



Chattanooga Community Kitchen

Help from the Heart of the City

FALL 2020 NEWSLETTER

Fast Day Your Way

This time of year would usually be filled with speaking engagements in businesses and churches, Thanksgiving and Christmas celebrations and other events that support our Fast Day Campaign. But, it seems the Coronavirus had a different plan.

In response, we've created a web page with resources that can be used in virtual events and services as well as print, donation links, promotional videos, etc. We hope that you'll partner with us by using these elements in your business, church, school or other event to continue supporting our mission of meeting the most basic needs of hungry, homeless and vulnerable people in our community while walking with them on a clear path to self-sufficiency.

Fast Day is the single most important campaign of the Chattanooga Community

Kitchen, raising critical funds to keep the stove burning, the lights on and the doors open.

Whether you give individually or spread the word through social platforms, you make a positive difference in the lives of our guests.

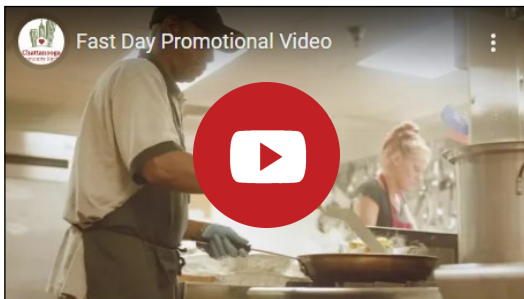
Throughout this pandemic, we've continued offering essential services every single day, 24/7 in some programs – and it's all because of your support!

As we face uncertainty in our own lives, the lives of the men, women and children experiencing homelessness can feel even more uncertain. But because of you, the Kitchen remains open each day.

Please join our 30th anniversary Fast Day chairs, Sam and Tina Currin, as we reach toward our goal of \$750,000. Thank you.

Please visit homelesschattanooga.org/fast-day for more information and promotional materials.

Website Resources



FAST day

Donate Now



Upcoming Events



Volunteer on Christmas Day to help serve a meal and spread some cheer.



Shop Altar'd State at Hamilton Place Mall on Mondays through the end of the year and the Kitchen will receive 10% of the net proceeds.



Join us to remember those we have known, lost, and served during our annual memorial service at Mission Chattanooga (806 E. 12th Street) on Dec. 21st at 10:00 am.

Congratulations

On December 24th, 2020, Denyce Carlock, our Clothing Program Supervisor, will celebrate 30 years as an employee of the Community Kitchen! Thank you, Denyce, for your dedication to our guests in their times of greatest need.



Volunteers: Offering Hope in Difficult Times

Over the past several months, we've received a lot of similar questions – questions like: “Are you still open? Are you taking donations? Can I volunteer?” The answers: “Yes, yes and yes!”

Although we've taken major steps to ensure the safety of those we serve, our operations remain open, and we continue working to fulfill our mission of meeting basic needs. In fact, we have expanded our outreach efforts since March to include daily meal delivery to those living in camps around the city. In addition to our usual daily activities, we now



Silverdale Baptist Church
Serve the City volunteers

have even more volunteer opportunities!

We continue serving meals in disposable containers and have begun offering dine-in options as well. Individual volunteers are needed daily to help prepare and serve meals as well as small groups to organize our pantry area – of course, all

volunteers are provided with protective equipment while working behind plexi-glass barriers.

In preparation for the cold weather, we have opened the Day Center with controlled access, ensuring that the folks we serve continue having access to phones, mail, showers and laundry. Volunteers can work at the front desk handing out hygiene items or by sanitizing common areas and assisting with general organization.

Our clothing program is back to the normal operating hours of Tuesday through Saturday from 10:00 am - 4:00 pm; we have a limit of ten shoppers at a time (whether for purchase or give-away).

Groups and individuals are desired to organize and sort donations and to assist with general tasks.

Our night shelters for men and women are fully operational as well and could benefit from volunteers to stay overnight with the guests – one of the easiest volunteer tasks ever as you generally get a great night's sleep!

In other words, we need volunteers for almost all of our programs; some can even accommodate children. After all, we commonly hear the question, “What can my children do to help?”

Many families have been helping us assemble outreach and hygiene bags at home. Supplies can be picked up at the Kitchen and completed at your convenience. Others have prepared desserts at home. Contact our volunteer coordinator for information.

Signing up is simple and certainly needed as we enter the holiday season. Go to our website: homelesschattanooga.org, click the “Get Involved” button and choose a task and time that works for you.

Thank you for your support; we hope to see you soon!



Notre Dame High School students
organizing our pantry.



A Note from Our CEO



**Jens Christensen,
CEO**

I always forget how exhausting the time change can be; it comes every year. It's literally clockwork. But somehow in the 11 months and 29 days that pass before the change returns, I seem to forget the impact. I know it's not the time change alone, but also the loss of daylight, the weather, even the leaves – seems everything combines to just wipe us all out each year.

So, for a few weeks each November, I walk around a little groggy. I wake up earlier than I should. I come home to darkness. I don't rest well. But soon, I'll adapt. After all, it's the transition that is often the hardest for all of us – the period that comes between what we're accustomed to and what we'll adjust to in the future.

2020 has certainly been a year of transition; from the closing of stores and businesses to a divided election to the cancellation of events, concerts and so many things we love – we can honestly say we don't know what 2021 will bring. We hear the words “the new normal” almost daily. In some ways, I imagine we feel a bit like a family experiencing homelessness might.

For families, the primary causes of homelessness remain unemployment, eviction and domestic violence. These are things a person often cannot control; in a sense they happen *to* someone, especially with an uncertain economy, rising costs of living, and strained relationships. For the many families impacted by homelessness, the triggering occurrence creates something far more significant than a time change – for the next weeks, the family faces a total, chaotic and frightening transition. Children may not know where they'll sleep. Parents must struggle to find work, housing, food, to get their kids to school, to care for the family. The worst part: most shelters have long waiting lists; and some divide fathers from their daughters, mothers from sons.

But six years ago that all changed for the better when we opened the Maclellan Shelter for Families; since then, more than 700 families have found safety and stability in our shelter, staying together, and generally only needing a few weeks to get back on their feet and on to greater stability. The shelter is open 24/7, meaning a family can find a safe place to turn, even when facing homelessness in the middle of the night. Of course, this shelter, *in fact everything we do*, would not be possible without your support and involvement.

It's this involvement that brings me comfort and peace as we see so much transition in the world around us. I look at your support and your compassion for those in our community, and I know we'll be okay. We're already adjusting to the changes. The year to come may bring greater uncertainty, possibly even more families experiencing homeless, but I know you're there supporting our work as we push through the transitions and walk toward stability with those we serve.

And for this, I thank you.

PS: My family is in a bit of a personal transition too. On October 3rd, my wife Christy along with kids Ezra and Maggie welcomed a healthy baby boy, Luke, into our lives. He's doing well, happily growing. We're adjusting and very blessed. Though, frankly, the dog is still in protest.

Give Hope for the Holidays!

Each year, the Chattanooga Community Kitchen offers you the opportunity to *Give Hope* to your family, friends, coworkers, and anyone else on your Holiday list.

When you *Give Hope*, we hand address, sign, and send beautifully embossed cards to everyone on your list; each card includes a lovely *Give Hope* ornament and informs the recipient of your gift:

*Give hope to the homeless,
encourage the less fortunate,
brighten the life of a child...in all
that you have, be grateful. In the
spirit of the season, a gift to
feed the hungry has been
donated in your name to the
Chattanooga Community
Kitchen*



This year, leave the work to us. Send us your list; indicate how you would like us to sign the cards. We'll do the rest.

We ask a \$15 donation per card. Please remember to include a day time phone number and e-mail address in case we need to contact you as we complete your order.

Not only does your gift go directly toward helping our area's most vulnerable people, it is also tax-deductible as permitted by law.

Giving Hope is easy! Remove this sheet, fill out the reverse side, and send it back. Please include additional sheets to cover your entire list.

Won't you Give Hope this Holiday Season?

CHATTANOOGA COMMUNITY KITCHEN HOLIDAY CARD CAMPAIGN

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone and Email: _____

(Please complete this information so that we may contact you with any questions).

ORDER ONLINE (HomelessChattanooga.org) OR MAKE YOUR CHECK PAYABLE TO:

Chattanooga Community Kitchen
P.O. Box 11203
Chattanooga, TN 37401

Please send a card and ornament to the following (names/addresses):

1) _____

Sign this card: _____

2) _____

Sign this card: _____

3) _____

Sign this card: _____

4) _____

Sign this card: _____

5) _____

Sign this card: _____

(Please enclose additional orders on a separate sheet of paper).

In Their Own Words...

Having previously worked with families in crisis at another organization, Kedric Webster felt that our family shelter would be a good way to use his experience to help others. Almost two years ago, he started as an overnight supervisor and now serves as the Administrative Supervisor.

“I enjoy the logistical and operational aspects of the shelter like inventory and other daily tasks so that Kathy (our program manager) and other staff can help the families on a more personal level.” Offering logistical support can also be helping new families navigate the bus system and other unfamiliar tasks.

When he reflects on his favorite parts of the shelter, Kedric appreciates that the shelter is a warm, welcoming place. “A shelter shouldn’t have to be drab. Our team does a great job to welcome families and make them feel at home.”

Another aspect that Kedric appreciates is the partnerships we have with other agencies.

“Some families assume we are a longer term shelter, but because of good relations with other partners, we can move families to greater stability at a faster pace.”



Kedric Webster
Maclellan Shelter for Families
Administrative Supervisor

Thank you, Kedric, for your practical support of families during critical times, and we thank *you* for another year of support of our Maclellan Shelter for Families.

Unfamiliar Territory

The last several months have been difficult and unfamiliar. While many plans have been altered and cancelled, the emotional toll of not knowing what tomorrow holds can be frustrating and stressful, especially when you have no support from family or friends.

For many of our guests, our case managers and support staff are the only source of support and hope they have. Kelly is a lady in her fifties who was homeless, disabled and on her own for the first time in her life. “It was scary. I had always had family around, and suddenly I had nowhere to go.”

Fortunately, Kelly knew where to turn. She began staying at our St. Catherine’s Shelter

for Women, where she found support from staff and her case manager. Kelly recalls, “I never got used to it. In fact, many nights I would cry myself to sleep, but I don’t know where I would be without their help.”

After several months, Kelly was able to secure a housing voucher and move into her own place. She proudly says, “It has been a big adjustment because I have never lived on my own before, but I made it! You have to work hard and want it, but the resources are there. You just have to use them.”





Chattanooga
Community Kitchen

P.O. Box 11203
727 East 11th Street
Chattanooga, TN 37401



We value your support and regard ourselves as accountable not only to you but also to God for stewardship of the funds you entrust to us. We are audited by a recognized, local independent CPA firm and publish an audited annual financial statement.

The Chattanooga Community Kitchen is a 501(c)3 organization. Qualified contributions are tax deductible.

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CFC #32577

www.homelesschattanooga.org

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CommunityKitchen](http://www.facebook.com/CommunityKitchen)**



[chattcommunitykitchen](https://www.instagram.com/chattcommunitykitchen)



Thank you for making our work possible!