



LOAVES & FISHES

Covenant Soup Kitchen

Volume 09 Issue 1

IT'S OFFICIAL—220 VALLEY STREET HAS NEW OWNERS

December 31st, 2008 was the day that 220 Valley Street the home of St. Paul's Church and the Covenant Soup Kitchen officially changed hands and the Soup Kitchen became the official owners of the property. It has



St. Paul's Episcopal Church

been a long process starting with its first announcement in January 2008. The sale, involved not only the Church and Soup Kitchen, but the Episcopal Diocese as well. There were contracts and inspections and meetings and a title search of course, but in the end, the closing went off without a hitch. Of course the number one question has been, HOW MUCH. The simple answer is

that it was an offer that we couldn't refuse. The sale price was \$100,000.00, with concessions to the church for the continued use of the worship space and parish hall for five years at no charge and an option to negotiate an extension of that use then, also. As was reported locally as well the Soup Kitchen was also the recipient of some State of CT Bond Monies to begin major repairs to the roof of

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2009 Can You Imagine

Someone reminded us just recently about how it seemed like just such a short time ago that we were all in the middle of concern over the dawning of the new century, Y2K, and "what might happen"

and now we have come through almost a decade since then, 'Can You Imagine'. It is hard to believe that this coming December, I will be here 9 years. It has been a great time of change. My first

year here, we served about 84,000 meals, and this last fiscal year, we have gone over 121,000 meals. There are times it doesn't seem like we are getting anywhere, and then we look around

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220 Valley Street (cont)

...the building, and replacement of the aged furnace. Both of those projects are to begin once we get a stretch of good weather to get the roof done, and when we can turn off the furnace for the season. Our building inspection has turned up quite a list of deferred maintenance so if you're a handy guy or gal and would like to join our volunteer fix it folks, just give Paul a call. The repair efforts will be led by

our own Three Amigos, those wonderful Habitat for Humanity guys, Rich, Ken & Bill. George helps too... They are here weekly with us to help us keep up with the many maintenance and handyperson projects. We hope as well with the help of other volunteers to



fussy up the outside with some new plants and landscaping. Long time volunteers, Fran & Gene Bowen have been helping us along with ideas for low maintenance plantings etc. Our goal is to provide some continuing TLC for this great old building here on the corner of Valley & Walnut and make it shine.

Rhode Island School of Design & the Soup Kitchen

Liliane Wong, a Professor with the Department of Interior Architecture at Rhode Island School of Design is providing design services for the Covenant Soup Kitchen, along with one of her graduate students to help the Soup Kitchen evaluate its use of space and come up with plans for the immediate space use of the building for both the Soup Kitchen to stretch it's wings a bit, and define some new space for St. Paul's as well. With the help of her students in the fall,



Ms. Wong will also help us to think about some intermediate goals for the use of the building, and some long term goals as well to make the best use of our space. Ms. Wong is a principle with Mahon Wong Assoc. of Cambridge Mass as well, and a consulting architect at Fletcher Harkness Cohen Moneyhun in Boston. She has taken on many public and commercial projects in the northeast and beyond. Her award winning work in library design can be seen at the Rowan Univ. Library

in Glassboro NJ. Montclair (NJ) Public Library as well as the Hartford Public Library. He has long volunteered at soup kitchens and homeless and transitional shelters, and actively seeks to get her students involved. She says that "She wants students to see that design has a wide spectrum and can be used as a tool in a larger human context, that it's not just for people who can afford to pay for it." We are so thrilled to have Liliane and her students giving their time lending their creativity to our efforts here.

2009 Can You Image (cont)

...of the changes we've gone through in as many years. We certainly have made strides in updating our facility and our equipment. When I started we had one computer, and now all of us have one, and wouldn't know what to do if we didn't.

(Although the promise of computers helping us to become a paperless society haven't come to pass, sometimes it seems like we even generate more). We have added about 20 more people to our payee program and have added an additional part-

time person in our Guest Advocate, Curtis Ehlers, not to mention having been blessed by the return of our kitchen manager Pam Rogers, our own Iron Chef/ Miracle worker. We have been blessed to by your continued generosity in time, talent and

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2009 (cont)

...finances to help us keep up with the increased need. I know it might seem to have become cliché to say, but, “we could not do what we do without all of you” You are the very breath of our work here and it is through your continuing efforts that those in need have their needs met. It might be cliché as well to say, that “the words THANK YOU, don’t quite say enough about what you mean to us”, because for us it doesn’t begin to express our gratitude, THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU . THANK YOU.

Clinic still going strong

The health clinic is still going strong here at the Covenant Soup Kitchen. The student Doctors from UCONN, and Student Nurses from UCONN and Three Rivers Community College continue to provide excellent health screenings and basic health exams. The clinic is open once a month during our Friday evening meals. Guests sign up during the dinner hour and will all be seen by the doctors that evening. The students are supervised by a volunteer physician



and referrals are made to Generation Family Health Center, or Windham Hospital as appropriate. A very important part of this service is also the Health Education provided by the nursing students. The students school our guests with information about various health topics from Diabetes to Hypertension. It has been great to see our client population become empowered with voluble information about general health concerns or chronic illness, and be able to become better health advocates for themselves.

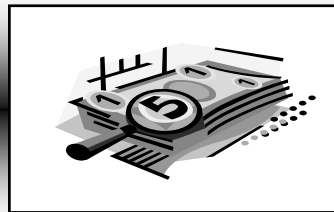
Soup Kitchen Receives Bond Funds

The Covenant Soup Kitchen is thanking it’s lucky stars to be one of the last in 2008 to receive some state bond funding to do some very necessary repairs to the roof over our main dinning room and the upstairs hall, and to replace our poor old furnace.

The roof leaks have been getting steadily worse and despite the best efforts to keep it

patched over the last several years, it cannot be patched anymore. It will be stripped and replaced as soon as the weather permits.

Our old furnace, (Vintage 1950’s) is about 65% efficient and although it’s still steaming



away, with the ups and downs of oil prices, we’d really like to get one that is quite a bit more energy efficient. It

too will be replaced as soon as we can shut it down for the season, and we’ll look forward to a dry roof, and efficient heating.

Doing Dishes just got easier at the Covenant Soup Kitchen

Well after millions & millions of dishes washed our old dishwasher finally gave up the ghost. It was originally installed in 1992 and was to the point that when it had a problem, it was difficult to get parts for it. It was a machine that we had leased, and we looked into securing another lease, and com-

pared it to the opportunity to purchase our own machine. It was the topic of much debate for a while at our board meeting's but then through the efforts of Board Members Dr. Nunez at ECSU and Ray Aramini and our



friends at Bike for Bread the money was raised to purchase the machine and have it installed. Not only is it faster, but saves energy and water as well. Like doing dishes, come on down and give it a try. We’ll gladly let you do some dishes. ☺

Covenant Soup Kitchen

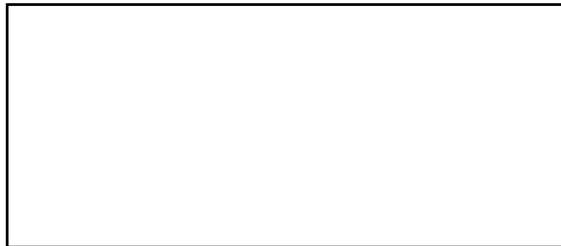
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We here at The Covenant Soup Kitchen, just want to take a moment to thank you for your continued support. We certainly could not do all that we do without you as our partners. In addition to your generous financial support we most definitely appreciate the donations of your time and talent as well. We look forward to joining forces with you to meet the ever growing needs of our community. Please send your donations along with the handy form below and don't forget to check out our wish list inside this newsletter.

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