

Our Daily Bread



Celebrating 30 Years of Service!

A Message from our Founder

Dearest Friend of Our Daily Bread,

As our thirtieth year of operating Our Daily Bread approaches, memories come rushing back to me!

I was compelled to call together a few friends and share the story of what I had seen at the intersection of Liberty and Vine (where the old White Castle Restaurant used to be). While walking by that area I saw an elderly man fishing through the trash, finding a small bag that contained a sandwich and some fries, and proceeded to eat his find.

I found it difficult to see the poor, the mentally ill, and the elderly poor trying to survive the poverty and loneliness that permeated their lives. I lived with these feelings for months and months, wondering about the "why's" and the "what could be done." A vision of some change that could benefit the poor and forgotten in the neighborhood came into my mind. From seeing that man, to finding a building, to moving locations - the past 30 years have been life changing for sure.



We were joined by several new, local social service agencies seeking positive change. In 1985 Tender Mercies created permanent housing for the mentally ill, Mary Magdalen House, located on Main Street, began offering clothing and showers for those in need, Peaslee Neighborhood Center and the Homeless Coalition also opened their doors.

The biggest change I have seen in the past 30 years is in the area of housing and gentrification in Over-the-Rhine. There are many empty buildings waiting for rehabilitation or demolition, but housing for the poor has become more difficult, forcing them to move to neighborhoods such as Clifton, Price Hill and Westwood. One other large change that took place that affected the children in the neighborhood was the closing of Washington Park School, and the deep water pool located nearby that was the favorite place for children to gather and play and swim.

What remains the same: Housing for the poor, however available, is limited. Poverty is still rampant, 18% of our neighbors live in poverty. There are younger people living on the street and abusing the various drugs available, in 2001 16% of the homeless population were between 19 and 30 years old. While we haven't rid the city of poverty, we have lessened the burden for countless individuals over the years.

In truth, the biggest change has taken place within me.

By working with the poor, and the not so poor, I have learned some lessons I try to practice daily:

- Never to judge anyone
- Listen
- Practice honesty
- Smile more
- Show empathy
- Be gentle towards children

Perhaps you have been changed by the part you have played in our work. I hope this letter finds you well and that you will continue to support Our Daily Bread as we move forward into our next 30 years!

Thank you for all that you have done for our guests.

Wishing you peace and all good,
Cookie



A Message from our Executive Director

I've been working at Our Daily Bread for three years now, exactly one tenth of the age of our organization. During that time I've witnessed some amazing things. Over the past three years we've experienced the highest numbers of guests we've ever served. That is a challenge, because it means more of our neighbors are experiencing hard times right now. Yet, at the same moment, we are experiencing countless blessings, because at Our Daily Bread we have been able to continue to serve the record numbers of people, offering hospitality, food and friendship.

Our mission is needed now as much as it ever has been. However, I have learned that the many acts of kindness and service that we offer every weekday are not the real heart of what makes Our Daily Bread so special. The true magic happens in the interaction between people. At Our Daily Bread, people of all types come together to serve and receive services. In these moments, social norms are broken, stereotypes fall apart and people learn names and life stories. Individuals are given new eyes and ears, changing forever their perspectives on different groups of people in our society. This kind of transformation cannot be bought with any amount of money, it can only be experienced.

The magic of Our Daily Bread is bringing people together, offering small acts of kindness and changing everyone's life for the better in the process. As we celebrate 30 years of service, let us all remember what we have received in the act of giving.

-Rev. Tyler Pettigrew, Executive Director

Looking Back at 30 Years



1980

Cookie sees a man eating out of a garbage can at Liberty & Vine. This injustice sparks a fire within her, to help feed the hungry.



1984

Cookie finds a location on Logan Street in OTR. A crew of friends, family, future guests, and "favors owed" are called in to create a ragtag renovation crew. Everyday another miracle is delivered to the door: sinks, ovens, furniture, and food.



1985

January 25th the doors open. For the first meal there were more volunteers than guests, but word travels fast and the numbers start to grow.



2000

After being asked to move, we find a new home on Race Street. An old IGA is transformed by volunteers into the location we have today. With a bigger space Kids Cafe and the office staff were able to move in too.



2006

The Mayerson Foundation, 10 local high schools, and artist Jan Brown Checco partner with Our Daily Bread to create custom murals for the exterior of our building. The murals reflect our mission and those we serve.



2015

The exterior of the building gets a much needed face lift. By removing the window grates, highlighting the Italianate architectural details, and improving signage, our building welcomes all who walk by.

Then & Now

1985

The 1st Annual Dinner Dance Fundraiser took place. 200 people attended, mostly close supporters of Cookie's.

Lunch on Legs was just a dream of Cookie's, it didn't start until 1992.

Kids Corner, our first children's program was started in Mt.Auburn.

The idea of having a social worker to help with the complex life challenges that our guests face was always a goal of Cookie's, but didn't take shape until June 1996.

Our average daily cost was \$3 per guest per day, while serving 300 guests, or \$900 a day. This included food, utilities, supplies, and any other expenses.

2015

Our fundraiser is now the Grand Slam Gala. In 2015 we hope to have 400 attendees and raise over \$100,000.

Lunch on Legs serves 4 homebound seniors in our neighborhood each day.

Kids Club is now housed in our building at 1730 Race Street and has 33 children signed up.

We now have one full-time social worker and one part-time social work assistant. On average they serve 110 clients each month.

Our average daily cost is \$4.75 per guest per day, while serving 500 guests, equaling \$2,375 a day. This includes food, utilities, our mortgage, supplies, and any other expenses.