

# Toni's Kitchen

*"More than Soup...Feeding the Soul"*

A Quarterly Newsletter

ISSUE NO. 6- FALL 2008

## HELP END LOCAL HUNGER

*By Mary Ann Renn*

Toni's Kitchen is participating in World Hunger Relief Week with a special "Empty Bowls" lunch on Sunday, October 26 from 12 noon to 3 pm. "Empty Bowls" events like this are happening all across America. What is this and how can you be involved locally?



*Organizers Elizabeth Smith Jacobs and Peg Kenselaar.*

***Come for lunch at Toni's Kitchen. Select a bowl. Have it filled with soup and take some bread. Then sit at the same tables where Toni's Kitchen guests sit every Thursday, Friday and Saturday for lunch.***

You keep your bowl as a reminder that there are always "empty bowls" in the world. In exchange for this meal of soup, bread and the bowl, you are asked for a donation of ten dollars. All proceeds will go to support Toni's Kitchen.



Toni's Kitchen is grateful to the local artisans, representatives of the Montclair Art Museum and committee members who are sponsoring this event, chaired by Elizabeth Smith Jacobs of The Clay Studio.

## FREE GROCERIES FOR OUR GUESTS

*By Emma Cortese*

Through a coordinated effort between Essex County Department of Welfare, Division of Citizen Services and the New Jersey Community Food Bank in Hillside, 500 pounds of vegetables were delivered to Toni's Kitchen on July 18th. Our volunteers filled grocery bags with cabbage, peppers, cucumbers and grapes in addition to a box of cereal or pasta. Over 70 bags of groceries were distributed to people who frequent Toni's.

Area artisans, adults and children from the community have been busy designing, creating and glazing beautiful one of a kind bowls to be used to increase awareness of world and local hunger.



LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR:  
SALUTING OUR GUESTS

Dear Friends,

Joy fills my heart when I see our guests concerned for one another ("I'm worried. I haven't seen Frank in a long time."), sharing in the food take-away line ("You can have these last bananas. I have plenty."), helping to sweep the floor, clear the tables etc. ("What can I do to help?") and having fun together playing Scrabble, singing together, enjoying good conversation, laughing together ("Toni's Kitchen is the one place that makes me smile both inside and out.").



We seek to respect the dignity of every human being and our guests return that respect to us and share it with one another. We salute our guests and thank God for the privilege of knowing them.

**Mary Ann Renn**

**WHO WE ARE:**

*Toni's Kitchen is a food ministry at St. Luke's Episcopal Church in Montclair, New Jersey. As many as 70 guests are offered warm hospitality and a hot, nutritious meal every Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, as well as on Christmas Day.*

*Volunteer Support is always welcomed at Toni's Kitchen. Whether your schedule permits a weekly or monthly contribution of time, your efforts will be appreciated.*

*Financial Support is also important to Toni's Kitchen. Even though much of the food that is served is donated, funds are needed for the purchase of additional food staples, serving supplies and for operational expenses and those associated with our expanding programming.*

*Mission Statement "To Serve Our Guests". At Toni's Kitchen every effort is made to provide an atmosphere of warmth and respect for those among us who find themselves in need of our hospitality and services.*

GIVE BOOKS, CARDS, HELP  
TO TONI'S LIVING ROOM

Toni's Living Room at St. Luke's is back by popular demand! On public holidays when municipal buildings are closed, leaving our guests with few options for shelter, the dining room at Toni's Kitchen becomes "Toni's Living Room", offering guests a place to gather.



*Upcoming dates for the Living Room, open from 1pm to 5pm, are Columbus Day, Oct. 13 and Veteran's Day, Nov. 11. Volunteers are needed to host and prepare light snacks.*

generously donated by the Montclair Public Library. Board games are popular, too. In addition to competing in a pleasant game of Chess, Scrabble or Monopoly, our guests also enjoy signing greeting cards and writing notes to friends and loved ones. Toni's Kitchen takes care of stamping and mailing the letters. As always it is our pleasure to serve the



needs of our community and we thank you for your continued encouragement and support. Please continue to bless others by passing along your books, magazines and unused greeting cards with envelopes. These may be dropped off at St. Luke's to the attention of Toni's Kitchen. God bless all you cheerful givers.  
- Toni Whitlock

**Feedback from our guests:**

*"Toni's Living Room provides a warm relaxing, friendly environment for anyone who enjoys reading, watching movies, and playing board games."*

*"It's nice to know there's a place to stop in when there's nowhere else to go, especially when the weather is bad."*

*"It's a home away from home."*



# "ON THE MENU"



## Tips and Tidbits from Toni's Kitchen Cooks

By Marybeth Nibley

Transforming the largesse of our generous donors into nutritious, delicious meals takes careful planning and creativity. Often, quick thinking is required, too, when a very perishable, last-minute contribution shows up at Toni's Kitchen. Thanks to the kitchen know-how and multitasking skills of Cooks Laura Feire and John Kopitz, meal preparation and service runs like a well-oiled machine.

Both Cooks say the key to running a successful kitchen is delegating tasks, monitoring progress and welcoming menu input from the volunteers. "Even though I set the initial menus and tell the volunteers what I'm planning, all ideas are accepted. One day, my vision of chopped meat in tomato sauce on pasta became Moroccan Beef, with raisins and Middle Eastern spices served over a bed of rice thanks to the ingenuity of Mike Gorman."

On Thursdays and Fridays, Laura has the challenge of organizing a heavy inflow of walk-in donations plus the "whatever"



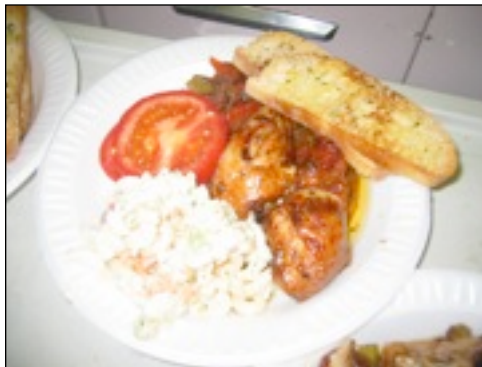
that comes from Whole Foods and the Route 46 Farmers Market. The unpredictable food assortment makes for some interesting options. A mountainous supply of mushrooms one day and an abundance of asparagus on another yielded two delectable cream soups à la Herb, for instance.

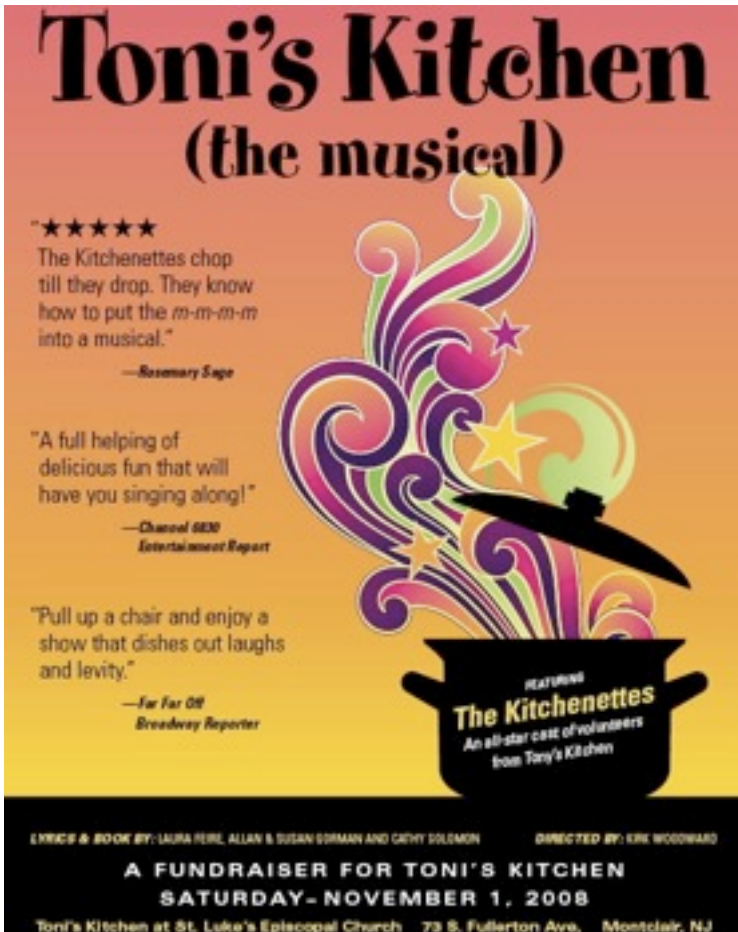
On Saturdays, John acts as "clean-up man" to make sure all the new food that has been received for the week gets used efficiently to minimize waste. "My job is to be sure we use as much of the existing food as possible before pulling from stock."



John and Laura believe they are most effective when they act as conduits channeling the energy and enthusiasm of the volunteers. "I'm like the orchestra leader rather than the lead violinist," John said. "I try to motivate the team, give volunteers ownership of individual parts of the meal and watch the clock for them. It works like magic."

*A typical meal at Toni's Kitchen:  
A salad of greens, Chicken with pasta and a vegetable ragu, and berries and cookies for dessert.*





**R.S.V.P. before it's too late!**

## **Toni's Kitchen Annual Fundraiser**

**Saturday, November 1<sup>st</sup>**

The evening begins at 6pm with a social hour, followed at 7pm with dinner and an original musical performance.

Read the reviews!

Seating is limited on a first-come, first-serve basis.

Tickets are \$65 and tax-deductible.

Call 973-860-0768 for more info.

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TONI'S KITCHEN

*St. Luke's Episcopal Church  
73 S. Fullerton Avenue  
Montclair, NJ 07042*

All guests are welcomed as Christ, because He will say,

"I was a stranger and you took me in."

- Matthew 25:35