

Friends of Jean Webster, Inc.



Fighting Hunger and Changing Lives
Reverend John R. Scotland, Board President

Dear Friends,

February 4, 2019

As a faithful supporter of the work at Jean Webster's Kitchen, we are writing with heavy hearts to advise you of current difficulties now confronting the Kitchen. Our mission to serve those in need in our community began when Jean Webster saw a man eating out of a dumpster and took him into her home and fed him. Soon Jean fed others as well, eventually moving to the Presbyterian Church at the corner of Pennsylvania and Pacific Avenues in Atlantic City. Since that move over twenty years ago, we have served over a million and a half meals to brothers and sisters in need. Inspired by Jean, we do this with no pre-conditions or questions asked about one's religious beliefs or lack thereof, or sexual orientation, or nationality. We also do this without a dime of money from Atlantic City, relying on the support of our faithful donors. Unfortunately, our work may be about to come to an end.

Since the creation of the Casino Tourism District in Atlantic City, it has been made clear to us that government officials are unhappy with the Kitchen being at the location where we have operated for over twenty years. The picture of poor people lined up for food next to the opulence of a casino hotel has created an image problem for the City. We understand the practical concerns of City officials and for at least five years have been looking for a place to relocate outside of the Tourism District. Over that time we explored moving to several different sites, but each time we identified a possible new location, the prospect of moving was met with opposition.

Then in 2017, it seemed that our prayers had been answered. St. Monica's Church two and a half blocks away on North Pennsylvania Ave. outside the Tourism District became available. We worked with representatives of Atlantic City Mayor Don Guardian's office and the Atlantic City Planning Dept. who encouraged us to buy the property. We also secured a Resolution from the CRDA Board of Directors reserving funds to assist us in making necessary renovations to the property. With this encouragement, we purchased the property by using limited reserve funds and taking out a substantial mortgage. We met with people in the neighborhood and obtained site plan approval from the Atlantic City Planning Board.

Location: Victory First Presbyterian Deliverance Church - South Pennsylvania and Pacific Avenue – Atlantic City, NJ

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