



# CHEESE ON TOAST



OCTOBER / NOVEMBER 2009

**Newsletter of the Soup Kitchen (SK) at the American Church in London  
Helping the homeless and marginally homeless in Central London**

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From the Director, Miranda Suit:

## CRISIS AT CHRISTMAS?

Just recently one of our guests wanted more information about the extra services put on at Christmas by charity Crisis. A quick search online for 'Christmas Crisis' turned up some rather unexpected results!

- For the second year the Chairman of US publisher Conde Nast has cancelled their famous Christmas Luncheon for his chief editors and publishers at the Four Seasons restaurant.
- The Swiss plan to cut down on Christmas gifts because of the recession. Ernst and Young have found that the average budget for Christmas presents this year will be only \$260.
- Santa has fallen sick this winter holiday! Even Ms. Claus' chicken soup is not powerful enough to cure his perilous cold. He won't be able to make his deliveries until much later than usual, and that is too late to deliver all of the presents. 'Christmas Crisis' is a game in which you and other elves help make up for Santa's missed time: fly over cities, drop presents down chimneys; hit a 70% success rate to save Christmas!

I finally found what I was looking for:

- If you are homeless or living in hostel accommodation, Christmas can be a lonely and depressing time. Charity 'Crisis Christmas' aims to alleviate that loneliness.

**Combating loneliness and isolation, as well as physical needs, is at the very heart of what we aim to do at the SK all year round, providing free food and clothing, but also a warm welcome and encouragement.**

Our annual services are rounded off by our free Christmas Luncheon for over 200 people: a 3 course meal of turkey with all the trimmings, crackers, a gift bag and entertainment provided by students from the American School in London. Here are some guests' comments:

*'The hospitality is wonderful - all the helpers and volunteers keep checking to make sure you are OK.'*

*'It is very well organised and friendly.'*

*'I can be on my own at Christmas, so the company is great.'*

*'I appreciate the opportunity just to chat and be listened to - it doesn't happen everywhere.'*

**Can you help us cover the cost of our Luncheon, and also, the cost of running the SK in December? (PTO for Response Slip)**

**Christmas Luncheon £ 1,000**  
**Running the SK for 1 month (average over the year) £ 4,000**

**MORE GOODBYES:** sadly Jorge, our wonderful Kitchen Manager of more than 4 years is leaving in December. It is a very exciting step for Jorge who has completed his studies and will now be working as a fully qualified art therapist. Myra, who has done a marvellous job as a volunteer on the Board, is also leaving, due to her work. We are very

## KITCHEN GARDEN IN MEMORY OF KAREN RAUCH

Most of you have heard the very sad news that over the Summer break, Karen Rauch, our former Volunteers' Coordinator, died unexpectedly in the US.

Karen served the SK for 6 years before returning to the US in June, and made many, many friends along the way, who wanted to mark her important contribution to the SK in a concrete way. After discussion, we decided on a memorial Kitchen Garden, and the American School Community Service Group planned, financed and in October installed, 4 raised beds in the passageway leading to the Clothes Closet! The beds are full of good soil, there is also a memorial plaque, and one bed is already planted up with garlic. Vegetables will be sown in the other 3 in the Spring and eventually provide fresh produce for the SK to cook and serve. We are hoping that helping with this initiative might also be an enjoyable activity for some of our guests. (Charity 'Capital Growth' are also providing a mentor for the project).

**VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR SK BOARD:** If you can spare a few hours every 6 weeks or so for Board meetings, please contact Miranda (PTO for details). We especially need someone to take minutes. This is different from helping in the SK itself, but just as important!

\* Come to our CHRISTMAS CONCERT and hear the Choirs of the American School, London: Sunday 13 Dec at \*  
\* 6pm at the American Church ...Donations on the door ... All proceeds to the Soup Kitchen \*

**CAMDEN HAS 3rd HIGHEST NUMBER OF ROUGH SLEEPERS**

According to homelessness charity Broadway, the five London boroughs with the highest numbers of people seen sleeping rough at present are:

Westminster	571
City	133
Camden (SK here)	111
Southwark	88
Lambeth	64

Following a reduction of 66% in home-lessness in Britain, last year the Government committed itself to providing a long-term solution to the problem in the paper, 'No-One Left Out: Communities Ending Rough Sleeping'. It pledged to end rough sleeping by 2012. Figures from July 2009, however, show that the recession has contributed to a sharp rise in homelessness. Also Camden (the borough where the SK is located) are planning to close several of their homeless hostels, so the SK is more needed than ever.



**TO:**

- All our loyal individual donors
- ACL, American School, Bloomberg, Royal Garden Hotel Kensington, Hampstead Women's Club (WC), American WC, Junior League,

Sick Man's Friend Soc., McKinsey, Deutschebank, StreetSmart, Notre Dame Uni, Syracuse Uni, NYU, Dineathon, Worshipful Butchers, Arup, Petroleum WC, St John's Wood WC, Sodexo, Rosslyn Hill Unitarian Chapel, St Pancras Thanet St Trust, Girl Scouts, Texaco-Chevron

- all our amazing volunteers
- PLUS many others

**LOOK AT FUNDRAISING WEBSITE JustGiving**

We are now registered with this very useful website which was used so successfully for Will's sponsored run below. It is very simple to set up your own page for a sponsored event. You can also donate online at:  
<http://www.justgiving.com/whitefield-soupkitchen/Donate/>

***Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much.'* (Helen Keller)**

**PRAYER**

† Pray for Karen's husband, 2 daughters and extended family to feel the strength and peace of God at this difficult time

† Ask God to help us meet as many of our guests' needs as possible and to give us the resources to do so

† Thank God for the brilliant support the SK receives in funding, in kind and in voluntary help

**'Carry each other's burdens ...' (Gal 6:2)**



**SPONSORED RUN RAISES £1,000**

High school student, Will, who ran for us on 27 September writes: *'I finished the Half-Marathon in a time of 01:44:19 and I am absolutely exhausted! Luckily it was a sunny day with great family support (Thanks Mom!). Hitting the £1000 target is fantastic ...!'*

**THANK YOU, WILL,** and everyone who donated. For more information and to see a photo of Will, go to his JustGiving page at:  
<http://www.justgiving.com/Will-Michele>

**HELPING TO MEET PHYSICAL AND EMOTIONAL NEEDS AT CHRISTMAS AND THROUGHOUT THE YEAR**

**Response Slip Dec 2009: Enclosed is my gift of £\_\_\_\_\_ for the Soup Kitchen**

*(Please make cheques payable to The Soup Kitchen or The Whitefield Corporation)*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ email: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ postcode: \_\_\_\_\_

- Pls. send me more info on:**
- corporate support
  - volunteering in the kitchen and/or the office
  - praying for the Soup Kitchen
  - setting up a standing order to make regular donations

**Gift Aid Declaration for Taxpayers only:** If you have NOT filled in a Gift Aid Declaration form for the Soup Kitchen before, please fill in the following now in order to increase the value of your donations by about 25p in £1.

**Gift Aid Declaration:** As a UK taxpayer, I want the Soup Kitchen to reclaim tax on all my donations made after 6 April 2000

**Full Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

NB: You must pay an amount of Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax at least equal to the tax that the charity reclaims on your donations in the tax year.

**Data Protection:** Your details will NOT be used by anyone except the Soup Kitchen, who will send you occasional news/ appeals. If you do NOT wish to hear from us again, please tick here

**Pls. fill in slip and return to: Miranda Suit, Director, Soup Kitchen at American Church, 79a Tottenham Court Road, London W1T 4TD (020 7580 2791) [www.amchurch.co.uk](http://www.amchurch.co.uk) email: [soupkitchendirector@hotmail.com](mailto:soupkitchendirector@hotmail.com)**