



SOUTH STREET MINISTRIES

WORD ON THE STREET

“Unlikely partners taking shared risks to renew our community for Christ’s sake.”

THE FRONT PORCH CAFE: OPEN FOR... BUSINESS? JOB-TRAINING? MINISTRY?

by Joe Tucker and the Front Porch Cafe Staff

Candidly, running the Front Porch Cafe is one of the greatest leadership challenges of my life. In 2009, when Duane Crabbs envisioned the old Croatian-American club as a place of gathering, job-training, and revenue generation for South Street Ministries, I don’t think anyone quite fully understood the scope of what that would require.

As a place of equitable gathering, we opened our doors to recovery groups, reentry meetings, and a hub of gathering for our neighbors and friends. We wrestled to keep the menu pricing low enough to be approachable, but competitive enough for us not to overtly lose money.

As a job-training site, we brought in experienced restaurateurs to train our staff in inventory, ServSafe, and leadership. We worked with youth programs to take young adults and expose them to their first work-experiences.

As a place of business, we scrambled to make catering menus, attract larger networking events, and market our venue on a shoestring budget. And as a place of ministry, we often stop the business of the day to pray with a neighbor, encourage someone in their struggles, and share the faith that drives us to serve and love in this particular place.

We’ve made many mistakes along the way, and have learned many hard lessons. We’ve endured the business woes as our freeway exits were closed. We’ve weathered the relapses of coworkers and employees. We’ve recognized our own limitations and shortcomings.

But the Front Porch Cafe endures. One of the consistent challenges of South Street’s Board of Directors is to assess the efficacy of the Cafe. Is the goal profitability? Is the goal job-training and employment? Is the goal

ministry and place-transformation? All the above? What happens when the needs of one goal challenge the needs of another?

In 2019, the Board and staff of South Street Ministries resolved to have a Focus on Training and Job-Readiness for the Front Porch Cafe. We are still discerning and deciding what this will look like and how we will enact it, but the direction fits.

Presently, the Front Porch Cafe is stabilizing our team in order to grow and move forward. Hear their thoughts about this place and keep the Front Porch Cafe in your prayers and your culinary destination-spots!

Gary Eckenrode - *Being with the Cafe for over four years, I sure enjoy coming into work and helping all in need - in food and spirit. We feed the body as well as the soul here!*

Holly Fields - *If God brings you to it, He will walk you through it.*

Joe Thorpe - *I pray we all wake up feeling dangerous every day.*

Jay Travis - *Pray for the Cafe and for South Street Ministries. Pray we all grow and develop much more. Pray for me as I heal. Pray for strength.*

Voncell Otero -- *If you stay ready, you don’t have to get ready.*

Starting on April 27th the Front Porch Cafe will be open on Saturdays from 8 am to 1 pm.



THE FRONT PORCH
A Vision of South Street Ministries



FAITHFUL SERVANTS
CARE CENTER



A HEART TO SERVE

South Street Ministries celebrated our volunteers, supporters, and team last month with a special event. It was a joy for us to gather together and pause in appreciation and celebration of what God has done over South Street's twenty-two years of history. Thank you for your prayers, partnership, and service! God has developed this ministry in significant ways, and we believe there that there is still more growth to come.



ADJUST THE CROWN

Studio has transformed into #AdjustTheCrown! #AdjustTheCrown is a girl empowerment group for teen and pre-teen girls in Akron. We hold space for girls grades 5th - 12th to give voice to their thoughts and ideas, while pouring truth into each meeting; supporting them as they choose health for their hearts, minds, bodies and spirits.



Want to Give Back?

Contact us at:
South Street Ministries
130 W. South Street
Akron, OH 44311
phone - 330.761.1992

website - www.southstreetministries.org
email - lcrabbs@southstreetministries.org

Cafe Hours

Cafe hours are Tuesday through
Friday 7 am to 2 pm
Saturday 8 am to 1 pm.
Kids under 10 eat pancakes for free!
The Café is available for catering at any time;
email lcrabbs@southstreetministries.org
to place a catering order.