



FACT SHEET: December 2020

The Year of COVID-19

What is Out of the Cold - Centre 120? OOTCold (Centre 120) is a program to serve good, hot meals to disadvantaged people of Ottawa on the Saturday nights of the 5 coldest months of the year. OOTCold at Knox Presbyterian Church has served over 60,000 meals in a warm and friendly atmosphere since opening in 1995 to the end of July, 2020 (about 105 guests each evening).

In 2016 the program was augmented with a Community Health Clinic, led and staffed by Internal Medicine residents from the Ottawa Hospital, offering health checkups to our guests.

Where and when is Out of the Cold - Centre 120? We are at Knox Presbyterian Church at the corner of Elgin and Lisgar Streets, entrance at 120 Lisgar. In normal years we open at 4 pm every Saturday from the beginning of November until the end of March every year.

What changes has the COVID-19 Pandemic required? This spring we remained open by implementing pandemic safety protocols, including pivoting to takeout. In response to shutdowns of other outreach services, we served meals until the end of July. We are currently serving takeout meals only but hope to have indoor dining when it is safe to do so.

Who do we serve? We are open to all but it is clear that most of our guests are on a low income, often social assistance for medical reasons, although some work. Most are single adults; some live on the street, but many live in rooming houses. They come not just for the food, but also the welcoming atmosphere and friendly smiles - our smaller numbers mean that we are able to provide personalized service and frequently an additional meal to take home.

Volunteering: Every week, 35-40+ volunteers come from across the city to deliver the food in bulk, set up, prepare and serve the meal at the tables, socialize with guests and, finally, clean up. Our dedicated leaders are there most of the day, but otherwise we have shifts so as not to exhaust volunteers. Team members are from Knox, other churches, friends, family and colleagues and the wider community, including the Centretown Community Association.

Interested in volunteering? Please email knox.volunteers.ootc@gmail.com or call Knox's office at 613-238-4774 and we will match your interests with our needs.

What does it cost? Our food costs for last season were over \$10,000 or about \$460 each evening. As a volunteer-run ministry of Knox, we have no overhead costs. We rely on the generous donations of many individuals from within and outside Knox, other churches and some organizations or businesses - plus fundraising concerts or meals except this year as they were cancelled due to the pandemic.

The pandemic has also increased costs. We are thus particularly grateful for all support in 2020, including from Faulkner Real Estate, Boogie + Birdie, Johnny Farina's, Massine's Independent, University Medical Association, Liberté City church, St. Andrews (Kars) church and the Government of Canada's Emergency Community Support Fund and Ottawa Community Foundation.

Interested in donating? Knox is a registered charity. Donations should be sent to Knox Presbyterian Church, designated to Out of the Cold. You may donate by cash or cheque (payable to Knox), E-transfer to knoxottawa@rogers.com or through Canadahelps.org (it retains 3%). Donations of \$20 or more will receive a tax receipt.