

MANNA MATTERS



APRIL 2021

FISHING LESSONS

Manna Cafe clients learn to create a budget, change a tire, and organize a closet.

— by Victoria York

We've all heard the saying, *Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day. Teach him to fish and you feed him for a lifetime.* Every so often, someone recites this adage to Kenny to convince him that it's not enough to "just feed people." They're surprised when he assures them that quite a lot of teaching does, in fact, happen at Manna. It started back in 2013 with Operation Pomegranate, consisting of cooking classes and education in meal prep and nutrition. Then came Change for Change, a Type 2 diabetes prevention program that combines instruction in healthy living with exercise classes. Recently we added Manna CATERS, a six-month culinary program led by a trained chef (see the December newsletter for details). Then came Basic Adulting—hour-long sessions led by experts from the community and covering myriad topics.

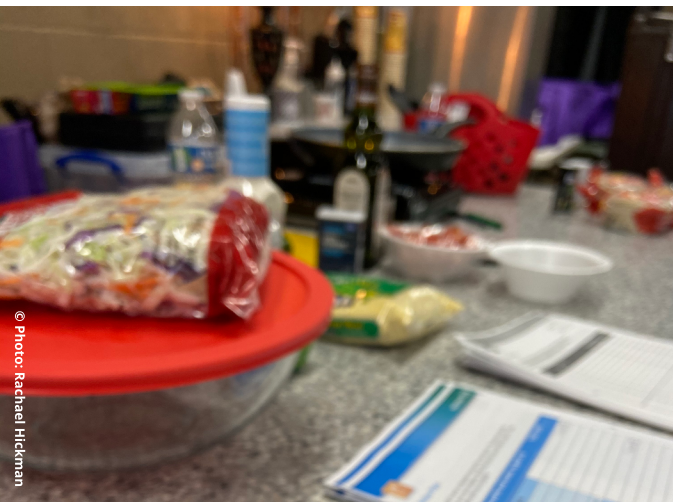


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Most classes focus on important life skills, and a few are just for fun. They've included car maintenance, home maintenance, sewing, first-time home buying, party planning, time management, understanding credit, job search skills, cleaning hacks, body language, legal aid, budgeting, taxes, parenting, self defense, and even cake decorating. (Interested in taking a class? Watch for the weekly event on Facebook.)

Are we hitting our mark with these resources? Consider this: One evening during a bread baking class, a Manna employee overheard a young woman ask her mother, "Mom, did you ever think we'd be the kind of family who could go out to eat and then take a class?" As far as she was concerned, eating at Manna Cafe equaled dining out, and taking a class was a special treat. If that's not a perfect example of how serving others can restore their sense of hope, empowerment, and value, I don't know what is.

Many thanks to everyone who has given of their time and expertise to lead a class. We appreciate you!



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12/29/2020

Fish Tacos - Spend Smart Eat Smart

SPEND SMART. EAT SMART.®

Fish Tacos
Serves: 5 Cost/Serving: \$1.45 Serving Size: 2 tacos

INGREDIENTS

- 1/2 cup light ranch dressing
- 2 tablespoons lime juice

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CALLING ALL GOLFERS!

Announcing the Manna Cafe 2021 Golf Scramble:

When? Friday, June 11. Registration begins at 7 a.m., and tee time is at 8.

Where? Eastland Green Golf Course (550 Clubhouse Lane, Clarksville, TN 37043)

Why? Because playing golf, competing with new and old friends for cash, winning raffle prizes, and scoring door prizes and swag bags is a great way to spend the day.

How much? \$45 if purchased before June 1 (includes a golf cart, breakfast, lunch by Manna Cafe's catering staff, and snacks). After June 1 = \$50.

Manna is looking for hole sponsors as well as team members.

To sign up (either individually or as a team), log on to MannaCafeMinistries.com (click on "Golf Scramble" under the Events tab). For information regarding sponsorship, email rachael@MannaCafeMinistries.com.



LESSONS FROM THE CAVE

—BY KENNY YORK

Many people who look at me today might see just someone who has a happy and successful life: a ministry that's grown by leaps and bounds over the past 11 years, a beautiful wife I love very much, four kids and six grandkids, a comfortable house, a dog who makes me smile, and even a slightly used pickup truck that I'm not ashamed to let people ride in. Life looks great—and it is, and I thank God every day for what He's blessed me with. But just a few years ago, life didn't look anything like it does now.

In 2004, after I'd spent seven years in drug addiction, alcoholism, and failed relationships, God set me free. Then He led me to go live and work at an inner-city ministry in Nashville. My wage was \$75 a week, and I lived in a 20 x 20 room in a warehouse. That warehouse was connected to three others, and together they totaled 50,000 square feet ... most of which was infested with rats. And not little rats—*big* ones. We even named one Jojo because the warehouse was in the middle of the Jo Johnston projects.



Continued on pg. 4

**Pray like it depends on God;
work like it depends on you.
—Mother Teresa**



MANNA CAFE MISSION STATEMENT

Manna Cafe Ministries serves people in need in Clarksville/Montgomery County through a soup kitchen on wheels, food box distribution, and other vital resources. Propelled chiefly by volunteers, Manna Cafe strives to restore hope, dignity, self-reliance, community, and the love of God through Jesus Christ.



© Photos this page: Rachael Hickman

JOIN THE FAM!

We hear it from volunteers again and again: "Manna Cafe has become family to me." We've seen countless people find purpose, fulfillment, and friends by working shoulder-to-shoulder with others. Quite a few have morphed into full-time staff members. A few have even found love!

You, too, are invited to be part of the big Manna Cafe family. *I'm not sure where I'd fit in*, you might say. But did you know there are dozens of ways to help out? Some volunteers sort clothing, work in the office, or answer phones. Others load groceries into cars, serve meals, or assemble food boxes. And still others do carpentry work or mow the grass. Find *your* spot by signing up at MannaCafeMinistries.com or calling 931-647-5313, ext. 102.



MOBILE PANTRY VOLUNTEERS, JANUARY 2021

THERE FOR YOU

Last year, much of the nation shut down. But Manna Cafe never closed its doors. This was possible with a lot of help from our friends: donors, volunteers, staff, and many more. Instead of curtailing services, we made adjustments to keep everyone safe, then added more hot meals, started weekly food box distribution in Dover, provided hot showers, and offered emergency shelter 63 times this winter! When all was said and done, we'd given away 2,959,449 pounds of food. (Let's just round it up and call it three million, what do you say?) We often did all this with a skeleton crew.

By the grace of God, we were there for you, Clarksville. Will you continue to be there for us? To support Manna Cafe's efforts, log on to MannaCafeMinistries.com.



WARMING CENTER GUEST SONISE ENJOYS BREAKFAST

THE CAVE, CONT'D

One of the challenges during the four years I lived in that room was keeping the rats out. One of my neighbors, Norman (a Vietnam vet who walked with a cane and had long, gray hair, a beard, and a bad limp) had really good aim with a slingshot, so I kept him supplied with marbles to help the war against the rats. I didn't



spend my first few weeks at that organization doing normal ministry stuff; instead, I sorted through the warehouse, throwing away the thousands of pounds of clothes, furniture, and other things that the rats had overrun.

Everyone called my room "the cave" because it was in a far back corner of the warehouse, on a slightly lower level so that you had to walk down a ramp to get to it. It had no windows, which meant no sunlight. Some nights in the winter, it was so cold I slept in insulated coveralls. There was no ventilation, and in the summer it got so hot my clothes stayed soaking wet even with fans blowing directly at me.

This doesn't sound like a very fun way to get into ministry, does it?

I'm not complaining or hoping you'll feel sorry for me. In fact, I cherish those memories. I'm telling you this to brag on

God. You see, He had me right where He wanted me: while I was throwing away junk and sweeping up rat poop, my loving Father was removing the "junk and poop" of the world that had infested my life.

Things weren't always so hard those four years. God was molding me—and

"GOD HAD ME RIGHT WHERE HE WANTED ME."

yes, sometimes breaking me. But during that time He also trained me and gave me the vision for Manna Cafe. I met my wife Vicki there. I was ordained as a street pastor there. And I met friends from all over the world while I was there.

People often ask me, "How did you start Manna?" or "How did you get into homeless ministry?" I'm sure I kind of glaze over when they ask me those questions, because behind these eyes are so many memories just like these—treasured memories of the times when God used the little then to produce the big now.

Peace out.

GRITS & GRAVY

Join us on Thursday, May 6, at 7 a.m. for breakfast at the Refuge! Come celebrate Manna Cafe's eleventh birthday as you enjoy live music, a guest speaker, and all the fixin's of a big Southern breakfast.

Tickets are just \$20 each or \$35/couple. Register and purchase your ticket(s) online at MannaCafeMinistries.com. (Or register ahead of time and get your tickets at the door.)

