



Home cooking with a delicious mission

March 5, 2015

Dear Friend,

Thank you for coming to the table. Your place at the table.

The feeling you're wanted and needed. Knowing you're valued and have something to contribute.

It's what we all want, isn't it?

I'm so grateful to you for being among the first people to support us. You really stepped forward – you took a chance on a big idea.

And that's why I'm writing to you today. As one of our first and most important contributors, I want to ask you to consider the enclosed funding proposal and invite you to become a Sustainer of Grace Café.

You were there when we announced our ambitious goal: to end hunger and food insecurity in Boyle County. More than that – **your early support let us offer a new solution** – one that treats every person with dignity. One that provides access to locally grown, nutritious, delicious food regardless of your ability to pay.

Your generosity has gotten Grace Café so far! Thanks to you, we've landed the perfect location. We're building, painting and getting ready. And we're winning tremendous support from the community for this innovative idea.

But your continued support at this time is critical.

I want to share a story with you. It's a true story, a Kentucky story, a story about hunger told by one of our neighbors. I think you'll understand.

I remember my grandmother's garden. She and her mother had what seemed like miles of tomatoes and beans and corn and such. The smell of the vegetables, still dripping with sun as these came in from the garden to be washed and cooked and plated teeming with life, is like nothing else in the world.

I was born in southeast Kentucky and raised poor. My own mother didn't garden or can. We grew up on seven untilled acres, and we got our food from the store.

We lived on white bread and bologna. And potato chips and pop and Little Debbie's when the money allowed. We were hungry sometimes when the money ran out or there was no way to the store.

But even then, somehow we'd find enough to feed our even poorer neighbors.

And even though everyone was dirt-poor, we were still proud about not being "on the dole." None of us died from starvation. My mom knew how to take a little flour, some lard and sugar, and make pancakes. We could live on those for weeks – and we did.

I moved away from Kentucky, but never far from hunger. That fear of lack has been with me my whole life.

So many of us live paycheck to paycheck. And poor people food – tuna, ground beef... is off the roof expensive.

There's nowhere in the world prettier than Kentucky. (I bet you agree.) So eventually, I came back and settled here in Danville – a real town. A real community.

Accountability comes with the kind of roots you grow here.

I'll be at Grace Café, helping. The time I volunteer will pay dividends for me spiritually as well as physically. My kids will eat good nutritious food, prepared with love by neighbors.

You know, my family doesn't have a lot. Yet almost every night, my child brings home a friend to eat with us. I choose to believe there's enough for everyone. Don't ask me how it works, but it does. That's grace in my opinion.

That's why I believe in Grace Café. We have the chance to heal the entire community, one plate at a time.

I love the way she put that. I always think of Grace Café as *embracing* the community. But that's a kind of healing, too.

Does her story sound familiar to you? Maybe you're in a much better situation now, but you still remember your own hungry days. Or maybe you've never experienced the fear personally – but know neighbors who have. Or, maybe you don't have to go too far back in your own family history to find relatives who experienced hunger. I know I do. My family goes back several generations to farmers and coal miners in Breathitt County, KY – one of the poorest counties in the nation.

You understand the way we've been dealing with hunger doesn't work. Charity is a virtue. It *does* put food in people's mouths, and we need to support it.

But let me explain. We have caring and generous communities. We have churches, faith communities and good people – like you – who want to help and do. We have dozens of emergency-food programs like pantries, soup kitchens and other grass-roots emergency programs throughout the Bluegrass. However, the important word to note is “emergency.”

Emergency food programs are in place for folks and families who have missed a meal or, sadly, many meals. **Grace Café's mission is to prevent missing meals in the first place.** To give a sense of security to our neighbors who don't know where their next meal is coming from.

Grace Café will provide food security. This is how we end hunger. *You* can help us do that. Your gift to Grace Café – either onetime, occasionally or monthly – helps us open the doors to a delicious, nutritious and joyfully sustainable solution.

Would you please consider becoming a Graceful Sustainer with a monthly gift of \$10 to Grace Café? For example, your monthly gift will provide 40 delicious, locally sourced and nourishing meals per year.

Why do I ask? **Because your monthly tax-deductible gift gives us the security to grow and accomplish our mission.** And I want to assure you: It's easy, and it's safe. Every month, the amount you choose will be charged to your credit card via PayPal, or perhaps you can set up a monthly donation through your online banking. You can change the amount or opt out at any time. Just call or write to let me know.

Your monthly gift will be automatic – not something you'll need to remember to take care of every month. And it makes it easy to include Grace Café in your budget. Your monthly gift can be small enough to fit your finances – but adds up to large impact.

And your impact will be felt by so many people in Boyle County! Grace Café follows a more effective model, proven in more than 50 communities across the country. A model that strengthens our city, feeds hungry neighbors and offers everyone a chance to contribute according to their abilities.

Because you are so important to us, I've enclosed a detailed account of our progress to date and what we need to keep the momentum going. It may be more detail than you need, but I am so excited I have to share. I hope you'll read it and give it your most thoughtful consideration.

I really do hope you will. Because we need you!

As a Sustainer of Grace Café, you'll know you're making a meaningful contribution to the problem of hunger and food insecurity and the lives of our neighbors *every single month*.

You can take a lasting stand against hunger here with your sustaining gift to Grace Café. Only then can we make plans with enough assurance that we have the resources to confront and end hunger in Boyle County once and for all. With your commitment we can have a sustainable impact.

I hope you'll continue to choose Grace.

With grace and gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rochelle Bayless". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rochelle Bayless
Executive Director

P.S. Thank you so much for believing in us right from the start! I can't tell you what that means to me.

And now, I hope I can count on you to take the next step and help us at this crucial time. With your help, we can end hunger in Boyle County. Please review the information I've enclosed and return your acceptance form to me. If you have any questions, I'd be pleased to speak with you. Call me at 860-301-2043 or email me at info@gracecafe.org. Thank you.