

Local Leaders Help Out a 'SOUPer' Cause

Heritage Baptist Church's 5th annual "SOUPer Bowl" lunch brought city council members and the community together to raise money for the Light House Shelter.

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From Left-Right: Chef Zachary Pope, Alderwoman Classie Hoyle (D-3rd Ward), Alderwoman Sheila Finlayson (D-4th Ward) and Alderman Fred Paone (R-2nd Ward) Courtesy Photo Photos (13)

It's not everyday in Annapolis when city council members, donned in aprons serve up lunch to members of the community.

But that's exactly what happened at [Heritage Baptist Church's](#) 5th annual "[SOUPer Bowl Sunday](#)" [lunch](#) on Feb. 6. According to a press release, the event, which drew a crowd of more than 250 people, raised \$2,700 for the [Light House Shelter](#)—a homeless prevention support center in Annapolis.

Alderwoman Classie Hoyle (D-3rd Ward), Alderwoman Sheila Finlayson (D-4th Ward) and Alderman Fred Paone (R-2nd Ward) were the celebrity servers—dishing up hundreds of bowls of chicken noodle, chili and loaded baked potato soup.

Chef Zachary Pope, a member of the church and owner of [Roundz Catering](#) in Crofton, made the soups.

"I love to do soups and these are just three classics," he said of the menu.

The event was free, but those attending were encouraged to donate, and all proceeds will go directly to the shelter.

“I think there’s no better cause than to come out and help others that are in need...” said Finlayson.

Hoyle agreed.

“I’ve been on board with the Light House Shelter from the beginning. It’s my number one charity,” she said, adding that she was delighted when she was asked to be a server.

Paone is a veteran ladler, serving at the event for four out of its five years.

“Oh, I enjoy it. It’s a great way to give back to the community,” he said.

Lisa Seborowski, who does marketing and public relations for the Light House Shelter, said she was impressed with the turnout and emphasized the importance of donations from events such as this one.

“The support of the community is imperative to what we do at the Light House Shelter, because that’s how we fund it,” Seborowski said.

Heritage Baptist Church is part of Annapolis Area Ministries, a group of local churches that work together to support the shelter and serve its residents.

The Rev. Henry Green, pastor for the church said “The goal is just to raise as much money as we can.”

He said the church welcomed the servers, Republican and Democrat.

“We’re not partisan...because everybody in the community, everyone is involved in wanting to help others,” Green said.

Though Green had a different opinion when it came to choosing Super Bowl teams.

“I just have to say if you’re a Ravens fan, by default you have to root for the Packers,” he said, adding that “reluctantly,” they did allow some Steelers fans to attend the event.

Among those fans was Hoyle, though both Paone and Finlayson said they were rooting for the Packers all the way.

Despite the light-hearted rivalry, the servers were all smiles, and so were those attending—knowing they were all helping a good cause.

Eleanor Sturgis, a member of the church, said she was there “to support the shelter.”

“I didn’t realize there was so much need in the county,” she said.

According to event organizers, this year's SOUPer Bowl raised the most money in the event's history.

Before the event was over and the final numbers were tallied, Seborowski thanked those attending for their support.

She explained that the shelter isn't really just a shelter, but called it an "entry point" for people who are struggling and need help help and empowerment to get back into the community.

Editor's Note: Chef Zachary Pope is a contributor for Crofton Patch.