



# AGAPE TABLE

Newsletter April 2010



NUTRITION ▼ EMPOWERMENT ▼ DIGNITY ▼ COMMUNITY

## AGAPE TABLE FOR KIDS

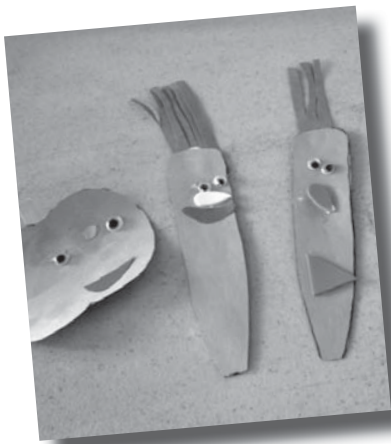
Over the past winter months, the families in Agape Table for Kids have continued to learn about nutrition, play fun games together and enjoy each other's wisdom.

Agape Table for Kids is a preschool nutrition program designed for children 0 to 5 years. We meet once a week to participate in the program and enjoy a healthy snack together. Each family receives enough fresh food to provide for 100% of the dietary needs for each preschooler in the house.

This program operates solely on the financial support of donors like you. We receive no government funding.

Below is a sample of our kids' excellent creative work. These paper vegetables were fun to make, fun to play with, and remind us of the importance of good food for health and wellbeing.

Thank you for your continued support of this unique and needed program.



## A DAY'S LABOUR

*A guest of Agape Table speaks about his experiences seeking day labour in Winnipeg over the last ten years.*

**Today, I would like to talk to you about work – both about your work and labour in general. Can you tell me a bit about your history of employment?**

Sure. I worked construction for 15 years very steady. I transferred out of town to Thunder Bay for a big project. After that I came back to Winnipeg and while waiting for my unemployment insurance to come, I checked out day labour. I was actually really bored - that's what led me to look into it.

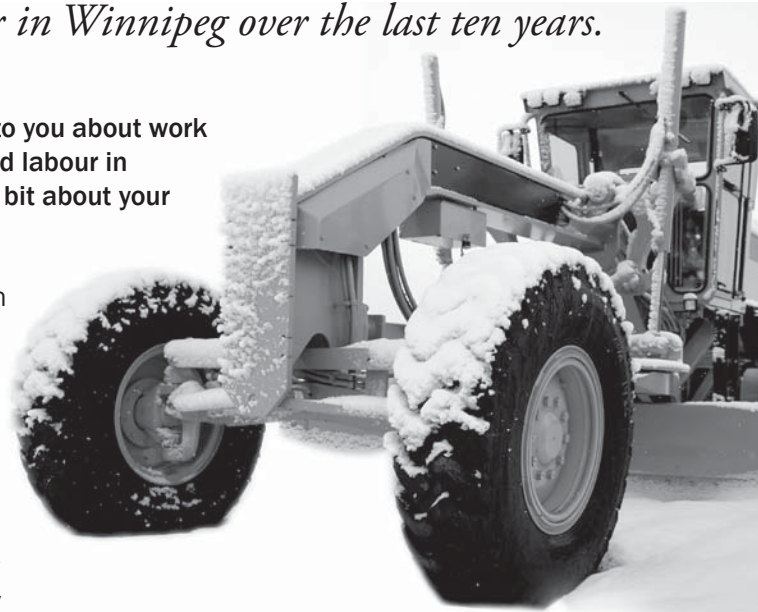
**Do you always get a shift when you go to the day labour office?**

Well, these days, if you want a shift, you have to show up really early in the morning. Most offices open at 5 or 6 in the morning, and it's first come, first served. If you're not on a repeat ticket, you're not guaranteed a job. These days many workers are lining up for hours just to be sent back home.

**Is it always like that?**

No. This is a tough season for day labour work. It's cold, so a lot of construction slows down and even some of the office work slows down too.

Anyway, it seems like guys are getting there earlier and earlier these days. Some are even lining up at 2 a.m. looking for that 5 a.m. job. Standing out in the cold! That's why there are a lot of guys that are stressed and cranky in the morning. I see them at Agape, they walk by me and just shake their heads. They mean nothing there. Nothing.



***"I really lucked out. Turns out they needed me for snow removal."***

Story continues next page

### **Why do people end up seeking day labour?**

Certainly, some of the workers actually prefer it. They can take a day off whenever they want. It's very flexible. I knew a guy who worked "temp" for 19 years. One particular company that always asked for him, offered him a permanent position over and over. He would always decline it. He considered himself a "temp", and he liked it that way. He takes a day off whenever he wants, and doesn't have to explain it.

And sometimes it can be like a cycle you get stuck in. You almost get addicted to the day cash – you see, many of the offices pay out daily. You work, you get paid and you spend the cash, then you have to show up the next day. If the day worker takes a full time position, what's going to bridge him to the first pay cheque? You end up with four bucks in your pocket and three weeks until your first pay cheque. That's a hard stretch! I've done it several times. Another guy I worked with – he works very hard and could land a full time spot for sure. Thing is, he is supporting a wife and kids – that three week jump is a hard one for a guy like that.

### **What is the pay like?**

A lot of the temporary companies start at minimum wage [currently \$9 per hour]. Some of those don't pay daily. Some of the better ones start at 11.40 per hour and it's paid out daily. Of course, the higher wage places have the longer lines. For me, over the years working temp, I've made lots of contacts – companies that I've left on good terms. I usually make some calls to see if any of them have work. I never say no, I always take the work no matter what it is.

### **What sort of work has kept you busy lately?**

I really lucked out. Turns out they needed me for snow removal. It's a graveyard shift. I drive a grader, loader, or dump truck.

### **Sounds like a lot of fun.**

Well, it's a lot of stress for sure. You have to be constantly attentive. There are other vehicles, pedestrians at night, surprises by the curb, you name it. The expectations are high. The wage is high too – I'm getting paid 23.50 an hour. It's that high because I've had my certificate for 20 years. Anyway, winter is a bit of a boom for me. Payroll is done twice a month so it turns out I've got to wait six weeks for my first cheque. There's that holdback issue again that comes with switching from temporary to full time.

### **How will you bridge that six week gap in income?**

I've planned well this year. I had a bit saved up. It's gone now, but I'll manage. I come to Agape for breakfast, although for me I suppose it's supper. Anyway, it's my major meal for the day. I usually buy the \$1 egg breakfast. It's a good source of protein to give you energy for the day, and I keep the fruit for later. Sometimes I even buy two. Agape is critical for those lean times.

I've never been on welfare and haven't been on E.I. for a long time. I am making my way just fine.

### **When that first cheque lands, what will you do?**

Buy some more furniture for starters. I need a new bed and some pots and pans, so I'll look into that. I'll get some more food into those cupboards. I may go out to a restaurant too. It's been a while since I've been able to do that.

### **Will you still come to Agape?**

For sure. Two reasons – my friends are there, and I like the food. I love the \$1 breakfast for sure. You can't make eggs like that at home.

I enjoy helping out too. I've been setting up tables in the morning.

### **What are your hopes and dreams?**

Simple: to have good work, and to be with good people. All I need are the necessities taken care of. A few dollars in the bank, that's all I need. I'm 55, I've got 10 years until I'm 65 and I have no savings. It's late in the game, I've gotta start working on that. Canada pension only goes so far.

### **Any final thoughts?**

Just that I do appreciate Agape. It's important to have a place that is always there. Working day labour is anything but stable so it's really great that Agape is a place you can rely on.



## VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION 2009

Agape is a Greek word that means “love”. According to Wikipedia, it has the connotation of activity – it is love-in-action. It is certainly then our diverse roster of volunteers that put the “agape” into Agape Table!

Once a year Agape Table formally recognizes the effort of our volunteer team with a meal and celebration. On December 8, 2009, the Park Theatre on Osborne was packed with over 80 volunteers, delicious food and great fellowship. The evening saw performances from our music circle musicians, art on display from our art and craft circles, and individual recognition.

Agape Table would like to thank the generous sponsors of our door prizes:

- KEVIN DONNELLY
- TRUE NORTH SPORTS AND ENTERTAINMENT LTD.
- THE MANITOBA MOOSE
- DAN PROWSE
- BOB SOKALSKI
- HILL SOKALSKI VINCENT TRIPPIER, LITIGATION COUNSEL
- THE WINNIPEG BLUE BOMBERS
- AIKINS MACAULAY & THORVALDSON LLP

Read more about this event on-line at [agapetable.ca](http://agapetable.ca). If you are interested in volunteering at Agape Table visit [agapetable.ca](http://agapetable.ca) or call 783-6369.



## TREASURER’S NOTE

You may have seen the Agape Table thank you ad in the Winnipeg Free Press generously sponsored by McKim Cringan George and the Winnipeg Free Press. If you did not, the focus of the ad was to thank our donors for their generosity in 2009 and to inform them that we experienced an increase in donations from previous years. The audited financial statements with the details will be available on our web site [agapetable.ca](http://agapetable.ca) as soon as the audit is completed and after they have been presented at the Annual General Meeting in mid April.

This strong financial support results from a donor base that recognized and responded with generosity and compassion to the difficult financial situation that many people faced in 2009. I am thankful and proud to be associated with you in addressing this need.

The increase has allowed us to expand our existing programs to include more people in need of assistance and to develop new programs to serve many of our guests more appropriately.

Two new programs being developed under the watchful eye of our Executive Manager Mark Courtney are the subsidized breakfast program and the co-op food program. Both are designed to provide guests with subsidized access to quality food sources that were previously unavailable to them. The co-op food program is a partnership between low-income families, Agape Table, and our suppliers. The subsidized breakfast program enhances our traditional morning food program by providing our guests with options to supplement the normal fare. Through these new programs, our guests are empowered by a wider range of choices and the opportunity to participate as partners in the process.

These programs reduce reliance on charity, show more respect, and provide more dignity to people who use our services. You will be getting more specific details about these initiatives through this and subsequent newsletters. We hope you get as excited about these programs as we already are.

Dave Yuill, Treasurer, Agape Table Inc.

### MARCH 18, 2010 MONTHLY CELEBRATION

Provided by the Manitoba  
Buddhist Temple

### APRIL 01, 2010 EASTER CELEBRATION

Funded and served by the  
Kinsmen club of Winnipeg

### APRIL 17, 2010 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

175 Colony, 9:30 a.m.  
All are welcome

### MAY 24, 2010 MONTHLY CELEBRATION

Funded by Glenlawn  
Collegiate

### FOR INFORMATION ABOUT HOSTING A MONTHLY CELEBRATION AT AGAPE TABLE VISIT [AGAPETABLE.CA](http://AGAPETABLE.CA)

### JUST IN TIME FOR BBQ SEASON!

You can support Agape Table  
by purchasing premium  
quality beef at  
[KeystoneProcessors.com](http://KeystoneProcessors.com).

During the sign-up process,  
select “Agape Table” when  
you get to the “Choose your  
Fundraiser” section and we will  
receive 15 cents on every dollar  
you spend.

# 2010, Thirty Years On

On behalf of the guests and volunteers at Agape Table, I thank you for your support in 2009.

This past fall, after much hard work, the Board of Directors officially articulated four “pillars” that are to guide all Agape Table programs and services in 2010. They are nutrition, empowerment, dignity, and community. To better reflect these values, Agape Table now refers to itself as a Community Nutrition Centre. The old terms of soup kitchen and food bank will continue to fade as our language evolves to match our reality.

Yet, this change is much more significant than a simple shift in vocabulary. This newsletter comes with a brochure that explains our new subsidized egg breakfast program. You will also notice a reference to this program in our guest interview. We have been astounded by the significant early adoption of this service: each morning more than 30% of individuals seeking food at Agape Table opt for this subsidized program instead of our free meal. In January alone, we served over 1000 subsidized breakfasts. As we move to introduce pre-paid cards and other budgeting tools, we anticipate serving more than half of our existing community in this way by the end of 2010.

The newly-formed Visioning Committee at Agape Table has taken up the challenge to use food as a tool of empowerment, a move which leads us to venture outside the traditional lines of charity. In order to work towards our goal of empowerment, we must ask ourselves how we can assist in the community’s efforts to be self-supportive. I hope you can see how a service such as our egg breakfast is a profoundly empowering experience for those who would otherwise rely on surplus or redistributed food on a regular basis. Of course, programs like this will not replace our emergency food programs. They are not intended to solve food emergencies. Instead, the program has its greatest effect in the time and circumstance before a crisis occurs, helping to prevent the emergency by extending the purchasing power of the low-income dollar.

2010 is our 30th year in operation, and is a time to reflect and reminisce. I am proud of Agape for being there for people when all else fails. We will continue to serve the no-cost food requirements of the inner-city area for as long as there is need. We also commit to exploring the tools of subsidized food and cooperative purchasing in an effort to increase access to affordable nutrition, a problem underlying every house-hold food emergency.

Please join us as we set out on this journey. Please consider supporting Agape Table in 2010 - our year of innovation.

In Gratitude,  
Mark Courtney, Executive Manager

*Thank You*

*Mayor Sam Katz*

*The Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce*

*Everyone who attended the “State of the City” address this year.*

*Mr Albert El Tassi*

*The Cardinal Foundation*

*Peter Tonge*

*Craig Murray*

*McKim Cringan George*

*Visual Lizard*

*Kinsmen Club of Winnipeg*

*Canadian Mennonite University*

*Winnipeg Free Press*

*David and Sam Kovnats*

*Saint Benedict’s Table*

*St. Andrew’s River Heights United Church*

*Food Systems Management*

*Costco*

*All Saint’s Church*

*Granny’s Poultry cooperative*

*Star Lite Colony*

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**I WOULD LIKE TO SUPPORT:**  
 Most Needed       Agape Table for Kids  
 Meal Program       Endowment Fund

I would like to contribute monthly in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ . \_\_\_\_  
Withdraw on: \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_  
(MM/DD/YY)

## THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING AGAPE TABLE

Please send your donation to:  
**Agape Table Inc**  
PO Box 26111, Winnipeg, MB R3G 3R3

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I would like to remain anonymous  
 I would like the Chair of the Board to contact me about a gift of securities or a bequest