



ON A MISSION

Your Wellington City Mission Magazine

Issue 1 2021



Our Future Looks So Much Brighter

As a sole parent to my five children, it's been a really hard road. But with the awesome support of The Wellington City Mission we're now in the best position we've ever been in, and we're excited about our future.

At one point, I couldn't see a way forward for our family. I was barely meeting our basic costs, and racking up debts. That's when I started working with The Mission to get on top of my budget. They also provided us with weekly food parcels which helped us get by, and meant that I could focus on paying back the debts that had been hanging over my head.

When our landlord gave us our notice and we were expected to move out of our home, we simply couldn't find somewhere affordable to live. Our Mission social worker advocated for us with Housing NZ, and after a lot of work she found shared emergency housing in my local community. It was a massive relief to have a roof over our heads!

We were so grateful to be there, but over time all six of us ended up living in one bedroom together. Understandably my older kids didn't like it, and they started playing up at school. One was also diagnosed with ADHD. During that extremely tough time my social worker made a huge difference. She supported me in critical meetings with school and health professionals, and she advocated for us with Oranga Tamariki when everything was piling up on us as a family. She even gave us special food and presents at Christmas so that my kids wouldn't have to miss out.

I found full-time work as a carer for people with disabilities. I took every shift I could to help our family get ahead, and I began extra training. All the while, my social worker and I were constantly applying for houses. Even though I had a full-time job, time and time again, as a single parent with five kids we were being skipped over for private rentals, and government housing was always full. But after four years of living in emergency housing, we were finally successful last September, and we moved into a four-bedroom house.

It felt so good to start again as a family. You can tell that my kids feel much more settled, and they're excited to start new schools this year. My oldest boy has a new baby with his partner, and is working full-time, so I've been able to support their young family to get a good start.

"All I can say is thank you so much to The Mission for being there for us."

I really enjoy what I'm doing each day as a care worker. I just passed my Level 3 Certification in Health and Wellbeing and I'm starting my Level 4 study this year. My goal is to become qualified to work with people experiencing mental illness.

We no longer need The Mission's support. I've paid back all my debts and I feel confident financially. I'm even saving towards a deposit on our own home. All I can say is thank you so much to The Mission for being there for us. I don't know where we would be without you!

Empowerment. Transformation. *Fullness of Life.*



Murray's Message, Wellington City Missioner

"What a Difference a Day makes". Popularised by the likes of Dinah Washington, Tony Bennett, Diana Ross and Amy Winehouse; this song has the following lyrics in the first verse:

*What a difference a day makes
Twenty-four little hours
Brought the sun and the flowers
Where there used to be rain*

I am sure most of us felt like that on 1 January 2021 as we welcomed in a new year and said

goodbye to the challenges and difficulties of 2020. Last year seemed so hard, primarily because of the ongoing impacts of COVID-19, that most people were looking to the New Year to contain the hope, restoration and COVID recovery that it promised. Although 1 January is "just another day", it seems to contain something special, the promise of better things to come.

We are now into the second month of the year and we know that the very real threat of a COVID relapse remains with us constantly. But in Aotearoa New Zealand, we are indeed a privileged people as we see the impact this horrendous disease is having on the rest of this planet. And I do hope you are retaining the 1 January hope of a brighter and more optimistic future!

At the Wellington City Mission, we have the privilege every day of seeing lives transformed and the power of hope bringing new life to those who are struggling. This newsletter is full of stories of real people with real issues finding solutions and restoration through the work of the team at The Mission. In doing so there is real hope for the future.

I often wonder how people feel the first day they connect with The Mission; and know that someone loves and cares for them and will walk the distance with them – I trust that it is an experience of relief, comfort and anticipation. A day of renewed hope for their future! What a difference a day makes...

That renewal, that hope; is a wonderful gift that can only be given with the support of so many of you. On behalf of all of us at The Mission, thank you so much for enabling us to do what we do and creating the potential for that day when everything changes.

"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." Jeremiah 29:11

Murray Edridge
Email: murray@wgtncitymission.org.nz

Strong for the Year Ahead

A couple of years ago, I felt isolated and riddled with grief. My mum, who was my only local family member, had passed away. At the same time, my relationship broke down, resulting in me becoming a solo mother to my 1½-year-old and 6-month-old boys. It felt like my whole world had turned upside down – especially considering I had a successful career in banking, where I felt certain of my path. I was in despair and had lost all sense of hope.

Then I remembered the role The Mission had played in my mum's life. Little things like how she always had a packet of biscuits and tea at home from the food parcels she received, to how much happiness she found in the Community Lounge. I realised that I needed a bit of help to get through this tough time, so I sought refuge.

I have been stunned by the level of care my Mission social worker Hanna has shown us. We were well supported during the COVID-19 lockdown and Hanna's practical and personal support has helped me regain my sense of direction. She started providing amazing food parcels and spent time discussing strategies to begin building an amicable relationship with my children's father. Our shared goal is that our children are safe and are raised well.

When I broke my neck just before Christmas, Hanna went over and above to support me. I underwent major spinal surgery and knowing she was there to check in on me when I was so vulnerable was such a relief, and helped my recovery.

My physical health and tight budget meant I knew I was not able to provide a special Christmas for my children. Then the most extraordinary experience was presented to us. The Mission delivered Christmas hampers filled with new toys and special

food! My feelings of despair were lifted away and replaced with joy. My babies will always remember such a wonderful Christmas.

The support we've received as a family has meant we've started this year strong. I have just completed my level 4 qualification in project management and small business management. I have started my own business and continue studying the Rongoā (traditional Māori healing) for my healing balms. I am always taking small steps towards financial independence until I fulfil my dream career with the New Zealand Police Force.

I truly hope that everyone who contributes to The Mission gets a sense of how their giving is making such a long-lasting impact on families like ours. I feel supported and confident that I can now give my boys a great childhood, and find ways to give back to our community throughout our own lives!





From a Shelter to a Community

I've had some hard times and personal challenges throughout my life. When I lost my house, and I was unable to find work, I found myself in a bad space. I was struggling to provide for myself, so I started staying at The Wellington Night Shelter.

Then came the Level 4 Lockdown. The Mission invited all of us to move into their housing facility, Te Pā Pori, because it was a safer setup for everyone. It was clear from the beginning that we had gone from simply having a place of shelter into a community where we would be cared for – both by staff and each other as manuhiri (guests).

Here we've received honesty, love, and guidance from the Mission staff. They are with us 100%. They make sure we are healthy with good kai, offer advocacy for manuhiri who have literacy difficulties or had bad experiences with agencies, and provide budgeting advice as well as employment opportunities with recruitment agencies. At Christmas, The Mission even gave me a big box of toys that I could gift to my mokos (grandchildren), because I didn't have enough to spend – that was so cool.

Here we have the freedom of choice about what we do with our days and the decisions we make, but at the same time there's an expectation on all of us to respect each other and this place. Everyone has taken different paths to get here, but I believe this

is the right place for each of us to move forward as men. We have everything we need to release the burdens we carry, start the healing process, and get back on our feet.

"Here we've received honesty, love, and guidance from the Mission staff."

I'm proud as punch to have recently found full-time work as a painter in Petone. What's awesome as well is that The Mission immediately offered me a place at Te Pā Manawa (Britannia House) as it's close to work. I'm moving there now, and I know it will be the stepping stone I need to make my new life. It just shows how genuine the Mission staff are, and the opportunities they can give you if you want to uplift your life.

I am completely focussed on my plan to prove myself as a good provider for my whānau, and enjoy their company for as long as I can. I really want my children and mokos to visit and stay with me at my own whare (house).

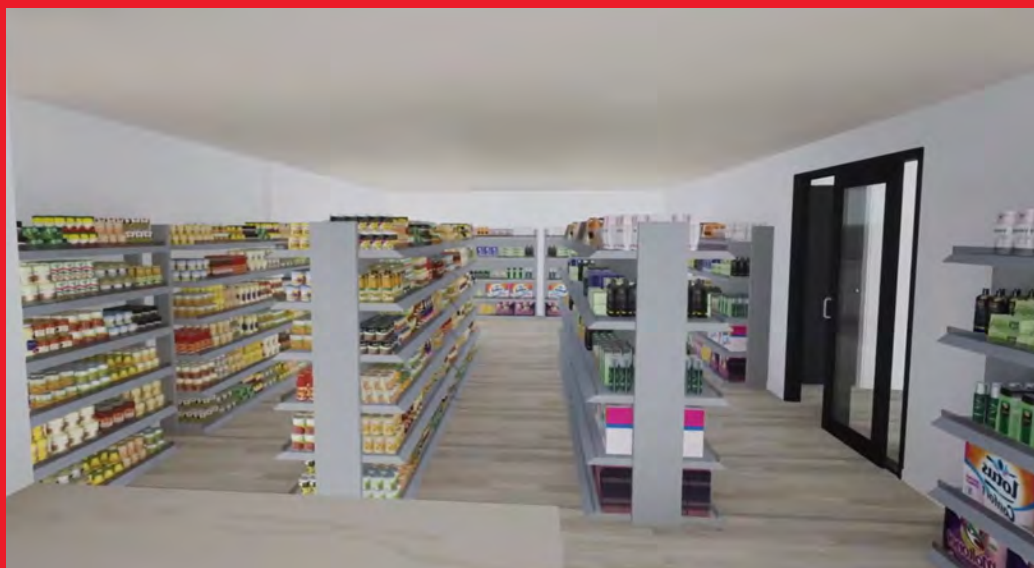
I am depending on myself, and God, to continue on this journey. I am forever grateful for the team at Te Pā Pori, and also to the people who support The Mission. You need to know that whatever you're doing to help is making a difference for someone else. Thank you, because you have changed my life.

Introducing our Social Supermarket

This year we will be trialling our Social Supermarket concept at Gordon Place, Newtown before we eventually take it to our new home Whakamaru, at Oxford Terrace.

Currently, The Mission's staff and volunteers pre-pack food bags then people collect the bags or social workers deliver them to families. However, in a move to provide people who require food assistance with a more mana-enhancing experience, the Social Supermarket will enable people to come into a small supermarket setting and pick the grocery items which suit their personal preferences or cooking ability. Giving people the dignity of personal choice of food and normalising the experience is the driving feature behind our change from a Foodbank to a Social Supermarket.

Supporting The Mission in this new venture is Foodstuffs, the team behind PAK'nSAVE,



New World and Four Square – they've been a part of helping us with the fit out, planning the layout, and working out how we might run the Social Supermarket in the most effective and efficient way.

The Social Supermarket concept is an idea that comes out of The Mission's Whakamaru

building project, which is set to begin construction this year. Whakamaru will be a transformative community hub for all Wellingtonians in the heart of our city. The Social Supermarket will sit alongside 35 supported transitional housing units, a Community Café and other social support services in the new building.

OUT & ABOUT

Community Sports Bank Update

In September 2019, we officially launched our Community Sports Bank initiative. We aimed to help facilitate conversations and create connections, to break down the barriers to sport and enable more children and young people to engage in sport and meaningful activities.

The Community Sports Bank recognises that sports poverty is a growing issue in our community. The cost of subs and fees, sports gear, and transport are a few of the barriers to people being able to access or participate in sport.

Together with councils from across the wider Wellington region, we have been working collectively to improve equity in sport and recreation.

Since opening our first 14 Sports Banks in 2019, we have distributed:

5,000

Over 5,000 mouth guards

6,000

6,000 items of sports equipment

1,240

1,240 swim passes

9

Nine 3-month gym memberships

50

Funded and supported adaptive football for 46 children with disabilities, and powerchair football for 50 children

9

Funded 9 children to go to their school camps

1

Funded and supported a Special Olympics Play Day for 4 to 7-year-olds

A huge thank you to those who have contributed to our Community Sports Bank by donating new and used gear – you've helped support hundreds of people to become more active.



Volunteer Celebration

Our Volunteer Celebration event in November was a great chance to thank our amazing Mission volunteers. It was a special afternoon filled with delicious kai, music, laughter, aroha and community.

Many of The Mission's crucial services would simply not be possible without our volunteers, who currently donate over 500 hours of their most precious time every month.

Thank you so much to our awesome team of volunteers!

Become a Regular Giver Through ChangeGivers!

Join our community of dedicated supporters who recognise the importance of making a sustained and ongoing commitment to helping those who need The Mission's support.

Our regular giving programme, ChangeGivers, will play an essential role in helping to ensure that we can continue to be responsive and ready to meet the needs of our community at all times of the year.

You can set up your monthly gift on our website donation page by choosing the monthly option, or by contacting Vivienne on (04) 245 0845 or vivienne@wgtncitymission.org.nz.



ChangeGivers
Regular Giving Programme

LOOKING FORWARD



Important News for Donations by Cheque

This year will see BNZ, Westpac and ANZ follow Kiwibank in phasing out cheques. ASB have indicated they will follow too. This will affect all New Zealand charities, and at The Mission we would love to talk to you about alternative methods of payment for your support if you require any help.

Please call Vivienne on (04) 245 0845 or email vivienne@wgtncitymission.org.nz to discuss the available options.



Look Out for Our Family2 Family Food Appeal!

After a successful inaugural Family2Family Food Appeal in 2020, we are excited to once again be partnering up with Foodstuffs, and our fellow City Missions for Family2Family in 2021. This winter, you will be able to collect our special brown paper bags from any New World in the Wellington region.

If you are part of a group who would like to host a collection and will need a larger quantity of bags, please call (04) 245 0862 or email jana@wgtncitymission.org.nz



Two Worlds Paella

The Mission has teamed up with Paella Boys to produce and sell ready-to-eat Paella meals at local supermarkets across the Wellington region. You can choose from Chicken, Beef, Vegetarian, Lamb and Seafood.

Every Paella you buy will help The Wellington City Mission support more people and families in need across the region. We can guarantee, giving has never tasted so good!

Be sure to grab your Paella at our stall at The Food Show here in Wellington, 28 - 30 May at Sky Stadium.

WHAT IT MEANS

Kara

**Financial Mentor
Mission for Independence**



When you talk with someone who is in an overwhelming financial situation, you realise that any of us could find ourselves in a similar position. One of the first things I say to clients is that there will be no judgement from me, as I've had some really difficult times with money myself. I know first-hand how having debt can make you feel like you're drowning. It's a privilege for me to now be serving those people who can't see a way out, and being the person I myself once needed. I love being a part of someone's journey, and seeing them feel supported to turn their life around.

Maria

**General Manager
Residential Services
Operations**



In Te Pūnaha Pā, our transitional housing system, we give manuhiri (guests) an experience of what it's like to belong somewhere. We make them feel welcome and valued - often for the first time in their life. Showing someone that they do have strengths and options lets them realise their own potential. We also have staff who have lived-experience, and there's dignity in seeing them walking alongside manuhiri who are going through challenges they've overcome themselves. Our care and support gives manuhiri hope that they can live the life they want. Playing a part in helping people follow their aspirations really adds meaning to my own life.



A Word From Bridget - General Manager Fundraising & Marketing

I feel very blessed to be in my role here at The Mission. Each day, it's incredibly humbling to see Wellingtonians step forward to help people in need who they have never even met and, in turn, to see the impact that generosity has on the individuals and families who need it. I am greatly challenged and motivated by the stories of hardship I hear. But I get to see the best in people –

an interconnected community of individuals, families, businesses, organisations, and local government all working together for the good of others across Wellington. In this way, The Mission is a conduit for everyone's goodwill.

It's also clear to see how giving and receiving is an intrinsic part of feeling a sense of belonging in a community. It creates a wonderful connection that makes all of us feel good. Christmas 2020 was a wonderful example of how caring our community can be. Having so many people, families, and businesses donate funds, food, and beautiful new toys was just so special – especially at the end of an extremely difficult and tiring year for us all. It shows how understanding our supporters are about the hardship some people in our community are facing.

What strikes me as well is how so many of our supporters have long-term personal relationships with The Mission, sometimes within their wider family and even previous generations. The Wellington City Mission is the oldest Mission in New Zealand, so it has this trusted heritage of working with those

who are struggling. Throughout its 117 years, The Mission has always made sure that its services adapt and respond to the needs of the day. However, the underlying needs like inadequate housing, health, and food insecurity have been a constant challenge. The Mission's supporters have always powered this vital work, so donations are absolutely critical. We simply couldn't be here for people in their time of need without the donations we receive.

This year our team will focus on continuing to grow our group of supporters, and sharing personal stories about our work to ensure you feel valued and connected to what we're doing in the community each day.

Obviously, we don't know what challenges lie ahead for all of us this year. But we do know that there will be people in the Wellington region who need our support. Just being able to help one person meet their most basic necessities and start to feel happy and hopeful for their future is an incredible achievement, but you help us do so much more. Whichever way you support The Mission, thank you for all that you do!

THANKS TO YOUR HELP...

Oct - Dec 2020 Key Statistics



3,670

We distributed 3,670 food parcels



772

772 Adults and 530 children have been supported through our Foodbank



469

Our Community Service Advocates & social workers carried out 469 face-to-face visits with clients



115

We provided 115 manuhiri (guests) with transitional housing



9

9 manuhiri moved into permanent housing



100

We provided 100 clients with financial mentoring

DONATE NOW TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

WAYS TO DONATE

Website:
wellingtoncitymission.org.nz

Phone:
(04) 245 0845 to make a donation.

Internet Banking:
To our bank account 03 0547 0296036 17
Email donations@wgtncitymission.org.nz with your details if you wish to receive a receipt.

CONTACT US

Call in, or contact our Newtown office and Community Lounge:
19 Gordon Place, Newtown, Wellington
PO Box 7200, Newtown, Wellington 6242
T: (04) 245 0900 E: enquiries@wgtncitymission.org.nz

E-NEWSLETTER

To sign up to our quarterly e-newsletter, please email your details to enquiries@wgtncitymission.org.nz or call (04) 245 0845.



The Wellington City Mission



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THANK YOU

Thank you for helping us Light Up Wellington at Christmas



As we all know, 2020 presented its fair share of challenges for many people and families in need throughout the Wellington region. What typically should be a happy and festive season for many, was going to be harder for those in our community who were affected by the wide-ranging impacts

of COVID-19 – whether that was because of unemployment, having limited income, or inadequate housing. We knew that it was going to be a Christmas like no other.

From our whānau at The Wellington City Mission, thank you for supporting our Light Up Wellington

Christmas Appeal. Your generosity helped make a real difference in the lives of people and families in need at Christmas. You helped provide the light they needed to enjoy a special Christmas, and to look forward to the new year with hope!



Pack the Bus at St Mark's School



Our Special Toy Shop set up for families at Christmas

YOUR CHRISTMAS SUPPORT ENABLED US TO:

970

Provide over 970 families with toys & Christmas food parcels

7,900

Gift nearly 7,900 new toys to children for Christmas

200

Gift 200 family zoo & pool passes for families to enjoy

2,550

Support over 2,550 children at Christmas

2,835

Provide 2,835 food parcels to feed people & families in need at Christmas

70

Supply 70 community service agencies throughout the Wellington region with Christmas food and/or gifts

X3

Meet a three-fold increase in demand from the community service agencies we supported at Christmas

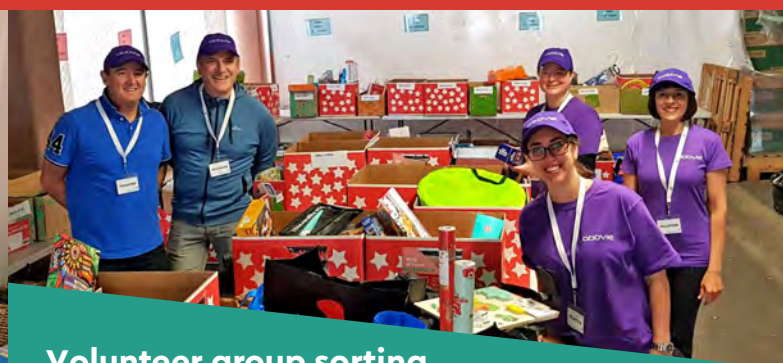
245

Deliver 245 special Christmas Hampers filled with food & new toys

In particular, we would like to thank the following partners who supported our 2020 Christmas appeal through significant donations, promotions or events: ASB (lead sponsor of our Christmas hampers), Alan and Helen Tristram, Cricket Wellington, DineAid, Foodstuffs NZ & Flybuys, Kāpura, Koru Hub, Mediaworks and The Breeze's Pack the Bus, My Food Bag, Queensgate Shopping Centre, St. Mark's School, The Good Registry, the NZSO, ToyWorld Wellington, Verifone NZ, Wilson Parking, all of the businesses and organisations that filled our 730 Christmas Star Boxes, and our Walk of Fame Gold Star supporters – BERL, Chapman Tripp, DataTorque, Precinct Properties and Z Energy.



**Christmas Eve
Hamper deliveries**



**Volunteer group sorting
Christmas Star Boxes**



Walk of Fame



**Pack the Bus
with The Breeze**



**Christmas Eve at The
Basin with Cricket Wellington**



**ASB (lead sponsor of
our Christmas hampers)**

THANKS TO OUR GOLD STAR SUPPORTERS!

