



ON A MISSION

Your Wellington City Mission Magazine

Issue 4 2021

Being the Man I Need to Be for My Family

I've lost a lot of people in my life, starting from when I was young. In my teenage years, both my older and younger brothers passed away, followed a few years later by my mother and father. My long-term partner and our four children became my world, and I focussed my life around us. Two years ago we were going through a separation. I couldn't handle it, and I attempted suicide.

What followed has been a very hard road. I'd caused a brain injury, which affected my memory, cognition, and physical health. I was grateful to have my ex-partner and kids there for me, but my injury had changed me. I just wasn't the same person anymore. I became homeless, and dependent on drugs.

I understood that my family needed a bit of space from me, and I wanted to change myself, so I moved into The Mission's Te Pā Manawa. When I arrived, I could tell that I was putting myself into the hands of people who could help me. It was the right place for me to create some normality.

Having my own room where I could think and reflect was exactly what I needed. Taking part in our morning meetings and everyday activities gave me routine, and talking with the guys in the house took me out of my own head. I got to know each person, and learned about their pasts, their troubles, and where they wanted to go. The staff opened up about their own lives too, and helped keep me going. I also got a lot out of encouraging the other guys, and being honest about my experience, so that hopefully I could stop someone else from taking the same path that I did. Belonging to a bigger group was completely new for me, and it was just what I needed at the time.



Ryan in his new home

"It's good to know that whatever happens, that community will always be there for me."

It brought me a new perspective on my life and my situation.

Everything I was doing was about dealing with my background issues, to become better for my family. I couldn't see my own progress, but over time people started noticing how much my health was improving and my whole personality was growing. Hearing that sort of thing builds up your confidence, and a few months ago I was ready to live independently again. Gaylene

from the Pā advocated for me with my landlord, and I moved into my flat.

Now I'm doing everything I can to get back to my career, and at the moment I'm completing cognition testing to prove that I can work safely. The Pā is still in my life, and I sometimes pop in to catch up. It's good to know that whatever happens, that community will always be there for me. I definitely feel a lot better, and I'm never going back to where I was in the past.

My family means everything to me. All I want is to be back with them full-time, but it's about getting myself right first. My youngest daughter and son visit me heaps, and we all have dinner together in the family home every Sunday. Christmas time for me is all about being with family. And for the first time in a long time I'm in a better place, which means we can all be together.



Murray's Message, Wellington City Missioner

Since I last wrote to you, we have all experienced the further impacts of COVID-19. For all of you, your family and friends, I hope you are well and surviving these challenging times that we find ourselves in. COVID-19 lockdowns in 2021 have reminded us again about the dangers of this virus and the devastating impact it can have on individuals, families and communities. Our hearts are particularly with colleagues, friends and loved ones in Auckland and the Waikato as they experience life harder than the rest of the country. However, in the midst of adversity, we often see generosity, compassion and love come to the fore as we seek to care for and look after each other.

Our hope as a community and as a nation is that concern for each other's wellbeing continues in the days ahead. Recently, I have heard people refer to a return to "normality" as people long to get back to "the way things used to be". Helping people who are struggling to feel "normal" is one of the things that The Wellington City Mission has been seeking to achieve. In this context, we are wanting to remove the barriers and obstacles that prevent people from participating in community and receiving the benefits of being part of a community; the way that others do. We are aspiring to fairness, equity and social justice for all those who form our communities. But perhaps "normal" is not what it used to be, and perhaps our "new normal" having endured the challenges of COVID-19 together, could be better than it was before? I was sent a quote this week from Sonya Renee Taylor: "We will not go back to normal. Normal never was. Our pre-Corona existence was not normal other than we normalised greed, inequity, exhaustion, depletion, extraction... We should not long to return, my friends. We are being given the opportunity to stitch a new garment. One that fits all of humanity

and nature." This quote reminds us that we have the opportunity and potential to build something new and different from what we have had and what we have gone through. This magazine contains some wonderful stories of people whose lives have been changed; who have had the opportunity to build new from their experiences of life to date. To embrace and enjoy a "new normal" for themselves. It is a wonderful privilege for all of us at The Mission to play a small part in that opportunity and we can only do that with your generous and ongoing support. Thank you for your faithfulness in support of The Mission and for your belief in what we are seeking to do in the lives of those who need our support. Please stay safe and well and dream big about what our new normal could look like!

"Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing!"
(Isaiah 43:18-19)

Murray Edridge

Volunteer Profile – Adrian

I first got to know about The Mission through one of their Community Sports Days, and I asked to start volunteering with them. For the past year, I've worked in Tā te Manawa our community lounge, from 9.30am-12.30pm every Tuesday.

I work in the kitchen preparing different foods that people like. I love learning recipes and cooking for other people, and it feels good when manuhiri say that they've enjoyed the food. It's fun for me getting to listen to music and chat while I work, and I'm very lucky to get nice coffees from the barista!

I love meeting new people at The Mission. I enjoy getting to talk with the people I work with and the manuhiri when I can, but sometimes I'm just too busy working! It feels good to be part of my team. I've made a couple of good friends here and I always look forward to hearing how everyone's week has been. It's nice helping to cheer people up who come in too. You see a whole lot of people walk out feeling better than when they came in.

I'm really proud of my job, and I tell lots of people how cool The Mission is!

Thank you Adrian – we love the joy you bring! And thank you to all of our volunteers for everything you do. We couldn't offer our services without your mahi aroha (volunteering).

If you are keen to volunteer, please apply through our website: wellingtoncitymission.org.nz



Adrian bringing joy to Tā te Manawa

A Thriving and Diverse Kemp Community

The Mission's Kemp Home & Hospital in Tītahi Bay has been caring for our kaumātua (elders) for 59 years. In response to the Wellington region's housing crisis, one wing has recently been dedicated to providing supported Transitional Housing. Since then, a variety of individuals, couples, and families who were experiencing homelessness have found a place to belong and journey towards securing a permanent home in the community.

We offer manuhiri opportunities to contribute to everyday life here, by taking part in activities and forming relationships with others at Kemp, and it has added another layer to our community. Our rest-home and kaumātua really enjoy connecting with our Transitional Housing manuhiri.

Belonging to the Kemp whānau has given so many residents and manuhiri the feeling of security and stability that they may have been lacking for so long. We've even had manuhiri take up a variety of roles with us including one with full-time employment at Kemp, which is actually a common trend across all of our Transitional Housing programmes!

Joining the community at Kemp will be the Alasdair Clark Respite Centre. The ground floor of the Charlotte Wing will become a respite facility for Homes of Choice, to be built by McKee Fehl. The centre will have five bedrooms with common areas and an outdoor space.

It's a really exciting time in the history of Kemp Home & Hospital. It's becoming a very special multigenerational community, where people of all backgrounds are lifting each other up. Depending on the lockdown restrictions, we hope to celebrate Christmas time here with the classic summer BBQ and special events that everyone connected to Kemp is welcome to join.

A Safe and Loving Home

The last year or so was really horrible for me. During the first Alert Level 4 Lockdown, my living arrangements were very volatile, and I was unsafe. I felt completely lost, and I was suffering from depression. I couldn't find anywhere else to go, and I ended up in an Emergency Housing hotel. I was safer, but I was lonely, and I wasn't able to recover from what I'd been through.

I stayed there for five months before Work & Income NZ told me about The Mission's Transitional Housing at Kemp. I was a bit unsure about it (being a rest-home and all!) but I came for an interview, and it seemed like the right place for me to start again. Everyone made me feel very welcome, which was a huge change for me. I went from being told I was a waste of space, to feeling more wanted than I have ever been. Something small like being greeted with a "Morning!" every day means the world to me. I especially enjoy talking with the residents about the old times, and love baking cookies to share around with the other residents and manuhiri. Hearing someone say "Oh, these are yum!" makes me feel really good!

I've been using my time to work on my self-esteem and opening myself up to

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"My whole state of mind has completely changed. I feel like myself again."

others. People here are so kind, and they've told me that I'm an easy-going and lovable person – although I still struggle to see that in myself. I've got back to being close with two of my daughters, who live in Auckland and Australia. I talk to them every day, and they have noticed a big change in me. We're

hoping that my daughter in Auckland moves to Wellington soon, and I've set a goal to one day visit my daughter in Australia. Coming into Christmas can be a pretty hard time for me because it reminds me of when my dad passed away. But it helps to know that this year I will be in a safe place, with so many friends around me.

My whole state of mind has completely changed. I feel like myself again. I'm more self-confident, and I've been applying for jobs. I'm also looking for a house in this area, so that I can still visit the residents heaps!



Julie enjoying her time at Kemp

Loving Each Day

My life was completely empty before coming to Kemp five years ago. After my mother passed away, my sisters and I somehow lost contact and we couldn't get in touch with each other. It was awful and

I wasn't coping at all. I felt so alone, and was very unhappy. I just wasn't functioning properly living by myself. I had no purpose each day, and I had lost my way with God. My life and health went on a downward spiral and I was hospitalised. Afterwards, I wasn't allowed to return to my flat and had to move into a rest-home to be cared for.

But I soon settled in at Kemp and began feeling a lot better. Everything started to fall into place for me, and life started going right. I had purpose each day, my health picked up, and I started having fun again. Now my daily routine keeps me very busy. I deliver the morning papers, care for the plants and flowers, and set the dining room tables at night. I join in on group activities like exercises every morning, and I look forward to the weekly crosswords, church services, and happy hour! I also like to organise cards for residents and staff when they are celebrating a special occasion, or are dealing with something. It feels like a family here, so if I can make someone's day a little bit brighter then I will.

I always look forward to Christmas time here at Kemp. We usually do the dining room up with streamers and balloons (even though the end of November is far too early for it in my opinion!) and have a big party. I usually spend some time with my sister who's on her own in Masterton too, although I am worried about what will happen this year with the lockdown rules. My faith is very important to me at Christmas as well, and I am grateful to have God back in my life.

I feel so loved, and part of the Kemp family. It's a joy to be alive!

OUT & ABOUT

On a Mission in Lockdown

When Wellington first went into Alert Level 4 Lockdown in August, we knew that the need for our services would be massive. But we also knew that Wellington would be with us, and that's exactly what happened. As the demand for our services went up, so too did the support. Together, we made a huge difference for people and families who, all of a sudden, had lost their ability to put food on the table – some for the first time in their lives.

We responded to those who asked for help in the most caring and mana-enhancing way we could. In our Social Supermarket, that meant our dedicated team became 'personal shoppers'. Those who needed

food support provided a list of their essentials, which were then packed and delivered to their homes contactless. And our Te Pūnaha Pā supported Transitional Housing, as well as Kemp Home & Hospital, became bubbles. The team kept everyone together and safe by organising karaoke nights, games and crafts.

This pandemic has shown us how quickly things can change, and at any point, each of us could find ourselves genuinely needing a bit of help from our community. At The Mission we are privileged to see how much empathy Wellingtonians have.

It truly is an honour to be here for our community, especially at times like this. And because of your ongoing support we always will be!

Thanks to our community of generous Mission supporters, during the three weeks of the August/September Alert Level 4 and 3 Lockdown:

- We packed and delivered 2,208 bags of much-needed food and essentials
- 631 Families were supported by The Mission
- Each family received on average \$130 worth of groceries, worth a total value of over \$82,000
- We provided support for the entire Wellington region, from Island Bay to Akatarawa and the Kāpiti Coast

Te Pā Pori's Special Carving

One of the special and significant parts of Te Pā Pori in Tory Street, one of our supported Transitional Housing Pā, is the amazing carvings that form its entrance. The carvings signify the journey someone takes when they choose to make a change in their life – moving from a place of darkness into light and potential.

It was an honour for a group of us to travel up to Raetihi to see the carvings being made and to deliver them to Wellington. And now, as they sit in their place, you can feel the wairua (spirit) with which they were created for The Mission, our manuhiri, and our city.



City Missioner Murray Edridge with master carver Kura Wanikau

Our deepest thanks to Uenuku Charitable Trust, Aiden Gilbert, and Kura Wanikau and his team of master carvers. Thank you for sharing your unbelievable talents, your mahi (work), and for your tautoko (support) for the way we believe in everyone who journeys with us.

Reimagining Te Pā Maru

We are excited to announce that Te Pā Maru on Taranaki Street is currently undergoing an extensive renovation. When completed in mid-2022, the ex-Wellington Men's Night Shelter will have 29 rooms available for those experiencing homelessness. There will also be two spacious communal areas for shared meals, activities and community connection, a large outdoor patio and landscaped outdoor spaces.

When completed, manuhiri will receive the holistic model of care that The Mission provides as part of our Te Pūnaha Pā supported Transitional Housing model – empowering them for their journey towards finding a permanent home in the community.

Our thanks to The Wellington City Council for helping with funding the re-development of Te Pā Maru, and backing our approach to help end homelessness in Wellington.



Thank you Hannah!

Hannah Brockett, who is a Year 9 at Wellington Girls' College, was compelled to do something about period poverty in Wellington. So she collected over \$900 worth of period products from shoppers at her local New World. These are such highly-needed products, and make a real difference in someone's life – not only financially but also in enhancing their dignity. Thank you Hannah, for caring for people in our community in such a courageous way!

GET INVOLVED

The Gift of a Book

Kiwi Christmas Books is an initiative that helps to get new children's books into the hands of Kiwi families who can't afford to buy gifts at Christmas. Last year, they donated an incredible 400 books to The Mission! These went into our Christmas Toy Shop for parents to choose for their whānau.

Sonya Wilson told us why she started Kiwi Christmas Books: "I didn't think it was fair that some kids grow up in households full of books, and others grow up with none. I really do believe in the power of books. They can help a child develop not only their literacy skills, but also to see other points of view and feel empathy for others. At the very least a book can provide a laugh, an escape, or a dream. Being able to gather together as a family to share the reading of a book helps create a real connection and bond, as you point at pictures and discuss your ideas together."

Sonya encourages people to donate books that tell local stories, as well as celebrate diverse cultures and identities. She explained: "Being able to see yourself within the pages of a book, and



identifying with a character, can help validate anyone's sense of place and identity. That is so important because whatever challenges you face in your life, having the sense that you do matter brings so much self-esteem – as well as a sense of pride in yourself, your story, and your community."

We couldn't agree more Sonya! Thank you so much for your inspiring thoughtfulness, and care for families in our communities! From now until December 13, Kiwi Christmas Books is collecting donations of new books for organisations like The Mission again. To find out more, visit their website kiwichristmasbooks.org.nz.

Become a ChangeGiver

"We love the fact that The Wellington City Mission is concerned about the whole person - dignity, fullness of life, belonging and purpose. To be able to regularly support those in need is a real privilege."

Support The Mission by becoming a regular giver, like Jeff and Rachel.

You can set up a monthly gift by choosing the monthly option on our website donation page. Or email vivienne@wgtncitymission.org.nz to set up an automatic payment.



WHAT IT MEANS

Hayley

**Community Services
Social Worker**



Part of what's fulfilling in my role is breaking down our tendency to categorise people as 'us and them'. Here we just see people as people. All of us have different challenges, and there are usually so many layers to why someone has come to The Mission. I'm often in awe of how resilient our manuhiri are after so much trauma, yet they still have the strength to engage in the healing process and strive to do better. I believe true charity is about wanting the same things that you want for your own whānau for everyone. The work we're doing now is less about 'charity helping the needy' and more about fostering a compassionate community, and that's really exciting!

Teana

**Development Coordinator
Volunteer Services**



I love the way that we do things differently here at The Mission. Our approach creates special moments where you see a volunteer's thinking suddenly shift from simply wanting to help other people, to realising community means truly caring for each other. In areas like our Tā te Manawa, we see people from completely different walks of life form genuine relationships, begin to deeply care for each other, and feel part of a wider group. Interacting together brings out the best in everyone, our goodness and our strengths, because we aren't meant to live in isolation. It's a privilege being part of a community where you see people's passions, gifts, and personalities intermingling and thriving!



A Word From Kath - GM Brand & Communications

At The Mission, enhancing a person's dignity underpins absolutely everything we do. We believe that for someone to feel empowered to overcome their challenges, and create the greatest transformation in their life, they really have to feel like they matter and they do have value.

That's reflected in our new and innovative services, most obviously in our Social Supermarket, Tā te Manawa, and supported

Transitional Housing. We've moved away from the transactional nature of food parcels and soup kitchens and towards enhancing someone's mana through relationships and dignity of choice. Our manuhiri are finding the opportunity to make choices for themselves, and gain more control over their own lives. For some people we walk alongside, this will be the first time they're able to see their value and talents, and the incredible possibilities for what they can achieve in their lives. For me, it's been inspiring to witness so many people's amazing journeys – to see them find a new path and feel hope again!

I joined The Mission six months ago. It's been so exciting to be part of an organisation that is courageously doing things differently, and breaking the mould, to create the change in our community that we all long for. And I think what makes The Mission really special, is that everyone who's part of it, supporters, volunteers, manuhiri, and staff, knows and appreciates that our whole community has been called to care for each other. We want to create change that empowers people to live with dignity, and makes Wellington an even greater place to live for everyone. In that way, we are all The Wellington City

Mission, and together we really are moving in the same direction with great momentum!

Often we'll hear, "Oh it's only little." But we get to see how massive every contribution is when we are joined together. Thank you for wholeheartedly coming along on this journey with us, because we can see that everyone we're here for can feel the care and support behind what we're doing. We are creating so much good together every day, and we urge you to continue trusting in The Mission.

Now we are asking you to take a moment to consider what Christmas time means to you, and then what you want it to mean for everyone else. Our challenge is to make that vision happen for all those who, for whatever reason, continue to feel excluded in some way. The Mission team is working to make sure that everyone is able to be included at Christmas time – to have the chance to experience the little joys that we look forward to and special memories that live on in our minds. It's not about excess and commercialism, it's about making sure everyone feels valued and knows that they do deserve to be part of a time that can be so beautiful!

THANKS TO YOUR HELP...

July - September 2021 Key Statistics



154

Our Te Pūnaha Pā provided supported Transitional Housing to 154 manuhiri (guests), including 68 new manuhiri



2,750

Our Social Supermarket supported 2,750 adults and kids, with 1,083 shops



349

Our social workers carried out 349 face-to-face sessions with people and families at The Mission, and in the community



130

Our Financial Mentors provided 130 budgeting advice and Total Money Management sessions



15

15 Manuhiri in our supported Transitional Housing moved into permanent housing



29

29 People and families working with our social workers felt confident to move on from Mission support, after completing the goals in their personal plans

DONATE NOW TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

WAYS TO DONATE

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wellingtoncitymission.org.nz

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(04) 245 0845 to make a donation.

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To our Bank account 03 0547 0296036 17
Email donations@wgtncitymission.org.nz with details if you wish to receive a receipt.

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Light up Christmas for Everyone

Together Let's Make Christmas Time

Special for Everyone

Light up Christmas for Everyone

Together Let's Make Christmas Time Special for Everyone

As we come to the end of another immensely uncertain and troubling year, Christmas time offers us something special. For you it could mean taking a much-needed break from work, spending time with your loved ones, and getting out in the summer sun for barbeques and fun activities. Enjoying a classic Kiwi Christmas can really lift your spirits and make you feel good about life!

However, many people living in the Wellington region are unable to see themselves within that picture. We believe that everyone deserves to feel included. The Mission's Christmas is about making sure people and families can join in the experiences we all cherish at Christmas time. Rather than excess and commercialism, what's

most important is being able to appreciate our loved ones, take a break, reflect on our blessings, and consider what we want to do next.

This Christmas time, we will be here for everyone who needs our community, to remind them that they do matter and they are part of 'us'. Our social workers and Financial Mentors will support people and families to step into the life they deserve. Our Te Pūnaha Pā supported Transitional Housing, Kemp Home & Hospital, and Tā te Manawa (our community lounge) will provide safe and encouraging places of belonging. Our Social Supermarket will give shoppers the dignity of choosing their own food, and our Christmas Toy Store will empower parents and caregivers to find a gift for their child with intention and care.

Help Light up Christmas for everyone, by joining with The Mission this Christmas!

Wellington City Mission Toy Store

This Christmas, The Mission will provide families in the Wellington region the dignity of choice, through our Toy Store.

Rather than receiving generic toys from The Mission, parents and caregivers will be invited to the Toy Store to choose a gift for their children.

Supporting parents in this way, provides the mana-enhancing experience of intentional gift giving, and enables families to enjoy a very special Christmas morning.

Ways you can help Light up Christmas for Everyone



Pack the Bus



Walk of Fame



Christmas Star Boxes