



ON A MISSION

Your Wellington City Mission Magazine

Issue 1 2022

I Do Matter

I feel like I've been stuck in the bottom of a very deep and dark hole for the last 15 years. But after nearly a year with The Mission, I'm doing everything I can to live a better life, and be there for anyone else who needs the support I was fortunate to have.

Growing up, my parents gave us a good home, but I felt like the odd one out. I was never really encouraged or felt valued, and I didn't have a bond with my father. The only time he took notice of me was when he was punishing me, and I was always on edge around him. I felt like I was a loser, and I started drinking and smoking marijuana. Eventually, I decided that I wanted to break the habits I was getting into, and enrolled for a Limited Service Volunteer (LSV) Course, which is a six-week programme at an army camp. For the first time in my life, I was healthy physically and mentally, and confident in myself.

When I came back home I found a good job, but my old feelings and drinking problem started creeping back in. I didn't know it at the time, but I was suffering from an anxiety disorder and depression. I lost complete control of my thoughts, and I started believing everyone was judging me for going back to my old ways. I had a constant sense of dread, and I was saying things to myself like, "You're useless", and "You've let everyone down". Drinking became my only way to cope. I stopped showing up for work, and I became like an empty vessel.

I was so scared, but I didn't want anyone to see it. I pushed my friends and family away to the point where I stopped being invited to family events, and I started staying in hostels and lodges. I always had intentions of stopping drinking and getting healthy, but deep down I believed that I had no future and I was less than everyone else. I kept falling into the pattern of drinking, getting kicked out, and then going to the next place.



Photo supplied by Stuff Limited

Last year my brother offered me a place to stay for a bit, and I realised I needed to reach out to someone who could truly help me. While searching the internet, I came across The Mission's supported Transitional Housing. It meant a lot to me that they were willing to help, and I arrived at one of their Pā last May.

"I didn't feel alone anymore."

When I first walked into my room, I lay down and felt so relieved. I had a bed, a roof over my head, food, and a safe and supportive environment unlike anywhere I had been before. I reached deep down inside myself to really give it 100%. I put my trust in the staff, and in their promise that this was a safe place where no one was going to judge me. I wanted to make sure my room didn't become my own 'bubble' so I forced myself to spend time in the common room. I felt OK about doing that

because I could just stay quiet if I wanted to and I felt respected being able to do that. It was good to know that I was around others who were wanting to make a better future for themselves. I didn't feel alone anymore.

The staff at Te Pā really stood out to me, especially as some of them actually had a similar life experience to mine. Someone who understood what I was going through was always available to talk to. I had people around me I could relate to and who I could turn to for advice and encouragement. They made it easier to bring up the hard issues I was holding inside. In my counselling with Peter, I started dealing with the unresolved issues and anger that I held onto for so long. I hadn't matured in many years, and I had to nurture that little kid inside me so he could finally grow up. I still had to struggle to go against my old ways, so his tips and tools helped a lot. My defences started coming down and I was able to start finding myself, and my new direction.

Te Pā gave me a reason to get up each day, like our morning meetings where we talked about a positive quote for each day. I also enjoyed doing programmes like the wānanga with Robert, Poutama group outings where we visited places like the beach or the zoo, and Money Mates with Rahel where we learnt about budgeting. Everything at Te Pā gives you a chance to finally calm your mind, leave all of your worries at the door, and have some breathing space to reflect and focus on your next move. I started really wanting to evolve myself as a person, and feeling a sense of pride in myself. Even little things

like the way the rooms are so nice, show you that you can have better than what you came from. You learn to respect the place, by cleaning your room and common areas, and being hygienic, and you can even learn how to cook.

"There's always hope when someone cares about you - even someone you don't know."

Every now and then I have thoughts of going to the liquor store just for a one-off, but I can get past it. The Mission has given me so many good experiences that it's not worth losing everything I have gained. I'm still on my journey, and I'm still learning, but I feel so different - I wake up happy. My confidence has grown so much, and I'm proud to no longer just be 'a negative statistic'. Another massive thing for me has been really connecting with my father for the first time, and he is supporting me in everything I'm doing.

I'm also volunteering one day a week in Tā te Manawa (Community Lounge). I like being here for anyone who needs a listening ear, and my goal is to one day be part of The Mission team at Te Pā. I want to help others who need help to get through whatever they're going through, and to let them know that they can create the life they deserve. There's always hope when someone cares about you - even someone you don't know. I'm so glad that The Mission was here for me because instead of still being stuck in that dark place, I get to look forward to what each day will bring, and I'm excited to see what comes next!

Over three months
work team can
face-to-face ses
visits with people



Murray's Message, Wellington City Missioner

When is it too late to wish people a Happy New Year? I think we grapple with this question every year! Whilst we get on with our lives after the fun and renewal of summer holidays, I am sure there is some part of us that wants to hang on to the feeling we have at New Year when we reflect with gratitude and learning on what has gone before and we look forward to what is to come with hope and anticipation. So, a Belated Happy New Year. I hope that you are safe and well as we together face the ongoing challenges of a global pandemic and the particular difficulties that the Omicron variant seems to be threatening us with.

I arrived at New Year 2022 with a different perspective on life than ever before. This change was occasioned by the arrival of a little man by the name of Louie who arrived in this world in November 2021. My very first grandchild! For me, Louie who has just passed his 3 month milestone is the epitome of hope and potential and I am revelling in the privilege of my new and most important role yet, of being Poppa!

Urie Bronfenbrenner said "Every child needs at least one adult who is irrationally crazy about him or her." Louie is very fortunate to have many of these people and I am honoured to be one of them!

Louie's arrival has caused me to once again reflect on what a difference it makes for all of us to have someone in our corner, supporting and encouraging us. We have seen that with the recent Winter Olympics where our young New Zealand athletes have done us proud, and they have commented publicly on what it means to have so many people "back home" believing in them and supporting them.

Probably none of the people featured in this magazine will be international

athletes, most have very little support around them, and some may not even have the loving support of a doting "Poppa". What we can see however is the hope, anticipation, and joy of what might lie ahead because of the work of the team from the Wellington City Mission. Helping people deal with the challenges of today so that they might live into the potential of tomorrow is one of the most rewarding things I can imagine.

We can only continue to do this in 2022 and beyond because of the wonderful and generous support of those who walk with us and believe in what we are trying to do for others. Thank you for your ongoing loyalty and generosity and I hope that 2022 will be a year where we together make a real impact on a community that right now, needs us more than ever. I hope too that this year brings joy and encouragement to you all.

"You will be secure, because there is hope"
Job 11:18

Murray

Murray Edridge

A Little Help Goes a Long Way

A few years ago, all my husband and I wanted was to live normal lives. But there was no way we could. I was going through renal failure, so I couldn't work, and I was doing dialysis in my emergency accommodation. My husband, being born in Fiji, could only be here on a visitor's visa, and was not permitted to work at all. Unfortunately, his family was opposing our application for his residency because they disapproved of our marriage.

94 months, our social carried out 494 sessions and home people and families

It all left us in a very hard situation with our money. After rent and power, we had just \$20 a week to spend on everything we needed.

Going to the supermarket was so stressful, and we'd end up buying cheap unhealthy food to get us to the next day. We also owed money on loans that I had taken out before I got sick. I had never thought ahead to consider "What if something changed?", so when it did we were completely stuck. We were barely coping, and it seemed impossible to get into a better situation. It was the hardest and loneliest time in our lives.

We felt embarrassed that we had got to the point where we needed to ask for help with food, so we were a bit fearful when we took those first steps into The Mission. But when we met with one of their Financial Mentors she was so down to earth, and we felt welcome. The Mission started helping us with everyday items we couldn't afford, like food, and personal care and cleaning products. It gave us one less thing to worry about as we were trying to get out of the hole we were in – and it really made our \$20 spending budget go a lot further.

We were still really worried but after a couple of sessions with our Financial



Fazleen and Farook

Mentor, we felt way more confident that there were better times ahead. I realised I had never learnt how to properly manage my budget, loans, and interest. Before, it was just a huge mess in my head – it was always just money comes in and then the bills go out. We learnt so much about prioritising money to go on high-interest loans, and it was a great feeling being able to start paying off our debt.

"Having someone who will support you and guide you is huge."

As my health improved, I was able to take on some part-time work. It was a crazy exhausting time, but it had to be done. After work, I would get home and go straight on dialysis for 6 hours, and then go back to work at 5am. My husband helped out as much as he could, but his visa restrictions were so frustrating because he couldn't work, and often had to return to Fiji. With everything going on, especially times when I was so sick I couldn't move, it was really reassuring knowing The Mission was there for us. We could start paying back our debts, planning for the future, and even started saving money for the fees to get my husband's working visa.

After about six months, we were confident to move on from The Mission's support.

We took all of our new knowledge, and carried it on in our daily lives. I was eventually able to get back to full-time work as a community support worker at an Intellectual Disability Home. And, after a long journey, my husband became a New Zealand resident and started work as a painter. We're debt-free, and are saving towards owning our own home one day.

We feel so well-off compared to where we were before, so two years ago we started putting away part of our pay every week to make annual donations of toys and food to The Mission at Christmas time. It's nice to think that we're able to help take a bit of pressure off people and families, so they can have a special time. When we dropped off our donations last Christmas, it was so cool seeing how the Social Supermarket gives shoppers points to choose exactly what they need. I know it's hard to be picky when you can't afford food, but it gives people a chance to start making their own decisions. Someone can feel like they're able to do a shop like everyone else, so they have more dignity going in.

My husband and I know how hard it can be to stand up and ask for help when you're feeling alone. When there are so many obstacles in your way, having someone who will support you and guide you is huge. It makes you feel like you actually do matter, and that you can have a better life.



A Word From Maria - GM, Residential Services

Nearly all of the manuhiri (guests) who come to our Pā supported Transitional Housing have experienced some form of trauma, or even one or two devastating life events like a relationship breakdown, job loss, or health issue. Many have got to the point where they feel disconnected from the community, along with having little sense of self-worth. When someone thinks they have nothing to contribute, and they're having to rely on other people to survive, it can create a sense of shame and makes them unable to see a way forward.

But when anyone arrives at one of our Pā, we tell them, "You are in the right place, and you are enough". And in the first instance, just feeling safe and being seen in this light gives someone the freedom to think beyond the moment and the need to just survive – it creates space to nurture their goals and aspirations. They realise that they have incredible gifts, skills, and value to offer others, like being able to share their life story with new manuhiri. Their journey with us is filled with empowerment, pride, and hope!

OUT & ABOUT

Unlocking the Joy of the Zoo

How cool is Wellington Zoo?! Once again, we've partnered with the zoo to provide access to the zoo for people we're supporting!

For many people who are on their journey with The Mission, having the chance to visit the zoo may be completely out of reach, and being unable to have special opportunities like this can really make people and children feel different. The challenges they're facing can make it hard for life to feel 'okay', but the zoo is one of those places that brings joy, offers a chance to experience something new, and create a special family memory.

Wellington Zoo's Chief Executive Karen Fifield said: "It's critical that we give the people The Mission cares for the opportunity to be in a beautiful place with beautiful animals – you can't help but smile when you walk around the zoo. Everyone should have access to such a lovely place as this, and the more we can do that the better."

We believe that having the dignity of choice is vital, so it's a privilege to give this opportunity to people who would otherwise miss out.

Zoo passes will go to people and families our kaiārahi (social workers) are walking alongside, as well as our Tā te Manawa Community Lounge guests. Thank you Wellington Zoo!



Wellington City Missioner Murray Edridge and Wellington Zoo CEO Karen Fifield holding the freshly signed agreement

Good Sorts Promoting Sports



Two awesome bikes for Dian's children.

Working with businesses and organisations, we help to supply quality sporting equipment to people and families who would otherwise be unable to afford them. We also work with schools to make sure all students have a chance to take part in fun activities.

Our ultimate goal is to foster enough connections for the community to support itself, and to break down the barriers to participating in sport. We've seen first-hand how being able to take part makes people feel good, and really boosts their physical and mental wellbeing.

We also find specific resources for people and families who are working with our kaiārahi (social workers) from cricket and rugby supplies to gym passes and judo gear.

Last year one of our mums, Dian, wanted to encourage her 13 and 11-year-olds to be

more active. So they were super excited when they received a couple of bikes, along with helmets and locks, just before Christmas.

We worked with ReBicycle to organise these bikes. They make sure the bikes donated to them are roadworthy and safe, then agencies like The Mission distribute them to people we're working with. Pedal Ready Cycle Skills also taught the kids how to wear their helmets properly and change the gears.

Thank you to all of the amazing organisations and businesses who support The Mission in this mahi as well as the thriving Sports Banks throughout our region. If you have any good quality sporting items that aren't being used, please think of The Mission and we'll get them into the hands of someone who will make the most of them!

WHAKAMARU



BUILDING

COMMUNITY

UPDATE

After three years of planning, construction on The Mission's new home, Whakamaru, has been all go for the past few months!

In October, we were excited to hold the groundbreaking launch and blessing, which marked the official start of the building project. It was attended by Deputy Prime Minister Grant Robertson and other dignitaries. Demolition of the old building began the very next day, with around 90% of the old building being recycled for use in other ventures, such as roading. In November we signed the construction

contract with Naylor Love. The demolition was completed in December and the construction will commence early 2022.

Scheduled to be completed by the end of 2023, Whakamaru will be a dynamic and transformative community facility for all Wellingtonians. The project will cost up to \$40 million. So far, we have received \$15 million from the Government, \$14 million from individuals, companies, trusts and other sources, and \$500,000 from the Wellington City Council.

To find out more about Whakamaru, and what it will mean for everyone in Wellington, please visit our website.



GET INVOLVED



zoomy
charity drive

ride local, round up
and donate

A Zoomy Way to Support The Mission

One awesome way a Kiwi business and Wellingtonians are teaming up to support The Mission, is Zoomy's Charity Drive initiative.

Zoomy is New Zealand's own ridesharing service, offering fairer rates for both passengers and drivers. They've partnered with charities across the country so passengers can choose to round up their fare to the nearest dollar, with the difference going straight to a local charity. Wellington's largest taxi company, Wellington Combined Taxis, is also part of the Zoomy fleet.

Zoomy Co-founder, James Fisk explained: "We're proud to have partnered with The Wellington City Mission. Now we're regularly kept up-to-date with the great work they're doing and the exciting projects that are planned. We're really happy that we can make a small difference towards their goals, and make the city a better place to live for all!"

If you are keen to give Zoomy a go, the next time you need a ride download their app from either Apple or Google's App Stores – or visit their website zoomy.co.nz to find out more.



City Mission Store Expands

We're excited to announce that our flagship City Mission Store on Taranaki Street is about to expand!

When the space next door recently became available, we took up the opportunity to join the two areas. This will nearly double the size of our current store, which means more of our furniture and other goods can go on the floor immediately after being donated. We are aiming to open the new store section in July.

This year our stores are working on partnering with more high-value designer brands, following on from our successful collaboration with Yu Mei, which raised over \$50,000.

Sales in the City Mission Stores help to make sure we can continue offering professional and free social services to anyone who needs a bit of help. You can always support The Mission's work by donating any of your pre-loved quality household goods and clothing.

Visit our Taranaki Street Wellington and Jackson Street Petone stores, call us on 0800 245 542, or email store@wgtncitymission.org.nz

OUR IMPACT FROM OCT - DEC 2021

722

722 families and individuals
shopped for free in our
Social Supermarket

183

Our Financial Mentors provided
budgeting advice to 183 people

152

Our Pā provided 152 manuhiri with
supported Transitional Housing

354

354 people gave their time
volunteering in our Social Supermarket,
Tā te Manawa (Community Lounge),
and sorting Christmas donations



Volunteer Profile - Chloe

I really enjoy working in the Social Supermarket every Wednesday. I help sort food and stock the shelves, and also get to chat with the shoppers. Some people need help finding things or keeping track of their points – or they just want someone to go around the shop with them.

You form quite a connection with the people and families. They often share a lot about their kids and you get to know about their daily lives, so it's quite exciting when you see each other again! It's a really personal experience, and it's a different connection from anything else you do in day-to-day life. I like how our shoppers are so surprised by how much choice they have, and they feel really comfortable and happy here. I think that's so important because no one deserves to feel embarrassment just to get food, and support their family.

Donor Profile - David & Anne

There are so many things that can happen in life that are simply out of our control. A bad experience or sudden change could completely shift our direction and limit our opportunities. There are really nice people out there who, through no fault of their own, are going through hard situations and can't find a way to escape. Being fortunate enough to make it through all that, and do well in life, means we really ought to care about people who maybe haven't been so lucky.

We choose to support The Mission because it's local, and Wellington has been good to us over the years. We also like how they cover so many bases. When we visited the Community Lounge there was no hint of an 'us and them' – it very much had a friendly and welcoming feeling. We're also excited to see the new building, Whakamaru. We think the concept is so farsighted for our region.

About Us

The Wellington City Mission's three key areas of focus are responding to the housing shortage, offering food support, and mobilising volunteering. People and families are finding the opportunities they need to transform their lives through our supported Transitional Housing facilities, Social Supermarket, Community Lounge, social worker support, and much more. Together with our supporters, The Mission is creating the change we all want to see in our community!

Be Part of the Change, Become a ChangeGiver

We all long for the day when The Mission isn't needed – but right now that isn't a reality. We need to have a long-term vision and we need long-term support to enable the delivery of that vision. Would you consider becoming a regular giver?

It's easy to set up your gift, and make an immeasurable difference in people's lives. You can set up a monthly gift by choosing the monthly option on our website donation page, or email vivienne@wgtncitymission.org.nz. Thank you!



FIND US

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CONTACT US

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Email: enquiries@wgtncitymission.org.nz
Postal Address: PO Box 7200, Newtown,
Wellington 6242

JOIN US

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 details if you wish to receive a receipt.

FOLLOW US



The Wellington City Mission



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SIGN UP

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



Christmas at The Mission

Thank you to everyone who gave at Christmas!

Whether you donated funds, food, gifts, or your time, you helped make Christmas time mean something special for so many people. Families gathered together for a special meal, parents were able to choose a gift for their children, and people who live alone were connected with our community.

Giving others the opportunity to celebrate at Christmas time is so important – especially as we continue into such uncertain and stressful times this year. None of us knows what lies ahead, but we do know we are more resilient together. At The Mission, we are privileged to see just how strong our community is!

Some of the ways you helped Light up Christmas for Everyone!



THE TOY STORE

Following our Social Supermarket model, this year we opened our free Toy Store. Rather than allocating toys to families, parents were invited to the Toy Store to choose a gift for their children. They could then wrap the gift themselves and give their gift on Christmas morning!

209

209 families shopped in our free Toy Store

"I was lucky enough to have been part of this Christmas Toy Store. I truly appreciate the help and giving my kids such amazing gifts. Thank you so much!"



CHRISTMAS HAMPERS

In the days leading up to Christmas Day, staff and volunteers made up luxury Christmas Hampers for people and families that The Mission supports. The hampers were delivered all over the Wellington region with 180 of those deliveries made on Christmas Eve!

454

We made up and delivered a total of 454 luxury Christmas Hampers for people and families



CHRISTMAS DAY AT TE PĀ

We served a full Christmas lunch for our manuhiri (guests) who are journeying with us in our supported Transitional Housing. Our manuhiri also each received gifts on Christmas Day! These are people who have experienced homelessness, and are working through their personal issues – alongside our team, and each other.

73

73 manuhiri in our supported Transitional Housing joined together for a special Christmas Lunch

SUPPORT OF OTHER SOCIAL AGENCIES

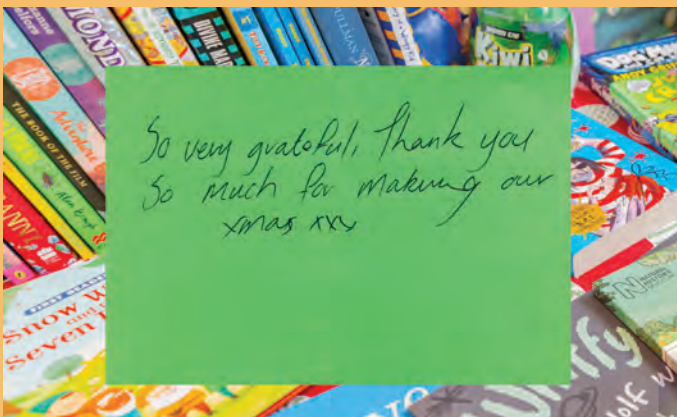
We were able to support local or specialist social agencies with food and toys, which they distributed to people they work with all over the Wellington region. We also supplied food for various community lunches.

66

The Mission supplied food and gifts to 66 other social service agencies we work with



*"What can I say but Wow, Christmas has arrived at my house!
Thank you, you are my blessings and prayers, and I feel thankful that you are in my life."*



WHAT WE ACHIEVED TOGETHER

7,536

At Christmas time, The Mission supported 1,193 families, 3,237 children, and distributed 7,536 gifts!

A SPECIAL THANKS

1,950

Thank you to our amazing volunteers who gave a total of 1,950 hours during November and December!

