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Sarah and Selena

ON A MISSION

Your Generosity Changing Lives

Issue 3 2022



MORE THAN FEEDING FAMILIES

Your gift of dignity and respect

When the Social Supermarket first opened, we both agreed to make sure all of our shoppers would have a great experience here and leave happy. Along the way, especially through challenging times like the Covid Lockdowns, sticking to that goal has guided us. And our shoppers really enjoy the atmosphere we've created.

When someone first walks in, they quickly realise there's no judgement from any of the staff or volunteers, and that they are welcome. They come into a quiet space, where they can choose the food that they wouldn't be able to buy otherwise. Some people have never had the chance to learn shopping skills, so one of our staff or volunteers will spend as long as they need with them, picking food and chatting about meals.

Many people are overwhelmingly happy when they first see the selection available. People even go around and ask, "Can I please

have one of those?" and we get to say to them, "Of course, choose whatever you want!". We've heard so many of our shoppers say how nice it is to be able to take something simple like a packet of chocolate biscuits home, and for parents, knowing how excited your child will be when they see their favourite food item in the groceries, is really special.

Because of our point system and that there is no cost to shopping, some first-time shoppers expect that there must be a 'catch' at the end. They feel so blessed to be going home with enough food to get them through the week. Everyone deserves to feel that in their life.

Recognising what our shoppers are going through is important for us personally too, as both of us have had hard times in our lives where we've needed to ask for food support. There is a real

Empowerment.Transformation.Fullness of Life.

struggle out there for people and families now - not only because of high food prices but also in rising petrol costs and rents. We even have lots of working families who have to shop here. It's become normal for many people to live on the absolute bare necessities.

“The Social Supermarket environment has given lots of people the confidence to seek further support from Mission services, to make even more of a difference in their lives.”

Sarah and Selena

One thing we didn't anticipate was how this place gives people a chance to open up about their lives, and there have been lots of tears along the way! Hearing what people are dealing with can be pretty tough, but it's really gratifying being able to help them with their kai. We feel so lucky to be working here, because having a purpose each day is an important part of living a full life. You can

see how giving our shoppers the opportunity to make their own food choices helps make their life a little fuller too. The Social Supermarket environment has given lots of people the confidence to seek further support from Mission services, to make even more of a difference in their lives.

We know the Social Supermarket definitely can't continue being here without our community's support. So we really want to say thank you to all of our supporters, from the little kids who have proudly saved up a bag of groceries to the large ongoing donors that help stock our shelves each day. We also want to thank our volunteers for all of their time and hard work. We love our volunteers, and we've had the privilege to work with so many awesome people!

A Message from Murray

I love this time of the year!

After the long cold and wet months of the winter season, we are approaching Spring. The daylight hours are getting longer, the temperatures are warmer, and the earth feels like it is quivering with possibilities, ready to produce the colour and beauty of a new season.

As I walk around my garden, I can feel that the plants and the seeds that have laid dormant in the ground are just waiting to burst into new life when they once again feel the warmth of the sun!

The experts have recently been talking about the effects of Seasonal Affective Disorder. It is particularly felt during the winter months and is directly related to a lack of sunshine. The symptoms include fatigue, depression, hopelessness and social withdrawal. Hopefully as we move into the season of Spring, those challenged by the rigours of winter, can look forward with renewed hope and anticipation.

I recently travelled to Tokoroa to be a part of the launch of New Zealand's third Social Supermarket which is a collaboration between Buttabeen Motivation and Foodstuffs North Island. Both this new venture and the second Social Supermarket that opened two months ago in Kaitia emerged from the Wellington City Mission's Social Supermarket in Wellington. After visits to our supermarket, the people involved in these initiatives became so inspired about what a Social Supermarket could do in their communities, that they proceeded to ensure they could make it happen in their own context. The seeds that were planted on those supermarket visits, have now germinated and bloomed! With the generous support of Foodstuffs, we hope to see a number of further Social Supermarkets open throughout our country.

This magazine contains some wonderful stories about the Wellington

City Mission's Social Supermarket - from our two awesome staff members Selena and Sarah, and our fantastic volunteer Mark. We also hear about how important the Social Supermarket is to some of the people we serve in our Financial Mentoring services. But most importantly we hear from Debbie who reflects on how significant the Social Supermarket has been for her and her family as they strive to build new lives for themselves.

The Social Supermarket is built on the philosophy of offering those we serve the dignity of choice. We continue to find that treating all people with dignity, respect and without judgement, offers them the best possible opportunities to work on the things that make their lives challenging, and to make positive choices for their lives and the lives of their family.

As we partner with people on their journeys, it is like planting and nurturing seeds, continuing to care for them and looking forward with anticipation to when they bloom into fullness of life! Just as Spring is coming, hopefully so is a better future for many of those that are doing life tough.

Thank you for supporting us to support others in this way. You enable us to be better than we would otherwise be.

Now he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness.

2 Corinthians 9:10



Murray

Murray Edridge
Wellington City Missioner



THE POWER OF SELF WORTH

The first step to financial independence

There are so many circumstances that lead people to come to The Mission for support. Something unexpected could have happened which has pushed them into hardship like a relationship breakup, losing a job, or even just a hefty bill. Or someone might want to make a change or start a new chapter, for example someone who comes out of prison and needs help to get set up. It could also be longer-term issues, like a sole parent who is being threatened with eviction, or an individual with physical or mental health challenges that mean they're unable to manage their budget. Sadly, a lot of our clients, especially parents, have become used to living in 'survival mode' and are having to go without healthy food.

For whatever reason people come to The Mission, most need some help to deal with an urgent need. But our wrap-around support can help address more than just the presenting issue. Many people are actually introduced to our team through the Social Supermarket. That's because when someone comes into The Mission asking for food support, the supermarket meets that immediate need, but by their third visit they make an appointment with a Financial Mentor, to start understanding the underlying causes.

Asking for help with your finances, especially as New Zealanders, can feel a bit shameful, so having a positive Social Supermarket experience enables people to feel more comfortable when opening up about their personal life. Together we unpack their financial issues, and choose action steps to help them reach their immediate goals. We offer budgeting advice, or our Total Money Management system where we manage their budgets and allocate their pay each week. Throughout the journey, we are always working towards achieving their financial goals, making progress on their deeper issues, and if they are able to, empowering themselves to lead a full life without any Mission support.

People often come here feeling like there's no way out, and that there's no hope for them. But I love The Mission's approach of delivering services that are 'mana enhancing', and helping people realise their self-worth. You can really see that in the Social Supermarket. We treat shoppers with respect, but we also require them to make appointments and then to be on time for those. It's not treating people like 'charity cases', or creating dependency. It's a shopping experience that is only one step away from being able to buy your own groceries. The range in the Social Supermarket is amazing too, and being able

to choose specialty items, like skincare products or sauces and spices, can help people feel better about themselves and bring so much joy!

To me, fullness of life means having more than just your most basic needs met. Ensuring people have healthy food is the first step in someone's journey, as it frees up some of their headspace to address the deeper problems they have been unable to get on top of. It makes sure they have good quality food for the week, and also that they can allocate more money to paying off urgent bills, get out of the cycle of debt, and learn how to manage their own budget. Meeting someone's physical needs with food, and also caring about their personal wellbeing through Financial Mentoring and social work is making a big difference!

"I love The Mission's approach of delivering services that are 'mana enhancing', and helping people realise their self-worth."

Ruth Corlette, Financial Mentor



HELPING FAMILIES FIND HAPPINESS ONCE AGAIN

You are the heart of the Mission

The past few years have been pretty traumatic for me, as my life has done a total 180. I ended my 20-year relationship, which had gradually turned extremely abusive, and moved our two college-aged kids out of our house to make a fresh start. I had no support from their father, and my day-to-day finances became very stressful. I was paying for our new flat as well as the mortgage, and with everything going on between me and my ex I wasn't able to sell our house. Then, when the first Covid-19 lockdown hit, I was made redundant from the company I was with for ten years.

Even though I've always been good with budgeting, I suddenly had no money at all to make sure my kids had everything they needed. I found myself constantly saying "No" to everything. I was also dealing with the shock of finding out that I had a lifelong health condition. It was just an awful time. Mentally I went into a deep, dark hole, and I couldn't see a way out. I had gone from once having a good life and being a confident and happy person, to having no self-esteem, and no options. I was even having suicidal thoughts, which was completely uncharacteristic.

My doctor told me I needed to take some extended time off from finding another job to try and get well, and I started counselling. I knew we simply couldn't survive without reaching out for some sort

of help so I got in touch with The Mission, and one of their Social Workers, Kirsten, visited me a few times. Having someone to talk to who obviously cared about us meant so much when I was down in the dumps. She then referred me on to one of The Mission's Financial Mentors, Carla. It was clear that I simply didn't have enough money to get by, so I was invited to go to the Social Supermarket to help alleviate some stress on my budget and make sure I could better provide as a Mum.

Shopping in the Social Supermarket is such a pleasant experience. Being able to select the food that is right for your family means you don't end up with food you don't need or can't use, and the quality is amazing. You can do a really good shop for your family, and have a healthy diet. Then getting home and unpacking the shopping is really exciting – I always felt so lucky! The whole experience truly puts a smile on your face.

The staff and volunteers are so lovely and welcoming as well. You get to know each other, and they genuinely care about you. One thing I especially appreciate is how I've never felt judged. That's so important for anyone who is in a position where they can't afford food because it takes a lot to ask for help - you feel very low about yourself. I also think the stereotype of someone who might need help from a charity has changed. Personally speaking, people would see me and think that I've got money but I don't.

Now there are lots of people who are suddenly finding it hard to make ends meet, even those who are working.

With the Social Supermarket's support, I started to get back on track. I was able to start a great new job, and stopped regularly visiting the Social Supermarket as soon as I was able to. Getting by day-to-day as a sole mum is still pretty hard though, so when something outside the square comes up I simply don't have the funds available. Recently I was hit with some big bills, so it has been a huge relief being able to come back to The Mission just while I try to get ahead of it.

"I don't know where we'd be without you."

Debbie

The Mission has been amazing. You feel like they're on your side, and you don't have to beg for help. I also want to say thank you to everyone who supports it. I don't know where we would be without you, but I know we wouldn't be on the path we're on now. What you are doing for others is truly amazing, so please don't stop! You have helped make my family's life so much better, and I am just so grateful. After losing a lot in my life I feel like I'm getting back to my positive self, and I'm determined to find a happy life again.



INSPIRED TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Meet Volunteer Mark

I recently took up the opportunity to volunteer in the Social Supermarket on my day off from work each week. Along with my volunteer buddy Jan, and staff Sarah and Selena, our job is to support the shoppers to understand the way the supermarket works, do the checkout process, sort the incoming donations, and stock the shelves.

I really enjoy the role, and it's satisfying to feel that my little contribution is helping to make a difference for someone who's having a bit of a tough time. It's interesting getting to know our shoppers too. Some people are really open about what's going on for them, so it's pretty humbling to hear about their lives. You see how people are genuinely grateful for the support, and the parents who come here just want the best for their kids.

“Anyone can have something happen in their lives, so I think we need to have a community that is here for people when they are going through hard times.”

Mark

The Social Supermarket model seems to be a big step forward. It's really cool how people have choices about what they want to eat, just like anyone else does. That really matters too, because each shopper buys very different things. It also just makes sure people can access items that they may not otherwise be able to afford. It all gives our shoppers a bit more agency and personal autonomy, because there may be some other stuff going on in their lives that they simply don't have control over.

I'm always amazed by the way Sarah and Selena engage with everyone as well. They have such a compassionate and professional approach, and there's no judgement from anyone about why someone is shopping here. All that matters is that they need some support with food, so we're here to help. Anyone can have something happen in their lives, so I think we need to have a community that is here for people when they are going through hard times.

My partner, Clare and I are really inspired by what everyone does here at The Mission, and we have been long-time supporters. We know the work that The Mission is doing is important, and they're doing a great job, so we're happy that we're able to be part of it. I would absolutely encourage anyone to consider

bringing something like volunteering into your life if you can, because I think it's just generally good for you!



OTHER NEWS



Your Whakamaru Update



A large project like Whakamaru means spending a lot of time working on the foundations, so our construction teams have been busy for the past few months preparing to build upwards.

In May this year, we received building consent from the Council. During that process the Geotech engineers required us to drill 17 additional piles, which are 450mm in diameter, deep into the ground on the side of the neighbouring apartments. Drilling started in late July, and we also began drilling the 11 screw piles on a grid across the site. These screw piles go down into the rocks below the clay, and they are then encased in concrete, so they can support

the foundation slab. This will be a floating slab, which is a common technology for structures like Whakamaru. While it will sit down on the earth, it will also allow for some movement.

Once the foundation is finished, we'll start on the basement floor and walls. We expect the basement structure to be completed in January 2023, and then Whakamaru will really start taking shape!

If you want to take a look at the progress for yourself, you can visit The Mission's future home anytime, on Oxford Terrace, Mount Cook.

Getting Ready for Christmas!

Every Christmas time, we place stars down on the Wellington Waterfront. These stars symbolize the way our community cares for each other. There are so many reasons why people purchase stars. Local business purchase stars to show their support of the City Mission, families honour loved ones that they can't be with, and others buy a star as a gift for the person who has everything! Funds raised from the stars enable us to make sure everyone in Wellington has the opportunity to celebrate Christmas.

If you would like to order a star, please contact penny.mcewan@wcm.org.nz



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!

THE CHANGE YOU ENABLE



Being the Place of Warmth this Winter

Our winter appeal invited supporters of the Wellington City Mission to “Help Us Be the Place of Warmth” and because you did, during the winter months of June and July, together we...



Provided

64

daily meals for manuhiri living in our supported Transitional Housing accommodation



Supported

406

people through our Social Supermarket



Welcomed

70

people every day into Tā te Manawa our community lounge, where we served barista coffee and home cooked meals



Enabled

284

visits with our Social Workers to support people and families facing challenges in their lives



Walked alongside

158

people who are in our Financial Mentoring programme

Family 2 Family

And thank you to everyone who donated food to New World's Family2Family food drive. The Social Supermarket received

3,804

bags of grocery items!

Thank you for your feedback!

Thank you to everyone who completed the survey that we recently sent out. We are still collating the responses, but we can share with you some insights from the feedback that we have received so far.

The majority of those who responded are interested in attending one of our events or coming in for a visit – which is wonderful. And there has been an overwhelming response from people wanting to volunteer with us. We look forward to reaching out to you soon!

The top three most important issues that our supporters are concerned about are homelessness, the cost of housing and food insecurity. “Your concerns are aligned with what we are committed to,” says Murray. “Almost everyone who comes through our doors has a housing challenge. Our work in food provision and wrap around support is helping people with the here and now, but

we also have to use our advocacy voice to start changing some of the policy settings and societal settings that make housing so unaffordable.”

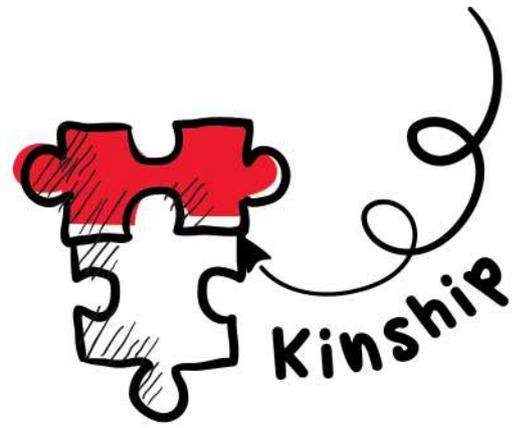
Watch out for more survey insights and responses in our next On A Mission Newsletter.





ChangeGivers

Regular Giving Programme



Be Part of the Change, become a ChangeGiver

ChangeGivers is a group of special supporters who give a donation each month of the year, giving not only a powerful combined gift but also the security of regular donations to support the Wellington City Mission throughout the year.

If you're not already a ChangeGiver, we are inviting you to join this amazing group of people. You will receive regular updates showing the positive impact you are having. You can choose the amount that fits into your monthly budget, and it will automatically be deducted from your credit card or account.

To sign up, you can simply call or email
Emma, on (04) 245 0843 or emma@wcm.org.nz

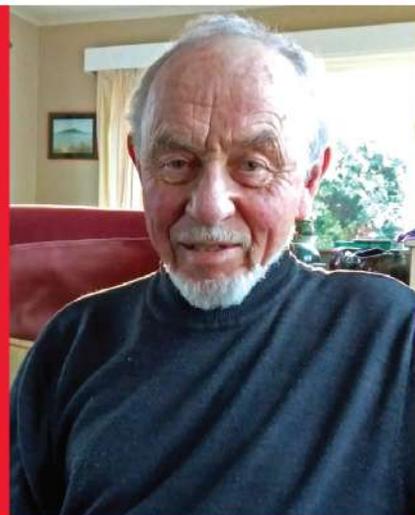
By becoming a ChangeGiver, you will be helping us to be more efficient. Knowing how much we can regularly count on, allows the mission to plan ahead and to improve and expand our vital services helping those most in need. If you ever want to make changes to your regular giving, just give us a call.

Why I am a ChangeGiver



"When I see the increased numbers of people begging and sleeping rough, I feel powerless to know how to help them. So I support the Mission as a regular giver because they know how to best help those Wellingtonians who need it the most."

Rose



"I look at it this way: I'm a pensioner and would be lost without a regular amount coming in. Why should the City Mission be any different? Regular giving makes sense and it's easy. Just figure out what you'd be willing to give. Go on, you know you can!"

Alan

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