



ON A MISSION

Your Generosity Changing Lives

Christmas
Restoring Connections



Murray

Murray Edridge
Wellington City Missioner

A Message from Murray

Looking forward ...

We have recently had some wonderful events in our family where we all gathered together to celebrate a number of things, including the 1st birthday of my grandson! These were awesome opportunities to reconnect and catch-up because like all families, sometimes the busyness of life seems to get in the way of connecting regularly.

Often, it is only when we get together that we recognise again the importance of doing so.

I find that part of the enjoyment of reconnection is not just the opportunity itself but the excitement and anticipation of looking forward to it in the days and weeks leading up to the gathering.

Getting together with those we love and care about, also reminds us how fortunate we are to have so many wonderful things in our lives to look forward to!

Christmas 2022 will be very significant for many as we have the opportunity to restore connections and welcome others home in a way that hasn't been possible over the last few years because of Covid-19.

Sadly however, we know that Christmas is also a time of challenge and sadness for some, as the publicly celebrated joy of the season just serves to accentuate the disadvantage and difficulties being experienced by many in our community.

We know too that this year in particular will be hard because of the cost of living crisis we are experiencing. We are all impacted by these economic challenges – but we are not all impacted evenly! Some amongst us are doing life really tough ...

The wonderful news of Christmas 2022 is that together we can make a difference in many of these situations!

This edition of our On a Mission newsletter contains some wonderful stories of dignity and restoration. I am constantly in awe of the amazing team of people and volunteers that I have the privilege to work with as they help people make sense of their situations and walk alongside them as they make the changes they need to make.

I hope that as you read these stories of people having something to look forward to, you will feel the encouragement and satisfaction of enabling real change.

I do hope you are looking forward to Christmas this year with your loved ones, particularly if it has been a while since you reconnected. I also hope that you know for sure, the incredible impact you are having on the lives of others – thank you!

In addition, I hope like me you are looking forward to 21 December when The Silent Night happens – the event that doesn't happen and we don't go to, but the City Mission is supported to make an even bigger difference in our community.

Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go.

Joshua 1:9





A HOME FOR *Christmas*



YOUR GIFT OF A PLACE TO BELONG

Dakota and Jacob from Te Punaha Pā, our supported Transitional Housing, share their insights on what makes Christmas at our Pā so special.

For our manuhiri who have been living without a home, Christmas is a pretty daunting time. Worrying about having a roof over your head and food on the table means you can't even think about celebrating like most of us do. Some of our men have fond memories of Christmas from when they were kids, but their journey in life has made those positive feelings fall away. A lot of our manuhiri haven't celebrated Christmas for years, after being unable to take part in it for so long.

For our manuhiri who are dads though, their biggest disappointment is being unable to fill the role of 'provider', especially at Christmas time. Often, the reason they first engage with our service is that they dream of having their own home for their kids. They feel stressed and embarrassed that they have nothing to contribute, and that they're letting their kids down.



But at Te Pā, manuhiri, family, and friends are all invited to take part in a Christmas time that many of us cherish. Celebrating here together gives our whānau a chance to take their minds off their day-to-day challenges for a while, and have a smile on their faces. Most importantly, it shows our men that they truly can have the life they are searching for.

Christmas time at our Pā always starts with the Christmas tree. Staff and manuhiri come together to decorate their tree – often to a soundtrack of carols! This can be a pretty significant moment for our manuhiri, and it might even be the first time we see someone drop their guard to really engage with the group and show joy. Then, on Christmas morning, each manuhiri has handpicked gifts waiting for them outside their doors and under the tree. Last year, one manuhiri told us that this was the first gift he'd received in ten years.

During the day, kids, partners, relatives and friends join together to





enjoy food and games. Parents who've had the opportunity to visit The Mission's Christmas Toy Shop are so excited and proud that this Christmas they are the dad who can provide a gift and a welcoming home for their children. And for those who don't have those same connections, all of us become their family. Many manuhiri who have found a home in the community come back to spend time here too, as our Pā really is a home for life.

The positive vibe carries on throughout summer, as we organise games of cricket at the park, barbecues and activities at the beach, and even fishing. Our various Pā link up as well,

"Last year, one manuhiri told us that this was the first gift he'd received in ten years."

and get to know each other as a bigger community. We know that all of this is made possible through the people who support us. And their donations mean so much more than they could ever imagine. Even the smallest gift can mean the world to our manuhiri, and men with the toughest exteriors have shed tears because of the unexpected kindness from our community. You can see how feeling cared for and connected at Christmas time truly helps change someone's life, and inspires them to take big steps on their new journey with us!



• Talia and Liz from Home Baked

MAKING A DIFFERENCE TOGETHER

Liz from Home Baked shares about the power of joining together

Each year in December, our online baking business, Home Baked, runs a promotion where a percentage of each sale is donated to a not-for-profit organisation. Last year we wanted to support a local charity, and we instinctively chose The Wellington City Mission.

Our donation went towards stocking special Christmas Hampers for the manuhiri who were living in their supported Transitional Housing service, and Talia and I were also invited to visit Te Pā Pori on Tory Street. I was a little nervous as I had no idea what it would be like, but we got caught up in everyone's enthusiasm and we

were soon doing karaoke in one of the lounges with some manuhiri! We also talked with Tanoa, who had gone from being a manuhiri to becoming part of the Mission team, and who we'd read about on The Mission's website. It was really cool seeing the presents that our donation had gone towards too - all wrapped up and ready to go!

Everything we saw at Te Pā backed up my own personal understanding of what The Mission is all about. What I really loved was how the rooms and facilities are top notch, so people who are perhaps down on their luck and need a bit of a break in life are looked after with dignity and respect.

I think there's clearly a huge need in our community, and The Mission makes it really easy for people and businesses like ours to contribute. All it takes is reaching out to them, and someone will have ways you can get involved. I think there's more power in us joining together like this, because you feel part of something with purpose and that you are making a difference, which also inspires you to keep going. We also like that we have a relationship with The Mission now, and we understand more about how it is here for everyone!

"I think there's more power in us joining together like this, because you feel part of something with purpose."



THE Christmas TOY STORE

YOUR GIFT OF DIGNITY AND HOPE

Anna, who helped run the Toy Store last year, shares her impressions

The Christmas Toy Store gives parents, guardians, and even grandparents an opportunity to experience choosing a gift for their children at Christmas. Similar to The Mission's Social Supermarket, having the dignity of choice and offering our shoppers the best makes it a mana-enhancing experience.

Shoppers arrive with their Mission social worker or support person and choose gifts specifically for their kids. They can then have them wrapped to go straight under their Christmas tree, or take some wrapping paper to do it themselves. Shoppers can also take decorations home, to share in those special moments with their families.

Last year, some of our shoppers were a little bit whakamā (shy) at first, because they didn't know what to expect. But as soon as they walked in, you would see their faces light up and their postures lift. That's because it really is a special place. It feels like a retail toy shop and is filled with quality donated new items that anyone would be excited to give their kids at Christmas. That really lets people feel dignity in what can be such a tough time.

I think there's a lot of pressure on parents at Christmas, especially if they're unable to give their kids a special experience, so making it a welcoming place for parents to choose gifts that their kids will appreciate is something they can delight in. At its heart though, the Toy Store is about giving someone the opportunity to extend their own thoughtfulness and generosity to their loved ones. As far as everyone is concerned, the presents have come from them, which can be really encouraging – particularly for people who feel like they are always receiving kindness from others. It creates a sense of self-confidence because they are part of a community.

“ The Toy Store is about giving someone the opportunity to extend their own thoughtfulness and generosity to their loved ones.”

It's really cool that most of the work in the Toy Store is done by fantastic volunteers and groups. You can see they have a lot of fun getting to step away from their busy workplace for the day, and enjoy the time together. For me personally, it has been such a privilege to be involved. Seeing all of the support from our donors and volunteers gives you a real sense of connection, and proves that when we work together we can show such powerful manaaki (care) for so many families in our community!





• Grandad Karl's family is looking forward to spending Christmas together again this year



Christmas

WITH GRANDAD

Your support is bringing families closer this Christmas

I first came to The Mission about six years ago, after my marriage broke up. At the time I was a wreck, and had it not been for them being there for me, along with the support from my daughter Tara and son-in-law Darren, I'm not sure I would be here today.

I've had a few serious injuries that mean I'm unable to work, and I'm on a supported living benefit. I couldn't afford to pay my bills so The Mission helped with food, and they also started providing budgeting advice. My Financial Mentor Elizabeth is just awesome, and their Total Money Management service makes sure my money automatically pays the bills so I know

exactly how much I have to spend each week. I visit the Social Supermarket once a fortnight, and the amount of food I can choose and bring home is really incredible – especially with prices these days. All the food is fresh, nothing is out of date, and it has everything you could need. There, your mind shifts from thinking, “Oh, I can't afford that,” to, “Wow, I can actually get that!”

My budget means that at the moment, it's still really tough to get by. So last year, Elizabeth took me to choose gifts for my grandkids in the Toy Store. I couldn't believe my eyes seeing all the brand new presents that I could choose from. And all for nothing! The decorations and friendly people made it such a special place, and the volunteers wrapped the presents for me as well.

Being able to choose your gifts is important because I can find something that I know my grandkids will really appreciate. I was even given a special food parcel, and my family had a beautiful Christmas at home. It meant so much being able to give gifts that had come from me. I got to see the expression on my grandkids' faces, and they each gave me a big cuddle and said “Thank you very much Grandad, you knew what I wanted!”

My family is really looking forward to spending this Christmas together again. Having the opportunity to celebrate brings us even closer together. Elizabeth has told me our family will also receive a special Christmas Hamper, which was totally unexpected. I think it's a really nice way that they acknowledge that I am trying to give my family a better life as well.

“ Having the opportunity to celebrate brings us even closer together.”

The way The Mission is so giving to people like us is just so wonderful. No matter who you are, they are just there to help you out. It makes you feel like we are all one big family. In my eyes, they are people sent down from God and I sincerely hope that everyone who supports The Mission can feel good about what they are doing!



THE MAGIC OF THE TOY STORE IS COMMUNITY

Danielle and Rakesh from The Wellington Company share their experience in the Toy Store

The Wellington Company has been a long-term supporter of the Wellington City Mission and the fantastic work they do via donations for a number of years. Last year we had the chance to extend our support to volunteering and took on the incredible opportunity of helping set up their Christmas Toy Store.

As a team we put together ideas, gathered decorations, and spent a day creating the space. It was really rewarding seeing the transformation of the space, and a great reminder of how people can do something special by working together. We all felt good to be giving back, and although volunteering is about helping

other people, we got a lot out of it as a team too. It brought us closer together, which was so valuable – especially after going through all the Covid lockdowns.

Ultimately, getting behind the Toy Store was a great opportunity to help families experience special memories. The joy of being able to share gifts is all about the thought that goes into them. We all know how doing activities together like reading a book, playing games, or building a toy builds family moments, and that's a cool thing to be part of.

We're all really looking forward to doing it all again this year, and we have lots of ideas to make it even better for everyone who shops there!





Your Whakamaru Update

Construction update:

Onsite construction at Whakamaru has shown excellent progress over the last few months with the placement of steel, pouring of the concrete base, and the erection of the base of the new tower crane, which will arrive early January.

The contractors onsite have shown great expertise in the preparation of the site, placing of the steel, and the boxing and pouring of the concrete.

We've had two significant pours of concrete which means the entire basement floor has now been poured and the walls are

under construction. The intention is that all the concrete work will be completed prior to Christmas. In the early part of January, the steel can be erected by the crane.

We're delighted with the progress Naylor Love are making and look forward to seeing some very tangible and visible progress early next year.

THE SILENT NIGHT

wellingtoncitymission

PRESENTS

THE SILENT NIGHT

A CHRISTMAS FUNDRAISING EVENT THAT NO-ONE GOES TO

By not attending, 100% of ticket sales go to the Wellington City Mission.

21 DECEMBER 2022

We are excited to announce a fundraising initiative that we hope will captivate the imagination and hearts of Wellingtonians.

The Silent Night is a crowd-less Christmas fundraising event that helps to ensure all Wellingtonians are cared for this Christmas. By purchasing a ticket but not attending, 100% of the cost of tickets will be donated to the Wellington City Mission. We are inviting the community to fill the stadium with nothing but the generosity of Wellingtonians this Christmas.

We are very grateful to Sky Stadium, Ticketek and Special Group who have been the champions of this event.

THE CHANGE YOU ENABLE



During the months of August – October, together we...



Provided
103

meals per day for manuhiri living
in our supported Transitional
Housing accommodation



Supported
1076

people through our Social Supermarket



Welcomed
65

people every day into Tā te Manawa our
community lounge, where we serve
barista coffee and cafe style meals



Enabled
685

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



Walked alongside
204

people who are in our Financial
Mentoring programme



Supported
21

manuhiri from our Pa into
permanent housing

Thank you! Your support enables us to be better than we would otherwise be.

An Update on our Recent Survey

“Thank you...We are so humbled”

When the responses to the survey started coming through, we were thrilled. And just when we thought they were slowing down they kept coming! We are humbled that so many of our amazing supporters took the time to respond and provide feedback and thoughts about the work we do.

While we shared some of the responses in our previous newsletter, there were some significant responses where you indicated interest to connect with us. And as a result we are committed to making these a priority in the year ahead.

More Events/ Tours - The opportunity to see/ hear firsthand the work we do. The opportunity to meet with Murray and some of the Wellington City Mission team, to learn more about the services and ways in which we are caring for our community.

Supporting Whakamaru - To know more about one of the most significant developments for the Wellington City Mission and the services we deliver. We will be looking at holding specific events around this for our supporters in the New Year.

Bequests - A significant number of supporters indicated their decision or interest in making a gift in their Will. We have some exciting developments around this in the new year which we will let you know about.

If you have an interest in one or more of these, or would like to talk to someone directly please let us know by either calling on (04) 245 0843 or email enquiries@wcm.org.nz

Thank you again for your encouragement and being on this journey with us!



Thank you OrangeBox!!

We have received such lovely feedback about the address labels that we recently sent our supporters. A big thank you to Orangebox who very kindly produced them! It's been wonderful to hear how warmly they were received.





Christmas
Restoring Connections



ChangeGivers

Regular Giving Programme

The wonderful gift that gives change.

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 member we invite you to join this amazing group of people. As a ChangeGiver, 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.



Jeff & Rachel

"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."



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Internet Banking:

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Email donations@wcm.org.nz
with details if you wish to receive a receipt.

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