

“Be kind to one another,” urged Professor Nicola Spurrier when a six-day lockdown was announced in South Australia. Spurrier specifically mentioned hoarding toilet paper, an anxiety induced reaction to the first wave that saw shelves stripped of essential items. But even before the press conference ended, many headed to the nearest supermarket and began stockpiling pasta, sauce, cereal and, yes, toilet paper.

This was a contrast to our experience on Thursday when we opened for Emergency Relief. Under our revised restrictions, those with facemasks were allowed into the courtyard where they could see the food displayed in the hall and select what they wanted. Those without facemasks needed to wait in the carpark to receive food that was (kindly) selected for them.

Shortly after opening, one of our community members came to collect food. She is one of several “hybrid” members who both receives assistance and volunteers, a beautiful blurring of what can too often be definitive lines. Seeing the situation for those who were sitting in the carpark, she returned twenty-minutes later with a package of masks which she distributed, leaving the rest behind for others who might come.

Growing



This has been a reoccurring experience for us in 2020. As the sense of community grows, we are witnesses to humble yet deeply significant gestures of kindness, compassion and connection. The months have been challenging and stressful for us all. So, we are grateful for the many ways love is born and thriving among us and for all who participate in this divine action.

Ready and Willing



Lisa, Kristen and Nicky serve curried sausages

As with sectors across South Australia, the recent COVID cluster caused us to take two steps back in our reopening progress. We are pleased to say this did not dampen the spirits of our volunteers whose smiles are obvious under their masks. Those who are seventy years-old or older and those with compromised immune systems once again needed to take a break from volunteering. But a willing and capable crew carried on as we adapted once again.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all the volunteers who weathered the ever-changing conditions of 2020. May everyone enjoy a well-deserved rest over the Christmas holidays.

Christmas Holiday Dates

Final Tuesday meal w/special Christmas prayer	15 December
Final ER day service	18 December
ER day service resumes	12 January
Tuesday meal resumes	2 February

If need arises for you or someone you know, you can check out askizzy.org.au for up-to-date information on emergency food and accommodation

Reflections on the Year

On a warm afternoon, a few sat in the courtyard at the end of the day's service reflecting on the year. Tyson lives in a share house with a handful of others and was watching the Primer's press conference on his phone. James is currently experiencing homelessness and was finishing a cup of soup as the conversation began.

Tyson said he found 2020 "mind numbing" and "stressful." During the first lockdown, he chose to withdraw from his Flinders Uni course because he found the online learning less than satisfying. In April, he was tested for COVID and told to go home and self-isolate. This is difficult for anyone, but Tyson spoke about the challenges of isolating in a shared housing arrangement without supportive family or friends to help him get the things he needed. While Tyson missed the interactions at Uni and playing cricket this year, he enjoyed watching history programmes on SBS and learned a great deal.



James having fun

On the flip side, James used the word "rewarding" to describe his experience of 2020. As someone who practices yoga, James used the obstacles of these months as an inspiration for greater focus. James feels that life is about "learning to roll with your lot" and to be "in the spirit."

In contrast to Tyson's experience, James appreciated the first lockdown because it removed what he called the "smokers, druggies and intimidators" from the streets as many took up the Government's offer of motel accommodation. James enjoyed the greater peace of the outdoors where he camps each night.

When asked about their hopes for 2021, Tyson said he hopes everyone will get vaccinated so life can be more relaxed without having to think about distancing and hand sanitizing all the time. James hopes for "the implementation of myself in the work force" so he can feel more free to make contact with his family on the eastern seaboard again.

Sharing in Community Spirit

When area cafes and restaurants received word of the six-day shut-down, owners needed to make adjustments quickly including what to do with produce that would go off during the lockdown. Mayor Amanda Wilson sent out an invitation to area businesses to donate their food to St. Andrew's Emergency Relief Services and Mama Camilo's responded gifting us with over 80 kg of food. Through their generosity, we were able to package meals and distribute the produce to those who needed it. Thank you!



A Special Gift for an Unusual Year

Looking for a meaningful gift to give someone who seems to have it all? Consider making a cash donation to UnitingCare Glenelg for that special someone. Simply follow the instructions below to make your donation. Upon receipt of your details, you will be emailed a printable A4 document that you can fold into a lovely card to present as your gift. Alternatively, call in or post your donation directly to St. Andrew's and receive a card that's pre-printed for you to give.

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<https://bit.ly/UnitingCareERC> Or scan the QR code with your smart phone. Be sure to designate **UnitingCare Glenelg** when you make your donations.



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