

October 2020

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At a recent Tuesday night meal, a few conversations went like this:

"Are we having Christmas this year?"

"Of course! There will always be Christmas," came the somewhat cheeky response.

"I mean, will we be having a Christmas party?"

"No, we can't have a party because of COVID."

"So, we won't be having Christmas then..."

Each conversation concluded with a similar expression of sad disappointment.

Amidst the uncertainty that has been 2020 and the need to adapt our beloved traditions, we suspect many might feel something similar. However, among the gifts of this time is the possibility of bringing fresh eyes to who we are and what we hope to do. We are grateful for the volunteers who have stepped up, for their energy, passion and helpful insights. We give thanks, too, for the strong connections we have with service clubs, organisations, businesses and individuals including some new ones. Together we are able to create a place of hospitality, acceptance and practical care in every season. So, despite the many changes, Michael Leunig reminds us:

*Love is born  
With a dark and troubled face  
When hope is dead  
And in the most unlikely place  
Love is born:  
Love is always born.*

With minimal government funding, UnitingCare Glenelg relies on generous donations of cash and gifts-in-kind to support our mission. Therefore, as each of us make plans for Christmas celebrations, please keep the UnitingCare community in mind.

### **Non-Perishable Collections for Christmas**



Be part of supporting local families experiencing food insecurity this year by setting up a non-perishable collection area in your workplace, neighbourhood, school, organisation or community. Information packs are available to help you with your collection. Please contact St. Andrew's at [office@standrewsuc.org.au](mailto:office@standrewsuc.org.au) or on 8295 1771.

### **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 on the back of the newsletter to make your donation. Upon receipt of your details, you will be emailed a printable A4 sheet 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.

### **Feeling the Impact of the Pandemic**

Foodbank Australia released its Hunger Report for 2020 providing a picture that is "unlike any previous report." Here are just a few statistics:

- 28% of Aussies experiencing food insecurity are doing so for the first time in 2020
- 3 in 5 Aussies (61%) have accessed food relief since the advent of COVID-19
- Two new food insecure groups have emerged as a result of the pandemic — members of the casual workforce and international students

## Inspired Dedication with a Deeply Personal Cost

N. came to UnitingCare Glenelg after hearing about our services from the chaplain at her Uni. Like so many international students, the pandemic has made studying in Australia especially difficult as many support systems at home are weakened or falter and students find themselves struggling alone in an unfamiliar country.

N. arrived in Adelaide in March to study for a two-year Masters in Nursing degree. She has nursed for over a dozen years in Nepal and hopes her education in Australia will help her serve her community better. But of course, these plans were put in place before COVID hit the world and lockdown came to South Australia.

Making N.'s situation especially difficult is the fact that she left behind her six-year old son and husband—a sacrifice many of us can only imagine. With the travel restrictions, their separation is felt more keenly and it is difficult to know if and when they will be reunited during N.'s time of study in Australia. Nevertheless, N.'s resilience, determination, and passion to serve her neighbours in Nepal are an inspiration. We feel fortunate to have her as a member of the community.

## Creating a Picture of Our Community

Since the beginning of Emergency Relief Services in April, we have 265 people on our database. In October, we greeted an average of 183 guests every week. This is an increase from 140 guests in August. Our oldest guest is 92 years-old and our youngest is 16 years-old.

Of those coming for food relief:

- 58% are single
- 42% are people with dependents
- 12% have no fixed address
- 8% live in a boarding or share house
- 64% were born in Australia
- 36% were born overseas

## Shared Meal for International Friends

On a Friday evening in October, several families and individuals from our UnitingCare Glenelg community gathered for a shared meal. The evening included a colourful diversity of food, languages, and stories but



they all shared one thing in common: they have migrated from other countries and now call Australia home.

Through conversation with community members during the week, the idea of coming together began to emerge. Leaving behind all that is familiar—even if the situation is dire—is difficult and grief filled. Trying to understand and learn a new culture and perhaps even a new language is equally challenging. As the Foodbank Hunger Report revealed and our experience confirms, this transitioning group has been especially vulnerable during this time.

Besides food, those who came were invited to share conversation with suggested questions such as: What is one thing you miss about the country of your birth? Where do you feel most at home in Australia? What is a contribution you hope to make in your new land? We look forward to bringing this community together again for friendship and mutual support.

## Tax Deductible Giving

Donations of >\$2 to UnitingCare Glenelg are tax deductible when made at:

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



Please email us at [office@standrewsuc.org.au](mailto:office@standrewsuc.org.au) if you wish to receive a printable Christmas card.