

A few months back, an unkind message was scrawled on the church steps: *Satan lives here*. Thankfully, it was in chalk so it could be easily rubbed out. But instead, punchy on a Friday afternoon, we decided to counter this message with a playful, yet hopefully profound, alternative message of our own: *All are welcome*.

We expected both messages to fade with time and spring rains, which for the most part they have. But this week, we noticed that the wetness of these days has caused some words to shine out in their original brilliance: *All are welcome*.

Perhaps we can take heart from this parable. There is no denying that hardness and hate are alive in our world and those who spend a majority of their time on the streets know this more than others. Some among us are often the recipients of cold, judgemental stares, violence and the loss of personal property to theft when their back is turned.

But love and kindness are also alive and well. If you are reading this newsletter, you are most likely invested in strengthening hospitality, compassion and justice in Glenelg and beyond. Predictions are that the financial fallout of the pandemic will have a wide and lengthy impact on communities across Australia. Let us commit to working together so that love will shine out amidst the storms.

New Volunteers Always Welcome

If you think you might like to be a bigger part of St. Andrew's UnitingCare Glenelg community, please contact the church office or drop in during our opening times (Tuesday, Thursday, Friday, 11:30–2:30) to explore the possibilities. Many opportunities await those with willing hearts and hands.

A Story of Refuge, Belonging and Peace

Three years ago, Mtanios (Tony) fled his home in Tartus, a seaside city in Syria, with his wife Suhair and their two sons Rony (15) and Roberto (13). They arrived in Adelaide as refugees and are trying to build a new life in Australia. The journey has not been easy.

Though he is a qualified brick layer, his struggle with English has left Tony unemployed. He came to St. Andrew's for food after the pandemic began. We communicate more easily with the translator app on his phone where Tony also has a video of Tartus and the home he built. Many of the buildings, including his home, are no longer standing because of the war. Tony looks at the photos and tears pool in his eyes.



Before becoming a volunteer at St. Andrew's, Tony would walk along the shore between Brighton and Glenelg for hours each day, seeking solace. "The sea takes all the negative energy from my body," explains Tony, "It is a bridge between here and Tartus for me." Tony says being a volunteer gives him a sense of belonging in Australia. "Volunteering is the hope I have now," he offers, "I have suffered a lot and I no longer want to deal with money."

When invited to share a word through the newsletter, Tony smiled, spoke into his translator app, and out came: *Thanks to Australia I live in. She fed me from the first moment I came. There is peace, safety, security for children. It is my wish to live in peace with everyone here. This is important for human life.*

Rotary Food Drive

Thank you to Holdfast Rotary Club for conducting a food drive to collect items for the UnitingCare Glenelg pantry. On one day, Rotary collected \$1200 worth of food items. Well done! Your efforts enable us to bring assistance to members of the local community. This is wonderful in and of itself. But your presence and the request for non-perishables raises awareness among the general public that the need exists and gives an easy way to respond.



Gifts in Kind

Since January 2020, we no longer receive government funding and rely entirely on donations, including gifts in kind. We are truly growing love together! Here's a snapshot of the donations we received in August:

SecondBite fresh food	\$1,032.25 per day
TOTAL for August	\$12, 387.00
Bakers Delight	\$250 per week
Caruso's	\$150.00 per week
Rotary nonperishable donation	\$1,200.00
Zonta nonperishable donation	\$200.00
Community nonperishable donations approximately	\$80.00 per week
Lions, Connect Youth hygiene packs	\$1,500.00
Share the Dignity donation	\$600.00
Soup donations for the month	\$1,300.00

Youth Group Making Connections

Connect Youth is a group of 12-18-year olds from all over western Adelaide who believe young people have the power to influence not only their lives, but their communities by discovering the power of connection. Gathering at Trinity Uniting Church in Alberton, Connect Youth chose to assemble hygiene packs for the UnitingCare Emergency Relief Services. Thank you for caring. You are an inspiration.

Visions for the New Op Shop

Plans are underway for a new Op Shop to open in 2021. A priority for those taking on this project is to create a space that imbues hospitality, dignity, and joy, bringing a unique vibe to the Jetty Road marketplace. We anticipate the Op Shop will give us another avenue for volunteers to find a place to belong, especially those who may be newer to Australia or who wish to learn new skills.

Besides the weekly Op Shop activity, the team is enthusiastic about using the courtyard for occasional markets where local artisans and others can sell homemade preserves and craft items. We're just beginning to give shape to this new venture so, if you would like to be part of the planning or volunteer in the future, please speak with the UCG Emergency Relief Coordinator Avril Noy.

Community Care Room Upgrade

Sarah Davies, a local merchandise designer, has submitted a draft proposal for the upgrades to our Community Care room. Our points of focus are to create a greater sense of inclusion while adhering to the COVID restrictions—which have an indefinite timeline—and a general eye on safety for all. It is our aim to improve on the room's storage and function, making the space more efficient for our volunteers. We also hope the space will be more welcoming, enabling our guests to feel empowered when it comes to their wellbeing.

Tax Deductible Giving

Your gifts to UnitingCare Glenelg are now tax deductible. To donate to the UnitingCare SA Relief Fund, please visit the Uniting Church SA website and follow the links. Or, click bit.ly/UnitingCareERC to go directly to the donation page. Be sure to designate **UnitingCare Glenelg** in the details block (in Payer Information section) when you make your donations.

Or, if you do *not* need a tax deduction receipt, give directly to St. Andrew's Uniting Church:

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