

Mission News

Spring 2022

Missioner's message

Despite the ongoing challenges of living and working through a pandemic, I am grateful for all that we've achieved at Auckland City Mission – Te Tāpui Atawhai in recent months.

Looking ahead, I am filled with hope at what's in store. As I write, we have more than 45 people living in the HomeGround apartments, with more tenants moving in every day. The smiles on the faces of people who were once homeless and who finally have a home of their own at HomeGround, are heart-warming to see.

We continue to support people needing access to food, particularly with the increases in the cost of living that have been so well documented in the media. In June, 2,592 Aotearoa Standard Food Parcel Measure (ASFPM) parcels were distributed by the Mission's Food Security team. This equates to food for 10,368 people, three meals a day for four days. We also supplied additional donated food to 50 Foodlink partner organisations across Tāmaki Makaurau.

And of course, in the midst of winter, the Mission's health services are as needed as ever. We have continued to provide COVID-19 vaccinations as well as flu vaccinations. Providing health services is such an important part of the Mission's work – you can read more about our health services in this newsletter.

I'm so pleased to tell you that we officially welcomed our GM Māori Joanne Reidy into her role with a pōwhiri at HomeGround in June. It was an incredibly moving occasion and a significant milestone in the Mission's journey to becoming a good Treaty partner. At the pōwhiri, kaumātua Otene Reweti of Ngāti Whatua ki Ōrākei gifted Joanne the name Manutea. It was chosen because it is appropriate for a woman who leads with strength, determination and grace. This new role involves leading the Mission's kaupapa Māori services as well as the Mission's overall Māori strategy. I look forward to telling you more about this in the coming months.

Just a few weeks later, it was such a pleasure to see how New Zealanders embraced Matariki, the Māori new year, and celebrated it with a public holiday for the first time. Here at the Mission, there were several opportunities to gather and celebrate Matariki together, including a very moving service at St Matthew-in-the-City, where Mission staff acknowledged people we supported who had passed in the last year. I had the privilege of reading out their names, and I can tell you there were far too many of them. Many of their lives were shortened because of the harsh realities of living on the street.

All of these things are only possible because of your support. We simply can not do what we do without the generosity of our donors. These are challenging times for all of us: the cost of living and the effects of the ongoing pandemic are making things harder for all of us, which is why I am so grateful to those who continue to support us, no matter what.

Amongst the Mission's most dedicated supporters are our board members, who generously give their time and expertise. I particularly acknowledge and thank Celia Caughey, who has been a member of Auckland City Mission's board for 11 years and was instrumental to HomeGround being built. Now that HomeGround is operational, Celia has retired from the board; however she still intends to support our work. Her care and attention to detail and her consideration for all those the Mission serves, are second to none.

Finally, a special word of thanks to you for helping us keep the doors open and supporting people when they need it most, every day.

Noho haumarū,

Helen Robinson

Missioner – Manutaki



PS. I am looking forward to seeing some of you at the next Auckland Marathon in October. I loved being at the finish line to celebrate with you last time, and this year I've signed up to do the 11km Traverse – walkers are welcome! If you'd like to join me, please take a look at our website for more information: aucklandcitymission.org.nz/support-us/fundraise-for-us/



A pōwhiri was held at HomeGround for the Mission's GM Māori, or Manutea, Joanne Reidy.

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Our health services

Calder Health Centre

When the Mission first opened the Calder Health Centre in 2008, there was one doctor based in a tiny room in the Prince of Wales building. Today, there are five part-time GPs and four nurses, and we plan to initiate a dental service, providing essential health support.

The Mission's very low-cost primary health care model is nurse-led. Nurses provide medical care both on-site and in the community through our outreach service. At HomeGround, we now have seven consulting rooms, a social worker's station, a nurse's station, a comfortable waiting area and capacity for 3,000 patients. This is a great improvement on what we could offer at Union Street, with capacity for only 1,700 patients. The Centre also provides co-ordination services with other health providers, as well as primary mental health services, with secondary clinics on-site.

We are so grateful to the generous donors who helped create the state-of-the-art new Calder Health Centre, so the team can give patients the best possible care. Alongside supporting Mission clients, the Centre is also open to any central city residents who would like to enrol as patients. The Centre is open Monday to Friday, 8am to 4.30pm; phone 09 303 9266.

"The stunning team of health professionals and allied staff provide incredibly sophisticated trauma-informed care to our patients. At HomeGround we have the opportunity to do things differently by integrating our services, because the layout of the building means people connect more easily. A patient in the Withdrawal Service, for example, can have an opportunity to be vaccinated against COVID-19 while they are staying. And because we have more rooms here, we can offer specialist clinics by having a mental health pop-up or a diabetes pop-up. There are so many more opportunities to work together."

– Gilli Sinclair, Health Services Manager



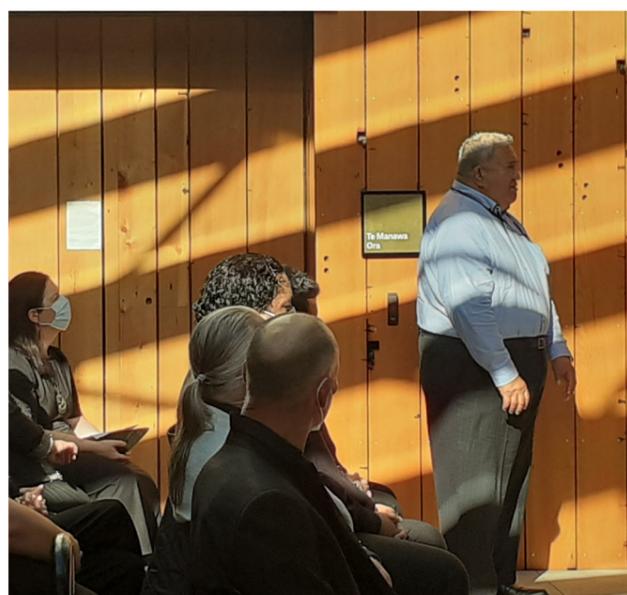
Nurses Fiona (left) and Esther in the new Calder Health Centre at HomeGround.

Withdrawal Services

In May, the Mission officially welcomed the team from Te Whatu Ora Health New Zealand Waitematā (formerly Waitematā DHB) to HomeGround. Waitematā runs the 10-bed Medically Managed Inpatient Withdrawal Service at HomeGround, alongside the 15-bed Social Withdrawal Service run by the Mission team.

People needing support with withdrawal are assessed and if they require medical support to withdraw from the use of alcohol or other drugs, may be admitted to the Medically Managed Inpatient Withdrawal Service, usually for a period of three to seven days. If people need support to withdraw but are not at the level of needing 24-hour medical care, they may spend time in the Social Withdrawal Service, often for a two-week period.

Depending on their level of need, sometimes people will spend some time with both services, and then move on to being supported in the community as they continue to recover. The benefit of having the two services located in the same building is that it means patients in the Medically Managed Inpatient Withdrawal Service can immediately move to the Social Withdrawal service as soon as they are well enough, without having to travel across the city. This means that many patients who would have had to stay in the medical service for a week previously can potentially head to the social service within three or four days, allowing more people through the service. Having both withdrawal services in one building along with the Calder Health Centre means we are able to provide the best possible support to the people we serve. The Social Withdrawal Service has already helped more than 165 people on the road to recovery, since moving into HomeGround.



Kaumātua Otene Reweti speaks at the mihi whakatau for Te Whatu Ora Health New Zealand Waitematā (formerly Waitematā DHB) at HomeGround.

Hobson Street Pharmacy

Pharmacist Anthony Zhang started his community pharmacy at the Mission's premises at Hobson Street 11 years ago, then moved with the Mission to Union Street while HomeGround was being built. He now enjoys being part of HomeGround.

"I wouldn't work anywhere else," Anthony says. "The bond that you have with the customers is incredible. They treat you like family."

After completing his training, Anthony worked in a community pharmacy in Rānui.

"I had a good teacher. I worked for someone who was a true people's pharmacist. I learned the importance of taking the time to listen, talking to people about their medication and explaining it to them. You always find a way to help."

Anthony says that he and his two staff, Parinda Jansari and Elizabeth Ramen, find the work incredibly rewarding.

"I would say we're like any other community pharmacy, it's just that a lot of our clients tend to have specific needs, and some of them don't have a lot. We always make sure they have the medication they need, and then we can sort out payment later. What touches my heart is, people will think of us and come back as soon as they have some money.

"Having wraparound health and social services together on one site works really well. When people come into Haeata [the Mission's community dining room] for a meal, they walk past the pharmacy, and that reminds them to come and see us and take their meds. We have people we see every day, and people we see every week. If they don't turn up, we can talk to the social workers and the doctors here and between us, we make sure they're ok. So there is a support network – they are never completely on their own.

"In the time I've been here, I've seen the difference the Mission makes to people's lives. If people don't have housing, it's really hard to improve their health. Once they are housed, they can get into routines like taking their medication. Their life is completely changed and their health is so much better."

Auckland City Mission's Manager of Health Services Gilli Sinclair says Anthony and his team play a crucial role at HomeGround.

"The pharmacy team work tirelessly to provide the best possible service in a style that works for our street whānau and patients. Their service often makes the difference to whether or not people receive and take their medication – we are incredibly grateful for our partnership with the Hobson Street Pharmacy."



Anthony Zhang and Parinda Jansari at Hobson Street Pharmacy.

Southern Cross Health Trust

Southern Cross Health Trust is a generous supporter of the Auckland City Mission, with an annual donation that is enough to fund a significant portion of two nursing roles at the Calder Health Centre. The Calder Health Centre sees some of the most complex and high-needs clients in New Zealand, many of whom are homeless; in crisis; have mental health concerns or are battling addiction. The Mission team is incredibly grateful to the Southern Cross Health Trust for their unwavering dedication to supporting Calder Health Centre patients.

"I wouldn't work anywhere else. The bond that you have with the customers is incredible. They treat you like family."

– Anthony Zhang, Pharmacist

What's happening at HomeGround

HomeGround Apartments

Here at the Mission, we take a 'housing first' approach. That means, we aim to find people a safe, stable home, regardless of any other issues they are dealing with. The reason for this is, once people have a home, they have stability in their lives and can then deal with any other difficulties. When you have a home, you can make doctor's appointments and remember to take your medication, and your health improves. If you don't have a home, those things are hard to deal with, and your health continues to deteriorate.

After Auckland moved to the orange traffic light setting, the Mission welcomed the first tenants into the HomeGround Apartments in April. There are now more than 45 people living at HomeGround, which has 80 apartments in total. There are more tenants moving in each day.

Auckland City Mission Housing Limited is a Community Housing Provider (CHP), meaning we can officially provide homes to people who are on the public housing register.

As part of the Mission's commitment to permanent housing, we offer support services to tenants of the HomeGround apartments to those people who need it. The Supportive Housing team's purpose is to help tenants sustain permanent housing through planned support. This includes working together with each person to set and achieve goals, access health and social services, live independently and contribute to the HomeGround community. Whether someone is working towards having better physical or mental health, harm reduction, becoming employed or reuniting with their family, the team will support each person on their own journey. The focus of supportive housing is on creating the greatest degree of empowerment and independence for each tenant.

In May, the HomeGround tenant community began planting the rooftop garden with food plants. The semi-enclosed space has become a sub-tropical food garden with bananas, taro, ginger, tea and coffee plants. A herb garden is in development and the community is also investigating plants used in Rongoā Māori (Māori healing). Auckland City Mission's Community Development Lead Sam Morrison says the journey to get to this point has involved collaboration between many different services at the Mission, and support from external collaborators too. A big thank you to Richard Main (Gardens4Health, Diabetes Foundation Aotearoa) who has provided invaluable guidance in the set-up, planning and maintenance of the garden.



The semi-enclosed rooftop garden at HomeGround has become a sub-tropical food garden.



Corporate groups are welcome to volunteer at Auckland City Mission. Air New Zealand cabin crew (from left) Suni, Erena, Dana, Anthony, Dianah and Jireh enjoyed volunteering in the Mission's Haeata community dining room.

"The best thing about living at HomeGround is, I've got my independence, which is very important to me. There is support here if I need it, but I can do things on my own. And it's not far to go and get my medication or see the doctor – I only have to get in the lift."

– Ivan, HomeGround apartment tenant

Front of House

At HomeGround, the Mission's Front of House team is based in the laneway between Hobson Street and Federal Street. It's a busy public thoroughfare used by people accessing the HomeGround Apartments, the Calder Health Centre, Hobson Street Pharmacy, Haeata community dining room and other Mission services.

Front of House Manager Kylie Tipene and her team were thrilled when Auckland moved out of the red traffic light setting and the Mission was able to welcome more people into HomeGround. Throughout the various COVID-19 settings, the team have done a fabulous job of maintaining the sense of manaakitanga – even from behind a mask.

"Our mahi is all about connection and respect. It's our job to meet and greet, to get information from the people who come through the doors, figure out where they need to go and help them navigate that," Kylie says.

Auckland City Mission volunteer Marlise helps out at Front of House two mornings a week, on the Mission's busiest days.

"A lot of people are coming for breakfast at Haeata, and then there are some who don't really know what they need, or how to ask for it. You try and be a friendly face. You get to know who's new and who is a regular. Every day is different, and you never quite know what to expect," Marlise says.

Working at Front of House requires resilience and training.

"If people are dealing with alcohol, drug or mental health issues, they just don't have the coping mechanisms, and so it doesn't take much for people to get upset. They just need someone to love them and that's our job – it has to be unconditional love," Marlise says.



Kylie, Tracey and Peggy from the Front of House team.



Marlise enjoys volunteering at Front of House at HomeGround.

Haeata

The Mission's community dining room, Haeata, is open 365 days a year to ensure that people who are living on the streets or facing hardship can get a nutritious hot meal each day. Even when COVID-19 restrictions meant the Mission couldn't welcome people into the dining room, the Haeata team still provided a meal, which was packed in a bag to take away. Haeata can serve up to 300 people in a day.

Haeata also has an activities room where street whānau can get involved in a range of creative activities. There is everything from wood carving to art class, drama club, stone carving, band practice, clay club, quiz day and choir practice. Each class or group offers valuable opportunities for people to learn new skills, rediscover their talents, connect with others and express themselves creatively. After many months of not being able to run an activities programme because of COVID-19 restrictions, it's great to see so many people coming to HomeGround for these life-enriching opportunities.



Long-term Haeata helpers Mark, Ivan, Rangī and Judith cleaning up the kitchen after service.

"Our mahi is all about connection and respect. It's our job to meet and greet, to get information from the people who come through the doors, figure out where they need to go and help them navigate that."

– Kylie Tipene, Front of House Manager

Aucklanders helping Aucklanders



Auckland City Mission's Corporate Partnership Specialist Mairi Herbert and the team at New World Southmall with some of the Family2Family donations collected.

Family2Family

New World's annual Family2Family campaign was held in May. Over a two-week period, New World shoppers had the opportunity to fill a paper bag with foodbank-friendly grocery items and drop it off in-store for distribution to local foodbanks – including ours! There were 20,000 bags collected and New World matched each bag donated with a cash donation, totalling \$250,000 nationwide. Shoppers also had the opportunity to donate their Flybuys points towards New World gift cards for New Zealand's Missions. Thank you to all the generous New World shoppers who participated – our Food Security team are so grateful for your support.

Cook-Off

The annual Auckland City Mission Cook-Off was held on 9 June at St Matthew-in-the-City. Chefs Michael Meredith, Gareth Stewart and Carlo Buenaventura worked with teams of Auckland business leaders to cook for 150 guests. As well as Mission volunteers, the guests included people experiencing homelessness and those who face a daily struggle to put food on the table. Each of the business leaders was tasked with raising \$10,000 in the lead-up to the event, towards emergency food parcels. The chefs were responsible for creating the menu and guiding the team of cooks through the evening. The event raised more than \$240,000, which will make a huge difference to the Mission's ongoing work with Aucklanders in need. Thank you to the chefs, the business leaders who took part, and to St Matthew-in-the-City for the beautiful venue.



Business leaders worked with chefs to prepare the food for the Cook-Off guests. From left are Cassie Roma from C&R Co, Helen Robinson from Auckland City Mission, Robbie Turnbull from Alsco, Chef Carlo Buenaventura from Bar Magda, Brett Henshaw from Fonterra, Kate Slavin from Ironclad Pan Co and Matthew Ballesty from SkyCity.



Mission staff and volunteers helped transform St Matthew-in-the-City into a kitchen and dining room, served the guests, dealt with the dishes and then packed everything away.



Chef Gareth Stewart from Nourish Group, Jackie Mills from Les Mills, Anna Scott from Hobson Wealth and Bryan Sherritt from Te Manatū Waka – Ministry of Transport work on the dessert course.



The Cook-Off was held at St Matthew-in-the-City, and guests were entertained by a performance by the Street Choir.

Soap for Society

This spring, our friends at Soap for Society are once again collecting toiletries and hygiene essentials for City Missions around the country. For people living on the street or struggling with living costs, being given the basic products that help us to feel clean can restore a sense of dignity. You can help by donating sanitary items, razors, shaving foam, deodorants, shampoo, conditioner, body wash, toothbrushes and toothpaste, between 19 September and 2 October. Your donations will be distributed to families and individuals in need, through emergency food parcels and through the Mission's homelessness outreach services.

This year Soap for Society is also collecting household cleaning products, which will be a welcome addition to emergency food parcels for those Aucklanders who are struggling to make ends meet. Visit soapforsociety.org to find your local drop-off point.



In memory of Gordon Chapple

When Shelley lost their friend Gordon, they wanted to do something to honour and celebrate him, while paying tribute to the community in which he lived. An online fundraising page was created in memory of Gordon so friends and family could pay their respects. Always passionate about social justice and helping those in greatest need, Shelley told us: "Gordon's legacy will always be making others' lives better in whatever way he could and supporting the important work of the Mission seems very fitting." We are truly grateful to Shelley and Gordon's whānau for their kindness.

Western Springs College food drive

After learning about the complexities of poverty at school, Western Springs College students Scarlett and Isla decided to take action. They coordinated a food drive collecting much needed food, toiletries, and warm clothes for those who come to the Mission for support. Thank you Western Springs College, we really appreciate your generosity!

Knitting for HomeGround

When long-time supporter of the Mission Helena Hamlin was shown the plans for HomeGround three years ago, she knew she wanted to do something special. Helena has committed to knitting 80 blankets for HomeGround – one for every apartment. The wool has either been donated by friends or purchased second-hand, and each blanket has a unique design and theme. Helena began her knitting project in 2020 and has so far completed 62 blankets. She is well on her way to completing the final 18. Thank you Helena for this special gift.

A night on the street

As the weather got colder, Nicholas Seymour and his colleagues couldn't help but think of those sleeping rough over the winter. They decided to sleep outdoors for a night and raised more than \$6,700 for the work of the Mission. "The sleepout was cold and at times uncomfortable, and also the night was filled with pockets of reflection on others doing it hard every night," he says. Nicholas had a personal connection with the cause. "My five siblings and I lived with our parents, aunt, uncle and three cousins in a three-bed house in East London in the early 1970s. A tough period for me but we were lucky we had whānau to lean on. Many do not have this." We're so grateful to Nick and his colleagues for their support.



Nicholas Seymour and his colleagues spent a night sleeping on the street and fundraised for the Mission.

Trust and Foundations

We are grateful to all Trusts and Foundations who support the Mission's work. Thank you to the following Trusts and Foundations who recently made grants to the Mission for their ongoing commitment to supporting Aucklanders facing complex hardship.

- Grassroots Trust
- Sutherland Self Help Trust

Meet John Cashmore,

Senior AOD (Alcohol and Other Drug) Professional, Managed Withdrawal Services – Social Detoxification

How long have you worked at the Mission?

I've worked at the Mission for 11 years – I'm pretty happy in my work.

The Social Withdrawal Service (or Social Detox) used to be in Federal Street in a 100-year-old building, and then we were in Avondale for three years while HomeGround was built. It's great to be here at HomeGround in a purpose-built facility where there's plenty of room and plenty of office space. The rest of the team and I are really enjoying it.

What does a Senior AOD Professional do? What is a typical day like for you?

I'm an AOD Community Worker, so I get to work with clients in the community. It means I'm out and about and there's lots of variety. Because of COVID-19 restrictions we tend to do our assessments over the phone these days rather than in-person, but I still get to do things like take clients to appointments (e.g. to the doctor, dentist, hospital, laboratory, court or probation services appointments). It means you get to spend one-on-one time, which is really good.

Our referrals tend to come from other services (both from the Mission's residential services and from other providers) but people can self-refer as well. People can contact the Mission and ask for an assessment to help them withdraw from alcohol or drug use.

How did you get into this kind of work?

I used to work with at-risk youth in West Auckland, and then I was at my son's AUT graduation, and saw some people getting certificates for a qualification in addiction. I realised that would be a good next step for me – addiction was part of what we would see in youth work.

So I took a year out to do that qualification at AUT so that I could move into this sector. It taught me the importance of having a therapeutic relationship with clients – being empathetic and supportive.

What is a challenge that you face in your role?

There are lots of challenges but it's very rewarding work. Time management is one challenge – the work can be unpredictable because it doesn't come at a steady pace. Just when you think things are quiet, there are lots of phone calls and lots of needs all at once. I like the variety that comes with that though.

What is your favourite thing about working for the Auckland City Mission?

The most rewarding thing is when someone comes back to tell you that they've been sober for three years and they're working now.

At the end of each day, I just hope that we've brought some positive change to people's lives. These are problems that were not created in 10 minutes and you can't solve them in 10 minutes, but you can certainly help move people in the right direction.



Senior AOD Professional
John Cashmore at HomeGround.

Give a gift today to help
support the people in our
community in desperate need.

How to donate...

You can make one-off or regular donations to the Mission online:

aucklandcitymission.org.nz



Bank deposit: Acc no: 12-3011-0520064-00
REF 1: SPR23
REF 2: Donor ID or Surname
REF 3: Donation

Phone: (09) 303 9209

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