



ANDREWS CENTRE

ENDEAVOUR MINISTRIES

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ANNUAL REPORT 2020

2020 has certainly been a very challenging year but also a year when we have been really amazed at the generosity of so many who have supported the work of Endeavour Ministries Inc. and The Andrews Centre. Last year we were challenged with the prospect of having to find an alternate location for the Andrews Centre or purchase the building we have been renting for the past 20 years. No alternate site seemed suitable and so began the journey of finding the means to stay and continue all the vital services provided by the Andrews Centre.

What we have managed to achieve since then is beyond all expectations! Settlement went through in April this year, thanks to donations received and monies raised through the sale of two of our emergency units. The purchasers have kindly allowed us to continue the use of these units for emergency accommodation.

At the end of March this year Covid19 meant all our psychologists and counsellors ended up having to provide all counselling services online from home. Whilst this was difficult for many to adjust to, it at least allowed this service to continue and it certainly proved to be absolutely vital that it did so! Meanwhile the Andrews Centre remained open to provide necessary emergency food relief and financial help to many in need.

RENOVATIONS!



With the psychologists working away from the building, we have been able to undertake major renovations to a very tired and neglected building. ! Generous donations enabled us to complete all the works needed including replacement of rotting windows and eaves. Trees were trimmed or removed where needed thanks to Taj Jedrys volunteering time and effort. The exterior facias were covered with durable new colorbond steel compliments of Ace Gutters and a new storeroom was built thanks to Alan Lesich. Extra pipes were installed to prevent flooding. The dentist reception area was renovated to provide a new meeting area and two new counselling offices are now located on what was the dental area of the building. John from “Hire a Hubby” donated “time and effort” to make a path in the middle garden area to allow access between the dental and main areas for the counsellors. The back carport was converted into a much more useful storage area with walls covered in and a roll a door installed. The front room was fitted out to accommodate the Opp Shop which has moved from The Terrace to be now on site at the Andrews Centre. Thanks to Bill and Shadia and Noel the building has received a fresh coat of paint.



Maranatha Christian School also helped us with general maintenance before Covid19 curtailed their activities!

EMERGENCY RELIEF



The Andrews Centre has remained open throughout this year despite all the lockdowns. As an essential service, we have provided vital support to many who, due to Covid19 have lost jobs but do not qualify for any government support. These include international students, families and individuals awaiting a decision on whether their visa applications are successful or people from New Zealand who have lived a number of years in Australia but are not Australian citizens.

Alan helping Bill bring in Foodbank Supplies

People on low income continued to seek our support for unexpected expenses such as car repairs, upfront specialist fees, medical or pharmacy expenses. The Centre has also been able to supply help with medical aids such as wheel chairs, shower chairs, wheelie walkers and even a hospital bed!! Many have also struggled to afford school books, uniform etc. Housing affordability remains a key issue, even with the government assistance during the pandemic. This support did not extend to people who were already unemployed or on pensions, so the Centre has continued to support many with financial help to keep a roof over their heads.. Unfortunately there has been a significant increase in reports of family violence over this period, and this has meant a number of families seeking alternate accommodation and looking for help with rent in advance. Our “Responsible Rescue” program has helped 49 families and individuals with help to securing or keeping housing during this critical period.



Housing help has also involved providing bedding, furniture and even clothing for individuals and families who have moved into new homes or rooms in boarding houses. Thanks to Kogo we have also had some beautiful hand knitted jumpers for children and lovely warm knitted blankets to hand out

Bill and Alan helping a single mother with beds and couches

FOOD GLORIOUS FOOD!



Alan bringing in Foodbank supplies! Donation from The Vaishnan Sangh of Melbourne The food relief room

As well as food vouchers and financial help The Andrews Centre has provided families with generous supplies of non-perishable foods, toiletries and laundry products. At the height of the lockdown when toilet paper was in short supply, thanks to Foodbank, we were able to keep people stocked with this rather essential item! We

are very grateful to the many organizations and individuals who helped keep us stocked with food and laundry products. This included food from Endeavour Hills Uniting Church, Narre Hills Community Church, Emerson School, The Vaishnan Sangh of Melbourne and Monash Health and laundry products from Central Healthcare Services, Pinch-a Poo and Share the Dignity

Thanks to City of Casey, we also had a good supply of hand sanitizer and masks to keep us safe and operational through the most difficult months.

MEALS

The Monday Meals team situated at St James Church hall in Dandenong have continued to provide around 100 or more hot meals and desserts every week to the disadvantaged and struggling from the Dandenong, Doveton and Endeavour Hills areas. Because of Covid19 restrictions, they have not been able to have people sitting at tables but have very effectively improvised to allow the service to continue. Every week there is a long line of eager and hungry guests suitably distanced from one another, waiting their turn to pick up a packaged meal and dessert which they can eat in the garden areas around the church or take home. The local police came by earlier this year no doubt concerned by the number of people on the premises. When they found out what was happening they decided they wanted to help serve the meals!! They have been involved ever since! The Assistant Commissioner even joined them for the last meal of the year! Dandenong Rotary members are also helping out. The team leaders Rob and Roslyn have been wonderfully supported by Reverend Graeme and Jane Peters who have worked tirelessly alongside them and the rest of the team and have also provided a new freezer and ovens for the Meal's kitchen. There has been a team of helpers at the Andrews Centre making up the desserts for this meal. Reclink, continued to provide recreation activities for the guests before the lockdown curtailed their activities. City of Greater Dandenong helped with the supply of fresh vegetables and fruit as did a parishioner from nearby St Mary's church. The fruit was given out each week for the guests to take home.



Every week Marien De Bruijne and Curate Mike Kicevski from St James would drive over to Crossway Baptist to pick up a truck housing portable showers so that some of the homeless who attend the meals were also able to “freshen up” with a hot shower and shave – all equipment provided!

Thanks to the easing of restrictions, The Monday Meals team provided a sit-down Christmas meal (albeit in the garden area and well socially spaced!). The meal was a mouth-watering selection of roast pork, turkey with ham and beautifully prepared vegetables! There was a whole variety of sweets to choose from and each guest went home with a Christmas hamper!



Christmas hampers at the Monday meals Christmas lunch Preparing the meals

Unfortunately, due to Covid19, we had to suspend the sit-down Thursday meals at the Andrews Centre. Nevertheless these meals continue to be made and many have benefited from our supply of packaged frozen meals which are distributed every week day to many homeless and singles who would struggle to prepare nutritious meals for

themselves. Thank you to Sue and Matilda who have come faithfully each week to prepare these delicious meals for the freezer!!



Sue and Matilda making meals



Karen, Catherine and Pam making desserts for the Monday Meal



CHRISTMAS HAMPERS AND TOYS



Christmas hampers and toys 2020



Taking home "the goodies"!

We have been able to provide around 200 generous hampers as well as toys and other gifts this year to both families at the Andrews Centre and the Monday Meals team thanks largely to The Andrews Foundation and the supply of some beautifully presented and heavily packed hampers from the parishioners at St Paul Apostle Catholic church and the "Sisterhood" group as well as toys and food from Endeavour Hills library, Endeavour Uniting church and Gleneagles Secondary College. It was wonderful to see the joy on the faces of many who had thought Christmas was going to be very bleak for themselves and their children. One mother of seven children who received a generous hamper and supply of toys just stood in the middle of the Centre waiting area and cried. She could not believe what she was receiving and was just overwhelmed. All year she has struggled to survive without her husband who, because of Covid19 was trapped overseas following a family member funeral. I was just really moved to see a refugee lady battling bowel cancer who, in response to the kindness shown to her, poured out something of her story and how much this gift meant to her. She touched the heart of an Australian mother standing nearby, who happened to be waiting for a hamper! She just spontaneously reached out to this woman with great warmth and compassion.

EMERGENCY ACCOMMODATION

Covid19 has led to a significant increase in the incidents of family violence which, unfortunately, has also meant a number of families breaking up and many mothers and children seeking alternate accommodation. With our four emergency housing units, we have provided shelter to six such families this year. We have also provided housing to a family not eligible for Centrelink payments where the husband lost his job and they their share home due to Covid19.

In total Endeavour Ministries has spent \$127,183.00 directly providing emergency relief this calendar year and around 1450 appointments for emergency relief.

NO INTEREST LOANS

There have been many families helped this year through the No Interest Loans scheme this year. Many low income families from the local secondary school can only afford the required laptop computer through this scheme where they are able to

pay for the purchase through a fortnightly deduction from the Centrelink payment. The scheme also provides many with the opportunity to purchase necessary whitegoods at a reduced rate through their partnership with the Good Guys. Car repairs and registration costs can also be covered under the scheme up to the value of \$1500.00 Thank you to Bill Matthews who organizes the majority of the loan applications at the Centre.

MONEY MINDED AND COOL MONEY COURSES

Bill has also spent valuable time this year coaching individuals in ways to effectively budget, get and stay in control of their finances.



Bill has also run the “Money Minded” course before lockdown where groups meet to go through a whole program designed to help them manage financially.

A special course at the Centre is now providing practical support for teenagers to develop financial literacy and also to heighten their awareness of how difficult it can be for people to survive financially just on Centrelink payments.

LOAN CARS AND LOAN SCOOTER

Our faithful blue Corolla continues to help families who desperately need transport but whose own car has broken down. This year the car helped a family of five where the mother suffers from a chronic illness and needs frequent visits to specialist and hospital. The car is now being used by a single mother not eligible for government payments who needed a car in order to travel to any prospective work! Next year we will add another loan car to this service – a Honda Civic! The Andrews Centre continues to provide “wheels” ,in the form of an electric scooter, to one of our elderly friends who can no longer drive but needed some way to travel to the shops etc

OP SHOP



Endeavour Opportunity Shop, now located at the Andrews Centre, is now in its 26th year! It is great to see so many come to shop there and to donate a steady flow of goods to replenish supplies! It gives us real joy to see how many see the shop as part of a community outreach which they identify with and want to support.

The volunteers who run the shop do an amazing job under the leadership of Liz McLennan and a number of those volunteers have been there 15 years or more. As well as providing many low income families with cheap clothing and household goods, the Op Shop has been an invaluable resource for the Emergency Relief team. It is great now to have the shop on site! We have provided warm coats and jumpers in winter, shoes, cutlery and crockery to many homeless or newly housed. Many needing good clothes for job interviews or work clothes or shoes for starting a particular job have been able to source these from our little shop!

COUNSELLING

Due to Covid, the majority of the counselling sessions since March this year have been conducted online or over the phone. It has certainly been a very difficult and demanding year as far as the counselling service is concerned. The need has been

overwhelming to the point where we have had to “close the books” on a number of the psychologists because of the sheer size of their waiting lists. People of all ages have really struggled as a result of the lockdown with fear and anxiety associated with the pandemic as well as the social isolation. Many living on their own have felt very isolated and lonely and often very fearful, increasingly tired, confused and losing hope. Some of the more elderly clients really struggle to be counselled online and a few counselling sessions have continued at the Centre to help these people. Counselling has been about allaying fears, and putting strategies in place to help them manage their well-being and connections whilst still adhering to all the COVID 19 restrictions Thanks to the City of Casey we have special sneeze guards and other protections in the counselling room to keep them safe.

Others who are out of work are struggling financially as well as coping with all the stresses related to job loss or potential permanent loss of job or business etc. There are also many struggling with relationship issues as a direct result of the current situation, so part of the counselling work has been around supporting and advising clients who are victims of domestic violence or who have separated and are trying to cope now with living on their own. Parents also are seeking counsel to deal with parenting issues and difficulties arising from children having to learn from home Many young people are struggling to cope with separation from their friends and the lack of any peer support or social activities such as sport etc. Others find it really difficult to adapt to online learning. The second stage of lockdown has proved to have a much greater impact on the mental health of many young people than the first. Anxiety, depression, eating disorders and school refusal are among the common issues addressed by the counselling team.

Although there has been an increase in the number of Medicare sessions available to the many who need counselling support, this does not solve the problem there is with being able to access sessions for these people! Hence the Centre has paid to provide counselling to many in immediate need where the counselling provided is not paid for under the Medicare service.

LEGAL ADVICE



Noel Martin continues to provide a valuable service assisting many vulnerable and disempowered people with legal advice to help with issues such as relationship breakdown, custody issues, estate matters and elder abuse. Andrew Wheeler has also provided his valuable time at no cost to assist some of our most desperate with legal help, especially in family law matters.

COMMUNITY GARDEN

The Community Garden has had some new members this year joining the team and, though formal “get-togethers” have been limited by Covid, we have still manage to meet in small numbers as people come to tend their garden beds. There have been some wonderful crops and vegetables and the fruit trees are abundant with various fruits including apples, pears, oranges, lemons, peaches, apricots and nectarines! The chooks continue to lay eggs and some of the vegetables are used to supply the meals programs. .



Thank you to Alan Lesich for solving many maintenance issues and to Geoff Brooke looking after the fruit trees. Through a generous donation from Robert Russo, we also acquired a large amount of netting so that we did not have to share our fruit with the birds!

OTHER COMMUNITY GROUPS

Being an essential service, Al Anon has continued to use the new meeting area at the Centre for their meetings and the church group “Victory in Jesus” is once again using the main area for their Sunday meetings now that restrictions have been eased.

It remains to thank the many individuals and organizations who donate to the work of Endeavour Ministries either by volunteering, direct financial giving, donation of food, laundry products, bedding or items for the shop. It is amazing how much has been achieved thanks to the generosity of so many in our wider community. I am humbled and awed by your giving!

Judy Martin

We acknowledge with thanks following **Trusts** for their financial support over the past year

- The Andrews Foundation partnering with us to keep the doors of the Centre open with their support towards emergency relief, Christmas gifts and counselling expenses
- Peter and Lyndy White Foundation for supporting our “Responsible Rescue For People In Housing Stress”
- Department of Social Services providing funding to help with the cost of food vouchers and food for the Emergency Relief Program
- City of Casey for help with the emergency relief and counselling programs and for significant help with operational expenses

Thank you to the following **churches** for their support this year

- Endeavour Hills Uniting Church for regular donations of food and for linen, financial support and Christmas toys, voucher gifts and Christmas food for our hampers
- St Paul Apostle Catholic Church for providing us with 17 beautiful hampers to help some of our most needy families
- Narre Hills Community Church for donations of food and for financial support
- St Matthews Anglican Church for their faithful ongoing financial and volunteer support
- St James Anglican Church Dandenong for the use of their hall and volunteer support for our Monday Meals and for financial support
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Thank you to the following **community groups**

- Specsavers Endeavour Hills providing financial support
- Endeavour Hills Lionesses for financial support
- Emerson School and Gleneagles Secondary College staff providing Christmas goods for the Centre & Maranatha Christian School for garden help!
- “Sisterhood” for Christmas hampers
- “Share the Dignity” providing free sanitary pads for needy clients and also providing Christmas handbags full of toiletry items for mums and teenagers
- Kogan providing blankets and other hand knitted goods

Manager