



# ANDREWS CENTRE

## ENDEAVOUR MINISTRIES

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## QUARTERLY REPORT

APRIL TO JUNE 2022

Thank you to the many who have so encouraged our team of volunteers in these challenging times with so many really struggling to make ends meet. Every dollar donated, every parcel of food, every donation of blankets, coats, household goods, clothing etc etc – all of it makes it possible to meet the particular needs of families in hardship.



*Berwick Joey Cubs donating food*



*Fresh fruit and vegetables for the needy*

The Centre continues to provide emergency help with food vouchers, large parcels of food and takeaway meals, financial contributions towards utility, rent, car repairs, education costs and unforeseen expenses such as medical, dental or pharmacy costs. In addition a number of families have accessed important necessities such as whitegoods, computers, car repairs through our No Interest Loan scheme. Others have been supported with budgeting advice to manage the best way possible on a very limited income.

*“John” suffered a head trauma which has left him a severe epileptic. Unfortunately he has not been able to tolerate any medication to ease his suffering apart from one medication not on the PBS which costs him around \$600 a month. He lives with his partner in share accommodation, is no longer able to work and his unemployment benefit covers only his rent and medication. He has to rely on his partner (on unemployment benefits) to even be able to eat! The Centre paid for one month’s supply of medication as well as loading the couple up with a generous supply of food and cooked meals.*

Thanks to donations of medical aids such as wheel chairs, wheelie walkers, crutches, shower chairs etc we have been able to save considerable expense related to either purchasing or hiring this equipment. Our two loan cars have also been a great help to families who would otherwise find it difficult to get to work or medical appointments. At the moment one is being used to get a single dad to and from work after his own car was damaged in a car accident. The other is supporting a single mother of four who needs to be able to access medical help and also transport her teenage daughter to school.

As many would be aware, around 720 refugee families who have recently escaped Afghanistan are now living in the Doveton, Dandenong, Endeavour Hills and Hampton Park areas. We have helped a number of these families with everything from food and food vouchers to clothing, sheets and blankets and help with medical expenses. The Andrews Centre also has a worker from Jobs Victoria on hand to help these and many others with possible job opportunities.

The shortage of housing and consequent rise in rental costs has meant a number of low income families are really struggling to stay on top of household expenses. The smallest unforeseen expense can mean they fall behind in rent and face imminent eviction at a time when finding alternate accommodation is extremely hard. As well as high rental costs, of course, is the rise in the cost of utilities, petrol and food. It really is a very difficult time for the poorest in our community to be able to manage. The Andrews Centre is providing vital support to many who do not know where else to turn.

*“Joanne” has just given birth to her fifth child. Her husband was injured playing sport and has had two weeks off work. This, coupled with two contributing family members leaving the home, has meant they are now behind in rent and have received a Notice to Vacate. Judy was absolutely desperate and came to us for help to try to get the money together to avoid eviction. The Centre provided immediate assistance and also helped with budgeting and referrals to help the family achieve more secure tenure into the future.*

*“Mary is a single mother with two grown up sons. One son has moved out and the other son living with her has an intellectual disability requiring her care and support. Mary is in private rental and survives on casual work as the Jobseeker allowance would not even cover the cost of her rental. The only work she has been able to get is in childcare over 30 km from her home. Unfortunately she fell behind in rent due to Covid restrictions on work and has struggled to make up consequent rental arrears. Recently she lost another week’s pay due to suffering badly with arthritis which meant that her doctor ordered her to have a week off work. The Centre has helped her to get back on track with rent, covering her arrears. She was also given advice around seeking a carer’s payment and/or support from NDIS. In a recent note she stated the following:-*

*...Dear Judy firstly I just wanted to say a huge thank you for all your help not just help with my rent but the chat we had on Friday really helped me feel less alone and isolated. I have spend the weekend researching NDIS and other help...*

We were also able to help this mother with a double bed and mattress for her son delivered by our volunteers in the Andrews Centre van

## EMERGENCY HOUSING

This is such a vitally important part of our work in the present difficult climate. At the moment we have four families in our four units – all of whom have been victims of domestic violence. One little family includes a baby only 12 weeks old! It is always

a challenge to keep on top of maintenance issues in these units and we are very grateful to Alan Lesich for the vital role he plays as our housing maintenance manager.



We are also very grateful for the contribution of Men's Shed and Brian Hall when we had to do a major re-paint and repair of one of our vacated units. They did a wonderful job painting, repairing and installing new ovens and rangehoods.

### Endeavour Op Shop To The Rescue



Liz doing a morning sort



Endeavour Op Shop

*“Harry” is a young man who has been sleeping rough for a number of weeks now. He came to us in dire need of some decent clothing, some shoes and socks. The girls in the shop made it their mission to find him some warm and clean shirts, trousers, shoes and a winter jacket. He came with his case worker who was given a K-mart voucher to purchase clean socks and underwear for “Harry” while he had a shower and hot meal at the Centre. “Harry” had tears in his eyes when he emerged from the bathroom in his clean, neat and rather attractive outfit!*

Having our shop “on site” has been a great help, especially as the cold weather leaves many seeking warm clothing and blankets to counter the winter chill! Even with the small amount charged, many families on low income are delighted with the good quality clothing they have been able to afford! The community support for our little shop is nothing short of amazing and we are so grateful for what the shop provides towards supporting the work of the Andrews Centre. We have many volunteers there who have been with us for over 20 years and they continue to provide a wonderful service. A special thank you to our faithful team of early morning sorters – Andy, Liz, Peg and Lorraine – who brave the cold early every morning to sort donations ready for the shop to open.

### MONDAY MEALS

Every Monday our meals team in Dandenong provide many homeless with the chance to have a hot shower and shave before being served a choice of meat or

vegetarian hot lunch and a dessert The mobile shower truck has been a wonderful addition every week. Guests are also sent home with extra “goodies” including fruit or left over meals. Thanks to Kogo, some will be provided with warm beanies and scarves this winter. Rotary and Dandenong police help out every week and over 140 meals are served, providing nutrition, helpful advice and good company for many who struggle to make ends meet but are often socially isolated and struggling with mental health issues. Thanks to Reclink, the Monday Meals’ guests are also provided the opportunity to participate in some physical activities after the meal in the multi-purpose sports ground at St James.



#### TAKE-AWAY MEALS

Thanks to the generous support of Sue Bracher, our Andrews Centre “chef extraordinaire”, we are able to keep a stock of delicious takeaway meals in the freezers to be given away primarily to the homeless, or those in boarding houses who do not often get to cook a nutritious meal for themselves. Around 60 meals are cooked and stored each fortnight.

#### EASTER FUN DAY

We celebrated Easter with the children of a number of the families who have sought our help over the last year or so. It was great fun as the children did crafts, played games, did an Easter egg hunt and even joined in a Chicken dance!! There were prizes for the best colourings and, of course, we had a visit from Easter bunny!



*Easter Bunny entertaining the children*



*Making Easter baskets*

#### RENOVATIONS!



Thanks to the hard work of our Management Committee, we have created a nice new patio area at the side of the Andrews Centre. It is hoped we might be able to use it for outdoor meals in the summer months. Meanwhile over the winter months, thanks to Ian Ferguson, we also have a good supply of wood.

## COUNSELLING

All our counselling and psychology team are incredibly busy trying to make room for the many seeking their help and support. Unfortunately, the numbers seeking help remain quite overwhelming. Covid lockdowns have certainly taken their toll on many who were already fragile and struggling with mental health issues. It is good to see the intersection between the work of the counsellor and the emergency relief team in terms of meeting the needs of some of the most needy seeking counselling.

*“Jenny” is a mother of four who has recently lost her husband to cancer and the grief counselling she has received both before and after his death has been a great help to her. In addition, the Centre has been able to support her with food and vouchers and legal advice. One of her children has also been helped with counselling.*

Starting late May three of our team began the long-awaited PEERS program for teenagers who struggle with forming and keeping friendships. This can be a major concern as it impacts seriously on the mental health of many young people. They can become highly anxious, socially isolated, sometimes bullied, and can end up refusing to attend school. The program involves two concurrent groups – one for the teenagers themselves and one for their parents so that they are helped to know how best to support their son or daughter.

## LEGAL ADVICE

It remains invaluable to be able to access advice from Noel on issues related to the law. This advice can be very helpful to many who feel disempowered and at a loss to know how to deal with particularly stressful personal situations.

The type of issues he addresses, either himself or by directing people to relevant other helps include: tenancy issues, elder abuse issues, car accident and infringements, information on Wills and Powers of Attorney, advice around supporting incapacitated seniors or children. He also provides Statutory Declarations relating to loans.

## MIGRANT ENGLISH

Heather and Judy continue to provide one on one English classes to support migrants wanting to improve their ability to communicate both verbally and in written form.

## READING AND LEARNING PROGRAM FOR TODDLERS



Working with Endeavour Hills library  
The Andrews Centre has hosted a most delightful program each Friday for parents with children two years old or younger. The program is designed to help parents to promote early literacy in their young children and it is a real joy just to watch how these children are engaged via books, songs and actions. The program has been provided without any cost and the children have even gone home with extra books to enjoy.

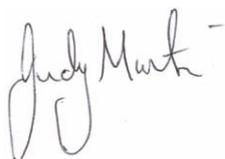
## OTHER COMMUNITY GROUPS

The Andrews Centre continues to make its facilities available to other community groups such as Al Anon every Monday and a church group running each Sunday at the Centre.

## COMMUNITY GARDEN



Winter crops are now in and all the beds are being used. Maranatha Christian College VCAL group have taken one bed over just to grow vegetables for the Monday Meals. With the rising cost of vegetables, this is a real blessing! Lots of oranges, lemons have been picked of late from all the fruit trees surrounding the garden and one garden bed alone has boasted the growth of 25 healthy looking pumpkins now ready to pick! We have also had a donation of six chooks happily settled into their new home

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Judy Murt".

On Behalf of the Management Committee

Thank you to all the organizations and individuals without whose support we could not keep doing this very important work in our community.

The Andrews Foundation; Peter and Lyndy White Foundation; City of Casey; DSS; Specsavers; Hire a Hubby; Roman Works; Endeavour Hills Uniting, Anglican, Catholic, Narre Hills Churches Community Church Victory in Jesus, Narre Hills, St James Anglican Dandenong

To donate towards the work of Endeavour Ministries the bank details are as follows

Account Name

BSB 063610

Acct 10419490

Please provide email and/or address or name so that a receipt can be sent.

Email Address [admin@andrewscentre.org](mailto:admin@andrewscentre.org)

**ALL DONATIONS OVER \$2 ARE TAX DEDUCTABLE**