

THRIVE

Thrive Autumn 2020



Chris and Lisa outside the Vulcan Street Community Hub

Thread Together Brings Hope

Chris and Lisa lost their home near Mogo in the Black Summer Bushfires. They received support from the Vulcan Street Community Hub in Moruya, the outcome of a new partnership between Anglicare and Thread Together in the wake of the fires. **Story continues on page 3.**

Message from the CEO



"Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering..."

Hebrews 10:23

Perhaps you are like me. With COVID-19 restrictions forcing many of us to slow down, there has been time to truly feel the grief and loss of being separated from friends and family over the past few weeks. We all bear the pain of these separations and loss of connection. For some of you the grief will be deeper, perhaps even made tougher by financial insecurity and job loss.

There have been mixed impacts for our Anglicare teams across the region. Some like our emergency relief centres and our new bushfire assistance services on the South Coast have seen an influx of people seeking help. Others like our Early Learning services have experienced the effects of many families choosing to keep their children home during this time.

So what is a healthy Christian response to the pandemic and for people still recovering from the bushfires? Former Anglican Bishop of Durham, N.T. Wright says our vocation in dark times is not to seek explanations for human suffering, which would no doubt be either glib or misplaced. Instead, Wright says we should look to the ancient Jewish poems and songs in the Psalms. Our vocation, he says, is "not to be able to explain" but "to lament instead".

I would add that it is also our vocation to be compassionate: to share the burden of other people's suffering:

"As the Spirit laments within us, so we become, even in our self-isolation, small shrines where the presence and healing love of God can dwell. And out of that there can emerge new possibilities, new acts of kindness, new scientific understanding, new hope."

As you read through the following stories, we hope you will be encouraged by the resilience of the Anglicare team members who have rallied together and worked so hard during this incredibly difficult time. We are putting in place all that we can to ensure our staff are supported and protected during this time so they in turn can continue to serve those who are most vulnerable.

We also hope you'll be encouraged by stories showing the outpouring of community support of which many of you have been a part. Your prayers, volunteering and financial giving has been crucial at a time when more and more families are experiencing trauma and are in need. We also thank the companies that have reached out to us to provide substantial levels of material aid. These multiple acts of kindness are what helps communities, families and individuals to hope, heal and thrive in the face of tremendous challenges. Thank you.

Jeremy Halcrow
Anglicare CEO

\$
7,330

bushfire-affected people received financial aid from Anglicare between Feb - April 2020


37,644

items of brand new clothing donated to bushfire-affected people through our partnership with Thread Together


500

people shared their stories of grief and loss strength and resilience with Anglicare case workers



Chris and Lisa's Story continued

During the 'Black Summer' bushfires that caused 5.4 million hectares of destruction in NSW, Chris worked through the night to set up Evacuation Centres in the South Coast towns of Moruya and Narooma.

While Chris worked to provide emergency shelter for the community, his wife Lisa and their four children were preparing to defend their property.

At 5am on New Years Eve, the fire front was just 12km away.

"There was a very funny feeling in the air that morning. It was very calm but I was the hottest I ever felt," describes Lisa. Just 30 minutes later, the firestorm had reached the nearby town of Mogo. "I realised then that we were in trouble".

Fortunately, their family evacuated safely but their home and possessions were destroyed.

"It is difficult at first because when you've lost everything, you don't know what you need" says Lisa.

"We'd already been to a couple of the centres that had donated clothes which was fine for emergency clothing. But coming into Anglicare, people met us at the door and were very nice. They didn't just give us new clothing and advice, but a sympathetic ear and someone to talk to" says Chris.

Vulcan Street Community Hub in Moruya

Anglicare have partnered with Thread Together to create the Vulcan Street Community Hub in Moruya where people affected by the bushfire can choose from a large range of brand new clothing, receive emergency food relief plus emotional and practical support.

Chris shared that the partnership between Anglicare and Thread Together made a huge difference to him. Being able to wear new clothes to work meant that things could be 'business as usual' helping him regain a sense of normality in his life.

"The biggest thing about the whole process is that it gives people dignity" says Chris.

"I didn't know much about Anglicare [before the bushfires] but what they've done for us is amazing. They've become an extended family. So much so that we're looking at ways that we can give back to Anglicare now," says Lisa.

"Our friends and neighbours ask us 'where did you get your shirt from?' and it's really exciting to tell them that they can come into Anglicare and get fitted out and be well looked after." ■



new Anglicare staff members hired as Bushfire Recovery Coordinators in Batlow, Bega, Eden, Moruya & Cobargo



of toilet rolls donated by Quilton have been distributed through Anglicare services to address supply shortages affecting vulnerable families



worth of new furniture, bedding, mattresses and camping equipment donated by Domayne Furniture, Good360, Givit, Big W, Bunnings and Pottery Barn



Joc pictured with his case worker, Darryl



Joc's Story

Eager to make a positive difference despite his dysfunctional upbringing, Joc joined the fire brigade at just 14 years of age.

Joc served in the NSW Fire Brigade for 22 years, but even his experience as a crew leader in the specialised division, could not prepare Joc for the horrors of the Canberra Fires in 2003.

After days of fighting the erratic fires in the Brindabella Valley, Joc was sent home for a few hours rest. His rest was interrupted when he received an urgent call to say the 'fires are coming!' and they had just one hour to get people out.

Joc worked to frantically evacuate families in the suburb of Duffy but fires overcame the suburb in just 20 minutes.

"The fires were 150 – 200 foot going over the top of us. There were gas cylinders exploding. The kids were screaming. It was horrific" recalls Joc.

Joc and his team weren't able to evacuate everybody and tragically, the people left behind lost their lives.

The trauma of the Canberra Fires haunted Joc and led to his diagnosis of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and seasons of severe depression.

Joc found it difficult to complete day-to-day activities such as cleaning his home and he had a fall in his bathroom that left him trapped for three hours. "I realised I couldn't do this anymore," says Joc who then contacted Anglicare for help.

Joc now receives support from an Anglicare case worker through the NDIS. "I was so isolated [but] when Anglicare came into my life they got me out and about and I was able to do things that I hadn't done in a very long time."

The recent 'Black Summer' bushfires on the NSW South Coast threatened Joc's home in Bateman's Bay but he praised the team at Anglicare for doing so much to support him through the distressing time.

When asked how Joc was supported by Anglicare during the recent fires, he said "Words can't describe it. What they've done for me. They checked in with me several times a day, and would visit me at least once a day just to make sure I was okay."

"[Anglicare] go over and above. They think they're just carers but they're everything. They're a shoulder to cry on. They listen... I can't explain the lengths they went to for me," says Joc.

Joc and his case worker, Darryl, have developed a great friendship through their mutual love for music, and having 'jam sessions' together has been a huge comfort to Joc. ■



Bushfire Recovery Team

In response to the outpouring of need as a result of the bushfires, Anglicare has employed five Bushfire Relief Coordinators to assist communities in Batlow, Cobargo, Eden, Bega and Tomago. Joanne Burrell, one of the newly appointed coordinators, explained that "we're here to provide care and support to community members who have been affected by the fires. Everyone's experience has been different so we are able to respond on a case by

case basis." Through the work of these new team members Anglicare is able to offer some financial assistance, material aid and referrals over the coming months.

If you are in need of support as a result of the bushfires and are from the NSW South Coast of the NSW Snowy Mountains regions, please call us on 1800 875 153 or (02) 6152 8444 during office hours.





Art For Aged Care Project

The COVID-19 pandemic has meant many people, especially the elderly, have become increasingly isolated due to strict social distancing measures.

Fiona Harris, an educator from Calwell Early Childhood Centre, has launched a heart-warming project aimed at keeping young children and aged care residents connected when face-to-face visits are no longer an option.

The Art for Aged Care project is an opportunity for young children to express their love and care for elderly members of the community through art and notes of affection.

"Creating art and sending it with letters to aged care residents is the best way to keep connected. We can't see them physically but we can let them know we still care" says Fiona. ■



Children with Calwell Educators Steph and Fiona



Katrina's Story

Five years ago, Katrina's life changed forever. She took the big step of becoming a foster carer.

"My mother and grandmother were both foster carers so I think it was inevitable that I'd become one too," says Katrina.

She now cares for three young boys, as well as a teenage biological daughter. "I think it's a great learning experience for my daughter. Being a foster sibling can teach biological children to have greater empathy and compassion."

The boys Katrina cares for, like all foster children, have experienced a level of trauma. As the children visit psychologists and adjust to a more consistent life, the transition and healing can sometimes be difficult.

"Having people offering respite care gives parents like me a rest which is really appreciated. Some days can be tough. But when you see the children trying out a skill for the first time,

becoming more relaxed, or suddenly giving you a hug, it melts your heart. It makes the tough days worthwhile. I don't think anyone would regret becoming a foster carer. These children just want to be loved," says Katrina.

Anglicare continues to recruit, train and support foster carers during the COVID-19 restrictions. "I don't think I could do this without the help of the

Anglicare team," says Katrina. "With COVID-19 they've offered additional help and respite. It helps me love what I do. I can't imagine doing anything else."

For more information about becoming a respite, short-term or long-term foster carer with Anglicare or St Saviours (in south Sydney and Nowra), visit www.anglicare.com.au or www.stsaviours.org.au.



Interested in becoming a Foster Carer?

There are children in NSW who urgently need foster care placements.

Call 1300 990 770 for more information.

**not actual family pictured*



Celebrating our Disaster Recovery Teams

This past summer we have drawn on the support of our Disaster Recovery teams more than ever. Over 60 volunteers selflessly assisted at over 20 Bushfire Emergency Evacuation Centres across regional NSW and the ACT – some for weeks at a time.

The impacts of the fires were truly devastating with 5.4 hectares of land destroyed, over 2400 homes

destroyed, and 6 percent of NSW state land destroyed.

Mercifully, in the midst of all this our volunteers joined with other agencies and with over 4000 firefighters to provide critical assistance. Over 14,000 homes were saved and thousands of people received care and practical support. Thank you for your support!

ANGLICARE
PENS Against POVERTY

LOST & FOUND

The LOST THING
by Shaun Tan

FREE Schools Writing Competition

Calling all young writers! Write an original POEM or STORY (no more than 500 words) based on the theme, "Lost and Found".

- Entries close Friday, 6 September 2020
- For students from the Australian Capital Territory and surrounding regions, in grades 3-10
- A WINNER and HIGHLY COMMENDED entry will be chosen from each of SIX categories
- Entries judged by author Jackie French and other (or authors) journalists
- Major prizes to support young writers donated by Caliburn Insurance Brokers and Heala
- Awards ceremony Friday, 18 October 2020 at Canberra College Performing Arts Centre

For more information visit www.pensagainstpoverity.org



Pens Against Poverty 2020

The Pens Against Poverty competition gives children and young people the opportunity to use their voice and creative writing skills to heighten their awareness and understanding of poverty and social issues, allowing them to develop their creative skills to make a difference now and in the future.

We believe that this year, Pens Against Poverty is more important than ever. Students and parents are learning to cope with completely new ways of schooling and Pens Against Poverty is an opportunity to bring students together for a unified purpose.

The theme for 2020 is "Lost and Found" and participants are encouraged to seek inspiration from Shaun Tan's novel "The Lost Thing".

The competition includes categories for students from Year 3 to Year 10 in ACT and NSW schools.

For more information or to submit an entry, visit www.pensagainstpoverity.org



Message from Bishop Mark



"We're all in this together."

Somehow those words have become stuck in my head during this COVID-19 season, courtesy of TV advertising on high rotation. It's certainly true that the challenge of responding to COVID-19 has impacted all areas of society. Nonetheless, if solidarity is to be more than a slogan it needs to be expressed in genuine community and care for everyone. Across the Diocese Anglicare and local churches are being called to serve those who are so easily overlooked at times like these – overseas students, asylum seekers

and refugees, workers in casual and temporary employment.

In 1 Corinthians 12:26 the Apostle Paul outlines what solidarity looks like for the people of Jesus – "If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honoured, all rejoice together with it." In difficult times, may that vision inspire our work and enliven our communities.

Bishop Mark Short

Diocese of Canberra/ Goulburn

+ Prayer Point

Pray for Anglicare's contribution to the Canberra Relief Network and other initiatives to provide food assistance at this time.

May we connect with those most in need.

+ Prayer Point

Pray for communities across the Diocese still recovering from summer bushfires and for Anglicare and other workers called to serve in those places. May they continue to receive support and encouragement.



Welcome Rev'd Sarah

The Rev'd Sarah Plummer has been appointed as Anglicare's new Director of Mission and Culture.

When asked what she is anticipating in her new role, Sarah said, "I really enjoy meeting people and hearing their stories. I love discovering ways communities can flourish together so that the most vulnerable have evidence of hope and goodness."

"It will be a privilege to serve Anglicare and I really look forward to this new opportunity," says Sarah.

Most recently Sarah served as a Senior Chaplain with the NSW Police in partnership with Anglicare Sydney. Her role saw her responsible for caring for those serving on the frontline including members of the specialist commands such as the counter-terrorism unit, marine unit and PolAir.

She also worked across all NSW Dioceses to conduct weddings, funerals and significant state services for the NSW Police.

Prior to her appointment of that position in 2016, Sarah worked as a chaplain within Anglicare Sydney's residential aged care services and the Director for Prayer Ministries at World Vision International.

Sarah looks forward to becoming part of the Anglicare family and connecting with staff across the organisation. She commenced her new role in May.

Her position includes leadership of Anglicare's mission goals, coordinating church engagement and the oversight of Anglicare College and workforce development team.

Please join us in welcoming Rev'd Sarah.



**HOPE.
HEAL.
THRIVE.**

Your support makes a big difference!



Make a financial contribution

This year is shaping up to be one of the most difficult our emergency relief teams have ever seen. The number of families needing help is unprecedented. Your financial gift can help us make a difference.



Make a donation of food or toiletries

With many of our Pantry Appeal activities being cancelled this year, we are receiving only a fraction of our normal supplies while the need remains greater than ever. Donations of food and toiletries will go to families facing hardship who are in need of urgent support.



Pray for Anglicare staff, clients & services

2020 is bringing us challenges we've never faced before. Your prayerful support is greatly appreciated during this difficult time.

See our enclosed prayer card for our current prayer requests.

thank you



Thank you again to our generous donors for making these wonderful projects happen. If you haven't donated, or would like to make a further contribution, your donation would be appreciated.

Donate here or on
www.anglicare.com.au

1. Please complete this form
2. Enclose this form / cheque in an envelope and post to us at
GPO Box 360, Canberra ACT 2600

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Thank you for your generosity. A receipt will be sent to you shortly. Donations over \$2.00 are tax-deductable

Thrive Autumn 2020

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