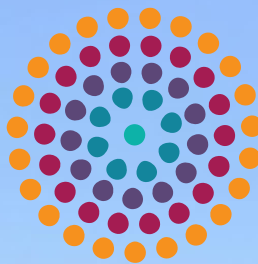


THRIVE

AUTUMN 2021



EDEN CANOE PROJECT

In November last year, Anglicare Rural Chaplain, Rev'd Michael Palmer, coordinated a community project to empower Aboriginal children from Eden Marine High School on the NSW south coast through a canoe building project.

**Story continues on
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Rev'd Michael Palmer
with children from Eden
Marine High School NSW



MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

To help shape our mission the Anglicare Board has adopted Jesus' words from John's gospel: "I came that they may have life and have it abundantly". Anglicare's tagline explains this mission with three simple words: Hope. Heal. Thrive. Thriving carries that sense of human flourishing and living life in all its fullness, hence Anglicare's commitment to work towards alleviating material poverty as well as healing past trauma. Dr Ed Stetzer, Dean of Wheaton College explains the concept of "abundant life" this way: it is a gift received when we live knowing we are stewards of the blessings of God.

It may seem odd to talk about abundant life in the context of 2020 and a devastating, unprecedented bushfire followed by a global pandemic. However 'abundance' is about our orientation to life, and our confidence in the trustworthiness of God's promises. We hold on to our hope of New Life and a New Creation.

The next year will be dominated by recovery from the current recessionary economic conditions. It is highly likely the recovery phase will continue through 2022 and into 2023. We expect to see a significant increase in demand now JobKeeper has finished. For crisis services like our homelessness programs, the pressure will be to do more with the same resource.

Sadly, 2020's unprecedented bushfires is a forewarning of worse to come. Climate change is predicted to worsen the frequency and scale of extreme weather events: including floods, heatwaves, cyclones, droughts and bushfires. Vulnerable communities are often the hardest hit by climate impacts and the least able to cope, adapt and recover. No one organization can tackle such a large and complex problem. We all have to play our part. While Anglicare needs to become more systematic in our sustainability planning, we also need to build alliances to support marginalized communities, especially the so-called "thin markets" of rural NSW. In their own way the two stories on this page Eden Canoe project and Carlin Stanford's work in Cobargo show the power of this collaborative approach.

Jeremy Halcrow
Anglicare CEO



BUSHFIRE RECOVERY UPDATE!

In February 2020, the NSW Rural Fire Service reported that **2,439** homes had been destroyed in NSW and over **17 million** hectares of land was burnt across the region.

Amidst the tragedy, hundreds of generous donors stepped in to help those in need. With **\$220,770** donated specifically to bushfire recovery in addition to funding from the Department of Social Services, Anglicare was able to respond quickly and provided assistance to more than **700** bushfire-affected households.

Support provided to individuals and families included immediate financial aid, emergency food relief, new furniture and white goods, new clothing, accommodation, construction materials and fuel. Anglicare recruited six bushfire Recovery Coordinators to provide urgent and practical support in the communities of Batlow, Cobargo, Bega, Moruya and Eden.

Anglicare is committed to remaining with local communities as long as possible and is currently providing pastoral care, financial counselling, emergency food relief, new clothing through our partnership with Thread Together and is working on a number of community development projects.



Carlin Stanford outside the Cobargo caravan



Carlin Stanford is one of six Anglicare Bushfire Recovery Coordinators employed in the aftermath of the Black Summer fires. She and her husband were attracted to the New South Wales South Coast town of Cobargo for its natural beauty and unique community. But things changed during the bushfires which swept through the region last year.

She and her family began volunteering at the Bermagui Surf Lifesaving Club which was an unofficial evacuation point. Shortly after the fires were contained, Anglicare recruited Carlin as a Coordinator specifically from the local area.

Carlin started working out of a caravan on Cobargo's main street, which is where she continues to work today.

The recovery landscape is becoming more complex. Those few families who have managed to rebuild their homes, now face the new challenge of having the capacity to deal with the full impact of the fires on their mental and emotional wellbeing.

Community-led recovery, through key people like Carlin, is one of the best approaches following a traumatic event such as the fires. But this relies on community members being strong enough to lead. One year on, many people are

finding that they are no closer to rebuilding. Instead, they've endured 12 months of hard and costly living which have diminished their dreams of owning a new home. They are tired. Because of this, Carlin has worked collaboratively with a counsellor and establish ongoing wellbeing workshops. Many of the community leaders who stepped up early to help are now exhausted and pulling back. Community-led recovery still needs ongoing support from organisations like Anglicare. But Carlin is optimistic.



EDEN CANOE PROJECT *continued...*

In November last year, Anglicare Rural Chaplain, Rev'd Michael Palmer, coordinated a community project to empower Aboriginal children from Eden Marine High School on the NSW south coast through a canoe building project.

Over five days, six young people of different ages worked together to build, decorate and eventually paddle their three canoes in the local creek.

Michael sees his role as helping people to thrive through creating healthy community connections. The canoe

project is one of the initiatives he's working on to achieve this.

"I'm an amateur canoe builder and have built several boats over the years," explains Michael. "As you work on [projects] like this together you don't just build a canoe; you're building relationships. You don't just build a boat; you get the chance to use the boat and to explore the local environment. When we took the boats out, we had Indigenous Elders come with us to share some of the local history."

The project was a community collaboration between the school, local Elders, professional boat builders and local businesses. For Michael, there's a real joy in seeing young people who may feel disconnected from their traditional culture feeling a greater sense of personal identity through an activity like this.

"IT CAN HELP THEM TO REWRITE THE NARRATIVE OF THEIR LIVES,"

- Michael

Barb & Dave's Story

FOSTER CARING DURING THE BUSHFIRES



Sue with Barb and Dave outside their new home

Anglicare foster carers, Barb and Dave Rugendyke, have fostered more than 400 children over three decades. They currently care for a 14-year-old and an 18-year-old, as well as their adopted 8-year-old daughter, Sarah, and they regularly provide respite care to toddler twins.

Sadly, they lost their home and all of their belongings during the ferocious bushfire that ripped through Cobargo on News Years Eve 2019. But even losing everything they had didn't stop them from fostering.

"It was a really difficult year. I think continuing to foster in the aftermath of the bushfires helped life feel more normal. Like everything wasn't all gone. We could still be useful and it was a bit of our old life we could hold onto when we had nothing," says Barb.

For the first few months after the fires, the family lived in four tents and a caravan before moving into a refurbished shed donated by Barb's nephew. Barb said caring for three children in temporary accommodation was challenging during the last year, but she wouldn't have it any other way.

"Barb and Dave are remarkable people and we would be lost without them" says Sue Cullen, Anglicare's Permanency

Support Program (Foster Care) Manager, South Coast.

"What they've offered to children over the years is incredible. They are simply amazing people," says Sue.

One week before Christmas 2020, almost one year since the loss of their house, Barb, Dave, their foster children and daughter Sarah, moved into their newly rebuilt home.

Anglicare continues to recruit new foster carers across regional NSW to ensure all children and young people have a supportive and nurturing home environment to help them hope, heal and thrive.

Anglicare recognises that the one-year anniversary of the Black Summer Bushfires is a difficult time for many residents of the NSW South Coast. Anglicare continues to support bushfire-affected individuals and families with emergency food relief, new clothing, pastoral care, financial counselling and a number of community development projects.

For assistance, please visit www.anglicare.com.au



HONOURING Kath Withers

Anglicare in Wagga Wagga recently farewelled an incredible foster carer, Kath Withers, who has served as a carer for more than 100 children over the past several decades. Kath also works as an artist, casting a calm and quiet presence in the artist studio of her home surrounded by paintings, sculptures and clothing through which her Wiradjuri heritage is beautifully evident.

She approaches her art in the same way as she approaches her care for children; as a natural extension and expression of who she is.

**“I WAS QUITE YOUNG MYSELF
WHEN I FIRST STARTED CARING
FOR YOUNG PEOPLE,”**

explains Kath. *“I had only recently married, and one night I remember walking through town and seeing a teenage girl sleeping on a bench in the park. I spoke to her and invited her home for a feed and somewhere safe to sleep. I guess that’s how I started foster caring.”*

Kath grew up in an Aboriginal area of Wagga Wagga colloquially referred to as Tin Town; a reference to the tin shanties of its residents. Despite the difficulties of poverty and very little formal education, Kath showed deep intelligence and empathy, and spent much of childhood caring for other children.

Kath overcame the challenges of her childhood to become a well-respected Aboriginal Elder and

award-winning artist, dedicating her time to being a mother for scores of children. *“We need more Aboriginal carers and kinship carers... These children need someone to love them unconditionally,”* says Kath.

After battling cancer, Kath made the difficult decision to cease foster caring following the 18th birthday of a young person in her kinship care in order to focus on her health.

Anglicare honours and thanks Kath for the significant impact she’s made in the lives of the children in her care, and across the Wagga Wagga community.

**To become a foster carer with Anglicare, visit;
www.anglicare.com.au**





'WALGA' EARLY LEARNING PROGRAM



In 2020 Anglicare's Southern Cross Early Learning Centre in Canberra introduced a nature preschool program known as Walga – a 'Ngunawal' word for hawk. The program was developed to help children to remain at the centre of their own learning. The curriculum includes a dedicated nature program, making the outdoors a classroom where children can jump in puddles, feel frost on the grass, run, skip and get dirty as they explore and create their own adventures, while also acknowledging the Ngunawal Aboriginal people on whose land they play and learn.

executive teaching team at Southern Cross to deliver this beautiful environment for the whole school community to enjoy.

To join, contact Southern Cross Early Learning on 02 6142 0020 or visit www.anglicare.com.au and click on the 'Early Learning' tab.



In 2021 the program expanded to operate five days a week. The space facilitates elements of Anglicare's therapeutic 'Sanctuary' model, where children are taught mindfulness in their quiet time. As part of Anglicare's continued commitment and collaboration with the ACT Education Directorate, we were so pleased to be able to work in conjunction with the



GOULBURN CHRISTMAS GIVING TREE

Donated Christmas presents and items of non-perishable food, given in the lead up to Christmas, allowed Anglicare to deliver additional support families struggling to make ends meet and cover food and housing costs over the Christmas and New Year period.

"Anglicare relies on our partnerships in the Goulburn community, especially at Christmas, and we've been overwhelmed that so many people chose to give after such a difficult year. We sincerely thank everyone who donated," she said.

For more information about Anglicare's Emergency Relief and Homelessness and Housing Service in Goulburn, visit

www.anglicare.com.au or call (02) 4823 4000 for more information.

During December and January, record numbers of people approached Anglicare's Homelessness and Housing service in Goulburn needing rental assistance, and from July to December over 270 people received emergency relief including food, toiletries and other items. Support from local churches, businesses and individuals has enabled Anglicare to continue to meet the increasing needs of the local families.

"While we appreciate all the donations received, we particularly want to mention the parish of St Saviours who support us each year through their Christmas Giving Tree Appeal.

"They donated over 180 presents as well as gift vouchers. We also want to thank the Goulburn Soroptimist Club who gave over \$500 worth of gifts. This has meant a great deal for the families we support and lifted a huge burden at a challenging time of year."

Anglicare's Regional Manager for Housing and Social Services, Toni Reay, says the organisation is extremely grateful for the community support.



PENS *Against* POVERTY

SCHOOLS WRITING COMPETITION “TIME FOR CHANGE”



Barefoot in the creek beside her bushland house, award winning Australian author, Jackie French, embodies what it means to notice and appreciate the world around you. As she prepares to once again judge Anglicare’s annual Pens Against Poverty schools writing competition, Jackie kindly invited some of the Anglicare team to film her giving a message of encouragement to budding young writers – right from her picturesque backyard.

“Don’t worry so much about the words,” says Jackie. “First you need to feel something; you need to empathize with people and with the environment around you. Then the words will naturally come.”

This year’s theme is **“Time for Change”** and is designed to educate students on issues of poverty, heightening empathy among young writers through the imagination and shared experience. The competition is open to students right across Australia from Year 3 to Year 10, and includes poetry and short stories.

Entries close Friday 3 September with winners announced in October. For more details, visit pensagainstopoverty.org



Embracing Ministries

Anglicare is proud to partner with Director Andrea De Vaal Horciu and her Embracing Ministries team as they help strengthen the lives of people affected by disability. Embracing Ministries provides more than support to people with a disability. It’s ultimately about ‘inclusion’.

Embracing Ministries provides pastoral care, spiritual support and developmentally appropriate programs for children and especially families in the Canberra area who live with disability. The program has seen incredible growth over the past year, in spite of the challenges of COVID-19.

According to Director, Andrea De Vaal Horcui, families feel they have found a place where they feel accepted, loved and embraced. *“Embracing Ministries welcomes people of all ages and abilities. We don’t just care for the child living with a disability, but for their parents and siblings too. The ministry truly offers a safe place for people to feel free to speak the truth, ask questions of each other, and offer support and care. We are now connected to over 70 families, 25 mentors and a growing number of schools and churches.”*

Following the cancellation of the 2020 Easter program, one grateful mother shared this testimony:

There was a real lack of services over Easter for children like my 9-and-a-half-year-old son with autism, who is non-verbal. What could I share with him about this momentous event of our faith? The answer came in the form of a call from Andrea who said she had an Easter package for him. I was very touched by the thought that my boy was being gifted Easter eggs by his community. But actually, it was much, much more than that.

The package, besides the Easter eggs and some thoughtful sensory activities, had the Story of Jesus. It was prepared in a language of visuals that my son could understand. I’ve always believed my son came to us as the most precious gift of God. And tied to that belief is that our boy knows the heart of God better than we do because of the purity of his soul. But as a parent, it was still so precious to read through that special story of Easter and have my boy place the red heart on the page and to tell him that he is loved by God and is so precious in His sight.



Horizons of Hope



With life slowly returning to normal after the COVID-19 lockdowns, and with churches now able to meet together face to face, Anglicare is gearing up for Anglicare Sunday 2021.

This event coincides with national Anti-Poverty Week and is an opportunity for churches to be informed and inspired about the work of Anglicare. (You can also choose to run this event at another time in the year that fits in with your parish calendar.)

While we are always extremely appreciative of the financial support we receive from parishes, Anglicare Sunday is not a fundraising initiative. It's a time we set aside specifically to engage with parishes to provide an update on the work we've achieved together over the past year.

This year's theme is **'Horizons of Hope'** which encapsulates our desire to move forward optimistically – even in uncertain times – and to keep advocating for and serving those in need in our communities.

Thank you to all churches who have partnered with Anglicare Sunday in previous years. If you're keen to sign up for 2021, simply email missionpartners@anglicare.com.au or visit www.anglicare.com.au for more details.

SUNDAY 24 OCTOBER 2021

"May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope." Romans 15:13



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

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