

The Mission *Message*

A Perfect Storm

The current world economic and financial crisis has become a “perfect storm”. The over-leveraging of banks and the creation of a property bubble through unrealistic debt has become something obviously unsustainable, but regrettably only in hindsight.

While it is hard at the time of writing to be certain of the impact of this crisis on day to day life, there are a number of early suggestions of what we should be preparing for: increased unemployment, increased bankruptcy, and increased homelessness.

Economic pressures like these are known to have a direct and unwelcome influence on health and crime in our communities, beyond the immediate and sometimes shattering impact on individuals and families.

In this country the first to suffer are usually the young, the working class (disproportionately Maori and Polynesian), and the poorly skilled.

Some of these impacts will also be felt by older people who rely on private superannuation income.

We know, from considerable research, that our social services will make the greatest difference if we can prepare well, move flexibly, and work with respect for those that we service.

This is not the time for New Zealand to return to the “bash the beneficiaries” approach of the early 1990s; of coercing and shaming those taking the brunt of this crisis into stressful and devaluing choices.

This approach is a proven failure, and only adds to the distressing statistics.

Instead, this is a time for intelligent and compassionate responses; it is a time for us all, not just those of us who work in social services, to consider how we may actively contribute to a better future for the whole of our community.

Such contributions are, of course, of time and money, but equally of respect and care. Amongst all the losses, let us not lose sight of this.



Laura Black
General Manager

Wesley Village Appeal

Since 1890, Methodists in Dunedin have been responding to many of our community’s social services needs.

We started by operating orphanages and aged care homes, and have moved to early learning, adult learning and youth training centres, as well as running programmes to provide community social workers, advocacy and support.

As society has changed so has Dunedin’s social and community issues. The Methodist Mission has evolved to meet those changing needs.

Based now in South Dunedin, but operating in Dunedin City, Mosgiel, Milton, and Balclutha, the Mission is again looking to the future.



Enough support and challenge for you to risk a better future

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themission

The Mission saw that the resources of The Mission and the church could best serve South Dunedin and these other areas through the creation of a new community and childcare facility on Hillside Road: WESLEY VILLAGE.

Although The Mission and Wesley Parish currently have buildings on this site, these are well beyond their economic life, and present more risk than benefit.

The new WESLEY VILLAGE will enhance all operations in a modern, flexible and safe complex.

WESLEY VILLAGE will provide a purpose-built facility which will include:

- Community lounge and hall
- Childcare nursery and early learning centre
- Community and social services offices
- Child and family services offices
- Meeting rooms
- Administration offices
- Edible garden learning and resource unit.



WESLEY VILLAGE will allow The Mission to develop new and existing programmes and services, including:

- Support and advocacy community workers door knocking and meeting people in their streets and homes; identifying issues, finding leaders, working with them to plan how best to create local resources and local solutions, and building tools and skills within that street or home.
- A home for community law clinics, PFLAG South and other groups to provide their support services within a community-owned facility
- Supporting older people, providing a way for them, their health workers, carers, social services, family members, other support agencies and advocates to work together.

- Day centre activities to reduce social isolation, improve parenting skills and support family literacy, including:
 - Celebrating Mums
 - Celebrating Dads
 - Managing on a Benefit
 - Personal Relationships
 - Family Health
 - Just Who is the Parent?
 - Making Chores for Children Fun
 - Moving Up and On
 - Around the House
 - From a Child's Eye.

WESLEY VILLAGE is expected to cost approximately \$5.6 million. The Mission and Wesley Parish have already donated land valued at \$1.05 million.

If you would like to find out more, please contact Laura Black at laurab@dmm.org.nz or on 466 3026.

Recent Mission News

ARAHINA FAMILY SUPPORT CENTRE

The Mission celebrated the inclusion of Arahina Family Support Centre at 2 Perth Street in Mosgiel into our family of services at a launch on Friday 10th October. Arahina is now part of our Community & Social Services section and offers:

- A mothers group / family wellness programme (Monday)
- Fun with food on a budget (Tuesday)
- Family literacy (Tuesday)
- Craft and art classes (Wednesday)
- Sewing classes (Thursday)
- Parenting course (Friday)



Arahina also provides an after school programme for children at school.

Staff and volunteers work holistically with families; and our open door is a welcome relief for those who have been

excluded or who do not fit the criteria of other agencies. Arahina Family Support Centre is a one stop shop for advice and information on a variety of subjects from health to education, job research and related skills to obtain employment. To find out more contact Sharon, our Coordinator, on 489 5273.

BIRTHDAY!

In September we celebrated the 21st birthday of Approach Community Learning.

Approach originally started independently of the Mission, and has since become one of the longest-lived small private training providers in the country.

It has also become, by dint of extremely hard work on the part of its founders and staff; the pre-eminent provider of specialist foundation education in Dunedin.

Literally thousands of trainees have benefited from the courses and learning experiences Approach provides.

COMMUNITY LAW CLINIC

We have welcomed the Community Law Centre's trial South Dunedin clinic at our Main Office, 300 King Edward Street, on Monday mornings.

Contact the Community Law Centre 474 1922 or the Mission Main Office 466 4600 for more information.

VISITS

We welcomed the President of the Methodist Church Te Haahi Weteriana o Aotearoa to the Mission in August, and Ruth Dyson, Minister of Social Development in September.

STAFFING

We have welcomed Tama Smith as our new Wise Up Walk Tall Tamariki Coordinator (tamas@dmm.org.nz). Wise Up Walk Tall is a life skills programme for primary-school aged children. Contact Tama on 455 2960.

Moe Uriaro has also started as our new Youth Training Coordinator (moeu@dmm.org.nz). Youth Training provides national qualifications framework credits (similar to NCEA) for young people aged 16-18; has low student : tutor ratios, individualised learning and a specialist staff. See below for more information.

Finally we are pleased to have appointed Dave Eggers as our new IT Coordinator (davee@dmm.org.nz), who is already saving us from much that is technological.

Something to Think On

The Sting of Poverty

The Boston Globe recently reported that bees can teach us a great deal about what it means to be poor and the flaws of

economics.

The question asked is "why some poor people act in ways that ensure their continued indigence", says the Globe. For instance, the poor are "more likely to drop out of school, to have children while in their teens, to abuse drugs, to commit crimes".



This "irrational" behaviour has no place in classical economics, the theory being that poor people have more incentive than others to improve their lot. Conservatives argue that poor people "lack the smarts or willpower to make the right choices". Liberals blame prejudice and the crippling affects of inter-generational deprivation.

However, research out of George Washington University offers a different perspective. "When we're poor our world view is shaped by deprivation and we see the world around us in terms of problems to be alleviated. A person with one bee sting is highly motivated to get it treated. But a person with multiple bee stings does not have much incentive to treat one, because the others will still throb".

The researchers suggest that the more of an undesirable thing one has, the less likely a person is to do anything about any one problem. Poverty, they say, is "less a matter of having few goods than of having lots of problems".

The logical conclusion to this? Reducing the amount of economic hardships the poor have to deal with actually makes them MORE not LESS likely to work.

A Bit of the Mission

YOUTH TRAINING

We provide Youth Training for Under 18s who are looking for an alternative to school, and want a qualification in Computing, Business Administration or Horticulture.

The Mission's Youth Training programme was originally established by Youth for Christ, who themselves became Aspire Training. Four years ago, Aspire and Approach Community Learning joined forces, and we have been pleased to offer Youth Training for up to 16 young people at a time since then.

The programme is based on individualised learning programmes, but includes unit standards toward:

- National Certificate in Computing (Levels 2 & 3)
- National Certificate in Business Administration & Computing (Level 2)
- National Certificate in Horticulture (Level 2)

We provide a relaxed learning & assessment environment,

helping trainees understand their own learning styles and needs. Learning is at the pace of the individual and is designed to meet trainee goals.

There is a low student to tutor ratio, and we provide work experience as well as specialist maths and English tuition.

For many of the trainees it is an opportunity to rediscover learning away from the formal school environment, to make new friends, to enjoy recreation periods, field trips and other outings.

Approach Community Learning is fully accredited with the New Zealand Qualifications Authority and is on the maximum 3 year audit cycle. Most of our courses are funded by the Tertiary Education Commission, and are free to students (although entry criteria do apply). Course hours are 9 am to 3.30pm, Monday to Friday. Students do the number of weeks study needed to meet their goals.



Support & Learning - Right Now

APPROACH COMMUNITY LEARNING

Restart Your Learning!

Adult Learning • Youth Training • Family Learning • Smart Food • Edible Gardens • Prisoner Education

Contact us TODAY at 177 Mornington Road, Dunedin
Phone 487 7959 or email acl@dmm.org.nz

CHILD & FAMILY SERVICES

Support for Families & Children

Early Learning Centre • 20 Free hours for 3 & 4 year olds • Family Whanau Support • Wise Up Walk Tall • OSCAR & Holiday Programme

Contact us TODAY at 11a Wesley Street, Dunedin
Phone 455 1445 or email cfs@dmm.org.nz

COMMUNITY & SOCIAL SERVICES

Advocacy & Support

Home Support • Community Support • SPAN Caversham Social Group

Contact us TODAY on 466 4600 or email css@dmm.org.nz

HOW TO HELP

Donations

The Methodist Mission relies upon the generosity of donors to help us maintain and develop our services.

If you would like to know how a donation could make a difference please contact Laura Black, the General Manager, on 466 4600, write to her at P O Box 2391, South Dunedin 9044 or email laurab@dmm.org.nz.

Work for Us

We are an equal opportunity employer and welcome applications from suitably qualified people in all walks of life. The Methodist Mission has a number of job vacancies at most times, which are normally advertised in the ODT. To find out what vacancies we have, please call us on 466 4600 or email admin@dmm.org.nz.

Remember

The Methodist Mission has been serving the Dunedin community since 1890. We are a social service agency of Te Haahi Weteriana O Aotearoa, the Methodist Church of New Zealand. The vision of the Methodist Mission is of a fair, safe, caring and sustainable society where every citizen is valued and respected and enjoys equal opportunity to lead a fulfilled life. We promote social justice through partnerships that strengthen families and build fair and safe communities. In partnership with the network of Methodist social services agencies throughout Aotearoa, ours is a commitment to Creating Cycles of Hope®.

We use the airborne seed of the native New Zealand Clematis Paniculata, also called Puawhananga ("flower of the skies") as our emblem; the Maori harbinger of spring, a traveller to far-off places, a climber that grows in harmony with host trees of the forest: a gentle, free, adventurous plant that represents our commitment to enough support and challenge for you to risk a better future.

The Methodist Mission
Main Office Phone 03 466 4600
P O Box 2391
South Dunedin 9044
admin@dmm.org.nz

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