

Cornerstone Contact Centre

Annual Report
2018



SERVING CHRIST BY SERVING OTHERS

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Cornerstone Board Chairman's Report

The last financial year has seen a number of significant changes for the Cornerstone Community in Dandenong. We moved out of our building of 25 years, which meant a massive clean-out, as well as collecting and preserving significant memorabilia from those years. We have successfully relocated to our temporary home at the Dandenong Church of Christ in David St and are enjoying a growing relationship with the Church. On behalf of the board and all at Cornerstone we would like to thank the Church for their generosity and hospitality and we look forward to growing our connection with them.

We also farewelled our CEO, Stephen Barrington. Cornerstone owes Stephen a debt of gratitude. From the moment he heard that we needed to move from our home, he tirelessly began scouring the real estate agencies in Dandenong and beyond, looking for a suitable space to relocate to. He also organised a couple of major clean up and moving days. Without Stephen's dedication and his willingness to go above and beyond, I doubt the move would have been possible.

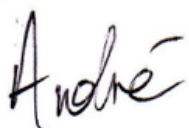
Whilst leavings are always sad, they do open the way for new beginnings. In April this year we welcomed our new CEO Zillah Everett. In the few months that she has been with us, Zillah has breathed new life into Cornerstone. The community has embraced her and it is heartening to see her love for all and her desire to see each one thrive. Zillah is also a strategic thinker and, with her guidance, a number of new initiatives, including crucially-needed programs and services, are well into the planning stage. We all look forward to seeing where God leads us for the future of Cornerstone.

In the interim between Stephen leaving and Zillah commencing, Lexie Sheard, our then chaplain, recommenced the meals for the year. The board is very grateful to Lexie for her dedication to the community and her commitment to keeping Cornerstone running day-to-day. Once we became more stable, Lexie felt it was right for her to leave and explore other opportunities. And so, we have recently welcomed Maurice to the team. Maurice has a warm, open personality which draws others to him. The men particularly have enjoyed connecting with Maurice and there are a number of different groups launching in the near future.

And finally, to the delight of all, we were able to hire a kitchen manager. Sam Hadfield has been a great addition to the team; bringing new life and organisational skills to the kitchen.

In the midst of all of this, I have been very proud of the board, our staff and the whole community who have adapted well to the changes. Everyone has been most accommodating of one another and shown genuine interest in letting individual strengths shine. We look to the future with gratitude to God for his sustaining hand over Cornerstone and with an expectation that the best is yet to come.

Every Blessing,



Andre Van Eymeren
Chair



About Cornerstone

In 2017/18, Cornerstone Contact Centre continued to have an impact within our local Dandenong community through providing a safe haven for vulnerable individuals experiencing a number of difficulties; including homelessness, family violence, isolation and relationship breakdowns. We were able to achieve this by providing a drop-in centre aimed at engaging and providing meaningful respite; where people could connect with others while having their immediate needs met; gaining access to basic services, healthy cooked meals, community service referrals, health & wellbeing support, mobile laundry, food parcels, other material aid and SWAGS.

Highlights

Cornerstone continued its mission to support people within the Dandenong community by successfully securing premises at 136 David Street, Dandenong at the Church of Christ building. Although numerous items remain in storage until a permanent premises is found, the relocation of all our facilities and equipment was a challenge met with enthusiasm and we would like to thank everyone who assisted in this transition. We would especially like to thank the Dandenong Church of Christ for all their support in allowing us to utilise their space and to Pastor Larry Edwards who continues to speak into the lives of visitors and guests at Cornerstone.



Throughout this transitional phase, we continued to provide healthy home-cooked meals each week from our new location. This financial year alone, we have served approx. 10,000 meals, including a special Christmas lunch, which would otherwise have been isolating time for families and individuals.

To further strengthen the support we provide our guests, we employed a part-time Chaplain who offers pastoral care and advocacy services for people in need of specialised support. In addition; the Dandenong Lions Club has recently commenced a community meal once a month on a Thursday night, while the generosity of the Mulgrave-Sandown Lions Club has enabled Cornerstone to purchase half a dozen new SWAGS.

On the 26th of February, in conjunction with the City of Greater Dandenong and Advocare, Cornerstone held a golf fundraising day, which raised monies for the purchase of hygiene packs to distribute to our guests.

Delivering the expertise so our guests can achieve their goals, Cornerstone this year implemented a diverse array of support services with help from the Outreach Services network:

- The **Australian College of Optometry Outreach Services** provided an optometry service every second Wednesday of the month. They also provide low-cost reading glasses for guests if required;
- **Avalon Centre** attended monthly to provide a free second-hand clothing service, shoes, bags, and books. They are wonderful organisation and our guests really love this support;
- **The community health nurses** continue to drop in to keep an eye out for those who may be in need of medical attention. These much-valued nurses often have professional contacts which enables them to arrange appointments with specialists and assist in the transportation of less mobile guests to ensure they keep their appointments;
- **Peninsula Legal** attend Cornerstone to assist individuals who are experiencing difficulties in their boarding houses;
- **Monash Health** ran immunisation clinics in May and June;
- **Link Health** ran a gambling workshop in May.

We would like to take the opportunity to thank these wonderful organisations for partnering with us to provide further support, security, safety, and wellbeing to our guests.



Supporters

Cornerstone is funded by donations and grants from individuals, businesses, community organisations, charitable trust funds, and the Victorian Government. We are very blessed to have donations from regular and sometimes unexpected sources. Thanks to our many volunteers, we can operate on a small budget and really appreciate every donation that comes our way.

Cornerstone really is a thriving community and we see it as a real privilege to be in this space alongside so many others. We would like to thank our local community, donors, supporters and sponsors who have provided financial support and prayers.

We particularly thank the following organisations for their support:

- **Avocare;**
- **Andrews Foundation;**
- **Australian College of Optometry;**
- **Avalon Walking Wardrobe Centre;**
- **City of Greater Dandenong;**
- **Community Health Nurses;**
- **Dandenong Christian Reformed Church Op Shop;**
- **Dandenong Lions Club;**
- **Feed Melbourne;**
- **Foodbank Australia;**
- **Give Now;**
- **Individual donors;**
- **Mulgrave-Sandown Lions Club;**
- **Peninsula Legal;**
- **Reclink;**
- **SWAGS for the homeless;**
- **Victorian State Government.**

Mission

Cornerstone's mission is Serving Christ by Serving Others.

Our Purpose

To reach people in need; ministering to them physically, emotionally, socially and spiritually through building relationships that lead them to Jesus Christ.

Our Team

Cornerstone Board

Cornerstone continues to develop a strong team of board members who have demonstrated experience in a broad range of areas. This year's elected team of board members are Andre van Eymeren (Chair), Corey Van Garderen, David Talathoti, Gloria Anderson, Grant Renkema, Jamie Maddaford, and Suzanne van Rooy.

Our staff

Zillah Everett- Chief Executive Officer – Part time (0.6FT)



I have recently commenced as the CEO at Cornerstone and I feel privileged to have this opportunity to work with Cornerstone Centre in this new season.

For the past 11 years, I have been working within the community sector. I have had the opportunity to gain a broad range of experience across a number of areas which includes working at a local council, women's refuge, community information and referral service, and a church-based community agency that offers an extensive range of community-based programs and therapeutic services.

Through working in these roles it has provided me experience in various areas which include support and management of teams of people, direct client support, program development, sourcing of funding and an understanding of the impacts that people are facing and dealing with in our community.

I am committed to continuing the legacy that Cornerstone has built over the past 25 years within our community. We want to continue to meet some of the basic needs within our community with the aim to continue to strengthen a sense of belonging and for people to find purpose and to provide opportunities for growth.

Maurice McKenzie – Chaplain– Part time (0.2FT)



It has now been 3 months since I started as chaplain at Cornerstone centre. It is an honour to be part of such a great team.

I am married with 4 adult children and also have 4 grandchildren.

For the last 18 years, I have been self employed in the Gym industry. During those 18 years, I have also worked in overseas cross-cultural missions in Jordan. In Jordan, I opened a gym as an outreach to marginalised Muslim Palestinians as well as serving as interim pastor with an English speaking church.

On our return to Australia, I took up a position at a community church in Shepparton predominately working with the marginalised and indigenous community. Over this period I have learnt to accept people for who they are without judgement. My journey has taught me to walk alongside people without expectations or agendas.

God has taught me that genuine love and acceptance of people is what will bring change and open the door into His Kingdom. After 3 months at Cornerstone, I'm starting to see that relationship and trust is being built with certain clients which has been encouraging and rewarding.

God is at work within Cornerstone.

Sam Hadfield - Kitchen Manager – Part time (0.4FT)



I have worked within the community sector as well as within retail and administration roles. My experience includes assisting in the development of activities and programs within the community sector, as well as cooking at a resident centre and community cafe. I've been a mentor and coach working to improve people's skills and confidence via fun learning activities and sharing experience.

I love singing, cooking, collecting different types of tea and working in the community to make a difference. I'm currently on maternity leave but will be returning to Cornerstone shortly.

Stories of impact

The following is a selection of stories highlighting our positive impact within the community; particularly with our guests who deal with complex and challenging situations:

"Glen suffers from anxiety and put off making a podiatrist appointment for months, not even willing to answer calls from the doctor's office. However through engaging with Julie face-to-face in an environment where he felt at ease, she was able to arrange an appointment for him that he feels comfortable. Through the environment provided by Cornerstone, Julie has helped Ron to help himself.

"Anne came to Australia from New Zealand. Anne has been homeless for four months due to domestic violence. When she attended Cornerstone in February she received a food parcel, toiletries and a meal. She said coming to Cornerstone "It puts a smile on my face because I am not worrying about where I am going to get my next meal. Anne has jumped wholeheartedly into the community because of the support provided and the opportunity to volunteer and clean up. Anne has found fast friends and she says "it feels really good to come to talk and have a good cry. It made me feel like I'm not struggling as much."

"Richard comes to Cornerstone "to meet people" and make friends. This has been life-changing for Brendan. He has been an elective mute for most of his life. He said, "When I first came to Dandenong, I couldn't talk for 51 years. People would talk to me, but I couldn't talk back. After one year coming to Cornerstone, people at Cornerstone would talk to me and my voice came back."

Volunteers

Our service would not exist but for the dedicated team of volunteers who attend each week to provide support in every facet of our organisation, from kitchen duties to collecting donations, setting up and cleaning. Thank you so much for all the hours of work and dedication to Cornerstone. It is priceless. We continue to have a number of students who volunteer their time to assist within our service. It's great that we can provide this opportunity to young people within our community. We would like to make a special and big thank you to Helen who volunteered as our cook for about eight months. Helen did an amazing job and we appreciate all the hard work she completed over this time.



Annual General Meeting

Location: Dandenong Baptist Church

Date: 22/05/2018

Time: 7.00pm – 8.35pm

Attendees: Cameron Bedeiph, Martin Kemp, Paul Briscoe, Melanie Cumming, Lexie Sheard, Susan Masima, Suzanne Van Rooy, Sarah Collin, Grant Renkema, Alex Stok, Samantha Hadfield, Brendan Tan, Zillah Everitt, Andre Van Eymeren, Gloria Anderson, David Talathoti, Jamie Maddaford

Agenda items

1. Andre opened with an opening prayer and welcome to country.
2. Informal Introductions – Everyone present introduced themselves and shared what they like about Cornerstone. Some great stories were shared.
3. Zillah introduced herself and answered questions from the floor: Zillah briefly spoke about herself and why she chose to take on the job advertised. Zillah spoke about the fact she was ready for a change and that the Cornerstone line 'There's no place like home' drew her attention.

Zillah stated she's has 11 years' experience in the community sector. That she was a case manager working with victims of domestic violence. She also has worked in a community referral centre and was Director at Citylife community care.

4. Andre then shared some words around the changes Cornerstone has experienced in recent times – Andre opened by saying we must "Trust that God has this in his hands".
Trust was a key theme of Andre's reflection.
5. Acceptance of previous 2017 AGM minutes - Jamie seconded the move to accept the minutes and all present agreed as well.
6. Spill of positions was announced by Andre – Andre listed the positions available and once nominations were announced, Martin and Melanie seconded these appointments.

The appointments for the year ahead are...

- Andre Van Eymeren (Chairperson)
- David Talathoti (Deputy Chairperson)
- Jamie Maddaford (Secretary)
- Corey Van Garderen (Treasurer)

With the following people as Board members:

- Gloria Anderson
- Grant Renkema
- Suzanne Van Rooy
- Zillah Everitt

7. Finance Report presented by Grant – Grant circulated the finance report and advised there will be an audit conducted within the next few weeks. Grant went onto mention that some of the funds available are for a specific function such as ‘finding a new home for Cornerstone’ and as such are quarantined.

Suzanne moved the approval of the report and those present accepted the report as well.

During the discussion about the financial report, those present asked about the current interim arrangements at the Church of Christ. Andre stated that BOTH the church and Cornerstone are happy with the current arrangement which means Cornerstone has a home for the next 6 -12 months whilst a permanent home is sought for Cornerstone.

8. Zillah then shared with those present her thoughts on what the future looks like for Cornerstone
Zillah shared some stories / reflection of her time at Cornerstone thus far. Zillah stated that whilst we provide a place where people can grab a meal, that it's important to remember we also help people out as well. Often we assist people find their purpose in life.

Zillah stated we're working on the visibility of Cornerstone as well as the following;

- Looking at applying for various grants (piloting a life skills program)
- Engaging more with local business
- Hosting fundraising events
- Looking at possible partnerships in a new building
- Looking at social enterprise concept to engage the whole community
- Looking at establishing long term sustainable funding

Discussion then turned to our vision statement (why Cornerstone exists) and how many programs we can reintroduce during this period of transition.

Grant then led the closing prayer

The AGM was then officially closed at 8.30pm.

History

In 1991 a group of Christians from various Dandenong Churches was granted free access to the old Church of Christ building, while the site - on the corner of Mason and Walker Streets in Dandenong - was awaiting redevelopment. Much work was done preparing the old building to comply with safety standards and fire code regulations. On Friday 8th of May 1992, the doors were thrown open and people were invited to come in for free food, drinks and a chat over a game of snooker. The initial group of fewer than twenty volunteers has grown to over one hundred and there are programs at Cornerstone every day of the week, meeting the needs of people from different situations and various backgrounds.

Through the kindness and generosity of the Rado family, Cornerstone operated rent-free for 25 years until notified in December 2016 that the property would be sold. As a result, our final meal was celebrated at the site on the 28th of July 2017.

Contact us

By post:

Cornerstone Contact Centre
PO Box 358
Dandenong VIC 3175

By email:

admin@cornerstonecentre.com.au

Visit:

Community Meal - includes breakfast and lunch
136 David Street, Dandenong
Wednesdays and Fridays
9am - 12:30pm