

Wesley Impact

Summer 2026





The ripple effect of your support is extraordinary

Christmas may be over, but for me, the season's message of love, joy, peace and hope lives on. I hope you and your family had a wonderful, restful holiday.

As we welcome a new year, there's a real sense of positivity and energy for what we can achieve together in the coming months. As always, partners like you are the beating heart of our mission. Your support radiates out, bringing comfort and joy to people from all walks of life.

Because of you, we can respond when a woman like Sophie reaches out to escape a violent home. When a family is overwhelmed by the cost-of-living crisis and needs support. When a person in mental distress simply needs someone to listen.

In this newsletter, you'll read about some of the extraordinary ways your quiet, steadfast support has touched lives – and transformed them. I'm so grateful for our community of supporters, staff, volunteers and church members who live out our mission to do all the good we can every day through acts of love.

So, before the year gets into full swing, I want to thank you for standing with us as we continue the work of Jesus Christ in Word and deed. Please know that you're making an enormous difference.

Every blessing,

Rev Stu Cameron
CEO & Superintendent

After the water

The Lismore floods swallowed everything. Simon's recording studio, his instruments, his home – gone in one night. At 50, he was starting over with nothing.

For nearly 30 years, Simon had drifted. A musician who'd found his voice through song when childhood stuttering silenced his words. He'd even run a homeless shelter in Maroubra until the council closed it, then fined the displaced residents for sleeping rough.

After the floods, Simon bought a van. It became both shelter and liability. But when the van broke down, he was stranded for months. The financial pressures built up and *"it felt impossible"*. Depression deepened.

When Wesley Mission Caseworker Joanne first approached his van, Simon said no. He'd lost all trust in systems.

But Joanne kept coming back.

"She treated me with dignity. She didn't judge me. She sat there and listened to me have my moment."

Your support made possible what happened next. A safe home. Help navigating impossible housing systems. Medical care, dental work, mental health support.

"If it wasn't for the Wesley crew, there's no way I'd be housed today. I love my home. It's the first place I've ever felt like I belong."

Thank you for making Simon's story possible.



From impossible choices to a life of possibilities



This Christmas, Sophie* and her daughter Olivia* gave thanks to Wesley Mission supporters.

She had arrived in Australia with her young daughter Olivia, believing her dreams had come true. She was excited to start her new life. But behind closed doors, life became increasingly difficult with her partner. She was trapped in an abusive relationship for months, desperately searching for a way out.

Fortunately, Sophie found the courage to ask for help while undergoing cancer treatment. When she was referred to our services, we immediately set about finding her a place to live. Soon after, we were able to find her a home and helped her reunite with Olivia.

She's now in remission from cancer and excitingly, became

an Australian citizen in October. Olivia is happy and healthy, back where she belongs with her mum – and doing well in school.

Sophie told us Christmas was a lively affair, with friends and neighbours pitching in to prepare and enjoy traditional festive dishes. Sophie is incredibly grateful for the compassion of Wesley Mission supporters, who have made her fresh start possible.

"We have love, we have laughter, we have our lives back," she said.

Sophie once faced an impossible choice but today, Sophie and Olivia are excited for their future. Life feels full of hope and possibilities once more, thanks to you.

* Names and images changed to protect the identity of the individuals



The heart of our service



The room glowed with warmth. Conversation rose and fell like music.

In Sydney – and later in Newcastle – we gathered for our Volunteer Celebration Dinner. It's become a tradition, this pause. The chance to say: we see what you do.

Our volunteers are magicians of the everyday. The voice steadying someone on the edge through Lifeline Sydney & Sutherland. The hands sorting donations at the food pantry, making sure families eat tonight. The mentor showing up, week after week, for a young person who needs stability. The presence turning Christmas from an ordeal into something beautiful.

Each volunteer brought their own lives, their own challenges, their own full calendars. Yet they showed up.

This annual dinner is our chance to honour and thank them.

The thing about volunteers? They don't wait for permission. They see need and respond. They understand that community isn't something that happens to you – it's something you create, one gesture at a time.

To our volunteers: You are the hands and heart of everything we do. Thank you for showing up. Thank you for staying. Thank you for reminding us what's possible.



Our incredible volunteers – the everyday magicians behind every act of care.



Smiling faces mirror the joy captured in every brushstroke.

Making space for young artists

Gallery light pooled on canvas. A riot of colour. A whisper of charcoal. Joy, expressed through little hands.

Every year, our young artists in foster care take part in something special: a real exhibition. Professional lighting. Their names beside their artwork. An opening night where they are the stars.

Rising Artists creates that space – where creativity isn't just encouraged, it's honoured.

This year's theme landed like a question: "Joy is..."

The answers came in brushstrokes and clay, in collage

and sculpture. Each young artist from our foster care programs offered their truth. Joy is a sunset. Joy is a puppy's face. Joy is simply being heard.

The festival day? Pure electricity. Art lessons with Kirsty Neilson and Jonathan Dalton. Face painting stations where kids became tigers and butterflies. A jumping castle that bounced with shrieks and giggles. Craft tables swimming in glitter and glue.

Then the exhibition opened. Children stood before their work, hung professionally, lit beautifully, framed as treasures.



These artworks from children and young people in foster care carry stories, dreams and resilience. It's a chance to honour their worth, amplify their voices and remind the world that every young person deserves to be celebrated and loved."

– Virginia Meers, Wesley Mission Ministry Coordinator.

Joy is... giving

A local school turned creativity into care – and the results are inspiring. Sylvania Heights Public School hosted a Movie Day fundraiser, where Kindergarten and Year 5 students created short films for the Sutherland Shire Film Festival, then screened them for families and friends.

Every dollar raised went directly to supporting the Rising Artists Exhibition.

When Christmas came knocking



The kettle whistled in the Newcastle Community Hub kitchen. Outside, December sun slanted through gum trees.

Every year, We Care Connect and Wesley Mission's Newcastle Community Hub work together to respond to families experiencing hardship.

Last Christmas, these rooms hummed with energy. Not the frantic buzz of shopping centres, but something quieter.

Families arrived tentatively. Some hadn't known if Christmas would happen at all this year. The grocery bills had been climbing. The rent too. Choices had become impossible calculations: electricity or food?

This partnership provides clothing, nappies, school supplies, bedding, shoes and toys – essential items that allow parents to focus on finding stable employment, securing housing or addressing their health.

Families left with arms full. Christmas trees. Food hampers. Gifts.

"This Christmas will be so different for us," said a single mother of three. "Thanks to the support, my children will now have a tree with gifts under it."

A father who recently lost his job reflected: *"The support we received helped us celebrate Christmas with dignity. We had a lovely meal and gifts for the kids."*

Tina added: "I cannot express how grateful I am for the clothes, shoes, bedding and toys we received. Knowing that we had help and we were not alone helped make Christmas bearable. "This is what you made possible. Not just hampers and trees, but the moment when someone who felt invisible suddenly felt seen.

Christmas at the Hub is about more than gifts and hampers—it's about restoring hope. When families walk through our doors, they're often carrying the weight of impossible choices. Seeing their relief and joy reminds us why this work matters. It's a privilege to stand alongside our community and make sure no one feels forgotten at Christmas."

– Leanne Poole, Newcastle Community Hub Coordinator.



Leanne Poole and volunteers packing Christmas hampers for families in need.

A Life of Service, A Gift for the Future

There are quiet achievers everywhere you look. People who humbly give their time, their energy – their lives – to a bigger goal. They don't ask for any fanfare. Just knowing they are making a difference is what really matters.

Daniel Gilfedder is one such person. He has spent his life in service, first to his country and always to his community.

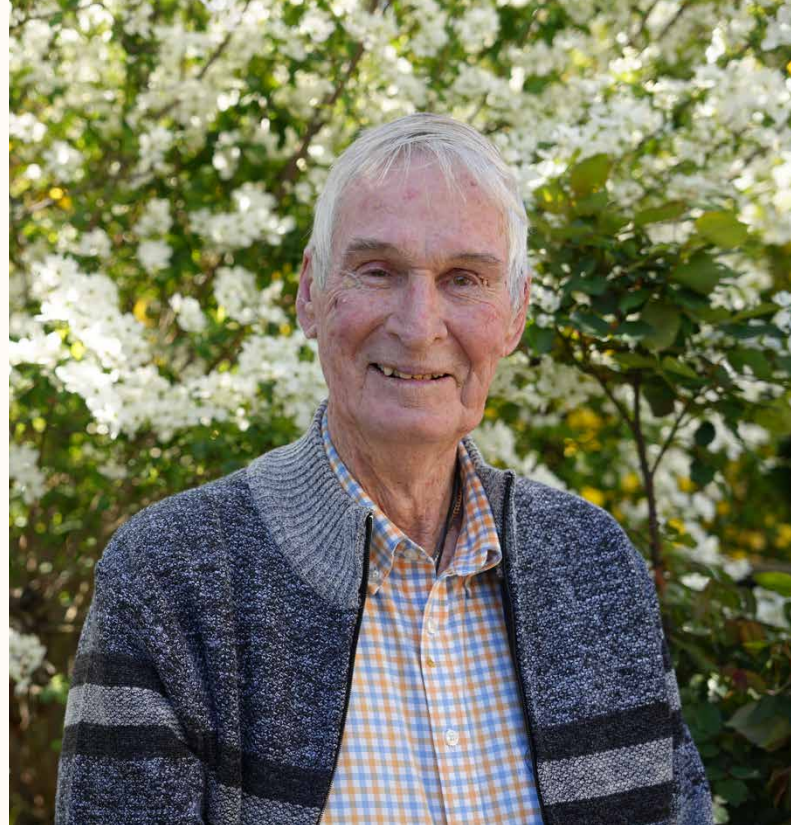
As a young man, Daniel served with the Australian Army during the Vietnam War. There, he learned the true value of resilience, compassion and the importance of standing up for others.

Today, Daniel brings that same spirit of service to his local community, with his tireless support for local causes and charities that he believes in, including the work we do at Wesley Mission.

Daniel has been one of our loyal supporters for more than a decade, moved to help others whenever.

Recently, Daniel shared that he's taken a powerful step to ensure that his legacy of service continues well into the future. He has chosen to include a gift to Wesley Mission in his will to help vulnerable Australians for years to come.

"I've seen what it means to both offer support and be supported when life is at its hardest," Daniel says. "Wesley Mission supports people every day, and I want to be part of that work, even after I'm gone."



Daniel's decision reflects a growing number of supporters who are choosing to make a lasting impact through a gift in their will. It's a simple, yet profound way to continue supporting God's work for future generations, after you have taken care of the people you love.

Just like Daniel, you can make a lasting difference for generations to come. By including a gift in your will to Wesley Mission, you'll help ensure vulnerable Australians receive the care and support they need—long after today.

To learn more or speak with our team, visit **wesleymission.org.au/bequests** or email us at **giftinwills@wesleymission.org.au**



Make a Difference Today

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