

HAPPY 25TH ANNIVERSARY ST JOHN'S CARE



Mon 4 July 2016

Photo: from left is Glenda Richards (Chair of St John's Care), Gai Brodtmann MP, Stuart Davis-Mehan (director) and Alistair Coe MLA.

Our parish community service partner in Canberra St John's Care has celebrated its 25th birthday with two events, including a special service at St John's Church, Reid, on 19 June. The Director of St John's Care, Mr Stuart Davis-Meehan, spoke about how much St. John's Care has grown in 25 years, supported by no less than ten Anglican churches, one Uniting and St John's Russian Orthodox church, with teams of dedicated volunteers, and the provision of food and other necessities.

St John's Care is an integral component of Anglicare's emergency relief network in Canberra with them helping to deliver our DSS ER contract. We are also partnering to develop a new case management model to deliver on Anglicare's Survive/Thrive care philosophy.

St John's Care now serves about 3500 people per year and feeds about 7000 people through the Emergency Relief Centre with 600 gifts and hampers are given out at Christmas time. The Community lunch on the first Friday of each month attracts between 80 and 100 people, with 250 on Christmas Day. About 50 students at Ainslie Public school have breakfast 3 days per week and the now two youth workers with Youth Care Canberra support over 80 of the most disadvantaged and disengaged young people in the ACT and Queanbeyan. St John's Care also auspices a Marriage Education Course four times a year for a number of churches. This is a truly impressive set of statistics reflecting substantial Christian service.

This work is supported by connections with organisations such as Oz Harvest, Street Law, Food Bank, the Snow and Victoria Shakespeare Foundations, the Orange Laundry, as well as Anglicare.

Stuart spoke of the "strong and mature partnership" that St John's Care has with Anglicare. This is evident in the Pantry Appeal, which Anglicare organises and St John's Care is the principle recipient. It is also evident in the joint funding of a new community worker position to help people not only survive, but also thrive.

Quoting from the Gospel of Matthew chapter 25, Stuart talked about St John's Care being the "cutting edge of what it is to be church" in "representing Christ to the world through its actions."

One of the Five Marks of Mission of the Anglican Communion is "to respond to human need by loving service." Stuart also noted that St. John's Church vision is to be "a vibrant Christ-centred community that engages and transforms the heart and soul of Canberra." Stuart concluded with Jesus' words: "Just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me."

Happy Birthday and Congratulations, St. John's Care!