



Catholic Social Services

people helping people *āwhina tātou*

New Director of CSS appointed

Kia ora e te whānau

My name is Chris Ward and I have been appointed as the Director for Catholic Social Services. My wife, Cat, and I moved from Scotland to Aotearoa in 2008 along with our three children. We settled in Nelson, where I worked at Nelson City Council in the Community Services and Environment teams. For the last two years, I've worked as Diocesan Manager for the Nelson Anglicans.

Outside of work, Cat and I have fostered a number of kids, and I was Presiding Member of Garin College School Board for three years. I've also been involved in governance with a

few other community organisations both here and in Scotland. My working life there was spent in environmental management and sustainability.

Our children are now all grown up and Cat and I decided to move to Wellington to be nearer our daughter. We've bought a house in Wadestown and are both looking forward to our new career challenges.

I'm passionate about social justice, and believe the Church has a key role to play in addressing those experiencing real needs in our community. I'm really looking



forward to joining the CSS team, getting out into the parishes to meet people who care about CSS, and contributing to the wider Archdiocesan team.

Ngā Manaakitanga
Chris

[Chris takes up his new role on Monday 5th August 2024]

Haere rā Kamau Holland



Tēnā koe,

I would like to thank everyone who has generously supported the kaupapa and mahi of Catholic Social Services. Particularly donors, volunteers and kaimahi. During my time at CSS firstly as Community Facilitator and then as Director, I have

grown to deeply appreciate the importance of the work we do. I am proud of the mana enhancing way the whole team encounters and connects with the people who come to us as well as to each other. It has been a privilege to be the Kaiarahi-Wayfinder leader of the team at CSS.

Following the priorities of the 2017 Synod CSS, in addition to social work and navigation, focused on community development and project work. Projects such as refugee resettlement, benefit impacts, Deaf community workshops, Community Facilitation and Mentoring, Seasons for Growth

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programmes, and *Game On Dads* for Dads men's parenting workshops. CSS is also responsible for hospital and prison chaplaincy and the coordination of our clergy healthcare.

In line with further priorities of the 2017 synod, CSS has actively sought to collaborate with parishes and organisations with shared values. For example Changemakers Re-settlement Forum, Upper Hutt Benefit Educational Services

Trust, St Vincent de Paul, St Joseph's parish Levin and Our Lady Of Kāpiti parish, and Greenstone Doors.

We grew our volunteer programme with truly generous people who share their time, knowledge and experience to support our mahi and respond to the needs in our community.

After 18 years working in Catholic organisations which includes CSS, Compassion Soup Kitchen, and the Parish of Wellington South, I am

deeply grateful for everything I have learnt, the people I have worked alongside and to share in practical and meaningful ways of living and working the principles of Catholic Social Teaching.

I welcome Chris Ward to the organisation, and wish you all the best.

Wahia te tika – *seek the right path*
Wahia te pono – *seek the path of truth*
Wahia te aroha – *seek the path of empathy and love*

- Kamau Holland

Weaving Community Connection

**Deirdre Meskill, CSS
Community Facilitator**

"It's really hard to meet the locals in New Zealand"

This is something we hear at CSS. Our mahi at CSS threads in a hospitality of welcome and encounter.

This way of being supports individuals and communities to make connections that counter the increasing isolation, loneliness, anxiety and polarisation many of us are witnessing in our community.

Deaf Community Workshops

From 11th July 2023, to 14th May 2024, community workshops were organized each month, for members of the Deaf Community at Petone Community House by CSS Social Work Navigator, Lyneen.

Speakers were invited to make presentations about their services which were followed by Q&A sessions with attendees.

Thanks to the generous support of the David Daily Charitable Trust, CSS was able to cover the costs of running the workshops, including engaging a NZSL interpreter to assist at each of the sessions.

Speakers included: Ian (CSS Senior Social Worker), Deirdre (CSS Com-

munity Facilitator), Sheryl (from My Life and My Voice), Tess (from MSD), Lauren (from Disabled Artists Festival of Theatre [Daft]), Karen (CCS Disability Action), Karen (WINZ Employment Consultant).

The workshops were very helpful for all those who participated.

Those presenting learnt first hand, some of the difficulties a Deaf person can face when trying to access their service.

Members of the Deaf community also learnt about services previously unknown to them and were able to put their questions to the providers directly.



Ethnic Communities Gathering

On Saturday 13 July 2024, Deirdre Meskill, along with Maya Bernardo from the Archdiocese, supported a gathering of Ethnic Communities. A welcome to the newly reopened Cathedral with Mass was followed by a workshop (pictured left) where diverse communities voiced their strengths and aspirations for the future. Seeds were sown with several practical ideas to grow and strengthen our communities further. The day was full of the enjoyment of coming

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Clergy Healthcare Co-ordinator retires

After 11 years of supporting the Clergy with their healthcare needs, I am retiring as at the end of August 2024.

During my time I have worked alongside the Clergy Trust Board, our Clergy in Ministry and our Retired Clergy assisting them wherever needed. The role has many hats especially when it comes to their health requirements or transitioning



into retirement, whether it be to private homes, Retirement Villages or Rest homes, being with them in their final journey and ensuring their dignity and comfort through this time.

It is a privileged role, where I have met and made many valued friendships with both clergy and my colleagues at CSS, all of whom I will miss.

- **Linda MacGregor**

Local Volunteer honoured with prestigious nomination

Bridgett P, a dedicated volunteer with Catholic Social Services since October 2021, was nominated for the Mitre 10 MEGA Volunteer of the Year Award at the 2024 Mahi Aroha Awards.

Bridgett serves as a Seasons for Growth Companion, a role she first trained for in 2010 for the Adult Programme and again in 2022 for the Children and Young Persons' Programme.

Over the past year, Bridgett has tirelessly promoted and led the Seasons for Growth programme in rest homes and retirement communities. Her commitment to supporting individuals through significant life changes and losses is evident in her work, where she creates a nurturing space for adults to share their feelings, experiences, and coping strategies.



Pictured L-R: Jess and Bridgett at the Mahi Aroha Awards ceremony

Bridgett's nomination was formally recognized at the Mahi Aroha Awards ceremony on Thursday, June 20th. 5-7.30pm.

Weaving Community Connection *(cont'd from page 2)*

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together and, of course, the sharing of our kai traditions.

To find out more about our Community Facilitation or to volunteer with our Friendship Project, contact Deirdre at:

d.meskill@wn-catholicsocialservices.org.nz

Women's Friendship Project

Deirdre, CSS Community Facilitator, has been working with a leader from a recently-settled community, along with Welcoming Communities Officers from the Te Awa Kairangi local councils.

Over the next 6 months we will be bringing women from the recently-settled community together with locally-connected women to share our common ground and celebrate our diversity. We will gather once a month on a Saturday afternoon with the hope that friendships will grow as we get to know each other.

Events Coming Up!

- ⇒ **Weds 31 July:**
Game On, men's parenting programme (8 week course). 6.30pm-8.30pm. Venue: 4 Exchange Street, Upper Hutt.
 Enquiries/Registrations to: reception@wn.catholic.org.nz or call Francis 021 0887 4824
- ⇒ **Weds 31 July & Weds 7th August:**
 Seasons for Growth Parent Programme. Time: 7.30pm-9.30pm. Venue: Collective Community Hub, Johnsonville.
 Enquiries/Registrations to: seasons@wn.catholic.org.nz or call Jess 021 374 405
- ⇒ **Sat 27 July:**
 Women's Friendship. Gathering recently-settled and locally-connected women from across the Wellington region for friendship. Time: one Saturday afternoon per month. Venue: Lower Hutt.
 Enquiries to Deirdre: d.meskill@wn-catholicsocialservices.org.nz
- ⇒ **Mon-Tue 12-13 August:**
 Seasons for Growth Companion training in Adult program: Professional development for Educators and Professionals. Time: 9.30am-4pm. Virtual Training (changed from in-person to online course).
 Enquiries/Registrations to: seasons@wn.catholic.org.nz or call Jess 021 374 405

THANK YOU to our FUNDERS

Each year CSS applies for grants to assist us to deliver our core services and special projects for our communities eg free interpreting for clients and buying items to complete house setups for our refugee resettlement work. Recently funders to whom we have applied to in the past, report record numbers of applications being submitted. This makes it more difficult for CSS to obtain funding via this method. Every donation received directly to CSS is hugely appreciated and vital for our continued work. Thank you to all our funders for their fantastic support. In particular we would like to thank the following:

- The Archdiocese of Wellington • The Catholic Foundation
- Donovan Family Charitable Trust • David Daily Charitable Trust
- KSC Wellington Charitable Trust Board • NZ Lottery Grants Board
- James K Baxter Trust • Hutt Mana Charitable Trust
- Oranga Tamariki Ministry for Children • Ministry for Social Development
- WCC Betty Campbell Accommodation Fund • Tindall Foundation
- Wellington Hospital Chaplaincy Trust • Arobake • St Vincent de Paul

Also, thank you all those who donated to our **2023 KOTAHITANGA APPEAL** and those who donate money or goods for our refugee resettlement work.
 Your donations allow us to continue assisting the most vulnerable in our community.

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