

## How can we help you or someone you know?



Did you know **Wesley Mission offers over 120 support services** across New South Wales? If you or someone you know needs support, reach out. We're here to help.

**Have you had a gutful of gambling?** If you're struggling with gambling, take the first step out of it with Wesley Mission. Call 1300 827 638 to speak to one of our gambling counsellors.

**Wesley Financial Counselling:** Free, independent and confidential face-to-face counselling to help you navigate financial stress and manage your money more effectively. Call 1300 827 638.



## Our operations over the holiday period

Wesley Community Housing will continue to operate over the holiday period but with minimal staff. On public holidays and after hours, call 1800 770 602 and listen to the voicemail for instructions.

The team at Wesley Community Housing would like to wish you and your loved ones a blessed and safe holiday period.

"You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden."

**Matthew 5:14**



December 2023

# Knock knock



Wesley Community Housing

## Finding connection and hope in the heart of the city

For Wesley Community Housing tenants, Ehab and Barry, Tuesday is the pinnacle of some weeks. Why? Ehab and Barry attend CityHeart midweek – a weekly gathering at the Wesley Church in Sydney CBD, where people come together for a chat, to connect and find hope through Jesus Christ together.

We interviewed Barry and Ehab to hear their thoughts on CityHeart.

### How did you feel the first time you came to CityHeart?

**Ehab:** I remember the first time when we came [to] CityHeart how excited I was to get to the city itself. Because I live in Warwick Farm [I] never really come to the city. I came with my friend, Randy and the train ride was a long one,

but enjoyable. I knew it was going to be in a church but when I got there, I was actually surprised to see how big and luxurious it really was. I was very happy to find all the food and drinks that we were offered, followed by [a] religious gathering.

**Barry:** Bewildered... not knowing what was going to happen or what to expect. Opinion has changed since then. City Heart is always different with different people and activities each week. Boring is normal, so why be normal?

### What's the journey into the city like? Do you find it hard to get there?

**Barry:** I have a nap. It's a bus to the station then straight to Town Hall.



**What would you say to someone who is unsure if they should come to CityHeart or a Wesley Community Housing community engagement event?**

**Ehab:** But you can still come. If you find God, you will find yourself.



**Lifeline (24/7 crisis support)**  
13 11 14

**Emergency services (Police, Ambulance and Fire)**  
000

**Police (non-emergency)**  
131 444

**1800 RESPECT (for people impacted by sexual assault, domestic violence or abuse)**  
1800 737 732

**Beyond Blue (for depression and anxiety)**  
1300 224 636

**GambleAware Helpline**  
1800 858 858

**MensLine Australia (24/7 telephone counselling support for men)**  
1300 78 99 78

**Butterfly Foundation (Free, confidential counselling and referral for people with eating disorders and body image issues)**  
1800 334 673



### Contact us

General enquiries 1800 770 602  
Maintenance and repairs 1800 770 602

Wesley Community Housing  
communityhousing@wesleymission.org.au  
wesleymission.org.au

ABN 42 164 655 145 Wesley Mission is a part of the Uniting Church in Australia.

Connect with us



**Doing all the good we can because every life matters**

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**Barry:** Everyone should come. You get to listen to stories from others. I believe in people and connecting to people at CityHeart [because] we are a team. And although we are at different stages, we come together as a team.

**We asked you the other week what you loved about CityHeart and you said, you enjoyed being with friends and being able to complete your work development order. Can you give us a bit more detail?**

**Ehab:** I love [engaging] with other people at CityHeart. I look forward to seeing my friends, the wonderful food and drinks that I get to enjoy and the games that we play together. I also enjoy the church gatherings and Bible verse studies that we do with our chaplains, Sam and Rick, who run these sessions wonderfully. It reminds me of all those times as a kid, and still today, when I read my Bible in Arabic. [I] read [those same] verses and stories in a different language, but [I now realise] they have the same meanings.

**What is CityHeart?**

CityHeart isn't a gathering for 'religious' people. It's a group of regular people from different walks of life who want to discover real friendships, celebrate good news together, find purpose and connection and share hope with others. We asked our tenants and other CityHeart attendees what they like most about CityHeart. Check out their responses here:

“Love the community and friendly faces.”  
– Sophia

# Join us at CityHeart, midweek

Every Tuesday, 1pm  
Wesley Church  
220 Pitt Street Sydney



“Seeing the [Wesley Community Housing Team] and playing games makes you happy. If you're down, [the team] cheers you up.”  
– Sharon

“I like the advantage of having a day of meeting people, having fun by playing games with 'noisy' people rather than a calm night of reminiscing.”  
– Barry

“It's an informal discussion about the bible, you can ask questions, people are not prejudiced to others, and there's occasionally music.”  
– \*Bob\*Name Changed.

“With friends, we talk to each other and have lunch... I'm about to complete my work development order here.”  
– Ehab

“I like the food and the friendly people.”  
– Randy

“Friendly people who make you feel good and happy.”  
– Hong

## Community engagement: in your community





# Christmas is about God's love

The Christmas festive season is upon us and while this time is often thought of as a time of joy, love and celebration, for many it can be a time of loneliness and many may not have the opportunity to be part of the season's festivities.

Connection and community are always important, but I think especially at Christmas time. The Christmas story is about God coming down to us on earth, for us.

There's this idea that God is distant and detached from us. Bette Midler sings, "God is watching us (that's comforting) from a distance," (wait... from a distance? So, does He care about me?). I would go as far as to say, "He's not just watching us, but deeply loves us and knows everything about us".

Psalm 139 says, "Lord, you have examined my heart and you know everything about me... You go before me and follow me. You place your hand of blessing on my head."

God is not hiding, nor is he distant. He has drawn close to us through the person of Jesus. The Christmas story is not a nice made-up story to make us feel good and trade presents. Christmas is about God's desire to have a relationship with us so much that He took on the form of a man, Jesus – Emmanuel, meaning 'God with us'. God knows what each of us is going through. He lived on this earth as we do. He experienced the same emotions you do and knows you intimately.

For this is how God loved the world: He gave His one and

only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him will not perish but have eternal life, (John 3:16). Christmas is about God's love – for you, for me, so that we can have a relationship with Him.

Whatever your Christmas season looks like, whether shared with others or time with yourself, know that **you're not alone**. God is with you and He loves you. The Lord your God is living among you. He is a mighty Saviour. He will take delight in you with gladness. With His love, He will calm all your fears (Zephaniah 3:17) and He is near to all who call on Him (Psalm 145).

If you'd like to connect more with Wesley Mission at Christmas time, CityHeart has services on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day and we'd love to see you there.

– Louise, Wesley Mission Chaplain

## What's cooking? A recipe from our tenant, Zenebu

Our Community Engagement team regularly host cooking classes and lunches with our tenants. Zenebu is known in her community to be an incredible cook who loves to excite our tastebuds with wonderful dishes from her culture. Find out how to cook Zenebu's Ata kilt Wat, an Ethiopian one-pot wonder! Guess what? It's gluten-free and vegan!

### What you will need:

- 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 1/2 cup chopped brown onion
- 2 tablespoons minced garlic
- 2 teaspoons turmeric
- 2 teaspoons cumin
- 1 teaspoon ginger paste or 3/4 teaspoon minced fresh ginger
- 1 cup water
- 1 cup chopped carrots
- 2 cups chopped potatoes (something that boils well like Yukon gold, if possible)
- 4 cups roughly chopped green cabbage
- 1/2 teaspoon salt and pepper.

Zenebu recommends serving the dish with rice or a flatbread (like Ethiopian Injera).



### How to cook it:

1. Heat olive oil over medium heat.
2. After 30 seconds, add garlic, ginger, turmeric and cumin.
3. Cook until fragrant, then add onion.
4. Brown onion.
5. Add carrots, potatoes and water. Mix well to infuse with spices.
6. Cover and cook for 10 minutes on medium heat or until potatoes are soft and can be pierced by a fork.
7. Stir in cabbage, add salt and pepper.
8. Cook until cabbage is soft, but not mushy (about five minutes).

## Doing all the good we can: Celebrating good neighbours

We love seeing our communities 'doing all the good we can'. In this section, we're celebrating our neighbours who've been shouted out by their communities for their good deeds. If you'd like to shout out someone in our next newsletter, reach out to the team on **1800 770 602** or email [communityhousing@wesleymission.org.au](mailto:communityhousing@wesleymission.org.au)

**A huge shout out to** Giles, Brad and Khan from Miller for taking care of the shared gardens and making sure the block always looks fresh.

**Let's celebrate** Randy for always helping at other properties and lending a hand to all his neighbours.

**We appreciate** Enes from Warwick Farm for taking care of the shared gardens and his wonderful work to make the veggio patch thrive.



## Team update: Meet Britt

**Position:** Tenant Engagement Officer

**Team:** Community Engagement

### What weird or wacky fashion trend would you bring back?

If I had the opportunity to bring back a weird or wacky fashion trend it would have to be overalls for all ages, young and old.

### Your position is new. What type of things will you be doing with Wesley Community Housing?

I'll be working with the Wesley Community Engagement team alongside Liesa and Sophia. "You'll see me out in the blocks where all the fun, food and games are. Make sure you come out and say hello! I can't wait to get to know you."



# Community engagement: in your community



## Heatwave checklist

It's going to be a hot summer, so it's important to be smart about heatwaves and know how extreme heat may impact you. You can use this checklist from NSW Health to help you beat the heat:

- Monitor the weather**, you can use the Bureau of Meteorology Heatwave Service 
- Know who** you will call for help 
- Know **who you will check on**, such as neighbours, friends, relatives and those isolated 
- Understand how to **manage your medical condition** in the heat. 
- Store **enough medication** at the right temperature 
- Check** fridges, freezers, fans and air-conditioners work well 
- Have **cool packs** and make ice cubes 
- Check you have **enough food and drinking water** 
- Create **cool rooms and cross breezes** in your house 
- Protect windows** from direct sun by using blinds or curtains 
- Know **local cool public spaces** 
- Have a power failure **emergency kit** 
- Be **bushfire** prepared 