The Joy of Birthday Cake

We recently had a solo mother of four children come to our social food pantry to collect a food parcel. We have come to know her as she has been in a few times for food support, so we often have a little chat to connect. This lovely mum mentioned it was her birthday coming up and she was planning on making a cake so she could celebrate with her children.
We had very kindly been donated a birthday cake which was waiting for someone special. The mum was so pleased she didn't have to worry about providing her own birthday cake and was able to celebrate her birthday with her very excited children.

What might feel like a small gesture to some, is a significant gesture to others. We wouldn't be able to do these things without the generous donations we receive from churches, schools and individuals. Thank you for your ongoing support of our social food pantry.



Long walk for Weetbix and milk

Here at the social food pantry, we love to offer a safe and open space to our community members. We always have fresh hot coffee and some baked treats available for our community when we're open on Tuesdays and Fridays.

We have one elderly gentleman who lives a couple of kilometres away from CFC but makes the long trip by foot to visit us once a week.
He initially came only looking for some Weetbix and a carton of milk, which became his signature items that we happily give him.
Over time we kept inviting him to stay for our community lunches every Tuesday and Friday at 11.30am.

He now makes his way over to us around 11.00am, collects his Weetbix and milk, sits down for coffee and cake, and stays and enjoys a hot meal with CFC staff, volunteers and community members.
It's wonderful that he has found a place within our CFC whānau and enjoys his lunch alongside new friends.

Help make our food parcels **extra special** this Christmas.

Donate Christmas food treats to our food pantry and brighten a family's day this festive season.

Drop off your festive food donations at CFC, 1207 Dominion Rd, Mt Roskill, or make a financial donation via our website: https://www.psn.org.nz/donate-now



Sweet as... GGB

We're grateful to have Good Bitches Baking (GBB) as a regular supporter of Communities Feeding Communities. Since April 2024, GBB's Central Auckland volunteers have baked treats at home and delivered them to our community, adding a little sweetness and a lot of care to the work we do together.

GBB Central Auckland, led by Head Bitch Jacinta Khiu, has 289 volunteers. In the past 12 months they have baked 2536 boxes for 26 local organisations, an estimated $280,558 in social value. Nationally, 3581 Good Bitches baked 38,593 boxes for 633 organisations, worth an estimated $4.27 million. GBB also celebrated its 12th birthday on 26 September.

Thank you, GBB, for showing up for our community week after week.

Want to get involved?
Email akl-central@gbb.org.nz
or visit www.gbb.org.nz

CONTACT US

PHONE: 021 390 748
EMAIL: cfc@psn.org.nz
1207 Dominion Road,
Mount Roskill, Auckland

CFC is an initiative provided by:
Presbyterian Support Northern
www.psn.org.nz

Communities Feeding Community's Social food pantry

NEWSLETTER

October 2026

Communities Feeding Communities INITIATIVE



Sophie Wijetillake, our Social Food Pantry Coordinator

From the team at CFC
Sophie, Jilll & Louise

Kia ora,

Welcome to the Spring edition of the CFC newsletter

At Communities Feeding Communities, we believe everyone deserves access to good food and a warm welcome. Every Tuesday and Friday, our social food pantry in Mt Roskill opens its doors to share kai parcels, fresh coffee, baked treats and a hot community lunch. Much of it is made with produce from our own garden, rescued food and the generosity of our supporters.

With the cost of living continuing to bite, the need in our community is growing, and so is the kindness of those who help us meet it. In this issue, you'll meet our head gardener Jill and volunteer Linda, hear from our community partner Te Hā Oranga, and read a few stories that show what a small gesture can mean to someone.

Thank you for being part of our CFC whānau.

Interested in volunteering? Scan the QR code below to learn more and apply.

KEY DATES & UPCOMING *events*

Gardening Working Bee

Location: 1207 Dominion Road, Mount Roskill.
Date: Every Tuesday morning
Time: 9.30am – 11.30am

Come and join us for our weekly working bee.

Email Jill, if you are interested: jill.kennedy@psn.org.nz

CFC Christmas party

Location: 1207 Dominion Road, Mount Roskill.
Date: Saturday, 5th of December
Time: 4-7pm

Celebrate the season
Join us for our Community Christmas Party.

Run in partnership with The Storehouse

Follow us
communitiesfeedingcommunities

INTERVEIW WITH SHARLEEN LYONS FROM TE HA ORANGA



One of our community partners is Te Hā Oranga, which provides individuals and whānau with the appropriate services and support they need to improve their wellbeing and achieve their aspirations.

In this interview, we talk to Sharleen Lyons from Te Hā Oranga about CFC and our mahi.

What does CFC do for you?
CFC provides an essential service to our valuable whānau in the community. CFC's holistic approach addresses the overall wellbeing of whānau through their kai parcels and community-based supports such as targeted whānau events throughout the year. CFC is a true testament to manaakitanga and aroha ke ti tangata for our whānau in need.

Do you think our food parcels meet the needs of whānau?
CFC kai parcels contain a balanced and nutritious selection of kai. They are put together with thought and consideration based on a whānau needs. Whānau are grateful to receive CFC kai parcels. It lifts the hauora of our whānau and gives them a sense of pride and joy.

CFC staff also make referrals to other professional services within their networks, for example, financial mentoring and counselling.

Why do you think the need for food support is growing?
The significant increase in the cost of living has hit our whānau hard. Many whānau are on a fixed income and have to decide whether to pay rent, power or buy food. They simply don't have enough income coming in to keep the whare going every week. This means our tamariki have to go without. CFC provides hope for our valuable whānau. CFC is essential to the hauora of our whānau as they nurture wellbeing without judgement and with compassion.

What real world effect do you think this has?
CFC sets the standard of how our community providers can truly be effective in supporting whānau in need. CFC staff listen to what our whānau have to say. They take the time to speak directly with whānau and to understand where they are struggling. They provide one of life's most essential items – kai through their well-stocked whare kai (food pantry) which greatly helps whānau, particularly our tamariki.

When our whānau have access to nutritious kai, it makes for a happier whare. Our tamariki can also focus better at kohanga reo and kura. Having kai in the whare helps alleviate the stress and anxiety parents experience due to financial hardship and the increase in the cost of living.

Do you have any individual stories that show this?
I support a whānau that has experienced significant financial hardship. It is led by a kaumatua in his seventies who cares for four of his mokopuna. They range in age from 10 to 14-years of age. They came to live with him due to an unsafe home environment.

The kaumatua only receives his superannuation to support him and his four mokopuna. He does not get any other financial support, which has put a strain on his financial situation, especially with the increased cost of living.

When the kaumatua is provided with a kai parcel from CFC, the entire whānau is extremely grateful. It also means the kaumatua can redirect funds to other key household costs, reducing the stress and anxiety that comes with these monthly household obligations.

Head Gardener Continues to Grow



Growing vibrant, productive and nutritional food is a wonderful skill to have. That's why we are blessed to have head gardener Jill working for us at Communities Feeding Communities.

Jill is not only a fabulous gardener but has enhanced her skills further by completing a NZMA Horticulture Certificate Level 3 qualification, achieving an A grade.

We are incredibly proud of Jill completing her studies, alongside her work in the garden, which is becoming increasingly important as the food needs of the community continues to grow.

Jill not only tends our gardens, but also leads groups of community volunteers each Tuesday, helping to keep the gardens productive and welcoming.

Each week, the garden team harvest flowers and fresh produce, including spinach, kale, cauliflower, cabbage and broccoli.

Freshly picked produce is used in our community meals and shared with people accessing food support, as well as with members of our local community.

It's a real example of people coming together with a common cause and a love of growing food for the benefit of those who have fallen on difficult times.

If you'd like to become a volunteer with us please contact:
louise.garbett@psn.org.nz

VOLUNTEER SNAPSHOT: Linda Harun

We are so lucky to have many volunteers help us to keep our food haven going every week.

I've been volunteering for about 6 months now. It feels longer because the Communities Feeding Communities group now feels like such a lovely part of my week.

I started helping in the garden but now work mostly in the kitchen preparing lunch for the community.

I've always worked with people in education, health and disability areas. So this gives me a connection with a wonderful community in ways that are useful.

I've been interested in preventing food waste for some time and that was what drew me to this role with CFC.

Each week we work as a team to create a delicious lunch that locals and volunteers share together. I really enjoy the challenge of creating a nutritious meal from what is available and the friendships that develop as we cook and chat and eat together.



Linda Harun (right) and Diane Morton (left) cooking up a storm in the CFC kitchen!