



Each week, for a number of years, the local Uniting Church community and the broader community of Camperdown have hosted a community lunch. Each Wednesday this lunch provides a hearty smorgasbord with warm food and warm companionship to up to 30 residents of the area. Along with other schools and service groups in the community, Mercy Regional College students and staff are assisting with the preparation and provision of food for the community. The menu is varied and cooked either at the school or on site at the Uniting Church Hall. The large chalk board is filled with the day's menu and some meals are also packaged as take-home fare or delivered to those who may need some comfort and support but were unable to attend. Over the past few years both the VCAL students and Social Justice Teams have regularly been on the roster, but lately there has been a renewed focus on senior students in Years 11 and 12 taking turns at rendering this outreach to the regulars who attend.



So for now in this time of lockdowns and physical distancing measures, the Community lunch had sadly been put on hold. The solution was found in the initiative of Mercy Regional College to take on the preparation of the meals for the duration of these restrictions. The wonderful members of the Uniting Church Community lunch organising team then deliver the meals to homes around the town, offering a kind chat and some delicious meals to the regular family of locals who are missing their weekly gathering time and conversations.

Principal Ms Sharon Gillett has used this opportunity to engage support staff from the Food Technology Faculty and the school canteen to cook the meals in the school's industrial kitchen, thus providing meals for the community and a sense of connectedness for the staff who have different responsibilities at this time when schools are void of students and staff.

Finally, the most important aspect of this new initiative is the opportunity for our Catholic school to continue to serve the wider community and those most vulnerable at this time.

*Jo Saunders – Mercy Regional College, Camperdown*

*Photo: Staff of Mercy Regional College Di Beard, Nicola Fletcher and Wendy Gleeson prepare hearty winter meals*