

2025



ANNUAL REPORT

JOHN PIERCE CENTRE
Spirit of the Deaf Community

MISSION STATEMENT

INSPIRED BY JESUS CHRIST AND THE TRADITIONS OF
THE CATHOLIC CHURCH, THE JOHN PIERCE CENTRE
SEEKS TO EMPOWER ALL DEAF PEOPLE AND THEIR
FAMILIES WITHIN VICTORIA TO LIVE THEIR LIVES TO
THE FULL

OUR VISION

TO PROMOTE COMMUNITY THROUGH
EDUCATION, SPIRITUAL, AND FAMILY SUPPORT

Values

Inclusivity

Deaf, deaf, hard of hearing people, their families, our volunteers, staff, and other stakeholders feel respected, supported, and valued.

Integrity

Being honest, ethical and consistent with our core values in both our words and actions

Compassion

Showing kindness and empathy in our relationships with the Deaf community, our partners and other stakeholders

Collaboration

Contributing our time and skills in working, with other individuals and organisations to support the overall wellbeing of the Deaf community in Victoria

Accountability

Being responsible for our actions, behaviours, performance, and decisions at an individual and organisational level

Directors' Annual Report



On behalf of the John Pierce Centre (JPC) Board of Directors I am pleased to present our annual report for the 2025 year.

At the time of preparing the report, the JPC Accounts for the 2025 year have been subjected to the usual practice of a full independent review in accordance with the requirements of the relevant Auditing Standard ASRE 2415 and the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission Act 2012. No issues were identified and the JPC continues to be in a financial position wherein the organisation is able to pay its accounts as and when they fall due.

During 2025, the John Pierce Centre has continued to provide a broad range of services and activities to support our community. This was only possible with the dedication and hard work of the JPC Staff, Board and Volunteers who ensure we can continue to deliver our services and support to our community. On behalf of the Board, I would like to express our thanks and appreciation to our wonderful JPC Staff and Volunteers for their ongoing work and dedication.

Our Executive Manager Sophie Duncan continues to do a great job managing the Centre and keeping the Board apprised. Sophie continues to lead the JPC Staff and Volunteer community with her engaged energetic and committed approach. As part of her role, Sophie also does an excellent job of building and maintaining our relationships with our community of stakeholders.

Brother Shane Wood continues to provide his valuable support and input to the Board, for which we thank him.



Evelyne Albrecht
Outgoing Director



Dean Sinclair
Treasurer



Br Shane Wood
Board Minute
Secretary



**Roshan
Abraham**



**Gemma
Cameron**



**Andrew
Woods**

Financially, we remain focused on a careful approach to managing the finances and resources of the JPC and I would like to thank Dean Sinclair and Sophie Duncan for their hard work in this regard.

The Strategy and Management subcommittee provided its ongoing support to the JPC team and the Board in its governance role.

We continue to focus on refreshing and implementing our strategy to ensure JPC has a strong role in supporting our community going forward.

I would like to thank Evelyne Albrecht for her 9 years of service and contribution to the JPC, both as a Director and as Chair of the Strategy and Management Committee. We will very much miss having her as part of our team. Gemma Cameron has kindly taken up the role as Chair of the Strategy and Management Committee.

I would also like to thank my fellow Directors for their continuing contributions, support and professional commitment in their stewardship role for the JPC.

It is a pleasure to see our JPC team and community working together across all our activities with understanding and compassion for each other in the Spirit of our Founders.

I would like to thank and acknowledge the Melbourne Catholic Archdiocese and all our committed financial supporters, stakeholders, advocates and benefactors, without whom we could not meet our pastoral and community needs.

The JPC remains a unique Community Centre with compassion and inclusion at its core, positively impacting all those with whom it comes into contact – a continuing demonstration of faith in action.

I commend the John Pierce Centre Board of Directors report for 2025.

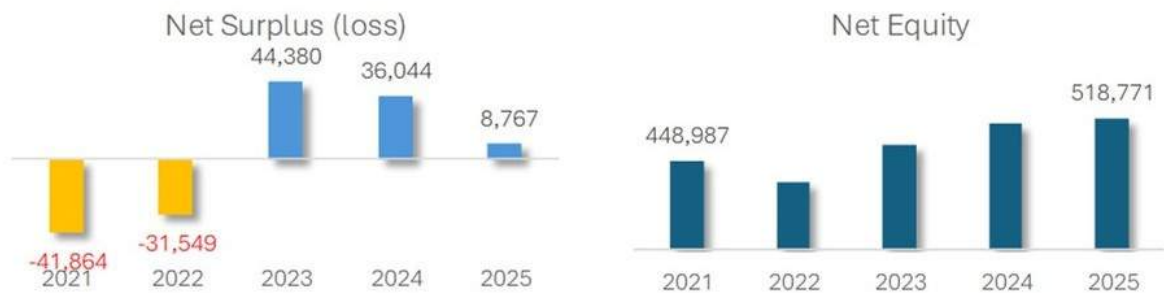
Trevor Hughes
Chairman
John Pierce Centre



Treasurer's Annual Report

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I am pleased to present the John Pierce Centre Ltd Special Purpose Financial Statements for 2025. This year brought significant challenges, particularly with rising expenses driven by inflationary pressures that all of us are also experiencing in day-to-day living. Despite these conditions, we achieved a modest net surplus of \$8,767 supported by revenues of \$389,219 (a 2% decrease year-on-year) and total expenses of \$381,405 (a 6% increase year-on-year).

The charts below provide a summary of our net surpluses (losses) and net equity position over the past five years. After several highly variable years following COVID, the Board and Management believe we have now reached a more stable balance between the services we deliver and the costs required to sustain them. We are especially proud that, amid ongoing uncertainty, we have continued to provide responsible, sustainable outcomes for our community members.



Looking ahead to the coming year, we are forecasting a modest deficit, reflecting the reality that ongoing inflationary pressures are likely to outpace anticipated increases in donations, fundraising, and grant income.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude to everyone who has supported JPC over the past four years. Our major donors have shown remarkable commitment during challenging times, and we are especially grateful to the Catholic Archdiocese, the Ephpheta and Gorman Foundations, and all those who have generously volunteered their time. Their support has been fundamental to our continued existence.

In closing, the Board and I extend our heartfelt appreciation to our Executive Manager, Sophie Duncan, and her team for their disciplined financial stewardship and their dedication to delivering essential services to our members. I would also like to acknowledge my fellow Board members and our Chair, Trevor Hughes, for their ongoing guidance and support. Our thanks also go to our auditor, Ryk Eksteen of Collins & Co, for his invaluable assistance in preparing and reviewing the JPC Financial Statements.

We look forward to seeing you all at the centre.

Dean Sinclair
Treasurer

Executive Manager's Annual Report



The John Pierce Centre continued to strengthen its mission throughout 2025, providing a welcoming, inclusive, and culturally safe space for Deaf and hard-of-hearing people across Victoria. This year marked a period of steady growth, renewed partnerships, and deeper engagement with our community, supported by a committed team of staff, volunteers, and supporters.

Our programs remained at the heart of JPC's work. Regular community gatherings, pastoral support, and Auslan-accessible workshops—including our new cyber security sessions—ensured that Deaf individuals could connect, participate, and feel valued. Attendance across key programs remained strong, and feedback consistently highlighted the importance of JPC as a place of belonging, cultural identity, and spiritual connection.

We continued to implement the strategic and business plans developed over the past three years, ensuring our services remain relevant, sustainable, and responsive to the evolving needs of the Deaf community.

Our partnerships with JoCare and the Aged Care Volunteer Visitors Scheme (ACVVS) continued to flourish in 2025. These collaborations expanded our reach to isolated Deaf and hard-of-hearing community members, offering meaningful companionship, advocacy, and social connection.



**Sr Janette
Murphy**
Outgoing Staff



**From Left: Teresa Paulet, Tamara Dwyer, Diane Backholer,
Kim Kavanagh, Katrina Mynard, Sophie Duncan, Gail Finn.**

Through this work, we supported Deaf volunteers with Auslan-interpreted training, onboarding, and ongoing support—an essential investment that ensures equitable participation. We witnessed powerful outcomes, including older community members who had previously withdrawn from social life re-engaging in activities, building confidence, and reconnecting with others. These partnerships remain among JPC’s most impactful and valued collaborations.

Operationally, 2025 was a year of consolidation and careful financial stewardship. We refined internal processes, strengthened compliance, and maintained transparent reporting. Improvements in budgeting, payroll, and MYOB systems supported more accurate forecasting and audit readiness. These efforts ensure JPC remains sustainable and well-positioned for the future.

Pastoral care, home visits, and individual support remained essential components of our mission. Many community members faced significant personal challenges this year, and JPC continued to provide compassionate, culturally appropriate support. Our team worked closely with families, carers, and external agencies to ensure Deaf individuals received the advocacy and assistance they needed.

We were also delighted to welcome Kim Kavanagh to the JPC staff team in Pastoral Care, commencing in February. Kim has seamlessly integrated into the organisation, bringing warmth, professionalism, and a deep respect for the Deaf community. Her presence has strengthened our pastoral outreach and enhanced the support we provide to individuals and families.

This year we acknowledged the completion of Evelyne’s nine years of dedicated service on the JPC Board. Evelyne’s leadership, wisdom, and commitment have been invaluable, particularly in her role as Chair of the Management and Strategic Committee, where her guidance played a vital role in shaping JPC’s long-term planning and organisational stability. We thank her sincerely for her outstanding contribution.

We were also pleased to welcome two new Board Members, Gemma Cameron and Andrew Woods. Both bring strong governance experience and a deep commitment to supporting Deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals across Victoria. Their insight and energy will be invaluable as we continue to implement our strategic and business plans.

I extend my heartfelt thanks to our Board, staff, volunteers, donors, and community members. Your dedication and generosity make our work possible, and together we continue to honour the legacy and mission of the John Pierce Centre.

Sophie Duncan
Executive Manager

Supporters

Acknowledgement

On behalf of the John Pierce Centre staff and Board, we would like to sincerely thank the many people and organisations that have supported our work throughout the year.

Our appreciation goes out to the:

- ongoing and first-time donors to our annual fundraiser Ephpheta Appeal
- long term private benefactors
- many community volunteers who helped us deliver our social groups and activities
- JPC archiving team: Sr Bernadette, Kathleen Carroll and Mike Wilson
- philanthropic organisations who through their granting have made some of our core work and project initiatives possible including the Gorman Foundation and Ephpheta Foundation
- JoCare for their support of the Deaf community through the Volunteer Visitor Program
- Australian Government Community Grant to provide cyber workshops targeted at Deaf community members
- many partners that supported our work including Deaf Victoria, Expression Australia, Deaf Connect, Melbourne Polytechnic, Victorian College of the Deaf, Council on the Ageing Victoria.
- faith organisations including Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne, St. Patrick's Cathedral East Melbourne, Josephite's Associates, St. Paul Apostle Catholic Community Endeavour Hills, Catholic Social Services Victoria, donors of various goods and services including Toorak Uniting Church
- Regis Aged Care Facility, Blackburn, for their continued support of Deaf residents
- Auslan and Deaf Interpreters who have worked closely with us to help facilitate our programs, services, staff meetings and events
- members of the JPC Deaf Men's Group who have volunteered their time to help with maintenance and repairs of our courtyard and carpark areas

Community

Groups, Spiritual Care & Pastoral Care

JPC continues to be a unique centre focused on the wellbeing of D/deaf community members and their families. The centre is an inclusive space, ensuring all communication choices are supported. Employing Deaf Interpreters is an important part of the strategic operations within the centre, ensuring inclusive engagement for all and a focus on Deaf to Deaf support and connection. Through a range of events, activities and workshops the community are empowered in their life and learning.



"I love coming to JPC Ladies' Get Together. It feels like family. I can communicate easily in Auslan and we have a great time together."

14

church services
provided at JPC

12

services at Regis Blackburn
Aged Care facility

13

services Auslan Interpreted by
the JPC Auslan team **at St Patrick's Cathedral**, East Melbourne

105

GROUP ACTIVITY
sessions
delivered in 2025

over

500

hours
of PASTORAL
SUPPORT

21 Pankina Social Group

18 Ladies' Get Together

12 Men's Group

11 Signee Tots Playgroup

43 Arts and Crafts

Projects

Cyber Safety

JPC were successful in securing a three-year grant from the Australian Government Community Grants Hub, for a series of Cyber Safety workshops targeted towards the Deaf community. Cyber safety workshops specifically designed for Deaf people are crucial because mainstream digital safety education often overlooks the unique communication needs and lived experiences of the Deaf community. Many online threats—such as scams, misinformation, and privacy risks—are typically explained through spoken content or complex written language, which may not be fully accessible to individuals who rely on sign language as their primary mode of communication.

Tailored workshops delivered in Auslan and culturally appropriate formats ensure that Deaf participants can fully understand and engage with the material. They also create a safe space to discuss issues like online harassment or exploitation, which Deaf individuals may face at higher risk due to social isolation or communication barriers. By making cyber safety education inclusive and accessible, these workshops empower Deaf people with the knowledge and confidence to navigate the digital world safely and independently.

Multiple sessions were delivered in 2025 focusing on Artificial Intelligence, Child Safety, Multi-factor Authentication, Scams Protection and much more. Sessions were delivered by Deaf Community Leaders, Victoria Police and ANZ Bank. Thankyou to the Australian Government for supporting targeted workshops for the Deaf community.



Partnerships

JoCare

JPC has partnered with JoCare to deliver a Volunteer Visitor Program aimed at supporting Deaf seniors in the community. Across Melbourne, Deaf seniors are often geographically dispersed, with many living far from one another. As they age and experience reduced mobility, it becomes increasingly difficult for them to travel and participate in community activities. This has led to a significant risk of social isolation, particularly for those who rely on Auslan and value regular connection with the Deaf community.

In response to this need, JPC developed a program that connects trained volunteers with Deaf seniors through regular visits in their homes and local neighbourhoods. These visits provide not only social interaction, but also meaningful communication in Auslan, helping individuals maintain their language, identity, and sense of belonging.

Throughout 2025, the program expanded steadily, reaching more participants and strengthening its impact. It continues to play an important role in ensuring Deaf seniors remain socially connected, culturally engaged, and supported within their communities.



Community Impact

Volunteer visitor Eileen

“

My name is Eileen Humphry, I am hearing and I know some Auslan. I am a visitor in the JPC Volunteer Visitor program and for over a year now, visit a lovely lady named Angela 1 hour a week. I thoroughly enjoy the experience and each week really look forward to it.

Angela enjoys my visits and we chat and laugh and the 1 hour always goes past very quickly. It is extremely enjoyable and a very rewarding experience. I am very privileged indeed to volunteer in the JPC Volunteer visiting Program.

”

Partnerships

- Deaf Connect who are leaders in service provision in the Deaf sector, attended the community centre throughout the year to provide information sessions about services available to the community and guidance to accessing eligible services.
- Expression Australia who are leaders in service provision in the Deaf sector, attended the community centre throughout the year to provide information sessions and support individual Deaf community members.
- JPC worked with Tobin Brothers Funerals to support community members in the planning and organising of funerals throughout 2025. We are grateful for the continued partnership with Tobin Brothers for all their support of our community.
- JPC worked in partnership with Regis Blackburn, Aged care Residential Facility, to provide monthly church services as well as Art and Craft sessions for the Deaf residents who are unable to leave the facility due to health and mobility. This offers opportunity for those at Regis to socialise and engage with the Deaf community coming in to visit.



Communications & Events

In 2025 the John Pierce Centre provided a range of activities, events and supports. Communication is provided to community members and stakeholders via our newsletters and website.

Our main stream of Information and engagement with the community is via our Facebook page where regular information is posted in Auslan videos, flyers and updates. Events like the monthly Mass is livestreamed on Facebook and many information videos are provided in Auslan on our Facebook page.

Expanding our network and contacts is a key element of the work at JPC to ensure successful outcomes for Deaf community.

Regular annual events at JPC were once again well attended, including the AGM. The Thankyou party was held to give thanks to all of the volunteers that give up their time to support the vital work of the JPC. We could not operate without volunteers and we are truly thankful for their time and energy.

The annual Christmas Rally is the biggest event of the calendar for the community where people come together to give thanks for the year and the community that share a deep and special connection through language, history and culture.

1,137

*Facebook
followers*

571

*newsletter
subscribers*

Australian Catholic Youth Festival

The JPC staff attended the Australian Catholic Youth Festival in November hosting an expo stall to share what we do with the next generation. There was plenty of engagement from the hundreds of youth who attended the event over two days. Deaf Staff taught the students and visitors some religious and general Auslan signs to raise awareness of language and faith in the Deaf community.

The festival was lots of fun for the staff and all of the participants who were able to network with a range of service providers, schools and organisations across the catholic sector.



You can support the work of JPC...

MAKE A DONATION

By supporting the John Pierce Centre, you are creating a positive change. Financial donations are welcome and can be made by visiting www.jpc.org.au or calling our Office on (03) 9525 1158

Or you can donate online at www.givenow.com.au/jpcdonations. All donations over \$2.00 are tax deductible. Scan the QR code to donate today!



LEAVE A GIFT IN YOUR WILL

By leaving a gift to the John Pierce Centre in your Will, you will have a lasting impact, supporting the JPC Deaf community for years to come.

For more information, please contact our Administration Office on (03) 9525 1158 or email us at admin@jpc.org.au

VOLUNTEER

We welcome volunteer involvement at JPC.

Volunteers can contribute their skills to JPC, whether it's by being a JPC Board member, assisting with activities throughout the year or visiting isolated seniors in the community.

For more information about volunteering, visit: www.jpc.org.au/volunteering

KEEP UP TO DATE

Receive updates by subscribing to John Pierce Centre eNewsletter at:

www.jpc.org.au

And follow us on Facebook:

www.facebook.com/JohnPierceCentre

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John Pierce Centre HISTORY

Spirit of the Deaf Community



FATHER JOHN PIERCE

The first Chaplain to the Deaf Catholic Community

The origins of the John Pierce Centre (JPC) date back to 1935 when Father John Pierce was appointed as the first Chaplain to the Catholic Deaf Community in Victoria by Archbishop Mannix. In those times, all the major denominations conducted missions of various sorts to the needy people of Melbourne; included in these were the deaf and blind.

The first gathering of the Deaf Catholic community began before that, in 1924, when the community decided there was a need to establish a Catholic Deaf community group. They regularly gathered and attended church in different places in Melbourne including Armadale and St Francis Church in the city. From 1973 to 1979, a monthly Mass was held at Jolimont at the Victorian Deaf Society.

In 1979, Fr Peter Robinson, Dr Pierre Gorman and Mr. Bryan A'Hearn were the driving force behind the setting up of the John Pierce Centre at Ripponlea. A board of directors was set up as a Company limited by guarantee on 29th December 1979. The Centre was officially opened and blessed on Ephpheta Sunday, August 1980.

In 1995, the Catholic Deaf Community moved to the parish of Prahran and relocated to a refurbished church, St Francis Xavier, which had a multipurpose chapel and offices.

JPC has over 45 years of experience of supporting Deaf people who frequently are isolated within their local communities and even within their own families. Our pastoral care supports the well-being of our community and our community centre, all Deaf people and their families; sharing strength, friendship and the spirit of the Deaf Catholic Community.



WWW.JOHNPIERCECENTRE.ORG.AU