

# Church provides a recipe for success



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- Tracey-Lee Cane

*LEFT:*  
Community Kitchen participant Andrew Allen collects some lemon juice.

*BELOW:*  
Sally and Theresa Cluff sprinkle some lemon zest on a lemon sponge pudding.



## By Rhody Gleeson

A new cooking course is equipping Hill's residents with the skills they need to prepare their own meals and make healthy eating choices.

The Community Kitchen program run by the Mt Barker Uniting Church and AC Care is designed to give Mt Barker's disadvantaged residents real life experience in the kitchen.

The four-week course aims to build skills, knowledge and confidence in food preparation and handling as well as budgeting and increasing awareness of healthy eating and hygiene practices.

Participants are involved in the entire cooking process from planning the menu through to shopping for ingredients and finally plating up.

The group then shares the meal they prepared together and discuss the day's session.

### Pilot programs

The program is set to run as three pilot programs in August, September and October and pastoral support worker Tracey-Lee Cane said she was hopeful the program could be funded for additional sessions.

"We have had a great response with the first two programs at capacity and the third filling up fast," she said.

"It would be fantastic if we could extend the program further."

Ms Cane said she would have ideally liked to see participants helping out with a weekly community meal on



Wednesdays using the skills they learned throughout the course.

"Preparing a weekly meal would not only keep the group together but would also encourage everyone to form deeper connections with others which is a known contributor for improving health and wellbeing," she said.

A number of 'community foodies', volunteers with training in nutrition and healthy eating, guide participants throughout the course giving advice on how to maintain a healthy diet making good nutritional choices.

Sandy Murrell has participated in the Community Foodie program since 2009 and said it was a great way to give back to the community while also

sharing her passion for food.

"I love everything to do with food and it is incredibly gratifying to share that with other members of the community," she said.

The course has already had some encouraging results with many participants already starting to cook at home.

"Sally's carers said she now enjoys joining in with the cooking while another participant's wife was very surprised to come home from work to find him preparing an evening meal," Ms Cane said.

"This is exactly what we want to hear and makes us feel very optimistic about future courses."