



Outlook Christian Living

Autumn 2023 Newsletter

Welcome to the Autumn edition of our newsletter. Over the past few months, we have welcomed many new residents across all four of our sites. An extra special welcome to those who are reading our newsletter for the first time!

Our Outlook Christian Living family is unique, and we truly value every individual. The network of family and old friends within our community is staggering, and we know that many choose to make their home with us upon the recommendation of another resident. Others arrive with no previous link to Outlook Christian Living, and each one finds a sense of belonging and connection.

We love our Outlook Christian Living community, and we are grateful that YOU are part of it. We hope that you enjoy catching up on news and stories, and that this newsletter brings you a little bit closer to your neighbours and friends.

From our CEO

There is something special about working in aged care. Many join the sector because of a personal association, experience or previous responsibility for the informal care of a loved one. Whatever the reason, the compassion and care in the staff's hearts and minds are quite palpable. Indeed, it is not uncommon for staff to celebrate five, ten or even 15 years working with the same organisation. They do this because it is a vocation, more than just a career.

As CEO of Outlook Christian Living, there are three key priorities to which my team and I will stay consistent; delivering exceptional care and service to our residents, valuing our staff, and remaining financially sustainable to ensure we provide these well into the future, despite many challenges. As a team, we look forward to the year ahead and trust that the Lord will give us the wisdom and guidance to continue caring for our much-loved community across all four sites.

In addition to our overall priorities, the aged care sector is also experiencing significant growth and change—with an ageing population, major government reform and legislative change. In response, we have recently implemented several initiatives at our aged care home to ensure that we are well-positioned to succeed. An external clinical audit was commissioned to highlight areas that require improvement, which will help us to be well-prepared for our next accreditation. We also have an external workforce and culture audit underway to ensure we continue to provide a safe and supportive workplace for our valued staff.

I am incredibly excited to advise that our aged care home is now at capacity and in the coming weeks, the newly refurbished Lavender wing will reopen. We are also eagerly awaiting the arrival of several new residents in our retirement villages. We always look forward to welcoming new residents and trust they will enjoy settling in to the Outlook Christian Living community.

Thank you to our residents, families and our staff for their ongoing support as we continue to work together to fulfil our Aim & Mission:

We display God's love by caring for the physical, emotional, spiritual, and social needs of our elderly, whilst providing a loving and caring Christian atmosphere where residents' rights and dignity are respected, and where residents are supported in living life to the full.

Jacques de la Porte
Chief Executive Officer

Around the villages...

Olive Gardens

We have recently had lots of workers busy around the village. The Hall is being refurbished, some units have received an external coat of paint, and the gardener has kept the gardens flourishing despite a hot summer. We have also enjoyed a coming together for a couple of social activities—we don't take this for granted after so many months of Covid restrictions.



During all of this activity, it has also been a time of coming and going at Olive Gardens amongst our community. Recently, one of our residents relocated to Outlook Gardens Aged Care, and we also welcomed Heather to unit 17. Welcome, Heather!

Ebenezer

Greetings to all our readers and a Happy New Year from the Ebenezer community. Due to age-related issues we have seen many departures as well as new arrivals. Despite all this, the most comforting outcome has been that we've seen many of our long-term residents requiring higher care and finding a place in our aged care home at Outlook Gardens. I say comforting because the continuity of care continues from a Christian ethos point of view, with the same Board and Executive team at the helm. We've seen a couple, married for 65 years, ... one moving into Aged Care and the other into a unit, literally metres from each other. Praise God for His Grace and providence.

And we know that all things work together for good to them that love GOD



to them who are called according to HIS purpose.

Romans 8:28

Outlook Gardens

After the lovely long break over Christmas and the New Year, activities in the village have started up again: bowls, exercise classes, Thursday morning coffee and kiosk, Happy Hour, various Bible study groups, and the Op Shop.

In the past few months, we have welcomed Rini (unit 52), Trudi (unit 24) and Clair & Jean (unit 4) - we wish them well settling into their new homes.

To start the year off we enjoyed a soup and film night, an evening of fun & fellowship—enjoy the photos!



From Rev Michael de Kretser, our new Pastoral Care Coordinator...

It has been wonderful to start ministering among you. Thank you for welcoming me. For those who do not know me, I am married to Jenny and have two sons Shane (26), who married Mareshah a year ago, and Ryan (22) who still lives with us. I had the privilege to be the Pastor of the Christian Reformed Church of Casey for the past eleven and a half years. I enjoy playing cricket, coaching soccer, gardening and relaxing at the beach!



I minister on **Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays** in the aged care home and am also available to our three retirement villages. **If you would like to chat with me, please talk to one of our staff members, ring 9795 7566 or email michael@outlookcl.com.au**



In keeping with our association's Christian heritage, CEO Jacques asked me to consider starting a fortnightly gathering in the aged care home to learn from God's Word and discuss how we can keep growing in our Christian faith. This gathering is called **G.I.F.T. (Growing In Faith Together)** because our Christian faith is God's gracious GIFT to us (Ephesians 2:8-9). We seek to grow in our faith because Jesus said He is the Vine and we are the branches, we are to remain in Him and bear much fruit (John 15).

G.I.F.T. alternates with the very popular hymn singing led by my Dad, Ps Crosbie and Aunty Ishbelle Poppenbeck. Henni Burggraaf also continues to lead a Faith Stories discussion each month. **Every week, we have God's word shared and sung in various ways in the aged care home.** This complements the Dandenong Christian Reformed Church's weekly church gathering and 24/7 songs of praise that is streamed throughout Outlook Gardens. Many are deeply encouraged from these faith growing events.

I encourage you to check out the Bible study that the Dandenong Christian Reformed Church (the church next door to Outlook Gardens) is holding in the leadup to Easter focusing on Jesus' final week. This is held at 7 pm on Tuesday evenings at the church. If you would like to be part of this Bible Study, please let Pastor Ron know on 0416 084 297 so that materials can be organised.

We are also looking into other ways we can keep Christ at the centre of our lives and organisation, e.g., through devotional booklets and Bibles being made available, and a team praying for prayer requests. If you have any other suggestions, please let me know.

We are coming out of another **large outbreak of Covid** in the home (30+ residents and staff) and **we thank God** for His healing and protection. We also **thank our wonderful staff and families** for their patience, care and love displayed in word and action. I witness your acts of service and kindness and we are grateful for you and your dedication. You are amazing! Keep serving faithfully and sharing love sacrificially.

Psalm 121 states that our help comes from our God Who created the heavens and the earth. Our powerful God does not slumber nor sleep and is continually watching over us and protecting us 24/7. I encourage you to read this psalm and note the repetition of the word 'watch' or 'protect' that emphasises this. God's protection over our coming and going happens in this life and forevermore! **So whatever you are facing in life, know that we can come to our faithful Friend Jesus in prayer, ask for His help, count on His protection and provision now and for eternity!**

Be encouraged by the words of the familiar hymn we sing: *"Have we trials or temptations? Is there trouble anywhere? We should never be discouraged, take it to the Lord in prayer! In His Arms He'll take and shield you; you will find a solace there!"*

*"The LORD bless you and **protect** you; the LORD make His face shine on you and be gracious to you; the LORD turn His face toward you and give you peace (Numbers 6:24-26)".*

Pastor Michael

Transitions within the family

Outlook Christian Living is a big family! With three retirement villages and an aged care home, our network and community extends far and wide. One of the benefits of being part of Outlook Christian Living is the option to stay within the group if/when your needs change.

With an aged care home within our family, retirement village residents have priority access to respite or permanent care as the need arises. Some of our residents have also recently moved between villages to be closer to a loved one moving into aged care.

As new residents arrive or relocate between Outlook Christian Living sites, it is wonderful to see them greeted and welcomed by old and new friends. All four sites share the same Christian values and sense of community.

If you are starting to consider your next steps, would like to discuss options for moving between villages, or would like further information on permanent or respite care, please call us on 9795 7566.

From Outlook Gardens Aged Care

When it's time to write my seasonal newsletter it is always an opportunity reflect on the past few months. What has happened in my life, what I have done, how many new people I have met, and my plans for the coming season.

Autumn is one of my favourite seasons. It follows our very hot summer (although not so hot this year) and it seems that we are moving into a slower, less hectic time.

We have had a very busy past few months at Outlook Gardens, with exciting things like Christmas, family gatherings, special birthdays and wedding anniversaries, as well as welcoming new staff and residents to the home. In addition, with the Lavender unit now almost ready to receive new residents there is a real buzz in the air.

The next Quality and Safety Commission Resident Survey (conducted by outside auditors) has now begun and shortly we will receive notice of the date they will be here to speak to residents.

We have again been through a Covid outbreak which was disappointing, but everyone is now well and we have returned to our normal everyday activities. Thank you to everyone for their support and compliance with restrictions that enabled us to manage the outbreak so quickly.

As I started this newsletter with thinking about autumn, I would like to share this reflection.

'Autumn shows us how to embrace change in glorious splendour. Autumn reminds us to accept and flow with the changes and just like the falling leaves we need to let go in order to renew and heal.' (Earthmonk)

Talya Goldsmith, Director of Aged Care

Noticeboard

MAINTENANCE

Maintenance concerns or requests can be logged during business hours by calling Outlook Christian Living reception on 9795 7566. Urgent issues should be reported immediately on the same number.

Lenten Bible Study at

Dandenong Christian Reformed Church

As we approach Easter, you are invited to join a Bible Study at the Dandenong Christian Reformed Church on Tuesday evenings at 7pm. This study focuses on Jesus' final week.

If you would like to be part of this Bible Study you are most welcome to come along.

Please let Pastor Ron know on 0416 084 297 so that materials can be organised.

Would you like to volunteer to spend some time with Aged Care residents?

Outlook Gardens Aged Care is recruiting volunteers! Our activities program has many opportunities for volunteers to be involved in activities, including: art/craft, special interests, bingo, gardening, music, facilitating boardgames, helping set up or pack up. We are especially looking for people who might be available on weekends when our regular programs are taking a break.

If you are interested or need more information, contact Gabby on 9795 7566 or leisurelifestyle@outlookcl.com.au

All volunteers need to provide a police check and be fully Covid vaccinated (including booster).