



Outlook Christian Living

Winter 2023 Newsletter

It's Winter again, and time for our Newsletter update. We hope you enjoy catching up on news from across our community and you see some familiar faces in the photos. In particular, we hope that Pastor Michael's reflection on being graceful and grateful is an encouragement to you.

Even though the weather is cold, the Outlook Christian Living community is always warm and welcoming. We love celebrating our common interests, learning from one another's different cultures and backgrounds, and sharing our lives together. We value each person and their life experiences, and we work together towards a common goal. See the back page for the Aim & Mission, Philosophy and Values that form our foundation...

From our CEO

As we approach the second half of 2023, it's a good time to reflect on the year so far and all that has happened. This year has been uncertain and unpredictable due to the ongoing effects of COVID. However, despite some challenges, there have been many joyful moments throughout our villages and aged care home. It's been heartwarming to witness our community of residents, families, and employees come together and celebrate life in the face of adversity. The residents' positive and hopeful attitude has been a great help in keeping our team upbeat and focused on our Mission.

Across our three retirement living villages, there has been an increased demand for units, with many retirees looking to downsize. New residents are enjoying the strong sense of belonging that comes with living in a safe, low-maintenance unit in a welcoming Christian community. Likewise, our aged care home has also been privileged to welcome many new residents (and their families).

In Aged Care news, the quarterly Aged Care Star Ratings were released in May, and I am happy to announce that Outlook Gardens received a four-star rating. This is a significant achievement. For perspective, only 29% of providers nationally achieved a four-star rating, with only a further one per cent reaching a five-star rating. The remaining 70% of providers are rated three stars or below. I am immensely proud of our staff; we cannot do this without their passion and dedication to our organisation and residents.

The Federal Budget allocation of \$12.4 billion towards the aged care sector is a significant step towards addressing providers' financial and workforce challenges. We welcome this funding and look forward to its positive impact on the sector. We are also grateful that our care staff will receive fair compensation for their hard work and dedication, as we look forward to passing on the 15% wage increase in full when the funding becomes available.

Our finance team has put great effort into preparing Outlook Christian Living's budget for the 2023-24 fiscal year. We are optimistic about our ability to return to surplus. While it won't be a simple task, we are confident that with the help of the Lord and by working together across departments, we can achieve success.

Our community is lively and engaged, dedicated to supporting each other and enjoying life. Age doesn't stop us from exploring new ideas, forming friendships, or trying new things. We continue to rely on God each day and are grateful for our community's optimistic outlook.

God Bless,

Jacques de la Porte
Chief Executive Officer



Around the villages...

Olive Gardens

We have recently enjoyed a number of social events, including Easter morning tea, a special lunch provided by Casey Christian Reformed Church, our annual Biggest Morning Tea cancer fundraiser, celebrating some special birthdays and more.

We also gathered to farewell Herman and Tally Schuring, and thank them for their many years of friendship and cheerful help around the village. They are relocating to Outlook Gardens Aged Care, so it's nice to know that they remain part of our Outlook Christian Living community. We are also looking forward to welcoming some new neighbours and friends in due course.



Ebenezer

Greetings from your fellow residents at Ebenezer Village. One of our highlights this quarter must be our inaugural Outlook Christian Living outing to The Dandenongs. For the first time residents of our three villages ventured out together. It was a wonderful occasion; one we hope will become a regular event.



Some other events worth mentioning are: Trivia night, Shrove Tuesday, Easter celebration, Mother's Day High Tea, St Patricks Day, ANZAC Day service, Residents living at Ebenezer for 20 or more years.

While we have had several vacant units at Ebenezer recently, we are looking forward to welcoming some new neighbours throughout the rest of the year. Most recently, Lois Anderson moved in during May. Welcome Lois!

Outlook Gardens

Even though the weather is cooling off, we are still enjoying gathering for events and activities. We meet for morning coffee every Thursday, as well as Happy Hour once a month. Recently we have also enjoyed some extra activities, including a trip to the movies to see Jesus Revolution, an Easter reflection time with Pastor Michael, and joining with some of our Ebenezer and Olive Gardens friends for a day in The Dandenongs.

We also celebrated Mother's Day with a barbeque lunch, served to us on beautifully set tables in the Community Centre (which was nice and warm on a chilly day!), and the sausages, burgers, salads and desserts were enjoyed by all. This was organised by the residents of one of our courts, with plans for each court to assist in planning group activities as they are able.

We welcome Tim Tiemens into our village, and wish him well settling into his new home. Tim has relocated from Ebenezer, and already knows a number of his Outlook Gardens neighbours.



Encouragement from our Pastoral Care Coordinator

Thank you for welcoming me as your pastoral carer. It has been wonderful getting to know residents and staff, sharing God's Word, singing with you, praying and encouraging you in your life and faith journey.

An elderly gentleman once said to me "**I want to grow old gracefully, not grumpily**"! He wanted to be known as someone who was graceful and grateful rather than be known as one who complains and focusses on the negatives. How about us? Are we known for being graceful and grateful?



God's Word repeatedly encourages us to be grateful: "Give thanks to the LORD, for He is good; His faithfulness endures forever!" (Psalm 107:1, 118:1, 1 Chronicles 16:34 and many more). One way to do this is to regularly count our blessings and name them one by one and we will see what the Lord has and is doing for us and through us. Let me practise what I preach! Over the past few months...

- We thank God for **answering prayers**. Residents shared how God has healed them from cancer, how He has been with them through sickness, falls, surgery, and hospital stays, while others prayed for God to take them to be with Him in glory and not suffer for long. What a Friend we have in Jesus, all our sins, griefs, and joys to bear!

- We **celebrated the 'good' of Good Friday and Resurrection Sunday** with a service and Lord's Supper in our aged care home. We also gathered for Easter devotions and sang praises at Ebenezer and Outlook Gardens retirement villages. We considered Isaiah 53:5 and how Jesus was crushed and bruised to make peace between us and our holy God. We read and sang praises to God for His death and resurrection. Because Jesus lives, we can face all our todays and tomorrows!

- We thank God for many **new friends** joining our communities at Ebenezer, Olive Gardens and Outlook Gardens.

- We thank God for **blessing Hilda for 100 years!** We had a special birthday party in the home.

- We thank God for **helping our aged care home receive accreditation** from the government for a further three years and we celebrated with residents and staff. Our wonderful **staff put in many hours** preparing for this, and we sincerely thank them for their ongoing care, support, encouragement and patience!

- We thank God for providing us with finances so we could **refurbish the Lavender wing** in our aged care home and welcome new residents. Thank you to Greg and his maintenance and gardening team that do so much work in the home and at our three retirement villages.

- We enjoy the Spirit working through **G.I.F.T.** (Growing In Faith Together) Bible discussion, **hymn singing** and devotions, **faith stories** and the weekly **Sunday service** livestream from Dandenong Christian Reformed Church.



The **most important gift we are grateful for is our salvation**. God so loved us that He sent His only Son, Jesus into our world. He lived a sinless life and died on that old, rugged cross at Calvary to pay for our sins. God the Father was satisfied by His Son's perfect sacrifice for our sins and raised Him up on Easter Sunday! Jesus offers us forgiveness for all our past, present, and future sins and abundant life to enjoy now and for eternity! All we need to do is accept God's gracious gift by turning from our sin and turning to the Lord in faith. The question is, **have you?** When you do, you too will be free from guilt and shame, enjoy real life and surpassing peace!

In conclusion, **what are you thankful for? Write them down one by one and share them with a friend or family member.** Let us be known as graceful and grateful people.

A reminder that I minister on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays in the aged care home and our three retirement villages. If you would like to chat with me, please talk to the staff, call 9795 7566 or email michael@outlookcl.com.au

God bless you and keep you in His wonderful care, *Rev Michael de Kretser*

Outlook Christian Living—who we are

Did you know that Outlook Christian Living is built upon foundational principles of God's love and Christian care? Everything we do begins with our Aim & Mission, Philosophy and Values:

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.

Philosophy

We believe that the Bible is the Word of God and therefore has life directions for us all; and that each person is a unique individual with their spiritual, physical, emotional, and social needs.

Values

We place a high value on:

- *Treating all residents with love, compassion, and dignity.*
- *Operating as an effective and cohesive team.*
- *Delivering a consistently high standard of care.*
- *Supporting residents living as independently and safely as possible.*
- *Building relationships based on trust, integrity, and friendliness.*

From Outlook Gardens Aged Care

It is hard to believe that we are at the beginning of June and winter is upon us.

Here at Outlook Gardens the start of a new season means the start of a new menu. Members of the food focus group have been busy studying the menu and making suggestions, and the menu has now been finalised. As always there are lots of choices and some residents have asked for more hot pies as alternatives to main meals (*I know they are thinking of hot meat pies but for those of us who support Collingwood, 'Hot Pies' means something different*).

Winter food of warm roasts, casseroles, and slow cooked food means there are lovely aromas coming from the kitchen so please come to the dining room to enjoy the meals so well prepared by Chef Rebecca and her team.

It is also a time for reading a good book and just joining others for coffee and a chat. Staff will always help with extra warm drinks and snacks.

I would like to welcome all the new residents and new staff members into our home. You are all welcome into our community and we will do all we can to help you settle and become part of Outlook Gardens.

The Lifestyle staff have a full and varied calendar of events so please don't hesitate to join in. If you have any suggestions for activities talk to Gabby (Lifestyle Coordinator). She is always looking for new ideas.

Wishing everyone a warm and fun filled winter months.

"Laughter is the sun that drives winter from the human face". (Victor Hugo)

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.

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).