



Outlook Christian Living

Autumn 2024 Newsletter

It's been a while since our last newsletter, and we have lots of news and photos to share! Daily life continues at each of our villages and our aged care home, and we share in one another's joys and struggles. Life together is a blessing, and we continue to be grateful for our Outlook Christian Living community. We hope you enjoy catching up on our news, and recognise some familiar faces in the photos.

We also hope you enjoyed our Year in Review book, which replaced our Summer newsletter at the end of 2023. If you haven't yet seen it, you can read it online under the 'newsletter' tab on our website, or pick up a copy from reception.

From our CEO

It is easy to get swept up in the commercialism of Easter without taking time to reflect on its true meaning. Jesus' sacrifice on the cross was an act of love for all that demonstrated what we now know as the "ultimate sacrifice". Before His death, Jesus explained that "greater love has no one than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends" (*John 15:13*).

This is why, when I hear of staff investing their time to continue to care for our residents or our volunteers who are assisting with activities, I am reminded of Jesus' example and His encouragement to put others before ourselves. Whilst Easter is a special time of reflecting on sacrifice and love, it is also something I witness all year around. The daily actions of the Outlook Christian Living team are our way of honouring Jesus by serving and caring for the most vulnerable in our community.

- I am proud to share with you that the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission awarded Outlook Gardens Aged Care a Five-Star Provider Rating. This is a testament to our exceptional staff and their commitment to the overall well-being and happiness of all residents in our home.

- Thank you to everyone who has supported our Bus Appeal thus far. We hope to raise \$100,000 to purchase a 12-seater bus to be shared by our home and villages. To date, we have raised close to \$20,000. Every donation, whether small or large, gets us one step closer to achieving our goal. Tax-deductible donations can be made via our website or in person at reception or the Support Services office. Thank you once again for your generous support and believing in our cause.

- After almost seven years with us, Neil Morgan has decided to explore other opportunities, travel, and enjoy a well-earned break. We thank Neil for his dedication and service to our community and wish him all the best for the future. We trust the Lord will continue to guide him and watch over him in this new chapter of his life.

I hope this update finds you well and that you have a blessed Easter. As always, please don't hesitate to reach out to us if you have any questions or concerns. We appreciate your ongoing support and look forward to continuing to serve our residents and the wider Outlook Christian Living community.

Thank you, and God Bless,

Jacques de la Porte



Around the villages...



Olive Gardens

We have had a wonderful start to the new year, welcoming many new residents to live amongst us throughout the end of 2023 and beginning of 2024. Welcome to Roseanna De Zylva, Damian Nugara, Maria Vranic, Christine Sirtunga, and Alek Gagatsis!

We continue to enjoy one another's company at morning tea, special social events, Bible studies and birthday parties. Olive Gardens is truly a friendly and welcoming community!

We gathered in December for a Christmas carols service, and then in January we enjoyed an Australia Day BBQ. Birthdays are also special events, which we enjoy celebrating together, especially one another's milestones!

As well as the upcoming combined village outing to Wonthaggi, we are also looking forward to an Easter service with Pastor Michael, a visit from U & I mobile fashion service, and several 80th birthday parties. There are always plenty of opportunities to gather with one another for events in the Hall, while also enjoying the peacefulness of our own units.

Ebenezer

There is a lot to like about Ebenezer Village. Our social group met early January to plan events and outings for the coming year. Our first gathering for the year was our annual Australia Day service and BBQ lunch. As with every year, this was very well attended. We are looking forward to our first Outlook Christian Living outing to Wonthaggi planned for March 18.

Since our last newsletter, we have welcomed some new neighbours to our community; Lloyd Poole, Wendy Chalmers, Judy Matthews, and Jan & Noeline Van Der Watt. With another couple arriving in March, we will only have three vacant units remaining which we trust will be occupied soon.

We continue to walk by faith. We celebrate knowing we will ultimately experience victory in our spiritual warfare. It's already won, and we can live in triumphant optimism today.



Outlook Gardens

Since our last news update we have begun a brand new year, with many fun times to look forward to including outings and film nights. Now that the holiday period is over, activities have started up again including exercise classes, Bible study groups and Thursday morning coffee, at which time the kiosk is open for all of our Dutch treats too. We have also recommenced our once-a-month Happy Hour.



As well as our regular activities, we also enjoy gathering for special celebrations. On Australia Day we gathered in the Community Centre to enjoy an Aussie barbecue lunch—it was so good to acknowledge our special day.

We welcome Henni Burggraaf, our newest resident, to the village. We wish her all the very best settling into her new home, and are glad to have her living in our community.

In other local news, our new letterboxes are now in place and we are very glad to have no more snails or wet letters!

Encouragement from our Pastoral Care Coordinator

I have the privilege to care for, encourage and listen to our residents, many of whom have lost their lifelong companion and struggle with loneliness. They miss their loved one, particularly in the evenings as there is no one with whom to share about their day. Others do not have regular visitors to talk to, reminisce about yesteryear and to listen to them. It is not nice being lonely.



God's intention is for us not to be alone. He created us to have fellowship *with Him and others*.

He said to Adam in the Garden of Eden: "It is not good that man should be alone", and created Eve to be his helper (Genesis 2:18). King Solomon also said, "Two are better than one" (Ecclesiastes 4:9).

When you feel lonely, I encourage you firstly to **be in relationship with Jesus, our faithful Friend** who said, "Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends" (John 15:13). Jesus demonstrated this by sacrificing His life at Calvary so that we could be His friends.

Jesus is our true Friend who is with us 24/7 through the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit. He is our Comforter and Counsellor! Let us go to Him when we are lonely, weary and heavy laden to find rest.



Secondly, I encourage you to **ask the Lord to provide you with a trusted person or group** whom you can befriend. For some of us this is easy, whilst others struggle to open ourselves and trust others to maintain confidentiality. However the scriptures below share some wonderful benefits of having and being friends.

Thirdly, having enjoyed the benefits of friends, as the scriptures below point out, we are to be **warm, friendly and hospitable to others** who stay in their homes and rooms all by themselves. I have seen this in action in our retirement villages and aged care home with residents visiting others, welcoming new neighbours into their friendship circles and social activities, hosting them for coffee or a meal, invitations for Christmas lunch or New Year's Eve and making meals for them after hospital stays. Please keep this up! You are obeying the second greatest command by loving others in these ways. I receive lots of positive feedback on how our four sites are so welcoming and friendly, and I encourage you to continue!

The Bible says a lot about friends and how we are to love our neighbours. This is a good checklist for us:

A friend loves at all times (Proverbs 17:17) and forgives as the Lord forgave us (Colossians 3:12-14).

A friend encourages (1 Thessalonians 5:11), builds others up (Job 6:14) and is kind (Galatians 5:22).

A friend does not stir up conflict nor gossips (Proverbs 16:28).

Wounds from a friend can be trusted (Proverbs 27:6).

Friends carry each other's burdens (Galatians 6:2).

A friend is hospitable and serves others (1 Peter 4:8-10).

A friend sharpens the other and holds each other accountable (Proverbs 27:17).



Let us continue to love our Friend Jesus, enjoy His comforting Presence and be friendly and loving to our neighbours. If you would like me to visit, please speak with staff, call 9795 7566 or email

michael@outlookcl.com.au

Finally, I took up my part time, three days a week role as Pastor of the Dandenong Christian Reformed Church in February. We appreciate the Sunday services, funerals, special choir programs and 24/7 Christian content that the church offers to our Dandenong aged care home and retirement village residents through "Hope TV" on Channel 101 on their TVs. We look forward to celebrating Easter together per the services detailed on the left. Please join us in person, watch live or later on "Hope TV" or YouTube.

CELEBRATE EASTER WITH US

6.00 pm Palm Sunday Choir

9.30 am Good Friday

9.30 am Easter Sunday

9.30 am Every Sunday

Dandenong Christian Reformed Church
Corner Gladstone Road and Outlook Drive
Dandenong North



I appreciate your understanding as I allocate my week across our four Outlook Christian Living sites and the church. I also value your prayers and encouragement as I continue to serve Jesus. I know the Lord who called me into ministry is faithful and He will do it and that I can count on His help and friendship...and yours too!

Pastor Michael de Kretser

Thank you, Neil!

In early April we will farewell Neil Morgan from our Outlook Christian Living team. Neil has been with us for seven years serving in various Executive roles, including a stint as our CEO and most recently as our Director of Finance & Corporate Services.

After handing over the finance reins, Neil is planning to take a well-earned extended break with his wife Jacquie. They will travel through various parts of coastal and outback Australia, before returning home for Neil to begin a new career challenge.

We extend our grateful thanks to Neil for everything he has brought to Outlook Christian Living. He has contributed generously to our community through his professional skills and faith in God, and also as a friend to many residents, families and staff members. Neil's sense of humour, approachability and insight will be greatly missed.

Thank you Neil, our prayers and good wishes go with you into your next chapter!



Update from Outlook Gardens Aged Care

It's a privilege to bring an update from our Aged Care home, and share some wonderful news with you. All aged care homes are continuously assessed and monitored by the Aged Care Quality & Safety Commission and issued with a public "star rating" for comparison against other aged care homes. All homes are assessed across multiple criteria, including residents' experience, staffing levels, quality and compliance.

I am very pleased to share that Outlook Gardens Aged Care has recently achieved a five star rating—which is a testament to the care and support provided by our wonderful staff! You can view the rating and assessment here: <https://www.myagedcare.gov.au/find-a-provider/aged-care-homes/1195241>. We know that our home is a wonderful place to live, and are grateful to have this recognised by the government.

Over the past few months we have welcomed many new residents to our home as well as a number of new staff to our team. We also enjoy having short-term residents spend time with us through respite. Respite is a wonderful way for carers at home to take a break and catch their breath. Respite can also be a great way to 'dip your toe' into aged care before making a long-term decision, and respite residents sometimes choose to stay on permanently after experiencing community life in aged care. If you would like to visit our aged care home to look at options for yourself or a loved one, please call us on 9795 7566 to arrange a tour.

Jodie Hoogenboom
Director of Nursing

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 looking for 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, or just joining a resident for a chat. 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 would like more information,
contact Gabby on 9795 7566 or leisurelifestyle@outlookcl.com.au