



Outlook Christian Living

Winter 2024 Newsletter

We hope you enjoy our Winter edition of the newsletter. In this edition, we are celebrating our **community** and thanking God for those with whom we share daily life. Living in community brings its own unique joys and challenges, and we hope that this newsletter encourages you to reflect on what you love about your own community—whether that is those with whom you share your home, extended family, neighbours, workplace, church or community groups. As a resident, friend, staff or family member of Outlook Christian Living, we are grateful to have each of you as part of our community too!

From our CEO

As the crisp Melbourne winter air settles in and the beauty of the season unfolds, I'm delighted to bring you this newsletter. At Outlook Christian Living, we continue to cherish the opportunity to walk alongside our residents in this chapter of their lives, fostering a vibrant community built on faith, fellowship, and compassionate care.

In the following pages, we share with you many exciting events, heartwarming stories, and inspiring reflections that embody the spirit of our Christian community. We also share updates on our ongoing efforts to ensure our residents' continued well-being and spiritual enrichment.

Life in our villages continues to flourish, with new residents welcomed warmly at Ebenezer, Olive Gardens and Outlook Gardens. It's a privilege to join in at village social gatherings, and to see the genuine care and friendship that exists between neighbours. We currently have very few village vacancies, and I often have enquiries from people who have received a recommendation from an existing resident. It is encouraging to know that our residents are so happy in their homes that they recommend village life to their family and friends! You will often see various tradespeople at work in your area as refurbishment and regular maintenance work continues across each village – thank you for your ongoing patience as we maintain our beautiful gardens, buildings and facilities.

In the spirit of keeping our environment up to date and comfortable for all, I am pleased to announce upcoming refurbishment work in our aged care home. In the coming weeks, carpets on the bottom floor and remainder of upstairs will be replaced. Additionally, the Banksia unit is receiving new vinyl flooring and a fresh coat of paint. We understand that any construction can cause temporary inconvenience, and we promise you that we'll take all necessary steps to minimise disruption while ensuring the project is completed efficiently. We're confident that the refreshed spaces will enhance our residents' overall comfort and enjoyment in the home we all love so much.

I'm also thrilled to welcome Elizabeth Adepoju as our new Residential Services Director on the 3rd of June. Elizabeth brings a wealth of experience and leadership in aged care, and we're confident she will play a vital role in ensuring our residents' continued well-being and happiness. We extend a warm welcome to Elizabeth and look forward to her contributions to our community.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Tanya Connor for her outstanding service as Acting Residential Services Director over the past eight weeks. Tanya's dedication, expertise, and compassionate leadership have been invaluable during this transition period.

We have now received \$21,000 towards our goal of \$100,000 to purchase an Outlook Christian Living bus. We have a long way to go, but with the support of our community, we will get there. Thank you to those who have donated or contributed already! Tax-deductible donations may be made via the 'donate' button on our website, or in person at the admin support office.

Whether you're a resident, a family member, or a valued friend, we're grateful for your presence in our Outlook Christian Living community. May this newsletter bring you a sense of warmth and joy, reminding you of the enduring strength of faith and the importance of community.

In Christ's love, *Jacques de la Porte*



Around the villages...

Olive Gardens



It's hard to summarise the past few months in just a few sentences—we have been busy with special events, outings and our regular activities too. We enjoy one another's company, and regular opportunities to catch up for meals and events. Since the last newsletter, we have celebrated some 80th birthdays, paused for an Easter devotion with Pastor Michael, held a Biggest BBQ Lunch cancer fundraiser, joined a group outing to Wonthaggi, gathered for lunch at Prince Mark Hotel and enjoyed a fashion presentation. Australian International Ministries have also recently commenced monthly church services in our Hall, and it is wonderful to have a worship service conducted regularly on our site.

We have also recently welcomed Cor & Julie Van Lieshout to our Olive Gardens community, and are enjoying getting to know them.

Ebenezer

A well-known idiom, "Time flies when you're having fun", must be true. It's hard to believe that we are already nearly halfway through 2024. The past three months have just flown and indeed here at Ebenezer Village we have had a lot of fun and we continue to make new memories. Some highlights include our trip to Wonthaggi with all three villages, our Easter service, ANZAC day and most recently Mother's Day. Our social committee continually looks for ways to make our events interesting, fun and meaningful.

Many residents have also taken the opportunity to travel, be it local, interstate, or international. We have had some who needed to go to hospital due to age-related illnesses and a small group have had to deal with Covid. But the great thing about living here is that there is always support. Neighbours, friends, and family rally around those who need encouragement, a meal, a visit, transport, or a friendly face. Speaking of friendly faces, we also welcome Graeme & Linda Godfrey to our community!

Our sense of community is what makes Ebenezer such a special and wonderful place to live.



Outlook Gardens

It's been wonderful to gather together recently for a few special events. As well as joining with Ebenezer and Olive Gardens friends for a special ANZAC day service and a bus outing to Wonthaggi, we also enjoyed a Mother's Day BBQ and a special Easter reflection led by Pastor Michael. We also continue to enjoy monthly Happy Hour gatherings and coffee together on Thursday mornings.



We have welcomed many new friends to our village recently, and hope they are settling in well. We are enjoying getting to know: Eleanor Gauder, Fritz & Yolette Gunawardene, Everard & Dagmar Hoffman, Rosalie Wright, John Hall, Chris Boustead, and Desmond Diaz. It's quite a lot of new faces, and our new arrivals are bringing a new energy to our village! Welcome to each one, and we pray that you enjoy your new home and community.

Encouragement from our Pastoral Care Coordinator



Our theme this edition is “**Community**” and it reminded me of a conversation with a church friend named Brian. Brian was a ‘larger than life’ character, full of life, kindness, a big heart of love and he could talk! In one of our chats, Brian asked me a thought-provoking question which I have never forgotten: “**What is the number one question people ask as they walk into church?**”

What do you think the answer is?

According to Brian, the number one question people ask as they walk into church is, “**Will I be loved?**”

This question and answer can also be applied to our aged care home and retirement villages. As potential residents consider moving into our Christian home or retirement villages, they are thinking, “Will I be loved?”, “Will I be accepted?”, “Will I live in a loving community?”

I have been associated with our aged care home for decades: having visited my grandmother Hazel or “*Girlie*,” now my mother Yvonne at the aged care home and my father Crosbie who lives in the Outlook Gardens retirement village. I



now have the privilege of working two days a week as pastoral carer and I must say, I have witnessed wonderful Christian community. People and staff who come to our home and villages often comment that there is something different about us, they can feel a real sense of **love, community and wonderful care being shared! Wow!**

Where does this come from and how can we share and grow community? We all share a brotherly or sisterly kind of love (Greek word ‘Phileo’), and this is certainly practiced. But we come under the banner of Outlook Christian Living.

As Christians, God’s word commands us several times to **love one another**, sincerely, deeply from the heart (Matthew 22:39, John 15:12, 1 Peter 1:22, 1 John 4:7, 11 to name a few). The imperative to love in the Bible is a different type of love. Love in the Bible is a different Greek word ‘Agape.’ This type of love is **sacrificial** type of love, it is **another person seeking** type of love, it is a **forgiving** type of love, it is loving the other person ‘in spite of’ what they have said or done.

Jesus says in John 15:12 “Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no-one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends.” Jesus practiced what He preached by sacrificially laying down His life for us, His friends, at Calvary as the greatest act of love for us. He **now asks us to also agape each other as He has demonstrated agape for us.**

Our aged care home and three retirement villages **were built to share and experience this kind** of Christian agape love and community and our Christian **Leadership Team** continue to foster this key value in all we do.

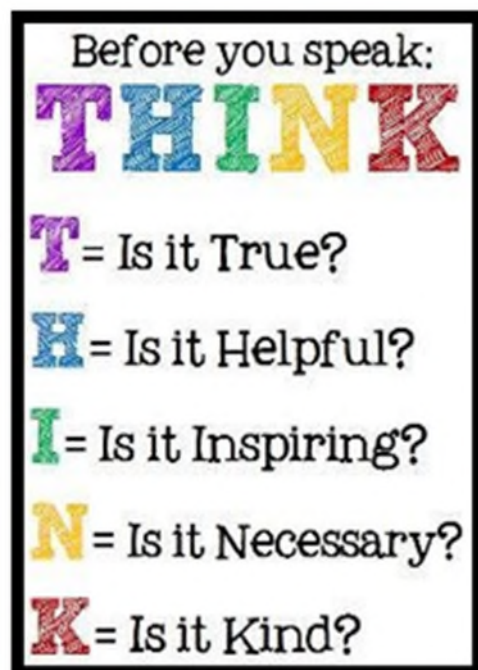
In addition, **residents also play a big part** in growing love and community. All of us are encouraged to be **Christlike in our thoughts, words, and actions** rather than the opposite. This is easy to read but often hard to practice! However, we do not do this in our own strength. Believers have the Holy Spirit living in us and we are to cooperate with Him daily to cultivate and grow His first fruit of LOVE... (Galatians 5:22). I have found the picture below to be very helpful. You could consider cutting this out and keeping it in a place you regularly see.

Believers **failing to be Christlike** in our thoughts, words and actions **compromise our faith and witness**. You may have heard people say, “Those so-called Christians, listen how they gossip and slander people; see how act and treat one another! If that is what Christians say and do, I do not want anything to do with them”! Ouch! Loving community is broken when we sin by not being Christlike in our words and actions.

The **Good News** is that God sent His Son Jesus for sinners like us. Jesus died and rose again to forgive our sin and shame and is always amazing in grace! When we turn from our sin of not being Christlike in our words and actions, our gracious God offers us a fresh start.

As God shows us amazing **grace**, let us be gracious to others. As God freely **forgives** us, let us freely forgive others. As God first agape **loved** us, let us agape others. By striving to do this, **people will know we are Christians** by our love, and we will practise and grow COMMUNITY! May God help us do this.

Pastor Michael de Kretser



Fostering Community

At Outlook Christian Living, one of our key aims is to foster community amongst our residents. Each of our retirement villages has a team of residents who actively encourage community life through arranging events and activities for their village. In addition to this, our villages have semi-regular events to which residents of other villages are invited to attend. It is wonderful to see a strengthening friendship and sense of connection form across our three villages. Outside of scheduled events, village residents also enjoy dropping in to share a cuppa or card game with one another, and they keep an eye out for neighbours who might be struggling or ill. Village residents also regularly pop into our aged care home to visit or volunteer, maintaining links across our entire Outlook Christian Living community.

In our aged care home, communal dining areas create a sense of community and residents also enjoy socialising together through formal and informal activities and outings. In addition to the activity program, residents also often visit one another, enjoy a board game or cuppa together, or just quietly watch TV with a neighbour after dinner. One of the most frequently noted things by visitors is the sense of 'family' that is evident across our home.

Our staff actively contribute to the family atmosphere, and their care and love is obvious in their interactions with one another and our residents. It's not unusual to find a staff member and resident chatting together and sharing stories about life, culture and family.

As a Christian home, we believe that our sense of community stems from our love for God and for one another. In a world where people are increasingly isolated and lonely, we are grateful to be able to offer a place of community and connection for all.

Our Outlook Christian Living logo is a daily reminder of this: a Christian cross in the centre, encircled by a heart that represents the love and care surrounding our community.



Welcome to our new Residential Services Director!

We are very pleased to welcome Elizabeth (Liz) Adepoju to the Outlook Christian Living community as our new Residential Services Director at Outlook Gardens Aged Care. Liz commences her role on Monday 3 June, and is looking forward to meeting our residents, family members and staff.

Liz has an extensive background in aged care, an active Christian faith, and a wonderful heart for caring for people.

Although she hasn't quite started yet, we wanted to let you know to keep an eye out for her around our aged care home. In our next newsletter, Liz will share a little bit about herself so that you can get to know her better.

Until then, **we extend a great big WELCOME to Liz**, and look forward to her arrival!

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