



Outlook  
Christian  
Living

## Autumn 2025 Newsletter

### Dignity

In part, our Aim & Mission is to *display God's love...whilst providing a loving and caring Christian atmosphere where residents' rights and **dignity** are respected...*

At Outlook Christian Living, our respect for each person begins with our belief that everyone is individually created by God. Residents and staff alike are encouraged to recognise the value in one another, listen and learn from one another's point of view, and respect one another's differences. The dignity of each person is part of our mission, and woven throughout everything we do.

### From our CEO

As we welcome the beauty of the autumn season, I am reflecting on the many blessings we have received as an organisation. I am genuinely grateful to the Lord for His continued guidance and provision, allowing us to thrive financially, operationally and as a community. We continue to serve those in our care with excellence through our staff's dedication and our families' support.

I am delighted to announce that after twelve months of fundraising, we have purchased a ten-seater bus to share across our Retirement Villages and Aged Care Home. This fantastic initiative would not have been possible without the generous donations from our residents, families, staff, and the broader community. Your kindness and commitment to enhancing the lives of those in our care are deeply appreciated, and I sincerely thank each and every one of you for making this dream a reality.

As we look ahead, our organisation is well prepared to embrace the upcoming changes in the aged care sector. The new Aged Care Act and Strengthened Quality Standards, set to be implemented on 1 July, will bring about significant sector improvements by placing the rights and needs of older people at the heart of the aged care system. These reforms will address key issues faced by older Australians, aged care providers, and workers, ensuring a higher standard of care and a more person-centred approach. We welcome these changes and remain committed to upholding the highest standards of care and service.

I am also incredibly proud to announce that Outlook Gardens has once again retained a five-star aged care provider rating. This remarkable achievement is a testament to the dedication and hard work of our staff and leadership team, who continually strive to create a warm, supportive, and nurturing environment for our residents.

Our retirement living communities also continue to flourish, with a vibrant calendar of events and activities enriching our residents' lives. One recent significant improvement is the renewal of the bitumen walking paths at Ebenezer, providing a safer and more accessible environment for residents to enjoy the beautiful gardens and leisurely strolls.

The memorial cornerstone at Outlook Gardens Village is set to receive a well-deserved refurbishment, along with the installation of a flagpole. This will allow residents to hold meaningful ceremonies on significant days such as ANZAC Day and Remembrance Day, honouring those who have served our nation.

Olive Gardens is a hive of activity with the construction of a new veranda and a much-anticipated kitchen refurbishment. These improvements will provide greater opportunities for social gatherings and events at this wonderful village. Olive Gardens will also receive a flag pole near the Community Centre.

In closing, I thank our residents, families, and staff for their ongoing support, dedication, and care. Through our collective efforts, we continue to create a welcoming and thriving community in our aged care home and villages. I thank the Lord for each and every one of you.

May autumn bring you joy, peace, and countless moments of connection.

*Jacques de la Porte*



# Around the villages...

## Olive Gardens

We have kept busy over the past few months, with plenty of opportunities to gather together. We have enjoyed several activities in the Hall, including a fashion show, fundraising dinner, Christmas celebrations, Australia Day BBQ, and our regular Happy Hour gatherings. We have also ventured out for a lunch outing to Cranbourne and joined in with the combined village outing to Mont de Lancey. Pastor Michael is currently running an Explaining Christianity course in the Hall, which is fortnightly at 2pm on Tuesdays until 25 March. New attendees are very welcome!

During the past few months we have welcomed **Vera Lamb** to unit 32 in September, and **Hayden & Diane Harvey** to unit 24 in December. We are enjoying getting to know these new members of the Olive Gardens community, and are very pleased to have them with us.

## Ebenezer

Over the past few months we have shared some wonderful times together! In October we enjoyed a combined village outing to Mont De Lancey in Wandin, and then Ebenezer residents gathered in December to witness the Christmas story through song and performance.

Our community shares the highs and lows together, with individuals caring for each other and valuing dignity and respect.

Since our last newsletter, we have been delighted to welcome **Gerry & Frances Zuidwijk** and **Gary Buckley** to Ebenezer, and are enjoying the beginning of new friendships. We hope they are very comfortable in their new homes and in our community.

Sadly, three of our residents have been called home by our Lord. Their presence will be deeply missed. We have also farewelled five residents who have moved into Aged Care Homes. Of these, one has a spouse still living in the village, and we extend our support and love to the families during this transition.

Through it all, we continue to support one another, and are hopeful and optimistic for the opportunities, challenges, and blessings that the Lord has planned for us in 2025.

## Outlook Gardens

Activities have started up once again now that we are into a new year; exercises on a Wednesday morning, coffee morning on Thursdays (along with the kiosk open until 11am), and Happy Hour on the first Saturday each month. Since our last newsletter, we have gathered for Cup Day, Christmas celebrations (including a special morning tea with carols, and a Christmas lunch at Dandenong Club) and the New Year. Over the next few months, we are looking forward to a film and supper evening on March 14, a Pizza night in April, and some interesting outings in the near future.

We continue with bottle collection and car washing, working together in a few ways towards the fundraising for the new bus.

We also extend a very warm welcome to **Aubrey & Cheryl Paternott**, who moved into unit 16 during February. It is wonderful to have them join our community!

## Encouragement from our Pastoral Care Coordinator

Our theme this edition is “Dignity,” taken from Outlook Christian Living’s mission statement which says we respect the **dignity** of our residents. **What does it mean to show dignity?** The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines **dignity** as “the quality or state of being worthy, honoured, or esteemed”. The Apostle Peter writes in the Bible saying “Honour everyone. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the emperor” (1 Peter 2:17, ESV).

**So why show ‘worth, honour or esteem’ to one another?** In the opening two chapters of our Bible, we read that God created the first human Adam from dust! Dust is not significant, but God breathed the breath of life into Adam, and he became a living being. God gave humans significance and worth when He created male and female in His own image! As God’s image-bearers, every human being deserves to be treated with worth, honour and esteem.

**Jesus is our supreme example of how we are to do this.** When Jesus lived on this earth, He treated outcasts, sinners, children, the sick and even His enemies with **dignity**. No matter what they had done or deserved, Jesus loved, respected, cared, healed, and forgave them.



One key example of Jesus showing **dignity** is in His interactions with the Samaritan Woman in John chapter 4. The Jews hated Samaritans. However, Jesus, a Jew, intentionally went out of His way to go to Samaria and minister to her. This woman had five husbands, and lived with a man who was not her husband. In spite of her sin and shame, Jesus communicated with her and offered her Living Water, eternal life to quench her deepest need of real and lasting love. Even though she did not deserve it, Jesus valued her, accepted her, treated her with **dignity**, showed her God’s riches and lavish favour!

**As God’s image-bearers, you and I are called to walk in our Master’s footsteps and treat everyone including our residents and neighbours with **dignity**.**

As a Pastoral Carer working in our aged care home and retirement villages and as a grandson and son of present and former residents of both the aged care home and retirement village, I see and hear how staff show **dignity** to our residents.

Staff patiently care for frustrated and cranky people; carefully shower and assist residents with meals; tend to gardens and maintenance concerns; toilet and clean up smelly situations; cook for varied palates; spend time playing games and talking with the lonely; praying and reading scripture to assure saints about to be promoted to glory and the list goes on!

We are good at respecting **dignity**, however there is room for improvement! At times, we do fail, and we ask you, as God’s image-bearers, to show us **dignity** and forgive us too. Living in such a close community, we all have daily opportunities to practise this value amongst our neighbours.

May God help us to continually choose to show dignity to one another!

*Rev Michael de Kretser,  
Pastoral Carer, Outlook Christian Living.  
Pastor, Dandenong Christian Reformed Church.*



## Introducing...the Outlook Christian Living bus!

With **grateful thanks to God**, we are very excited at the arrival of our bus! The bus has come all the way from Queensland, and will be used regularly by each of our Retirement Villages as well as our Aged Care Home. Thank you to everyone who has generously contributed towards the cost, as well as those who have organised and/or hosted fundraising activities. Although we still have a small fundraising gap

to cover, we were blessed to be able to find and purchase a secondhand bus in excellent condition, with only 25,000 km on the clock.

This bus is a tangible reminder of God's provision, and the love and teamwork amongst our community. It will be kept busy out and about on the roads as our residents enjoy the benefits!



### ***An update from our Residential Services Director at Outlook Gardens Aged Care***

It's been a busy few months in our aged care home, with many new residents moving into our community, and staff getting ready for the introduction of the Strengthened Quality Standards, which take effect on 1 July. As part of our preparation, I'd like to introduce you to our new Clinical Leadership Team: Jaskiran Kaur (Quality & Compliance Coordinator), Vijo Varghese (Clinical Care Manager), Karen Edmonds (Admissions & Aged Care Operations Manager), Ashleigh Phillips (Clinical Practice Coordinator), and a yet-to-be-appointed AN-ACC Coordinator. I am looking forward to working with the new team, and continuing to focus on ensuring that our residents receive the best care at all times.

We continue to invest in our staff, providing training and education as well as one-on-one coaching and mentoring. We have welcomed several new team members in the past few months, and our residents are enjoying getting to know them.

There has been a bit of construction activity recently in the home, with a new lift being installed near reception. As I write, we are looking forward to the completion of installation and the use of a more modern and larger capacity lift for our residents. The maintenance and construction team are also busy converting an unused area of the Lavender wing into another much-needed residential room.

As always, our fabulous Lifestyle team continue to offer wonderful activities, outings and events each day. Our residents have the option to be as busy and social as they would like, as well as enjoying quiet and relaxing hobbies when they prefer.

As we look forward to what we hope to achieve together in 2025, and we transition through the upcoming changes in the aged care industry with the strengthened aged care standards and updated Aged Care Act, I'd like to share a quote to remind us: *"Alone, we can do so little; together, we can do so much."* (Helen Keller)

Liz Adepoju



## Noticeboard

### **MAINTENANCE**

Maintenance concerns/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 would like more information, contact Gabby on 9795 7566 or [leisurelifestyle@outlookcl.com.au](mailto:leisurelifestyle@outlookcl.com.au)