



# Autumn 2026 Newsletter

## Christian atmosphere

In keeping with Outlook Christian Living's Aim & Mission, in this newsletter we are celebrating what it means to provide a "loving and caring Christian atmosphere..."

Visitors and residents often comment that our villages and aged care home feel 'different' and 'like home', and many residents choose to join our community after visiting and experiencing the atmosphere.

We believe that this is due to our commitment to display God's love through care and action, and pray that it is evident throughout every facet of our community.

In this edition, we also hope you enjoy the extra contribution from Jacques, Michael and Liz, with each of them sharing a photo that represents something from 'home' for them.

### From our CEO

As we welcome the Autumn season, we are reminded of the beauty of change, reflection, and renewal. This time of year encourages us to pause and appreciate the community we have built together at Outlook Christian Living, grounded in care, compassion, and a shared commitment to fostering a truly Christian atmosphere.

Our mission continues to guide everything we do. Creating a Christian environment is not only about the services we provide, but also how we live out our values each day. It is reflected in the kindness shown between residents, the dedication of our staff and volunteers, and the sense of belonging experienced across our Aged Care, Retirement Living, and Home Care communities.

Within our Aged Care services, we remain focused on delivering high-quality, person-centred care that upholds dignity, respect, and spiritual wellbeing. It has been encouraging to see the continued strengthening of our care practices, alongside the meaningful connections formed between residents, families, and staff. These relationships are at the heart of a nurturing Christian environment and reflect our commitment to enhancing both care outcomes and quality of life.

Across our Retirement Living communities, we are equally inspired by the vibrant and supportive lifestyles our residents create together. Autumn brings opportunities for fellowship, shared activities, and quiet reflection, whether through social gatherings, pastoral care, or neighbours simply supporting one another in everyday life. These moments reinforce the strong sense of community and belonging that defines our villages.

Our Home Care Services continue to grow as an essential extension of our mission, enabling individuals to remain living independently in their own homes while still experiencing the care, dignity, and Christian support that defines Outlook Christian Living. Through personalised care, meaningful relationships, and a focus on wellbeing, our Home Care team brings not only practical assistance but also companionship and spiritual connection into the homes of those we serve. This service reflects our commitment to meeting people where they are, ensuring that our Christian atmosphere is not limited by location, but is lived out in the wider community.

I am also pleased to acknowledge the ongoing commitment to excellence across Outlook Christian Living, including the continued strong performance of Outlook Gardens Aged Care in comparison to the sector. This achievement reflects not only operational strength, but a deep, organisation-wide dedication to quality care, continuous improvement, and financial sustainability.

As we move through this season, I encourage each of us to continue living out our mission; to be a community where Christian values are evident in both word and action. Thank you to our residents, families, staff, and volunteers for the role you play in making Outlook Christian Living a place of warmth, faith, and genuine care.

*Jacques de la Porte*

*Jacques with one of his beloved horses*



# Around the villages...

## Olive Gardens

The Olive Gardens community has enjoyed gathering for lots of social events over the past few months! We celebrated Christmas together, as well as enjoying a BBQ on Australia Day. In the Hall, our regular Friday Happy Hours are always popular, as well as Bible study discussions, light exercises and morning teas at various times throughout the week. We also recently enjoyed a social lunch together at the Hallam Hotel, and our Social Committee is busy planning for more events in the coming months.

We welcomed Monica Ross to our community in November, and we are enjoying getting to know her as she settles in. With Monica's arrival, every unit at Olive Gardens is now occupied, and it is wonderful to see community life buzzing along well with residents coming and going from every unit.

## Ebenezer

Greetings from everyone at Ebenezer Village! Our Social Group has been actively preparing an engaging social calendar filled with events and celebrations for the upcoming year. The schedule promises a variety of exciting activities, and we are delighted to invite everyone to join in.

We began the year by celebrating Australia Day, marking the first major event for the new year. The occasion brought together members of our community, setting a positive tone for the months ahead.

This year, we have welcomed Bert & Loretta Zandt, David & Carol McCall and Beverly Jones to Ebenezer Village. Their arrival has enriched our community, and we continue to pray for more new additions. At present, there are six vacant units available, and we look forward to welcoming more residents in the future.

Our newly elected Resident Coordinator, Robin, is adjusting to her role and settling in well. We appreciate her efforts and look forward to seeing her contributions to our community in the coming months.

## Outlook Gardens

After the Christmas formalities and break-ups it was nice to have a little break from our activities.

Australia Day came along very quickly, so we headed over to our lovely gazebo in the gardens for a get together and sausage sizzle—always great fellowship. We are so happy to have our very own flagpole and to fly the flag on Australia Day and other special days.

We recently enjoyed a film night and supper together in the Community Centre, and all of our usual activities are up and running—exercise classes, morning coffee (together with the kiosk being open for business), Happy Hour and various Bible study groups.

We look forward to another year of enjoying social outings and events and also living in our beautiful village.

## Encouragement from our Pastoral Care Coordinator

Outlook Christian Living's Aim & Mission is: *To 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.*

The focus of this edition is on the **caring Christian atmosphere** that people experience in our aged care home and retirement villages.

I could not think of a Bible verse about 'atmosphere' but regular feedback from residents visiting us and staying with us is that they feel a **sense of peace, calmness, or 'there's something different'** about us compared to other non-Christian homes and villages they have visited.

So, why is this? Where does this Christian 'atmosphere' come from? I could only think of the Apostle Paul's writing in 2 Corinthians 2:14 *But thanks be to God, Who always leads us as captives in Christ's triumphal procession and uses us to spread the aroma of the knowledge of Him everywhere (New International Version).*

I work with a number of ladies who spray nice smelling fragrances before walking into the office. These fragrances give off a sweet-smelling aroma. I often ask the name of the fragrances I like, so I can buy them for my wife next time!

Applying this to our context, Paul says, through us, God spreads the aroma of the knowledge of Him in every place including our aged care home and retirement villages!

This started with the pioneers of the Christian Reformed Churches who donated sacrificially and fundraised tirelessly to start our Christian aged care home and three retirement villages. God used them to spread the aroma of the knowledge of Him. This has been continued by our successive Christian Board and Executive over five decades.

Our believing **staff and residents play a pivotal role** in spreading the fragrance of Christ daily and sharing His sweet-smelling aroma. **People hear and see** that we are different and experience the sweet Christlike fragrance in our community. As they hear and see us in action, they feel our caring Christian 'atmosphere'.

Our aged care home and retirement villages also benefit from **pastoral care and many Christian activities** like hymn singing and devotions, Bible discussion and prayer, Faith stories shared, Easter, Christmas and Remembrance services, 24/7 Christian music and Sunday church services through resident TVs, each one contributing to our caring Christian 'atmosphere'.

**Our prayer is that God will use us** to spread the knowledge of Him to everyone in our community, and that we would continue to be a place of welcome and care for all who enter, including residents, staff and visitors.

We pray that they will **not only notice** the fragrance of Christ, **but taste and see** that He is good, gracious and that He gave His life to save us from our sins. May they not only feel the Christian atmosphere but most importantly, come to a saving knowledge of Christ our Life-giving Saviour!

*Rev Michael de Kretser*

*Pastoral Carer, Outlook Christian Living*

*Pastor, Dandenong Christian Reformed Church, [dcrc.org.au](http://dcrc.org.au)*

*or search us on YouTube*

*Michael with his lovely wife Jenny*



## ***An update from our Care Services Director***

Another year is well and truly underway. By the grace of God, we are grateful to begin 2026 together and to continue nurturing the strong Christian atmosphere that defines Outlook Christian Living, one of connection, love, compassion and community.

Scripture reminds us: *“Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins. Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling. Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others”* (1 Peter 4:8–10). This passage reflects the heart of our community: serving one another with love, generosity and grace.

Over recent months we have celebrated many special moments. In addition, we have warmly welcomed new aged care residents and Support at Home clients to our community, and paused to honour residents who are no longer with us. Each person who becomes part of Outlook Christian Living leaves a lasting imprint on our hearts, and we are grateful for the privilege of walking alongside them and their families.

A new year brings renewed opportunity to reflect, grow and improve. In 2026, we remain strongly focused on listening and responding to resident and family feedback, whether concerns, complaints, compliments or suggestions. Each voice matters and continues to guide how we enhance our services.

Food and dining remain a key focus in our aged care home, with food and nutrition being a dedicated new standard under the Strengthened Quality Standards. We are committed to regular consultation with residents regarding menus, meal quality and the overall dining experience. Through ongoing collaboration with our catering partners and seasonal menu reviews, residents continue to play an active role in shaping their dining experience.

Our Support at Home program, which commenced in October 2025, continues to grow. We are pleased to support clients from our villages and surrounding community and look forward to welcoming more in the future. Services include personal care, domestic assistance and allied health supports such as physiotherapy, occupational therapy and podiatry, as well as other essential services to support clients to stay living in their own home. If you know someone who may benefit, please encourage them to contact our team on 9795 7566 or email [homecare@outlookcl.com.au](mailto:homecare@outlookcl.com.au).

Aged care continues to evolve, particularly following the introduction of the Aged Care Act 2024 and strengthened compliance requirements. Despite these changes, our commitment remains steadfast, to display God’s love through genuine, compassionate and person-centred care in both residential and community settings.

We may not always get everything right, but we are committed to learning, improving and doing better each day. Thank you for your continued trust and support as we build a strong, faith-filled and caring community together.

“Faith is taking the first step even when you don’t see the whole staircase.” — Martin Luther King Jr.

May God continue to guide and bless our community this year.

*Liz Adepoju*

*Liz with her beautiful nieces*



## **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 always 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)