

Spring 2026 Newsletter

It's always a joy to compile this newsletter and think back over the past few months of life together. The photos and stories remind us that we are created to be in community and it's wonderful to see friends and neighbours enjoying good company, sharing time and helping one another. We hope that this newsletter gives you a little glimpse into daily life at Outlook Christian Living, and reminds you that you are part of a wonderful community that includes residents, family members, friends, staff and Association members.

From our CEO

As we move into Spring, there is a sense of renewal and momentum across all areas of Outlook Christian Living. The changing season is always a timely reminder of growth, new beginnings, and the importance of community - values that continue to shape everything we do across both our aged care home and our retirement living villages.

Within the home, it has been encouraging to see strong occupancy and a continued focus on delivering high-quality, resident-centred care. Our team has remained committed to not only meeting the strengthened quality standards, but genuinely enhancing the daily lives of those in our care. From lifestyle programs and pastoral support through to clinical excellence, the feedback from residents and families continues to reinforce that the work being done by our staff is making a meaningful difference.

A key highlight over the past period has been the completion of the Grevillea refurbishment, which has been thoughtfully transformed into a dementia-friendly unit. This project has been an important step forward in how we support residents living with cognitive decline. With guidance from Dementia Australia, our design focuses on creating a calm, familiar and safe environment, with improved wayfinding, appropriate lighting, and spaces that encourage both independence and meaningful engagement. It has been particularly pleasing to see how positively this new environment has been received. Families have shared their appreciation for the homely feel and the sense of dignity it provides, while residents themselves appear more settled, comfortable, and engaged in their surroundings. It is a great example of how considered design, combined with compassionate care, can significantly improve quality of life.

Across our retirement living communities we are also seeing positive engagement and a strong sense of connection among residents. These communities are more than just places to live; they are environments where independence is supported, friendships are formed, and people feel secure in the next stage of life. We continue to focus on maintaining and improving these environments, while also preparing for legislative changes within the retirement living sector.

Our in-home care service continues to grow steadily and is becoming an important extension of the care we provide. We are now supporting a number of clients within our villages and the wider community, enabling them to remain in their own homes while receiving the care and assistance they need. It has been encouraging to see strong interest through My Aged Care and local referrals, and we remain focused on building a service that reflects the same Christian values and quality standards as our residential offerings.

There has also been steady progress on a number of key projects as we continue to plan for the future, including the planned relocation of our Head Office, the completion of our kitchen upgrade, and the ongoing development of a dedicated specialist memory support unit. These initiatives are important as we position the organisation for future growth and ensure our facilities continue to meet the evolving needs of those we serve well into the future.

Importantly, none of this is achieved without our people. I would like to acknowledge the dedication of our staff, the support of families, and the trust placed in us by our residents. It is this collective commitment that allows us to continue building an organisation that reflects our Christian values and provides care, dignity, and community to all.

Jacques de la Porte



Around the villages...

Olive Gardens

Greetings from Olive Gardens! Despite the cold weather during Winter, our friendships continue to be warm, and we have enjoyed gathering for our regular events and some special celebrations.

Our regular meetings continue to be wonderful times together, with Bible studies, games in the Hall, prayer meetings, exercises and Happy Hour.

As well as all our regular events, we were also invited to join Ali Prins' friends and family to celebrate Ali's 90th birthday with a lovely morning tea in the Hall. We have also recently enjoyed a lunch outing together to Berwick Hotel.

So much of our time together includes eating and drinking and enjoying one another's company!

Ebenezer

How wonderful it is to feel the warmth of the sun on our faces once again. After the colder winter months, there are already gentle signs of spring beginning to appear around us, and slowly but surely, we are coming out of our winter hibernation.

Some residents have made the most of the season by travelling to warmer places, while here at home we look forward to the blossoms and spring bulbs soon bringing fresh colour, beauty, and renewed energy to our surroundings.

Throughout the cooler months, life at Ebenezer Village has continued with our regular gatherings and activities, including the much-enjoyed Winter Dinner Dance. Sadly, we also bid farewell to a resident who had called Ebenezer Village home for the past 10 years, and we remember their time among us with gratitude.

As we look ahead, we continue to pray that the Lord will lead new residents to Ebenezer Village, especially as we currently have several empty units waiting to become home to others.

Outlook Gardens

Our gardens have told us that Spring has arrived and we look forward to many days of sunshine.

We kept warm over Winter with activities in the Community Centre, including a Pizza Night and a Soup Night, which were both popular with everyone enjoying good fun and fellowship.

Our normal activities are in full swing especially morning coffee on a Thursday morning, where we greet any new residents and enjoy the company.

Planning ahead, we are looking forward to a bus trip for lunch at Mornington and then a scenic drive around the coast road to Safety Beach.

Encouragement from our Pastoral Care Coordinator

God has called me to the best vocation in the world! As Pastor, I have the privilege to share God's live-giving Good News and be involved in '**Hatches, Matches, and Dispatches**' and everything in between!

When visiting people about to pass from this earth, I have the opportunity to assure believers that death is not the end, but the beginning of eternal life in heaven, pray and pronounce God's blessing over them. Often, their family are there, and I pray for them as well. It's a wonderful privilege.

I also help families left behind plan funeral services. Although this is sometimes uncomfortable to talk about with your own family, communicating your funeral details in advance can be **extremely helpful**. Family members can sometimes become overwhelmed by decisions that need to be made quickly, and are very grateful if their loved one has **prepared well** by writing what they would like to have included, who they would like to be involved, and prepaying for their funeral expenses. **Have you done this?** If so, great! If not, here are some things to think about, write and give to a family member, friend, or funeral director:

Your favourite Bible passage(s) and why: _____

Who would you like to read these passages? _____

Your favourite psalms, hymns, or songs: _____

Who would you like to share the eulogy? _____

What would you like done with your body? _____

What would you like written on your headstone? _____

What would you like served for refreshments afterwards? _____

If you have not already chosen a funeral director, this is worth considering. It is immensely helpful to your family, if you can, to meet with them and prepay your funeral, as it can be very costly! In choosing a funeral director, you may like to consider a Christian firm which helps your family during their grief.

Finally, **the most important question I ask a member before they pass is:** "Do you believe in Jesus?" Your answer is so helpful to me and your family as we have your funeral. May Jesus' words from John 11:25-27 encourage you. Jesus said, *"I AM the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in Me, even if he dies, will live. Everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die. Do you believe this?"* May you respond like Martha and say, *"Yes Lord, I believe You are the Messiah, the Son of God!"*

Jesus' words assure those who believe in Jesus that life does not end when they pass from this world. Instead, it is the beginning of our eternal life with God, where there is no more death, mourning, crying or pain (Revelation 21:4). What grand hope! What a wonderful comfort!

Thank you for thinking deeply and acting on these things. It will be a **great help to your loved ones**.

Rev Michael de Kretser

Pastor, Dandenong Christian Reformed Church, dcrc.org.au
or search us on YouTube





We've changed!

Here's a sneak peek of our Grevillea wing upgrades, as mentioned by our CEO on page 1. The full story will be in our upcoming *Year in Review* magazine.



An update from our Care Services Director

I am glad to be back after an incredible six weeks travelling through Europe, and have returned feeling refreshed, grateful and with a renewed appreciation for the wonderful work we continue to do each day.

My travels were truly a gift. Experiencing different countries, cultures and communities reminded me that, despite our differences, the need for connection, kindness and belonging is universal. Returning home and seeing our teams continuing to provide such compassionate care has reinforced what a privilege and blessing it is to be part of a community that makes a meaningful difference to the people we support and their families. A big thank you to Vijo for holding the fort in the Aged Care Home and Lili for covering my duties in Support at Home.

Strengthening the Voice of Our Community

Our Consumer Advisory Body recently met in an important gathering designed to strengthen the voice of our residents, clients and representatives. The meeting is a meaningful forum where people can share experiences, ideas and feedback and contribute to shaping the services we provide.

More than simply meeting our obligations, this is about partnership, listening and continuous improvement. As a Christian organisation, we continue to place our faith and values at the heart of this work, seeking God's guidance as we make decisions and ensuring dignity, respect and compassion remain central to the way we serve.

Enhancing Food and Dining

We were also pleased to introduce Pure Foods texture-modified meals last month for residents who require modified food textures to support safe and enjoyable dining.

Feedback has been very positive, particularly regarding the taste, texture and presentation. We believe texture-modified meals should not only meet clinical and swallowing needs but should also look appetising, taste delicious and offer the same enjoyment and dignity as any other meal. This initiative supports our commitment to Standard 6 – Food and Nutrition under the strengthened Aged Care Quality Standards.

We will continue to listen to resident feedback to further enhance the food and dining experience across our home.

Looking Ahead

Spring is a season of renewal, making it a wonderful time to reflect on what we have achieved and look ahead with gratitude and optimism. I am incredibly thankful for our residents, clients, families, volunteers and dedicated team members who bring our purpose to life every day.

In the words of **Maya Angelou**: *"People will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel."*

May we continue to ensure everyone within our community feels valued, heard, respected and genuinely cared for.

Liz Adepoju



Noticeboard

MAINTENANCE

Maintenance concerns/requests should be reported by calling Outlook Christian Living on 9795 7566.

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