eNews February 2022

A word of encouragement from the incoming Chaplain Rep to MCF-A

PCHA Andrew Lewis, DGCHAP-N

As we begin a new year, I'm confronted by the reality that this is now our third year of a pandemic. Loved ones and colleagues have been isolated, disconnected, unwell, and some have even died. Within this, our service men and women and their families have had to deal with the stresses and pressures of operations, deployments and postings to name just a few. The normal aspects of our world and lives, where we find hope, have been dislocated and found wanting.

It is here that I am reminded that hope is not a thing, not a location, not a situation, not an experience. Hope is a person, and his name is Jesus. We live in a world that is hope obsessed. What we are all searching for is a hope that won't disappoint us, that won't leave us hopeless in the end.

Romans 5;1-5 talks about a hope that won't disappoint you even in times of suffering. This hope is not a thing, it is not a place, it's not temporary. It is Jesus. He brings life – life to the fullest, life abundant. People can love and respect us, but they cannot give us life. Situations can make life easier, but they don't give life. Achievements can be satisfying, but they are only temporary and they don't give life. True lasting hope is only found at the feet of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who is hope, and the one who brings hope.

As we look to 2022, as we care for loved ones and as we serve alongside our mates and colleagues, may I encourage us all to look to Jesus and to point to Jesus, as he is the one who brings real and everlasting hope.

2021 MCF AGM wrap-up - David Coleman, MCF Secretary

The MCF AGM was held on 9 Nov 21 at Campbell Park Offices in Canberra. There were only 5 members physically present (thanks to COVID), but we were very grateful for all those who participated via Skype.



Some members of Christian organisations consider the AGM of secondary importance, as simply the 'business' side of the organisation, done to meet a legislative requirement and therefore less important than 'ministry activities'. Sure, an AGM does have a distinct business or administrative flavour to it and it is a legislative requirement, but they are also very much ministry activities. Not only is our AGM an avenue for fellowship and meeting together in our Lord's name, but through it we appoint leaders to carry the ministry forward and allocate the ministry resources for the extension of God's Kingdom for the year. In that sense, they are very much direction setters and an important element of ministry.

At our meeting, in addition to celebrating God's provision for MCF through consideration of the financial statements and budget, the 2022 council was elected.

We welcome Steve Neuhaus as the new Chair (formerly Vice Chair), Darren Thomas as Vice Chair (formerly Members Rep), David Schweinsberg as Treasurer, Andrew Lewis as Chaplains Rep and Steven Cutts as Members Rep. Steven Cutts has been an active member of MCF for many years and it is great to now have him formally on Council. We give thanks to the Lord for appropriately gifted people for each of these roles.

We are also grateful for the work of those who have stood down; Jacob Choi (former Chair), Eric Bettanin (former Treasurer) and Mark Willis (former Chaplains Rep), all who have served diligently and faithfully in service to MCF and through it, our Lord. We wish each of these men every blessing as they continue to serve God through MCF and other ministry activities.

Meet the new Exec members

CHAP Stephen (Steve) Neuhaus – ***Chair*** If you missed Steve's bio last year click here to read it.



WO2 Darren Thomas – ***Vice Chair*** (Full bio click here)

Darren (Thommo) has been in the Army since 2000 and a member of MCF-A since 2011. He has been a Member Rep for many years, run Bible Studies and worship services on Bases, attended and run Defence Christians Dinners and has attended and run many other events on behalf of MCF-A. In 2019 after some personal post-deployment reflection and family decisions, WO2 Thomas volunteered to become a Padre in Australian Army Cadet (AAC) and was commissioned as an ACC Chaplain. WO2 Thomas is married to Tracey and they have two sons, Riley and Fraser. WO2 Thomas is excited about the future in his dual roles in the ADF and in his Ministry in the AAC and Military Christian Fellowship (MFC).

You can read about Thommo's remarkable conversion in the Defence Testimonial book My Story, My God, that came out last year. Ask your Chaplain for a copy or contact mcf.office@defence.gov.au with your best postal details.



CHAP David Schweinsberg – ***Treasurer***

David (Dave) has been in the Australian Army since 2005 and has been associated with MCF-A since 2006. Initially serving as an Artillery Officer, in 2019 he transferred to Chaplaincy at the direction of God and has been caring for the people of Puckapunyal ever since. Dave's better half is Ashleigh and they have two children and one with the Lord. In this uncertain time, Dave feels we need to get back to truth, that Jesus died for us because he desired to have a relationship with his creation, allowing us to be Children of God.

Mr David Coleman is continuing as ***Secretary***.

The MCF-A Exec are here to serve you and welcome your suggestions, ideas and asks for assistance or support. Feel free to contact them directly or via the MCF Office at any time. Please keep the Exec and Council in your prayers.

1 Feb is i4Give Day – 6 Feb is i4Give Sunday

Jesus instructs us to forgive – Matt 6: 14-15

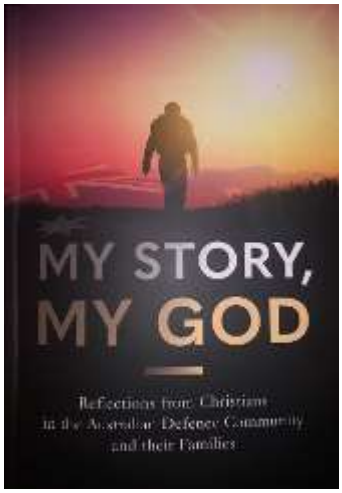
MCF encourages you to read the following stories, discuss forgiveness with your MCF Small Group, even if it's not this week, and share the information with those around you.

Our friends at DidYouKnow education have shared some amazing examples of forgiveness – Danny and Leila from Sydney, who's 3 children and niece were killed by a driver as they walked home after buying ice creams, and the Amish in the USA after a shooting at their school who's actions spoke louder than words.

More info on i4Give, i4Give Week and i4Give Sunday, extra reading and other great resources can be found by clicking the links or go to www.mcf-a.org.au

"Forgiveness is the greatest gift you can give yourself and others. The more you practice the better you become at it and it allows you to live peacefully and to heal. Forgiveness is more for the forgiver than the forgiven" Danny & Leila Abdallah.

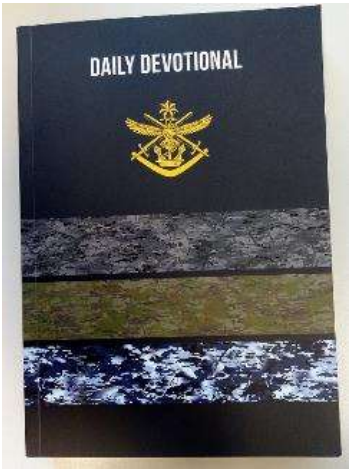
Don't forget these free resources from your ADF Chaplain……



"My Story, My God" is a book of many stories – short testimonials from military, public service personnel and families. It demonstrates how Christianity has impacted their lives both in the past and the present. These are rich stories. Stories of those doing it tough, those isolated, those growing and those succeeding.

This book has been complied on behalf of the Forum of Christian Military Ministries and Christians who have served the Australian Defence Force in some way in the past or are still serving. Whether you're curious about what these people have to say or you already have a relationship with Jesus, we pray you will find the stories in this book an encouragement and come to know of God's unconditional love for you, no matter what!

Special thanks goes to the generosity and patience of the Bible Society Australia in helping get this book published and distributed as well as to those who so willingly shared part of their faith story.



The ***ADF Daily Devotional*** has been compiled by many Chaplains across the three Services and journeys through the Bible in a way that helps make sense of it all. There's even devotionals that deal with military issues. In short, it is written for you, the ADF members along with your families! Some MCF small groups are using it for their Bible Study and others listen to the daily podcast on their way to work and read the extra Bible reading at home as part of their evening devotion.

While the Devotional is available in hard copy from your local Chaplain (or the MCF office) if you are unable to get to a Chaplain, are deployed or on exercise, or prefer to listen rather than read, the ***Devotional is being re-produced as a YouTube based podcast***. (Not DPN) Each Devotion is 3-4 minutes, often being read by the person who wrote it. Follow this link to the devotionals that we have already recorded (ADFDailyDevotionalPodcast). We have currently recorded around 25% of the 205 devotionals.



If you or your family would like to talk to a Chaplain they are available through the Defence Switch on 1300 333 362 (ask for the Duty Chaplain for your local area).

"My Story, My God" **and the ADF Daily Devotionals are available (free of charge) via your local ADF Chaplain for all who *currently* work within the Australian Defence Organisation**.
If your area doesn't have a Chaplain please contact mcf.office@defence.gov.au

Thanks to Bible Society Australia who gift these and other books and ADF Bibles to the ADF community.

Other items

Have you posted or moved house?

Please update your details HERE

Membership

Membership is free and ***open to every Christian***. If you've not had an association with the ADF you can be an associate member.

MCF is supported through freewill donations by members and supporters. Please look at Supporting MCF in prayer, with your time and through financial support.

Note that donations (over $2) to MCF are tax deductible.

Prayer requests

To put forward prayer points for inclusion in the calendar please email the MCF Prayer Coordinator Dr Brendan Pell: brendan.pell@dst.defence.gov.au

You can also send through **urgent prayer points** that are sent on to the MCF Prayer Warriors or enquire about becoming an MCF Prayer Warrior by contacting Brendan.

Contacting the MCF Office

PHONE (NOTE- not usual office number): 02 6212 1580

EMAIL: mcf.office@defence.gov.au You can also find us on Facebook, ForceNet and Twitter.

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