



Military Christian Fellowship of Australia

Feb 21 Newsletter

Happy New Year from the MCF Office,

As 2021 starts a lot may have changed for you, or it may be same ol', same ol'. Some things in the MCF Office haven't changed, but a lot has. There are some great opportunities being followed up on and lots of exciting things around the corner. There's also some new people on Exec and in other volunteer roles, so it's very exciting all round. There will be a short bio about those who are new in this and the next couple of e-News and updates on what's happening through MCF so make sure you always read through each of the e-Newsletters this year to see what's new and keep up to date. There will also be some of the annual MCF events coming back this year *but* some may be revamped because of COVID, and some just to fit into today's pace and commitments of our members as well as to give better support to all across Australia and beyond. Remember the Exec are very open to any ideas you may have to keep growing MCF and for sharing the Good News with all in the ADO, just email them to the [MCF Office](#).

The book of Romans has many verses on working together, well worth having a search, but I'll leave you with this one and ask once again that you make sure you read through *all* of this e-News.

Romans 8:28 And we know that in all things God works for good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose.^(NIV)

Every Blessing for all you do in 2021 and thank you for your interest in and support of MCF-A. I look forward to supporting and working with you this year.

Julie

MCF-A Administrator/Staff Worker

Introducing new MCF volunteers

****Stop the press****

The MCF Exec are excited to announce that **CHAP Steve Neuhaus** has been appointed as Vice Chair. More news on this in the March edition



MCF Member Rep assistant and joint Deployment Co-ord.

PTE Dillon Beatson

The oldest of 10 children, I first enlisted into the Army in December 2009.

I was baptised after birth, however I grew up in a secular household. I became staunchly atheist and laughed at those who believed in God. I enjoyed life the way most young, secular people do, by getting drunk every weekend.

In 2013 while on a training exercise, I was involved in a fatal helicopter crash. During the crash, I cried out to God to “please not let me die.”

This plea for help was the catalyst for a long and interesting journey of self-discovery and the meaning of life.

I started to look into philosophy and felt comfort in Stoicism, Jordan Petersen and Viking culture.

No matter how much I drank or what philosophical outlook I had, something was still missing.

By chance, my uncle sent me a YouTube series on the Bible; It blew my mind. For the first time I was shown how beautifully complex the Bible is. I started to search for proof of God’s existence. I investigated mathematics, randomness which with philosophy pointed to the reality of an ultimate author to the universe.

By 2018 I started to believe in a creator. Around that time, a friend invited me to attend an Alpha course. I learned who God was and His beautiful love for us in the person of Jesus Christ.

I felt drawn to the Catholic Church and by a strange chain of events, I attended a Traditional Latin Mass - I felt like I was transported to the middle ages!

I started to fall in love with God and the faith He had given me.

On the 31st August 2019, I was confirmed into the Catholic Church. I have only fallen more in love with God and the total richness of the faith since.

Today, I live in a young men’s Catholic Fraternity in Brisbane, striving to live a holy life. I have a passion for evangelisation, apologetics and theology.

In my role as a Deployment Coordinator (and Member Rep assistant), I hope to help facilitate the spiritual nourishment and those curious

about the faith for those members away from home. I pray that I can be an instrument in God's plan to bring people closer to Christ and ultimately to Heaven.



MCF Media and Outreach Resources Officer

Mr Paul Sheehan

I have worked as a project manager and military analyst for almost 20 years at DST Group. I started my career in Sydney in the area of Mine Warfare analysis, before moving into Navy Futures research and wargaming, after which I took up a position as an embedded operations analyst at the

Australian Maritime Warfare Centre working alongside Navy officers on fleet tactics. I am now based in Melbourne working as a project manager and operations research scientist in the area of aerospace maritime surveillance, and I am currently the lead for human-in-the-loop simulation wargaming support to project SEA1000 through which I provide analysis of tactics and operational concepts for the future submarine.

I have a diploma in theological studies and I am planning to soon undertake a Masters by research in theology and philosophy through Notre Dame University. I have previously worked for the Church in various voluntary capacities, including apologetics groups, charity organisations, pro-life groups and the media. I have travelled to the Holy Land on three occasions and have an interest in the regions archaeology and in its religious, cultural and political history. My personal interests include basketball, photography and hiking, and I am particularly interested in the relationship between religion and science.

I am looking forward to taking up the role of MCF Media and Outreach Resources Officer in 2021. Through this position I hope to help the MCF to promote Christian values within defence and to ensure freedom of expression for Christian employees is respected in defence.

Small Group info



Many MCF Small Groups are now meeting again in person. The MCF Exec are supporting welcome events on Bases so please look out for the promotion of an event at or near your Base.

You can find your local group and contact here <http://mcf-a.org.au/small-groups/> If there's not a group or Rep where you are, please feel free to contact the [MCF Office](#) for support to get one started or to ask about joining a virtual lunch time group.

There are two evening (virtual) MCF Bible Study groups running, with people across Australia joining in. Both groups are keen to have more Defence, APS and Contractors join. You are welcome to join one of these even if you attend a group on Base. Contact the [MCF Office](#) for more details.

Two new MCF Small Groups

RAAF Amberley - 11:30-1230 on Wednesdays at the main AAFCANS. All welcome. Contact Chaplains Runham or Bigg for more info.

RAAF Edinburgh – Group starting in next few weeks. All welcome. Contact [Chaplain Luke Skipper](#) to be added to info list.

(Contact the MCF Office if you would like info on the DST Edinburgh)

Thoughts

It's been just over a year since many MCF members and supporters were part of OP Bushfire Assist. Since then many of you may have been deployed on OP COVID Assist and other deployments. Remember MCF is here to support you on all deployments as well as when you are on Base. You can contact the MCF Office or the Deployment Coords if you would like Christian material sent to your location to hand out, have ideas of better support while on deployment or would like specific prayers (sensitive prayer requests will only be distributed as appropriate).

The following is a reflection from MCF co-Rep and Everyman Ben Ridley from his experience on OP Bushfire Assist. Please remember to keep Chaplains, other Christian Military Ministries and all Association of Military Christian Fellowship (AMCF) members, especially MCF members in the SW Pacific region, in your prayers.



A Raging Inferno – Ben Ridley

Whilst my wife Claudia and I were away on a Missions trip to Uganda and Finland late 2019 and early 2020, we had been tracking the progress of the terrible bush fires burning all over Australia. I received the message whilst in Finland that the

ADF were requesting philanthropic support with the firefighting effort on 'Operation Bushfire Assist'. As a Rep for Everyman's Welfare Service these opportunities to deploy are the most exciting and fruitful times of ministry. The fires had begun before we left for Uganda and burnt during the entire 2 months that we were overseas. I had actually had a feeling that I was going to go and help during our countries time of crisis a few days prior to the message of request coming in, and when it came I knew it was God who was calling me to go. Only a few days after landing back in Australia I set off in my 'Brew Truck' for Victoria. I ended up in the East Gippsland region, serving in the towns of Orbost, Omeo and Bairnsdale mainly. I was surprised to find that my battalion 8/9 RAR had also been sent to Orbost, so that made things easier and I also got to work with many other ADF units including 3rd Combat Engineer Regiment, RAAF personnel, and some Army Reserve elements. I also had the privilege of working with the P.N.G. Army engineers and Fijian Military Force engineers as well as the local authorities. During the 6 weeks I was deployed there were many long nights and early mornings, but the sacrifice was worth every second! One day that stood out was when I met the Chiefs of the Defence Forces of Australia, P.N.G and Fiji, when they were touring around the various fire affected towns. I had many opportunities for ministry and many spirit-led encounters during my time. I was particularly blessed by the Fijian Army who were all professing Christians, this made speaking about God very easy. The Fijians particularly hold God in a high regard and are not ashamed to show it. Every morning and evening the entire group have a time of devotion with hymn singing and prayer, I was able to join in and was even asked to lead the devotions on a few occasions. They were very touched to hear how God had transformed my life from being a soldier that was a wretched sinner to a disciple of Jesus Christ. It was the Fijians and the P.N.G. soldiers that I grew particularly close with and at the end of my time with them they showed me great kindness and gave me some gifts for myself and Claudia. The Fijians sung a traditional farewell song to me the day that I left, something I will always remember.

It was an amazing time and I saw much devastation and suffering, but tragedy also brings out good things in people and I was amazed to see communities pulling together in a powerful way. I consider it a privilege to serve the Lord, the troops, and the country in times like those during the bushfires.

Other items of potential interest

New Defence Church Services website

Thanks to Chaplain Luke Skipper, Everyman's Chief Commissioner Ken Matthews and many others there is a new website with Christian Church Services already loaded and more to be added in the following weeks. Everyone is welcome to use the website and to share it with others who may find it useful and encouraging.

You are also welcome to contribute suggestions or be involved in the content of the Services by making contact via the website.

Details at: www.defencechristianservices.com

Update details

Have you moved or been promoted in the past few years?

You can update your details here <http://mcf-a.org.au/update-contact-details/>

Crossfire

Next edition is with the editor. Contact mcf.office@defence.gov.au if you would like back-copies.

Prayer Calendar

Please continue praying for MCF - that we'd be a light of witness in the ADO environment. The attached prayer calendar can provide some points.

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 to be sent to our prayer warriors.

Membership

[Membership](#) is free and ongoing.

Members can [Update details here](#)

MCF is supported through freewill donations of its members. Please look at [Supporting MCF](#) in prayer, with your time and through financial support. ***Note that donations (over \$2) to MCF are tax deductible.***

If you are keen to support MCF in such ways you may like to sign up as a [Centurion](#).

Contact us

Contact us - we'd love to hear from you

Campbell Park Offices, CP3-1-160,
Northcott Drive, CAMPBELL, ACT 2612.

02 6266 4950

Website: mcf-a.org.au Email: mcf.office@defence.gov.au



If you would no longer like to receive MCF correspondence please let us know at mcf.office@defence.gov.au