



MCF Ministry Outreach

How do we connect with those around us in our workplaces and in a meaningful way share of our lives and faith? Outreach is often difficult. It is challenging individually and though it is still challenging together it is great when we can spur each other on and achieve things which we wouldn't on our own. None of us will have all the knowledge or skills but together we can assist one another. The Military Christian Fellowship of Australia (MCF) is keen to support various initiatives in outreach in Defence bases and establishments around the nation.

At a national level MCF runs some key events which are valuable and have an important place but such events whilst being an encouragement to a number will not have the same reach or impact as many groups and individuals connecting within their local networks and seeking to make a positive impact. The MCF needs to both broadly encourage as well as support and resource specific local initiatives.

BASIS FOR OUTREACH

GOSPEL

The good news of Jesus is why we want to reach out and share with people. We don't want people to become more like us, nor are we merely seeking a more moral society (though this is a positive by-product of people truly responding to the gospel). We want people to respond to what Jesus has done for them and to grow to be like him.

For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile. (Romans 1:16)

RELATIONSHIP

Our relationship to God: This is vital. Investing in this means we have something real to share and not just some dry facts. Also important is... Relationships with those we are trying to reach: Without this we will find

it hard to share with others our great hope.

In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus... (Philippians 2:5)

WORD AND ACTION

What we do share will need to involve both the good news message as well as practical action when needed. Deeds without words can be vague and words without deeds can seem empty and heartless when felt needs are being ignored.

Depending on who you are it is likely that one of these will be easier for you. Try not to leave out the one which is challenging to you.

Suppose a brother or a sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to them, "Go in peace; keep warm and well fed," but does nothing about their physical needs, what good is it? In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead. (James 2:15-17)

LOVE

If the basis for our outreach is not love then why are we doing it? Let's not be motivated by guilt nor see people as impersonal evangelism projects. People are valued by God and so we should love and value them for who they are and as those for whom Christ died.

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. (John 3:16)

SUPPORT FOR OUTREACH

We need support in such endeavours and are not meant to be the super Christian doing it all on our own. Some sources of support:

CHAPLAINS - It's great to have Chaplains on board and even if they won't be directly involved it is important to keep them in the loop.

MCF SMALL GROUPS - Where there is a strong established group this is a good core to start with preparing for outreach.

OTHER DEFENCE CHRISTIAN MINISTRIES - working together is both a good witness and brings together a further range of skills and support.

LOCAL CHURCHES - If you can garner the support of local churches at least in prayer but also possibly in further ways then this will just add further to the possibilities.



IDEAS FOR OUTREACH

There are always going to be more ideas around but here are some basic idea prompters to get you thinking about different ways and means to outreach.

Pray: Alone and with others for friends and colleagues and for opportunities and boldness.

Connect: Find ways to connect with people from your base or establishment. Have lunch with others. Get involved. Help out. Volunteer where you can.

Take an Interest: in the lives of people.

Invite: Include people in your lives and show hospitality.

1 to 1 Bible Reading: To those who are open to this reading God's word with people can provide a great avenue to some great conversations.

Encourage: Encouragement goes a long way. It helps the timid step out. It can brighten the day of someone who is down.

Support: This can be done in different ways. Support people in their ideas. Support people in their needs as an outreach.

Involve: Ask people to get involved. Delegate, share the vision and leadership.

Run an evangelistic course or jump on board with one which is being organised nearby.

Organise: a local MCF dinner or lunch event: Sometimes when a group of people get together and invite a special guest this can allow us something to take up the challenge of inviting people to and provides a helpful opportunity to challenge people where they are up to with God.

None of these are things that are magic bullets which will be the solution to successful outreach, nor are they all about getting out on a soap box and loudly trumpeting our faith. Rather we would love to see people building meaningful relationships and outreach being a natural extension of that. All of life can be a part of outreach as people watch the way we live and speak. It isn't all about the big events but it will involve purposeful and thoughtful living.

Though I am free and belong to no one, I have made myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible. To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews. To those under the law I became like one under the law (though I myself am not under the law), so as to win those under the law. To those not having the law I became like one not having the law (though I am not free from God's law but am under Christ's law), so as to win those not having the law. To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all people so that by all possible means I might save some. I do all this for the sake of the gospel, that I may share in its blessings.

(1 Corinthians 9:19-23)

The MCF Administrator, council and other members can assist as they are able. Contact mcf.office@defence.gov.au to make contact and see what might be possible.

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