



## e-News September 2021

In this edition, our Patron and Chaplains' Representative share some encouragement as we recognise the situation in Afghanistan

Hope in  
Christ



It might be difficult to process what's happening in Afghanistan, particularly for those who deployed to support Australian forces over the last 20 years. MCF always sees Christ as our hope:

*"The LORD is my rock, my fortress and my deliverer; my God is my rock, in whom I take refuge, my shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold." Psalm 18:2*

Our Patron, AVM Clements, and our Chaplains Representative to the MCF Council, Mark Willis, offer their thoughts below:

### **From AVM Clements, AM, CSC – MCF-A Patron**

"Like many of the thousands of Australians who deployed to the Middle East and Afghanistan as members of the Australian Defence Force and other organisations, I feel a mixture of anger, sadness, frustration and helplessness at what is happening in Afghanistan. It is said "it takes a village to raise a child", similarly it takes a world to raise a nation. Unfortunately it seems our patience as a world has run out at a time when it was needed most.

For many veterans and their families this will rip open or inflame the wounds they already have, therefore it has never been more important that as a nation (village) we need to embrace and support our veterans so they feel safe, significant and loved.

To our veterans and their families, your service to our Nation and Afghanistan will always matter. Your personal sacrifice and achievements are not diminished by the current circumstances, and you should be proud of what you have done. Please support each other, look out firstly for yourselves and your families, and then for each other. Please just ask for help from one of the many support services/organisations if you need it."

### **From Mark Willis, Chaplain Representative MCF-A and Principal Air Chaplain, Air Force.**

As Christians whose hope is found in God we can support our brothers and sisters in Afghanistan; why, because we believe that God is our rock, that He is our shield; that He *is our refuge and strength, a very present help in times of trouble.*

Whilst it might seem that the world's foundations are crumbling, let me assure you, that having built your house on the Rock, it will never crumble. So lift your spirits, sing your songs to Him, and wear your hope on your sleeve that all might know our Lord.

There are no easy answers right now, but we know spiritual answers always begin with prayer. If we want to see God do something big and miraculous, we need to pray. The Afghan people are in a dangerous moment in their history. Pray for a miracle . . . but also pray for endurance and tenacious faith. Pray for the vulnerable—the women, the children, the tens of thousands who are on the run, sleeping under trees, without water, and without food.

If COVID and Afghanistan weren't enough, the death of two soldiers last week could almost be the straw ... Your prayers for the family, especially given their grief in not only the loss but also of the inability to attend the funeral, will be much needed and most appreciated. As we each draw alongside the Master, and cast our cares on Him, we will be the stronger and better able to walk in care beside those who are hurting the most."

### Looking for Support as a Defence member or family?

- **The Defence all-hours support line** is a confidential telephone and online service for ADF members and their families on **1800 628 036**.
- Veterans and their families can call **Open Arms** on **1800 011 046**, or anonymous support is available from Safe Zone on **1800 142 072**. Both numbers are available 24/7.
- **ADF Chaplains** are contactable on **1300 333 362** – ask for your area duty chaplain.

### Vale: Commander Anthony Roper

Commander Tony Roper was a long-time supporter of MCF - we remember him with heartfelt thanks for his service to the nation, as a former Secretary of MCF, and a MCF Small Group Representative. Commander Roper's family invites you to join the livestream of the Memorial Service on [17 September, 2pm AEST via this link](#).

### Defence Christians Dinners

There are three dinners planned for 2021 - here are the updates given each state/territory's developing COVID restrictions:

- **Melbourne** (10 Sept- cancelled) postponed until 2022.
- **South Australia** is planning for a dinner at the end of this month, or early October. Please contact the MCF Office to register your interest.
- **Canberra** plans for a mid-Oct dinner, with a decision to be made on 1 October, with details in the next eNews.

### Save the Date

- MCF will hold its **Annual General Meeting** on **Tuesday 9 November** from 12 noon, AEST - there will be a call-in option.
- The [Australian National Prayer Breakfast](#) will be streamed on **Monday 8th November** online, from 7:30-8:30am AEST and AWST. A chance to hear from and pray for those in Federal Parliament. Guest speaker TBA.
- The next online, **Corporate Prayer with MCF** will on **Wednesday 10 November**, from 12 noon AEST, with a Zoom link to be promulgated.

## Some resources to share

- The [ADF Daily Devotional](#) is now on YouTube as a podcast, with ADF Chaplains reading each devotional. (More added each week.) Find a hardcopy of the book via your local ADF Chaplain or email the MCF office.
- The [Online Air Force Chapel Service](#) are released on the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of the month - a wonderful, accessible ministry particularly for those who might miss Sunday services due to lockdowns or deployment.
- Defence Anglicans have also uploaded [CHAP Grant Dibden's thoughts and prayers on the National Day of Prayer gathering](#) - CHAP Dibden is the Anglican Bishop to the ADF.

## Giving

Supporting the work of [MCF-A is easy at our website](#), or using these details with pay allotments:

- Bank: **DBL**
- BSB Number: **833205**
- Account Number: **20380708**
- Please include last name and first name or initial in the reference

We are thankful for these tax-deductible donations that help *equip, connect and inspire Defence Christians*.

## Have you moved in the past 12 months?

Please remember to click this link to [Update Contact Details](#)

Find a MCF group near you, support MCF work or link in with our Staff Worker, Julie at:

During ACT lockdown, we're using a different phone number



[mcf-a.org.au](http://mcf-a.org.au) [mcf.office@defence.gov.au](mailto:mcf.office@defence.gov.au) (02) 6212 1580 **equip | connect | inspire**

The Military Christian Fellowship of Australia is a non-denominational registered tax deductible charity (ABN 47 812 823 572) that operates within the Australian Defence Organisation. Find out more at [mcf-a.org.au](http://mcf-a.org.au)

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