



eNews October 2023

Thoughts

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

“But he answered one of them, ‘I am not being unfair to you, friend. Didn’t you agree to work for a denarius? Take your pay and go. I want to give the one who was hired last the same as I gave you. Don’t I have the right to do what I want with my own money? Or are you envious because I am generous?’ “So the last will be first, and the first will be last.” Matt 20:13-16 (NIV)

The Parable of the workers in the vineyard is an interesting parable, with its revolutionary tones and a little controversial works of arguing with the landowners, payments for a day’s work, and last will be first conclusion. Jesus often uses parables to teach, but we need to look back at Matthew 11 where the disciples came up and asked, “Why do you tell stories?” He replied, “You’ve been given insight into God’s kingdom. You know how it works. Not everybody has this gift, this insight; it hasn’t been given to them”. We in the MCF also ask, or have been asked the same question, and it is no different for us as it was for the apostles. Jesus in the deeper meaning of the parable wasn’t speaking about money, rather He was talking about the payment for turning to Christ and believing. It doesn’t matter if you have been serving and sharing the Good News throughout the military ministry for 40 years or 40 hours, we all get the same gift of salvation. Be like the landowner, go out and find those who are not doing anything for their payment, and help them get this gift from Christ.

May we the members of MCF be filled with praise for Christ, and with the Holy Spirit’s help bring others into fellowship and worship for our living Christ.

I also encourage you all to think and pray about the upcoming AGM and Defence Christian’s dinners as we strive to support, assist and encourage our Defence Chaplains, our local communities, and the wider church universal (within Defence and our local parishes).

Cheers and God Bless,

Thommo (Darren Thomas – MCF Vice-Chair)



MCF-A AGM 2023 – Save the date/info

All MCF-A members are asked to save the date for the upcoming MCF-A AGM which will be held **via Zoom, Monday 13th November at 7pm AEDT (CBR, SYD)**. Anyone else interested in the AGM is also welcome to attend but please contact mcf.office@defence.gov.au to make sure you receive joining details as these are only sent to members (not associate members or supporters). ***All members have been emailed the first instalment of info about the AGM.*** If you believe you should have received the documents but didn’t please contact the MCF Office – email above.

MCF-A exists for you, so please seriously consider joining the meeting (1hr) to hear what’s been happening in MCF across Australia the past 12 mths, and to help shape its future.

Film, Q & A with the director and a meal

Everyone is very welcome to attend, why not make a weekend of it? Book now!



You can just come for the movie, stay for the Q &A, or do the whole event – day designed to be friendly to those coming from Melbourne/Wodonga and beyond.



Date: Saturday 28th Oct, 2023 (*book your spot now! Bookings close COB 20 Oct*)

Venue: Puckapunyal (Vic) Memorial Chapel (If need Base access, indicate during booking)

Time: Film from 2.30pm, then Q & A with the film maker, light refreshments, followed by dinner from 5pm

Cost: **Adults** \$50 (includes film, Q & A, meal, light refreshments and more) **Children 10 and under** FREE

MOVIE only (70mins – or stay for Q & A) suggested \$10+ donation at the door to help cover costs but please book your seat via the booking link.

Film: [Written in Chalk - the echo of Arthur Stace](#) (of Eternity fame)

Accommodation: The nearby town of Seymour has great accommodation at various prices. It also has a large interesting Vietnam War display and other military memorabilia. Well worth a visit!

Bookings (*please book even if only attending the movie*): <https://www.trybooking.com/CKZOX>

Spread the word!

Church friends also most welcome. You don't need to be in Defence or a Christian to attend.

FCMM, and Rare Bible viewing by David Coleman (MCF-A Sec)

The annual meeting of the FCMM leads was held in Solid Rock Ministry's (SRM) headquarters in Weston, ACT on Thu 7 Sep. David Coleman (Secretary) and Julie Jaensch (Staff Worker) were in attendance representing MCF-A. Representatives shared how God has been working through their respective ministries over the past 12 months and where they intend to direct their efforts for the future. The group then committed each of the ministries to God in prayer.

The meeting worked through a series of discussion questions about what the FCMM is and how this cooperative forum can best serve us all into the future. The FCMM is not an umbrella organisation, rather a cooperative arrangement in which the partner organisations commit to pray for and support each other in a spirit of cooperation for the role that each plays in God's kingdom work in Defence. It enables us to share initiatives, keep abreast of what each other are doing and coordinate efforts where that may provide efficiencies or amplification of effort. The meeting also discussed refreshing the FCMM covenant that was last signed in August 2016.



FCMM: Back – Chris (Bible Society Australia - guest), Jamie (Association of Christian Military Ministries – guest) Middle – Fran (Solid Rock Military Ministry), Ken (Everyman's Welfare Service), Sam and James (FOCUS - Military Ministry) Phil (Navigators and Solid Rock – guest), Julianne (Solid Rock Military Ministry), Julie and David (Military Christian Fellowship Australia), Front - Russell and Helen (Association for Christian Conferences, Teaching and Service), Thomas (Navigators – Military Ministry) Absent: Brett (Red Shield Defence Services – Sallyman) Photo taken by Tina (Bible Society Australia – guest)

Chris and Tina, representing Bible Society Australia (BSA) were also in attendance for much of the meeting. While not strictly members of the FCMM, the level of support and funding for specific initiatives the BSA provides continues to be a source of great encouragement to all of the partner members and BSA reiterated their desire to continue to support Christian military ministries.

The BSA arranged a rare Bible viewing at St Marks Theological College in Barton the following morning, to which all participants were invited to attend. This was a great opportunity to see some very old copies of the Bible, some hundreds of years old and very well worn, including a number that have seen notable military service. Participants were treated to a very informative presentation by a member of the College, [Dr John W Harris](#), who provided the history and context of each of the rare Bibles on display. The staff at St Marks expressed their willingness to host another similar event in future if there is sufficient interest.



Dr Harris's Father's Bible and medals



Dr Harris shows Bibles from early 1600s (large - 2nd edition King James)



Inside the 2nd edition King James Bible from 1611



An Aussie's (one of the first at Gallipoli) French Bible with bullet embedded.

(Also believed to be the first Aussie from Gallipoli killed in France.)



Dr Harris with a Bible the way he received it via mail from East Timor after the killings and church burnings.

Dr Harris is looking to complete a series of Service Bibles that have been donated to St Marks/Bible Society. If you have a Bible that went to the Korean War and would like to donate it for others to see and study into the future, or if you have a Bible from a War you think may be of interest (has a great story to go with it), please contact MCF.

WWI, Bibles and Aussie soldiers

Here's a link to an interesting article penned by Michael Gladwin and included in the Journal of Religious History. Michael researched and authored 'Captains of the Soul – history of Army Chaplaincy in Australia' and again shows some great insights into defence history through his research in this area.

This article demonstrates the resilience of religious traditions and practices among Australian soldiers, and the need for caution about presuming connections between the experience of modern war and secularisation.

<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/share/ZFPDQH8HDDCAX5ABBN5W?target=10.1111/1467-9809.12939>

MCF-A clothing – great Christmas gift idea!



With thanks to MCF-A Vice Chair, Darren Thomas, there is going to be **another run of MCF-A clothing. See the attached for the clothing available.**

Return the order form to: mcf.office@defence.gov.au along with the payment (*please include your name in the reference*) as instructed on the form. **Orders close COB Friday 13th Oct, 2023. You should receive your order before Christmas.**

Defence Christians Dinner – Adelaide

When: Saturday 25th November, 2023

Where and time: 6.30pm for 7pm start at the Naval, Military and Air Force Club – 111 Hutt St, Adelaide (Private room) [Naval, Military and Air Force Club - Sth Aust](#) (navmil.com.au)

Cost: pay for own food and drinks from bar menu

Keynote speaker: Dr Brendan Kirby a former DSTG Scientist, MCF-A member and regular attender of MCF at DSTG and now full-time pastor of Hope Church Adelaide.

Booking link: limited seats so book now to make sure you don't miss out! <https://www.trybooking.com/CLERE>

Australian National Prayer Breakfast

in person and online – registrations now open



Mr David Smith, MP and Senator Matt O'Sullivan, co-chairs of the Parliamentary Christian Fellowship, would like to extend a warm welcome for you to join the 34th Australian National Prayer Breakfast!

This will be a great opportunity to pray for our leaders and for the wellbeing of all people throughout this great land.

Monday 13 November 2023

7.15-8.15am AEDT Parliament House, Canberra

Additional streaming at 7:15am AWST

To book your seat or online spot: [BOOK HERE](#)

(In person - \$60 Online - FREE, suggest donation)

The MCF Exec strongly encourage you attend in person or online. You may like to get your MCF Small Group to watch and pray together on the day.

Other items

Have you posted or moved house? Are you deploying or away from home for a long time?

Posted or moved, please update your details [HERE](#)

Deploying or on a long exercise? MCF-A would love to support and pray for you while you're away. Let us know at: mcf.office@defence.gov.au

Membership

[Membership](#) is free and ***open to every Christian***. If you've not had an association with Defence or you don't identify as Christian you can be an associate member via the same link.

Donations

MCF is supported almost entirely through freewill donations by members and supporters. Please look at Supporting MCF in prayer, with your time and through [financial support](#). (Direct debit preferred – details at right side of the webpage link)

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

Prayer requests

To put forward prayer points for inclusion in the Prayer Calendar please email the MCF Office: mcf.office@defence.gov.au

You can also send through **urgent prayer points** that are sent on confidentially to the MCF Prayer Warriors, or enquire about becoming an MCF Prayer Warrior or volunteer to be the Prayer Coord.

Contacting the MCF Office

PHONE: 02 6132 7845

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

To unsubscribe from this newsletter please contact: mcf.office@defence.gov.au