



# eNews November 2023

## Stand firm in your faith

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

*In your hearts honour Christ, the Lord as holy, always be prepared to make a defence to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect. 1 Peter 3:15*

As we enter a period of uncertainty in the world, where there seems to be dreadful conflict, both through war and oppressive intolerance attitudes particularly towards Christians and Jews, now is the time to hold to Peter's words of advice.

It takes courage to stand for what is right particularly when all those around you are behaving or advocating something that is hostile to our beliefs and what is written in God's Word the Bible.

Some of you may have seen the film Eternity, the echo of Arthur Stace, about a broken World War I veteran who was inspired by the message of Military Cross winner Rev John Ridley, who then wrote the word Eternity throughout the streets of Sydney for decades. This challenging message by a humble and gentle man was so powerful that it was the main feature on the Sydney Harbour Bridge on New Years Eve in 2000 and was broadcast around to world being seen by millions.

In many ways this is how we as Christians in Defence need to be – firm in our conviction and belief in Christ, yet gentle and respectful in our defence of the Good News, letting the Holy Spirit work in people's lives.

Finally, could I encourage you to join us at the AGM. I thank you all for your prayers and support over the last year.

Godspeed

Steve (MCF-A Chair)

## MCF-A AGM 2023

All MCF-A members are asked to join in the MCF-A AGM which will be held **via Zoom Monday 13<sup>th</sup> 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](mailto: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 will be emailed reports and joining details for the AGM in coming days.**

## Defence Christian Dinner – Sth Aust

All are welcome, ADF, APS, Contractors, ex-Defence, supporters, family members, friends. (If you would like to bring children under 12, please contact the MCF Office for more details.)

**Saturday 25th November 2023** 6.30pm for 7pm start

**Where:** Naval, Military and Air Force Club – 111 Hutt St, Adelaide (Private room)

[Naval, Military and Air Force Club - Sth Aust](http://navmil.com.au) (navmil.com.au)

**Cost: pay for own food and drinks from bar menu**

**Dress:** Smart Casual eg: collared shirt, neat slacks or equivalent (no jeans - jacket and tie optional)

**Guest Speaker** - Dr Brendan Kirby a former DSTG Scientist, regular attender of MCF at DSTG and now full-time pastor of Hope Church Adelaide.

**RSVP by COB Friday 17th Nov – limited numbers so don't miss out**

**Register your attendance:** <https://www.trybooking.com/CLERE>

For more info email: [mcf.office@defence.gov.au](mailto:mcf.office@defence.gov.au)

## Report on the Puckapunyal/Vic MCF event

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

Just a quick rundown on the 2023 Defence Christian's Dinner – Victoria.



The screening of the film 'Written in Chalk – The Echoes of Arthur Stace', was the highlight of the 2023 Defence Christian's Dinner held at the Puckapunyal Memorial Chapel. Our guest speaker, Richard Attieh, who is the Director of the film brought the images on the screen to life for all who attended. Richard spoke about the reason why he made the film and the history of how it happened, and how the words "Eternity" made such an impact on the people of Sydney for 35 years and beyond. So moved by Rev. John Ridley's sermon at the 14 Nov 1932 Burton St Baptist Tabernacle, that for the next 35 years, Arthur Stace continued to chalk this one word on footpaths around Sydney, altogether chalking it more than half a million times, anonymously, up until 1956 when the Rev. Lisle Thompson discovered Arthur's secret and convinced him to reveal himself publicly.

Arthur Stace "the Eternity Man"

The dinner was an outstanding success, especially with my wife, Tracey, cooking up an amazing meal after insufficient numbers resulted in the cancellation of our original catering plan. The Everyman's truck, thank you Shane Lavell, provided the refreshments and a chance for our dinner guests to see the amazing ministry of the Everyman in action.



The 2000 New Year's Eve fireworks with Eternity as the finale.

I think the power of the word Eternity, a single word sermon, is simply summed up with the question Richard posed to us all at the end of the evening. "Do you think you would join God in an eternal life in heaven, if you were to be in an accident causing your death right now?"

Psalm 93:2 NIV reads. "Your throne was established long ago; you are from all eternity".



Left to Right:  
Shane Lavell, Darren Thomas, Julie Jaensch, and Richard Attieh and dinner guest enthralled in the film.

God's Grace and Blessings to you all, see you in 2024.

Thommo

Darren Thomas (MCF-A Vice Chair)

## Australian National Prayer Breakfast in person and online – register now!



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 (in person and online)**

**Parliament House, Canberra**

**Additional streaming at 7:15am AWST**

To register for in person or online (online free/donation): [Australian National Prayer Breakfast 2023 | Humanitix](#)

More info: [Australian National Prayer Breakfast](#)

The guest speakers **Leila and Danny Abdallah** suffered great loss through the death of two daughters and a son in Feb 2020 when a driver hit their children on a footpath. Their story of grief, forgiveness and their hope in God for their future is very moving.

The website for registration should the links not work: [www.nationalprayerbreakfast.org](http://www.nationalprayerbreakfast.org)

**The MCF-A Exec encourage you to join in this important prayer event** either with your family or with your MCF Small Group. The video should be available after the event for those who've registered if the live timings don't suit.

## Job opportunity with Everyman's

**Everyman's Welfare Service**, the Christian faith based evangelical mission of outreach to the Australian Defence Force, would like to invite expressions of interest in the following paid part time position of **Administrative Support Officer (ASO)** for our organisation.

*The successful applicant will initially be required to work 2 days per week; advancing to 3 days per week, with a possible option of 4 days in the future. The position is located at Gaza Ridge Barracks Bandiana, which is located adjacent to the city of Wodonga, Victoria in the NSW/Victoria Riverina border district.*

*The position is paid under the Clerks – Private Sector Award [MA000002]. Remuneration and hours can be negotiated, taking into account the successful candidate's training and experience.*

Please enquire via our email [admin@everymans.org.au](mailto:admin@everymans.org.au) or by phone on **02 6053 5288** Monday to Wednesday.

Or contact [mcf.office@defence.gov.au](mailto:mcf.office@defence.gov.au) for the job description.

## Chaplains in Ukraine

To read more about what is happening on the ground in Ukraine in the Chaplaincy space, click [HERE](#)

Please remember them in your prayers.

## Book review as a note of encouragement

Dear fellow MCF believers, - a note of encouragement.





Perhaps if you are like me, you may feel a little intimidated and maybe even discouraged by the spirit of scepticism and disbelief in our prevailing Australian culture. However, as Christians, we should remember that it was not always such and that even in times of great trouble and conflict; God has always had his people and has put his people here for a reason. A few months back I came across a short biography of the life of a remarkable man that I had not had heard of before but during and after WW1 by some reports was the most well-known and best loved man in the country. It is well worth a read.

'FIGHTING' McKENZIE, Anzac Chaplain - Tribute to a Hero" by Col. Stringer.

William McKenzie was a Scottish immigrant (born in 1869 in Lanarkshire Scotland) who by the time of the First World War, had already been a Salvation Army officer for 25 years. At 45 he was at the upper age considered suitable for War Service, never the less in 1914 he applied for and was granted a commission in the 2<sup>nd</sup> AIF as chaplain to the Australian army and by early 1915

was aboard the flotilla accompanying the ANZACS to the Gallipoli landings.

He was man of tremendous faith 'under fire'. He stayed for the whole course of the Gallipoli campaign, and much of the Western front campaign living through the horrors of trench warfare and countless attacks and counter attacks. At Gallipoli, he earned the nickname 'Fighting Mac,' because he was never too far from the front line and regardless of his own personal safety always made sure that 'his boys' were being looked after both in life and in death.

Sometimes we forget that there have been generations of believers who have gone before us and suffered all sorts of difficulties with antagonism and suspicion from their fellow countrymen before breaking through and making a difference. God has always had his people. In our generation we may sometimes be on the minority and face suspicion, but one with God is a majority. I'm quite sure of that! As for my own lived experience, I have done my best to keep my head low, and avoid conflict, but it never ceases to amaze me how that conflict seems to follow. But then I'm reminded that we are part of a much greater battle, and often the greatest battle is the one that is within. But then again, I'd rather be on the Lord's side. So that's my encouragement. Keep up the good work!

God bless you all.

In Christ

Peter Toland (MCF member)

**To read the whole book review, or to buy the book click [HERE](#)**

## Upcoming online event that may be of interest



We at Christian Voice Australia (CVA) have an extraordinary event coming up that we believe will captivate your heart and inspire your spirit.

Allow us to introduce "**How a Marine Turned Football Coach Won Religious Liberty for All**" - an evening dedicated to sharing the incredible journey of Average Joe, an unlikely hero who fearlessly stood against tyranny by **taking a knee to pray**.

This captivating **true story** will take you on a rollercoaster of emotions as you witness the power of one man's unwavering conviction. Through engaging storytelling, you will discover how Average Joe, a Marine turned football coach, defied all odds to secure **religious liberty for all**.

Join us on **Tuesday, November 14th at 8:00 PM**, as we gather to celebrate Average Joe's remarkable triumph. This event promises to be an unforgettable experience, filled with inspiration, courage, and the unwavering spirit of freedom.

To keep reading, get more info and to REGISTER (free) click [HERE](#) or contact [mcf.office@defence.gov.au](mailto:mcf.office@defence.gov.au)

## 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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto:mcf.office@defence.gov.au) You can also find us on Facebook and ForceNet.

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