



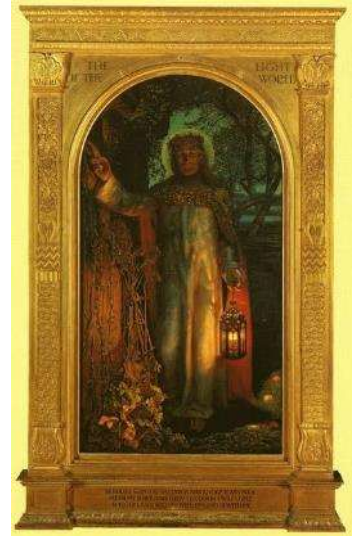
# eNews March 2023

## Light of the World

*Jesus spoke to them, saying "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but have the light of life. John 8:12 (ESV)*

I have always been fascinated by Holman Hunt's painting the Light of the World. Some years ago I had the opportunity to see it hanging in St Paul's Cathedral in London.

In the painting, we see two lights - the lantern that is the light of conscience and the light around the head of Christ, the light of salvation. The door represents the human soul - its lack of handle, rusty nails and overgrown hinges show that it has never been opened. Showing that the person has never opened the door of their heart to the Light of the World. It is interesting that Jesus is patiently knocking, He cannot open the door from the outside as the door handle is on the inside - He does not force the door open, He waits, a reflection of Revelation 3:16.



As we walk through Lent and we reflect on the fact that Christ came to bring the Light of Love, into our broken, fallen and darkened world. Let us take the time to ensure that our door is open to Jesus so that He can let His light into our lives, then we can reflect His light onto others around us pointing them to Him.

The time of Lent leads us to Easter and it is a journey that we should strive to go on each year looking to be spiritually renewed. It also gives us an opportunity to share our faith with others by being able to explain such things as Shrove Tuesday, Ash Wednesday, Hot cross buns, why the Cross, etc.

2024 also, brings us to the 40<sup>th</sup> year of MCF following the merger of the Officers' Christian Fellowship (formerly known as the Officers' Christian Union established in 1851) and the Australian Services Christian Fellowship (established in 1973). Over the last 40 years members of the MCF, have brought and continue to bring the Light of Christ into Defence working alongside many other people and groups doing the same. One of our key ministry partners over the decades has been the Defence Chaplains who have provided support and guidance and continue to do so as we support them in their work.

There are a number of activities happening this year to celebrate this, some locally and some centrally, some of which are outlined in this eNews.

May you have a Blessed, Holy and Saved Easter.

Godspeed,  
Steve Neuhaus, MCF-A Chair

## MCF-A Small Groups

It's exciting that there are a number of new or revamped MCF-A Small Groups as we move into 2024. To find out if you have a Small Group in your area check here: [Small groups - Military Christian Fellowship of Australia \(mcf-a.org.au\)](https://mcf-a.org.au) and if you can't find one, or would like to start one, click here: [Get Involved - Military Christian Fellowship of Australia \(mcf-a.org.au\)](https://mcf-a.org.au) or contact [mcf.office@defence.gov.au](mailto:mcf.office@defence.gov.au)

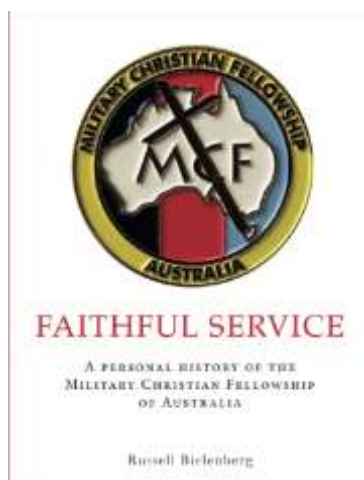
## Book launch and welcome event

### MCF-A Book launch and welcome event - Canberra

**Saturday 9th March at St John's Church, Reid** – the church and museum will be open. Come any time between 10.30am and 1pm. Free Sausage sizzle with, book launch at 11am. Ample free onsite parking. Info has been sent to Canberra members and be on the MCF Facebook page closer to the event. The Church and School House museum, both tied to Duntroon, will be open. Plenty of room for the kids to run around too! **Everyone is most welcome.** You don't have to be in Defence to come along, so bring your family and friends and enjoy fellowship with fellow Defence Christians.



***Bring your family and friends and help Russell and Helen celebrate the launching of Russell's book on the MCF-A.***



**The launch of Russell Bielenberg's book – Faithful Service (a personal history of MCF-A) will take place from 11am.**

***You can buy your copy of 'Faithful Service' for \$45*** (plus postage if not in Canberra) from Russell, just follow the instructions in this link from the MCF-A website:

[A personal history of MCF-A, book purchase available - Military Christian Fellowship of Australia](https://mcf-a.org.au)

Books will be available to purchase on the day.

For more information on the events please contact: [mcf.office@defence.gov.au](mailto:mcf.office@defence.gov.au)

## MCF National Day of Prayer for Defence, 2024



National Day of Prayer for Defence  
2024  
National Day of Prayer for Defence  
Sponsored by Military Christian Fellowship of Australia  
<http://mcf.org.au>



Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> June, 2024 has been chosen to set aside for the National Day of Prayer for Defence.

There will be a booklet with suggested readings and prayers available closer to the event that so you can organise your own event with your Small Group, on your Base and at your Church. If an event can't be held on that day (or weekend or the week either side), you are welcome to hold it when suitable but preferably before the end of June. **For those outside the Canberra area, it is strongly encouraged you host your own event but you are also welcome to join in the livestream of the Canberra event from St John's Anglican Church Reid beginning at 11am (AEST, CBR, SYD) on Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> June.**

More info will be sent to MCF Small Group Reps as it becomes available, uploaded to the MCF-A website and links placed in future eNews.

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

## SAVE THE DATE – Celebrating 40 years of MCF-A

Happy 40<sup>th</sup> Birthday



*Praise be to God for 40 wonderful years of the Military Christian Fellowship of Australia after the amalgamation of the Australian Officers Christian Union and the Australian Services Christian Fellowship in 1984.* MCF-A has evolved to include not only all in the ADF but all associated with Defence, such as APS and Contractors along with their families. MCF-A also likes to keep in contact and support those who have left Defence, and those who may not have served in Defence but have a passion to support those who do.

**On Saturday 31<sup>st</sup> August, 2024 at St John's Anglican Church Reid, Canberra, MCF-A will host an informal dinner to celebrate this great milestone. Everyone is most welcome and you don't need to be in Defence to attend.** Save the date and keep an eye on the eNews and your inbox closer to the date for more info and registration details. **The MCF Council hope past and present members from all over Australia, including anyone who's had a connection to MCF will attend and help them celebrate. It is also hoped that we may be able to connect across Australia on the night via a livestream.**

## Solid Rock Retreat – all ladies welcome



Staying in the picturesque township of Stanwell Tops, an hour drive south from Sydney. The weekend provides a time for you, a time for rest and reflection and a time to connect with other Christian female defence spouses/veterans as we look at how we were made for community.

**Dates:** 5th - 7th April

**Location** - The Tops Conference Centre, Stanwell Park NSW 2508

**Price for ACT & NSW** residents \$210 per person and **for those travelling outside of ACT/NSW** region \$120 per person

**Spread the word. Follow the link below to secure your spot.**

<https://www.trybooking.com/COKHA>

## Other items that may be of interest

### Helping Hands – TV series

MCF-A Vice Chair, **Darren Thomas**, was recently on the TV series called 'Helping Hands'. He gave a Christian Defence perspective on self-sacrifice. If you'd like to view this episode you can find it on [9Now - Helping Hands](#), series 2 episode 4. There is an extended version and more info on [www.helpinghands.tv](http://www.helpinghands.tv)

The producer of this series was the Keynote Speaker at last year's Defence Christians Dinner in Puckapunyal.



I have served as a coach for the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association's "Search for Jesus" online courses

for two years now. It is a rewarding experience to help folk all around the world to learn about the Bible Way to faith in Christ!

Kenya, Uganda, Italy, South Africa, United States and other countries have been represented in my "student list." I prayed for years for an online disciple-making opportunity before finding this:

<https://searchforjesus.net/>

Their training is good. I have a wonderful "upstream" coach with years of experience who helps me in many ways. I was able to meet her and her husband at a Philadelphia, PA regional get-together last year. Thrilling in these last days to be part of a worldwide movement toward heaven.

I was asked by the program to tell my friends about this glorious opportunity, and that's why I am telling you! Please forward it to other Great Commission minded friends of yours.

John M B – MCF-A member who lives in USA



**\$1,000 PRIZE  
FOR TEENAGE  
WRITERS**

A \$1,000 prize is given for the best unpublished manuscript by an Australian citizen under 18 years of age. Supplementary prizes may be given.  
**Entries close 31 May 2024.**

The Australian Christian Teen Writer Award nurtures and encourages the next generation of Australian Christian writers.  
For more information, visit:  
[www.sparklit.org/actwa/](http://www.sparklit.org/actwa/)



## Other items

### Have you posted or moved house? Are you deploying, 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 calendar please email the MCF Prayer Coordinator Dr Brendan Pell: [brendan.pell@dst.defence.gov.au](mailto:brendan.pell@dst.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, by contacting Brendan.

## 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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