



eNews June 2024

I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. Philipians 4:13

Over 40 years ago the leaders of the two main Christian groups which supported the members of the Australian Military Forces were encouraged by the chaplains of the day to combine and become a fellowship that supported all members and not being groups divided by rank. In faith and prayer they stepped out and formed the Military Christian Fellowship of Australia in 1984. This idea has spread and there are now many MCFs throughout military and security forces across the world who are loosely connected through the Association of Military Christian Fellowships (AMCF), which provides support to them through prayer and encouragement, through conferences, and personal contact.



How do our giant problems measure up to God's power?

As the MCF-A remembers and celebrates 40 years of service to Defence we need to learn from the past and look to the future being willing, while standing firm on the Word of God – The Bible, to step out once again in prayer and faith to expand the mission and ministry in challenging times.

As the MCF-A continues to move forward in faith in all aspects – mission, outreach, finance, access to Defence members and so on, please consider how you can support the MCF-A as we strive to increase and spread Christ's love and salvation to members of Defence within Australia, to their families as well as former members, veterans and their families. One of the main challenges remain finances and without these we are unable to support all the different groups and activities that occur.

As Paul stated in his letter to the believers in Philippi, it is only through Christ that we are able to do the things of God and achieve them. Can I encourage you to take a moment and pray for the ministry of MCF-A and all those involved and commit to supporting the ministry.

Godspeed

Steve
Chair MCF-A

Do you have photos of MCF-A events?

To help celebrate 40 years of the Military Christian Fellowship of Australia, MCF-A Vice Chair, Darren Thomas, is looking for photos of MCF events from over the years that can be shared in a video or similar. Please be mindful, especially if adding more recent photos, you remember the current Defence regulations on showing ADF personnel in uniform, people who can be identified, restrictions of photos of Bases etc. Anything you think may be of interest, including National Day of Prayer for Defence events (especially if people can't be identified), welcome events, advertising MCF etc can be added to this link (personal devices only): [MCF Photos 2024](#) All enquiries to: darren.thomas7@defence.gov.au

An opportunity to give your thoughts on MCF-A going forward

The MCF-A Exec and Council are looking to develop the next Strategy Plan for MCF-A from 2025-2030, and possibly even looking as far ahead as 2040. If you have some thoughts on what MCF-A should be focusing on, working toward, or things to be aware of, please get in contact with the MCF Office as the Exec would love to talk to you. Everyone associated with MCF-A is welcome to participate. mcf.office@defence.gov.au

Timor Awakening

MCF members Gary Stone and Eric Bettanin (former MCF Treasurer)



From Gary Stone on the Gold Coast

I'm writing this after just completing our 27th Timor awakening program, in Timor , bringing together about 41 Australian and New Zealand veterans ,some of their partners and other family members .

A particular highlight of this program was that I was able to share it completely with former MCF treasurer LTCOL Eric Bettanin who is now Australia's senior officer leading the Defence Cooperation Program (DCP) in Timor. Eric met us at the Airport and welcomed us, even driving me in a DCP car for us over 600km in rural Timor. I hadn't met Eric before and was delighted with his enthusiasm, energy, faith hope and love as we shared in myriad activities. We were also able to share our own experiences of nurture through MCF.

We had a 12 day program travelling to all the key sites of ANZAC involvement both in WW2 and from 1999 onwards , reflection on all the key holistic health themes of nurturing the body, nurturing the mind, nurturing the soul, nurturing our relationships, and developing a positive identity and life's purpose.

We also participated in an outstanding ANZAC dawn service in Dili on the site of the former Australian led UN hospital from the 2000-2004 period. Our culminating activity was a pre-dawn ascent of Timor's highest mountain mount Ramalau, climbing from 7000 to 10,000 feet to meet the dawn. The climb involved a two-hour walk along a rough 5 km track. As the sun broke through clouds at 7 am, we had the most spectacular view in every direction. It certainly was a mountain top experience in every regard and the journey both up and down was a metaphor for our lives. For most of the participants, the climb was a real struggle, but all made it with the help of our mentors and friends encouragement.

We held a brief service of thanksgiving for our group on the mountaintop. Eric read out our Veterans Care inspirational and founding scripture Luke 4 18-22 ***The Spirit of the Lord is upon us for he has anointed us to bring good news to the afflicted, to proclaim liberty to captives , to bring new sight to the blind , to set the downtrodden free, and proclaim the Lord's Favour*** After a brief homily we all said the Lord's prayer together and as I offered Holy Communion, the clouds dispersed, and the Son shone upon us . All were surprised! Some were amazed! All were blessed!

I'm grateful for Eric's witness as a Christian in this mission, and our Veterans Care team are grateful for his support of this healing mission.

From Eric Bettanin in Timor

Timor awakening is an amazing program, designed for many things but most importantly, it will help you get your head back in the right space. With a range of activities designed to test/fill everybody's bucket to capacity. Anyone who has served in defence for a period of time should consider attending one of these programs, your families, friends and relationships will thank you for it.

Embarking on the Timor Awakening program is like stepping into a realm of profound self-discovery and growth. From the moment I met the team at the airport, my connection to Timor-Leste's rich history and vibrant culture started to increase. Engaging in community projects and adventurous expeditions, I found myself challenged in ways I never imagined, yet each obstacle became a stepping-stone to personal transformation.

Guided by mentors who shared their wisdom and experiences, I gained invaluable insights into resilience and leadership. But, what truly made the experience unforgettable were the bonds formed with fellow participants. Through shared triumphs and moments of vulnerability, we became a tight-knit community, supporting each other on our respective journeys.

Attending Timor Awakening wasn't just about exploring a new place; it was about exploring myself and my place in the world. It ignited a sense of purpose and clarity that continues to guide me after the program ended. If you're seeking a transformative experience that will leave an indelible mark on your soul, I wholeheartedly recommend joining the Timor Awakening family.



You can find out more about the program, or how to join one here:

[Veterans Care Association Inc.](#)

<https://www.timorawakening.com/>

<https://www.facebook.com/timorawakening>

In case you missed it

The many days of Anzac – This is a documentary on Anzac Day, how it started and where it is heading. It has some interesting comments in it about Chaplains/Christians, as well as general info. *Find it on iView.*

Tax Receipts and an Unknown Donor

Thank you to those who have donated to MCF-A over the past financial year. Your tax receipt should be heading your way in the first two weeks of July. All donations to MCF-A over \$2 are tax deductible.



There is a regular fortnightly donor to MCF-A that started in January. Thank you! The Office would love to know who you are so we can send you a tax receipt at the end of June. If you think it may be you please email mcf.office@defence.gov.au

MCF gets little to no outside funding apart from office space at a defence site and some Christian material (Bibles etc) from Bible Society Australia. MCF runs on donations from its members and supporters. The Staff Worker is the only paid position. **Please consider donating to MCF this financial year!** *MCF is currently running at a loss. If every member donated at least \$10 p/mth this wouldn't be the case. Every little bit helps! All donations to MCF-A over \$2 are tax deductible.*

If you'd like to support this ministry you can donate via the website or use the various options like direct debit or from your pay - instructions on the right hand side of the same donate page.

Donate to the work of MCF-A: [Donate - Military Christian Fellowship of Australia \(mcf-a.org.au\)](https://mcf-a.org.au)

MCF National Day of Prayer for Defence, June 2024



National Day of Prayer for Defence
2024

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



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

There is a booklet with suggested readings and prayers available on the MCF website for you to use and adapt for your area and Church. You are encouraged to organise your own events with your Small Group, on your Base, in your local Bible Study groups 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 15th June.

You can join the Canberra event on the day via this zoom link: Please email mcf.office@defence.gov.au for the link

Booklet, events and info link: [National Day of Prayer for Defence - 2024 - Military Christian Fellowship of Australia \(mcf-a.org.au\)](http://National Day of Prayer for Defence - 2024 - Military Christian Fellowship of Australia (mcf-a.org.au))

Video (you are welcome to use this to advertise your event): [MCF-A Prayer Event Invite](#)

For more info and to **register your group's event details** please email: mcf.office@defence.gov.au

SAVE THE DATE – Celebrating 40 years of MCF-A

Happy 40th 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 31st 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.

Bereavement support for parents, and those who care for them

Lynne McPherson is an MCF-A member who ran a twin loss charity called National Twin Loss Support for 30 years. Lynne has also written 3 books on the subject, amongst some other fun books you can find if you search. Lynne's surviving son has been in the ADF for over 15 years and Lynne is keen to support others in the ADF who may experience the loss of a child. You can search for all of Lynne's books by putting her name into the search engine at: [Lulu Publishing – www.lulu.com](http://www.lulu.com) The 3 books on loss are titled; The Diary, The Survivor and Future's Hope. You can find Lynne on the DRN or contact the MCF Office if you'd like more info.

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

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 Daniel Solomon: daniel.solomon3@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 contact the MCF Office or Daniel.

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