



eNews Dec/Jan 2026

Welcome to the bumper 'end of 2025' edition.

Being Still

Be still before the Lord and wait patiently on Him. Psalm 37:7

Being still seems to be the opposite of what happens in society, as we rush headlong towards Christmas you find people yearning for peace, quietness and being still. These things seem like a mirage or mist that just as you think you can grasp them then you find they just vaporise. When looking at history this is not a new issue.

So what is being still let alone before the Lord?

"Being still" means not moving or being in a state of deep and calm quiet. With so much happening around us it is very difficult to achieve this. Life seems so noisy and busy with many demands crowding in, it seems an impossible state to achieve.



Life reminds me of a parade, it is all busyness preparing and then marching on, but once on the parade ground you stand absolutely still waiting for the next words of command. You listen intently with expectation not moving until the command is given, sometimes it is given at full volume and other times at a level that only those standing near the command giver can hear. In some way this is what the Psalmist is saying when he states that we need to be still before the Lord and wait patiently for Him. Just as we trust the Parade Commander not to lead us astray or into danger we need to trust the Lord not to lead us astray or into danger.

Jesus – the Lord – is our Parade Commander and one thing we know is that he has also marched on the Parade Ground of Life and as a result understands what we are going through as we march on the parade ground in the heat or the rain or the hail or the snow, those things are temporary and you may experience all of them in one parade.

As we march through the Advent period we need to remember the Reason for the Season, which was Christ coming into the darkened world to bring the light of truth and peace *"and the light shines in the darkness"* (John 1:5). In the hectic chaos of the Christmas get togethers, end of year parties, the rush to buy presents, prepare dinners and lunches. Pause for a moment and think about a young couple who were also swept up in the need to return to their hometown



as there was a census on and the hustle and bustle that they faced. The crowded overbooked accommodation, the noise and the smells. They had to travel around 112 kilometres from Nazareth to Bethlehem (on foot), this would have been a journey of about a week and for a heavily pregnant young woman would have been quite uncomfortable, challenging and difficult.

One thing about Mary and Joseph is that they demonstrated character and perseverance and are a good example for us in these attributes. Their faith enabled them to overcome many obstacles and as a result our Parade Commander – Jesus Christ was born on earth in human form to be able to empathise with us and become our Saviour through his death and resurrection.

2025 has been a steady as we go year for the MCF as we continue to build and develop a widened vision to be more intentionally inclusive of families and veterans, we have continued to build the relationship with the other ministries

within Defence (FCMM) which has also brought many blessings, we have continued to decentralise and encourage the MCF Reps and groups to be more active in their regions rather than a Canberra centric focus

Can I encourage you all during the Christmas period to take some time for yourself and your families, time to be still, to rest, to reflect and be restored in body, mind and soul.

May you all have a Holy, Christ centred, Peaceful, Blessed and Safe Christmas and New Year.

Godspeed,

Stephen Neuhaus

MCF-A Chair (Photo by S Neuhaus – Ireland)

Upcoming events and Save the Date

SOUTH AUSTRALIA: MCF Christian Dinner - Friday 5th December Hutt St Adelaide – pay for own food and drinks from bar menu.

Everyone is most welcome! You don't need to be in MCF, Defence or live in the State to attend. Contractors, APS, uniformed, retired, parents of ADF, family and friends are all welcome. Awesome guest speaker!

Please register by COB Wednesday 3rd December for the Sth Aust Dinner (table seating and entry purposes): <https://www.trybooking.com/DFZAD> (the link has all the Dinner info)

VICTORIA: The postponed MCF-A Vic Defence Christians Dinner is being planned for Saturday 21st Feb in Ormond Melbourne. Please save the date! Further details next year.

Gifting – every little bit helps!

This Christmas season, if you like to donate to charity, why not consider a donation to MCF-A?

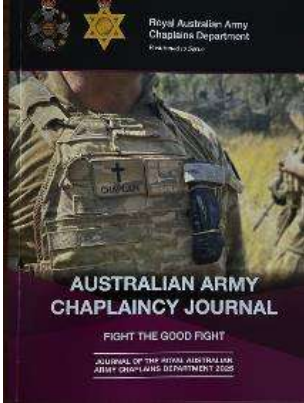
MCF-A exists on donations from its members and supporters and those who give of their time. It doesn't get funding from Defence but gets a small book grant and free Christian ADF material from Bible Society.

Making a small regular donation to MCF-A, or a once off donation, helps keep things running so MCF-A can support and build God's Kingdom in Defence. The part-time Staff Worker is the only paid person in MCF-A, everyone else is a volunteer, but MCF-A has expenses like insurances, postage, MCF branded merch and the like. If you'd like to talk about volunteering, or where the donation money is spent, please contact the MCF-A Office at any time.

Thank you to those who already contribute and every \$ counts, so no donation is too small!

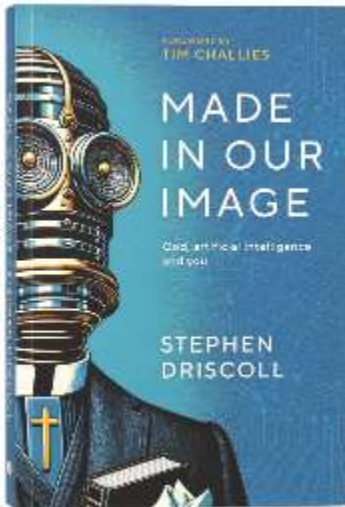
DONATE HERE: [Donate - Military Christian Fellowship of Australia](#) (with more options for donating below the big green button on the donate page). ***All donations over \$2 are tax deductible.***

Holiday Reading



The Australian Army Chaplaincy Journal 2025 edition – **Fight the Good Fight** is now available. You can view it here: [Royal Australian Army Chaplains Department | Australian Army](#) Or if you need a hard copy, email the MCF-A office with your name and best postal address and one can be sent to you. (limited copies available)

Book Review - Made in our image; God, artificial intelligence and you By Stephen Driscoll



Driscoll's book is a thoughtful and thorough look at Artificial Intelligence (AI) and its potential impact on the world as we know it. AI represents a considerable leap forward in technological advancement and Driscoll's realistic assessment notes that it is here to stay and will significantly impact our lives and how we work. He helpfully demystifies AI by explaining what it is and how it works, helping the reader to understand its tremendous benefits and limitations; its pitfalls and promises. Technological change is not new and like all technology before, we can be certain AI will be used for both good and evil, but resisting its influence on that basis is both unhelpful and unnecessary.

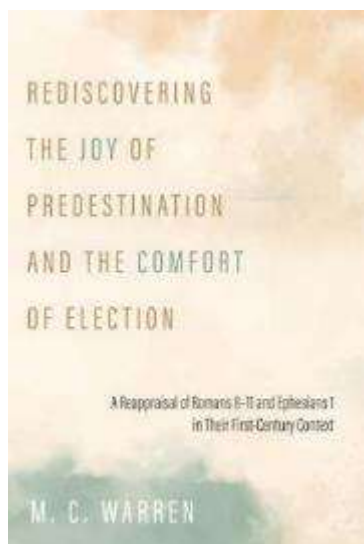
Driscoll steps logically through the issues, encouraging us to think biblically about the technology, its foundations and its application. AI can accomplish many tasks more accurately and more quickly than humans, but there are some things that remain the remit of humans uniquely made in God's image. He therefore encourages us to not be unreasonably fearful of AI technology and the change it will bring, but nor should we blithely embrace it without critical thinking.

The growing application of AI and the social change it instigates makes Christianity and the message of the gospel more rather than less relevant. Driscoll insightfully describes how the presence of AI might shape Christian ministry and our unchanging message of the one true Saviour. I thoroughly recommend this book as a well-written and thoughtful reflection on this important issue facing the modern Christian.

David Coleman, MCF-A Secretary

Rediscovering the Joy of Predestination and the Comfort of Election

A reappraisal of Romans 8–11 and Ephesians 1 in their first century context



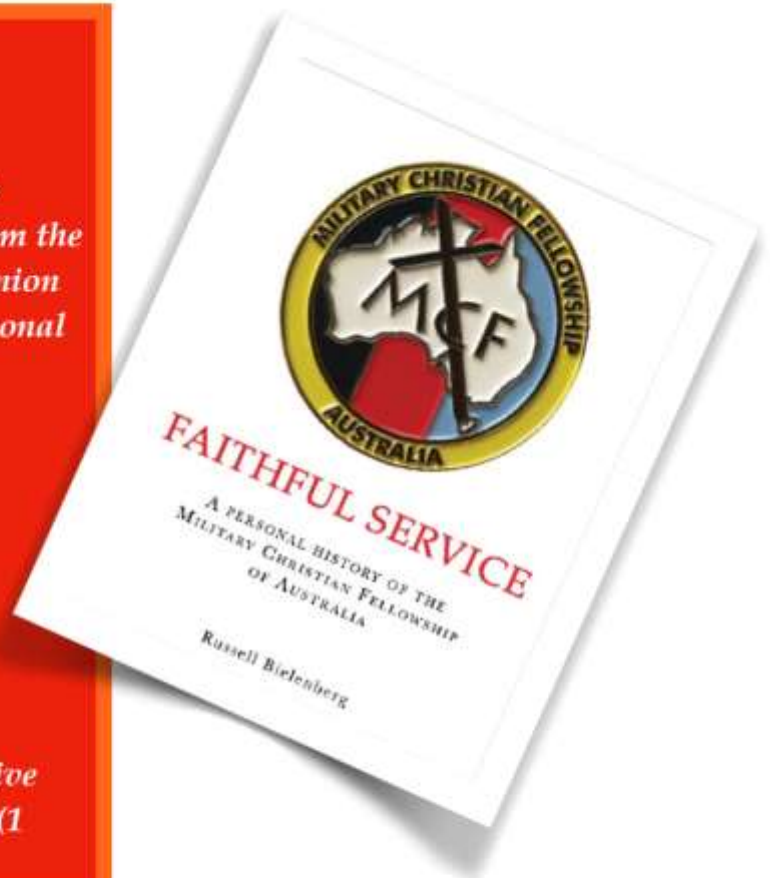
Mark Warren, past MCF Area Rep and one time MCF Staffworker, has just had his Master of Theology dissertation published by Wipf & Stock.

Mark notes that in the New Testament, predestination and election are reasons for great joy and comfort but sadly, as doctrines, they can become a cause of sadness and despair. The book aims to strip away the depressing fog that has beset the doctrines of predestination and election over the centuries to allow the reader to rediscover what made the NT authors so passionate and excited by them.

The book is available from the author himself m.c.warren.aus@outlook.com for \$25 + \$10 postage (if not in Canberra), wipfandstock.com (RRP \$27), and other online retailers.

FAITHFUL SERVICE - A PERSONAL HISTORY OF THE MCF OF AUSTRALIA

From the foreword by MAJGEN Sue Graham, MCF Patron: Few know the history of MCF-A as well as Russell Bielenberg, who together with his wife Helen, have been faithful stalwarts from the early days of the Officers' Christian Union (OCU) ... This is a comprehensive personal account which through the stories recounted shows God's continued faithfulness to this ministry. From small beginnings, lean membership periods, financial challenges and, at times, personal tensions, the ministry has grown and continues to support members to faithfully 'Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have' (1 Peter 3:15).



From the author: *I joined the OCU within three years of its commencement, so it is likely that only I am left to recount the early years ... I have tried to deal fairly with the difficult issues which I felt needed to be covered so that lessons might be learnt and similar situations avoided. I found great encouragement as I looked back over the past 62 years seeing what God has done through the OCU/MCF and I pray that the reader too will tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the Lord. The title is meant to reflect the desire of MCF members to be faithful followers of Christ while providing faithful service to the nation.*

How to obtain a copy of this book

The book is available for \$45 (+ postage \$15 if not collected from the author). **To purchase:**

1. Transfer the appropriate amount to RJ & HT Bielenberg Ministry A/c using PayID rjb11@me.com, being sure to include your name and initials.
2. Send an email to rjb11@me.com giving your details including address to which to post and, if you wish to collect the book, your phone number to arrange to collect it.
3. Any questions can be directed to Russell Bielenberg by sending an email (as above) or by phoning 0488 499 534.

4. If you can't afford the cost and postage of this book, please contact Russell and discuss, noting he is already making a loss on this book.

Other items that may interest:

Bible Study and other Christian Apps and websites

Some MCF-A groups find using an app a great way for their group to be able to be involved in the Bible Studies even when they aren't able to meet with the group. Some MCF-A Reps have sent in websites (and apps) they find useful for pulling together Bible Studies, or for personal use as well.

Please note, these are only suggestions and not an endorsement by MCF-A. Each person or group may find certain info more helpful than others.

Why not check some of them out over the Christmas break!

Websites (also available on the DPN):

Bible Gateway - BibleGateway.com: A searchable online Bible in over 150 versions and 50 languages.

Bible Hub - [Bible Hub: Search, Read, Study the Bible in Many Languages](http://BibleHub.com)

The Bible Project- [Study the Story of the Bible With Free Tools | BibleProject™](http://StudytheStoryoftheBibleWithFreeTools.com)

321 Speak Life course - [Home](#) or [321 Course - Speak Life](#)

You Version - [Connecting everyone, everywhere, to God's Word every day.](#)

Practicing the Way - [Practicing the Way](#)

Look inside.Bible - ??

Apps:

BibleProject App (highly recommended – look at videos and pod casts)

321course- SpeakLife

YouVersion

ReadScripture (The Bible Project)

Bible in One Year

God-Speak

Bible Gateway

Daily Prayer

5fish

GodTools

Resolute Ready



An open global community founded by the families of Veterans to give support through mental and physical trauma -“ONE STOP, ONE CALL, ONE LIFE” - "Our vision is to empower people through education, to advance social and public welfare, and to improve and support Global Mental Health through educational initiatives."

Check out the new '[backpack](#)' to help children associated with Defence. Website: [Resolute Ready](#)

Valuing People - Valuing Children - Valuing lives

The founder of this initiative is Christian and has attended MCF Dinners in South Australia, but this is not identified as a Christian organisation – the information above is FYI and not an endorsement by MCF-A.

Kookaburra Kids



Make a Difference with Defence Kids [Kookaburra Kids](#)

Are you a current or ex-serving Defence member looking to give back in a meaningful, enjoyable way?

Volunteering with AKKF is an opportunity to do something constructive on the weekend, while supporting young people who share your Defence background. Your lived experience offers a powerful connection for the young people we support—helping them feel understood, encouraged, and less alone.

Our camps and activity days are packed with fun and adventure, including bushwalking, rock climbing, arcades, archery, and more. Join us to make a positive impact, and take part in a purpose-driven, uplifting experience.

Get involved: [Volunteer](#)

Kookaburra Kids in Canberra support some MCF-A events but this organisation and its programs are for your information and not endorsed by MCF-A.

The Battle Initiative



The Battle Initiative is a faith-based organisation run by and for veterans, service personnel, first responders and their families. We teach our Warriors struggling with post-traumatic stress and common challenges how to be over-comers and live their lives in the manner God intended. For more info click this [link](#)

Note: Details of this program is for your information only and is not endorsed by MCF-A.



Let us put the CHRIST back in CHRISTMAS

*This is an invitation for you to join with me to put
CHRIST back in CHRISTMAS where He belongs.*

HOW YOU MIGHT ASK . . . GOOD QUESTION

All that you need is your phone and a desire to see your family and friends come to know Jesus.

Take your phone and press camera. Place over the QR code and click.

You now have the Story of Jesus in over 7,000 languages on your phone that you can share in almost any country in the world.

Did you know that over 10 million people living in Australia have neither parent, or only one parent who was born in Australia.

Facts: 90% or 7.21 billion of the world's 8 billion people own a smart phone.

Philippians 4:13 "I can do all things through Christ who gives me strength".

If you are a follower of Jesus, this portion of scripture is for you and me. Dare to believe.

The Lord has started doing a mighty thing around the world and we are invited to join Him.

To order your free box of 250 5fish cards for delivery in Australia only, please click below:

5fishcards@globalrecordings.net

Please check out these clips below sent to me by a dear friend who has already been used by our Lord to start this incredible movement in Africa. Be encouraged and thank the Lord for giving you this opportunity.



Report from Zambia

https://youtu.be/Z6oUfqg_7DY

Burundi with the Ladies

https://youtu.be/Bqdbqm_QS90

5fish Reaction Video from Uganda with Arthur

<https://youtu.be/mJiXbe426zM>



In His Mighty Service . . . Graham McDonald

Everyone, including Churches are welcome to order 5fish cards.

Graham is an MCF-A supporter from Did you Know education - <https://didiyouknow.org.au>

Have you posted or moved house? Are you deploying or away from home for a few months or longer?

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 further down page from 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: [Prayer Requests](#)

You can also send through **urgent prayer points** that are sent on confidentially to the MCF Prayer Warriors, or to enquire about becoming an MCF Prayer Warrior, contact the MCF Office or Daniel (via the Prayer Request link above).

Contacting the MCF Office

PHONE: Office: 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