

ISSUE 1 2022

# networking

BRINGING THE LIGHT OF CHRIST INTO COMMUNITIES



CHURCHES  
of CHRIST





# { Contents }

Find us on 



CEO update	4
AGM and Ministers Forum	6
Beached @ Burleigh	7
Discipleship and connection fuse together at camp	8
Catapult into leadership	9
Building confidence at HumeRidge	10
The one who teaches children good manners	11
Jake's story	12

The key to her family's heart	13
Embracing more choice and control	14
Finding 'homefulness'	15
Sod turned on commitment to remote Queensland town	16
Inter-service and inter-generational partnership fosters hope and meaning	17
The power of animals	18
Barry found home where his heart is	20





Celebrating 100 years of faith and love	21
Remembrance reflections	22
Help to realise dreams	23
Medical Santo	24
People and events	26
Foundation Building fund	29

#### networking

Churches of Christ in Queensland  
41 Brookfield Road Kenmore Qld 4069  
PO Box 508 Kenmore Qld 4069  
07 3327 1600  
[communications@cofcqld.com.au](mailto:communications@cofcqld.com.au)

# CEO update



**T**hank you for your support this year. We have been able to share with you many stories of how our churches services, team members, residents, clients, foster carers and others in our vibrant organisation and movement have been able to bring light and hope to those around them. We have shared the many achievements and milestones, inspirational stories and how God's love guides us.

#### **A YEAR IN REVIEW**

At the beginning of November, I presented at our Annual General Meeting, alongside Board Chair Ken Ewald, and Council Chair Kevan Denny. We delivered an update on our outcomes and achievements for the 2020 to 2021 period, including operating revenue of \$339 million and \$889 million in total assets. We received outstanding feedback on the Annual Report this year and I encourage all of you to

download it from our website. It really paints a clear picture of the great work we've done together throughout the year. So, take a moment to review it and to celebrate what we've achieved for those we serve.

- 3893 team members
- 686 volunteers
- 1200 team members born overseas and 96 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander team members
- 68 affiliated churches
- 5651 weekly attendees to our churches

#### **We supported**

- 1220 retirement living residents
- 13049 home care clients
- 1861 aged care residents
- 2125 in housing services
- 5716 children, young people and families.

We support over 20 per cent of children and young people in out-of-home care in Queensland, making us one of the leaders in the industry. In the past year, the operating revenue for Children, Youth and Families reached \$60 million for the first time. We are proud of the growth in this service area, which is a testament to the outstanding work of all of our team members and the support staff around them, and to the relationships they have built and maintained. The second stage of our affordable housing development at Bongaree on Bribie Island has been completed. This development, which is in partnership with the Queensland Government, now has 170 apartments, making it one of Queensland's largest, if not the largest, affordable housing developments. We have welcomed residents and hosted an



official opening with the Minister for Communities and Housing, Minister for Digital Economy and Minister for the Arts, Leeanne Enoch, on 17 December.

It was a big year for our Seniors Living services, as we brought our retirement living, home care and residential aged care together under a unified leadership. Thank you for embracing this change and working with us as we focus on delivering customer-centric care.

We have weathered the increased scrutiny on aged care well, and implemented a raft of recommendations from our working groups that were established to respond to the recommendations from the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety. Thank you to all who were on these working groups for your time and input.

During the past year, we had 68 churches active across Queensland. They engaged with over 12,000 people, including church attendees and through outreach activities in their communities. This year, I have been privileged to attend many commissioning services and inductions at churches across the state.

Our Church and Community Engagement Team have supported out church leadership through a range of development opportunities including Launchpad and the Global Leadership Summit. Our Chaplains have been there for residents and families in our aged care services, and we welcomed our first chaplain

dedicated to our Children, Youth and Families service. It was great to witness the work of the team and our movement at the recent Ministers Forum.

I encourage you all to read our 2021 Annual Report to find out more of our achievements for the past year.

#### SHINING STAR AWARDS

I presented the Shining Star awards at ceremonies across Queensland in December and in Victoria in March. Over 400 team and church members took the time to fill out a nomination to acknowledge the contribution of your colleagues and to say, 'this person walks the talk of our values every day'. What an inspiring testament to our people and the support we have for one another, and to the team we have who turn up to work each day focused on our residents and clients, and on continually improving our organisation.

Congratulations to each Shining Star award recipient.

#### BETTER TOGETHER

Following realignments in our leadership structures this year, I know we are in the best position to manage our ongoing growth and continue to innovate along the way on our journey. I am confident we will see some great outcomes in the year ahead that we can all be proud of. I set out at the beginning of the year with the guiding theme of 'light brings hope'. I have shared with you the analogy of the light house, and how it shines its light to all those in need, without judgement.

This year, we will focus on the internal rally cry we shared as part of the brand refresh, which is 'Together, we can change lives for the better.'

There is a verse in the bible that speaks to working as one team with one mission to serve others that captures the spirit of this theme:



Love one another, and work together with one mind and purpose. Don't be selfish; don't try to impress others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourselves. Don't look out only for your own interests, but take an interest in others, too.



**Philippians 2: 3-4**

This year, we will launch a new look magazine that will continue to tell the stories of how we are living out our values and delivering our mission, and exploring how together, we can change lives for the better. God bless.

*Gary Edwards*

*Chief Executive Officer* ■







# AGM and Ministers Forum.

Over 4 and 5 November, we held the Ministers Forum and Annual General Meeting. These yearly events bring our movement together in the name of Christ for two days of networking, development and encouragement. The theme for the event was taken from Proverbs 24:3. "Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it".

On the first day of the Ministers Forum, a key highlight was the presentation from Mark McCrindle.

Mark is a social researcher with an international following. He is recognised as a leader in tracking emerging issues and researching social trends. His presentation focused on leading thriving teams in rapidly changing times. It examined the changes we will see over the coming decades, including Australia's demographic identity, the rise of the regions, spiritual outlook, generational change and purposeful work. He also examined the future of the church and church leadership.

One of the participants reflected, "I was so encouraged by Mark's presentation. Particularly his research

finding that if invited to church, 45% of Gen Z are extremely or highly likely to say yes. This was reinforced when he noted that "Great leaders focus on the next generation, not the next program." The Annual General Meeting was held on the evening of 4 November, with delegates from across our churches voting on two motions—the adoption of the 2020-2021 Annual Report and the name change for Centenary Development Foundation to Churches of Christ Foundation. Each motion was accepted.

The delegates also elected two new members to Conference Council. They are Matt George, Pastor at Highfields Church of Christ and Ben Zambra, Pastor at Withcott Church of Christ. They each bring extensive church and chaplaincy experience to their new roles, and will be valued members. Steve Peach and Carol Joseph were also re-elected as Council members and will continue to serve for a further three years.

Chief Executive Officer, Gary Edwards, Board Chair, Ken Ewald, and Council Chair, Kevan Denny presented a review on the past year, including key achievements, statistics, our financial

position and the key decisions made and issues managed. These are highlighted in the 2021 Annual Report and 2021 Consolidated Financial Report.

Following a full first day of forum and general meeting, the attendees had a relaxing second day of the Ministers Forum, with Mark Conner bringing a message on Spiritual Formation - Becoming Like Jesus, before following up with The Spiritual Journey - Understanding the Stages of Faith. Mark was involved in church leadership at CityLife Church in Melbourne for over three decades, but now dedicates his work to coaching others toward greater effectiveness.

Throughout the conference, AJ Heijns from Arana Church of Christ joined Donna Savill as MC, the talented Ked Schneider, from our Dalby Church of Christ, engaged the audience with his country-flavoured worship at the AGM and Simon Teunis and Ryan Salzke from Little Mountain Church of Christ lead our worship at the forum. ■





# Beached @ Burleigh.

**A**n initiative of Burleigh Church of Christ, Beached @ Burleigh provides a network of support for the marginalised, homeless and isolated people in their Gold Coast community.

The aim of Beached is to help people in their community who are in need. They provide food help, coffee, IT support, craft mornings, haircuts, op shop, and welcome Orange Sky Laundry.

The initiative started in June 2019. Steve Gray, Pastor at Burleigh Church of Christ, said they wanted to “help the poor and disadvantaged in our community and show them God's love.”

“Beached @ Burleigh wishes to offer a place to stop, a place of rest a place to escape the relentless waves. A place to refresh. A place of hope and help to get you back onto your feet and back out into whatever season you are facing. This is the mission of Beached @ Burleigh.”

Beached @ Burleigh began with the Op Shop and food help 'Glimmer of Light', which the church has ran for for many years.

“We wanted a way to take these two services and bring them together, and that was the start of Beached @ Burleigh. With the help of Bruce Murry [former Regional Engagement Partner on the Gold Coast] we were able to create a Memorandum of Understanding with Churches of Christ.

“During the pandemic, there has been an increase in assisting those in need in the local community. Increasing supplies with the help of increased volunteers and donations made getting through 2020 a lot less tough.

“With tax deductibility in place, we have received many donations which have helped many people,” Steve said.

The service has come a long way from when they started, with COVID-19 playing a big part in that.

“The progress has been phenomenal, but we have time for even more growth so we can reach more people in our community.”

While Beached @ Burleigh is a recent addition to the Burleigh Church of Christ family, it has had a big impact. They have provided 13,500 meals; 3500 frozen meals; had 10,000 visits to Op Shop and Glimmer of Hope; and 30 volunteers have contributed over 7000 hours of support.

Steve Gray said they invite those who need some help to contact Beached @ Burleigh.

“That's what we do. We love doing it.”

They also invite those who would like to partner with them

As for what is ahead in 2022, the service hopes to continue to grow and provide their expression of unconditional love to their community.

“We pray that God will bring support to the community and that Beached @ Burleigh will have the financial support to keep on giving and we encourage all of you to pray towards Beached @ Burleigh as we continue to help people in need,” Steve said. ■



Watch  
the  
story





# Discipleship and connection fuse together at camp.

**F**or the past six years, youth from across our movement have gathered for the annual FUSE Camp, a combined Churches of Christ Youth Camp. It is an opportunity for the young people to come together in one place, meet each other and build a sense of being part of something bigger.

Between 120-160 young people attended the camp held in July last year. This winter camp was a departure from the summer camp, which is usually held in the second last week of January school holidays. Organiser Lachie Ashworth said the pandemic meant they had to change their plans this year.

“Managing the impacts of the pandemic caused quite a rollercoaster for us. This year, we had had our leaders meeting two days before the camp was due to start in January and Queensland went into a snap lockdown, meaning we had to cancel the camp at the last minute,” Lachie said.

The team decided to reschedule the event for the June/July school holiday, with 146 young people from 11 churches coming together for the week at the Mount Tamborine Conference Centre.

“We were met again with a snap lockdown the week before the camp was due to start, with the decision to go ahead made just a few days prior to when the camp was starting,” he said. The rescheduled camp was the first time the young people couldn’t take part in a worship mosh pit, with attendees needing to remain in their allocated, physically-distanced seating. While following all COVID-safe requirements for the event, the organisers found ways for the young people to safely interact. “The atmosphere was a little bit different this year. It meant that we had to problem solve and find ways to make more of the program take place outdoors, including meal times so that the kids could interact without requirement for masks.”

Over the week, the attendees enjoyed participating in outdoor games, worship sessions, night rallies, Zorb soccer and archery. There was also a big bonfire on the second night, a ‘C’ themed game show night where everyone wore costumes. There was also plenty of free time, with the FUSE Cafe, sports and games available for the young people to enjoy while they hung out with their

friends, and built relationships with new ones.

FUSE camp provides an experience for the youth from our churches and movement to come together and share in their faith.

“For our churches, who may not have the resources or capacity to run a week-long camp, or to even facilitate a weekly youth group, it allows their youth to be part of a life-changing week,” Lachie said.

“The camp also plays a key role in building a greater sense of community, thus building our movement through the young people.

“Which is important, as they are our next generation of leaders.

“At the heart of FUSE is discipleship, which is important because we get the opportunity over the week to empower and equip our young people to take ownership of their own faith, practically and spiritually, so that they can then do so in their everyday life—at their school, work and church.

FUSE Camp is scheduled to return in the second week of the 2022 winter school holidays. ■







# Catapult into leadership.

**C**hurches of Christ has a proud history developing the youth in our churches to be the leaders of tomorrow for our movement.

A new event launched in 2022, with an intentional focus on developing these leaders.

Catapult comes off the back of other popular youth camps and conferences, including L10 and FUSE camp.

Steve Gray, Senior Pastor within our Church and Community Engagement team, organised the new event and said its purpose is to launch “movement builders and disciple makers.” “We want to create a space to give our leaders time to share and to feel that they are equipped, inspired and have permission to be innovative, grow and plan what ministry in year ahead can look like,” Steve said.

It all started with a camp over in 28-30 January, including a rally-style event on the Saturday night. All young adults from across our movement were invited to attend.

## WHAT IS CATAPULT?

Catapult is a three-day event that seeks to build unity, intention and the general mission of our youth and young adults ministries across Queensland.

By gathering our Queensland leaders in one place, we create the opportunity and space for ideas to be created, shared and sharpened. We create a shared vision and encouragement to keep running the race marked out.

We can't wait to see Catapult 2022 attendees launch 'Disciple Makers & Movement Builders' into the year and back into their local churches. ■

# Building confidence at HumeRidge.

**A**fghan migrant, Zimra Hussain, had never heard of AFL when she first arrived in Australia, much less pictured herself representing Queensland in the sport. But, Zimra took to the sport like a duck to water, and has been awarded 'Outstanding Contribution from a new Queensland' honours at the Multicultural Queensland Awards



for her talents. Her inspiring story has been in part thanks to a program at a Toowoomba church.

Zimra was a part of a truly innovative program from HumeRidge Church of Christ. Alongside their popular 'Homework Help' program, their sport program helps children and young people from diverse backgrounds and upbringings, such as migrants like Zimra, to immerse themselves in a team environment and be part of the broader Toowoomba community.

The church hopes to give the young people the tools they need to engage in their society.

Pastor Ross Savill has been behind the outreach programs at HumeRidge and has seen many great success stories. "Zimra came out from Afghanistan as a little girl with her mum. She didn't have much English and had no idea what AFL was," Savill said.

"Mum was on her own and they were struggling. She got involved in AFL and she was amazing. She's risen through the ranks and plays in Brisbane now and has represented Queensland.

"What AFL did for her is give her a sense

of her place. It gave her confidence that she could be part of this whole deal, not just AFL but the whole thing."

Ross Savill has been a pastor at HumeRidge for more than 30 years, and giving this opportunity to young people is one of immeasurable fulfilment.

"I grew up with a bit of a connection with the church, moved away and then came back," he said.

"Back when I was working in children's services, part of the connection was with a lot of Indigenous kids.

"We started inviting them to programs at the church and found for a lot of these kids they were looking for somewhere they could come where they would be safe, where there was activities and programs that were designed to help them have fun, connect socially and find a bit of a place.

"I found that this place you could come no matter who you were, it was a positive, helpful experience."

Ross said while there has been a shift in the demographic of participants over the course of his time, the focus of the program has remained a constant.

"Over the last 15-20 years we've done a





# The one who teaches children good manners.

lot of work with young people of diverse backgrounds, and particularly the last 10-12 years lots of kids from refugee and migrant backgrounds,” he said.

“Part of that connection was they would come to the programs here like the Homework Help program.

“Because I was connected with Uni Cougars and I was coaching out there, what we found was having that connection with sport for them was a good fit. It was an important way of introducing them to the wider community.

“They got to play in a team sport, against other teams in a local community environment. That was really important.”

He said the combination of helping academically and sporting wise has helped to build up the confidence of participants in all areas of life.

“The confidence builds in other areas, “It’s been the link from here to the sporting field to wider social connections.

“Team sport is great for kids feeling a part of things.” ■

Congratulations Norma Hastings from our Gin Gin Family Day Care Services for receiving the 2021 Regional Educator Award – Queensland at the Excellence in Family Day Care Awards. Norma, 61 of Mundubbera, in the North Burnett Region, has worked with us since 2018.

“After finishing work as a nurse, I still felt that I could help working families in my local area by providing nanny services,” Norma said.

“I soon became so busy, I couldn’t cope with the demand.

“I could see families with both parents working and a real need for care for young children before they go to our local kindergarten and school.

“That’s when I contacted Churches of Christ’s Maryborough office and with their help, set up family day care in my own home.”

Norma cares for her husband Neville, and said that with the children in their home “it is like that ABC TV show, Old People’s Home For 4 Year Olds.”

“The children love it when he reads them stories.”

Norma enjoys being able to be a part of teaching basic life skills to the children.

“On a Tuesday we go on our weekly outing down the street and the children will tell us which way to turn, to help teach left from right,” Norma said.

“I’m known around town as: The one that teaches the kids good manners.”

Rebecca Westendorp is the Service Manager at Maryborough Family Day Care, and is proud of Norma and the care she provides to her children and their families.

“The families in Norma’s care agree she thoroughly deserves all recognition. We are very proud of Norma and the quality of care that she provides to the children in her community,” Rebecca said.

Congratulations also to FDC Coordinator, Zowie Simpson from the Maryborough office for being awarded an Emerging Star Award at the 2021 Excellence in Family Day Care Awards.

Family Day Care Australia’s Excellence in Family Day Care Awards are celebrating 10 years and are the only national awards dedicated entirely to the family day care sector. ■





■ Pictured, from left: Darren Llewellyn, Jake and Gary Edwards at the Kenmore CEO Update lunch.

## Jake's story.

**J**ake, 25, has been in out-of-home care for 13-and-a-half years. For the last few years, he has transitioned to living independently with support provided from Churches of Christ.

Today, Jake is training to be a youth worker and wants to share his life skills and experience with young people in similar circumstances. He wants to make a difference.

"I just think it would have had such an impact on me, when I was in care, if support workers around me could personally understand what I was going through," Jake said.

"That's why I've decided to study a Certificate IV in Youth Work."

Jake is grateful for the consistent and 'above and beyond' care he received from his youth workers, Darren and Dan.

"We had our ups and downs, but the communication was always honest. They spoke to me as a human being, and always with respect."

Something Jake will always remember from his time in out-of-home care is the statement: 'if a young person is old enough to be told about something, they are old enough to be a part of the decision-making process.'

"I've never forgotten that and I truly believe everything happens for a reason; that's part of what I want to share."

Jake met youth worker Darren when he was 12-years-old and built a brotherly relationship with him.

When he was about 16, the Supported Independent Living Service (SILS) Team Leader, Jake and his youth workers decided it was time for him to try supported independent living. They started with one night a week to get a feel for it over the course of a few weeks.

At the service, he learnt life skills to help set him up to live independently.

"Once every two weeks, we'd go shopping with a set budget and get food to cook for dinner that night."

Jake now lives by himself, and is looking forward to hopefully completing his workplace with Churches of Christ. He is also an active volunteer with the CREATE Foundation, the national consumer body representing the voices of children and young people in out-of-home care.

"I've also volunteered for many years with CREATE Foundation, and I'm a big believer in encouraging young people to have a voice."

"I've had the opportunity to meet with government ministers and directors-general and be on focus groups to share my experiences."

"I think sharing my knowledge will make a massive difference to other young people's lives. To let them know that they should always ask for help, especially with your youth workers; they'll point you in the right direction."

"To not be afraid to voice your opinion: You have a voice."

"And most importantly, never give up." ■





■ Pictured above, from left: Matt and Zara are kinship carers to Zara's three siblings and wouldn't have life any other way.

## The key to her family's heart.

**A**round two years ago, Zara's siblings, Felicity\* (16), Joey\* (11) and Emily\* (8) came into her care.

The maternal siblings experienced a home environment that featured drug abuse, alcoholism, violence and minimal, if any, parental guidance. "It was a real cycle of abuse," Zara said. When their mother had moved away the children stayed with their father for a while, but he broke parole and was reincarcerated. Zara and her partner Matt stepped in. "At the start, the kids stayed with their paternal grandparents, on weekdays and Matt and I would care for them on the weekends. We then decided to become the primary care givers, so we transitioned to that, keeping up regular visits with their grandparents." Zara said the toughest time for her and Matt was when her siblings first started living with them full-time. "We were dealing with children that

had been living with trauma their entire lives," Zara said.

"We had to show them what a 'normal' life looked like.

"We implemented a daily routine of breakfast together, going to school, dinners together, and showers every night.

"It was such a big learning curve for us all. But with respite support from their grandparents, Matt's caring family, helpful teachers at school and our amazing Churches of Christ case worker, Bridget, we got through it."

Zara said that their support worker from the beginning, Bridget, has been the greatest help, the children love her and she doesn't feel like an intrusion.

"If we ever need help, we contact Bridget and she gives me the answers or contacts the department for us. She always gets back to us on the same day, always there, always reliable.

"My sister, Felicity, had started going down a dark path with drugs, and hardly

passing at school. Now she is sitting her ATAR and getting great feedback from her teachers.

"She's in the process of finding a job and getting her driver's licence; it's like she's a new person.

"We are so grateful for all the support." ■

Interview  
with Zara





## Embracing more choice and control.

**F**rom aged care to a brand new one-bedroom Specialist Disability Accommodation unit —Matthew's story shares how Churches of Christ's integrated services worked together to achieve a wonderful outcome.

Matthew was diagnosed with Parkinson's at a young age. Not long after his diagnosis, his condition deteriorated and he needed fulltime support.

With no other suitable housing options available at the time, he entered the Churches of Christ Clive Burdeu Residential Aged Care Service at Hillcrest—a connection that stemmed back to his childhood, when he started attending a Church of Christ with his aunt and grandmother.

Like many other younger people who have extreme functional impairment or require very high levels of support, an aged care facility was the only place that could adequately meet his requirements. Now at 53-years-young, Matthew explains that he had resigned

himself to having to live in an aged care setting for the rest of his life.

"I was very frustrated. I was too young for old care and too old for young care," he said.

"But I always held onto hope that I would come out."

When the service manager of the aged care facility learnt that the remaining land on the site at Hillcrest would be developed by Churches of Christ Housing Services into 32 new units of affordable accommodation, including two Specialist Disability Accommodation (SDA) units, he referred Matthew to the housing team in the hopes a more suitable outcome could be found.

Working with the housing team, Matthew applied for SDA funding through the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) and was approved. In 2020, Matthew moved out of the Clive Burdeu Residential Aged Care Facility and into his very own, brand-new, accessible unit.

Since moving out of aged care and into more appropriate housing, Matthew has

seen an improvement in his health and wellbeing.

"It's improved my mental health by having more independence and more choices and has slowed down the progression of the disease. I can now have friends and family over. They can't believe how much space I have."

Churches of Christ Housing Services is committed to increasing the number of properties that are appropriate for people with a disability so that they may live in an independent and sustainable way. ■

You can  
watch  
Matthew  
tell his  
inspiring  
story





# Finding 'homefulness'.

**F**rom the outset of the Youth CONNECT program, the team have partnered with University of the Sunshine Coast to research opportunities to benefit the young people in the program.

A large focus of the research has been the concept of 'homefulness' that considers wellbeing and safety, as well as lived experiences, alongside the sense of where we feel 'at home'.

Brooke Weston-Hill, Acting Strategic Manager for Programs and Operations said that through the research with the young people, they found that the things that the young people needed for their sense of 'homefulness' were actually achievable.

"It was items such as baking goods and potted plants. Those extra, non-essential items that they don't have the income to buy," Brooke said.

The Youth CONNECT team had previously sought donations for clothing items for the young people to wear to job interviews, and so decided they would see if they could secure donations of household items that could impact the sense of 'homefulness' for the young people.

From this, the team dreamed up the 'homefulness van', which could deliver household items directly to the young people. But first, they needed to fill the van.

The team arranged a 'homefulness' donation drive, reaching out to the broader Churches of Christ team for donations of household decor items, arts and crafts, cookbooks and candles—things that will help make their house a home.

"We were overwhelmed by the generosity of other team members and our community,"

The Youth Group at Holland Park Church of Christ volunteered to sort the donated clothes into sizes.

"We also invited the Youth CONNECT young people to participate in an art competition, with the winning design made into 'Homefulness shirts' for the team."

To prepare for Homefulness Week, the team sorted through

donations and decorated the van.

"We wanted this to be a special experience for the young people. We planned where we would travel to, and offered to visit the young people in their homes. The van would turn up and the young people could board the van and 'go shopping' selecting anything they would like to make their houses feel like homes. The van also had a 'planting' section, where the young people could plant a small houseplant in the pot of their choice."

The Youth CONNECT team reflected on what individual young people spoke about when doing homefulness activities.

Samantha\* had shared her dreams of incorporating pictures of her daughter into her home and introducing her Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture into the daily life of her family.

When the van visited, the team had organised pictures of her and her daughter in frames and a photo album from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural day that she had shared with her daughter and the Youth CONNECT team.

"Samantha was overwhelmed when seeing it and could not hold back the tears. She smiled as she looked at the picture of her daughter holding the boomerang and again tears began to fall. She had begun her journey of fulfilling her dreams of creating a home of culture connection for her family," Brooke said.

Across five days, the Youth CONNECT team visited approximately 30 young people.

"The team received such a positive response from clients.

Everyone they visited was able to find multiple items, and some clients even offered to donate their own pre-loved décor. Our team travelled from the Gold Coast to Logan and Brisbane, and then onto Ipswich and up to Toowoomba.

"They visited clients at school and at work at their request. They shared how special this week was, and spoke of feeling a sense of fulfilment from the experience," Brooke said.

"Homefulness is a crucial concept for the Youth CONNECT program, and we are dedicated to helping the young people find that all important sense of home." ■





# Sod turned on commitment to remote Queensland town.

**O**n Wednesday 10 November, a sod turning event heralded the commencement of construction of a 10-bed extension to our Barcoo Multi-Purpose Service in Blackall, in remote western Queensland.

The day also celebrated Churches of Christ's purchase of the land the service sits on, cementing our commitment to the region.

When it opened in 2002, Barcoo featured an innovative new service delivery model designed to cater for changing community needs. It was the first service in Australia to operate under a tripartite agreement between the Commonwealth Department of Ageing, the Queensland Department of Health and a non-government organisation, Churches of Christ. Under the agreement, funding was pooled to deliver flexible and individualised care to the elderly in Blackall, Isisford and Tambo Shires.

Chief Executive Officer, Gary Edwards, said it wasn't long after opening in 2002 that Churches of Christ recognised the demand for such a service in the region and the need for more beds. The second, \$3.5 million, 14-bed stage equipped to provide high care services was officially opened by the then Federal Aged Care Minister, Julie Bishop, in June of 2005.

"The community played an enormous part in this extension, raising \$1 million for the development," Gary said.

The 10-bed, \$3.2 million extension is being pre-fabricated in Toowoomba by local Longreach builders Hutchinson Regional, before being trucked to Blackall. The construction method will mean that the new building will be opened early to mid-2022.

The purchase of the land signifies Churches of Christ's intention to support the town and region in the long-term. "We are committed to supporting the Blackall community and region, providing ongoing investment to improve the wellbeing of residents. As one of the largest employers in the region, we are proud to be establishing ourselves for the

future in Blackall," Gary said.

"Churches of Christ are dedicated to providing the highest quality of care to seniors in rural and regional Queensland.

"In a changing care environment, we are determined to deliver services that respond to the needs of today's seniors, that allow them to continue to live their best possible lives while receiving the highest quality of care.

"Across our 28, fully-accredited aged care services, we deliver person-centred care that responds to the individual needs of our 1860 residents."

The additional beds will also add six team members to the service, providing more jobs for the local community. ■





## Inter-service and inter-generational partnership fosters hope and meaning.

**R**esidents at our Sanctuary Park Retirement Community and clients from our Sunshine Coast Home Care got behind the local Children, Youth and Families Christmas Appeal, which helped provide gifts for the service's 160 children and young people in foster and kinship care. The Sunshine Coast seniors have supported the service for the past four years, donating Christmas and Easter gifts to bring a little bit of light and hope to the children, young people and families supported. It is also a rewarding experience for them and helps build their sense of community. The relationship was forged by the Sunshine Coast Strategic Action

Leadership Team. Stewart Harris is the local Regional Engagement Partner and facilitates the ongoing relationship. In November, Children, Youth and Families Service Manager Gemma Squire visited Sanctuary Park to talk to the residents and Home Care clients about her service and the children and young people they support. She explained to the group that they care for children and their families in many ways, including their Families Together program, which provides early intervention and support for families as well as the foster and kinship care service. Moreton Bay Foster and Kinship Care

“

we love it here at Sanctuary Park, it's like having an extended family...

”

Service supports approximately 160 children and young people from the Moreton Bay region, as well as approximately 90 from the Brisbane area.

The group listened intently as Gemma spoke about the role of foster and kinship carers and the team she has who support the children and their families to achieve outstanding outcomes, often in very challenging contexts.

Following her presentation, Retirement Living Manager Russell Elms presented Gemma with a collection of beanies and shawls knitted by the village residents for Gemma to pass onto the families. Home Care Service Manager Karen Vaughan said it was wonderful her clients could be part of the Christmas appeal this year, as it will be a rewarding experience.

Stewart said that two Sanctuary Park residents told him as an aside that: “we love it here at Sanctuary Park, it's like having an extended family and today we realised that our family also includes the Children, Youth and Families staff and clients.”

The Sunshine Coast Strategic Action Leadership Team is planning more inter-service and inter-generational activities, including increasing involvement with the local school, hosting a playgroup with the residents, and facilitating events to raise awareness of homelessness on the coast.

“In the new year, we are also planning on recruiting and training volunteer pastoral carers from the local church communities to complement the great work of the new Little Mountain Chaplain Rick Joseph,” Stewart said. ■



# Connecting with animals: It makes paw-fect sense.

**M**eet Dreamy, the beloved pony who brings ‘unbridled’ joy to our residents at Warwick Aged Care Service.

Warwick is a town well-known for its many horse shows and competitions, including the annual Warwick Rodeo, ‘Australia’s Most Famous’ rodeo. Many Warwick Aged Care residents have past experiences with horses, which inspired Seniors Chaplain Donna Craig to look for an equine activity they could participate in and enjoy.

Donna always keeps the affirmation ‘I choose joy’, front of mind in both her work and personal life, so it seemed like fate when she found the Warwick-based horsemanship program Mane Matters, which operates with the purpose of ‘spreading the joy’.

Mane Matters was founded by local school chaplain Erin Wilson, with the mission to restore, renew and reconnect lives through human and horse connection. The community funded the first four equine activity sessions, and Erin then donated her time and continued running the program each fortnight free of charge. The residents spend their time giving Dreamy lots of pats and cuddles and helping with his grooming.

Studies have shown that interactions with horses can offer therapeutic benefits for seniors, including improved wellbeing, quality of life, trust, and a sense of purpose and accomplishment. Donna said that the team at Warwick have seen firsthand the benefits of the equine activity program.

“The program has become very popular. We usually have about 40 residents taking part each time and it’s something that everyone looks forward to. We have seen the interactions with Dreamy impact our residents in many ways – from fostering meaningful connections, to relighting the spark of communication, and providing a sense of purpose,” Donna said.

Isabelle is one of the many residents who looks forward to the equine activity program. She misses her old pet dog dearly, so the interactions with Dreamy have become very special to her. The two have formed a close bond and Isabelle regularly talks about how much she loves Dreamy.

Daryl found his voice again through his interactions with Dreamy. Usually a man of few words, he doesn’t communicate with many people, but loves talking to Dreamy when they spend time together. Kevin is one of Warwick’s most energetic residents and often tries to venture off into town on his own. On one occasion, he was becoming frustrated that he couldn’t leave campus when one of the carers asked for his help to groom Dreamy. He became completely absorbed in the task, and when he was finished he said ‘I just did a good day’s work’! Kevin was proud of his accomplishment and stayed relaxed and happy for the rest of that day.

“We look forward to continuing our equine activity program at Warwick Aged Care Service, and exploring more opportunities for future animal interactions at our services,” Donna said. Going pet-friendly in Aged Care Services Ashok Sharma, Churches of Christ Clinical Support and Governance Manager, is a passionate advocate for animal interactions in aged care services. “In my previous experience, I have seen some wonderful outcomes for residents, with positive impacts on people’s sense of isolation and loneliness and their emotional wellbeing. There are also well-documented physical health benefits.

“It is important to manage the interaction safely, with the proper risk assessments, infection control strategies and logistics policies in place. But once you have addressed those important considerations, I am completely supportive of aged care residents having the opportunity to spend time with

animals,” he said.

“Earlier in my career I helped transform an aged care service I was working at to a pet-friendly one, and the feedback was overwhelmingly positive. We were able to take in residents that other services had turned away because the resident didn’t want to leave their pet behind – but we said yes.”

Ashok recalls a resident, Julie, who came to the service on respite. She didn’t have any family or friends and after her four weeks of respite care, it was determined she needed permanent care as she couldn’t look after herself at home.

“We went to her room and talked with her and she said she was feeling happy and pleased with the services we were providing. We asked her if she’d like to live permanently at the service and she said that was okay. But, I knew something wasn’t right.

“Julie had been to hospital four times in the previous month, and she wasn’t eating or drinking. When I asked her about this, she said it was because she was missing her two cats and that she was very sad not to have them with her. She said that she knew she was depressed but she had been prescribed antidepressants so thought she would improve soon.

“So, we got to work tracking down Julie’s cats. With some luck, we found them and arranged for them to come and live with her. Within two weeks of her cats returning, Julie no longer required her antidepressants. She immediately resumed eating and drinking and there were no more weekly hospital visits. She happily lived at the service with her cats for more than two years, showcasing the huge impact the cats had on her emotional wellbeing, physical health and quality of life.”

Whether it’s a pony, a pug, or two cats – connecting with animals is beneficial for the physical and mental health of aged care residents. ■







# Barry found home where his heart is.

**B**arry's story with Churches of Christ began when he was just 17 years old, when he became a Christian at Wollongong Church of Christ. It was here that he met his future wife Gay, and decided to pursue a career within the church.

Barry and Gay later moved to the United States, where for 14 years they ran a Mega Church in Los Angeles. During his time there, Barry saw the church grow from 900 parishioners to an amazing 12,000. After a long and successful career, the couple decided to retire back home in Australia.

They moved to Townsville and looked for a place to live that would be low maintenance and offer them the support they needed. In 2009, they chose to settle at the St James Retirement Village.

Barry was instrumental in bringing the proposal to Churches of Christ to purchase the village from the Anglican Church. He spent 18 months working with the Churches of Christ management team as well as the President of the Resident committee, Jennifer Bucky, to help transition the village.

Not long after the transition of the village to Churches of Christ, Gay's health declined, and the couple moved to a beautiful country town in New South Wales to be with their daughter and grandchildren. They stayed there until Gay passed away, after 57 years of marriage.

Barry decided to return to Townsville to be closer to his two sons and to live in an area that brought him cherished memories. When he moved back into

St James Retirement Village, he was impressed with how well the village was being cared for and presented like it was loved.

"I love the environment here, there is no conflict and it's such a close-knit community. The staff are warm and welcoming to everyone— they always greet you by your first name. There is an ever-present sense of happiness in the village. One of my favourite pastimes is to sit on my veranda in the late afternoon and catch up with my neighbours, sharing memories and stories. The food that our amazing chef prepares is definitely another highlight of living here," Barry said. Retirement Living Manager Wendy Williams said it's always rewarding to hear stories like Barry's.

"It's why we do what we do. We always strive to create a happy environment for our senior residents, where they can enjoy living and feel a sense of community," Wendy said. ■





# Celebrating 100 years of faith and love.

**O**n 19 September, Moonah Park Aged Care Resident Beryl Brown celebrated her 100th birthday with her family and fellow residents.

To mark the outstanding occasion and celebration of a life well lived, her son Warren shared the story of his mother's life, from being born to Scottish migrant parents in Maryborough in 1921 to meeting her husband Ken, and her enduring faith, which she carried throughout her life. It is a glimpse into a life from a by gone era in Brisbane.

"Anyone who knows my mother would have concluded that Beryl is a quietly spoken, kind, respectful, caring and humble person. My mother has always considered and looked out for the needs of others before her own needs," Warren said.

"But it was by far Mum's strong faith in her Maker that was the biggest influence on her life, and from an early age too. I know my mother regularly prayed for her children, her grandchildren and her great grandchildren."

Beryl was born Frances Beryl Brown, named after her maternal grandmother, but she was soon known simply as Beryl.

When she was young, her family moved from Maryborough to the inner-Brisbane suburb of Coorparoo, where she lived for 25 years until she was married. Leaving school after Year 7, Beryl attended Nunn and Trivett's Business College, before starting work. During the war years, her family

welcomed American soldiers into their home for tea, with Beryl's father Jack having fought in World War I. As part of the Presbyterian Women's Guild, Beryl entertained the soldiers, playing the piano.

One night, Beryl's good friend Rita invited her on a double date, where she formed a friendship with her future husband, Ken Brown.

On 3 September 1949, the couple married. They welcomed their first son, Warren, in February 1951, followed by a daughter, Allison, in 1953. After living across the northside in Geebung,

Nundah and Redcliffe, in 1959 the family settled in Northgate, the suburb they called home for 31 years. Beryl attended Virginia Presbyterian Church and volunteered in the office of Jim Edson's Campaigners for Christ.

In 1997, at the tender age of 72, Beryl learnt how to use a computer, learning 'just enough to get into lots of trouble'. "Behind all these facts," Warren said, "lies a woman of great substance, whose life has exhibited the faith and Christian values she holds dearly."

We extend a warm congratulations to Beryl for her outstanding milestone. ■



■ Beryl with her son Warren as she celebrated her 100th birthday at Moonah Park.





■ Pictured, from left: Memories from Donald's time serving in the Royal Australian Airforce. Donald at the Remembrance Day Memorial at Warwick Aged Care Service.

# Remembrance reflections.

**A**t 11 am on 11 November, Warwick Aged Care Service hosted a Remembrance Day Memorial to honour the past and present servicemen and women who have served and sacrificed in all wars, conflicts, and peacekeeping operations.

Approximately 50 residents gathered to commemorate the day and were invited to light a candle in memory of their loved ones. The wreath was laid by the service's oldest resident, Norman who is 100 years young.

Many residents in our aged care services have been touched by war, through their service, the loss of loved ones, or escaping war zones. Donald attended the service and reflected on the time he served with the Royal Australian Airforce between 1957 and 1984.

Donald was stationed in New South Wales, at the RAAF Base in Richmond.

He flew the C-130 Hercules Aircraft during his service period, often flying in and out of Vietnam, providing supplies for Australian soldiers and aiding medical evacuations.

There were certainly difficult times for Donald throughout his 27 years of service, including the tragic loss of his best friend, he still regards these years as his glory days. He feels grateful to have had the opportunity to serve his country and to have formed incredible bonds with his fellow comrades. Donald loved that his career allowed him to help others and make a positive difference.

He recalls in 1975, helping to evacuate a plane full of Vietnamese young women during the Fall of Saigon. Donald and his comrades hatched a cunning plan to allow the women to escape to safety. The women were disguised in nun habits and the mission to get them to safety was a success.

Remembrance Day is an important time for Donald to take a moment to reflect on his past experiences that are such a significant part of his life, remember those that he loved and lost, and pay tribute to his fellow veterans.

We pay tribute to those who have served, and are still serving, in our defence forces and remember those who have died or suffered in conflicts, wars and peacekeeping operations. We remember all those who gave up their tomorrows so we can have our today, those who continue to serve and those who continue to suffer as a result of their selfless efforts to protect our freedoms. ■

Donald loved that his career allowed him to help others and make a positive difference.

# Help to realise dreams.

The Churches of Christ Eziway Staff Study Assistance Scheme enables Churches of Christ team members to realise their dreams by assisting with the cost of study. In 2021, 22 team members received scholarships from our salary packaging partner, Eziway, with an average scholarship value of \$2800.

The scholarships go a long way to helping our team to develop their skills and grow in their chosen careers. We share some of the inspiring stories from team members who received a 2021 scholarship, and what the assistance means to them and their future.

## **Kita Smith, Foster Support Worker, South East Intensive Foster Care**

In June, I decided to enrol in university to do my Bachelor in Human Services, to become an official case worker and further my knowledge.

On 11 August 2021, I received an email to confirm I had been successful in my application. I'm so thankful to Eziway for helping me pay for a large part of my degree.

I'm a full-time working mum of three children and every little bit counts, so thank you.

## **Jennifer McKay, Service Manager, Warrawee Aged Care**

I would like to thank Churches of Christ and Eziway for contributing to some of my study fees. This study will be beneficial to me moving forward and progressing to my goal of being a Nurse Practitioner. Living in a rural and remote location of Queensland (St George), it is vital that we keep up-to-date in our practice and can offer our community the services and opportunities that metropolitan areas have on hand including the daily programs and activities.

## **Penny Tatow, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Officer Children, Youth and Families Mackay/Whitsunday**

I am so grateful to have been successful in my grant application and so thankful for the generosity in helping me to achieve my study goals.

## **Tracey Gill, Youth Worker, Everlast Place Residential**

Firstly, I would like to say thank you to Churches of Christ and Eziway for this scholarship. This scholarship is to assist me with My Bachelor in Psychological

My future plans as an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander team member and emerging social worker is to be innovative in practice to reduce the overrepresentation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care, and establish a solid cultural foundation to reunite and strengthen culture, connection and identity.

Science. I wish to use my degree to become a Case Manager or Team Leader in the Child, Youth and Families sector of Churches of Christ and this scholarship will help ease the financial burdens of achieving this. I can't put into words how much I appreciate this opportunity.

## **Susannah Warokra, Environmental Service Worker St James Retirement Village Townsville**

Let me begin by saying how grateful I am to Churches of Christ and Eziway for the opportunity and support that they have provided in my career. I began with Churches of Christ as a volunteer in the Lantern Coffee Shop at the St James Retirement Village, hoping to find employment. After a few months, I gained employment with St James as an environmental services worker, a role I enjoy and currently fill. With the recent approval of the Eziway Scholarship, I will be able to undertake

my studies doing a Certificate III in Commercial Cookery, which will allow me to achieve my goal of one day working in our St James kitchen as a qualified cook. I am very grateful to be a recipient of an Eziway scholarship and look forward to one day cooking up some tasty treats for our wonderful residents.





# Medical Santo.

**M**arch 2020 changed the world of Medical Santo. The Vanuatu Government slammed the borders shut overnight and citizens, residents and tourists were all locked in or locked out to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Over a period of weeks, flights were being arranged and thousands were leaving the island nation, including all but two of the clinic's volunteers, only one of whom was a medical person.

But, as Executive Manager Lyn Cox said, it wasn't just COVID they had to battle with.

Before we could get our heads around how we would cope in this new world, Cyclone Harold, a Category 5 cyclone, arrived and wreaked havoc on the Northern Islands. It lingered over our town for about six hours as it did its worst."

The Medical Santo clinic escaped any serious structural damage, and the solar and generator meant they had power for the many weeks it was down in the town. "Many of our staff lost their homes, and we were able to house them temporarily," Lyn said.

Following the cyclone clean-up, attention returned to managing the logistics surrounding the pandemic for a clinic reliant on international volunteers,

"We settled into a routine with just one nurse although we earnestly and continuously asked for volunteers to come. The Vanuatu Government in those first months put in place additional rules around who could come into Vanuatu – only medical volunteers, no additional family members, and it must be for at least three months. On top of this there was quarantine."

Dr Trellly, a ni-Vanuatu doctor who was supposed to be in Australia upskilling, came to work with the clinic in August 2020 and is still with them.

"In June 2020 we had an additional nurse arrive and then recently we had a short-term nurse for three months. Our Clinic practice nurse fell critically ill in May 2021 and we had to evacuate her out. This was a huge undertaking, but we are thankful that she received amazing care and attention in Brisbane.

At December 2021, the clinic has one Doctor (Trellly) and one nurse/ midwife (Rachael) working with the semi-skilled ni-Vanuatu staff and a wonderful volunteer Project Manager, Lucian who keep the Clinic functioning on a day-to-day basis.

Medical Santo has become known for its high-level of care and in particular wound management.

"This is costly and time-consuming

treatment but the results are limbs saved and lives changed. We are treating an average of 150 patients a week—a huge load by any standard. To date we have impacted the lives of over 55,000 people and their families since opening in May 2013."

Although it has been a challenge to fill volunteer clinical positions due to the pandemic, luckily the nation has escaped the wrath of COVID. There have only been five cases of COVID-19 in quarantine in Vanuatu, and nothing has escaped into the community.

"We have been blessed to escape the pandemic so far. Our vaccination program was slow to start as we relied heavily on other countries to provide the vaccines. At December 2021, 57 per cent of adults over 18 had been vaccinated with one dose and 27 per cent are fully vaccinated. It is a mammoth task here as we have 83 islands, some really remote areas where there are no roads and limited access."

Lyn returned to Australia in June 2020 after a four month stay on the island, and has been run off her feet finding alternative ways to deliver cold chain goods, vaccines, needed medications and dressings for the clinic.

"Speaking to interested people around Queensland has also been a priority. We



have been fundraising to fill a container as a lot of the regular supplies are depleted. This container will arrive in Santo early January 2022.”

To fill and ship, a container can be between \$60,000 and \$100,000 as they try to account for every possibility.

“We need to provide all dressings and clinic consumables, from gloves to specimen jars and mops for at least a year.”

Lyn and Recruitment and Retention Officer Bettina have also spent a lot of time communicating with potential volunteers who want to come but are just not aware of the long list of rules and regulations in place due to COVID.

“We have a lot of people interested in volunteering, but since March 2020 only one nurse has come for three months.

Our doctor is extremely tired, as are our staff because of the lack of volunteers.

Unfortunately, we will be closing the clinic over Christmas for two weeks.

Tired staff make mistakes, and we cannot let this happen.

“Please pray for volunteers to come and make a difference in 2022.”

Medical Santo changes lives in the Northern Islands every day. They urgently need volunteers, and also funds to continue their vital work. ■

**Can you or someone you know help make a difference? To find out about volunteering, go to [medicalsanto.com](https://medicalsanto.com). To donate funds, go to [cofc.com.au/give](https://cofc.com.au/give), or scan the QR code.**





# { People & Events }

in our communities



## Ipswich Street Connect

Our Housing Services team participated in the first Ipswich Street Connect. Essential providers offered Housing support, hot food and coffee, haircuts, physiotherapy, health checks, personal protective equipment and other useful items were all offered at the event for free to those experiencing homelessness or housing stress. We are so proud to have been part of this collaboration supporting our local community.

## Big “0” celebrations

Sanctuary Park Retirement Village in Nambour held a Big “0” celebration for 14 village residents who had a significant “0” birthday—70, 80 or 90th birthdays—in 2021. Residents and staff enjoyed a delicious afternoon tea.



## Welcome packs

Welcome to our new tenants at Coolamon Apartments Stage II. Our Housing Services team gifted welcome packs to new tenants who recently moved into our Bribie Island affordable housing complex. Packs included items to keep tenants COVID-safe and the nearby Bribie Island Church of Christ kindly provided morning tea.



## Celebration dinner

Munruben Church of Christ celebrated 25 years with a special dinner. From a small group of 10, the church has grown to 60 members. The male members of the church prepared, cooked and served the special dinner to their wives and partners. Congratulations on a wonderful milestone.



## New buildings

Congratulations to Highfields Church of Christ on the opening of their beautifully refurbished building and grounds, which were opened to the community on Sunday 3 October 2021. Services include a drop-in centre and counselling rooms. Steve Smith is cutting the ribbon here with Pastor Matt George and Donna Savill from Churches of Christ. Highfields are grateful to Steve Smith for the countless hours of work he and many volunteers have put into the renovation's and to Centenary Development Foundation for partnering with them in funding the work.



## Hogs visit

Little Mountain Aged Care recently enjoyed a visit from the Sunshine Coast HOG. Resident Josie was especially touched by the experience.

"My dad rode a Harley Davidson and we grew up riding on the back of his bike. This brings back such fond memories for me."



## Art workshops

Residents from Fassifern Retirement Village recently took part in an Aboriginal art workshop led by local Indigenous artist Peter Fowler. It was a wonderful cultural experience for everyone involved with some lovely works of art created.



## Queensland Mental Health Week

During Queensland Mental Health Week our Youth CONNECT team organised activities for young people in the program, including storytelling, art therapy and provided self-care services, including haircuts, brow grooming and DIY face scrubs. A cooking class for cost-friendly meal options was offered, and the event was opened with a Welcome to Country by local Elder, Auntie Gwen Taylor.





## Little Mountain Church of Christ turns one

One of our newest churches, Little Mountain Church of Christ, celebrated their first year of being a part of the Churches of Christ family.

Affiliated at our Annual General Meeting last year, they are a thriving faith community located at our Little Mountain Campus.

Pictured right is Pastor Simon Teunis and his dedicated team, including Amanda Teunis, Nick and Kassie Borrows, and Phil and Julie Bignill. Our CEO Gary Edwards and Manager Church Engagement Donna Savill (also pictured) were there to celebrate the exciting milestone.



## Comissioning Service

Sanctuary Park Church of Christ celebrated the Commissioning Service of Pastors Mark Wall and Steve Nixon, acknowledging that they will be undertaking their roles on behalf of God and the Church to serve their community.

## Gifts to support new mums

St James Retirement Village residents and team members have generously supported children and families this year. They presented giftboxes full of children's toys to our Townsville foster care team and gift packs for new mothers at Townsville Hospital who have experienced domestic violence. They really have shown unconditional love, thank you.



## Townsville Senior of the Year Award

We are so proud to announce that St James Retirement Village resident Richard Hosking has won the Townsville Senior of the Year Award. Richard is an active member of our village family and works tirelessly in the wider Townsville community.



## Outreach and Integration Pastor

Sam Chidamber was commissioned as the new Outreach and Integration Pastor at Rivers Church of Christ on Sunday 28 November. Sam's enthusiasm, insights into cultural diversity, ability to connect with people and bring God's word are assets to our movement. We look forward to seeing how God continues to bless and grow the ministry here at Rivers.



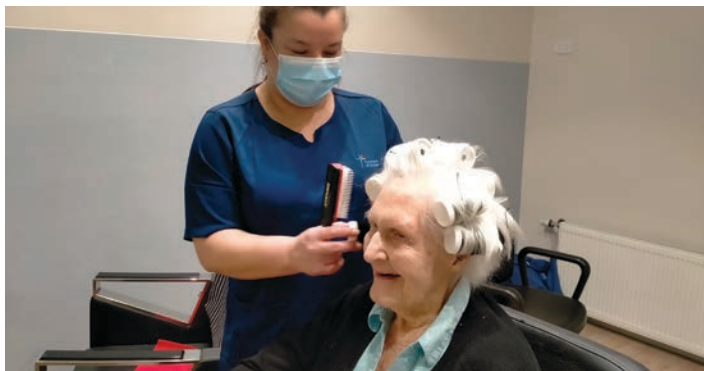
## Art and craft

In Warwick, village residents took part in the Regency Park Art and Craft Expo. As part of the successful day, residents had stalls selling their hand-crafted goods, including cards and delicious homemade sweets. It was a fantastic day enjoyed by all.



## Margaret's 100th birthday

Arcadia Aged Care resident Margaret recently celebrated her 100th birthday! Margaret has been a cherished and active member of the Arcadia community since June 2013. Margaret has a wonderful sense of humour and a smile that lights up the room and always has something nice to say about everybody. She enjoyed having her hair done for her special day.



## Father's day

A few of our Toowoomba-region retirement villages celebrated Father's Day in the Nubeena Community Hall. The gents and staff enjoyed a barbeque, tried their hand at darts, and shared some of their best dad jokes.

## New addition to Bongaree on Bribie Island

Wonderful to open Coolamon Apartments Stage II at Bongaree on Bribie Island Friday 17 December with the Minister for Communities and Housing, Minister for Digital Economy and Minister for the Arts – The Honourable Leanne Enoch, the local Member for Pumicestone, Ali King, architects Deicke Richards, builders Cornerstone Group, tenants and our staff that helped to create Queensland's largest purpose-built seniors community housing development – a welcome addition to a vibrant and exciting campus at Bongaree. Thanks to our productive partnerships with the Queensland Government, community, the builders and architect the approximately \$27.1 million jointly funded project has delivered 170 units during Stage I and now Stage II to a range of tenants from those that have down-sized from under-occupied social housing, which now frees up larger homes for families in need, plus from the register of need and other public and Churches of Christ housing.





# Foundation Building Fund

**C**hurches of Christ Foundation has released a new fund specifically geared at supporting the work of Churches of Christ.

You can help us expand our Christ-inspired care and compassion we provide at Churches of Christ. By investing in the Foundation Building Fund, you will support our various services in aged care, affordable and social housing, out-of-home care and family support services.

Your investment can transform the lives of so many people in our community and beyond. Bring the light of Christ into the lives of some of the most vulnerable members of our community today!

Join with one of our introductory terms available:

- Fixed rate 1.24% p.a. for 13-month term. Interest paid at maturity
- Fixed rate 1.42% p.a. for 23-month term. Interest paid annually and at maturity. ■



# { Events }

## May

**1 – 31 MAY**

Domestic and Family  
Violence Prevention Month

**30 APRIL – 7 MAY**

National Foster and Kinship Week

**12 MAY**

International Nurses Day

**16 – 23 MAY**

National Volunteer Week

**23 – 30 MAY**

National Palliative Care Week

**26 MAY**

National Sorry Day

**27 MAY – 3 JUNE**

National Reconciliation Week

## June

**19 – 25 JUNE**

Refugee Week

## July

**1 JULY**

Coming of the Light  
(Torres Strait Island)

**3 – 10 JULY**

NAIDOC Week

## August

**1 – 8 AUGUST**

Homelessness Prevention Week

**4 AUGUST**

National Aboriginal and  
Torres Strait Islander Children's Day

**7 AUGUST**

Aged Care employee appreciation Day

## September

**1 – 30 SEPTEMBER**

Dementia Awareness Month

**6 – 12 SEPTEMBER**

National Child Protection Week

**10 SEPTEMBER**

R U OK? Day

**22 SEPTEMBER**

Fassifern 50 Year Celebration



Find us on 

Keep up to date on what is happening across Churches of Christ by  
liking and following our Churches of Christ Facebook page.



Bringing the light of Christ  
into communities



[cofc.com.au](http://cofc.com.au)