

networking

ISSUE 3 {2019}

BRINGING THE LIGHT OF CHRIST INTO COMMUNITIES

Faith



Churches
of Christ
in Queensland

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Welcome to the latest edition of Networking

Thank you for reading *Networking* in 2019. It has been a joy to bring you so many inspirational stories from our church and service communities. There is no doubt that we have been on an exciting journey.

Faith is the theme for this final edition for 2019. It is central to all that we do and is an element of our Churches of Christ Way.

Faith can manifest and present itself differently, and each individual has their own lived experience. For the loving couple featured on our cover, Beryl and John Jobe, they chose to move into the new Little Mountain Aged Care Service because it was run by a faith-based organisation.

We hope you enjoy this edition of *Networking*. ■

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We wish you a holy Christmas season and look forward to sharing your stories in 2020.

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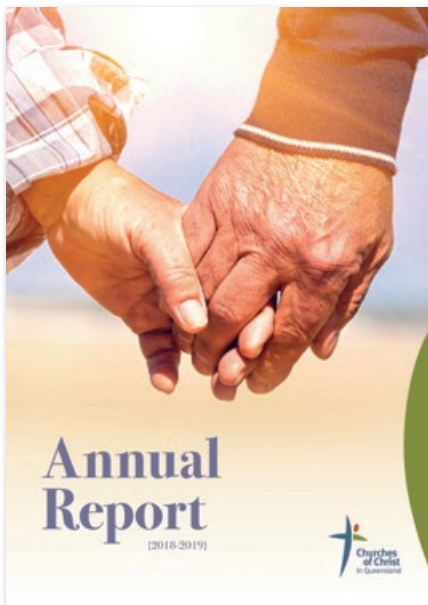
networking

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networking contains a variety of news and stories from across Churches of Christ in Queensland. Articles and photos can be submitted to communications@cofcqld.com.au. The submission deadline for the next edition of *networking* is 31 January 2020.



CEO update



■ The Churches of Christ in Queensland Annual Report 2018-19.

Another year comes to an end at Churches of Christ in Queensland. Throughout the year our faith has remained strong as we have steadfastly continued to deliver our mission of bringing the light of Christ into communities.

Faith is one of the five elements expressed in our new Churches of Christ Way (CofCWay). In all that we do, we come with faith. We believe that God is the source of all good things and that He is constantly bringing His light into communities. He works in us, through us and sometimes in spite of us to restore and build lives, homes and communities. We bring the best of our own efforts while also having faith that God works alongside us. We are not alone in our mission and this timeless mystery challenges, shapes, informs and directs all of our efforts.

Annual Report 2018-19

The release of our Annual Report 2018-19 captures some of our activities from the past financial year. We are proud to have impacted over 30,000 lives through our services in Queensland, Victoria and Vanuatu. It would not have been possible without our 3,665 staff, 1,060 volunteers and prayerful commitment from our 64 member churches. I encourage you

to view the Annual Report 2018-19 and the consolidated financial report online at cofc.com.au and delve into our wonderful achievement in the past financial year.

Thank you to our affiliated Churches, staff, volunteers, clients and our partners and communities for your continued support in 2018-19, we look forward to an even better 2019-20.

Church and service visits

This year, I have been privileged to visit so many of our churches and services to promote our new Strategic Plan and as part of the 'I Love Aged Care' tour. I have also more recently visited our dedicated staff in our Children, Youth and Families services, connecting with those who are working tirelessly to support vulnerable children, young people and families.

Thank you all for the hospitality afforded to myself and the members of our leadership, Board and Council in tow.

Sanctuary recertification

Congratulations to our Children, Youth and Families services following their recertification under the Sanctuary Model of Care. The service has been certified since 2013, and has been certified for another three years. This



■ Gary (second from right) with members from Living Hope Church of Christ in Caboolture.

recertification is a major milestone and cements its commitment to providing understanding care to children, young people and their families, creating a better future for all.

Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety

The interim report for the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety was released on 31 October. The Commission was established by the Federal Government in September 2018 to look at how older people are cared for and explore what needs to change to make aged care services better. Churches of Christ in Queensland supports the Royal Commission and has lodged written submissions to support its work.

The Commission has found Australia's aged care system fails to meet the needs of its older people and does not deliver safe and quality care. Aged and community care groups, associations and peak bodies have welcomed the interim report as a signal for change to the aged care system.

The Commission has called for change and said in its interim report 'we owe it to our parents, our grandparents, our partners, our friends. We owe it to strangers. We owe it to future generations. Older people

deserve so much more.' At Churches of Christ in Queensland, we agree wholeheartedly.

We are committed to leading and collaborating with others across the system so that every older Australian who needs high quality care and support, whether that be in the comfort of their home or at a residential aged care service, receives it when they need it—with kindness, dignity and without discrimination.

Bringing the light of CHRISTmas into communities

This year, how can you bring the true meaning of Christmas into your communities? I invite you to consider the Churches of Christ Way this holy festive season, and how the elements of welcome, wellbeing, home, community and faith can play a part.

For example:

- Welcome – Who will you make room for this Christmas?
- Wellbeing - How will you care for yourself this Christmas?
- Home - How will you find your way home this Christmas?
- Community - How will you share joy with your colleagues this Christmas?
- Faith - What are you hoping and praying for this Christmas?

I hope that by reflecting on these questions and considering the elements that make up the Churches of Christ Way, we are all able to bring the joy of Christmas to ourselves and those around us in a more meaningful way.

I wish you all a holy and blessed Christmas.

Thank you

I would like to thank the Board and Council for their support throughout 2019. They have had a challenging year, with a number of large decisions made to shape our future and keep us moving towards achieving both our strategic goals and our mission. You can read an update about their year in the following pages. ■

Gary Edwards
Chief Executive Officer

Council and Board update



■ The Churches of Christ in Queensland Council.



■ The Churches of Christ in Queensland Board.

The Churches of Christ in Queensland Conference Council and Board bid farewell to another busy year, which was accentuated with finalising our next strategic plan, various Royal Commissions and visits to some of our regional communities.

Members from the Council and Board travelled with Chief Executive Officer Gary Edwards for regional information sessions with church leaders. These events were a chance to connect directly with church leaders, elders and other church volunteers. They listened to stories from the local churches in action and better understood how Kenmore Campus can support their local mission. They also discussed the National Redress Scheme; safe people, places and programs; healthy governance and eldership; and shared the Strategic Plan 2019-24 and the priority of 'building the Kingdom of God'. Thank you to everyone who attended these sessions.

Our June Board meeting was held in Hervey Bay. Board and Council members took the opportunity to meet with staff and church leaders in the region. It was encouraging for all to come together to listen, share ideas, and see first-hand the great work being done in our communities.

The August meeting was held on the Gold Coast, where they also met with local services and held information sessions with local affiliated churches. The information session was an important opportunity for our CEO, Board and Council to provide an update on the new strategic plan, the work of Global Mission Partners and key

136th Annual General Meeting

On Thursday 7 November representatives and delegates from our churches, staff and other members of the public came together for the 136th Annual General Meeting at Kenmore.

The 2018-19 Annual Report and Consolidated Financial Report was tabled and adopted by the voting delegates.

The delegates from our churches also voted for the new Council members. Laura Snook, Youth Minister at The Lakes Church, was voted in as a new Council member.

Also welcomed on the night was our new affiliated Churches—Kenmore Church, God's Will Church (a Korean community church in the southern Brisbane meeting at Springwood Church of Christ), and Oasis Church Bundamba, who have previously been affiliated and re-affirmed their affiliation.

Geoff Charles, Ken Ewald and Gary Edwards provided in-depth updates on the performance of the organisation in the past financial year and activities of the Board and Council throughout the year. ■



■ Members of our new churches—God's Will Church, Oasis Church of Christ, and Kenmore Church—flanked by Geoff Charles (left), Ken Ewald and Gary Edwards.

sessions on eldership and strategies for attracting and engaging millennials in local congregations.

Gold Coast Mayor, Tom Tate, also addressed the meeting in what was one of the highlights of the day.

This year, there has been a few major issues and projects that have required the careful consideration and input from Board and Council, including the National Redress Scheme, the Strategic Plan 2019-24, new risk management framework and insurance, and the new aged care standards, as well as provided guidance to our Victorian aged care services following the enactment of

euthanasia laws in the state. The Board also approved new developments and adopted the organisation's budget.

Chair of Council and Conference President Geoff Charles thanks his fellow Council members for their contribution throughout the year.

"I commend Council members for their wisdom, and acknowledge the valuable contribution our two retiring Council members, Andi Owens and Chris Gribble have made. Your servant-hearted contributions are the strength of the Conference," Geoff said.

Board Chair Ken Ewald, acknowledged that while there have

been some challenges navigated, the Board has continued to be inspired by the work of the organisation.

"It has been a pleasure to work with my fellow Board members, Council and Executive this year to bring about many successes in the midst of new challenges from our insurers and government authorities.

"As we ponder over the year gone by, let us be thankful for the ability to manage our responsibilities for this great organisation that provides so much for thousands of people in our care throughout Queensland and Victoria," Ken said. ■

2019 MINISTERS FORUM

content | conversations | connection



Our annual Ministers Forum held 7-8 November once again engaged senior member of our affiliated churches to come together as one to discuss and dissect what it means to be a part of Churches of Christ today.

This year's event highlighted and celebrated many of the great opportunities and projects that

already exist within our churches and chaplaincy services.

In 2019, the theme for Churches of Christ in Queensland has been 'better before bigger'. International speakers Matt Bird and Alan Platt lead us through the importance of 'beginning with what is already in your hands' when it comes to transforming our communities and forwarding our mission.

Matt Bird is an international speaker, author and broadcaster. He has presented to over one million people in 30 countries, written 11 books and writes for The Times newspaper. He is Chief Executive Officer of the Cinnamon Network International, whose vision is to see communities, cities and nations transformed by the life and love of Jesus.

Alan Platt is the founder of Doxa Deo Churches, which currently serves 30,000 people across South Africa, United Kingdom, Germany and New Zealand. He is a leader of the City Changers Movement and lead architect of the Church United Program in South Florida.

Doxa Deo goes beyond having a church on a Sunday to serving and taking responsibility for their cities through the Lordship of Christ.

Their insightful commentary of Christianity in our society today left the audience energised and filled with faith-driven inspiration.

Professional development sessions fostered opportunities for growth and improvement and there was plenty of time for input, worship, discussion, stories for local churches, and a chance to laugh and connect with other ministering persons. ■



Happy new beginnings for Sunshine Coast seniors

The feedback we receive from families and residents about the wonderful impact our aged care services have on their lives and the lives of loved ones captures how a service can transform into a home and community for those we care for.



Beryl and John Jobe

We chose Little Mountain because it [is run by a] faith-based [organisation] and it is close to our family.

Both of us were unwell and we were not managing at home.

We love design of our new home, it's very modern.

We are thankful that we have made the right decision.

Robyn

I was living at Churches of Christ Care Inglewood Aged Care Service. I was very ill in hospital and needed medical care. It was recommended to me that I moved to this new place being built. Apparently it was "the place to be".

I came on open day and loved it. I still love it today. I'm happy, my family are happy. I feel safe here at Little Mountain. Staff do an amazing job.

It was meant to be. I believe that I am blessed to be here.



Benny

My daughter picked Little Mountain for me. I am very happy that she chose the right place. I'm so grateful. I feel safe. I love my room because I can look out to the trees. I love the activities. Extended family. Some people just smile.



Les and Glennis

Little Mountain was close to our home and family. We are both more than happy with our new home, the staff are wonderful and we are more than satisfied with the daily programs and activities.

Our new home at Little Mountain is all that you can wish for in your later years.

Eddie and Pixie Higgins

We were searching for a new home for my husband Eddie that would be somewhere nice for him to live but also somewhere that we could all visit and feel comfortable. We are lucky enough to live 5 minutes down the road so it was a perfect fit for us.

We were told about Churches of Christ Little Mountain by the lovely staff at Sage Age Care Advisors. So we organised a visit and we were not disappointed to find a magnificent outdoor area to wander around, with a family of kangaroos residing over the back fence.

Then when we looked around inside and found the rooms and décor a great talking point. The sensors above the



bathrooms and above the doors of all rooms in the dementia wing were also a big reason for us to choose this facility. My husband has young onset Alzheimer's and he is able to wander around the gardens freely without feeling trapped in.

Q&A

Driven to serve and protect vulnerable youth

Inspired by the work of Children, Youth and Families, *Networking* asked **Regional Manager Rachel Robinson** why she is passionate about working in child protection.

Rachel began her role with us in 2015, after working in the industry for 20 years.

Q Why is working in Children, Youth and Families important to you?

My family have a strong affiliation with Springwood Church of Christ with my grandfather Victor Parker a Church of Christ Minister from 1940 to 1980, and my brother Stephen Parker who is the Academic Coursework and Student Engagement Manager with Australian College of Ministries (ACOM). I have always had a connection with Churches of Christ in Queensland, and know my career pathway will always stay connected to my roots.

I love working with Children, Youth and Families services. Having spent the majority of my career working in government, I have loved coming over to the not-for-profit sector and seeing the amazing outcomes we can achieve for children, young people and families. Our Children, Youth and Families team

do incredible work and is comprised of passionate staff who make a difference in a very difficult field.

The biggest difference that we have been able to provide, and have built a reputation for, is following and guiding a young person through their journey into adulthood. Providing them with choices and opportunities to make their own future and not be a representation of their past or family history.

Q What inspired you to pursue a career in social work?

From a young age I have always been driven to work in an industry that served to protect vulnerable children, youth and families, and protect them from harm through prevention and intervention.

My family has shaped the person I am today, but some young people do not have that support growing up, and that's where I believed I could make a difference.



■ Rachel Robinson (right) with her brother Stephen Parker.



■ Rachel recently returned from conquering the trek to the Everest Base Camp in Nepal.

I care deeply about ensuring young people feel safe and have the opportunity to make their own choices.

Q What is the most rewarding part of being a Regional Manager?

Child protection is one of the most meaningful jobs I have done. We are able to make a fundamental difference to lives in a way that is not possible in many other jobs. Working with Children, Youth and Families has given me wonderful professional development opportunities, but it's the satisfaction of knowing I am making a difference that keeps me coming back every day.

Being in a managerial position allows me to work autonomously and within a team to introduce project work to assist young people deal with stress and stressful situations. We have introduced Adventure Therapy to work with young people to partake in outdoor activities as a way of dealing with stress. This includes participating in the Kokoda Challenge, the Brisbane to Gold Coast Cycle Challenge, and camping.

I often share my own experiences and adventures with young people for "blue sky thinking". I take part in several

marathons, and have recently returned from Nepal, where I did a 14-day trek to Everest Base Camp. This involved a lot of training and preparation, and sharing this experience has motivated one young person to accomplish this trek when they turn 18.

A highlight of my role is getting to work with a dedicated team and young people, and seeing them achieve things they never thought were possible.

Q What are some challenging moments?

A challenging part of my role is finding pathways for children and young people to connect to their culture in as many ways as possible. I've experienced and seen the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in statutory care and continuously see this systemically.

I have had the pleasure of partnering with Digi Youth Arts who worked with 11 of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people to share their experiences of being in care, and used their experience to write a play titled 'Dislocated'. The children had the opportunity to perform the play and watch adults portray their stories. That was an incredibly enriching experience for everyone involved.

Q How can we better support children and young people in care?

There is a huge need for carers to provide children and young with a place that feels like home, where they are cared for, connected to family and culture, and where they can feel safe. If you believe you can open your home to a young person find out more by talking to our staff or visit www.cofc.com.au/outofhomecare.

Seeing how you can make a difference to a child's life can be so impactful and rewarding. ■

“

A highlight of my role is getting to work with a dedicated team and young people, and seeing them achieve things they never thought were possible.

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VOICES IN ACTION

NOTHING ABOUT US, WITHOUT US 2019



Hearing the voice of young people in care



All children and young people have the right to be supported, to belong, grow, connect and thrive, and to have the best opportunity in life to be whoever they want to be.

Our Children, Youth and Families service is committed to finding different ways to really hear the voices of children and young people with a care experience.

As one of the largest providers of alternative care options for children in the statutory child protection system in Queensland, and one of the leading providers in for early childhood education, family support and transition to adulthood programs. We were proud to be the Diamond sponsor of this year's CREATE Conference, Voices in action: Nothing without us, about us.

The three day conference held at the Melbourne Zoo from 14 to 16 November, engaged young people who have a care experience, decision makers and key stakeholders in conversation about how to improve the current care sector.

"The CREATE Foundation is a peak consumer body who shares our passion to involve children and young people in

making decisions about their lives, and participation in the discussion to give them a choice in their future," Churches of Christ in Queensland's Children, Youth and Families General Manager Leanne Rutherford said.

The CREATE conference aimed to collectively enhance community awareness and reduce the stigma associated with receiving a care experience.

"We recognise the importance of engaging with young people as both partners and leaders in practice, drawing on their knowledge, experiences, strengths and resilience to shape the future of the care system and improve outcomes for children and young people.

"We want to make sure that children, young people and families are engaged, listened to, and influence service planning and delivery, ensuring that decisions are made in line with the child and young person's wishes," Leanne said.

The 2019 Voices in Action Conference explored three key issues: Transitioning from Care, Participation and Decision Making, and Complaints and Record Keeping. ■



Award winning Crows Nest housing development offers peace of mind

A Churches of Christ in Queensland housing project that supports ageing parents and their adult children living with a disability has won the 2019 Urban Development Institute of Australia (QLD) CEO's Award for Excellence.

Completed in October 2018, the \$560,000 development was constructed under the Elderly Parent Carer Innovation Initiative in partnership with the Queensland Government's Department of Communities, Disability Services and Seniors.

Acting General Manager Housing Services Alicia Follent said it was a privilege to be recognised by industry peers, though the real success lies in the project's potential to support vulnerable people and families.

"This development helps keep families together, it offers relief and peace-of-mind to ageing parents who can now receive support through affordable and appropriate housing that meets their needs, and the future needs of their adult children.

"The design optimises independence with a focus on dignity and quality of life. The layout can change to meet the needs of people living there through a variety of internal configurations," Alicia said.

The development consists of a dual key home with two bedrooms, adjoining studio apartment and a one bedroom apartment comprising open plan living areas, accessible indoor and outdoor areas, covered onsite parking, which allows for future modifications.



"When we commenced planning, research conducted indicated that while accommodation could be sourced to separately meet the needs of ageing parents and their adult children, there were few suitable developments that actually support them to stay together.

"We are hopeful that this project demonstrates to the wider industry the potential for a dedicated market that responds to lack of viable alternatives for people and families living with disability, particularly in rural and regional locations.

"There are clear social and emotional benefits to individuals and economic benefits to the community and industry with this model of flexible housing," Alicia said. ■





THE GLOBAL LEADERSHIP SUMMIT

Churches of Christ Kenmore Campus was privileged this year to host the internationally renowned Global Leadership Summit over 23-24 October.

The Global Leadership Summit contains fresh, actionable and inspiring leadership content from world-class speakers and is broadcasted each year from Willow Creek Community Church near Chicago in the US.

This year featured guest speakers from an array of backgrounds, including survivalist Bear Grylls; Co-founder and Senior Pastor Craig Groeschel from Life Church; entrepreneur and leadership coach Jo Saxton; Mayor of the City of Compton Aja Brown; former FBI negotiator Chris Voss, and a host of other leaders.

Churches of Christ is committed to the ongoing development of leaders and the Global leadership Summit is a significant event that all of our pastors and staff can access to raise the level of their leadership.

General Manager Leadership and Culture Steve Drinkall, emceed the event, said, "it was so powerful to see leaders from our churches, care services, local businesses, schools and not-for-profit providers all sitting together and eagerly seeking to grow their leadership. This is only the first of three years running this event, and the impact that it can have on our movement is immense". ■

The Global leadership Summit will be held at Kenmore Campus again on Oct 14-15 2020. Registrations have now opened, visit <https://willow.ucareapp.com/events/296/booknow>.

Coming in 2020

With the dawn of the New Year we will be preparing for the completion of major developments at Boonah, Hillcrest and Benowa. Catering for seniors in their communities, these developments form integrated communities providing the highest quality of care and support to residents.



Boonah

The redevelopment and expansion of our Fassifern Aged Care Service is on track for a mid-2020 opening.



Bongaree Apartments

In November we commenced construction on another seniors housing development as part of our successful integrated community on Bribie Island. The apartment complex will feature 83-units designed with accessibility in mind to allow residents the freedom to age-in-place.



Hillcrest Apartments

On the site of our existing Clive Burdeu Aged Care Service, Hillcrest Apartments will provide purpose built accommodation for seniors in the Logan area living in public housing to downsize from larger family homes when it opens in mid-2020.



Lady Small Haven

We are also on track to open the new retirement living complex at our Lady Small Haven site at Benowa on the Gold Coast mid-2020. This exciting development is the first stage in the redevelopment of the site. With a range of features for residents and their guests to enjoy, including clubhouse, pool and landscaped gardens, they will prove to be a popular retirement destination for Gold Coast seniors.



Bringing change together

Words by Vicki Marney, GMP Partnership Coordinator Queensland and Vanuatu

Churches of Christ in Queensland has strong links with Vanuatu, born out of the cane fields in North Queensland in the late 1800's. This relationship lives on in our local churches around the State.

Queenslanders love an adventure. Each year teams visit and support local churches and communities in many ways across Vanuatu. All who sign-up for this adventure come back with a new appreciation and baskets filled with blessings. Many say the experience has changed them forever, with their first trip not being their last.

It is not always possible for everyone to visit, but there are ways to be involved.

Sanctuary Park Church of Christ in Nambour, have been actively supporting the Bombua High School on the island of Espiritu Santo, Vanuatu, building a relationship based on our shared faith.

The Bombua High School was handed to Church of Christ Conference Vanuatu administration in late 2016. On my first visit I was asked to make a list of what the school may need. I came

away with two things on my list: prayer and a bulldozer!

Church of Christ Londua College, previously located in West Ambae, was evacuated to Bombua due to the continuing volcanic eruption on Ambae Island. It was decided to combine the two campuses, to be now known as Bombua/Londua Campus.

Student numbers have doubled to accommodate pupils from the displaced Londua College. Today the student population is approximately 200, with the majority being of pupils being boarders.

During a recent visit I was excited to take part in the Official Opening Ceremony of the Boarding Masters House. This new building was funded in partnership with Sanctuary Park Church of Christ and Global Mission Partners (GMP).

There was a celebration filled with excitement, as this building will support students boarding with an onsite Boarding Master 24/7. With the support of our churches, the school will also have a chaplain who will encourage, guide and care for the students,

particularly in healing those affected by the traumatic volcanic events on Ambae Island in the past year.

The school has a comprehensive building plan, including classrooms, sanitation and water infrastructure due for completion in early-2020.

Many who have contributed to these projects will never have the opportunity to visit. But together with our shared faith, we can bring change in Vanuatu. ■

Want to know more?
Go to www.gmp.org.au
or contact Vicki Marney
GMP Partnership
Co-ordinator Queensland
on 1800 467 222.



Jess's inspirational comeback

At 32, Jessica McDowell redefines the power of positivity following the amputation of her left leg.

Jess has always been a ray of sunshine, positively impacting those she comes into contact with, in particular, residents and staff at Fair Haven Aged Care Service in Maryborough.

On 9 October 2018, Jess had just finished work when she slipped and dislocated her left knee. A fall that caused her knee to fracture, impacting the arteries in her leg and the supply of blood to her bones.

She was airlifted to the Sunshine Coast University Hospital to undergo a series of surgeries, however doctors had no other choice but to amputate her left leg above the knee.

Admitted for over a month, Jess had regular visits from family, friends and colleagues who made the two-hour journey from her home town in Maryborough.

It was this support and the love for her job that was the driving force behind her recovery and rehabilitation journey.

As Jess continued to undergo an intense rehabilitation program, major changes were made to the accessibility of her home and car.

Unable to live at home for an extended period, Churches of Christ in Queensland provided Jess a temporary home in the independent living units at Fair Haven Retirement Village, co-located to the aged care service in Maryborough.

Living in a familiar location while her home was being modified enabled Jess to focus on her rehabilitation, embrace the changes in her life with positivity and connect with residents on a higher level.

Jess' return to work helped her overcome both physical and psychological challenges.

"I have always loved my job, and when I had my accident and was told I had to have my leg amputated, all I cared about was getting back to work," Jess said.

With the support of her mother Lyn, Fair Haven Aged Care Service Manager Cherylee Baker and the team at Churches of Christ in Queensland, Jess returned to work within four months after sustaining her injuries.

Jess receives ongoing support from Churches of Christ Care staff including residential aged care, retirement living and in-home care to assist with self-care in hospital, in her independent living unit, and upon her return home to assist with a transition to independence.

"Jess is the most positive person I have encountered. She overcame her barriers with an eagerness to re-engage with her friends, colleagues and residents, determined that she was not going to let her injury stop her from doing the things she loves most," Mrs Baker said.

Jess regularly plays indoor basketball, and joins the Maryborough Parkrun every weekend, with the goal of completing the course on two feet.



No matter if you're in a wheelchair or not, you can volunteer or even cheer people on to help them. It doesn't matter if you've only got one leg, it doesn't stop you doing anything if you've got the positive attitude of life.



■ Maryborough local Jessica McDowell has won the Injured Worker Achievement Award (return to work) at Worksafe Queensland's Safe Work and Return to Work Awards 2019.

Jess' colleagues and the residents at the aged care service continue to be inspired by the power of her positivity. Her actions and attitude are a reminder to others not take things for granted and enjoy life.

"No matter if you're in a wheelchair or not, you can volunteer or even cheer people on to help them. It doesn't matter if you've only got one leg, it doesn't stop you doing anything if you've got the positive attitude of life," Jess said.

Jess is an example of why we should celebrate life, and not let anything hold us back. ■



Community support during national disasters

Ma Ma Creek Church of Christ helps local farmers

2019 has without doubt put Queensland's resilience to the test with a series of natural disasters. Recent droughts and devastating fires have ended a year that started with flooding rains in the north.

In these times of disaster, we come together and help each other. This is the Australian way, and the Churches of Christ way.

Support for Townsville

Thank you to those who supported our 2019 North Queensland Flood Appeal. We raised over \$22,000 to provide immediate relief for flood victims as the clean-up and recovery began in local communities affected by yet another summer of devastating weather.

These funds were made available to our services and churches to directly support and assist people who have been affected by the flooding. This support allowed them to purchase essential personal items and household goods for people in the community who needed it the most, particularly those with no insurance cover or experiencing extreme hardship.

Thank you to the Stanthorpe community

Over the decades, Queensland has experienced a series of natural disasters, including devastating floods, droughts and bushfires. The current drought is affecting 66 per cent of our state.

Our services in these regional areas were affected by these disasters. Thanks to the generosity and continuous support of the local community our clients, friends, neighbours and families were resilient during these harrowing times.

Stanthorpe Aged Care Service has shared their heartfelt thanks to the Southern Downs community for their assistance during the September bushfire emergency.

"Thank you to our caring local businesses and community members,

in particular Mitre10, M & D Auto One, Rossow Fuel, Southern Downs Electrical, Vineyard Church as well as families of loved ones, staff and volunteers who have gone above and beyond to ensure our residents have felt safe and secure.

"Our gratitude also goes out to our heroic Queensland Fire and Emergency Services and volunteer firefighters who have put themselves on the frontline to battle fires blazing throughout Queensland.

"We are in awe of the many great acts of kindness, and the uplifting community spirit of Stanthorpe as we come together to ensure the wellbeing of our residents and neighbours.

"Thank you Stanthorpe!"

From Churches of Christ Care Stanthorpe Aged Care Service

Crows Nest evacuation

On 18 November, our Crows Nest Aged Care Service and Retirement Village residents were evacuated when fire threatened the town.

The local Churches of Christ in Queensland community banded together to ensure everyone's safety. Residents were relocated to services in Warwick and Toowoomba accompanied by Crows Nest staff. Our Fleet team arranged buses to ferry the evacuees, with assistance from the Queensland Ambulance Service. Community Care staff rallied to help the transition, and retirement village residents found family and friends to stay with. Additional support staff have travelled to Warwick to assist in the care of residents. Our Chaplaincy and Maintenance staff have also provided support.

Residents in our Crows Nest housing developments were safe from the threat of the fire.

Thank you to everyone who has helped during this emergency. Our prayers are with everyone impacted by the devastating fires that have impacted communities across Australia. ■

Ma Ma Creek Church of Christ members have rallied together in support of local drought-affected farmers and families in Fordsdale, Mt Whitestone, Ma Ma Creek, Winwill, Veradilla, Ropeley, and Mt Sylvia.

Vegetable hampers and boxes filled with goodies were donated and distributed to families following the Gattton Church's harvest service.

The service was joined by visiting Toowoomba Male Voice Choir who complemented each hamper with a financial donation.

Ma Ma Creek Church of Christ, church elder Peter Metcalf was grateful for the generous donations and gave thanks to those in the church community for their coordinated effort to produce and distribute the hampers to local farmers and families.

"As a church we saw the need in our local area to reach out to those who were suffering from the severe drought conditions," Mr Metcalf said.

The care packages and generous donations were received by grateful hands and allowed members of the community to come together and support each other during trying times. ■



■ Peter Metcalf (left) accepting donation from the Toowoomba Male Voice Choir.

“ Jesus said

My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one will snatch them out of my hand. ”

John 10:27-28

The Lost Sheep

From Seniors Chaplain Jane Ott, Toowoomba

The role of a Senior's Chaplain has many and varied functions in assisting residents with their spiritual needs. From chapel services, communion, hymn singing sessions, Bible reading and study, chatter groups, prayers, one-on-one pastoral care conversations, and training of volunteer Pastoral Carers. I recently had the absolute privilege and pleasure of conducting the Baptism of Mr Douglas Little (94 years old), resident at Toowoomba Aged Care Service. I share his story with permission.

During his long life, Douglas identified with the Church of England, and was fortunate to have been treated very kindly by the order's nuns who cared for him as a child in the orphanage.

Douglas said he had felt like a lost sheep who has been found by Jesus the 'Shepherd'. Being separated from extended family and not knowing the stories of his early childhood he could not recall if he had ever been baptised. Douglas told me he wanted to be sure by being baptised now to acknowledge his faith in Jesus Christ as his Lord.

Together we reflected on the 23rd Psalm 'The Lord is My Shepherd'.

On the day of his baptism, Douglas' loving wife Joan was with him to share in the special occasion, along with a couple of special staff members and fellow residents who share his Christian faith.

There was a real excitement as we gathered in his small room and Douglas was beaming. We all laughed and then cried with joy as the water splashed over him.

Douglas proudly showed everyone his Certificate of Baptism pinned to his wall and shared a box of chocolates with

everyone gathered. He and his family are delighted he has peace of mind in these later years. Wife Joan said "I can see the peace it has given him and it shows in his calmer behaviour."

By focusing on Douglas and his personal desires, rather than his ailments, it was a wonderful and enriching experience for not only him, but his wife, staff and residents at the service, and myself. ■

Editors note: Douglas Little sadly passed away on 3 October 2019. May he rest in peace.

The everyday danger of gathering water

By Global Mission Partners



In rural Zimbabwe, getting water isn't easy. People living in one village walk seven kilometres to the Ngezi River to fetch water. The water in the river is not clean, but it is the only source available. They fill heavy 20 litre buckets to carry back home.

Marisa has grown up with this hazardous walk as a part of her everyday life. But now that she is older, her age has made the walk a struggle. When she makes the long journey, she can feel pain in her chest. She can only manage to carry five litres of water back with her. She can't manage the trip any longer.

She has no choice but to send her children down to the river. While they are gone, Marisa is anxious. She is afraid that they may not come back alive. Along the walk, there are many wild animals they could encounter, and the river is home to crocodiles and

hippos. This journey to the river must be made every day.

Last year, Marisa became sick. She was rushed to the hospital and was told she had cholera, which was caused from drinking river water. The doctors told her that she should not drink the water without boiling it first. Her worries grew – she was scared that her children would be so thirsty that they would not wait to boil the water. She was scared that they would get sick, and not be as lucky as she was to recover.

But now, Marisa's fears are being eased. Just 500 metres from her home, a borehole has been drilled. There will be safe, clean drinking water for her community. She smiles brightly as she says, "We are very happy and thankful that we have clean drinking water which will also be enjoyed by our grandchildren."

"Even if I send my grandkids with the cart as they used to, I can get more water easily," she says. "And even start a small vegetable garden. I will not starve again as we now have water on our doorstep."

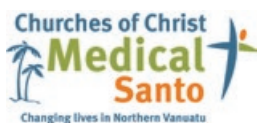
The borehole is being dug because generous people like you have supported Safe Water September. Because of the money raised, Showers of Blessings have been able to provide seven boreholes for villages like Marisa's. Statistics show that one in nine people still live without access to safe water close to home (WHO, 2017). We want those people's lives to be changed like Marisa's was.

"As we speak, I have even sent my grandchildren to go and get a bucket," she says with a smile. "So we can be first to taste the water." ■



Faith in the third world

By Executive Manager –
Medical Santo, Lyn Cox



How you can help?

Donate today to support the work of Churches of Christ Medical Santo
Call 1800 600 900
visit www.cofc.com.au/give or
email give@medicalsanto.com

It is easy to have faith when you live in Australia. We have faith in our car to get us from A to B, knowing that it has been serviced and there is fuel readily available, and a great road to drive on. Likewise, we have faith that when we are in need of urgent medical attention we can access reliable medical care close to home or even in coming to our house in the middle of the night.

But what if there was only a small possibility of a doctor being available? Would you have faith to make that phone call or trip to the medical centre along an unmarked dirt road and hope that they would be able help you, that the light would be on and the door unlocked?

Every day, patients of Medical Santo exhibit this faith, making the call late at night and during the day, hoping, praying and having faith that their calls will be answered.

Doctors from all around the world also take that step of faith when they board the plane to Vanuatu, set to volunteer at a small medical centre on a tiny island in the Pacific Ocean, and in doing so help transform the lives of its people.

Faith is confidence or trust in a particular person, thing or concept. Every day patients and volunteers make that step to trust and have faith in Medical Santo and its team.

Over and over again we see faith and hope working hand-in-hand as patients put their lives into an unknown doctor's hands. They have shown faith and been given hope when at times everything around them seems hopeless.

It could be the young women dying of cancer, her family reaches out in faith that she may be healed, and while this is unlikely, they are given hope that she may be comforted and die with dignity.



The older gentleman who has had a stroke puts faith in the community-based inclusive development worker to show him a better way to move around and meet life's new challenges.

The seriously ill mum suffering from fish poisoning whose family takes her to Medical Santo with unequivocal faith that she will be physically healed.

Faith is observed in action over and over again as patients trust Medical Santo to meet their needs today and in the future as we continue to change lives in Northern Vanuatu by bringing the light of Christ into these communities. ■

The WAY forward

THE COFC WAY.



In September we launched the roadmap for the next season of our journey—our *Strategic Plan 2019-24*.

This plan will guide us through the next five years with our revised vision and values and a range of deliverables set to help us on our way.

The plan also includes our newly articulated Churches of Christ Way (CofC Way), an overall expression of who we are as an organisation and a movement.

But what does it really mean?

Chief Executive Officer Gary Edwards said, “it is a demonstration of who we are in Churches of Christ in Queensland and the values and actions we hold dear across all that we do.”

The five elements of the CofCWay are:

Welcome

We invite people into what we are doing

Wellbeing

We help people live life to the full

Home

We help people find home

Community

We help communities build community

Faith

We come in faith

“We truly want to be about welcome, wellbeing, home, community and faith, and seek to embody these at all times, in all situations and where ever we are,” Gary said.

“While we have our values, vision and mission, which guide all of our activities and interactions, the CofC Way guides what our churches and services are about and what they do for and in their communities to bring the light of Christ,” Gary said.

Each of our Kingdom access places, our churches, services and offices, could be enacting one or more, or even all, of these in their daily work.

“I call on you, no matter if you are in a church, one of our services, or in our community, to think about how you can embed these postures in your daily interactions and work. Help us demonstrate what it means to be a part of Churches of Christ.” ■

Gerry's family recognised for World War II heroism

Churches of Christ Care Sanctuary Park Retirement Community resident, Gerry Zwart, was honoured

to receive, posthumously, the Righteous Among the Nations Award in September in recognition of his parents, Marinus and Marie Josepha Zwart's extraordinary act of heroism during World War II.

Gerry Zwart still remembers the Nazi raids during World War II, when his parents gave sanctuary to two young Jewish girls who hid under the floorboards of his family home.

Gerry was 16 years old at the time, and the youngest of 12 children, grew up in the small village of Blaricum Holland. His family's three-storey home became a "safe house" with anywhere between "two and five" Jewish people hiding there, along with members of the Dutch resistance on the run.

When accepting the award, Gerry remarked his parents never "set out to be heroes". "In those days, if someone was in trouble, you would help them out and that is all there was to it," he said.

In 1941, Marinus and Marie took in their first Jewish teenage girl, Bea, and soon after was joined by Bela.

"For four or five years when we were occupied by the Germans, we had anything from two to five Jewish people hiding in our house.

"Similar to Ann Frank's house, we had a double wall in one of the bedrooms



where the Jews would sleep at night. It was only small but there would be anything up to four or five people sleeping in there on mattresses on the floor," Gerry said.

The Zwart's neighbours were well aware of their home as a safe house for Jewish people and members of the Dutch resistance to dive in and out.

"The neighbours knew what we were doing – we had to let them in on it – but that made it so much safer because you had these people around you keeping an eye out.

"If you came to our door and rang the doorbell, everyone would scamper, but if you rang with a particular signal we had, we would open the door and let you in."

During that time there were food shortages, and as a result the Zwart family had to "beg, borrow and steal" so that everyone could eat. Both Bea and Bela were treated as part of

the family, with them obtaining fake identification cards.

One day the German army surrounded Blaricum and raided each house looking for Jews. Both girls hid under the floorboards for twelve hours, with only a bottle of water and a sandwich to sustain them.

Marinus and Marie's selfless act of bravery of hiding Jewish citizens was immensely dangerous.

Bela remained in touch with the Zwart's after the war, in a recorded tribute from her home in Israel, now 92, said she owed her life to the family.

"Gerry, I want to thank you and your family very much for saving me and I'm very happy that Yad Vashem recognises your parents as Righteous Among the Nations," she said.

The Righteous Among the Nations Award is the highest honour the state of Israel can bestow to recognise the immense sacrifice and bravery of those who rescued Jews during the Holocaust.

Rescue took many forms and the Righteous came from different nations, religions and walks of life. What they had in common was that they protected their Jewish neighbours at a time when hostility and indifference prevailed.

Their names have been added to the Wall of Honour in the Garden of the Righteous in Jerusalem and they have been made Commemorative Citizens of Israel. ■



A Christmas test of Faith

A Christmas reflection by General Manager Church
and Community Engagement Tim McMEnamin.



Expressions of my faith

Faith is a many blessed thing to understand and define. It is even more challenging to live out, particularly when you place your faith (trust) in the creator of the universe and all that he has said and done.

The fact is we are all people of faith! Yep you are! You get in a plane, you trust the pilot knows something about taking off and landing, you trust that he knows where he is going and you hope to heaven he can get you there once you leave the terminal. Nice name for the place you start a journey!

You also put your faith in the doctor when you check in with a lump, a test or a check-up. Since turning 50, I understand what this code word for an operation I had heard from senior citizens was: A "procedure". I tell you I put faith in the guy who had the knife in his hand, whose name I didn't know, and qualifications I have never seen, to take large amounts of flesh out of my body and watch me bleed in his office. I tell you faith (trust in God, a person or a process) is the way you live every day. Throw God in the equation and you multiply complexity expediently.

The faith of Mary and Joseph

There was a young lady in Nazareth who had a conversation with a celestial being named Gabriel, who announced to her that she would conceive of a child who would be a King over all creation. Can you imagine that being said to you?

Just to complicate the deal, Mary would have to carry the child to full term and explain to her husband and family she had no help from a man.

Pause there!

Mary, do you trust GOD to do this? Slight complication in this, Joseph (her husband to be), in their culture, could have Mary stoned for her crime of infidelity. Instead, Joseph chose

We are Churches of Christ and as part of the way we do life we 'come with faith'.

to quietly divorce her, but after God showed up in his dream, he decided to marry her.

Joseph, do you trust God?

The shame and humiliation factor in bearing this is unbelievable in the ancient near-eastern cultures. Joseph then has to take heavily pregnant Mary to his place of birth for the census of Caesar who is looking for a tax benefit from the empire.

It was a 90 kilometre walk for Joseph and Mary. I know you want the little donkey to do the hard work and carry Mary, but the fact is they couldn't afford one as only the rich had them. On arrival the couple had to lodge with family. The word 'inn' means 'house', probably in the lowset part of a three tier structure where animals eat. So the food trough where the new King lay his head is an accurate description of the manger scene.

Question to Jesus, Mary and Joseph, do you trust God?

Not long after the shepherds and cattle had done the singing and lowing, the tetrarch (or governor of the municipality of Israel) ordered all babies under two years old to be slain. In other words Herod was put off by a King being announced by the Jews so he took action and wiped out the male children (probably about 400 children over night). The new family has to leg it to Egypt where the Jews have been slaves for 400 years (in another part of the story we won't get into now).

How are your levels of trust now guys? Feeling affirmed and loved?

Feeling like utopia has broken out? Feeling like God is all over this journey with great blessing?

Christmas, if it is anything in the biblical sense, is a story of trust in God with an all in approach to trusting the calling of this mysterious creator and being faithful with it and the tasks being called for by Him.

God called Mary to bear a King. God called Joseph to protect and be husband Mary and a father Jesus. God called Jesus to be the Messiah. Everything around them said otherwise, yet they trusted God with all their being and they delivered. Yes it's complex, difficult and ambiguous. It is also filled with relational fidelity and huge layers of faith. The outcome of this faith is called the Kingdom of God where all who trust Christ enjoy the privilege of his love and grace. Faith is nothing short of throwing your lot in with Christ and walking the next step of your calling in every context. We are Churches of Christ and as part of the way we do life we 'come with faith'.

Place faith at the centre of Christmas

Everyone lives with faith. Can I ask you to consider placing at the centre of your Christmas and maybe in the centre of your life be the risen King, Jesus Christ.

Life may not get any less difficult but it will have a massive foundation to stand on. Living with faith in Christ is a many blessed thing for sure, I couldn't conceive of a life without him. I trust this Christmas will be filled with wonder and awe at the real story of how Christ came into the world and the wonder of you being here too.

We all live with faith, I believe it's 'in who' that matters.

Blessings

Tim McMenamin

{ People & Events }

in our communities



Helping hands for Mums and Bubs

Our St James Retirement Village residents gave a helping hand to mums and bubs at Townsville Hospital and Health Services. Residents donated 12 maternity bags filled with beautiful handmade items to share love and joy with new mothers.



Chesterville Retirement Village welcomes new Service Manager

New Chesterville Retirement Village Manager, Esmat Osmani, has shown off his skills at carpet bowls, impressing residents during a social club event.



Kenmore Market Day

Kenmore Campus held its annual community Market Day to raise much needed funds for the CYCLE (Child, Youth Centre for Learning and Employment) program. The markets had a variety of options for sale including baked treats, flowers, carnival food and games, and other knick knacks.



Celebrating Queensland Seniors

From chamber concerts to morning tea, seniors across Queensland were celebrated and recognised for their contribution. Pictured is leading Australian chamber ensemble Southern Cross Soloists, hosted by our Warwick, Little Mountain and Kenmore campuses. The crowd-pleasing musicians performed much-loved classics and virtuosic masterpieces for the community to enjoy.



Brig-O-Doon Aged Care Service art wall

Residents took paint to a blank wall to create a family tree of all residents and staff.



Community Care joins Walk With Me event

Community Care took part in Moreton Bay Dementia Alliance 'Walk With Me' event during Dementia Action Week in September. They cheered on 400 community members who walked 3kms as a symbol of the community's aim to create a dementia-friendly Redcliffe and Moreton Bay. MP Luke Howarth dropped by the Churches of Christ Care information stand.



Connect Kids Carnival

Our Children, Youth and Families team in Maryborough joined Act for Kids and the wider community for Child Protection Week. The Connect Kids Carnival provided families and their children access to many local support services and created awareness that protecting children is everybody's business.



Melbourne Cup Tour

Residents at our Arcadia Aged Care Service in North Essendon, Melbourne, experienced the magic of the Melbourne Cup when the coveted trophy visited the service as part of the 17th annual Lexus Melbourne Cup Tour. Residents and staff dressed up for the occasion and had the chance to have their photo taken with the \$200,000 trophy.



Little Mountain movie day

Residents at our Little Mountain Campus gave extra flare to their movie day with a Banjo Paterson poetry reading and then watched all-time favourite 'The Man from Snowy River.'

Grand Champion Samford and District Show

We come across some very talented people. Our resident Sylvia was awarded Grand Champion 2019 at the Samford and District show and has been cross-stitching since she was six!



Congrats to our Mount Isa team!

Congratulations to our Mount Isa Children, Youth and Families team for taking home TWO awards at Mount Isa's 6th Annual Community Services Ball! The service was recognised for their Excellence in Children, Youth and Families Service Delivery, and our Fostering Team Leader Jules Davey was the recipient of the Community Services Leader of the Year Award. We are incredibly proud of our dedicated team for their contribution to improve the lives of children, young people and families.



Adventures in Leadership final lunch for the year

Kenmore Campus held the final Adventures in Leadership lunch for 2019, with Ben Bolt, Founder and CEO of Ingenious Indigenous Solutions as key speaker. The presentation provided insight to our aspiring leaders on how to travel a journey into leadership by being open to and accepting change.



Changing the practice of Ageing presentation

Churches of Christ seniors services had the pleasure of attending one of three 'Changing the practice of Ageing' presentations by PK Beville (pictured). PK Beville is one of America's leading dementia advocates and educators, and is the founder of the ground-breaking Virtual Dementia Tour™. Attendees were inspired by her vision to break down the stigma faced by people living with a diagnosis of dementia and how we can support them to experience engaging and rewarding lives.



DigiAsk brings tech and support to West End

Each fortnight, the DigiAsk van visits Yumba Hostel in Brisbane's West End. Yumba Hostel is part of the Aboriginal Hostels Limited group of hostels and offers temporary accommodation. Residents do not have access to wifi, so the DigiVan's free wifi is very popular, alongside access to technical support, and printing, scanning and copying facilities. Staff from the Fortitude Valley Housing Service Centre have also been accompanying the van visits to provide housing focussed support to the hostel's residents.



Diamond days

August 15 was a special day for Regency Park Retirement Village residents Bruce and Judy Lane – it marked a wonderful 60 years as a married couple.



■ Bruce and Judy on their wedding day.

The couple, who met at Warwick State High School, married in 1959 at St Mary's Catholic Church. After spending most of their married life travelling Queensland, they returned to their roots and retired to a property in Warwick.

When the workload of a large house and garden became too much to manage, Bruce and Judy moved into Churches of Christ Care Regency Park Retirement Village.

Community spirit

The couple are popular members of their retirement village community. Bruce provides pastoral care at the residential aged care service, part of the integrated Warwick campus, while Judy participated in our Shine Women program.

On their anniversary, they were joined by their dear friends and family at Regency Park to celebrate their 60-year achievement. When asked the 'secret' to a lasting marriage, Bruce

and Judy wholeheartedly agreed that grace and perseverance sum up their life together.

"And family and friends," they added.

Being among friends

Regency Park is a close-knit community, where everyone is welcome to take part in some – or all – of the village activities. These include fitness classes, water aerobics, indoor bowls, art classes, movie club, organised social activities and more.

It offers the best of country living with all the modern amenities, including a heated swimming pool and spa, the newly built clubhouse featuring a lounge, billiards table and fireplace, and beautiful landscaped grounds.

The village has a wide range of lifestyle options, with personally tailored care and support packages and community-based aged care options available on site to meet residents' needs as they change over time. ■

{ Events }

Find us on 

December

25 DECEMBER

Christmas Day

26 DECEMBER

Boxing Day

January

1 JANUARY

New Year's Day

13-17 JANUARY

FUSE Camp

26 JANUARY

Australia Day

February

11 FEBRUARY

Safer Internet Day

March

8 MARCH

International Women's Day

21 MARCH

Harmony Day

April

1-9 APRIL

Queensland Youth Week

7 APRIL

World Health Day

10 APRIL

Good Friday

12 APRIL

Easter Sunday

25 APRIL

ANZAC Day

May

1-31 MAY

Domestic and Family Violence
Prevention Month

18-24 MAY

National Volunteers Week

26 MAY

National Sorry Day

27 MAY-3 JUNE

National Reconciliation Week

June

5 JUNE

World Environment Day

15-21 JUNE

Men's Health Week

John's new lease on life

In 2008, John suffered a stroke and spent the next nine years living in a nursing home in Dalby, on the Darling Downs, despite being decades younger than his fellow residents.

But in April 2018, Churches of Christ Housing Services was able to provide John a more appropriate home that not only meets his physical needs, but allows him to exercise independence and pursue his passions.

Our Lee Court development in Crows Nest (40km north of Toowoomba), allows up to three people living with a disability to share a house, with accommodation also available for an on-site carer. It provides appropriate, accessible accommodation for people, like John, who due to their disability would otherwise be forced to live in

an aged care setting. The home fosters the independence its residents crave, while ensuring care and safety for residents.

Since moving in John has made many local friends, he likes to visit the local hotel and each week meets the other members down at the Crows Nest Mens' Shed.

John is an avid woodworker, and with the support of his carers he has transformed part of the garage at Lee Court with workbenches to form a workshop where he busily builds birdhouses to sell for \$20 each.

John receives in-home care from a local specialty support organisation and enjoys the independence this brings. He is able to go shopping for his own food and cook his own meals, something



■ John enjoys having the space to practice his woodwork skills and create lovely little birdhouses.

that was not an option when living in the aged care facility. As a regular visitor to Lee Court, John's sister has seen the improvement in his life since he has moved into his new home. ■

Bringing the light of Christ
into communities



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