

Important Dates

Date	Event	Venue
01 - 05 October	Christian Life Week (CLW Orange) - <i>The Quest</i>	Tandara Lutheran Camp Halls Gap
02 - 07 October	National Convention of Synod, Rosehill Gardens NSW. For more information see the Convention website convention2018.lca.org.au/ Please note that due to Convention and CLW the Office will not be staffed during this week An emergency contact number will be supplied if you call District Office	
09 October	Friends of Lutheran Archives AGM and activities	Various including Calvary LC Greensborough
19—21 October	Games and Cards Camp	Tandara Lutheran Camp Halls Gap
14 October	Professional Standards Training session 1 of 2	St John's LC Southgate
21 October	Professional Standards Training session 2 of 2	St John's LC Southgate
28 October	40th Anniversary of the Dedication of Calvary LC Greensborough	Calvary Lutheran Church Greensborough
28 October	Installation of Pastor Carl Thiele	St Paul's Lutheran Church Nhill
31 October	Mission Stimulus Grant Applications due in . See more below Imagine what your church could achieve with \$25,000 for mission	
05 - 06 November	District Office closed staff leave and Melbourne Cup Day	
11 November	Installation of Pastor Levi Graham	St Paul's Lutheran Church Natimuk
For more information on these events please go to the District website vic.lca.org.au/news-and-events/coming-events		

Mission Stimulus Grant

Imagine what your congregation could achieve with \$25,000 in Mission.

The Mission Stimulus Grant aims to enable Congregations to set aside financial worries and focus on exploring new and innovative ways of connecting with their local communities through mission and outreach.

The grant is open for applications from all Vic/Tas congregations and parishes as well as to collaborative projects between congregations and parishes. The brochure and application form are available on the District website at the link

vic.lca.org.au/mission-and-ministry/congregational-support-2/

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To submit items for District Voices or eNews please email Kate by the 20th of the month
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District Voices

News from the Vic/Tas District October 2018



Celebrating 70 Years

On Sunday 26th August 2018, St Matthew's Lutheran Church celebrated our 70th Anniversary. With over 160 people attending our worship service there was no standing room left in the church. One of the highlights was the Sunshine Christian School choir singing several beautiful songs. Some of the previous ministers of St Matthew's joined our current minister Sam Davis serving Holy Communion that made this a very special service for all. The service was followed by a buffet lunch where everyone was able to catch up and celebrate the Anniversary.

Words and photo from Vanessa Williams, member



Rev. Ed Koch em., Rev. Sam Davis and Rev. Cecil Schmalkuche em.

The 70th anniversary gave opportunity for reflection on the past, present and future mission and ministry of St Matthew

- St Matthews is known and respected for outreach to and acceptance of the disadvantaged and marginalised including those at risk of homelessness, and migrants.
- The Congregation's mission statement is **God Cares, We care**. We are a home for the homeless.
- Sustaining our unity and identity as a multicultural church in mission.
- Celebrating our humble, yet powerful ministry. A messy church on the messy edge of mission, gathering all sorts of people together in the name of Christ: through the ministry of the Word, Baptism, services with Holy Communion - and service opportunities.
- Encouraging ongoing personal witness and service, connection and involvement with parish ministries of Open House, Sunshine Christian School, Mara and Hospital Ministry etc.

From Rev. Sam Davis

We are small and not overly gifted with money, resources or large numbers of people to call on when we need to get things done. I have recently begun to understand how this can be seen as a blessing. We find it hard to plan too far ahead or to get too far ahead of ourselves. This makes it much easier to see God at work in what we do and means there is little danger that we can get too proud of what we have achieved. We constantly need to ask God to guide us in where we should go and what is important for us to be doing. In some ways this takes pressure off of us. If good things happens we know God is at work.

From Ruth Borchert, Deaconess

From the Pastor for Congregational Support

God is providing us with wonderful new opportunities to share in cross-cultural ministry and mission. In 2016 Victoria led the nation in population growth: 127,500 people arrived, and the state population reached 6.1 million (ABS figures). This figure included 65,000 people from overseas. Approximately 40 per cent of residents in Melbourne are foreign-born.



In Acts chapter 11 we are told how the gospel was shared across cultural boundaries. In Antioch, the third largest city in the ancient world (with a population perhaps as large as 500,000 persons!) some of the early believers "began to speak to Greeks also, telling them the good news about the Lord Jesus. 21 The Lord's hand was with them, and a great number of people believed and turned to the Lord." (Acts 11:20&21).

The 'mother church' in Jerusalem hears of this and sends Barnabas to encourage the new believers. He recruits Saul "and for a whole year [they] met with the church and taught great numbers of people. The disciples were called Christians first at Antioch." (Acts 11:26).

History shows that the new church at Antioch would eventually be the 'sending church' for Paul and Barnabas and other teams of missionaries. God would use them to cross further cultural divides, sharing the gospel as they went.

Who is arriving in your local community? From what culture do they hail from? How might God be inviting you to reach out to them? It can start with a greeting and a smile, a word of welcome and a gesture of practical assistance. The good news is that God is in the habit of crossing cultures with his good news. He is inviting us to share in this joy filled task.

Rev Brett Kennett
Pastor for Congregational Support

Pastor Brett is a consultant to the LCA Cross Cultural Ministry Committee

When we use the word 'mission' we mean that just as God sent Jesus to bring forgiveness of sin, and salvation to our world, so he sends us to bring this good news to people everywhere.



Find out more about Cross Cultural Ministry and the upcoming **Many Cultures One Faith** Conference 01-02 March 2019

lca.org.au/departments/local-mission/cross-cultural-ministry/

CROSS-CULTURAL MINISTRY
CONFERENCE

Many Cultures One Faith

On the 01-02 March 2019 the Board for Local Mission will hold the inaugural **Cross Cultural Ministry Conference** in Melbourne. Erin Grainger answers questions on Cross Cultural Ministry below.

Why is Cross Cultural Ministry important even when my congregation is mostly mono cultural?

The simple answer to this is that Christianity IS cross-cultural.

I like to think of this by imagining a big family with lots of kids, parents, aunts and uncles and cousins. Imagine if there were twins in that family who had been brought up away from the rest of the family. What if those twins later found they had more family but never got to know them because they were afraid of this different experience of family? How much would they miss out on knowing and experiencing the reality of their place in something bigger? As Lutherans we must recognise that in our communities we are those twins with our similar heritages and common sort of stories and histories - but that in the family of God our brothers and sisters are from many Cultures, diverse and different!. The experiences, journeys and learning of others are relevant to us - in them we experience a bigger understanding of what it is to be the family of God.

What have you learnt through your engagement in Cross Cultural Ministry?

It's great fun to be curious! You will be surprised and stretched by people who understand things and have experiences so different to yours that new perspectives open up. I remember saying to one friend who had left Rwanda after genocide at age 10, alone. "You are so enthusiastic about the opportunities here in Australia! - it doesn't bother you that it is so hard for you work out how to do things! You just try!" He responded in laughter and said "I am here. Why wouldn't I try everything? Nothing bad can happen to me that hasn't already!" Suddenly I understood Paul better - the joy of knowing nothing can separate you from the love of God causes you to be able to live freely and joyfully and to try new things!

What has been one of the things you have most enjoyed in your involvement with Cross Cultural Ministry?

Other flavours!! I experience shades of God I would never have glimpsed without others who know him differently and express him differently to me. It's like the excitement of travelling new countries and culture. New landscapes! Air that smells heavier! I realise over and over that God is bigger than the one of just my everyday life. And I am grateful that I meet God both in familiar, quiet and comfortable places and in unexpected ways and places. It is so great to know that God is there with me in both.

That and the food! I can't go past a Lebanese sandwich with felafels and pink pickles, or the 33 layers of Greek Easter baklava that recall the 33 years Jesus was in ministry, not to mention moon cakes, red bean buns, chicken lemon and egg soup...

Erin is the District Congregational Support Facilitator and a member of the African and Migrant Ministry Reference Group (AMMRG)