

# LUTHERAN LOYALTY

## August 1914: Lutheran Responses to the Outbreak of War

*This year Australians and New Zealanders are commemorating the ill-fated landing of our troops at Gallipoli a century ago. Lois Zweck, on behalf of Lutheran Archives, has collected from church and regional papers the responses of Lutherans to the announcement of war.*

When Britain declared war on Germany on 5 August 1914, Australian Lutherans found themselves confronted with a dilemma. Although by then the overwhelming majority of them were Australian-born, the church was commonly perceived to be 'the German Church', with most pastors born and trained in Germany and most worship services and congregational life conducted in German. There were nine Lutheran synods in Australia, as well as one unaffiliated New Zealand synod and several independent pastors:

- the Evangelical Lutheran Synod in Australia (ELSA) in South Australia (including Western Australia), Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland, with the Concordia Conference in NZ
- the Immanuel Synod in South Australia and the German and Scandinavian Synod in Queensland linked within the Kirchenbund ('Federation of Churches')
- the General Synod, combining the Victoria Synod and the Immanuel aaG ('on the Old Basis') in South Australia and the Lutheran Synod of Queensland
- the Australian District of the Ohio Synod, and
- the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Australasia, affiliated with the Prussian State Church.

The major synods – and the ELSA in particular – acted quickly to assure the Australian government and people of their 'unswerving loyalty' to the British Empire and the Commonwealth of Australia. Church leaders dispatched letters to the Governor-General, state governors and premiers as well as to the press, and held meetings at parish level, reporting their resolutions to the local papers. These reports were often picked up by the local press in other areas, so Lutheran expressions of loyalty to Britain received broad coverage and generally favourable comment throughout the country.

### EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD OF AUSTRALIA

The ELSA (later ELCA, with 'Church' replacing 'Synod') was the largest single synod, and in a sense the least German. In South Australia, for example, only ten of the 30 pastors in 1914 were German born and trained, the remainder being Australians or Americans and trained in Australia or America. Of the pastors quoted in the articles below, Nichterlein and Rudolph were Australian graduates of Concordia Seminary in Murtoa and Adelaide; Brauer, Georg and Darsow were Australians trained in the United States; Nickel (German-born), Kriewaldt and Janzow were Americans; and Peters and Wiese were Germans trained at Hermannsburg.

Already in 1913 the synod began publishing *The Australian Lutheran*, the first English-language Lutheran paper in the country, edited by Pastor Alfred Brauer. This prayer for peace appeared in its August issue, which went to print after hostilities had commenced but before Britain had entered the war. The official publication of the ELSA, *Der Lutherische Kirchenbote für Australien* ('The Church Messenger'), published the official statement of the synod president and editor, Pastor Theodor Nickel, in its second issue for August.

**THE AUSTRALIAN LUTHERAN** August 1914, p7

### A Collect for Peace and Quietness

*O God, who art the author of peace and the lover of concord, in knowledge of whom standeth our eternal life, whose service is perfect freedom; we humbly confess unto thee that by our evil doings and continual disobedience we have deserved Thy chastisements; but we earnestly beseech Thee, for Thy name's sake to spare and succor Thy suffering people, that Thy word may be declared faithfully and without hindrance, and that we, amending our sinful lives and serving Thee with a quiet mind, may enjoy peace and quietness all the days of our life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

Never in the history of their country have Australians had greater reason for praying for peace and quietness than at the present moment. A war, the potentialities of which are staggering humanity, is threatening the world. The situation is particularly cruel for citizens of German nationality or extraction. The thought that the Empire of which we are citizens should be involved in a war with the nation from which we have sprung is a terrible one.

Apart from all self-interests – it is a matter of our own hearths and homes – we of course know where our duty lies. While our hearts ache on account of the calamity threatening the land of our fathers – the mighty Russian Colossus attacking from the east, France from the west, and possibly England from the north – we know it is our duty to remain loyal to the land of our birth or adoption, where we enjoy privileges and benefits denied in the Fatherland. Holy Scripture says: 'Let every soul be subject to the higher powers' (Rom 13,1). The 'higher powers' under which we live is of course the British Government. Let us pray with our whole hearts that the hostilities commenced may be speedily ended and peace restored. As Christians, let us also not forget that war is frequently a rod of chastisement in the hand of God for humbling individuals and nations.

This is indeed a time for earnest heart-searching. Have we Lutherans of German extraction, who feel the position most keenly, not deserved chastisement and fatherly correction? Have we not deserved the punishment of God by our non-appreciation of the blessings of peace and liberty? By our ingratitude, contempt of the word of God, worldliness, pride, avarice, sinful trust in man and earthly things, selfishness, in short by our many sins of commission and omission? Let us acknowledge our transgressions and take refuge in the unfathomable grace and mercy of God, imploring God not to deal with us after our sins nor to reward us according to our iniquities.

'Return, thou back-sliding Israel, saith the Lord, and I will not cause mine anger to fall upon you, for I am merciful, saith the Lord, and I will not keep anger forever. Only acknowledge thine iniquity, that thou hast transgressed against the Lord, thy God' (Jeremiah 3: 12).

**KIRCHENBOTE** 20 August 1914, p133

'From war and bloodshed, dear Lord, preserve us.'

'Render unto Caesar what is Caesar's and to God what is God's.'

The church of God has the promise that the gates of Hell will not prevail against it.

This grave time calls us to repentance and compels us to prayer. As subjects of the British monarchy, as citizens of this land, and above all as Lutheran Christians we are obliged and prepared to keep the oath of loyalty we have sworn to our King and the government of our land.

As soon as it became known that England had declared war against Germany, the following dispatch was sent by the undersigned to the Governor General in Melbourne:—

*Whereas war has been declared to Germany by Great Britain, as President of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod in Australia incorporated, comprising the congregations in South Australia, Victoria, Western Australia, Queensland, and New South Wales, I beg to assure your Excellency of the true loyalty of all the members of our church. Although we deeply deplore that Great Britain has been compelled to declare war against Germany, the land of our fathers, we are well aware of our duty as British subjects, and shall always be willing to defend the honour of our beloved King and of our dear country with goods and chattels, body, and life.*

*I am, your Excellency's obedient servant,  
T. Nickel.*

His Excellency has replied:—

*Deeply gratified and touched by your message of loyal devotion to King and country in the hour of trial, which finds you standing, in His Majesty's words, 'united, calm, resolute, trusting in God'.*

*R. M. Ferguson.*

**THE REGISTER** Adelaide, Wednesday 12 August 1914

#### **Our Lutheran Subjects.**

#### **Expressions of Loyalty.**

An outstanding feature of the present European crisis, from an Australian point of view, is the unswerving loyalty to the British flag which has been shown by the German subjects of the King in this country. Enthusiastic meetings were held last week at Lyndoch and Rosenthal by Lutheran congregations, the members of which are of German descent, but, with a few exceptions, Australian-born. The minister (Pastor J. Georg), addressing the meetings, said that all present deeply regretted the turn of events in Europe, but being true subjects of the British Crown, they fully grasped their divine obligation to honour, serve, and obey their King and his Government.

The speaker also recalled to the minds of his audience the manifold blessings which had been enjoyed by the Lutheran Church from its first beginnings in Australia. It was the British Government which, about a century ago, opened its doors to those persecuted in Germany on account of their faith. It was under the British flag they had enjoyed religious liberty and had been able to prosper in their earthly callings.

The British Government could therefore rest assured that true Lutherans would not forget the just and liberal treatment they had received at its hands. He felt convinced that each member present would show his gratitude by willingly and faithfully fulfilling his duties and obligations to his beloved Sovereign and country, by loyally supporting and assisting, as much as lay within his power and means, the Government in the present crisis. The meetings passed the following resolution:—

***We do hereby declare that we, being lovers and advocates of peace, are nevertheless fully aware of our duties and obligations towards our Sovereign King George V., and our beloved country, and that we, as true Australians, express our undivided loyalty to our King and his Government. Furthermore, we, as loyal subjects of the British Crown, are willing to make all the sacrifices of life and property necessary for the welfare of our beloved Australia and its Motherland England.***

The meetings closed with the National Anthem and enthusiastic cheers for King George V. and his Government.

A further demonstration of loyalty was witnessed at Rosenthal on Monday, when, in the presence of a considerable number of English and German residents, the Union Jack was hoisted in the village. The children from the Lutheran school were present and sang the National Anthem and other patriotic songs. As the breezes unfurled the folds of the much-loved flag, hearty cheers were given by the crowd for the King, the flag, and Australia.

At the Emmaus Eudunda Evangelical Church on Sunday last a special service was held. There were about 250 people present. Pastor Nickel, who is President of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Australasia, preached an eloquent sermon, and referred to the European war. He deplored the terrible struggle in which his congregation as British subjects had become involved. He reminded them that they were loyal subjects of Great Britain, and as Christians they would not forget their oath of loyalty to King and country. At the conclusion of the service Pastor Nickel again spoke and asked them to remain calm, especially those who still had ties in the Fatherland. They should not give anyone cause to think that the naturalised German population was anything but loyal to the land of their adoption. The service was concluded by the congregation standing and singing 'God save the King'.

**THE CHRONICLE** Adelaide, Saturday 15 August 1914

#### **Patriotic Lutherans.**

The following letter has been sent to the Governor:—

**To his Excellency Sir Henry Lionel Galway.**

***Sir—As war has broken out between England and Germany, and as the members of the Lutheran Church in Australia, and in particular in South Australia, are nearly all of German descent, though by far the greater number of them were born in Australia under the British flag, and thus have never owed allegiance to any other Power, I, for my own person and on behalf of the Lutherans in South Australia belonging to the South Australian district of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod in Australia, beg to assure your Excellency of our faithful allegiance and warm-hearted loyalty to our esteemed sovereign, his Majesty King George V., in this grave crisis. Though, in view of the suffering and bloodshed which must inevitably follow, we deeply deplore as a great calamity the sad course events have taken, we are at the same time conscious of our sacred duty as British subjects and citizens of Australia. We are prepared to sacrifice our property and life in the service of our British Sovereign, because such loyalty is with us a matter not only of doctrine and conscience, but also of deepest gratitude to that Government under whose wise and benevolent rule we have always enjoyed protection and liberty, peace and prosperity, and many other blessings, but, above all, that liberty which is to Lutherans the most precious boon, the liberty of conscience, the right so ungrudgingly granted by the British Government of Australia to all its subjects, to worship God according to the dictates of our conscience.***

*I have the honor, &c.,*

**William Janzow,  
president of the South Australian district of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod in  
Australia**

**HAMILTON SPECTATOR** Wednesday, 19 August 1914

**State Governor's Appreciation.**

The following correspondence explains itself. The letter of acknowledgment from Sir Arthur Stanley was written personally, and is much appreciated by the German community:—

*To His Excellency the Governor of Victoria, the Honourable Sir Arthur Lyulph Stanley, K.C.M.G. Sir,— As representatives of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod in Australia, Eastern District, we the undersigned, beg to assure your Excellency that, although the majority of the members comprising the above church are of German descent, yet being born in Australia, or having become naturalised, we are loyal subjects of His Majesty King George V. We beg to assure your Excellency that the members of the Lutheran church in Australia are prepared, should the necessity arise, to sacrifice their property and their lives for the welfare of the Empire. They fall or stand with the British Empire, not only because they love, honour and respect the British flag and throne and British institutions and integrity, but also for conscience sake.*

*The children attending our church schools are taught not only to pray for the King and his counsellors, asking God to bless them and preserve the Empire in its unity, they are also taught to love, honour and respect the country in which they live and the flag which waves over them. Intercessions are also made for our King and Government in our public worship. We direct this address to your Excellency as the representative of His Majesty King George V, and would further beg to draw your attention to the fact that German citizens in Australia are at present adopting resolutions of loyalty to the British flag and throne. We have the honour to be Your Excellency's humble servants,—*

*Emil Kriewaldt, president,  
O.M. Nichterlein, vice president.*

Governor Stanley concluded his response to these 'expressions of affection and loyalty' with these remarks:—

*It gives me particular satisfaction to learn that the fine institutions of our Empire have bound the members of your community to it and that you value your part in that Empire that you are ready to defend with your lives and property the freedom you have found under the British flag. It is the proud boast of the British Empire that we have as citizens men who, though sprung from ancestors who have owed allegiance to other rulers, do not yield in loyalty to the British-born. I am confident that your loyal expressions of devotion to the country of your adoption will earn for you the respect and admiration of all classes in this country.*

**THE HORSHAM TIMES** Friday 28 August 1914

**German Loyalty.**

Mr. F. H. Schultze writes:— A large and representative meeting of German residents of Ni Ni Well, Lorquon, Woorak, Glenlee, and Netherby, was held for the sole purpose of proclaiming

unbounded loyalty to the British Throne. At this meeting, over which I had the pleasure to preside, the following resolutions were unanimously adopted:—

- 1. That we, residents of Ni Ni Well and adjoining districts, being of German descent, deplore the sad fact that England and Germany, two of the most civilised nations of the world, are waging war against each other.*
- 2. That we herewith publicly and emphatically express loyalty to our sovereign lord, King George V., and to the land of our adoption, and that we justly demand of all our fellow citizens of the Commonwealth to regard and treat us as loyal subjects of the British Throne, who would, if necessary, sacrifice their goods and lay down their lives for the benefit and welfare of their king and country.*

Expressions of regret at the present terrible crisis and of loyalty to King and country formed the dominant tone of the remarks made by the chairman, the Messrs. P. Koop, P. A. Deckert, F. Noack, J. A. Rohde, and the Rev. Mr. Wiese.

**DAILY NEWS** Perth, Friday 14 August 1914

#### **Subjects of King George.**

The Premier has received the following letter from Pastor P. J. Rudolph, of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, Fitzgerald-street, Perth:—

*I wish to advise you for the information of the Government and the people of Western Australia of the text of a resolution passed by this congregation. At a meeting after sentiments of loyalty to the British Throne had been fully expressed, and after it had been mentioned that since the majority of the members were Australian born, and others of German parentage were naturalised British subjects, it should be clearly understood that they are all loyal subjects of King George V, and that they desired to assure you of the loyalty of the members of the congregation, the following resolution was carried— 'The Government should be assured of the unswerving loyalty of the members of the congregation to the British Throne.'*

**THE FARMER AND SETTLER** Sydney, 11 August 1914

#### **Loyal German Settlers.**

In the Temora district (N.S.W.) there are a number of German farmers. A representative German settler offered £25 to the hospital if it could be proved that the German flag was in the locality; he states that he has the authority of other Germans in endorsing a motion passed by them at Walla Walla, in which they expressed their loyalty to Britain, and their willingness to fight in the defence of Australia if the necessity arose. At the German Church at Henty (N.S.W.) on Sunday last, the following motion was carried unanimously:—

*The members of this congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Zion Church of Henty heartily endorse the assurance of loyalty to the British Crown. The resolution was conveyed by the president of the Synod, the Rev. Peters, to the Governor. Special prayers for peace were offered.*

**BRISBANE COURIER** 15 August 1914

#### **Lutheran Loyalty.**

The following letter has, we understand, been addressed to the Acting Governor of the State:—

*Honoured Sir, As head of the Queensland district of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod in Australia, the majority of which are born Australians of German descent, and the rest naturalised subjects, who have sworn fidelity to the English crown, I would herewith beg you to accept full assurance of our loyalty to his Majesty George V., King of England. On account of the present war disturbance we are prepared in every way to stand by our country and cause and would gladly offer our property and lives for the welfare of England and Australia, our home. God bless our Sovereign and our beloved Empire, in which we have enjoyed protection and freedom of our religion and prosperity in our calling. I remain, sir, your Excellency's faithful and obedient servant,*

*J. Darsow, Lutheran Minister*

**THE SOUTH PRESS** Walla Walla NSW

The Southern Press reported that at Walla Walla, NSW, after the holding of a well-attended meeting for the purpose of taking steps to raise £1000 for making additions to the local Lutheran Church, about 30 of the leading German residents assembled, when the following motion, moved by Councillor H A Paech (president, Culcairn Shire), seconded by Councillor John Wenke, was carried unanimously amidst enthusiasm:—

*That the German residents of Walla Walla and district express their unswerving loyalty to the British flag, and, as Australians born, are prepared at any moment, if required, to stand shoulder to shoulder with their fellow-Australian patriots in defence of the British flag, and would be prepared to give their money or their blood, if required, in defence of this country and the British flag, no matter who the invader may be.*

The report continued:

Walla Walla is the most important German settlement in New South Wales, and lately there has been a considerable increase in the population of German extraction. The resolution given above was submitted in order to show the disposition of the Australian natives of German extraction towards Great Britain in the present critical position.

**DAILY ADVERTISER** Wagga Wagga, 11 August 1914

**Germans in Australia.**

**Patriotic Attitude at Burrumbuttock; Letter from a Lutheran Pastor.**

To the Editor

*Sir,— In the press it is reported that Mr. Ball, M.L.A. for Corowa asked in Parliament if the Premier would ask the citizens of the State to refrain from unnecessary demonstrations against German residents? His reason in asking this was that he had read of such demonstrations in Melbourne. In regard to this, I would ask you to publish the following letter, which was sent by me to His Excellency the Governor of New South Wales:— 'May it please your Excellency, at this present juncture, when, as recent cable messages have advised, the British Empire has been plunged into the turmoil of the European war, I ask you to accept through me, as the president of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, New South Wales District, in the name of our ministers and congregations and their respective members, the assurance of our sincere loyalty to the Crown and person of our beloved King.'*

*Although the members of our church and Synod are of German descent they are filled with true patriotism and unswerving love for the British Empire, and this, our country and, having at heart the commonwealth, we not only deplore deeply the new trial and calamity which has fallen upon the British Empire but pray to the Almighty God that He may bring this terrible War to a speedy termination, and give us peace consistent with the dignity and prestige of the British nation, to which we Australians belong. I am Your Excellency's faithful servant, W Peters, President of Synod.'*

*By inserting this copy of my letter in your next issue you will greatly oblige.*

*Yours etc., W. Peters,  
Lutheran Parsonage, Burrumbuttock 6/8/11*

**THE DUBBO LIBERAL** 21 August 1914

#### **Loyal Germans.**

At a meeting of the Gilgandra Evangelical Lutheran Immanuel's congregation, held after the service on Sunday, the following resolution was unanimously and enthusiastically passed:—

***That this congregation affirms their unswerving loyalty to the British Empire and sincere devotion to His Majesty King George V.***

At the meeting it was emphasised that the Germans of the district were not forgetful of their obligations to Australia and the British Crown, which has given them a home and liberty. They declared their willingness to stand shoulder to shoulder with other Britishers for the maintenance of the integrity of the British Empire and the freedom and progress of Australia.

#### **IMMANUEL SYNOD**

Although it is often claimed that Australians, like the British, initially assumed that the war would be over quickly, Pastor Theodor Hebart's article in the KMZ expresses his awareness of the full gravity and magnitude of the conflict from the outset. Since the majority of Lutheran pastors in all synods in Australia other than ELSA came from German families and communities that were now officially at war with their own families, parishioners and communities here in Australia, the thought of such a conflict was surely very distressing.

**KIRCHEN- UND MISSIONS- ZEITUNG** No 32 11 August 1914 p255

'Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations' (Psalm 90, 1)

This is our cry from the depths to Him who has caused such a terrible judgment to befall the peoples of Europe, indeed the whole world, as has never been known in the thousands of years of world history. With profound repentance we seek shelter and safety in the great tribulation that has descended upon us. The sea of peoples is raging and roaring so violently that everything that has been constant in the history of the world threatens to collapse. The great world war has been unleashed, a war like none we have ever seen before, whether we consider the number of peoples who are now hurling themselves upon one another, or whether we consider the many millions who will have to march into battle, or the immense armaments with which they will do battle against one another. The misery is so great that ... it cannot be described, but we feel the truth of what Christ has said: 'All these are the beginning of sorrows' (Matt 24, 8). Read also verses 6-8.

We cannot contemplate this global catastrophe without the steadily approaching end of this miserable world impressing itself forcibly on our consciousness. And what fills our hearts with sorrow most deeply in this land in particular is the fact that England and Germany are now confronting one another as mortal enemies. How we had rejoiced as we were able to see these two countries beginning to understand and respect one another, how the two rulers came together, how through Sir Edward Grey, England's Minister for Foreign Affairs – a man deserving of all respect – the relations between the two great nations were taking a more congenial turn. And how hopeful for a peaceful collaboration were the speeches made recently at the 3rd conference of English and German churches and other prominent men of both nations. Now suddenly the whole seed of peace has been trampled underfoot, and all lovers of peace cover their heads in deep mourning.

The article continues with the statement of Lutheran loyalty quoted in the newspaper report below, and follows with a concise outline of the 'terrible events of the past week', the steps leading to Britain seeing itself compelled to declare war on Germany.

For the first time in history these two nations confront one another. When we survey the tremendous attempts that were made to limit the war to Austria and Serbia, the thought occurs to us involuntarily: God has laid His powerful hand upon the peoples in a terrible judgment. Not Europe alone but the whole world that is involved in this catastrophe needs this chastising rod so that millions who have turned away from the Lord and His Word will find their way back to Him ... And whatever the outcome may be, our consolation is that it is determined in the counsel of Him who holds all the kingdoms of this world in His hand and directs the history of the world so that it leads to the last times, which are approaching with gigantic steps.

There we can do nothing more than submit to His unsearchable wisdom in all humility and repentance, and say 'Thy will be done!' ... Even if everything must change in the world of the peoples, His kingdom will last forever, and all things must culminate in the glorification of His kingdom. In that we can rejoice and console ourselves in the midst of all this immense misery that has just begun. One thing this catastrophe shows: Nothing can come of the dreams of those who believed that the intelligence and high culture of the human spirit would develop to the degree that wars would no longer be necessary ...

We have not yet heard much of conflict or battles. But what the next days will bring, O almighty God, who can comprehend all the misery. The earth, the sea and the air will be filled with the tumult of the peoples and with the screams of those who must suffer a hero's death for their country. And what the consequences of this war will be, who can foresee? But as long as Christ and His kingdom remain for us Christians! That no-one can take away from us. Nothing in the present or in the future can separate us from the unending love of our God.

**DAILY HERALD** Adelaide, 14 August 1914

#### **Loyalty to England by Germans at Tanunda.**

Throughout the State the German communities have publicly expressed their loyalty to England generally, through the presidents of the various church synods. On Sunday last references were made to the European unrest in Tanunda German churches, and the ministers exhorted their congregations to remain calm and not forget their duties as Australians, but to show in return for the privileges enjoyed under British rule that they were ready to give assistance in time of need. Messages conveying expressions of loyalty to Britain have been sent to the Governor, and the Kirchen- und Missions- Zeitung, the official organ of the Ebenezer Lutheran Emmanuel Synod, says in an article on the war:—

Resident in Australia there is a large number of Germans. For 75 years Australia has opened to us as its hospitable doors, and we have often expressed our gratitude for being permitted to enjoy religious freedom under British rule. This fact we are now not going to forget. We would certainly be unmindful of our duty were we now not to act according to the Word of God, 'Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers'. Considering that the majority of Germans in this country are members of the Lutheran Church, we are safe in saying that the loyalty which the German Australians will show the land of their adoption, will be as sincere as is their belief in the Holy Word of God.

If the attitude of the inhabitants of Tanunda – fully 75 percent, of whom are of German extraction – is a criterion as to the German-Australians' loyalty to England should the necessity arise, Great Britain will find these sons of her adoption standing shoulder to shoulder in her defence. A monster demonstration arranged by Mr A. Sehulz, chairman of the Tanunda District Council, will be held in the Club Hall on Monday evening to publicly express the residents' loyalty and patriotism as British subjects.

**MURRAY PIONEER AND AUSTRALIAN RIVER RECORD** August 1914

**Loxton Pulpits and the War.**

Loxton, 10 August

There were no direct references to the European War in the pulpits here on Sunday. Pastor Kuss, in the Lutheran pulpit, referring to it only in general terms in a prayer. Rev. J. D. Loughhead, Congregationalist, preached in the Institute at night upon the wickedness of war.

He quoted an incident in the conflicts of the early settlers of North America with the Indians to illustrate the danger of carrying arms. Some Quakers were members of the white party attacked by the Redskins. Some of the former had seized weapons when the attack on them was made. These the Indians promptly killed, sparing the unarmed members of the Society of Friends. If England were to sink all her warships and throw all the guns into the sea she would never have any wars to fight. Pastor Kuss was present in the congregation and seemed to disagree with the preacher, promising a War Sermon on what he considered the right line next Sunday.

**THE REGISTER** Adelaide, Wednesday 19 August 1914

**Fighting Sermon, Loxton.**

The Rev. Martin Kuss (pastor of the Lutheran Church here) preached a remarkable sermon on Sunday night, urging his young men to go to the war, if called on, and fight for the flag their fathers found protection and religious liberty under when, in 1838, they were persecuted and their places of worship closed. The church was crowded, as it was understood Mr. Kuss would reply to a sermon by an English-speaking minister at a service he had attended the previous Sunday evening.

**MURRAY PIONEER AND AUSTRALIAN RIVER RECORD**

Thursday 20 August 1914

**Lutheran Pastor on the War.**

**The Flag of Freedom.**

Loxton, 19 August

The Rev. Martin Kuss, pastor of the Loxton Lutheran Church, was greeted by an unusually large congregation on Sunday morning, his intention to preach upon the war having become known through a note in last week's Pioneer. Taking his text from the Scripture lesson for the day, Luke XIX the preacher selected the prediction by Christ of the destruction of Jerusalem in verses 43 and 44, and referred to its fulfilment in A.D. 70.

All the people of Israel took part in the defence of the city', said Mr. Kuss, 'and we don't hear of any avoiding military service. It is not to the interest of our people to go through the world as a separate body, but they should enter into the life of those among whom they dwell. A Christian, as a true patriot, should recognise all the blessings of his Fatherland or Motherland, and it would be indeed strange if he should not be willing to give his life for his country in time of need. The Scripture tells us to be loyal to our country. St. Paul says, in the Epistle to the Romans, that everyone must be subject to the Higher Powers. A Christian must take part in a war to defend his own country.

It is natural for descendants of Germans to sympathise with Germany, but history tells us that members of our church were persecuted in Germany, services were disturbed and the worshippers cast out, thereby causing the greatest distress. These were Lutherans and being unable any longer to endure persecution many sought refuge under a flag that would ensure them the freedom they had so long sought. In this way several Lutheran pastors came here with their flocks in 1838. Here they found the flag of Britain that insured them freedom. Therefore, we are indebted to Britain, and must give our support to the country that has protected us for so many years.

The preacher, later in his address, said that they had no need to be ashamed of the ties of blood which connected them with the German Fatherland, 'but the ties of faith were of greater importance than those of blood'. It was his sincere wish and hope that the British flag would be victorious, and he emphatically urged the young people, if the call to arms came to them, to go.

#### **GENERAL SYNOD: VICTORIA SYNOD**

When the German Turnverein (Gymnastics Club) in Melbourne was subjected to a violent demonstration of anti-German hostility on 6 August, the attack was vigorously condemned in the local press. The police provided protection for a meeting of the Eastern Hill Lutheran church a week later, prompting public expressions of loyalty by the chairman of the congregation and its recently retired pastor Hermann Herlitz, as President of the Synod.

#### **MARYBOROUGH AND DUNOLLY ADVERTISER, Victoria, 12 August 1914**

**Growls.** (By 'The Grumbler.')

Ordinarily the writer is a most peaceful member of the community, but I candidly confess that I would much prefer to be handling a rifle than a pen at the present juncture. 'Keep calm' is the admonition of our political leaders, and no doubt it is sage advice. But that there is great excitement among the Australian people is only natural; but we must be careful not to permit our excitement to degenerate into injustice to any section of the community ... A regrettable feature of the 'excitement' was the conduct of those low scamps who made the disgraceful attack on the Turn Verein, upon inoffensive German citizens, and on the Chinese quarters in Melbourne. So far as Great Britain is concerned, the war is not against individuals, but against a nation. Anyone who has come in contact with Germans must admit that they are in the forefront of our law-abiding, industrious citizens.

Therefore any attack upon those in our midst is not only unmanly and un-British, but it is cowardly in the extreme, and could only be perpetrated by low-grade hoodlums. One of the rioters who was 'up' for insulting behaviour before the city court was fined 20s, in default seven days. Surely this was inadequate punishment for one of a crowd who were throwing missiles at the police, flogging them with cabmen's whips, stabbed a trooper's horse, and destroyed a lot of property. On the same day a sailor was charged with having struck a shopkeeper at Sydney, who, the sailor said, spoke like a German. The sailor was fined £6, in default two months' imprisonment. There is more commonsense in that decision.

Every law-abiding citizen, no matter what nationality, should have the full protection of our laws. If you meet a German treat him as you would like to be treated if you were a denizen of Berlin or Frankfort. We want brigades of guards, not blackguards. Surely there never was such a time of the lions and the lambs being at peace as the present. There has been a closing up of the ranks of the British people all over the world, and they stand shoulder to shoulder as they have never stood before. It is just splendid!

**KYNETON GUARDIAN** Victoria, Thursday 13 August 1914

**Boys in War Time.**

Donald Macdonald writes thus pertinently in 'Notes for Boys' in the 'Argus':—

Australia has once before had experience of war, but it was not a war that seriously challenged the position, safety or greatness of our Empire. No boy reading these notes to-day will probably live to see or hear again in his lifetime of a war so great as that into which we have just been plunged. It is a time of wild excitement, when people are apt to do things which in cold blood and in saner moments they would be ashamed of. We have amongst us many Germans and Austrians, but especially Germans, who came here to establish homes for themselves and to become Australians. They are in no way responsible for this great trouble, do not sympathise with it, and will take no part in it. Yet in periods of excitement — and there may be such times ahead — they are often attacked by 'crowds' who think that they show their loyalty by assaulting people who have done them no harm. I would appeal strongly to boys who read these notes to take no part in demonstrations against Germans, who have come here in good faith to live amongst us, on the contrary to do all they can to prevent anything of the sort taking place.

Do not let us follow the brutal and cowardly example of the crowd in Berlin who attacked men, women and children of the Russian embassy, who were living at the moment under their protection. The fact that others are doing it is no reason why we should. If we follow such a lead, even in recrimination we lower ourselves to their poor standard in manliness and fair play, and become as cowardly as wolves, who only find courage when they fight in packs against something weaker than themselves. I make a very strong appeal upon this point. Every boy who thinks a while will, I hope, see how unjust, how cowardly, how contemptible it is to take part in anything of the kind. Cheer your country, stick to your country, stand up for your country, but do not blacken your country's name or your own character by following such blackguardly examples.

**THE COLAC HERALD** Victoria, Monday 17 August 1914

**Germans Thank Police. Stand Shoulder to Shoulder.**

Melbourne, Saturday.

Mr John A. B. Koch, chairman of a meeting held in the German Lutheran Church recently, sent the following letter to Mr A. G. Sainsbury, Chief Commissioner of Police, today:—

*On behalf of the congregation of the German Lutheran Church, Eastern Hill, I desire to tender to you their sincere thanks for your readiness to give police protection on the occasion of a business meeting at the church last Wednesday evening, and thereby preventing any possible unruly behavior in the vicinity of the church. I think I am justified in saying, on behalf of the Australian-born and the naturalised subjects of the King, that should necessity arise they will stand shoulder to shoulder to defend the land of their adoption - Australia.*

**ALBURY BANNER AND WODONGA EXPRESS** Saturday 21 August 1914

**Germans in Australia.**

To the Editor of the Argus

*Sir— As president, and on behalf of the German Lutheran General Synod of Victoria (which comprises provincial synods in Victoria, South Australia, New South Wales, and Queensland), I desire to publicly express the faithful loyalty of its pastors and congregations, whether Australian born or naturalised citizens, to the English throne. We deeply regret that two nations who are so nearly related to each other by ties of blood and religion and who could if working hand in hand easily command the peace of this world should be at war. Yet if it should become necessary, we would be ready to fight in the ranks of our Australian fellow citizens for the defence of this our adopted country not only because we gratefully acknowledge the privileges of political and religious liberty which we are enjoying, under the English Crown but as Christians also in obedience to the injunction of the Bible: 'Seek ye the peace of the city whither I have carried you and pray unto the lord for it, for in the peace thereof shall ye have peace. [Jeremiah 29, 7]'*

*Yours etc,*

*Hermann Herlitz*

*Lutheran Parsonage, East Melbourne*

*August 13, 1914*

**GENERAL SYNOD: IMMANUEL SYNOD aaG**

No official statement on the war appeared in the General Synod's paper *Der Australischer Christenbote*, edited by Pastor FW Basedow of St Stephen's congregation in Adelaide. The pastors of the Immanuel Synod on the Old Basis were (like those of the Victoria Synod) graduates of the Basel Mission Institute and had separated from the Immanuel Synod together with their congregations when the Immanuel Synod decided against calling further pastors from Basel. The president of the synod, Pastor Carl Friedrich Braun, was travelling in Europe with his family when war broke out, and his whereabouts remained unknown for some weeks after all communication with Germany was cut off. Because of the public turmoil the synod cancelled a mission festival at Robertstown and the synodical gathering of the South Australian and Victorian synods which was planned for October.

As editor, Pastor Basedow had included reports on the crisis in the Balkans in the regular feature *Aus Welt und Zeit* ('The World in our Time'), and continued to comment on the war, predicting on 4 August that 'the world has surely never seen such a bloody spectacle. If it should break out, may God have mercy on us!' A week later he regretted 'together with all Englishmen who otherwise have an inclination towards Germany' that Germany had 'by its breach of the

treaty regarding the neutrality of Belgium given England just cause to intervene'. Pastor Basedow's prediction in the newspaper interview below that the war would unify the country into an Australian nation as never before has become a common theme in the 100 years since that day.

**DAILY HERALD** Adelaide, Monday 10 August 1914

### Loyal Lutherans.

The members of the Lutheran Church, Wakefield Street (Rev. F. W. Basedow, minister), at their monthly meeting on Wednesday last, unanimously agreed publicly to affirm their unreserved loyalty to his Majesty King George V.

In an interview with Mr. Basedow he made these striking remarks:—

*To all who take a right view of things it will be patent that it behoves all Australians to realise that they can do naught else but loyally support the mother country in its troubles and trials in a like enthusiastic and whole-hearted manner as that in which they have shared the blessings which under the protection of that great country has been accorded to them one and all, irrespective of nationality or creed.*

*It is clear that Australians prior to the inauguration of the Commonwealth were practically cosmopolitan, inasmuch as they were units of all nationalities in divided provinces, each of which was practically a separate dependency of Great Britain, so to say, left to itself to do as it pleased, in accordance with the saying, *Ubi bene, ibi patria*. Even under the then existing conditions true loyalty was the determining factor in the relations of the people of each separate State to the mother country. The consummation of the Commonwealth, however, has only tended to increase and solidify these separate States, and inherent with this is the absolutely essential factor of united and unswerving loyalty of each Australian to the Government of his adoption or birth. Australia has never yet had a really fitting occasion to enable it to properly express itself nationally as pressing for one goal, and its history has been of practically so uneventful a nature as to even make it impossible for anything but the traditions of old times to be held up to its children in schools and lecture halls as something calling for emulation. In other words, it has hitherto not been called upon to express itself truly 'nationally.'*

*But that aspect has been altered during late years. Year by year it has become more and more evident that 'Australians' having, as is the case, a separate existence, as a self-governing Commonwealth are yet bound by ties indissoluble and permanent, although invisible, to the mother country. The closer unity among themselves which has been brought about since the inauguration of the Commonwealth has made for true fraternity, and as a natural corollary has followed the ever-increased conception of the true recognition of the common maternal claims of the mother country, which alone made possible the existence of this great and glorious country which would have been an impossibility but for England.*

*We may say that the realisation of being an important integral part of the British Empire has ever since the bringing into being of the Commonwealth, when the idea as it were first really dawned upon its people gradually grown, and has now become a true indisputable and incontrovertible fact. But it required, as we said, some deep experience to properly bring this 'Australian' characteristic out, and the present crisis has sufficiently demonstrated how indissoluble united the Australians stand as a*

*Commonwealth and as a portion of the great British Empire. This wonderful Commonwealth of 'Australians', made up, as we have said, of cosmopolitans, could not have had its being under any regime but that of England, and we may be sure that all Australians, proud as they are of their unparalleled liberty and their sunny shores, although in their individual sections they may have kept up their mother tongue and the best traditions of the countries whence they sprang, will all fall into line, and as brother and brother fight to a man in all crises of their existence as a nation for their King and country.*

*How strikingly the true British-Australian characteristics have already shown themselves is evident from an observation of the affairs of the State and Commonwealth Parliaments of the Commonwealth, where, directly the crisis became imminent, all party differences were laid aside in face of the common danger. We pray from our hearts that God may bless our Sovereign, King George V., as well as our English nation, and grant that the efforts made to guard its welfare, development, prosperity, and peace may be crowned with success, and that a better state of affairs may be speedily established.*

## PUBLIC RESPONSES

In view of the suspicion and discrimination suffered by Lutherans and other Germans later during the war, the following reasonable and positive statements on German settlers and the predicament faced by German-Australians are remarkable for their objectivity and even empathy.

**THE NORTHERN HERALD** Cairns, 28 August 1914

**German Colonists.**

**Settlements in Queensland: Their Present Position.**

As most readers are aware, a considerable proportion of Queensland's earlier settlers were German, always a thrifty, law-abiding, and industrious people. Their chief aim has been to get upon the land, and by their indomitable energy and capacity for hard work, they have made flourishing agricultural settlements of huge areas of land, formerly dense scrub or stony, mountainous forest. Their willingness to tackle this uninviting class of country was not shared by the greater proportion of Britishers who immigrated to these shores 40 or 50 years ago. For, though the land was cheap, it meant that many dreary years of hard work had to be spent before the farms became remunerative. Hence the localities forming those close settlement areas between Ipswich and the Darling Downs became veritable German communities, where to this day the German language, marriage, social customs, and religious observances have been strictly maintained.

Quite a number of these farming settlements have since become busy, populous centres, having for their railway depots, Walloon, Rosewood, Laidley, Forest Hill, Gatton, Helidon, Toowoomba, and numerous Downs railway towns. These settlements include Beenleigh, Tarampa, Minden, Hatton Vale, Plainland, Blenheim, Prenzlau, Deep Gully, Blackfellow's Creek, Middle Ridge and many others, all being essentially German communities, or with a scanty sprinkling of English, Irish, and Scotch.

Lutherans or other churches of teutonic origin are to be found in all of these places, and, in addition to their ministerial duties, the pastors have to impart instruction in the German

language to the children. The rite of confirmation is strictly adhered to by the German Lutherans, and before its administration the boys and girls must be conversant with the German language to prepare themselves for the rite, with the practice of home conversation, almost always maintained in German, and the sound tuition received at the hands of the pastor, the children become fluent German speakers. They are assiduous in their attendance at the schools, and so have the advantage of both an English and German education. Whether this preservation of language, customs, and ideas among our German colonists has been wise yet remains to be seen.

With comparatively few exceptions, the German settlers have chosen their wives and husbands from among their own people and there are hundreds especially among the women who never have an opportunity of coming in contact with their British fellow colonists. The women, the men are hard-working, and the greater proportion of them perform field duties regularly. From the original immigrants that landed here some 50 years ago there has already sprung progeny establishing a fourth and even fifth generation, for the Germans marry young. Judging by the large families that have been raised by them in the State there has been no fear of race suicide, so far as they are concerned, but though the majority of the German farmers are natives, most of the young people adhere to the customs of their old folk.

Speaking in regard to the attitude of the German farmers in the present crisis, a well-known resident of the Lockyer, who is intimate with most of them, remarked that it was difficult to gauge their feelings. Many of the old original settlers had a military career under the old regime, and are proud possessors of war medals. Those old warriors are sanguine enough of Germany's ultimate success, but to a great extent the young fellows, who are more in touch with the doings of the outer world, share the opinions of their fellow Queenslanders.

**HAMILTON SPECTATOR** Victoria, Monday 10 August 1914

**Methodist.**

The following reference to the war was read at the Methodist Church yesterday:—

*We all deplore the fact that war has broken out between Great Britain and Germany. We are bound together by the ties of blood, religion and commerce; these we thought strong enough to keep us at peace with each other, in spite of the huge armaments built up in the spirit of rivalry. Our hopes have not been realised, and it behoves us to show a calm and Christian spirit. We will rejoice in victories of our grand old flag, and we should pray that they will result in a world-wide and lasting peace.*

*With regard to the German population in our neighbourhood we should show every feeling of good will. On their own initiative they have enthusiastically proclaimed their loyalty to Britain, and we should be wanting in British fair play and justice did we not clasp their hands with fervour, and welcome them as brothers. Moreover, there should be special sympathy shown to the old Germans, whose youth was spent in Germany. Appreciating as they do the liberty they have enjoyed under the British flag, they nevertheless feel, and feel strongly, the ties of kinship and nationality. This war tears their hearts in twain. They hope for Britain's success, yet that very success must be gained at the expense of the lives of their relatives in the old world. Hence their joy in victory will be doubly tinged with sorrow. Our hearts go out to them.*

*Those Germans who are members of this beloved church are assured of their minister's and brethren's regard. And now for us there is only one thing to do - to wait patiently. We cannot help glorying in our heritage as sons and daughters of Britain. Our cup of joy will be filled as we hear of her success on land or sea. As wives we will speed our*

*husbands, and as parents our sons, to stand for loyal Australia on our Great Mother's behalf. The lips may tremble, – but the word and step shall be strong. We have been blessed under the old flag, and for her we will give till best to possess. Let us meanwhile pray God that He may grant success to Britain's arms, arms which are being wielded in the sacred cause of liberty, and that soon peace may lay her loving touch upon the whole wide world — God save the King!*