**Lutheran Aged Care and Community Services Gathering**

**Saturday, 17 March 2018**

**Session Title:** Lutheran Theology and Ethos

**Issue:** To provide a briefing on the One Loving God: two hands saving and caring project

**Time:** 15 minutes

**Description**

One of the recommendations that has come out of the Governance Dialogue process is the need to provide a set of key guiding theological ethos documents for Lutheran aged and community services. These are to consist of

1. A concise theological exposition for members of governing bodies, executive teams, chaplains and spiritual advisers
2. A concise resource that chief executives can use in developing their culture, formation, employment and other HR policies
3. An induction training program outline
4. A short handout for staff
5. A short handout for volunteers/congregations/service users

I have been appointed to undertake this task as well as to revise the *One Loving God: two hands saving and caring* document that was prepared by Lutheran Community Care Australia and as decided at the Synod of 2015. The two tasks are related in that they are each about articulating the Lutheran Church of Australia’s theology of caring.

I commenced working on the project at the beginning of the year, and have spent a considerable amount of time reading about the Lutheran theology of caring and undertaking some preliminary work on the documents as well as consulting with SA aged care chaplains and some lay people within the LCA and beyond.

**Process to date:**

I am keen to talk to or engage with as many people as possible who work in the field, including lay and ordained chaplains, CEOs/managers, board members, service users/residents.

The project has been written up in the LCA Committee for Ministry with the Ageing newsletter and that has elicited several responses from people working with older members of congregations. It is also featured in the latest edition of *The Lutheran.*

A reference group has been appointed and we have met once and are about to meet again. The group members bring a number of perspectives and provide the opportunity of engaging with the church more widely. This will mean that the resources prepared during the process will not replicate those which already exist and they can be complementary to those that are being prepared elsewhere within the LCA.

When talking with people about the project, I am also keen to hear about resources that they have developed and are using that can be shared eg rites that are used for CEO or staff;

I am aware that a number of services are members of Meaningful Ageing Australia and I am looking at their resources as well.

One of the tasks in front of me is to prepare a **short handout or statement of what we as Lutheran Christians believe**. I undertook to do that in one page and it was a most interesting assignment! I shared it with a couple of friends in order to seek feedback. Their response was to undertake the same task.

**Outcomes sought from Session:**

To present a challenge to you to try the above task as well – and to send me through your efforts! You could well influence the achievement of one or more of the tasks I have in front of me. My email address is: colleen.fitzpatrick@lca.org.au

An understanding of the project among the participants. And an awareness that, as the project unfolds, I would really like to engage with as many of you as possible – we want the resources that are being prepared to be used! So you may well hear from me via email or by phone.

**Please email me if you do not wish to be contacted about this project.**

I’m looking forward to having some meaningful and useful resources for you by the end of the year – if not earlier.

Colleen Fitzpatrick

One Loving God Project Officer

8th March 2018