

Together

DECEMBER 2020

Good sports:
chaplains
on the field

Trees ring in Christmas spirit

Joy to the world

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Front cover: Ian Schubert trims the Christmas trees at Birdwood Lutheran Church. Image: Jessica Smith

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Together

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To subscribe to our eNews 'Online Together', visit www.sant.lca.org.au/news/enews/



Editor's note

Welcome to our final edition of Together for 2020 – and what an unexpected twelve months it has proven to be. Even our Christmas traditions are set to look and feel a little different this year, but, as is now becoming a familiar theme, we're again seeing our congregations successfully create wonderfully meaningful interactions, despite COVID hindrances.

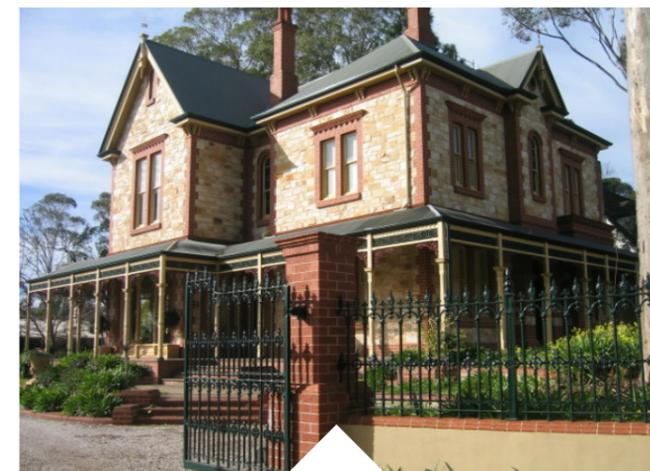
As we reflect on the year that was, we give thanks for the tireless work of individuals on the front-line of the COVID crisis. You can read about a team of staff from SA's Lutheran aged care providers who travelled to Victoria to work in the state's worst-affected facilities during the height of the pandemic on page six.

Although the 2020 season was postponed, Mallee Park Football Club's sports chaplain, Pastor Rob Schubert, has still been supporting players where he can. Pastor Rob talks about the work of sports ministry and how he has been welcomed into the team on page nine.

In a feel-good festive story (page 11) you'll find that Christmas is a year-round concern for members of Birdwood Lutheran Church. Their Christmas tree project sees them providing love and care to thousands of trees to help them grow to their full potential – eventually ending up adorned with decorations in your homes and churches!

As we come together to celebrate the birth of our Saviour, whether in person or virtually, I pray for a time of peace and joy for you and your loved ones.

While the information contained in Together is correct at the time of going to print, we recognise that COVID-19 is an evolving concern and therefore some details published may have changed by the time this magazine reaches our readers.



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Pastor David Altus
Bishop SA-NT District
Lutheran Church of Australia

A word from your Bishop...

We have learnt to value the “presence” of other people in an unexpected way this year. We have learnt to value each other’s presence by not being able to be present with each other for a time in many workplaces, at significant family gatherings such as weddings and funerals, and in our church buildings. How was that experience for you?

Denied physical access to each other, many of us learnt new ways to be present for one other on-line, and some re-discovered phone ministry, but after a while the novelty began to wear off. There is a richness about seeing people in real life, in the flesh rather than on a screen, as much as we were thankful for that. 2-D people didn’t look the same as 3-D people.

Pastors at the recent retreat shared of the opportunities and blessings of being present for people online this year and are being challenged to continue that presence for those who, for whatever reason, can’t gather physically with God’s people. But we also acknowledged the blessing of being physically together again with, and as, the body of Christ. The physical presence of another Christian, in spite of our faults and weaknesses,

is something we can never take for granted and is faith-encouraging in itself.



I heard today that residents in aged care here in SA can once again have unlimited visitors. It must have been very hard for them to miss out on visits and the sustaining presence of loved ones.

Christmas celebrates the presence of God on his own earth in the flesh, in 3-D, in real life, in real time. Jesus who walked, talked, touched and blessed the lives of people in hands-on ways, introducing and bringing God’s presence personally into their lives. The greatest “present” the world has received is the “presence” in person of the God who gave us all life, in the person of Jesus Christ.



This year has been a challenging one for all of us in different ways. I pray that in the days of Christmas you will again enjoy the presence of the God who is with you 24/7, in person, and I pray that you will continue to walk through life with him into whatever 2021 holds for you and for his church.

“The greatest ‘present’ the world has received is the ‘presence’ in person of the God who gave us all life, in the person of Jesus Christ.”

Jesus, our *“Immanuel – God with us”*.

Jesus, *“The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us”*.

God with us in all of life, sustaining, encouraging, forgiving, loving, blessing and offering us hope when we can’t see any. Jesus who calls and invites us to be his presence, his “body” in the world, so that people experience something of him through their interactions with us. What an honour that is, to be his presence in the world. How else would we really know God’s heart, except through Jesus? And how else will people experience the heart of Jesus if not through us, his body, the church.

Photos: Pexels

From the Bishop’s diary...

Pastors Retreat

About 60 pastors came together face-to-face for the first time this year in October, at Nunyara in Belair. It certainly was a blessing to share, pray and just be together again. There have been a number of unwell pastors this year and we ask you to keep praying for them and their recovery, together with their families.

Ordinations

Stanley Roberts, an indigenous man from Central Australia, was ordained on November 22nd by Bishop Henderson. The five graduates from ALC were ordained on December 6th.

Graduate Pastors Assigned to SA-NT

Joseph Theodorsen has been assigned to Darwin and he will most likely be installed there on February 7th. Joseph comes from Port Hedland and his wife Maricel from the Philippines. We pray for them and their family as they move north to serve the Lord in the Top End Lutheran Parish.

Philp Bentley has been assigned to Greenock Parish. Philip has had a variety of occupations including as a primary school teacher. He and his wife Narelle, a nurse, came to ALC from Mt Isa, so the Barossa will be a real change of scenery for them. We welcome them to the District.

Roland Adams has been assigned to Renmark – Paringa which is new territory for him. He came to ALC from Perth and has been a vicar at Morphett Vale. His installation is likely to be on February 21st.

Stephen Noblett has been assigned to the Southern Flinders parish and he will live in Laura. With a background in financial planning, Stephen was a vicar with Loxton and outlying congregations, giving him exposure to rural ministry which he enjoyed.

Welcome

Pastor Matthew Bishop has accepted the call to our District to serve at Blair Athol. We welcome him and his wife Melissa and family.

Pastor Rolf Lungwitz’s part-time call to Hampstead has been made ongoing and we thank God for his return to pastoral ministry after some years on leave of absence and that the call there is going well.

Farewell

Pastor Lee and Anna Kroehn and their children leave the Waikerie Parish and the SA-NT District to serve in Rochedale, QLD. We thank them for their time with us in the Lord’s service and the gift they have been and pray for them in their life as part of the Queensland District.

Bereavements

We pray for the families of **Pastors Paul Haines, Rolph Mayer, Martin Freund** and **Marnie Renner** who died recently. We also remember the family of **Elaine Traeger**. We thank God for these servants of the Lord and for those who supported them to use their gifts in the life of his church.

Retirements

We thank God for the following pastors: **Graham Jenke, David Gogoll, Geoff Havelberg, Tim Koch** and **Noel Due** for the gift they have been to the church during their ministries in the LCA. We pray his blessing on them and their wives as they enter a new phase of life together in retirement.

Closure

St John’s Taplan was closed at a service on October 18th. The service was attended by a good crowd both from the region and from afar. We thanked God for the faith and life he created and blessed there over the years. The words over the sanctuary are from Genesis 28 – “Surely the Lord is in this place”. He has been and we thank him for that.

SA-NT Vacancies

- 8 parishes are in the call process for full time pastors
- 8 parishes are looking at part time / other arrangements
- 2 FRM roles
- 3 Schools

LUTHERAN CHURCH OF AUSTRALIA SOUTH AUSTRALIA NORTHERN TERRITORY

49TH CONVENTION OF
SYNOD 2021

SAVE THE DATE

15-16 MAY, FAITH LUTHERAN COLLEGE TANUNDA

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THE HOPE WE HAVE
1 PETER 3:15

LUTHERAN CHURCH OF AUSTRALIA SOUTH AUSTRALIA NORTHERN TERRITORY

SA-NT DISTRICT
PASTORS CONFERENCE
12-14 MAY 2021, LANGMEIL LUTHERAN CHURCH TANUNDA

SAVE THE DATE

Details can be found on our website www.sant.lca.org.au
All enquiries to the SA-NT District Office
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THE HOPE WE HAVE
1 PETER 3:15

Heeding the call for COVID help



Photos: Above - SA team members on the ground in Melbourne. Left - L-R: Sharina Corney, Bridget Irrgang, Monei Seduku and LHI Retirement Services CEO, Graham Reed

Graham Reed, CEO at LHI Retirement Services, said that the two personal care workers and one cleaner recruited from his facility were selected from a number of volunteers, after the urgent government call-out.

“We had several staff consider the request and the final three were selected for their resilience and sense of calling,” he said.

“All of the volunteers from LHI and other SA aged care organisations participated in a two-hour briefing session with a representative of the Commonwealth Department of Health that pointed out the challenges that the staff would face on the ground in nursing homes that were

in dire need of staff - not one of the staff pulled out after the briefing.”

Graham expressed his admiration and pride in the volunteers, saying he had stayed in touch with them during their deployment and subsequent quarantine period.

Staff from South Australia’s Lutheran aged care providers didn’t hesitate to put up their hands when the call went out for personnel to assist in Victoria during the COVID-19 crisis, as part of the National Aged Care Emergency Response (NACER) program. A total of five staff from Lutheran aged care facilities were deployed to Melbourne’s COVID hot spots, including three from LHI Retirement Services and two from Fullarton Lutheran Homes.

“I am in awe of the decision that all these staff made to head over to Victoria into what they knew would be very dangerous and personally challenging circumstances,” he said.

“They all maintained a very positive attitude in spite of some setbacks and appreciated the opportunity to serve.”

The LHI staff members were deployed in teams for a four-week stint working in Melbourne facilities deemed most in need, followed by two weeks in quarantine when they crossed back over the South Australian border to come home.

Bridget

With a previous career as a police officer spanning twenty-two years, Bridget Irrgang’s mindset was already fixed on helping those in need. Bridget was deployed as a cleaner, a role she usually undertakes at LHI.

“I really looked forward to the opportunity to help out in Victoria, I was interested as soon as I saw the email....the only thing I was concerned about was leaving the kids,” she said.

Although her two children are young adults, Bridget knew that her absence would pose a challenge for both them and herself. She was also hesitant to leave her beloved pets including her Rottweiler, Koda.

“This is the first time that my kids have had to run the house on their own, which I’m sure has been a good thing,” she says. “Now they can see what Mum actually does – working, shopping, cooking, housework and looking after the pets!”

Bridget describes her work in Melbourne as ‘constant cleaning and sanitising’. The mandatory full PPE gear was often hot and uncomfortable, and meant it could be hard to tell staff apart from one another while on the job. Despite these challenges, Bridget said she appreciated the teamwork and camaraderie established throughout the experience.

“I wasn’t really concerned about contracting COVID, I knew that if I did as we were taught we should be OK. We went and worked as a team and bonded immediately, we were always looking out for each other and our safety was a top priority.”

Speaking from hotel quarantine upon her return to South Australia, Bridget said that she was looking forward to seeing her family again as well as getting back to work at LHI.

“I’ve really missed my residents, especially the ones I visit daily,” she said. “I also look forward to catching up with my colleagues and friends at work – it feels like I have been gone forever.”



Monei

Deployed as a personal care worker, Monei Seduku says she felt ‘blessed’ to be given the opportunity to serve others during the pandemic.

“Service to humanity is the most gratifying aspect of my life,” she said. “Some say ‘plant trees under whose shadow you do not expect to stay’ and the bible says ‘blessed is the hand that giveth’.”

While the days were sometimes unpredictable with staffing needs constantly changing depending on the circumstances, Monei says she felt that most days were overall ‘filled with a sense of gratification and accomplishment.’

Thoughts of her own family prompted Monei to put her hand up for deployment.

“My own father is ageing and I had been wishing I was back home with my family during this trying time,” she said. “I felt guilty that I would not be able to be there should my father contract the virus, so the deployment gave me an opportunity to make a difference in other elderly people’s lives.”

Monei’s deep-seated desire to help others stems from her problem-solving life philosophy.

“Each time there is a problem, I see myself as part of the solution,” she said, quoting Martin Luther King Junior’s famous words: “Life’s most persistent and urgent question is, ‘what are you doing for others?’”



Monei, dressed in full PPE gear

Photos: supplied

Photos: supplied



District update

By Angela Rogers
District Administrator

God is good! 2020 has thrown us many challenges but God has been with us through it all and has given us many opportunities to share the gospel in new and exciting ways.



Together we have run the gamut of emotions with you, in circumstances that have had a wide-reaching impact on our communities. We have shared concerns – about the closure of our buildings, our financial viability, our yearning to commune together to study and share God’s word, and our desire to provide safe social outlets for both ourselves and our families. We have also rejoiced together as we have learned to worship in new ways, seeing innovation and creativity come to the fore.

As we’ve shared new experiences we’ve seen that, through it all, God has been providing for us, encouraging us to reach out to Him for guidance, wisdom and love. The District Office continues to be grateful for the opportunity to support you all as you serve God and the Church throughout this season.

On behalf of the team at the District Office, we send to you our Christmas blessings as we all give thanks for the miracle of Jesus’ birth.



Images: 2020 will be remembered as the year of social distancing for our churches

CHRISTMAS SERVICES

This Christmas we’re encouraging our congregations to step out and try something new, inviting your community to experience church in a different way. Summer weather is a blessing we have in our favour, meaning we can gather outdoors in the shade, or on a warm summer’s eve. You may sing to your heart’s content outside – spread out to allow the music to travel further.

RELIEF PASTOR PAYMENT UPDATE

Our District is blessed to have many emeriti pastors who willingly serve our congregations and parishes during vacancy. To assist with the prompt payment to these pastors the District Office has updated payment instructions and these can be found on our website.

DISTRICT CONTRIBUTIONS

Congregations have been invited to share with the District Office details of their planned contributions to the work of the District recently. Please keep an eye out for correspondence regarding this.

SYNOD

Here at the District Office we’re already in planning mode for our District Convention of Synod in May 2021 - we remind you to appoint your delegates and budget for this event. Don’t forget that 2021 is also a General Convention of Synod year, and so you will have a delegate for this also.

OFFICE HOLDER DETAILS

Has your congregation and parish held their AGM recently, or are you planning for this in the coming months? Please remember to update all office holder details in LAMP2 as soon as possible.

WANTED
Singers and Musicians

At Golden Grove Lutheran Church we are looking for singers and musicians to be part of our bands in the contemporary morning service. If you would like to share your God-given talents in this way please contact the GGLC Office.

 GOLDEN GROVE LUTHERAN CHURCH
e: office@gglc.org.au
ph. 08 7200 0090



Above: Pastor Rob outside Mallee Park Football Club. Inset: Mallee Park players on the field

Good Sports Chaplaincy on the field

Photos: supplied

‘Loitering with intent’ is how Eyre Peninsula Pastor Rob Schubert describes his role as a sports chaplain with Mallee Park Football Club. “But intent to do good, not harm!” he laughs.

Established in 1981, Mallee Park is renown as the nation’s most successful indigenous football club with many players going on to be drafted in the AFL, including Eddie Betts, Byron Pickett, Graham Johncock and Shaun and Peter Burgoyne, to name just a few.

With many club members already having a connection with the Lutheran Church where Pastor Rob is based at Our Saviour’s in Port Lincoln, it seemed a natural fit for him to take on the role of sports chaplain at Mallee Park.

Pastor Rob was recently interviewed by Life FM’s Grass Roots SA program, highlighting the connection that sports chaplains

have with their local community and the opportunities that stem from the role.

“It’s about developing relationships on the training track, at games, socialising after a game, just being there with players, the crowd and officials,” Pastor Rob told Life FM.

“You don’t have an agenda as a chaplain, there’s times when you might be a sounding board for someone around the club and you’re just there to listen and hear the inevitable frustrations that happen as part of a club.

“Chaplains are people who can just be there to support; it’s certainly not about bible bashing or proselytising, it’s about being there.”

Pastor Rob is in good company, with hundreds of dedicated chaplains currently serving in Australian sports across the nation. Chaplains assist in many facets of a sporting club, including pastoral care, assisting those in distress, navigating grief and loss and building strong and healthy communities.

As well as lending a supportive ear to anyone who needs it, Pastor Rob also helps out where he can with day-to-day tasks at the club like assisting trainers with equipment, filling water bottles and cleaning up around the change rooms after match day.

“Clubs, especially clubs in the country, really need volunteers and thrive with volunteers,” said Rob.

“Sports chaplains are volunteers who provide an extra level of support for a club, especially when things go wrong - I think it is important to be there in the tough times as well as the good times.”

Pastor Rob said he has been embraced as part of the football community, and his presence has been met with grace and respect.

“I think of it as being the presence of Christ in the community, so for me it’s about the church going out to the community, rather than expecting the community to come to the church – there’s conversations I’ve had with a whole range of people that I don’t think I would have had if I didn’t have my role as chaplain, so for me that’s a pretty important thing.”

With COVID-19 shutting down the 2020 football season for the club, Pastor Rob has been out and about supporting members who are playing in other teams in town. He hopes to be back out with the Mallee Park Woodpeckers in 2021.

“Hopefully next year for our 40th anniversary we will be back in the green and gold, and I think the boys are looking forward to it.”

POSITION VACANT: SPORTS CLUB CHAPLAIN



Based in Adelaide’s south parklands, Adelaide Lutheran Sports Club was established over 50 years ago and has around 500 members. We are country and city people that enjoy playing netball, football and cricket at all levels.

We are keen to engage a Chaplain for 2021.

Time commitment is flexible but approximately one Thursday per month (7-9pm) and one Saturday per month (1-6pm).

The role is largely social – being present, enjoying a beer or meal (provided), getting to know players and supporters.

Applications to Chairman tim.stollznov@hotmail.com or 0415 504 056

Adelaide Lutheran Sports Club prides itself on being a ‘country club’ in the city. If you are interested in being part of our friendly and successful club, find us on Facebook or our website www.alsportsclub.com.au



Elcies To Help Fund LCC's Barossa Services

LR: Celebrating the opening of Elcies in Tanunda were Gemma Deane, Babs Deane (LCC Op Shops Manager), Pam Hage (Tanunda Manager), Deborah Davidson, Cindy Schmidtke, Halia Maynard (Tanunda Manager) and Carol Poel.

Barossa locals have a fresh new way to support their community following the opening of Lutheran Community Care's Elcies op shop in Tanunda.

Elcies Tanunda opened in October on the back of the success of LCC's first Elcies store, which opened on The Parade, Norwood, in 2019.

LCC's Marketing and Communications Manager Amelia Dawkins said the new shop had been well-supported in the community so far, with many stopping by for a browse, signing up to volunteer or dropping donations off.

"On opening day, stock was flying off the shelves and all for a great cause," Ms Dawkins said.

All proceeds from Elcies Tanunda will stay in the Barossa and enable LCC to help more local people who present to its Nuriootpa office for assistance.

Ms Dawkins said there had been a growing need for LCC's services in the Barossa region for several years now, with more local people suffering financial hardship and facing homelessness.

"In the 2019/20 financial year, we supported more people at our Nuriootpa office with emergency food and Christmas hampers compared to the previous year," she said.

"Our financial counselling and personal counselling services continue to provide many locals with much-needed support as well. Because of this growing need, we decided to open a new op shop in the Barossa, to help us fund and grow service delivery in the area."

Elcies Tanunda is located at Shop 4, 46 Murray Street, Tanunda, and is open every day but Tuesdays. LCC is always looking for new volunteers. Contact LCC Volunteer Administrator Renee Sevens on 0437 836 134 or rstevens@lccare.org.au



The Christmas tree team

Trees ring in Christmas spirit

Christmas is on the mind year-round for some enterprising Birdwood Lutheran Church members, who grow and distribute Christmas trees as part of an ongoing project.

The venture has been a labour of love, starting as a fundraiser for a new church hall nearly 36 years ago. Around 200 trees were initially planted on a spare block of land beside the church, and were sold to other churches across Adelaide for congregation members and locals to enjoy as Christmas trees.

Today the project sees around 400 trees being planted each year in June, and some 2,000 trees in different stages of growth that need to be looked after year-round. All spare church ground has become a planting site, with trees taking at least four to six years to reach cutting height. Trees also grow on a small plot of neighbouring land, thanks to congregation member Jim Rathjen. These days the money raised from sales goes towards chaplaincy in public schools.

The bulk of the work in caring for the trees is undertaken by a group of men, some who have been involved since the very beginning of the project. The men - Alwyn Pfeiffer, Ian Schubert, Max Ronan and Mark Amber - have dubbed their group 'the AIMM team'. Their work consists of pruning the trees around five times a year, watering them often during the drier months and regularly mowing the surrounding grass. They also install guards to protect the smaller trees, as the young plants are a tempting treat for hungry rabbits and stray goats.

In the two weeks before Christmas the mature trees are cut and delivered by a team of volunteers to the congregations who have placed an order. Trees are also available to the general public from November, and a trip to Birdwood to pick the perfect Christmas tree has become an annual tradition for many.



Regular trimming of every tree is important to maintain shape

Sue Ronan, who acts as the tree sales coordinator, says the project has been a blessing, especially for her husband, Max.

"We moved to Birdwood nine years ago to be with our daughter and we were wondering where our life was leading," she says.

"Alwyn, who was looking to slowly step down from the amount of time he spent pruning trees, asked Max to help him. It has been a blessing as he had only just retired and needed something to help him settle into his new life."

Sue says the time the team spends together means they have really gotten to know and support each other.

"They say they solve the problems of the world while they prune trees."



A beautifully decorated church tree

For Christmas tree enquiries please contact Sue Ronan on 0411 084 556. Trees are \$45 and are cut each Saturday in December at Birdwood Church from 10am - 1pm.



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Young adults 2021

The Blueprint Ministries team has been prayerfully considering how to best support the needs of the young adults in our Lutheran community in the SA-NT District. In 2020, we held an event to welcome young adults moving to the city for study or work and provide them the opportunity to meet others from Adelaide. We are hopeful of growing this event further next year, and providing a regular monthly space for young adults to gather in Christian fellowship and build networks with other young Lutherans.

Barossa CLW

By Rachael Golder
Camp Director

On Friday the 2nd of October, Barossa Christian Life Week held a one-day conference event titled 'United' at Faith Lutheran College in Tanunda. It was a very successful and encouraging day, with over 70 leaders and participants attending. Over 20 of the participants had never been on camp before, so a one-day event was perfect for introducing young high schoolers to what a Christian Life Week is all about.

The event was a snapshot of one day on camp, with two worship services, small group time, games, community time and electives. The speaker, Andy Traeger, gave two fantastic messages on the importance of Christian unity, how this serves God's mission and our own personal roles within that. It was the perfect reminder that amongst the unknowns and isolation of this year, we are never separated from God's love and the good news of Gospel. Our coordinating team is so grateful for the opportunity to come together as a Barossa community, and the joy that Christian community brings. We look forward to (hopefully) returning to our week-long camp next year!



The 2020 Christmas Family Faith Trail is here!

A resource for families, congregations and other ministries, this year's trail is based around the themes of peace, love, hope, joy and worship. Designed for pre-school and primary aged children, this year the trail also features an 'all ages' section. To download a copy visit the Blueprint Ministries website.

October camp.online

Camp.online was again held in the October school holidays – it was great to be able to gather together and see each other, even though it was from afar. Lots of fun was had by all.



Blueprint 2021 calendar of events

SPIN Kids Camp	Year 4-6 (in 2020)	12-15 January
RENEW Young Adults Camp	Young Adults	5-8 February
NOVO District Youth Camp	Year 7-12	16-19 April
Blueprint Ministries Appeal Dinner	All welcome	29 May
Adelaide Hills and Barossa CLWs	Year 7-12	5-9 July
Adelaide Metro CLW	Year 7-12	12-16 July
Junior Christian Life Camp	Year 4-7	12-15 July
Riverland, LMSE and Port Hughes CLWs	Year 7-12	27 Sept – 1 Oct

Images supplied



The Hon John Gardner MP, Minister for Education, presents Tyla with her award. Inset: Rex Arthur Glasson

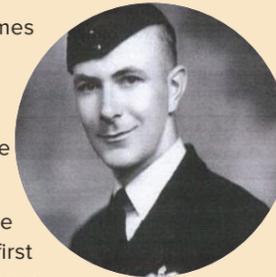
Tyla's ANZAC tribute

Tyla Peters, a year 10 Endeavour College student, has recently been awarded for her ANZAC tribute essay, a project that has helped to keep her own family ANZAC legacy alive.

Tyla was presented with a Premier's ANZAC Spirit School Prize for her research essay focussing on the life of her great-great-uncle, Rex Arthur Glasson, who served as a bomber pilot during World War II. Rex was killed at just 25 years of age, when his plane went down off the coast of Belgium in 1944.

Tyla's interest in her family history was supported by her grandfather, who had taken possession of Rex's personal belongings. Together, the pair spent countless hours learning about Rex's life. Tyla also visited Rex's memorial plaque in Canberra, with the moment cementing her decision to participate in the ANZAC Spirit Awards, so she could spend more time researching her family history.

The journey was sometimes an emotional one for Tyla, especially when learning of Rex's family circumstances at the time of his death.



"Rex's young wife Yvonne was pregnant with their first child when he left for Europe, and gave birth to their son, Jeffrey, while Rex was serving with the RAF," said Tyla.

"Consequently Rex never had the opportunity to meet his son. He had so much to look forward to with a young wife who loved him dearly and a newborn son who would grow up never knowing his father, other than through stories from his family."

Tyla was formally presented with a medallion and certificate by The Hon John Gardner MP, Minister for Education, in a ceremony at ANZAC House. Due to restrictions the intended prize – a trip to France – had to be changed, and will instead take the form of a trip to Darwin and Canberra.

Images supplied

Grant for digital ministry

An LLL Mission Resource Grant has allowed the continuation of an innovative online communication platform created by Unity College in Murray Bridge, as well as supporting the local Music Ministry.

The school began live-streaming devotions, assemblies and other school-wide events during the COVID-19 pandemic in an effort to reach parents and other community members when they were unable to come together in person. The concept was met with great feedback and a realisation that going online was giving many regional and remote contacts the opportunity to engage, something they weren't able to do even pre-COVID.

While the technology was initially set up as a temporary arrangement, an LLL Mission Resource Grant has meant that more permanent measures could be put in place – supporting the school's mission to reach the wider community through digital means.

Music Ministry, a joint venture between the Lutheran Churches of Murray Bridge, will also benefit from the grant as they share Unity College's facilities to conduct regular worship services. Mirroring the school's experience, Music Ministry discovered the value of a streamed digital service when moving to online worship during the pandemic.

"This has been especially evident in our ability to reach a broader and diverse audience and engage in a manner that is non-threatening and comfortable for many," said Ministry Leader, Alexandra Westlake.

"Music Ministry believes investing in digital ministry means investing in the future, and the ability to reach the gospel to the world."

Grant funds have gone towards the purchase of equipment – including a PTZ camera, stream deck controller, multi-view screen, output monitor and other AV accessories.

Adam Yeager, Senior Chaplain at Unity College, said another benefit of the new technology is the learning opportunity for students, with many getting involved and exploring new ways to communicate.

"The new equipment has allowed us to engage students who have a passion for audio video production and has created a new avenue for them to explore and express their various gifts and talents," he said.

"We are excited about how this new production equipment can be utilised to spread the gospel."



Unity College Media Team students: Kayne Moffat, Lachlan Mann, Brayden Denman and Carsyn Hobbs.



Above: Pastor Rodney celebrates his final run for the month.
 Insets: Pastor Rodney's running views.



180km to turn lives around

While running is part of regular life for Pastor Rodney Witmitz from Hallett Cove Lutheran Church, he was recently inspired to turn the solitary pursuit into one with a broader purpose – to change lives.

"I can run, it takes a bit more careful planning nowadays with a few injuries and limitations and I can't run every day, but I'm grateful to still be able to run strong with careful nurture – so why not set a goal and do it for the benefit of others too," said Pastor Rodney.

That goal was to fundraise for ministry in Uganda as well as for chaplaincy support for local children. Pastor Rodney decided to up the ante on his usual running distance of 100-120km per month, setting himself a new target of 180km for the month of September, and the motto '180km to turn lives 180° around' was born.

"The idea was to inspire people to look at what they can do and how this can also be utilized to serve others for the Lord," said Pastor Rodney.

"The invitation was also put out to the rest of the congregation to join in with the 180° turn for their own lives too – reading 18 verses a day of scripture, or getting out to walk 180 days, or whatever else."



By September's end Pastor Rodney had managed to outrun his goal, totalling a distance of 210km and raising \$1200 in the process.

Reflecting gods love



Professional Standards Department updates

By **Dave Biar and Holly Koning**
 Professional Standards Officer &
 Professional Standards Assistant

We would like to say an enormous THANK YOU to all the SP3 Coordinators in our congregations. The tireless work of these individuals has been ongoing as restrictions and regulations constantly changed throughout the year, not just due to COVID but also in response to royal commission outcomes and changes in legislation.

We are grateful for the work and positive can-do attitudes of these volunteers and ask that you continue to support them and all volunteers who work with children and other vulnerable people.

As we reflect on this very different year, we have seen congregations rise to the challenge of meeting members outside of church buildings, safely reaching out and continuing to support their communities. It has been wonderful to hear of how old programs have been tailored to meet the standards of this 'new normal', and see emerging programs created to continue building community throughout South Australia and the Northern Territory.

The new year presents an opportunity to review the safety planning for 2021 programs, continuing to incorporate COVID precautions into our normal risk management processes.

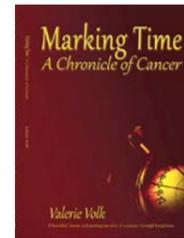
Face-to-face training will recommence in February for both the full workshop and the refresher. We are already planning for these and encourage congregations to review your potential training requirements now and contact us to arrange for a trainer to visit your church community.

As always, we are here to assist you and if you have any concerns or questions please do not hesitate to contact us at the District Office.

In Brief

New book

Marking Time – A Chronicle of Cancer, is a new book by Valerie Volk, a member of Immanuel Lutheran Church, Novar Gardens and former teacher at Immanuel College, Adelaide. Lincoln Size, CEO of Cancer Council SA, describes the book as "a poignant collection of poems that will help an individual who is currently living with, or supporting someone through, a cancer diagnosis."



The book is available from www.valeriovolk.com.au with a percentage of sale proceeds donated to Cancer Council SA.

Messages of appreciation

The District Office admin team recently spent a day handcrafting cards with a special message of support for pastors' wives. A gift of a scarf was also sent alongside each card, to acknowledge the challenges faced this year due to COVID-19 and to let the families of our pastors know that we appreciate their part in carrying the burdens that this has created.



Thank you for continuing to pray for our pastors and their families, who, like many of us, have faced several changes in a short timeframe this year.

Top of the Valley

The combined members of Birdwood, Lobethal, Spring Head and Woodside Lutheran churches recently worshipped together as Top of the Valley congregation. The special 'Looking Forward, Looking Back' service focussed on support and healing from last summer's bushfires, and was held outdoors, 'under the oak' at Birdwood. Read more about the history of the Top of the Valley churches in the news section on our website.



Community Fete

The Golden Grove Lutheran community hosted a very successful spring fete in October. Held at Golden Grove Lutheran Church and Primary School, the fete was a fantastic day out for locals with over 1500 people attending. The fete featured a huge range of stalls, food, family activities, entertainment and competitions.



New Langmeil youth space

A bright, refreshed space has given youth and families a new lease on life at Langmeil Lutheran Church. The church team used downtime during the COVID-19 pandemic to plan and work on a renovation of the old Kids Church area. Head to the news section on our website to see more of this project.



LCC rebrand

Founded 50 years ago on the principles of the Lutheran Church, Lutheran Community Care (LCC) continues to be a champion of advocacy and equity, serving those most vulnerable or in need within our communities.

Over the next few months, Lutheran Community Care will be transitioning its name and brand identity to Lutheran Care, reflecting its evolution in an ever-changing sector and the growing demand for increased services.

The transition to the new branding is expected to be complete by March 2021.



Congratulations

A big congratulations to Pastor Shaun Manning and his wife, Jacqui, who were recently married. Pastor Shaun was installed at Naracoorte Parish earlier this year.



Images supplied



How far will your gift of grace go this COVID Christmas?

Who knows how long COVID-19 will keep us apart from those we care about? Until Christmas?

This year, more than ever before, we need to find ways to connect with those we care about. Our own friends and families. Families in the world's poorest countries threatened by poverty, conflict and COVID-19.

That's why this year's ALWS Gifts of Grace is packed with Connect at Christmas ideas:

- **21 gifts** based on the words of Jesus in Matthew 25:34-40 (*I was hungry ...*)
- **5 gifts** under \$10 (*Sunday school, primary school, grandchildren*)
- **as many Grace Cards as you like** (*recycled, packed by volunteers*)

Each *Gift of Grace* helps people like Venenanda from Burundi, the mum of the children you see in the photo.

'Before I didn't even know how to read and write, but now I can write my name on paper! *Learning Kit* – \$16 I am hoping you will continue to help people like me. An iron roof would be good and some kitchen pots. ***Build a house* – \$243** I hope I can learn about growing the trees in the nursery too. ***Farming Kit* – \$66** If I keep growing in knowledge, I know that this will improve my life.'

Each friend or family member who receives a Grace Card you send will be reminded how much you care for them ... and inspired by seeing your values at work bringing love to life. What a gift of grace you will be!



This COVID Christmas, *Gifts of Grace* can bring you close ... no matter how far away you may be!

1300 763 407 * alws.org.au/grace

