



LCA Pastoral Care Nurse **NOTES & NEWS**

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Multicultural ministry



Almost from the beginning, Lutheranism in Australia and New Zealand has been multicultural, though very few probably thought in those terms.

Lutheranism was brought to Australia by religious refugees seeking to escape persecution in Germany and find freedom to follow their conscience in worship and belief, and also by missionaries from Germany who brought the gospel to Australia's indigenous people in Central Australia and north Queensland. Later, my grandfather came as a graduate pastor from the Concordia Seminary in St Louis, USA, to bring the gospel to the indigenous people of South Australia's west coast.

For years, language and cultural differences kept Lutherans somewhat isolated from other Australians generally. Then came the impact of two wars with Germany, that saw Lutherans treated with suspicion and distrust by Australians generally. Lutheran schools were closed, place names changed, some pastors interned (even one whose son was serving in the Australian armed forces at the time!), and some Lutheran churches were burnt.

Some German Lutheran missionaries came to New Zealand, seeking to bring the gospel to the Maori people particularly of the Chatham and Ruapuke Islands. Small numbers of Lutheran settlers came from Germany (often via Australia), but from the 1870s on large numbers came from Scandinavia – particularly Denmark – seeking a new life after a disastrous war with Germany. Danish language congregations were established. The war history with Germany kept them apart from other Lutherans until the mid 20th century.

In Australia, the efforts of the missionaries led people of many Aboriginal nations to faith

and baptism, and into the Lutheran church. Now, increasing efforts are being made to understand and incorporate Aboriginal culture into church life.

The aftermath of World War 2 brought thousands of refugee Lutherans to our shores, particularly from countries such as Estonia, Latvia, Germany, Finland, and various south-east Europe countries. Ethnic congregations were established to minister to many of these people in their own language and culture.

More recent years have seen large numbers of people from countries such as China, Vietnam, Cambodia, India, Papua New Guinea, and various parts of Africa coming to call Australia and New Zealand home.

The greater part of my own parish ministry in Perth in WA, suburban Geelong in Victoria, and Wellington, NZ, was among post-war immigrant people.

During my time as President (Bishop) of the Lutheran Church of NZ, Lynette and I also regularly ran three-day orientation courses in our home for incoming pastors and their wives. Most of these pastors were young Australians, either just out of seminary or who had just spent three or four years in their first parish. Many – particularly the wives – experienced at least mild culture shock, without recognising it. They came, not realising the subtle cultural differences that exist between Australia and New Zealand!

Sessions covered the history and structure of the LCNZ, the health system, school dental



services, social services, government system and taxation, what to do in an earthquake, and language differences. (In Wellington, suburban trains are ‘units’; shacks are ‘baches’; and press studs are ‘domes’, as Lynette discovered after fruitlessly searching various shops for some weeks!) In the supermarkets, brands and packaging were often different, and one session was spent helping wives in particular deal with their ‘frustrations’ in not being able to find what they wanted!

This is an area where Pastoral Care Nurses can play a significant role in helping newcomers understand and fit into their new life in a culture that may be quite different from where they grew up. The particular benefit Pastoral Care Nurses can offer is to help newcomers understand and navigate our somewhat complicated health system.

The LCA/NZ has established a Cross Cultural

Ministry division within the Local Mission department, to nurture an inclusive missional culture and boost the confidence of members to reach out to people of other cultural backgrounds. The aim is to see cross-cultural communities developed, strengthened, and integrated into the life of the church. Craig Heidenreich has been appointed to facilitate this ministry.

Major and minor grants are now available for congregations that need financial help to develop a cross-cultural mission and ministry. Major grant applications close on 30 September each year and minor grant applications are open year-round.

A *Cross-Cultural Ministry Grant Booklet* available from the churchwide office is essential reading prior to submitting any grant application; it provides details of grant assessment criteria and reporting requirements.

Robert J Wiebusch



PCNs’ ‘Johnny Farnham’

Shirley Klinge is earning the nickname ‘Johnny Farnham’ at the Tabeel Lutheran aged-care facility at Laidley in Queensland, for repeatedly coming out of retirement! She had previously served there as Director of Nursing for a number of years.

More recently, she has been serving as Acting Chaplain, and again came out of retirement (just after being farewelled!) to fill the same role for two weeks in October, while the pastor had cataract surgery!



LPNI Study Tours



Registrations are now being received for the **2022** tour to Alice Springs on 22-28 September. While it seems unlikely that Australia’s borders will be open to general international travellers before the middle of next year, planning is continuing on the assumption that it will be possible for the tour to proceed. Registration forms are available from: robert.wiebusch@lca.org.au Should anything unexpected force the cancellation of the tour, full refunds will be made.

It is now likely that the 2023 study tour will be to Romania rather than the adjoining Ukraine.