

NSW & ACT District: Strategic Directions

WALKING TOGETHER IN MISSION

A MAP FOR THE JOURNEY

March 2019

Updated December 2020

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Terminology:

Strategic directions: Map for the journey including vision, mission, essential ingredients, strategic priorities within the context of our identity, character, values and situation.

Strategic priorities: immediate priorities for the coming years

Jeremiah 32:38-41

³⁸ They will be my people, and I will be their God. ³⁹ I will give them singleness of heart and action, so that they will always fear me and that all will then go well for them and for their children after them. ⁴⁰ I will make an everlasting covenant with them: I will never stop doing good to them, and I will inspire them to fear me, so that they will never turn away from me. ⁴¹ I will rejoice in doing them good and will assuredly plant them in this land with all my heart and soul.

A. Introduction

We live in a dramatically changing context, with considerable uncertainty. The Church faces challenges and uncertainties.

In 2014 LCA NSW & ACT Synod requested a Review of the District including future strategies for Christ centred ministry and mission. The Review began in 2017 (to follow the National LCA Review). The *MAP for the JOURNEY* was the Review's Report to DCC in May 2019 and to Synod in March 2020 where it was discussed and endorsed. The focus since the Synod is on implementation. See Attachments for details of the Review process and findings and next steps.

The Augsburg Confession, one of the principle documents of the Lutheran Church, contains two articles which speak about the Church. One article speaks of the enduring nature of the church and reminds that the Church which is the assembly of the saints will remain forever. It goes on to say that wherever the Gospel is preached and the Sacraments administered rightly, there the saints of God - the Church- are to be found.

So external structures – denominations, Districts, even congregations, are not the Church, but provided that the Gospel is proclaimed and the Sacraments administered, in these places the Church is to be found.

When speaking of the Church, Scripture often uses the word picture of a plant bearing fruit, or a crop producing a harvest, (see for example Matthew 13, Mark 12, John 15, Psalm 1, Galatians 5 & 6).

God's Word uses this picture to teach and encourage us. Like plants that rely on sun, soil, and water, the Church is fully dependent on receiving from God the Father, Son, and Spirit. Through Word and Sacrament we receive life from God by the death and resurrection of Jesus.

Like a plant growing through seasons, the Church likewise grows through natural and necessary seasonal change. One part of the plant may die or be pruned, but another part grows and bears fruit. Like a crop growing in a field, the visible Church is embedded in a constantly changing external context. The changing environment is uncertain, and perhaps at times frightening. Yet God, the farmer and gardener, protects and nurtures his Church, always producing a harvest for his kingdom.

Map for the Journey: Purpose

The purpose of the NSW & ACT's Map for the Journey is to support congregations and Ministries walking together to achieve our mission.

This Map is not a 'blueprint'. It is a map of the landscape and ways through the landscape. It is an aid for the journey.

If it's a useful map it will help in creating and taking opportunities to bring together the skills, talents and creativity of the NSW & ACT's people, congregations and ministries on the journey in mission together.

Terminology

<i>District</i>	NSW & ACT of the LCA.
<i>Congregations</i>	Lutheran Congregations in NSW and ACT members of the LCA. Congregations include ministries that are part of congregations.
<i>District ministries</i>	Ministries accountable to the NSW & ACT (as distinct from being accountable to a congregation).
<i>Ministries</i>	Both ministries that are part of NSW & ACT congregations and District ministries.

B. Our Identity, Character and Values*

Our Identity

In the words of the classic Lutheran summary of faith, we believe that we are saved 'by grace, for Christ's sake, through faith'. In other words, there is nothing we can do to earn God's favour or to gain eternal life. Through his death and resurrection, Jesus Christ has won all this and more for us.

What follows is that:

We are confessional. The LCA confesses the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as 'the only source and norm of its faith, doctrines, and life', and accepts the Creeds and the Lutheran Confessions 'as true expositions of the Word of God'.

We are evangelical. We proclaim the good news of Christ's life, his crucifixion, resurrection and ascension. We witness that, despite our brokenness, we are forgiven, saved and justified by God's grace for Christ's sake through faith alone.

We are sacramental. We live our life together in the community of the church, as we are served in worship by the Triune God through the proclamation of the word of God, both law and gospel, and in the sacraments of Holy Communion and Baptism.

We serve, as we are freed by Christ in faith to love and serve our neighbour. Our service in the world and our care for creation are integral to our Lutheran identity.

We are ecumenical. The LCA confesses 'the one holy, catholic and apostolic church' and resolves to serve and actively promote Christian unity and witness throughout the world.

We are synodical. We walk together as individuals, congregations and agencies to bring to life the Objects of the Church.

Values

Our values are derived from our Lutheran identity: 'grace alone, faith alone, scripture alone', all summed up in 'Christ alone'. Through faith in Christ, by the work of the Holy Spirit we are a church:

Shaped by the Gospel of Grace

The love of God in Christ is an undeserved gift from God. It is the transforming agent and motivation for all we do in ministry and mission (2 Cor 5:14). We humbly come before God, who alone strengthens and equips us for our tasks.

United in Christ

We are blessed by God with diverse backgrounds, talents, skills and opportunities. The Spirit brings us together as members of the body of Christ through one baptism.

Blessed by Relationships

We acknowledge that God's love is often seen and experienced most clearly within relationships. So, we support and respect one another. We listen to and learn from one another, to sustain and build up one another and our communities in the bond of love.

Inspired by Compassion

We are called to love in actions as well as by words. We strive to serve with the heart of Christ and we serve with the gifts of the Spirit. We join with Jesus in especially serving those people who are suffering, disadvantaged and marginalised.

Marked by Integrity

As faithful stewards of God's blessings, we strive for excellence in all we do. We are accountable to the people we serve, to each other, to our wider communities and to those who have entrusted resources to us.

*** LCA Strategic Direction 2013 - 2018**

C. Our context

Australian Society and Lutherans in Australia

Australian society

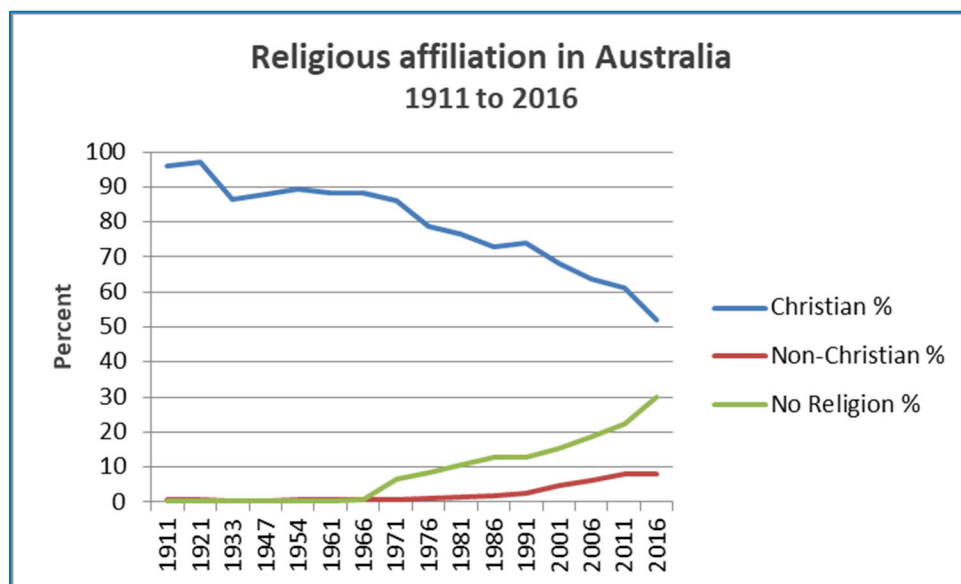
Australian society is going through dramatic change in many areas - social, political, economic, environmental and religious.

Within the religious context some of the changes are:

- a) Secularisation
- b) Loss of trust in Churches and institutions
- c) Young people of all faiths much less interested than their parents to be part of a church
- d) Changes to who people interact with and the ways people interact with each other because of changes in technology (e.g. social media, online forums, video calls and conferences).

In 1911, 96% of Australians identified as Christian in the Census. 0.8% identified as non-Christian and 0.4% no religion.

In 2016, 52% of Australians identified as Christian in the Census 8.2% identified as non-Christian and 30.1% no religion.



All churches are facing challenges and uncertainties.

Lutherans in Australia

In 2018 the Lutheran Church in Australia was 180 years old. It was established in part by German settlers from Prussia fleeing persecution and seeking a new home where they could live their faith without compromising their core beliefs.

Between 1838 and 1868, over 20,000 German immigrants came to Australia, settling across the country.

In 1991 346,000 people in Australia identified as Lutheran in the Census, in 2016 it was 174,000.

In 1993 there were 100,000 baptised members and 67,100 attendance at Sunday service.

In 2011 there were 67,000 baptised members and 28,700 attendance at Sunday service.

Lutherans in NSW & the ACT

Population

In 1991 53,100 people in NSW identified as Lutheran in the Census, in 2016 it was 20,500.

In 1991 6,100 people in the ACT identified as Lutheran in the Census, in 2016 it was 2,300.

Congregations

In NSW and the ACT there are 53 Congregation/Sites with an average weekly attendance (AWA) of approximately 1,770.

Some congregations are multi-site congregations; some are single site congregations.

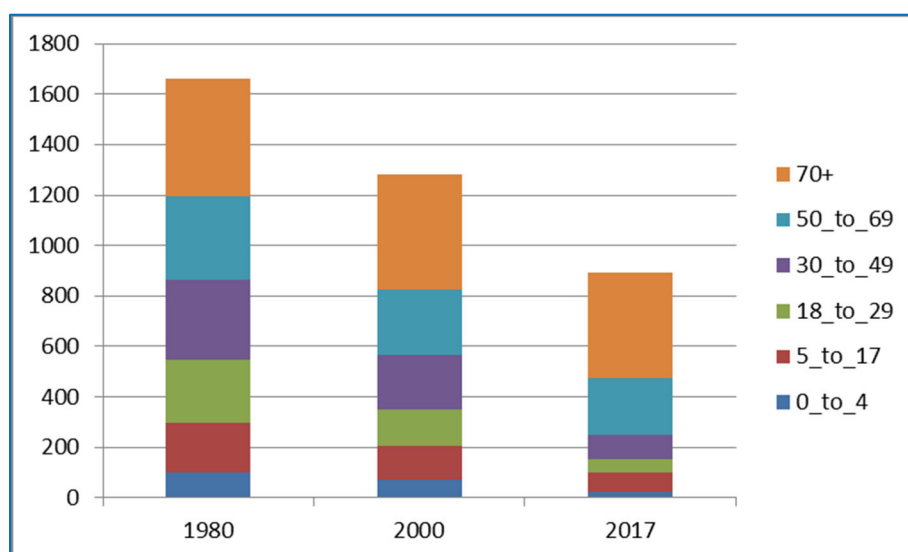
This distribution of the 53 Congregations/Sites by size is:

<i>Congregations/Sites: Size by Region*</i>							
Size	Size Nos AWA	Canberra	Coast North & South	North West	Riverina	Sydney	Total
Very Small	< = 20	4	1	6	7	4	22
Small	21 <= 50	1	3	2	5	6	17
Medium	51 <= 100	2	1	0	7	2	12
Large	>= 100	1	0	0	0	1	2
TOTAL		8	5	8	19	13	53

* Greater Sydney has been included as one region and Coast North & South combined for reporting above.

There are 22 congregations/sites with 20 or less AWA. There are 2 with more than 100 AWA.

There are 19 congregations/sites where data is available by attendance by age group for 1980, 2000 and 2017. For these 19 congregations/sites AWA was 1600 in 1980, 1200 in 2000 and 800 in 2017.



The biggest losses from 1980 to 2017 are in the 0 to 49 age groups.

Pastors

In 2018 there were 26 active pastors and 9 retired pastors (active in the NSW & ACT).

35 of the 53 congregations/sites had pastors. 18 congregations/sites were vacant.

District Ministries

Congregations each have their own ministries. There are also District Ministries (accountable to the District, rather than an individual congregation). District Ministries include:

St Pauls College, Walla

St Paul's is a Christian secondary school in the Lutheran tradition – specialising in programs in equine, academics, agriculture, and boarding.

It's both an educational setting and community, that is committed to proclaiming Christ and the core values of Love, Humility, Justice, Hope, Courage, Compassion, Service, Forgiveness, Appreciation and Quality.

Warrambui

A retreat and conference centre 40 minutes north of the centre of Canberra. It offers full catering and accommodation facilities for school, church, and community groups up to 210 people, serving over 7000 people each year.

Warrambui supports the mission of the LCA NSW & ACT by providing subsidies to Lutheran events and hosting an internship program which has been training and growing leaders for over 25 years. It also supports regional churches by providing a venue for retreats, camps and ministry training.

Turning Point Ministries

The NSW Lutheran Church has a long history of youth camps from the days when tents were pitched along the Murray River by the Lutheran Youth of NSW to events for all ages organised by Turning Point Ministries.

Turning Point Ministries (TPM) is the child, youth and family ministry of the NSW Lutheran Church, inspiring hope by resourcing LCA NSW communities in growing disciples of Jesus Christ. They currently offer up to nine (9) camps per year.

Lutheran Aged Care Albury

Lutheran Aged Care Albury provides a full range of high quality aged care and residential communities support services focussed on the Albury/Wodonga Region.

Lutheran Aged Care is about the Christian values of service to others, care, compassion, honesty and integrity.

District Supported Ministries

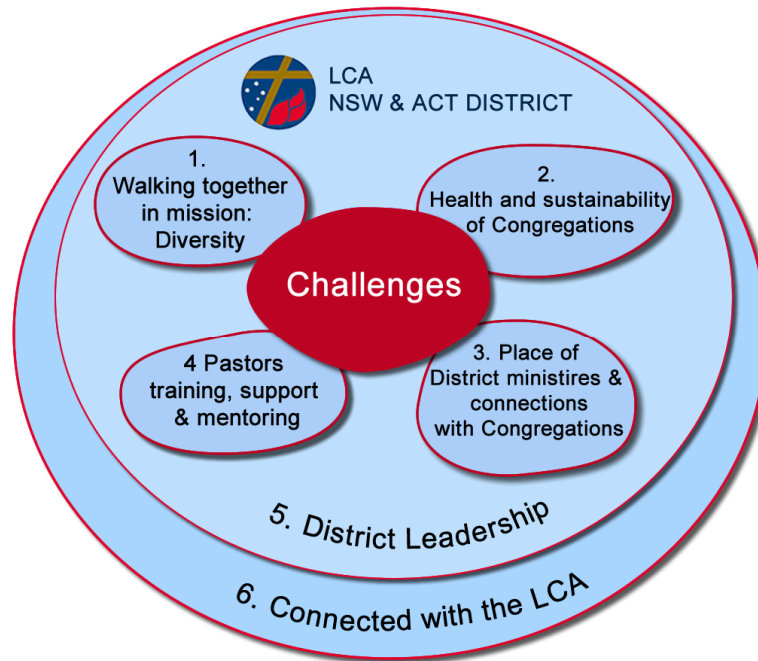
The District also supports other independent ministries, for example:

FRONTIER

FRONTIER is a traineeship program in missional leadership and practice. It is an initiative of and based at St Luke's Lutheran Church, Albury. It is accountable to St Luke's as a congregational ministry. It is supported by the NSW & ACT.

D. Our challenges on the road ahead

As we consider the journey God is taking us on, we need to be aware of some challenges and natural divergences within the district.



1. Walking together in mission

We are a diverse District; diverse regions; diverse congregations; diverse ministries; diverse individuals; a range of theological views.

The society in which we live is dramatically changing and hugely diverse.

How can we walk together in mission?

2. Health and sustainability of Congregations

Congregations each have their own journey. They see themselves differently, e.g. :

- Shrinking or possibly dying
- Struggling
- Maintaining
- Growing
- Planting.

Some congregations see themselves as inward looking, others outward looking.

How can each congregation be supported in its journey and the transitions it's called to, e.g.:

- Maintenance to growth
- To supporting planting
- To planting
- To re-birth.

As Congregations age and/or become smaller in size:

- Congregations are less able to afford pastors
- There are less active people in the congregation so pastors can be asked/expected to do more

How can pastors and congregations best be organised?

3. The place of District Ministries and connections with congregations

District ministries include:

- a) St Paul's College Walla Walla - started by a congregation
- b) Lutheran Aged Care (Albury)- started by a congregation
- c) Warrambui Conference Centre
- d) Turning Point Ministries

How are the District Ministries and Congregations connected? Synergising with each other?

4. Pastors' training, support and mentoring

Pastors have a key role in the health and sustainability of congregations and ministries. Pastors are called on to do more as there are less active people in congregations. As congregations change the skills needed by pastors change.

How are pastors appropriately trained?

How are pastors mentored?

How are pastors supported?

5. District Leadership

Leadership has many connotations:

- Servant leadership - one wants to serve others first
- Seeing the bigger picture - have a vision - bringing others along with you
- Holding others to account, telling others what to do
- Giving or withholding permission
- People working to serve the leader
- An individual leader
- A leadership team

The "District" has multiple connotations:

- An administrative centre/support for congregations
- Synodical expression of the LCA in NSW
- A larger group than a congregation walking in mission together

What leadership does the District need? What does it look like?

6. The District, part of, and connected with the whole LCA

The NSW & ACT is part of the Lutheran Church of Australia and New Zealand.

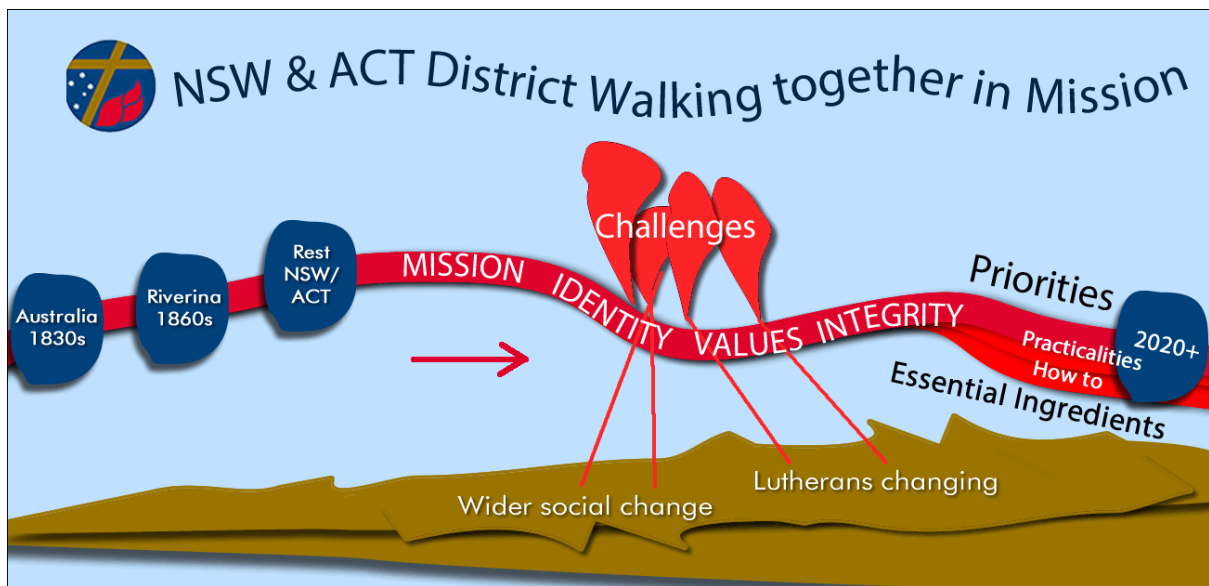
The NSW & ACT works collaboratively with the LCA.

Where are the important organisational points for collaboration between the District and the LCA?

Questions for the LCA include:

What districts should there be in the future?

E. The NSW & ACT: A MAP for the Journey



Mission

The Mission of the District is: Walking together in Mission.

Just as God sent Jesus to bring forgiveness of sins and salvation to our world so he sends us to bring the good news to people everywhere so that they may also know the love and grace of Jesus.

Vision

Our vision is to see God's love in Christ coming to life in people everywhere through a Lutheran Church that carries out the Great Commission by joyfully receiving, living and sharing the Gospel (c.f. 1 John 4: 9-12).

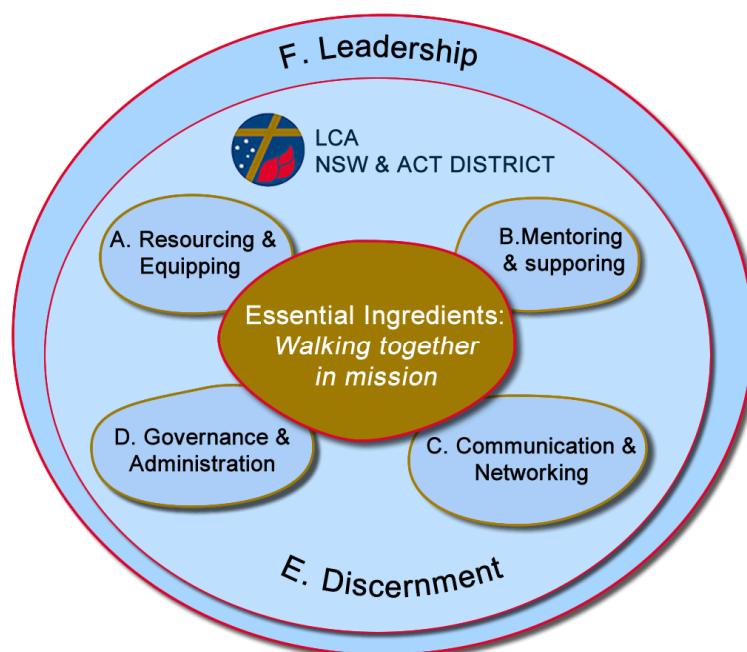
We achieve the vision together. Being part of a bigger picture better enables us to embody the Gospel robustly in community and individually, and better enables us to be caring and intentional in pastoral work and missional in terms of seeing converts.

Actions of God's people we would notice where the vision is coming to life:

- Baptisms - adult baptisms are likely to take place
- Congregational ministries and worship which are contextually relevant
- Congregations maintaining members
- Congregations prepared for (and welcoming of) new members and having new members
- Church planting
- Congregations retaining young people
- Training and enabling people in the church to share the Gospel with not-yet-believers
- Following up new believers with some form of discipleship training
- Aware the goal of mission and ministry is followers of Christ with the habits of disciples: praying, worshiping, reading scripture, serving in ministry locally and in the world, sharing time, abilities and wealth, spiritual friendships and fellowship.
- Resourcing and encouraging new ways of doing things.
- Support ministries to connect with young people and welcome them into our communities
- Connecting youth relationships between camp ministries and congregations
- Supporting and enabling congregations to undertake inter-congregational ministry – including education and practice.

Essential ingredients

Essential ingredients for the NSW & ACT to achieve the District mission include:



A. Resourcing and Equipping

Leaders, pastors, congregations, ministries to fulfil their mission effectively:

- Identifying, curating and promoting resources
- Encouraging and enabling the sharing of resources (including information about funds (such as grant availability), knowledge/expertise, etc.)
- Training
- Permission and authorising (accountability) for new starts/ministries/approaches
- Planning what's needed
- Resourcing and equipping projects (including arranging for facilities).

B. Mentoring and supporting

Pastors and congregational leadership

- Spiritual care
- Mentoring
- Leadership development
- Coaching

C. Communication and networking

Within and across the whole District

- Facilitating different parts of the body of Christ supporting each other
- Connecting with ministry areas and providing opportunities for inter-ministry collaboration
- Communication channels

D. Governance and administration

Of the District

- Governance (incl legal & financial)
- Administration
- Research, insurance, regulatory issues, compliance,
- LCA Church office and its functions

E. Discernment

Listening – to individuals, congregations, ministries in their contexts, in their challenges

- Listening
- Discerning e.g.
 - What are District priorities?
 - Which ministry ideas & contexts to support?

F. Leadership

Of the District: Bishop and leadership Teams

- Leadership of the District through the Bishop and Leadership Team(s)

Strategic priorities



Walking together in mission

Walking together in mission is the purpose of the District. It is the first and foremost priority.

Walking together in mission happens in people's lives. It can be enabled and supported through:

- a) Implementing strategic priorities and projects
- b) Aligning, where appropriate of the District Office, District's Ministries and Congregations with the strategic priorities.
- c) Reviewing the strategic priorities implementation - are the priorities on track and continuing to be relevant?

Holding *Walking together in mission* as the first and foremost priority will shape both day to day operations and strategic priorities and projects.

Within the context of walking together in mission there six **interconnected** priorities.

- A1. Supporting congregations and ministries in mission and ministry
- A2. Supporting congregations and ministries in transition
- B1. Alternative models of ministry that best serve the District
- B2. Planting and renewing congregations
- C1. Networking and connections between congregations and ministries
- C2. District Leadership through the Bishop leading Leadership Teams

While the six priorities are all interconnected, A1 and A2 are particularly connected with supporting existing congregations and ministries and B1 and B2 looking at new possibilities and C1 and C2 providing the networks and leadership to help get the work done.

A1. Supporting congregations and ministries in mission and ministry

The diversity of congregations in the NSW & ACT also reflects a diversity in the health and mission and ministry focus of the congregations in the NSW & ACT.

Key ingredients for supporting congregations and ministries in mission and ministry include:

- a) Listening to congregations and ministries - to lead to tailor made action
- b) Building relationships with congregations and ministries
- c) Researching appropriate human, financial and educational resources.
- d) An individual or a team in place working with congregations/ministries
- e) Networking and communication across the District.

A2. Supporting congregations and ministries in transition

There are many way points in congregations' journeys. Times of transition are times of additional challenge, where support from the District can be crucial. Congregations are at different points on the journey:

Congregations that have a limited future
Congregations that are starting to catch a vision
Congregations ripe for renewal and growth
Congregations that . . .

The NSW & ACT can take a key role in supporting congregations and ministries in their transitions through:

- a) Identifying common journeys and transitions
- b) Facilitator / strategic planner to open a conversation about the vision and mission of the congregations that are struggling.
- c) Assisting congregations to participate in Renewing and Planting initiatives and training; or helping congregations to end well.

Congregations that may need particular support are those that have a limited future. This could include conversations about is there a legacy that you can leave for another congregation, the district, church planting etc. How can Word and sacrament ministry continue to be provided?

B1. Alternative Models of ministry that best serve the District

The District is made up of diverse congregations and ministries at various points on their journeys.

A single model of ministry (e.g. one congregation/one pastor) for all congregations is neither appropriate nor feasible in the NSW & ACT.

Alternative models of ministry that best serve the regions of the NSW & ACT that take into account rural / city needs and supply needs, will be explored.

The exploration will include:

- a) Recruiting a team to explore options
- b) Exploring what other churches are doing and learning from them.
- c) Exploring training and resources required to implement each model.
- d) Presenting possible models to DCC for implementation.

B2. Renewing and Planting

The LCA has an active strategy around renewing and planting. The LCA and the NSW & ACT encourage congregations to self-identify as a sending church to plant new churches or a partner to a sending church. There are resources and training for both around congregational renewal, i.e. how to become healthy, mission shaped and multiplying. Renewing and planting is a standing agenda item for DCC.

This work needs to be further developed. Key ingredients include:

- a) Communication with pastors and congregational leaders.
- b) Long term planning: continuing the Sydney Committee and then progressing into other regions.
- c) Structural framework for placing people and resources.
- d) Articulate and communicate what a healthy, mission shaped and multiplying congregation is.
- e) Identifying additional sending, partner or not ready congregations.
- f) Identifying and working with relevant traineeship programs in missional leadership and practice.
- g) Providing opportunities for District Ministries to also be connected and involved with church planting.
- h) Resourcing and implementing specific planting and renewing projects.

C1. Networking and communication between congregations and ministries

Networking and communication between congregations/ministries is an essential part of all of the priorities.

It is identified separately here to emphasise its importance.

As each of the priorities is operationalised networking and communication strategies will be built into the priorities.

C2. District Leadership through the Bishop leading Leadership Teams

As noted above leadership has many connotations (not all of which are appropriate for District Leadership) e.g.

- Servant leadership - one wants to serve others first
- Seeing the bigger picture - have a vision - bringing others along with you
- Holding others to account, telling others what to do
- Giving or withholding permission
- People working to serve the leader
- An individual leader
- A leadership team

The “District” has multiple connotations:

- An administrative centre/support for congregations
- Synodical expression of the LCA in NSW
- A larger group than a congregation walking in mission together

Key ingredients for leadership that are required in the District include:

- a) The Bishop has a leadership role in the District
- b) It's servant leadership - serve others first
- c) It's seeing the bigger picture - having a vision - and bringing others along
- d) It's modelling the District mission, vision, values - walking the talk.
- e) It will be best achieved through teams which have more connections and interactions than one single person
- f) It's through permission giving to empower and release people to act to achieve the mission.
- g) It's mentoring future leaders; leading the leaders.

The Bishop will need a team(s) around him to implement this vision. The Bishop's Leadership Team(s) will be distinct from District Church Council. DCC is a governance body. Work will be needed to clarify the respective roles of the Bishop's Leadership Team(s) and DCC.

F. Next Steps

In 2014 LCA NSW & ACT Synod requested a Review of the District including future strategies for Christ centred ministry and mission. The Review began in 2017 (to follow the National LCA Review). The *MAP for the JOURNEY* was the Review's Report to DCC in May 2019 and to Synod in March 2020 where it was discussed and endorsed. The focus since the Synod is on implementation. The next processes are:

Operationalising and resourcing Rolling planning, action, reflection.

The Map for the Journey is a rolling Map with rolling priorities. It is part of an ongoing process of listening, discernment, action, reflection, adjusting.

The focal points for the next steps are actions for:

- A. Implementing strategic priorities and projects**
- B. Aligning with the District's priorities**
- C. Reviewing and modifying the priorities.**

For details see separate *Actions and Aligning Plans* which include:

A. Priorities and Actions

This is the list for:

- a) Actions for implementing the strategic priorities, in particular, projects and actions to achieve:
 - A1. Supporting congregations and ministries in mission and ministry
 - A2. Supporting congregations and ministries in transition
 - B1. Alternative models of ministry that best serve the District
 - B2. Planting and renewing congregations
 - C1. Networking and connections between congregations and ministries
 - C2. District Leadership through the Bishop leading Leadership Teams.

B. Aligning with the priorities

Successful implementation of the strategic priorities requires:

- a) Day to day operations of the District Office aligning with the strategic priorities
- b) Aligning, where appropriate the District's Ministries and Congregations priorities with the District's strategic priorities.

District Ministries and Congregations which each have their own priorities need to also ask and answer the question:

Where and how can we align with the District's strategic priorities and support and be supported by their implementation?

C. Reviewing and modifying the priorities

Reviewing progress on the strategic priorities includes answers to:

- a) **Aware of the Map For The Journey:** Are people in the District aware of the *Map for the Journey* and strategic priorities?
- b) **Understand the priorities:** Do people understand the strategic priorities?
- c) **Aligning with the priorities:** Are the District Office, District Ministries and Congregations aligning with the priorities to the extent that's appropriate (e.g. Congregations have their own priorities as well as aligning appropriately with the District's strategic priorities).
- d) **Projects & progress:** Are the specific projects in the action plan being implemented and progressing?
- e) **Priorities being achieved:** Are the priorities being achieved?
- f) **Still relevant:** The context is one of rapid significant change - Do the strategic priorities continue to be relevant? Are amendments needed in the light of the changing context and progress in implementing the priorities?

- 1. LCA, NSW & ACT, Congregations**
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- 4. The Report: Holding up a Mirror**
- 5. Feedback Surveys: Findings**

1. LCA, NSW & ACT, Congregations

We are a synodical church.

This means we consist of:

congregations of baptised members who have chosen to become part of one united body to establish a wider fellowship in the Christian faith, and work together to carry out common tasks that congregations cannot effectively accomplish by themselves;

divided into:

Districts, to provide general supervision to congregations within its area, and collaborate with the wider Church to promote and implement LCA's Objects;

supported by:

specific ministries including boards, commissions and auxiliaries which have been established to help achieve the Objects of the Church, especially those that can only be achieved as Synod.

Our synodical structure is directed and ordered by:

the General Synod, which is the highest constitutional authority of the Church, with power to direct and control those to whom it has entrusted tasks or has delegated authority;

General Church Board, which has been established by the Church with authority to make decisions between Conventions of Synod, within the limits prescribed in the By-Laws;

the Convention of District Synod, which is the highest constitutional authority of the District, with power to direct and control those to whom it has entrusted tasks or has delegated authority; and

District Church Council, which has been established by the District with authority to make decisions between Conventions of Synod within the limits prescribed in the By-Laws.

2. The NSW & ACT Review: Work so far

Purpose

The purpose of the NSW & ACT Review and Planning for Future Ministry is to ensure that:

Congregations are supported in Christ centred ministry and mission
that will enable us to fulfil our District vision and mission.

Process

The Review has three phases:

- Phase 1. Exploration and data gathering (From May 2017 to early 2018)
- Phase 2. Reflection and developing proposals and options and feedback on them (2018)
- Phase 3. Decision making and implementation (2019 & 2020)

Review Steps

Steps to date have included:

- 1) A decision at the 2014 LCA NSW District Synod (name at that time) requesting a review be undertaken. The start date was delayed so that the NSW Review would follow the National LCA Review.
- 2) Paul Bullen, an independent consultant has had **exploratory discussions and conversations** with a sample of congregations and pastors and District ministries and identified questions and issues to be considered in the review process (May - July 2017).
- 3) Establishing a **Review Working Party** to review draft reports, surveys etc.
- 4) Circulation of an **Interim Report to Church Council Chairpersons and Pastors in November 2017** with a preliminary survey to each group asking for any additional issues that should be on the table for discussion and work.
- 5) **Putting together an Information Pack** using data from the consultations, LAMP, National Church Life Surveys, Australian Bureau of Statistics and the November 2017 surveys to Chairpersons and Pastors. The Information Pack included the *Report for Discussion: Holding up a mirror, Summary*, the *Feedback Survey* and the *Reference Data*.
- 6) **Circulating the Information Pack to congregations** in March 2018
- 7) **Individual reflection** (March to May 2018)
- 8) **Church Council discussions** (March to May 2018)
- 9) **Members' and Pastors' Feedback surveys** (April to July 2018)
- 10) **Collating, analysing and reporting on the Members and Pastors surveys** (August 2018) and identifying strategic options for consideration.
- 11) **Collating the Open-ended comments** from the Members and Pastors surveys (October 2018)
- 12) **Strategic Planning Workshop in February 2019**
- 13) Strategic Planning Workshop Review **Report "Walking Together in Mission" on the Table and circulated for comment** on 18th March to Synod Delegates, Congregation Chairs, Ministries, Pastors, Participants at Strategic Planning Workshop on 16-17 February 2019.
- 14) An opportunity from 25th March till 17th May for **discussion of "Walking Together in Mission" at Church Councils and Ministries** and providing feedback prior to the May 31st DCC meeting.
- 15) **Discussion and approval at the DCC meeting on May 31st 2019.**
- 16) **Presentation (and endorsement) at Synod in March 2020.**
- 17) **Implementation plan** developed in 2020 by Strategic Planning Working Party.

3. Review Reports & Documents

The Review Reports and documents include:

A. Walking Together in Mission

A Map for the Journey

a) **THIS DOCUMENT** (23 pages)

For Synod delegates, Church Council members, District Council members, Ministries, Pastors and others who are interested

Original 29 March 2019; Updated December 2020.

B. Report: Holding up a Mirror

a) **SUMMARY** (11 pages)

For all congregation members

a) **REPORT for Discussion: Holding up a mirror** (31 pages)

For Church Council members, District Council members and others who are interested

March 2018

C. Feedback Surveys & Responses

a) **FEEDBACK SURVEY : FINDINGS** (49 pages)

For Church Council members, District Council members and others who are interested

August 2018

b) **FEEDBACK SURVEY : OPEN ENDED COMMENTS** (21 pages)

For Church Council members, District Council members and others who are interested

January 2019

c) **FEEDBACK SURVEY** (Questions 10 pages)

Part 1 is for all congregation members (5 pages)

Part 2 is for Church Council members and others who may be interested (5 pages)

April to July 2018

D. Reference Data

a) **REFERENCE DATA** (62 pages)

For Church Council members and District Council members and others who are interested.

March 2018

Online link to Reports and Documents

All these Report documents are available to all members of the congregations in the District. An online link to these documents is: www.mapl.com.au/LCANSWReview

4. The Report: Holding up a Mirror

The purpose of the Report was to promote discussion and reflection within the District about Congregation and District priorities and strategic questions. The Report:

- Paints the big picture - Population: Religious affiliation, Lutherans and Congregations in Australia and NZ
- Identifies the themes, questions and issues emerging in the consultations
- Provides additional data from the Chairpersons, Pastors and NCLS surveys in NSW and the ACT informing the themes
- Identifies strategic questions and priorities and questions to help Congregation Church Councils with their discussions.

The contents include:

Introduction

A. BIG Picture: Population: Religious affiliation, Lutherans and Congregations in Australia and NZ

Australian Social change
Lutherans in Australia
Lutheran Congregations in Australia and NZ
Lutherans in NSW and the ACT
Congregations/sites in NSW/ACT
Pastors in NSW/ACT
NSW/ACT Congregation sizes and attendees

B. Consultation themes and questions

The District story
Purpose of the review
The health and sustainability of Congregations
The well-being and sustainability of Pastors
The place of District ministries, their health and sustainability
The health and sustainability of the Lutheran Church in NSW
The District

C. More NSW and ACT data informing the themes

Who comes to congregations?
Congregations
Pastors views
Resources and Finances
Quotable quotes

D. Questions, priorities and strategic issues for exploration

Strategic questions and issues
Priorities

E. Congregation Church Council Discussion Starter questions

F. Next steps

5. Feedback Surveys: Findings

The Feedback Surveys were completed in response to the **Report: Holding Up a Mirror**. The contents of the FEEDBACK SURVEY FINDINGS include:

1. Introduction
2. Findings
3. Collated Responses
 - a) Collated Responses Part 1
 - b) Collated Responses Part 2
 - c) Congregation and District Priorities: & Strategic Issues Averages
 - d) Congregation and District Priorities:
Average Responses by Congregation & Experience characteristics

The Survey was in two parts:

Part 1 was for everyone

Part 2 was for Church Council members and others who may want to contribute.

The questions were about:

Part 1

- A. What best describes your Congregation at present?
- B. About you?
- C. What are your Congregation's priorities?

Part 2

- D. What should be the District's priorities?
- E. What are the District's strategic issues?
- F. What is the relationship like between your Congregation and the District and the LCA?
- G. Other Comments

There were two versions: a paper version and an on-line version.

The surveys were originally sent out in the first week of April with a return date of 25th May 2018. The final cut off was 16th July 2018.

Returns and response rates

There were 340 surveys completed. Some people completed some sections and not others.

323 *Part 1 Sections A and B* were completed

288 *Part 1 Section C - Congregations priorities* were completed

133 *Part 2 District Priorities and Strategic Issues* were completed.

The 288 who completed *Part 1 Section C* are included in the 323 who completed *Part 1 Sections A and B*. And at least 90% of the 133 who completed *Part 2 District Priorities and Strategic Issues* are included in the 323 who completed *Part 1 Sections A and B*. A small number of Part 2s were returned without Part 1s attached.

The collated responses to the open-ended questions are in the separate document: FEEDBACK SURVEY : OPEN ENDED COMMENTS.