

## Philippians 2: Selfies vs Humility



From the Bishop  
Robert Bartholomaeus

“  
*life is not  
found in  
focussing on  
ourselves  
but on our  
neighbour*  
”

Selfies characterise our age. These photos we take of ourselves with our mobile phone cameras. It is estimated that there are 93 million selfies posted online every day. Our age is narcissistic. Focused on self. Facebook, X (Twitter), Instagram, Pinterest, TikTok, Tumblr, 500px, Ello, Flickr and Mastodon, the number of sites online where I can show the world what I am doing seems never ending.

Selfies are an instant visual communication of where we are, what we are doing, who we think we are and who we think are watching. They are an indicator that we think the world revolves around us.

In 1540 Nicholas Copernicus wrote “If a man is to know the truth, he must change his thinking. Despite what we have said for years, our earth is not the centre of the cosmos, but one celestial body among many. The sun does not move around us, but we move around the sun.”

It seems that in our time, everyone has gone back to thinking that the sun moves around the earth. And forgetting

the truth that the earth moves around the sun. I am not the centre of the world.

In the second chapter of Philippians, Pauls draws us to the truth that life is not found in focussing on ourselves but on our neighbour, it shows us how Christ came to live this truth - to the extreme.

Paul says “Do nothing out of selfish ambition and vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not to your own interests but to the interests of others” Because this is the attitude of Jesus Christ.”

In Philippians 2:6-11 Paul moves into describing this life of Christ. In this

*Continued next page*

“  
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### in this issue

- Bishop **P.1**
- District News **P.2**
- Strategic Directions **P.3**
- PSU & Child Safety **P.4**
- Revitalisation **P.5**
- DCC news **P.6**
- Treasurer **P.7**
- Forbes Reopening **P.8**
- Turning Point Ministries **P.10**
- Warrambui **P.11-13**
- St Paul's College **P.14**
- Prayer Calendar **P.15**
- Upcoming Events **P.16**

### LCA NSW and ACT District is *Walking together* IN MISSION by:



- Supporting congregations and ministries in mission and ministry
- Supporting congregations in transition
- Developing and supporting alternative models for ministry
- Planting and renewing congregations
- Developing and supporting networking and connections between congregations and ministries
- Developing and supporting leadership – through the Bishop leading leadership teams

# DISTRICT NEWS

## For your prayer and care

### Calls

- Pastor Jonathan Goessling (SA District) declined the joint call to Albury and Lavington.

### Installation

- Pr John Borchert was installed as pastor of the Walla Walla parish on 13 August.

### Farewells

- Pr Hans Peethala held his final service at Liverpool on 25 June. We farewell Pr Hans, Cynderella, and their children Ethan, Yarmiyah and Carissa upon their relocation to Horsham Vic.
- Pr Mat Eckermann held his final service at Sutherland on 6 August. Pr Mat, Liz and their sons Ewan and Braden were farewelled before their move to Loxton SA. DCC expressed their thanks to Liz for her service to the District as Secretary for the past eight years.

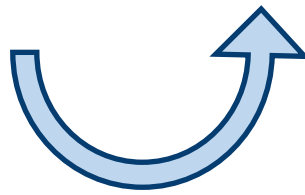
### Retirement

- Pastor David Schuppan held his final service at Illawarra on 23 July. Pr David has retired from parish ministry, he and Barbara have relocated to Adelaide, SA.

### Death

- Pastor Leo Doecke died on 27 July 2023. Pr Leo served at Burrumbuttock Parish from 1989-1995.

hymn or poem, it describes Jesus' journey as going down down down, then he is raised up up up.



Jesus was equal with God, but he put this aside, he humbled himself and took on human flesh becoming a human being. He continued his humility and was obedient to his Father and allowed himself to be killed on the cross.

But then God the Father raised him from death, and he ascended to the highest place and now has the name above all names, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow and confess Jesus is Lord of all.

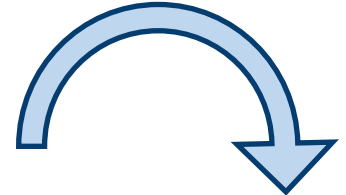
This movement down and then up is how it works in the Kingdom of God. We are created not to focus on self, but on others near us. That is how each of us as Christians are to live. Following the same pattern that Jesus followed. Humbling ourselves and focusing our attention on others and then God will elevate us.

“  
*As Christ followers we learn to serve and love other people*  
”

As Christ followers we humble ourselves, take the attention away from ourselves and so learn to serve and love other people. We focus on others not self. We don't count ourselves as better than others. We look to the interests of others, not to our own. In due course God will raise us up, perhaps here already on earth, but definitely in the life to come.

We know this is **not** how it is in the world around us.

Human nature fights and struggles to get to the top over others. Climbing over them, pushing them aside. It asserts itself and reaches for power and privilege and what I can have before others. It focuses on self and for a time an achievement is made, something we really want is obtained, but then it ends and falls away.



This Copernicus revolution within ourselves - a complete change of thinking - requires the Holy Spirit to change our hearts from self-centred to other centred. This begins at our baptism and then continues every day when we hear the Word of God. As Christians our sinful selfish nature struggles within us. We want to do things Gods way, but we also want to still serve self. We have two ways of experiencing the world. Jean Paige made the statement, "Each person must experience his or her Copernican revolution. They must learn that true living is experienced when we are not the centre of our world."

This is what Jesus meant when he said, "For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me and for the gospel will save it." Mark 8:35.

I pray you will come to know and live this truth and so adapt this revised statement of Copernicus, "If a man or woman is to know the truth, they must change their thinking... Everybody does not move around you, but you must learn to move around others."

Try it the next time you enter a room full of people. Think not about yourself but put your attention on the others in the room and focus on them. See what a difference it makes.

Pastor Robert Bartholomaeus  
Bishop NSW and ACT District

## Walking together IN MISSION Bible Study with the Bishop

### Philippians 2: Selfies vs Humility

Join with members of the LCA NSW and ACT District in an online Bible study led by Bishop Robert Bartholomaeus

Wednesday 27 Sept.  
7.30pm on Zoom

To register, please email  
office.nsw@lca.org.au



# Strategic Directions Facilitator



**Pastor Ian Rentsch**

As part of the Walking Together in Mission 'Map', the NSW and ACT District has appointed me, Pastor Ian Rentsch, as a 'Strategic Directions Facilitator'. What does a Strategic Directions Facilitator do? And what does all this talk about strategic directions have to do with the church? Surely, 'strategic directions' is something that belongs in the secular business world? Isn't

the church a bit above this? It's part of the universal church of God, not a secular business organisation, surely!

Yes, we do believe that the Lutheran Church of Australia and New Zealand (LCANZ) is part of God's kingdom in so far as it preaches the Word of God and administers the Sacraments. But the LCANZ also owns property, has governing structures and is subject to various laws of Australia and New Zealand. That makes it an earthly organisation, as well as an element of God's Kingdom. So, it is appropriate to engage in strategic thinking and planning. Or as the District calls it, 'Walking Together in Mission'.

Like all churches, the LCANZ, which includes the NSW and ACT District, is first and foremost established "to make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of Holy Spirit and teaching them to obey everything that I [Jesus] commanded you [us]" (Matthew 28: 19, 20). In other words, the church exists for the world.

Sometimes, however, earthly churches, including congregations, struggle to keep focussed on engaging in the world. Sometimes the very structures of the church encourage people to look inward, instead of outward. Sometimes due to size or age, the congregation struggles to function ade-

quately as a community for the world around it. How can congregations rediscover what God is calling them to in their settings?

## *How can congregations rediscover what God is calling them to in their settings?*

As a Strategic Directions Facilitator, it is my job to walk with congregations to support you as you seek to understand, or discern, what God's mission is for you in your particular contexts. The word "strategic" may have its origins in warfare, but in more contemporary times, it concerns the capacity to think long-term and to think of the important outcomes of planning, as opposed to "business as usual". My

role as a Facilitator is to assist congregations to articulate and commit to a longer-term plan that, in one way or another, will serve God's mission for the world. Note that the role title is not Director. I'm not there to dictate a specific plan to a congregation. My job is to encourage the congregation – all of its members, young and old – to actively discover for themselves where God is leading them.

This, of course, means that the vision you might discern for your congregation and locality will be uniquely yours. It is not the intent of the District to impose some form of uniform plan on any congregation. Rather as you very prayerfully reflect on where God might be leading you, you will discover anew your particular mission as God's children walking in God's Kingdom.

I have been tasked with walking with every congregation in the NSW and ACT District, so that each can understand, or discern, your mission journey. I look forward to meeting as many of you as possible in the near future and supporting you as together we walk in mission.

Pastor Ian Rentsch 0418 373 424  
ian.rentsch@lca.org.au



**LUTHERAN CHURCH**  
OF AUSTRALIA

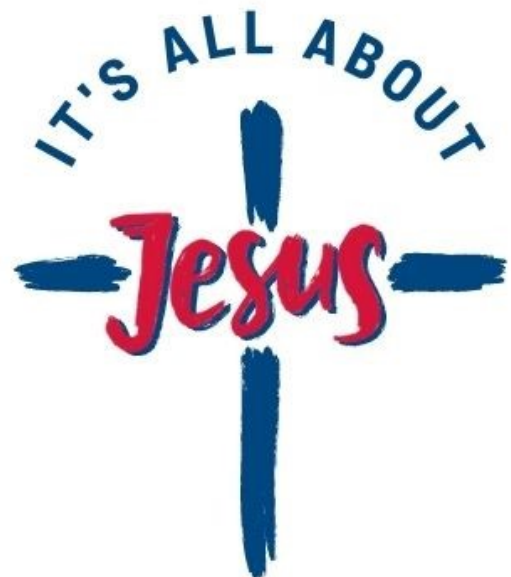
**NSW and ACT DISTRICT**

**LCA NSW and ACT District  
Pastors' Conference  
6-8 March 2024 ~ Wagga Wagga**

**LCA NSW and ACT District  
Convention of Synod  
8-10 March 2024**

**Lutheran Primary School  
Tamar Dr Wagga Wagga**

Online registration for pastors, delegates and visitors will be available late November. Reports, Proposals, and Nominations due to [office.nsw@lca.org.au](mailto:office.nsw@lca.org.au) by mid November. Enquiries to District Office phone 02 8660 1200 email [admin.nsw@lca.org.au](mailto:admin.nsw@lca.org.au)



**LCA NSW & ACT DISTRICT SYNOD  
WAGGA WAGGA | MARCH 2024**



# Professional Standards

It has been pleasing to note that there has been a high response by congregations of the district in preparing and submitting Child Safety Plans, however, now is the time that all congregations should be in the process of implementing the Child Safety Standards and working with their Child Safety Plan, to address any areas they have identified where there is room for improvement. I encourage congregations to set time aside in their church council meetings to reflect on 1 standard per meeting, identifying any areas that need addressing. If you have any questions or require assistance, please be in contact with me.

There have been some new child friendly resources developed. They are available on the LCA NZ website, or you can contact me.

Recently there have been disturbing news items about a former childcare worker, charged with more than 1,600 child sex offences. It is important to note that these offences occurred within formal childcare settings, environments where child safety awareness is typically high and monitoring is stringent, more so than in churches and places of worship. These allegations and their context are a salutary reminder to us of the importance of a child safe culture within our congregations and the need for all of us to be vigilant regarding the safety of the children in our care.

It is important to point out that our LCA Child Safety Standards remind us that there are 10 key areas for us to consider as we work toward becoming child safe congregations. Child safe screening is only one small part of the larger child safety picture.

I attended a meeting convened by the NSW Children's Guardian, Steve Kimmond, which was attended by members of faith-based organisations in NSW. It was during that meeting that I heard this quote: 'Abuse occurs in the presence of opportunity and the absence of vigilance. The risk of abuse is ever present – so our vigilance is paramount'.

I encourage congregations to keep up to date with members training and Working with Children/Vulnerable People checks. If you are unsure of compliance with these, again, please be in contact with me.

Once again, thank you to all of you engaged with the ministries of your congregations.

**Carolyn Kiss**

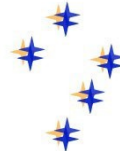
LCANZ Professional Standards Officer,  
NSW and ACT District  
Ph: 0457 770 100  
email: carolyn.kiss@lca.org.au



# RS M



Royal School of Church Music  
**AUSTRALIA**  
ACT Branch Inc.



## HYMNFEST

### “The Church Year”

*An event celebrating 50 years since publication  
of the Australian Lutheran Hymnal*

*Hymn Text Introductions: Lorraine Macknight,*

*Organist: Robert Ampt*



**St. Peter's Lutheran Memorial Church**  
**6 Boolee Street, Reid, Canberra, ACT**  
**2:00pm Saturday 30th September 2023**

Admission: Free

Please register with Trybooking: <https://www.trybooking.com/CKUUS>

Refreshments provided following the event



# Revitalisation: Is there hope for us and our congregation?



**Pastor Richard Schwedes**

For quite a few people the outlook for the Christian church appears bleak and challenging. They see declining numbers, increasing opposition to the Christian faith and people who were once faithful active Christians, now irregular at best. Unfortunately, this often leads to an atmosphere of negativity and hopelessness. This can paralyze a community, even a community of faith. Instead of a willingness to

give things a go or be part of change, there is resistance because of a fear of further failure. Such hopelessness and negativity arise from focusing on the present and comparing it to the past.

Yet we can still have hope.

The Christian life is one of constantly looking to the future possibility that God is creating and recreating, even when we are in challenging times. Consider for instance, the story of Moses and the Israelites, leaving Egypt and 40 years towards the promised land, the story of Jesus and His disciples who encountered many challenges, and the many church communities Paul writes to those who face threats and turmoil. Interestingly Paul often had much hope that God was working through these communities. And the common thing about these and other stories of Christian life, is they reveal how there is always a future with God, so we can have hope with God.

And when we say we have hope in God, we need to understand hope from a biblical perspective. Christian biblical hope is not just a feeling, nor wishful thinking nor do we live thinking that there is a 50% chance God will come through. Biblical hope is one of certainty in the life God gives us through Jesus. As the well-known hymn goes, "My hope is built on nothing less, than Jesus' blood and righteousness". This means hope is ultimately about being loved, guided, and shaped by Jesus. And if this is the case not our past, not our current circumstances and not our image or dreams of what church should be, but Jesus gives us hope.

Sam Rainer in his book, 'The Church Revitalization Checklist' says Christian hope being lived out in congregations is essential for any congregation that is looking to revitalise. When Christian communities embrace hope, they are releasing the brake of a struggling community. Because instead of focusing on the disappointments, the challenges, what we don't have, what's wrong, how life used to be better, how risky making change will be, how tired or old we may be, we focus on being led and shaped by Jesus, having confidence that God is working for the good of His mission and therefore all people, including us. And often this will mean life and the church community will be different.

So yes, we can have hope.... Hope that Jesus is at work for all people, in us and through us.

## **So how might we encourage hope in our church communities for revitalization?**

- Dedicate spending regular time with others in your church community to discover how and where God is leading you, through prayer, discussing the bible and exploring where God is leading your community.
- Be a Colossians 4:6 person (*Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.*) ...Fill your conversations with what God is encouraging and doing...
- Put life and the challenges we face into perspective. Remembering it is our future with God, not the past or the present which is leading us.
- Ask the questions about what opportunities is God placing before us? And how do we get involved in these opportunities?
- Expect challenges (like every Christian who has gone before you) and don't allow these challenges to stop you being part of God's active mission.

And may God's words to us Isaiah 43:18-19 live in you and your community!

*"Forget the former things;  
do not dwell on the past.  
See, I am doing a new thing!  
Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?  
I am making a way in the wilderness  
and streams in the wasteland.*

Pastor Richard Schwedes  
Assistant Bishop LCA NSW and ACT District



## CALL TO PRAYER

We are walking together towards an uncertain future.

- † We hold Christ's cross before us and we keep our eyes on him.
- † We see the image of God in our brother and in our sister.
- † We humble ourselves and we pray.

**Sunday 8 October 2023**

(one year until Convention of General Synod)

PRAYING AS ONE CHURCH  
PRAYING FOR ONE CHURCH



ORDINATION  
way forward

# District Church Council news



## Supporting Congregations and Ministries in Mission and ministry Child Safety Standards

NSW and ACT Professional Standards Officer Carolyn Kiss reported that all the NSW and ACT Congregations have engaged with completing their Child Safety plans. It was noted that Carolyn is working with a couple of congregations to help finalise the plans. She also noted that they are now in the process of reviewing the Child Safety plans, aware that some congregations may need some revision to be a little more robust.

## Narraweena Lutheran Church

The Narraweena Lutheran church have recently renovated their Church and hall complex to make them more usable for Ministry, particularly during the week. As part of these renovations, they also took the opportunity to review their constitution. Their new constitution includes all the updates from the General Synod, and the District Church Council were happy to work with them in approving this the first of the updated constitutions that will support their governance moving forward for many years to come.

## Intercessor's Weekend

It has become clear that one of the keys to successful church planting and or renewal is the undergirding of prayer. In the NSW and ACT District, we have been blessed to have Pastor Darren Kupke who is keen to uphold this ministry in the District. The DCC were therefore excited to be able to provide a grant of up to \$6000 to support the intercessors of the District being able to come together, and pray, learn and take time out to hear where the Lord is calling them, their congregations and the broader District.

## Alternative Models of ministry that best serve the District

### Tuggeranong training experience

Tuggeranong Lutheran church has been working together with the Bishop as they identify individuals who may train to be a pastor of the LCA in the future. The District were able to partner with Tuggeranong in this endeavor as they both shared the costs (\$13,000 each) to employ and train Zac Huggett-Wright within the Tuggeranong Church as he experiences what pastoral work and training may look like in a part time capacity. It is recognized that given the way people are often embedded in their community we need to look at alternative models of training as we continue to step forward. Zac has begun his training through attending Frontier Mission School.

## Two potential SMPs recommended to the College of Bishops

The District Church Council were excited to recommend both Jacob Traeger and Johan Lorenzsonn to the College of Bishops for admission to the SMP Program. Jacob Traeger has been serving as Church Planting Leader for many years as part of the Molonglo Valley Gospel Community Church a plant from the Immanuel Woden Valley Church. Johan is a member of the Liverpool Lutheran Church and has been identified by Pastor Hans Peethala and Bishop Robert to potentially step into a pastoral role in the future.

## Bass Hill Manse purchase

The District church Council as requested by the Bass Hill

congregation purchased a further 4% share of the Bass Hill Manse. This purchase releases funds for the Bass Hill Finnish congregation and it enables them to further support their ministry amongst the Finnish People in Sydney for the years to come. This brings the total District ownership of the manse to 8%.

## Planting and Renewing Congregations Lifeway Chinese Ministry funding

Lifeway Lutheran Church submitted an application to partner with the District to support the growing Lifeway Chinese community. This funding partnership will support a full-time position for Pastor Francis Leung as well as various ministries within the Lifeway Chinese community. The District was happy to support this partnership and approved a Mission Development Loan of \$120,000 over 3 years to support Pastor Francis Leung and the rest of the Lifeway team as they continue to open doors into this growing ministry.

## Governance of Specific Ministries Lutheran Aged Care Albury

The District Church Council were pleased to appoint Peter Schirmer to the Board of Lutheran Aged Care Albury. Peter who was an Albury local for 20 years comes to the board with vast experience at Australia Lutheran World Service and as the Executive officer of the LCA.

## St Paul's College constitution

St Paul's College together with the District Church Council have updated the St Paul's College constitution. The new constitution is updated to include all the Australian Charities Commission standards and also clearly defines the District as the owner of St Paul's College. This new constitution will provide a solid governance framework for St Paul's to continue to provide quality Lutheran Education in the District.

## St John's Jindera Lutheran School constitution amendment

St John's Jindera Lutheran School also had a small adjustment to their constitution approved. This adjustment allows for the governance of the school to have the flexibility to approve a Lutheran chair for the School Board who may come from outside the direct Jindera congregation if they so wish.

## Warrambui Retreat and Conference Centre

Neal Mason on behalf of the Warrambui Board reported how Warrambui is continuing to improve after Covid. Staff levels are improving, and the additions of the interns from PNG has helped with the ministry onsite at Warrambui. They noted that as they continue to improve booking numbers it is necessary to balance the number of bookings with staff availability.

## Liz Eckermann standing down as DCC secretary

It was with much sadness that the DCC received the resignation of Liz Eckermann as DCC Secretary. Liz came to the District with her husband Pastor Matt Eckermann many years ago, and he has now accepted a call to Loxton in South Australia. Liz has served as the DCC Secretary for 8 years, through many seasons including 3 Bishops,

*continued next page*

# District Treasurer update

The District Treasurer delivers a report at each convention of District Synod. Yet we produce financial statements annually. Your District Church Council has just approved 2022's audited accounts, so we have taken this opportunity to publish the results on the District website (see note below), and to present a corresponding Treasurer's Report.

Over the last three or four years, we have worked very hard to make our financial statements look like those of a public company the shares of which you might own, or those of a bank in which you hold an account. We compile a balance sheet and profit-and-loss statement, as well as a cash-flow statement and analysis of our net worth. Most important, though, we publish detailed notes which allow you to have a clear understanding of the financial activity of our District.

The principal feature of our accounts is our financial strength. We hold nearly \$28 million dollars of assets — a continuing reminder of our fortunate sale of Concord House, the old District office — with virtually no liabilities to speak of. Some of our assets are held in the property we use for District purposes: the new District office in Bella Vista, the Bishop's manse (located conveniently close to the District office), and a home in Sydney's outer West which we use for the Westside church-planting initiative.

We also hold over \$11 million in shares. While the value of our shares dipped last year, we are happy to report that our portfolio has recovered completely, and is now worth more than we initially invested. More importantly, we have earned \$2.5 million in dividends over the last three years.

I encourage you to look at the Mission Development Expenses (see table below), found in Note 8 to the accounts, which lists the wide range of mission and ministry initiatives funded by our investment income.

<b>Mission Development Expense</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2021</b>
Lifeway Lutheran Church (Western Sydney church planter)	\$87,012	\$86,272
St Pauls Sydney (community outreach)	\$77,564	-
Jindera/Albury Church (church planter)	\$74,562	-
Woden Valley Lutheran Church (church planter)	\$57,197	\$52,500
Tuggeranong Community Development Coordinator (community outreach)	\$40,123	-
Wollongong Lutheran Church (pastoral support)	\$34,794	\$46,467
Turning Point Ministries (CYFM support)	\$20,000	\$20,000
Lifeway Lutheran Church (Asian ministry church planter)	-	\$66,000
Various congregations (Covid-19 support grants)	-	\$50,000
LCA new and renewing (pastoral support)	-	\$20,000
Other grants and pastoral support	\$44,308	\$82,989
	<b>\$435,560</b>	<b>\$424,228</b>

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4 Synods, an office sale and relocation. Liz has been a key component that has kept DCC functional and organized during this time. She will be much missed, and we wish her and Matt and the family every blessing as they step into the new challenges that God has for them in Loxton.

Russell Veerhuis, on behalf of DCC

Each item is a story of how we are using the blessings of financial strength to deliver Christ's message to the world. We have also reconfigured the cash-flow statement to better show how the Church Council sees the District operating. We break out "cash flows from operating activities": the District's income, including the generous contributions from our member congregations. We generated an operating surplus this past year of \$384K, which was able to fund substantially all of the \$461K we spent on mission development.

Yes, we spent more than we earned. But that, we believe, is why we have been blessed in the first place. Jesus told the young rich man to sell everything he owns and spend it on the poor. We are intent in spending everything this District owns to proclaim the Message, for there is nothing worse than being a dead Church with lots of money in the bank.

There is one aspect of our financial circumstances which requires further discussion. Three Synods ago, we decided to forgive the District's loans to Warrambui Retreat and Conference Centre. That resulted in an immediate uptick in morale, and a renewed dedication to Warrambui's camp ministry. But then Covid-19 hit, and the camp had to shut down bookings. Our District Church Council made two important decisions: First, we decided not to sack anybody—we had both the heart and the means to treat our staff as family. Second, we used the break in operations to undertake a long-overdue refurbishment of the Dome. The project turned out to be bigger and more expensive than expected, but we now have a highly functional (and asbestos-free) facility.

But it came at a heavy cost. While Warrambui borrowed the funds to complete the project — and we fully expect the loan to be repaid in full — other significant cash outflows were required to keep the operation afloat. The District funded these deficits in the form of grants rather than loans, to the tune of \$442K, and that support has continued through this financial year. But bookings have picked up, and it now looks like no further cash-flow support is required. However, the entire process has taken a heavy mental and spiritual toll, and our prayers for Warrambui's board and staff will not go amiss.

In conclusion, our District is in the privileged position that we have no money problems whatsoever, other than a continual demand for mission and ministry initiatives in which we can prudently invest our bounty. Praise be to God.

Bruce Arnold, District Treasurer

The District's **2022 Audited Financial Statements** can be found on the District website: [nswact.lca.org.au](https://nswact.lca.org.au) Click on 'Resources' then 'Policies and Procedures', then look for 'Audited Financial Statements'.





# Forbes church celebrates reopening after flood

It was such a good feeling to celebrate our church re-opening on Sunday 27 August, after eight and a half months closure.

In November 2022, in anticipation of a flood event occurring, some items were removed from the church, and the organ was lifted up, one end at a time, on to a couple of pews.

At the last opportunity available, with minutes to spare, the SES were called upon to sandbag the church.

Shortly after completing the sandbagging, while I was still at the church, I received a broadcast text to evacuate the CBD area as it was expected that it would shortly become an island. I drove through the rising water which came up very quickly, and got out before the road closed to the CBD with 15 minutes to spare.

The church had 200mm (8 inches) of flood water through the building.

Built in 1934, the church most likely has been flooded before. The hall was built in 1984 and was meant to be above the 1950's flood levels. This time flood waters entered at several points in the hall and travelled into the toilet, kitchen, storeroom and north and south areas.

The church and hall were submerged for several days.

Following the clean-up operations we have been most fortunate to have had excellent support from the Lutheran church of Australia's insurance company, along with our insurance project manager Owen. ARC Projects were engaged to completing restoration works. Restoration works commenced in May.

It was found the church had been built without foundations straight onto the soil and with 500mm excavation underneath to create crawl space. So essentially creating a swimming pool under the church.

Hygienists then attended and found the church was not safe for use due to contaminants on the walls and floors, possibly forcing up contaminants from under the building from years ago.

Dry air blowers & dehumidifiers were used in two attempts to dry out the buildings over a total period of eight weeks. The walls and the floors were then sanitised. We were advised we narrowly avoided the floorboards in the church having to be removed & being replaced to further air out the building.

All the furniture and contents of the church and hall were then packed up and stored. This was no mean



*Members of St John Forbes in their newly refurbished church*

feat, as there is a full kitchen fit out for catering for at least 100 people.

The timber floor boards in the church and hall were sanded and refinished. Carpets were replaced in the church. The hall kitchen, flooring, cupboards and white goods replaced. Hall bathrooms, flooring and fixtures replaced.

As part of the restoration work the current church furniture which dates from 1934 was sent to Sydney for Historical Furniture restoration.

The original late 1890's table that was used as an altar at the site of the first Lutheran services in Forbes has also been restored. This table was located at Barenong church 14 km south of Forbes, having been used at this church by many denominations.

In early June a hygienist report passed the church as being safe for use, just in time for getting approval for use for a family member's funeral. In this instance a makeshift plan occurred, with the temporary plywood boarding the entrance being unscrewed beforehand, and put back after the funeral. The current doors had been set aside for repair at this time. Plastic chairs from the hall were moved into the church for temporary seating.

Renovation works continued with releveling of front pavers and garden being replaced with woodchips. The work completed on the Friday just before our reopening service.

During the period of closure we continued to worship in our homes.

Our little congregation is so very thankful for the support we have received from the restoration team during this time.

Looking at our church and hall now, we are so grateful for the fact that it looks the same as before, however we can see that it has been refreshed and invigorated.

Michelle Mahlo  
Chairperson



*November 2022*



*The church sanctuary with restored timber floorboards, furnishings and new carpet*



At the reopening service of St Johns Church Forbes, Pastor James Leach preached on 1 Kings 8, Solomon's prayer at the dedication of the new temple in Jerusalem. Following are some of his main points:

“ Homes provide shelter. Safety, warmth. A place to sit and rest. Eat. Talk. Share. A place to work. To play. To make things and to make memories. And this building that we are gathered in is no exception.

*But this building has an additional purpose: it is to be the light of Christ to this town. St. John's Lutheran Church, a light to Forbes. This building has the purpose of forming God's people into bearers of God's light so that those who witness our light will give glory to God.*

*But for every building, including buildings dedicated to God, there are obstacles that cause the builders to stumble.*

*In our first bible reading today, King Solomon prays to God on the occasion of the dedication of the great temple in Jerusalem. By the time of Solomon's prayer, the ark of the covenant, the large, decorated box that held the tablets of the 10 Commandments, and the presence of God, had already been placed in the Holy of Holies in the temple by the high priest. The gold and silver vessels given by Solomon's father, King David, had already been carried in. Priests and choirs and congregants have processed in solemn and dignified manner.*

*This was a triumphal day - as is today. But the triumphal day in 1st Kings came after many troubles. The first came a generation before, when King David asked, "Why should I live in a great palace, while the presence of the Lord (the ark of the covenant) stays in a tent?"*

*David had determined to build a great temple for God. But God would not allow David to build the temple. God had another plan. After Solomon, became king, God no longer objected to the building of the temple. So it was built. According to God's time. And according to God's will.*

*In these last months, we faced obstacles, too. The first obstacle was coming into the church on the days after the flooding and seeing all the mud and filth throughout the building, not to mention the smell... and then trying to lift the carpets and other things throughout the church and just knowing that this was a bigger job than any of us were going to be able to do on our own.*

*We knew however, that the bigger and more important task for the church at this time was to be in the community... I remember the feeling of trying to help but having the*



**Pastor James Leach preaching at the reopening of Forbes church**

*constant feeling of being completely inadequate, not sure exactly what to do or when to do it. That was tough.*

*But it was also a joy. Giving food and water out to people trying to reclaim their lives. Seeing the relief on their faces when they received those small portions realising they hadn't eaten or drunk anything up to that point of the day. These were some of the most humbling moments of my ministry to date.*

*As the days and then weeks passed we had to work out how to continue worshipping together, and we had one of the most intimate Christmas services I've ever been part of on the veranda of one of our members homes.*

*As the weeks turned into months other obstacles arose, and through each of those obstacles God provided what we needed and so much more.*

*... We are the church and as church we are to offer something different. We offer the grace of God when people expect punishment and indignity. We offer light to a world where lies and power are rewarded in the darkness. We are a community called to tell others of God's desire for abundance for everyone - not just those who already have a lot.*

*We are to be the places where the love of God, the mercy of God, the justice of God, the hope of God is present to all those we meet both inside and outside the church building.*

*This church building has stood here for 90 years. Throughout that time, the people of this congregation have made sure that the light of Christ has shone through its windows! But the church is more than this building. The church is all of us in Christ Jesus. May we shine with the light of Christ even more brightly each and every day! May we be the Light of Christ for Forbes. Amen!*



## New Mission Edge Tracts from LLL

LLL have just released the first batch of Mission Edge Tracts, authored by some of our own talented writers from NSW and ACT District. These tracts are specifically aimed at 20-40 year olds who might be unchurched or disenfranchised with the church. They are edgy! Topics include questions about who God is, why Jesus is relevant today, what the Bible tell us about caring for our earth.

Visit [www.ltm.org.au](http://www.ltm.org.au) to search for new resources and to place your order.





## Sisterhood 2023: 'Her Story': Sharing God's Story through Your Story

Sisterhood 2023: 'Her Story' : Sharing God's Story through Your Story

Stories are powerful. They help us to build connections and understanding; we can grow through reflection and imagination; when we share our stories, we know we are not alone and we can experience healing, hope and community.

Sisterhood 2023 was an opportunity for women from across the District gathered to delve into the theme of 'Her Story'. The teaching sessions over the weekend focused on how every woman's life story fits into God's big story for the world. There was plenty of laughter and fellowship as attendees engaged in storytelling and shared their experiences, enjoying worship, reflective and creative times together.

One of the main things we thanked God for was the influence of other women of faith on our own lives.

We also learned how to 'think about our thinking' and ways that we can overcome the negative stories we sometimes tell ourselves.

In the closing worship, women shared how we can 'pause' in our daily lives:

- To remember our story matters
- To remind ourselves that our story isn't finished
- To have empathy
- To care for myself
- To walk and worship
- To share my story and connect with others
- To lean on others
- To meditate on God's word
- To be me.

Tanya Cunningham



Save the date for...

**Leadership Camp**  
24 - 26 November 2023

**History Makers**  
16 - 19 January 2024

**Junior Youth Camp**  
19 - 21 January 2024

[tpm.org.au](http://tpm.org.au)



The TPM Camping Team is looking for some key positional people. We are in need of senior leadership who can assist in the oversight of our camping ministry.

We are also looking for senior leaders who are keen to join the team so that we can continue to supply a quality and safe camping environment. If you feel God is leading you in this direction, please get in touch with the team.

Contact Pr Mat von Stanke  
0435 038 805, Russell Veerhuis  
8660 1200, or email  
[tpmevents.nsw@lca.org.au](mailto:tpmevents.nsw@lca.org.au)







# WARRAMBUI NEWS

September 2023

## Prayer Points

- For our 2023 Interns from PNG (Grace, Moreenicka & Rose) as their internship draws to a close
- For Intern applicants for 2024 - that God will call the right people to serve with us
- For Warrambui's Strategic Planning workshop in late September

## Praise Points

- For the beauty of our site heading into spring
- For God's peace as felt by those who attend Warrambui
- For growth in bookings and enquiries
- For the creative groups we host who encourage and inspire children to use their gifts

## Centre Director's Update

### Beauty and Peace

The mornings are still freezing cold at Warrambui, but the days are generally sunny and we can feel the approach of spring. Several of the 11 varieties of wattle we have on our site are in full bloom, making much of our site bright golden in colour.

Our guests and visitors continue to remark upon the beauty and peacefulness upon arrival. These are both amazing gifts from our Heavenly Father who created the beauty, and whose peace pervades our site and is felt by many who come here, even if they cannot recognise its origin.

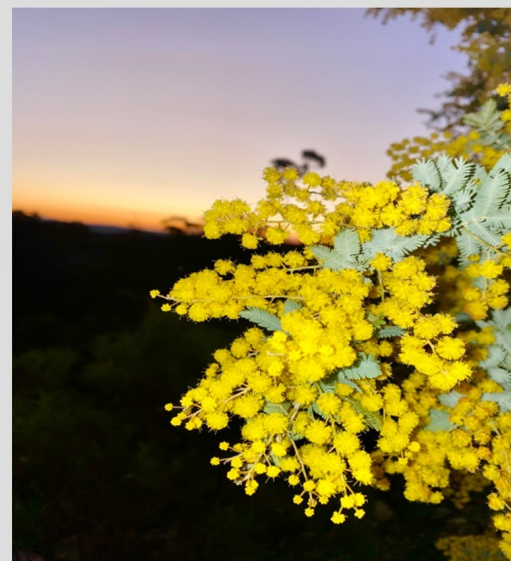
### Bookings

We continue to see moderate growth in enquiries and bookings, and have had the opportunity to welcome back more groups returning after a number of years due to COVID.

In May we hosted a local High School from Canberra who came out to prepare their musical production of "the Wizard of Oz". This included bringing out the cast and musicians for rehearsals, and the back-stage and production crews to build the sets and props. This school first started bringing their musical camp to Warrambui 11 years ago and last came in 2019 prior

to the pandemic. It was such a pleasure to welcome them back.

In July we again hosted the Transitions – Small Schools Creative Arts Camp. This 3-day camp involved 99 students from small schools across south and south western NSW, some with as few as 4 students in total. The aim of the camp was to support these students in exploring and expressing their hopes and fears about their forthcoming transition into high school through an integrated creative arts program. To view a video of their camp and see the participants talk about its value to them, and some amazing footage of Warrambui, search on google for "transitions small schools creative arts 2023".



We can make our plans, but the LORD determines our steps.

**Proverbs 16:9**



In August it was again a privilege to host TPM's Sisterhood camp and to see so many amazing women of God gathered together to share, grow and worship. Many participants remarked on the value of having a place to get away from the pressures of every day life and rest in the good things of God.

### Planning for the Future

Even though it feels like the times of COVID should be behind us and things should be getting back to "normal", there is no doubt that the landscape for venues such as Warrambui has changed significantly and that we are now operating in a different environment to our last "normal" year in 2019.

The breakdown of the types of camps we are hosting has changed, groups are booking at shorter notice, and the amount of administration required to assist groups with their booking has increased.

Additionally, other changes have occurred in the last few years; regulatory and compliance requirements have grown, we have

upgraded our facilities, and we have expanded our volunteer internship program to include young women from PNG.

For these reasons it is time for us at Warrambui to take stock of where we are at and to refine our future direction in key areas.

Therefore, the Warrambui Board and various stakeholders will be coming together in late September for a strategic planning weekend to prayerfully reflect and seek God's guidance for His ministry through Warrambui.

Please pray that we will hear and follow God's vision for Warrambui's future.

### Interns in 2023 and 2024

We have been incredibly blessed to have our three interns from PNG (Rose, Grace and Moreenicka) with us in 2023. As with all Interns, they have greatly benefitted our community and we have been privileged to serve alongside them and see them grow. Over the next few months, they will be completing their internship and

preparing to return home in December. It will be very difficult for us to say farewell.

We have begun the process of reviewing applications from potential PNG Interns for 2024 and we are open for applications from Australians wishing to participate next year.

If you, or anyone you know, would like more information about the 2024 Arise Volunteer Internship Program please see the notice on the following page and get in contact with us.

### Thanks and prayers

As always, we are incredibly grateful to our many supporters who contribute to God's ministry through Warrambui in many ways.

Please continue to pray for us that we may serve God faithfully in all that we do and serve our guests by living Jesus.

Yours in Christ,

Dean Salzke

Centre Director

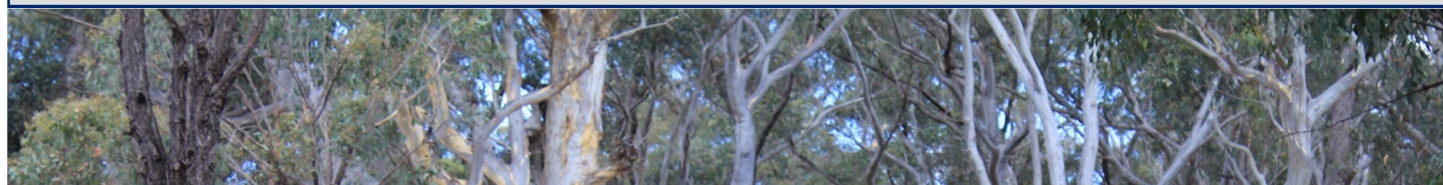
## Financial Information

<b>Warrambui Income &amp; Expenditure Statement 1 January - 31 July 2023</b>			
	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Pro-rata Budget</b>	<b>Actual to 31 March</b>
Total bookings	100	58	51
Total occupied bed nights	11,639	6,790	5,928
Operating income	\$ 943,258	\$ 482,786	\$ 618,917
Operating expenses	\$ 1,210,565	\$ 695,441	\$ 796,885
<b>Operating surplus/loss</b>	<b>\$ (267,307)</b>	<b>\$ (212,654)</b>	<b>\$ (177,968)</b>
<b>Non-operating profit, primarily from the quarry, is \$58,926 giving a net loss of \$119,042.</b>			

Bookings and bed nights are less than anticipated, but income was higher than expected for those camps.

Warrambui's ministry contribution to the District is \$87,701 mostly from the Arise Volunteer Internship Program (with the PNG Interns and the Internship Development Officer), the Retreat Hut, and discounts for Lutheran groups.

We continue to monitor and respond to the current financial situation and operational environment as we further emerge from the pandemic.





# WARRAMBUI VOLUNTEER INTERNSHIP 2024



**ARISE** is a program designed for young adults to experience practical ministry, and undertake ministry and theology studies as they learn to serve Jesus and each other while helping us host school, youth, church and community groups at our Lutheran Retreat and Conference Centre.

Arise focuses on building a faith foundation that is grown by living and serving in Christian Community.

Whilst volunteering interns will build their character, further discover their identity in Christ, and explore questions of faith in a supportive Christian environment that will give them a solid foundation for whatever lies ahead.

Australian interns will also live and serve alongside interns from Papua New Guinea, growing in understanding of each other's country, culture and faith.



## APPLY NOW!



SO, if you are (or know) someone who is interested and want to know more about this exciting opportunity please contact Warrambui for further information:

**Phone:** (02) 6220 1000  
**Email:** [director@warrambui.com.au](mailto:director@warrambui.com.au)



We continually ask God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives, so that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God,

**Colossians 1:9b-10**



Enquire now for courses and units in 2024.  
Contact Academic Dean, Dr Mark Worthing  
**0428 557 663** [frontier@lca.org.au](mailto:frontier@lca.org.au)

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Valuing People and Learning"*



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**75** Years  
1948-2023

### **FREEZING FOR A CAUSE : Raising Funds for MND**

What a successful fund raising event organised by our Student Representative Council held on a cold June day, to fund raise awareness for Motor Neurone Disease (MND). Our school community rallied together, demonstrating compassion and generosity in support of this worthy cause.

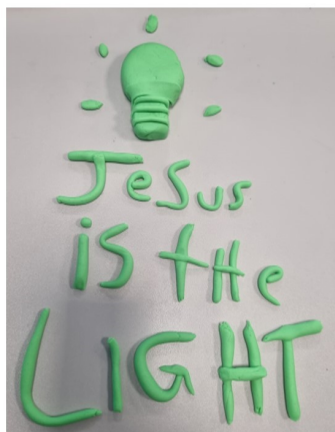
The day started with a burst of blue as our entire school dressed in the vibrant colour to show solidarity and support. Students and staff raised \$1,178.50 with holding a lunchtime sausage sizzle, a gold coin donation, and Year 12 and Teacher Big Freeze Event! The funds raised will aid in improving the quality of life for those affected by this challenging disease and bring hope to their families.



### **CHRISTIAN STUDIES**

Year 7s have been exploring the New Testament studying the various artwork of impressions of Jesus, and the meaning behind his parable and power of God through miracles that He performed. Students studied the "I AM" statements of Jesus using playdough to creatively represent a particular statement. A couple examples are -

**"I AM THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD"**, John 8:12



**"I AM THE GATE"**, John 10::7

**"I AM THE GOOD SHEPHERD"**, John 10:11



# ST PAUL'S COLLEGE

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**LCA Season of Prayer  
September 2023**



season of prayer  
**LORD, RENEW YOUR CHURCH**

[www.lca.org.au/worship/wpp/seasonal-resources/](http://www.lca.org.au/worship/wpp/seasonal-resources/)

**District Prayer Calendar** *To join the NSW and ACT District Intercessors Prayer List, email Kaye office.nsw@lca.org.au*  
nswact.lca.org.au



I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving and thanksgiving be made for everyone — for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. This is good and pleases God our Saviour, who wants all people to be saved and to come to knowledge of the truth. For there is one God and one mediator between God and people, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all — the testimony given in its proper time.  
1 Timothy 2:1-6

	Location	Pastors and Church Workers (and family)	Congregation/s
September	3 Albury	Vacant Pr Will Frost (Interim)	St Luke's Albury
	10 Albury Aged Care	David Jarman (Nicole)	
	17 Burrumbuttock	Pr Christian Fandrich (Sarah Joy, Enoch, Abigail, Andreas, Thomas, Sophia, Noah, Bethany)	Trinity Bethel Holy Cross Burrumbuttock St Peter's Gerogery Jindera - Bethlehem - St John's Chapel
October	24 Henty	Pr Darryl Shoemith (Shirley)	St Stephen's Culcairn St Paul's Henty St John's Pleasant Hills
	1 Henty Lutheran School	Brad Moss Principal	St Paul's Lutheran School
	8 Jindera Lutheran School	Brad Moss Principal Peter Reed Church Planter	St John's Lutheran School
	15 Lavington	Pr Peter Fuhlbohm	St Peter's Lavington
	22 Wagga Wagga	Pr David Cherry (Kayla, Esther, Eloise)	Bethlehem Wagga Wagga Bethlehem Milbrulong
November	29 Wagga Wagga Lutheran School	Janet Moeller Principal	Lutheran Primary School
	5 Walla Walla	Pr John Borchert (Charmaine, Natasha, Joanna)	Salem Alma Park Zion Walla Walla
	12 St Paul's College, Walla Walla	Anita Morton Principal	St Paul's College
	19 Retired Pastors	Contact District Office for details on retired pastors helping out in vacant parishes at this time	
December	26 Frontier School of Mission	Pr Mark Worthing (Kathy)	
	3 District Committees	District Church Council, Lutheran Women NSW, all other district committees	
	10 Strategic Directions Facilitator	Pr Ian Rentsch (Suzanne)	
	17 NSW and ACT District Office	Bishop Robert Bartholomaeus (Jenny) Tanya Cunningham Communications Kaye Simpfendorfer Receptionist Russell Veerhuis Administrator	



*Walking together* IN MISSION  
Bible Study with the Bishop

**Philippians 2:  
Selfies vs Humility**

Join with members of the LCA NSW and ACT District in an online Bible study led by Bishop Robert Bartholomaeus



**Wednesday 27 Sept.  
7.30pm on Zoom**

To register, please email [office.nsw@lca.org.au](mailto:office.nsw@lca.org.au)

## Upcoming Events

- Sept 27** Bible Study with the Bishop  
Zoom, all welcome
- October 9 - 11** District Pastors' Conference  
Warrambui
- Nov 24 - 26** Leadership Camp  
Warrambui, Ages 16+
- 2024**
- Jan 16 - 19** History Makers  
Warrambui, Years 7-12
- Jan 19 - 21** Junior Youth Camp  
Warrambui, Years 3-6
- March 6-8** District Pastors' Conference  
Wagga Wagga
- March 8-10** NSW and ACT District Synod  
Wagga Wagga
- October 4-7** LCA NZ General Convention of Synod  
Concordia College, Adelaide, SA

## Contact Newsletter

Published 4 times each year by the NSW and ACT District of the Lutheran Church of Australia

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Bella Vista NSW 2153

Phone (02) 8660 1200

Email:  
[kaye.simpfendorfer@lca.org.au](mailto:kaye.simpfendorfer@lca.org.au)

[www.nswact.lca.org.au](http://www.nswact.lca.org.au)

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with news and events.*

*Search Facebook for  
LCANSWACT,  
or go to*

[www.facebook.com/  
LCANSWACT](http://www.facebook.com/LCANSWACT)



## Assisting regional people coming to Sydney for hospital treatment

If you are coming to Sydney for hospitalization and require pastoral care, please let your pastor know. You can also contact District Office and we will endeavor to put you in touch with a pastor who may be able to visit.  
District Office 02 8660 1200

## LCA COMPLAINTS

Many complaints can be resolved before lasting hurt is caused, by addressing them quickly in a non-threatening manner and by raising the issue directly with the relevant person or organization in a thoughtful and courteous manner.

If this is not applicable or possible in your situation, you may lodge a complaint with the Professional Standards Department in any of the following ways:

**Phone the freecall number  
1800 644 628**

**Email [complaints@lca.org.au](mailto:complaints@lca.org.au)  
or write to**

**Confidential, PO Box 519,  
Marden SA 5070**

## LCA IT Online Shop

LCA agencies and congregations can now order computers and other IT equipment via the LCA IT Online Shop.

The products in the online shop have been sourced from reputable suppliers and are recommended by our IT team.

Go to <http://itshop.lca.org.au> to see the range and place your order. All prices are ex GST. Please allow for delivery costs.



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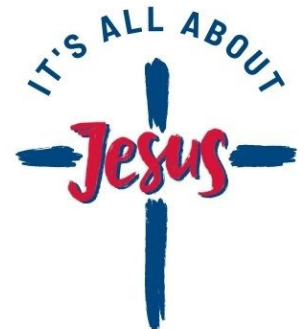


**NSW and ACT DISTRICT**

**LCA NSW and ACT District  
Pastors' Conference  
6-8 March 2024 ~ Wagga Wagga**

**LCA NSW and ACT District  
Convention of Synod  
8-10 March 2024**

**Lutheran Primary School  
Tamar Dr Wagga Wagga**



LCA NSW & ACT DISTRICT SYNOD  
WAGGA WAGGA | MARCH 2024