

**LUTHERANS INVOLVED IN PROVIDING AGED CARE:**

**Implications for our Practice suggested by Theological Reflection on our Mission and Values Statements**

Typical Value/Mission Statement dot point	Theological Reflection	Implication for Practice
We take the question of what we are on about seriously	The Lutheran Church is based on a theological movement, and we value sharing great theological ideas with one another and with other people of faith. We also welcome good theology that others will share with us.	We will continually ask the questions about purpose and identity and seek new insights to inform these questions
Identify as being loved by God	Talking about God as the Creator: Believing that every human being is a precious creation of God's, and God celebrates every aspect of how he made people, is one of two key prongs to our theology	We simply enjoy people the way we believe God enjoys people, and are satisfied to receive people in all their diversity. We also share God's heart for poor and unjustly-treated people, and reflect this heart in our policies and practices.
Identify as being 'children of God'	Talking about God as our Saviour/Redeemer: Believing Jesus has died for all people and wants to bring all people into his special community, the Church, is the second prong. People come to faith in Jesus by believing the proclamation of Jesus' love for them.	Lutherans in aged care will highly value the Christian people in their midst, and make provisions for the latter to worship God, either in a specifically Lutheran manner, or ecumenically, or both.
We are a 'Christian' home and yet we appear to easily accept people who are not Christians	We acknowledge that God works in two ways – as Creator and as Saviour. This is called the principle of two kingdoms {kingdom on the left; kingdom on the right, etc}. It's the same God who does both works.	An implication of 'two-kingdom' thinking is that in aged care we celebrate with genuine joy what God achieves in both realms – and so we love to see excellent care so people grow in body, mind and spirit even if their spirituality is not Christian; and we love to promote opportunities for people to come to faith in Jesus as well.

**A draft Paper submitted to the LCA Aged & Community Services Governance Dialogue by the South Australia Lutheran Aged Care Chaplains Network**  
 Draft 2 @ 9 June 2017

A forgiving environment	Lutherans have a theology of sin which says sins are not simply what people do, but is a matter of identity. It is something we all share in. Nobody is worse than anybody else.	We will not be surprised that people express their sinful nature in attitudes and actions in the home and workplace. We hold people to account, and promote reconciliation where possibly, always in a spirit of being non-judgemental
Christ-centred	In our religious work (kingdom on the right) we Lutherans strongly believe Jesus/Christ is the way to God and the image of God, and that being Christ-like is the way to live in harmony with God	We will foster values and lifestyle in the home which is consistent with Christ as we understand him.
Relational - communal	The Lutheran theological movement was about freeing up the individual conscience to serve freely through our vocational calling in the community.	Communal life where friendships based on common ground as well as respect for diversity is nevertheless highly valued as an expression of the way God created people
Ethical life – respect for residents	Again, Lutheran ethics are not unique, but shared widely among Christians and within the community as a whole, which you'd expect because creating laws is 'kingdom on the left' work.	So we support good government legislation that lifts the bar higher for the care of residents, including making our homes great working environments.
Best practice, imaginative practice, institutional as well as out-of-the-square thinking	The institution for Lutherans is not God-like in itself {Lutherans have always had a suspicion for Christians who think this way}. Institutions are humanly created, 'kingdom on the left' work.	So we have a pragmatic attitude to institutions, seeing them as great mechanisms to gather, organise and provide services. But all institutions are flawed, so we will continually critique then in a search for better practice and to honour the faith civil authorities put in us to do this work.
A place for all to be valued and to grow	Luther said a lot about Vocation – especially to stress that everybody's work is important .	Lutherans in aged care will be good employers, seeking to provide opportunities for all workers from the lowliest to the grandest to find meaning, purpose and joy in their work.