

AGENDA 8.1

Report: Council for Local Mission

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS AND KEY RESULTS AGAINST PLAN

- Brought together and united five significant mission departments of the Church in a common strategic direction to serve the LCA mission and vision.
- Creation and development of key governance and operational resources to reduce the administrative burden on the mission departments.
- Quality resources produced and practical training offered.
- Gospel messages sent widely via digital media with significant and positive responses.

SUCSESSES

- A growing movement of missional renewal and church planting across the LCA NZ.
- The publishing of *Grow Disciples* based on years of research and best practice.
- A growing awareness of a multiethnic future for the LCA NZ.
- A growing gospel presence in the digital space.
- Relationship building with and encouragement for aged care and community services CEOs, Boards and chaplains and those who minister with the ageing and the vulnerable.

LESSONS LEARNT AND CHALLENGES

Council challenges have included:

- Developing and maintaining a purposeful relationship with each Mission department
- Being mindful that programmes/projects need to get down to congregation level
- Engaging with the Lutheran Church of New Zealand.

The COVID-19 pandemic has been a major challenge to training, activities, and resourcing. We are well-pleased with how we have risen to the challenge while appreciating that many with whom we interact are tired.

RISKS

The risks for the work of Local Mission include reduction in income, with the resultant lack of capacity to offer the services, resources and support that has occurred in the past. We have also identified a risk regarding the training and recognition of church planters while, at the same time, delighting in the growing church planting movement in the LCA NZ.

MEMBERS

Committee for Local Mission

Matthew Bishop, Des Kalisch, Robyn Oatey, Danielle Robinson, Mark Schultz, Monika Tropiano (Chairperson), Sonia Weidenbach

BACKGROUND

The Council for Local Mission's purpose is to:

- provide strategic leadership and support to nurture a growing missional culture in the Church;
- develop strategic mission direction and establish the overall policy environment of the Church;
- promote and coordinate congregational participation in local mission; and
- oversee and monitor the resourcing of the mission of the Church to Australia and New Zealand.
- The work of the Council is underpinned by the foremost Object of the Church, namely to fulfil the mission of God. [taken from the Council for Local Mission Terms of Reference]

The Council provides governance oversight of the Local Mission departments of

- Cross-Cultural Ministry
- Grow Ministries (Child Youth and Family Ministry)
- Lutheran Media
- Ministry with the Ageing
- New and Renewing Churches

To assist the Council in its governance oversight, the Council has the following advisory committees:

- Committee for Cross-Cultural Ministry
- Committee for Child Youth and Family Ministry
- Committee for Lutheran Media
- Committee for Ministry with the Ageing
- Committee for New and Renewing Churches

ACHIEVEMENTS/RESULTS AGAINST PLAN

The following major activities and outputs are listed against the Local Mission Strategic Plan 20-19-2021.

Local Mission Strategic Priority 1: Ensure collaborative resourcing to facilitate forming and deepening the faith.

Cross-Cultural Ministry

- A short video was produced, and cross-cultural ministry bible studies added to webpage.
- A cross-cultural ministry non-accredited unit is being developed (due to launch in August 2021)

Grow Ministries

During the last synodical term Grow Ministries continued to create relevant resources for effective ministry with children, youth, and young adults. One of the most exciting achievements for Grow Ministries was the completion of the Grow Disciples guide and curriculum launched in February 2020. Other resources launched recently included:

- New Baptism and First Communion Faith Trail Markers—to add to existing Faith Trail resources.
- Woven Together—new family devotion resource
- Parents in Pain resource
- New Talking Points volume to add to existing resource

Lutheran Media

- 1,000's of people listened to, watched and read Messages of Hope content and were referred to Lutheran congregations.
- Lutheran Media Australianised, revised and reprinted several booklets including on Forgiveness, Chronic Pain, Grief, Depression and Parenting.
- Produced short videos on numerous topics including stories on Stress, Parenting and Dementia.
- The scripture calendar increased in popularity.

Ministry with the Ageing

- Through the One Loving God project, 'God's love-our care: theology underpinning the practice of Lutheran care' was developed.
- The booklet with an accompanying brochure 'Called to transformative action: the ethos underpinning Lutheran Aged Care and Community Services' was developed.
- An induction video was produced and a new webpage (www.lca.org.au/care) was published.

New and Renewing Churches

- N&RC staff worked collaboratively with sending church leaders and church planters.
- Published *Spirit Filled: normal Christian living*, written by Noel Due and Steen Olsen.
- Revised and updated Renew Mission Life training for self-serve and supported delivery from 2021.

Local Mission Strategic Priority 2: Empower and inspire diverse communities in their worship.

Cross-Cultural Ministry

- Cross-Cultural/New and Renewing Learning Network included the area of worship in its discussions.

Grow Ministries

- Continued to work in cooperation with Commission on Worship to produce lectionary based children addresses and developed new resources to encourage intergenerational worship and fellowship.

Lutheran Media

- 100s of people watched worship services online every week. Thanks to LLL funding, the Worship DVD and Livestream systems were upgraded. This enabled an efficient file transfer system and also enabled us to share worship online through Livestream (Toowoomba), Facebook, and YouTube. On average, 90 Worship DVDs and CDs were sent out every week. Worship DVD/CDs distributed grew up to 165 DVDs and 25 CDs during COVID restrictions.
- In 2020 on [Livestream.com/luthworship](https://www.livestream.com/luthworship): 69,987 total views, 47,536 unique views, average watch time 22 minutes and 32 seconds, 50% watched live, 50% watched recorded version. Thousands watched on YouTube and Facebook.
- Contributed to and published tips and a checklist for congregations on providing online worship.
- Signed MoUs with St Michael's and Good Shepherd.
- Videoed sermons project was negotiated and planned with the Commission on Worship and College of Bishops (in particular the LCA NZ WA District Bishop). LCA Special Ministry funds were applied for and granted. The project began but has been delayed due to a virus corrupting backed up worship service files.
- Participated in negotiations with TV stations, in particular with national and SA TV stations.
- Magill Lutheran Church and Adelaide Deaf Community Church started livestreaming their worship services.

Ministry with the Ageing

- Produced the resource 'Worship and the ageing: a list of ideas'.

New and Renewing Churches

Participated in conversations around online worship and ministry.

Local Mission Strategic Priority 3: Encourage service in and with local communities.

Cross-Cultural Ministry

- The 2018 study/immersion tour encouraged connection (service) between Asian congregations and with the LCA NZ.

Grow Ministries

- Presented its 'Rethinking Faith Formation in the 21st Century' workshop content (following an update) as part of District training days in QLD, SA and VIC and in various congregations or regions around Australia.

Lutheran Media

- The video competition was popular and enabled people to produce outreach videos to be shared through YouTube.

Ministry with the Ageing

- *Ministry with the Ageing: a beginner's guide* was produced.
- Ran a ministry stream at the Aged Care and Community Services Gathering/Forum in Nundah, Qld (2019) and in Albury (2021).

Local Mission Strategic Priority 4: Reach out and engage with LCA indigenous ministries to gain knowledge and understanding of their missional needs.

The Executive Officer-Local Mission, the department Managers, the Committees and the Council have begun engagement with the Reconciliation Action Plan and have met with the RAP Project Officer.

Grow Ministries

- Supports congregations to be mindful and inclusive of all people.

Lutheran Media

- Acknowledgment of country and significant dates for First Nations peoples were included in the annual calendar.
- Messages of Hope interviews of First Nations people recorded.

Ministry with the Ageing

- Lutheran Aged Care and Community Services were encouraged to engage with the RAP website and in their knowledge of indigenous issues.

New and Renewing Churches

- Supported missional communities to be inclusive of all.

Local Mission Strategic Priority 5: Model and nurture grace-filled lives that uphold the dignity of all people.

The Executive Officer-Local Mission, the department Managers, the Committees and the Council have engaged with the LCA Child Protection Officer.

Local Mission Strategic Priority 6: Cultivate a life-enabling grace-filled gospel-centred culture.

Cross-Cultural Ministry

- Cross-Cultural Ministry churchwide conference was held in 2019.
- In collaboration with ALC, an intensive was conducted in Mandarin on Lutheran theological emphases. Developed a resource of simple greetings in multiple (non-European) languages.

Grow Ministries

- Achieved this through its Grow coaching congregational training clusters and is took the time to review content to make sure it meets the needs of the LKANZ.

Lutheran Media

- In the last 2 years, over 65,000 unique visitors have visited messagesofhope.org.au, messagesofhope.org.nz and lutheranmedia.org.au.
- Messagesofhope.org.au was redesigned, with the homepage allowing easier access to topics and issues.
- Congregations and ministries received, used and shared outreach resources into their communities.
- Audience responders received supportive gospel content and referred to their local congregation. More congregations engaged with Messages of Hope content.
- Our first Calendar competition was very successful, receiving 100 entries with many perfectly suited for the calendar. As a result of this success, twice as many calendars were ordered and sent out than previously, many from people recommending and handing it out to others in their mission efforts.
- MoU was signed with LCNZ regarding Messages of Hope.

Ministry with the Ageing

- Produced an end-of-life issues paper and an issues paper on multi-faiths in aged care.

New and Renewing Churches

- Produced a partner churches booklet to complement the church planting booklet.
- Sending church training and mentoring continued.
- Article published in the *Lutheran Theological Journal*.
- Engaged key LCA missional stakeholders in a Church Planting Strategy Forum.
- Contributed to *The Lutheran* magazine.
- Engaged in missional conversations via Learning Networks and monthly coaching.
- Produced bimonthly e-newsletters.
- Grew our Facebook presence.
- Continued conversations with the College of Bishops around licensing church planters for Word and Sacrament ministry.
- Social media presence now includes Instagram.

Local Mission Strategic Priority 7: Collaboratively resource and equip mission-oriented leadership training.

Cross-Cultural Ministry

- 26 people attended the LCA Study and Immersion tour held at ALC, the Churchwide office, the LLL and in various locations in the Adelaide Hills and the Barossa Valley.
- Workshop on Lutheran emphases conducted in Mandarin (2019) at ALC.
- The first Cross-Cultural Ministry conference (as opposed to previously held African Ministry Summits or Asian Ministry summits) was held in Melbourne in 2019 under the theme 'Many cultures, one faith'.

Grow Ministries

- Thirty young people, including mentors, attended the third Grow Leadership National Youth Forum, discussing matters relevant to young people and issues being discussed at 2018 National Synod.
- Four young people attended Synod as Youth Consultants in 2018.
- Five Australians, one New Zealander and four young people from Myanmar participated in the Cultivate Young Adult Leadership Program in 2019.
- Facilitation of two leadership development intensives in partnership with Australian Lutheran College. 2020 saw the conclusion of two of five clusters (NSW and Barossa SA) in the first part of the year. The Perth, Adelaide Hills and Southern Queensland clusters paused for a brief time during COVID-19 lockdowns. However, we were able to provide self-guided resources for WA and QLD. Adelaide Hills experienced the added challenge of bush fires in early 2020 which added to their challenges of re-engaging, at the end of the lockdown.

Lutheran Media

- Leaders use Messages of Hope for outreach and to support enquirers.
- Annual lecture to ALC students on pastoring in the digital landscape.

New and Renewing Churches

- *Lighthouses: Christian Coaching in a Post-Christian World* was published and 7 seminars to roll out the resource were conducted.
- Sending church training delivered to St Petri Nuriootpa, St Johns Geelong, Werribee, Bethlehem Bendigo, Rockingham/Mandurah and Ipswich parish.
- Conducted a New Horizons retreat in Adelaide (2019).
- Provided a lecturer in the Frontier missional training program of St Luke's Albury.
- Supported pastors to reimagine missionally-focussed church practice amid the pandemic and changing circumstances.
- Coaching (mentoring) of church planters continued.
- Partnered with the Cross-Cultural Ministry Facilitator in the Learning Network.

Local Mission Strategic Priority 8: Assist communities to communicate to, and live the gospel in, a post-Christian Australia and New Zealand.

Cross-Cultural Ministry

- The Cross-Cultural Ministry conference inspired and gave confidence to and ideas for assisting communities to live the gospel locally.
- We have engaged more closely with the existing mono-ethnic ministries and worked to draw these members into closer relationship by stressing that the mainstream church needs them to be complete. The vision casting to the mainstream has meant opening up new ways of thinking. Introducing the fact that newcomers from other ethnicities thirst for relationship with us. Helping people to move beyond 'doing things' for others to doing life together (both giving and receiving).
- We have developed various position papers and utilised platforms like *The Lutheran* and CCM eNews to disseminate these new messages.

Grow Ministries

- Articles for the Go and Grow section of *The Lutheran* magazine are regularly submitted.
- Monthly eNews is distributed to subscribers.
- Facebook and Pinterest continue to facilitate the sharing of articles and resources with growing engagement particularly during COVID-19.

Lutheran Media

- Millions of people were reached on radio and social media. This has resulted in 12,633 social media followers and 827,844 engagements in the last 2 years.
- Outreach content produced on topics such as: future, ageing, relationships, crisis, friendship, grief, Easter, guilt, shame, well-being, parenting, domestic violence, science, anger, illness, loneliness, family, stress, and forgiveness.
- Content produced includes: 5-minute, 1-minute and 30-second Messages of Hope for radio; short videos, and daily posts on social media that include images, bible verses, videos, quotes, resources and links.
- More radio stations started playing Messages of Hope while many existing radio stations played Messages of Hope more often. New radio stations included commercial sports radio station SEN in Melbourne and Adelaide, the most popular Christian radio station in Australia - LightFM in Melbourne, Christian radio stations in Victoria, NSW and Queensland, RPH in Sydney and Newcastle, Rhema throughout New Zealand, and the Community Broadcasters Association of Australia began promoting and sharing Messages of Hope throughout is hundreds of radio stations.
- Messages of Hope began playing on Spotify and Google Podcasts along with iTunes. The Australian Christian Channel and Shine TV in New Zealand played Messages of Hope videos. Messages of Hope reached out through Google on stress and received daily responses.

Ministry with the Ageing

- Quarterly eNewsletters were produced and the National Aged Care Alliance reps communicated regularly to Lutheran Aged Care organisations.
- Reprinted the Called to Transformative Action and God's Love – our care documents.
- Communicated to Aged Care and Community Services CEOs, Board Chairs and Chaplains.

New and Renewing Churches

- In 2018 7 Missional Masterclasses were conducted across Australia and 11 sending churches supported; New Horizons (formerly the lead pastors retreat) was held in Brisbane.
- In 2019 NRC conducted and filmed Sent conferences in Adelaide and Brisbane and provided the training sessions on the LCA website.
- Conducted a six-week Season of Prayer for God in 2019 to raise up and send out harvest workers into his fields in Australia and New Zealand.
- Hosting of the planned International Research Consortium was moved to an online format due to COVID.
- Renew Mission Life/Sending church training occurred at Murray Bridge, Gawler and at Box Hill.

Local Mission Strategic Priority 9: Coordinate and promote, resource and support mission development.

Cross-Cultural Ministry

- Asian Ministry Coordinator continued support of Asian church workers and acted as a consultant to the Districts as required until his retirement from the position.

Grow Ministries

- Achieved this through its Grow coaching congregational training clusters and is took the time to review content to make sure it meets the needs of the LCA NZ.

Lutheran Media

- A content engagement plan was developed which included categorising Messages of Hope into a -3 and -7 (Engel Scale) rated Christian messaging.

- As at 30/4/2021, we have 8,179 Facebook fans, 1,465 Twitter followers, 621 Instagram followers, 124 LinkedIn followers and 2,244 YouTube subscribers. Daily posts are reaching thousands of people and new followers and subscribers are joining every week.
- Happyland.com.au continues to be used. Along with playing the website game, there is an App and other resources for families, children and primary and ELC teachers. The Stories videos are on the website. Website Christmas and Easter calendars are produced sharing content from Grow Ministries.

Ministry with the Ageing

- Engaged with the Aged Care/Community Services governance review and planned the ministry (chaplaincy) stream for the 2019 Lutheran Aged Care and Community Services Gathering.
- eNews disseminated quarterly to CEOs and chaplains of Lutheran aged care facilities as well as to those ministering to the ageing.
- Delivered over 1800 copies of the Dec 2018 edition of *The Lutheran* (theme of Healthy Ageing) to Lutheran residential living units

New and Renewing Churches

- Church planting vision was reviewed and expanded and a revised church planting booklet produced, as well as a partner church booklet.
- The Church Planting Mentor and Mission Facilitator assisted the NSW District in strategic planning for church planting and renewal in the greater Sydney area and across the District. The Church Planting Mentor and Mission Facilitator assisted the NSW District to implement their Sydney Strategic plan.
- Continued to collaborate with the District Mission Directors.
- Continued to share stories of missional activity. Stand-alone NRC website launched.

Local Mission Strategic Priority 10: Resource and support the strengthening and renewal of communities.

Grow Ministries

- Achieved this through its Grow coaching congregational training clusters.
- Rethinking Faith Formation training and continued development and updating of discipleship resources.

Lutheran Media

- Outreach content used and shared with other mission departments and organisations; regular contributions to the Go and Grow section of *The Lutheran*. Content produced annually for radio, TV, social media, websites, individuals, congregations and organisations to use and share:
 - 54 x 15-minute messages of hope produced along with equivalent 10-minute podcasts,
 - 144 x 1 minute outreach messages
 - 168 x 30 second outreach messages
 - 60 videos
 - Weekly images for social media

Ministry with the Ageing

- Produced a discussion paper on 'Same Sex Relationships in Aged Care and Community Services'.
- Provided scholarships for professional development.
- Contributed articles to *The Lutheran* magazine including contribution to the theme of Death and dying (April 2021)

New and Renewing Churches

- Training videos produced.
- Contributed articles for *The Lutheran*.
- Training was revised and videos produced for Renew Mission Life.
- Murray Bridge congregations and school and Gawler commenced the journey with NRC.
- Rockingham Mandurah Lutheran appointed Matt Schubert as Mission Facilitator and Church Planter (supported by NRC).
- Pakenham Lakeside Church underwent a significant review and consequently was able to undertake a transition process to call a second stage pastor.

Local Mission Strategic Priority 11: Act pastorally as we care for individuals and communities of the Church.

Cross-Cultural Ministry

- Asian Ministry Coordinator provided care to Asian church workers including support in conjunction with the SMP training at ALC. ‘
- The Cross-Cultural Ministry Facilitator provided coaching, mentoring and pastoral care for leaders and members involved in cross-cultural ministry.

Grow Ministries

- Provided care through engagement with guiding principles and equipping resources.

Lutheran Media

- In the last two years there were 70,000 unique views of our websites and about 2,000 booklet orders and downloads.
- Gospel-centred social media posts shared and outreach and interaction grows.

Ministry with the Ageing

- LCA reps to National Aged Care Alliance (NCAC) attended NACA meetings and reported to LCA Aged Care organisations.
- Assisted Vic-Tas District Church Council in the development of a Voluntary Assisted Dying policy statement.
- Produced a position description template for Chaplains in Aged Care.
- Ensured Bishop John’s video of encouragement during the pandemic reached Aged Care and Community Services (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kVpXDfQSFzQ>)

New and Renewing Churches

- Learning Network and coaching relationships provided care and support to church planters and missional community leaders and pastors.
- Noel Due announced his retirement and the position of Pastor for NRC (and Manager) was filled.

Local Mission Strategic Priority 12: Provide governance and financial oversight of Local Mission assets and resources.

Council for Local Mission

- Development and approval of the Local Mission giving and receiving donations policy and procedures and the Local Mission travel guidelines
- Commissioning of the review of the effectiveness for ministry sustainability of grant funding in cross-cultural ministry settings
- Engagement with the College of Bishops on the recognition, licensing and training of church planters

- Developed a formal risk register to capture risks noted by committees and the Council and a template for the committees to use when identifying and submitting new risks to the Council
- Updated the Local Mission strategic plan in light of the updated LCA Our Direction 2018-2024 document approved by 2018 General Convention of Synod
- Approved a 360 review of the Executive Officer-Local Mission in conjunction with Bishop John Henderson
- Engaged with the LCA Child Protection Project officer
- Engaged with Frontier training (St Luke's, Albury)
- Provided communiques to the Bishops, Districts Church Councils and GCB on the work of Local Mission
- Approved an amended Cross-Cultural grants booklet and approved a New and Renewing Churches grants booklet, application form, half yearly report template and annual acquittal form.
- Refining the presentation of financial information to promote understanding and oversight of financial areas relevant to all parties.
- Received permission from the General Church Board to have a Local Mission annual appeal.

Cross-Cultural Ministry

- Applications for grant monies received and grants provided. Accountability reports received and communication sent to congregations. In 2018, congregations/entities were supported by Cross-Cultural Ministry grant monies. In 2019 and 2020, 10 congregations/entities were supported by Cross-Cultural Ministry grant monies.
- Grant program was reviewed, and grant amounts and the grant period were reduced. Essentially the CCM department are now encouraging a wider volunteer led response and the inclusion of mainstream congregation-based ministry which leads to multicultural outcomes. Much discussion has ensued around how congregations can better partner with each other (rather than relying on direct LCA funding).

Lutheran Media

- In the past two years, Media attended more than 60 congregations, events and groups to share about Lutheran Media and inspire people in mission. This includes leading worship and preaching.
- Regular contact with supporters through monthly eNews, regular mail, and digital communication.
- Donations received from individuals, businesses and congregations. Legacies and bequests received from long-time supporters. Thank you for supporting Lutheran Media to reach millions of people with the gospel of Jesus Christ.
- A Memorandum of Understanding was agreed between Lutheran Media and the LCNZ to partner together to reach out to the people of New Zealand with the good news of Jesus Christ and his message of hope.
- Ongoing negotiations with media outlets to keep the costs low, discounts high and high rotation of Messages of Hope.

Ministry with the Ageing

- Ministry with the ageing scholarships were awarded.
- Provided input into and communicated from the National Aged Care Alliance (NACA). Note that NACA reporting is now under the oversight of the Aged Care and Community Services Governance Enhancement Committee.
- Contributed to the Aged Care and Community Services Governance Enhancement Committee.

New and Renewing Churches

- Application for and reporting on church plant launch grants was improved.
- Text resources were offered as free downloads and printed texts were priced for cost recovery.
- Grant documentation was further revised and grants offered to Beyond and Rockingham Mandurah.
- Fundraising toolkit was produced.
- Received permission from GCB to have a Local Mission annual appeal.

PROGRESS AGAINST PLAN

Historically the energy of the CCM department has been mainly directed to the support of congregations or communities formed to serve single ethnicities (like Chinese or Nuer) with these groups attached to Anglo congregations (but often not blending together). This approach has come to define CCM in most quarters. The new focus of the department is to give increasing priority to what the average LCA member (or pastor) can do to engage with people from other ethnicities. This is a vision of the LCA more fully imbedded among our society. This change in thinking will take several years and our impact during 2020 was that we have started to change the narrative. We were able to fully review activities from the past 10 years or so and develop detailed recommendations to guide the way forward.

We were able to reinforce the value of cross-cultural engagement and encourage those who have sometimes laboured in isolation. A growing signal is being sent to the LCA members from other ethnicities that they are truly part of the church and we (Anglos) welcome closer links.

Grow Ministries

Three clusters (a total of 10 congregations) completed the 2-year journey of Grow Coaching and shared stories of positive intergenerational interactions and new ways of doing ministry but acknowledged the challenges ahead in keeping momentum as they continued to implement small changes. Existing Grow Coaching clusters (a total of 6 congregations) reported how much they appreciated the self-guided opportunity as this had helped them engage more deeply with the content. We received very positive feedback regarding the resource packages we put together to support the online nature of ministry during COVID-19 in 2020. Facebook continues to be our most successful form of social media communication. Our regular eNews is also appreciated with regular feedback received as a result of sending this out.

The production and launch of our new resource Grow Disciples—confirmation curriculum has been a significant achievement over the last three years and we have been delighted with the take up of this resource by many congregations. They have reported their appreciation for the resource and the support they have received from the Grow team to implement.

Lutheran Media

- Messages of Hope continues to reach millions of people with the Gospel and engage with thousands of them including referring them to their local congregation.
- Messages of Hope provides content for congregations and the wider church (including schools and aged care facilities) to use in their mission efforts.
- Messages of Hope provides a safe space for people to engage and be nurtured in faith in Jesus Christ.
- Lutheran Media collaborates with fellow mission organisations and departments to maximise reach and engagement of people with the good news of Jesus Christ.
- We regularly interact with congregations and church departments and learn and share about mission including the promotion of Messages of Hope.
- Lutheran Media contributed to thousands of people continuing to worship despite the lockdown of congregations due to COVID.

Ministry with the Ageing

We've had a focus on relationship building with and encouragement for aged care and community service CEOs and Board Chairs and this has been appreciated. We've also encouraged and advocated for chaplains serving in aged care and for those who minister, both paid and voluntary, with the ageing and there is a growing awareness of the need to cater well for our ageing communities. We're delighted to assist a number of chaplains and pastoral carers with financial assistance for their professional development thanks to our scholarship fund.

New and Renewing Churches

- We've seen the emergence and growth of missional communities out of Rockingham Mandurah Lutheran Church and elsewhere.
- Church planters and pastors have felt supported.
- Conversations on the synergies between cross-cultural ministry and church planting have commenced. Collaborative work is being undertaken.
- Church plants are maturing (Beyond, Arise, Pakenham, LifeWay, etc) and have seen growth through conversions and newcomers. Leadership structures within these communities are maturing too.
- Coaching and relationships have assisted pastors, in particular, with the adaptive change needed to cope with the pandemic and its consequences on worship, ministry and mission. The pastoral care given by the Pastor for New and Renewing Churches provided a protective factor for the leaders in their changing circumstances.
- Anecdotally, church planting and mission in general is increasingly 'on the table' within the LCA NZ.

SUCSESSES

Cross-Cultural Ministry

A joy is working with some outstanding ministry teams and workers in the field. Two examples that illustrate outstanding community contributions are:

The Glynde ministry in Adelaide. The congregation has opened numerous activities during weekdays that appeal to Christian and non-Christian alike. It is not unusual for 30+ people of various ethnicities to attend one of the activities. The impact ripples out into the surrounding community and a good flow of newcomers are being baptised and established in the congregation. Another strategy they implement is to open the church facility to 3-4 other ethno-specific groups for use in their worship times. Their love flows in a way that each of these 'tenant' groups start to merge with them. From a distance it sounds tiring, but somehow the joy of the Lord brings new energy.

The Asylum-seeker ministry in Geelong. The various congregations and schools in the Geelong area have united around a desire to respond to the needs of local asylum seekers who are people with needs even greater than other refugees. Employing Michelle Filipovic part-time has generated contacts with many of these people and seen a real engagement happen into the local congregations.

Grow Ministries

- The wonderful stories we hear about the changes our coaching congregations are making and the positive impact that is happening on individuals as a result of their journey with us.
- The development of one of our Grow Coaching workshops, Family Faith Formation, into a self-guided experience and the positive feedback received from the congregations that have used this as part of their coaching journey.

- Our biggest joy was the February 2020 launch of *Grow Disciples* our new confirmation guide and curriculum.

Lutheran Media

- Messages of Hope increased substantially in reach and responses due to more media outlets sharing the content and more high-quality content being produced. We received thousands of heartfelt requests in response to the gospel and for more help to cope with life.
- Celebrating and giving thanks for 75 years of reaching out to millions of people with the good news of Jesus Christ.
- Growth of online worship and Lutheran congregations picking up the opportunity to share their worship services confidently online and on TV.

Ministry with the Ageing

- Relationship building and encouragement for aged care and community services CEOs, and Board Chairs
- Encouragement and advocacy for chaplains serving in Lutheran Aged Care
- Raising awareness of those who minister with the ageing
- Professional development for chaplains and pastoral carers
- New and Renewing Churches
- We celebrated the ministry of Noel Due and his positive impact on the LCA NZ.
- We successfully adapted – including moving CNRC meetings and coaching sessions online - and still managed face-to-face training at Murray Bridge.
- COVID broke down the walls of our church and it's been a joy to watch the barriers being removed and the gospel reaching further than thought possible via online platforms.
- LifeWay Westside was launched, and the Sydney strategic planning (and regional NSW) gained traction. (NSW District purchased a 'mission house' for LifeWay Westside in 2021!) NSW District has given significant support to NRC and has caught the vision for church planting and renewal.

LESSONS LEARNT AND CHALLENGES

Council for Local Mission

- Communication and the various mediums we use to communicate continues to be a challenge. As a Council, we are trying to be as inclusive as possible of all the Local Mission committees and to hear the voices of all concerned. We will continue to monitor the manner in which we communicate our message to different bodies in the LCA NZ.
- We are conscious of the importance of local buy-in and local engagement and seek ways to ensure projects and programmes have get down to the local level.
- Apart from membership from New Zealand on the Committee for Lutheran Media and engagement with leaders from Auckland on the Learning Network, we are challenged to seek ways to engage with our New Zealand sisters and brothers.

Cross-Cultural Ministry

The best approach for sharing the vision of a multiethnic Lutheran church has been to tell stories of joyful outcomes. One principle that has been important is that we act inclusively and respectfully of what has gone before. Little is achieved by competing against other important goals or obligating people to do more. We look for the grace to present a multiethnic vision that inspires, encourages, and enables others.

Grow Ministries

- The importance of being able to have the flexibility to change how we present training content. And in doing so the ability to try and learn new things. i.e., video production and online conferencing.
- The value of good team relationships and communication, particularly due to increased hours of working from home and use of email. We developed new ways of communicating and staying connected using Microsoft Teams and Microsoft Planner.
- The importance of strengthening ecumenical and LCA district connections for networking, encouragement, ideas, and support.

Lutheran Media

- Keeping up with increased demand for Messages of Hope content from radio stations and responses from these and social media outreach stretched and challenged us. From the responses we were able to improve the website to make it easier for people to respond and access the content they would like. Automated response processes were also used. A radio strategy is being developed to plan how to manage the responses.
- Demand for insights to help congregations with online worship increased substantially. Tips and checklist documents accessible on the internet helped.
- Demand for worship DVDs doubled during the peak of COVID restrictions.
- Use of media for mission and ministry is more in demand than ever, especially digital media such as social media. The church has an amazing opportunity to reach and engage with people with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We encourage the Church to promote, support and invest more in these forms of mission and ministry.

Ministry with the Ageing

That ageing is a growing area of need and ministry opportunity within Australia and New Zealand, both within the broader society and within the LCA NZ. Ministry with the ageing and with the dying is providing opportunities for reaching out with the gospel to some of our 'lost sheep'. With the need for expanding the services provided to this increasing sector of society, we need to consider how to

- Grow and sustain chaplains, pastoral carers, congregational pastors and others who minister with the ageing and the dying
- Ensure that this paid and volunteer workforce can provide services that meet the needs of our elderly in appropriate ways eg by raising awareness of ways to enhance worship for those suffering from dementia or those whose ability to see and/or hear is diminishing
- Resource our workforce.

We found that we are able to meet and work together successfully using technology.

COVID-19 has presented challenges for us all. Those living and working in residential aged care were particularly impacted when lockdowns were in place for protracted lengths of time.

Ministry with the dying and their families and friends became more difficult. Technology was able to be used, but it was unable to replace the comfort that being together at this time offers.

New and Renewing Churches

- COVID-19 had a big impact on planned events and halted many face-to-face connections/meetings. We adapted, as everyone had to, to the online environment and though it doesn't replace the importance of in-person connections, it showed us that we can reduce expenses.
- Many missional conversations within the LCA NZ slowed down as the focus became crisis and change management through COVID. The consequences of 2020 are many leaders are tired/burnt out.
- Lack of consensus around pathways for church planters in Word and Sacrament ministry is a challenge to the work of the department.

- That church planting and missional renewal is important but fragile work in the LCA NZ. (It is human nature to default to the status quo and the status quo is not what the Spirit is asking of us).
- That we, as a faith tradition, have much to learn in regard to discerning the Spirit both individually and in community. (We're a faith tradition that errs on the importance of head knowledge rather than a 'head', 'heart' and 'hand' balance).
- That church plants are real churches and need all the support structures and relational support of all churches, including Word and Sacrament ministry.
- Disruption can be productive for change.

RISKS

Major risks

The following are the risks recorded, in the Council for Local Mission's risk register, as high risk after current controls is in place:

1. Strategic/Operational – Lack of capacity of Ministry with the Ageing to support ministry/chaplains in Lutheran Aged Care - Inadequate funding for Ministry with the Ageing.
2. Operational – Ageing pastorate as well as scarcity of qualified aged care chaplains (lay and ordained) – decrease of people wanting to undertake formal studies in chaplaincy/ageing, declining membership of the church and the inability to attract suitable candidates.
3. Operational – Lack of pathway/recognition for church planters and evangelists – insufficient programs, training and support to potential and current church planters.
4. Operational – Lack of appropriate identification and training of church planters and evangelists at Australian Lutheran College – the provision of appropriate training is a capacity issue for both New and Renewing Churches and Australian Lutheran College.
5. Financial – reducing income to fund some of the Local Mission departments – loss of income from permanent funds and annual LLL funding.

Likelihood of identified risks occurring and potential impact

The risks listed above are categorized as 'almost certain' or 'likely' after current controls are in place.

1. The potential impact is described as per the numbering of the risks above:
2. Lack of support and resources to chaplains, pastoral care workers and organisations.
3. Failure to deliver programs, services and pastoral care to all those in need.
4. Missed missional opportunity and underutilisation or loss of our human resources.
5. Inadequate ministry support to the ageing.
6. Local Mission employees will be lost, Support work will not be able to continue at the professional and paid level which it has previously. Events and other resourcing will be reduced.

Action taken to mitigate risk

Note that the risks listed above are the risks identified as high after control strategies are in place. The following is the current control strategy:

1. Request funding via the General Church Board and apply for specific ministry grants. Beyond that action, we have advised the LCA's Finance Audit Risk committee of this risk and the General Church Board is aware of this risk.
2. The Council for Local Mission cannot directly mitigate this risk, other than to advocate for chaplains and chaplaincy education. Beyond that action, we have advised the LCA's Finance Audit Risk committee and the College of Bishops is aware of this risk.

3. The Committee for New and Renewing Churches in collaboration with the Council for Local Mission have organised church planting discussion forums with the College of Bishops and these discussions are continuing. Beyond those actions, the Council is continuing to monitor and advocate for recognition of church planters and clarity of pathways.
4. The New and Renewing Churches department provide coaching for church planters and use a church planter assessment tool. Beyond those actions, the Council is continuing to monitor and advocate for missional leadership training.
5. The Council applied to, and were granted permission from, the General Church Board, to hold an annual Local Mission appeal. The first appeal was held in 2021.

ALIGNMENT TO 'OUR DIRECTION 2018-2024'

Since being sent in mission to share the gospel is part of the LCA's identity rather than just one of its many activities, the work of the Council for Local Mission is to see God's love in Christ coming to life so that people everywhere may know Christ and his love. We do this by:

- Providing strategic leadership and support to nurture a growing missional culture in the Church;
- Developing strategic mission direction and establishing the overall policy environment of the Church;
- Promoting and coordinating congregational participation in local mission; and
- Overseeing and monitoring the resourcing of the mission of the Church to Australia and New Zealand. [Council for Local Mission Terms of Reference]

The Council for Local Mission therefore has the same strategic priorities as the Lutheran Church of Australia.

COORDINATION AND COLLABORATION

1. **Aged Care** - DVD worship services and resources supplied
2. **Australian Lutheran College** – lectures to students and participation in the Festival of Learning. ALC contributes to Grow Leadership and the National Youth Forum.
3. **College of Bishops** – engagement over the recognition and training of church planters
4. **Commission on Worship** - online worship information and promotion. Videoed sermons (in collaboration with the College of Bishops). Children's addresses supplied.
5. **Communications** – articles and resources supplied by Local Mission for communication to the LCA via eNews and *The Lutheran*. Design work supplied to Local Mission departments from Communications
6. **Congregations** – visiting (including leading worship and preaching), training and the distribution of resources
7. **Districts** – We enjoy collegial mission efforts. Written communiques after Council meetings are sent to Districts.
8. **International Media** – Cross-Cultural Ministry and International Mission work together in multiethnic ministry. International Mission contributes to Grow Leadership and the National Youth Forum.
9. **Lutheran Education Australia** – Local Mission departments have contributed resources and training.

FINANCE/BUDGET

COUNCIL FOR LOCAL MISSION

FINANCE REPORT

	2020	2019	2018
Income	719,525	764,405	1,625,732
Expenditure	(1,766,298)	(2,090,446)	(2,217,994)
Grants allocated for year	1,183,147	1,125,429	729,645
Non-cash transfer to reserves	(95,353)	75,743	(2,100)
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Net result for year	41,021	(124,869)	135,283
Total Available at beginning of year	1,237,489	1,362,358	1,227,075
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Reserves available for the future	1,278,510	1,237,489	1,362,358
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