**LCANZ Local Mission Annual Appeal**

**Announcement script –** *you may include an accompanying PowerPoint slide*

Good morning. We are all aware that the cultural landscape of our community is changing. ‘People watch’ in [name an Australian/New Zealand city] and you’ll see great diversity and many nationalities present and calling [name of city] home.

That's why, today, I want to share with you wonderful news about our Lutheran family befriending newcomers to our shores.

[Choose one, or both, of the following stories]

MICHELLE is a mum to four grown children and lives in Wyndham City, Melbourne. She keeps fit through Pilates and loves to walk with her two Maltese Shitzu dogs. Michelle works for the Lutheran congregations in Geelong and has visited and loved the Tamil new arrivals for six years. Every day brings an opportunity to share about Jesus and to pray with people, many of whom have known only Hinduism or Islam. Michelle is quick to acknowledge the many others who share the vision of her ministry and back her in her role. There’s a team of people who join her in visiting, praying and supporting this labour of love. Just this year, a Tamil language fellowship was launched by Michelle and Pastor Boyd Briese and a community of faith is now taking shape. God’s Spirit is active among these new arrivals.

Michelle says, ‘The wonderful people who have travelled from the other side of the world to live in Geelong have become my true friends.’

RIKA grew up in Japan, surrounded by Buddhist beliefs and influences. But the Lord had his eye on Rika, even back then. When she came to Adelaide for study, she met a Christian for the first time in her life. Her heart responded to the gospel, and her journey of faith began. Being a young mum in a strange land was not easy, but Rika found a home when she discovered the Mainly Music program at the Glynde Lutheran Church in SA. Within a few years, Rika was leading the mid-week activities and welcoming into the faith other women who had come from far away. The love of Jesus shines through Rika, and she is much-loved by her new church family. It was a Spirit-filled wind that blew her to Adelaide to participate in God’s mission in the Glynde community.

Rika says, ‘In this multicultural community, there are so many people out there like I was many years ago – not knowing there is someone so much greater than anything we can imagine.’

The Lutheran Church of Australia and New Zealand’s Local Mission team have launched their annual appeal. Your support of this fundraising appeal enables you to support mission fields, like those in Geelong and Glynde, in sharing the good news of God’s amazing love.

Please pray for Michelle, Rika and the work of Local Mission, and consider how you can join in with God’s mission.