

11 August 2020



**LUTHERAN
CHURCH**

OF AUSTRALIA

**SOUTH AUSTRALIA
NORTHERN TERRITORY**

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Dear co-workers in the fields of our Lord Jesus,

What a year it has been! Who could have predicted when 2020 started that the world would be plunged into a pandemic which would close our church buildings, suspend public worship, and challenge us to look for different ways to faithfully shepherd God's people?

I am guessing that at least some of you might be thinking that a pastors' retreat would be the last thing you want to think about with the year you have been having. I actually think that a retreat with others who are called to serve God's people publicly might be a good thing right now.

None of us were trained to be pastors in a pandemic – it just wasn't on the radar. Reflecting on my own experiences of this year, it has been difficult to cope with the pressure we can feel personally when our congregations are expecting us to lead them through territory we have never been through ourselves. There is no textbook for us to follow, so we have done our best with the resources we have had at our disposal, and taken one step at a time.

As I began to think about the program for our retreat in October, I wanted to provide an opportunity for pastors to reflect on our experiences this year with other pastors, both personally and professionally, to learn from each other, and to look ahead to the opportunities which God is presenting his people. Some might feel like they are tired of talking about COVID-19 and want a break. I would suggest that you might have something good to contribute to the life and ministry of another pastor – please don't pass up this opportunity to build someone else up in faith and love too quickly.

We do not have to provide all the answers to our current challenges on our own. As we come together as people called to the ministry of the gospel, we all have a valuable resource in each other's experiences, successes and even failures. God is providing for us through each other and what we are all learning along the way. I am sincerely looking forward to spending time with you, hearing your story of 2020, what God has been teaching you along the way, and how we might be able to serve God's people together as we walk with each other and with Jesus into an uncertain future.

We will spend time in retreat talking in small groups about our experiences this year, wrestling together with some of the challenges of ministry in a digital context, and exploring our hopes for ministry into the future. We will be blessed to have LCA Bishop John Henderson with us, District Bishop David Altus lead us for a session, and some representatives from congregations in the Adelaide Hills tell us how God has been at work in their communities since the bushfires. We will also have daily devotions, opening and closing services with the Lord's Supper, and a homiletical reflection to help us prepare our messages for the coming Sunday.

where love comes to life

The retreat is planned to be held at Nunyara, Belair, from midday on Monday 19th to lunch on Wednesday 21st October. Accommodation will be available at the venue plus we will be offering a day rate for those who would prefer to sleep off-site. Attendance rates vary between the two options so please refer to the registration site for exact costings based on your preferences.

Please complete and submit your registration for Pastor's Retreat by **Sunday 11th October**. Due to current restrictions, numbers at the retreat are strictly limited and registration is essential so please don't delay in registering.

If COVID-19 restrictions change and we are unable to go ahead with our retreat, we will let you know as soon as we can. If you have any questions about the registration process, please contact Michelle Storie at the SA-NT District office on 08 8267 5211 or michelle.storie@lca.org.au. If you have any other questions or comments about the retreat, would like to contribute something to the program or would like something else included, please contact me at eugene.minge@lca.org.au.

I pray that God is providing you with every good thing you need as you witness to the good news we have in Jesus and serve God's Kingdom faithfully. I hope to see you at Nunyara in October.

God bless you with peace, hope, and courage in these times.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Eugene Minge". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Eugene Minge
2nd Assistant Bishop
LCA SA-NT District

To register to attend District Pastors Retreat please [click here](#)

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