



**LUTHERAN
CHURCH**

OF AUSTRALIA

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Aged Care and Community Services Gathering 2019

Ministry stream

This report provides a brief overview of the LCA Aged Care and Community Services Gathering (day 1) and on the Ministry stream of the Gathering (day 2). The Gathering was held at St Paul's Lutheran Church, Nundah, Qld on 5-6 April 2019.

The ministry of care

Rev Paul Smith, Bishop LCA Qld District, gave a brief history of the caring (diaconal) ministries. He proposed that Florence Nightingale (widely considered to be the founder of modern nursing) was influenced by her time as a student at the Institution of Protestant Deaconesses in Kaiserswerth, Germany.

Introducing God's love – our care

Rev Ian Lutze, Chaplain Tanunda Lutheran Home, spoke of the document 'God's love – our care: theology underpinning the practice of Lutheran care' which breathes of a God of love and care.

Induction and the *Called to transformative action* ethos documents

Colleen Fitzpatrick, Chair Committee for Ministry with the Ageing, introduced the document 'Called to transformative action: the ethos underpinning Lutheran aged care and community services'. She spoke of its development and how it is strongly linked to the LCA's Our Direction 2019-2014 document.

The Gathering dinner

Graham Reed, CEO, LHI Retirement Services Adelaide, and Wendy Rocks, Managing Director Lutheran Aged Care Albury, spoke at Friday night's dinner sharing some of the opportunities and challenges of mergers.

Mission and ministry in Lutheran aged care and community services

Kathy Matuschka, Assistant Director Ministry and Mission Qld District, reflected on the journey of our aged care and community services and asked why they began and what caused them to grow.

Rev Paul Semmler, Director - Chaplaincy & Pastoral Care, Lutheran Services Qld, shared about the differing world views of the residents of Lutheran aged care in comparison to many of the staff employed by Lutheran Services (and, by extension, in all Lutheran aged care and community services organisations).

where love comes to life

Rev Martin Scharnke, Chaplain, Lutheran Services Qld, walked the ministry stream participants through his Master's dissertation *Bonhoeffer's Seelsorge as Model for Aged Care Chaplaincy in Australia*. Seelsorge (or soul care) is about relationship and bringing the presence of Christ to the relationship.

Chaplaincy today

Angela Uhrhane, Pastoral Care Nurse, Lutheran Aged Care Albury, shared about the pastoral care team at Albury and the team approach to ministry. She spoke of the 'intentional friendship program' and the activity of 'Hymns we love'.

Heidi Smith, Chaplain, Lutheran Services Qld, was one of the few chaplains who had worked at more than one aged care workplace. She shared of the breadth of her chaplaincy experiences and asked the chaplains to complete a survey of current ministry tasks. This survey will be collated in due course.

Research trends and projects

Rev Dr Laurence McNamara C.M., Director Human Ageing Project, spoke of the cumulative messaging that comes to us, from our society, which speaks of ageing as a burden. He proposed, however that the senior members of our communities are a rich resource and that there is a need for a counter narrative to the prevailing secular view of ageing. He called for the narrative of ageing as a 'new vocation', and 'a calling' from retirement to death. He saw a need for greater attention toward the educational and formation needs of church members in the area of ageing and death. He also spoke of the importance of accompaniment and the ministry of presence.

Professor Wendy Mayer, Associate Dean for Research at ALC, discussed the history of regimen in medicine and challenged the notion of spiritual care as a form of therapy, proposing spiritual care as an essential practice for the benefit of the whole person. Wendy challenged the participants to participate in practical/action research within their workplace and encouraged chaplains to explore ideas with her.

Where to from here?

Dr Tania Nelson, Executive Officer – Local Mission, facilitated discussion on where to from here for the aged care and community services chaplains and pastoral carers. Some of the issues that arose from discussion, and over the course of the Gathering, were

- The place of worship in Lutheran aged care and community services
- The role of the chaplain within the organisation
- Continuing education and pastoral supervision for chaplains

In Christ's mission,

Tania Nelson

Executive Officer – Local Mission