

LCA SA-NT District Synod Meeting 2019 Popular Report



**LUTHERAN
CHURCH**
OF AUSTRALIA

**SOUTH AUSTRALIA
NORTHERN TERRITORY**

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The LCA SA-NT District Inc 2019 Synod was hosted by TheArk, Salisbury Lutheran Church and we sincerely thank them for their hospitality. The theme for the event was 'Life from the Ashes' based on the text from Isaiah 61:1-3.

We began the day acknowledging the traditional custodians of the land and with worship led by Bishop David Altus and Pastor Joel Cramer. Bishop David showed a photo of the interior of the Notre Dame Cathedral in France following the recent fire and asked 'What grabs your attention?' He went on to remind us all that the cross is a reminder of the life that God brings and that He brings good news to those who have despair and hurt. We are not here to restore buildings but to be priests in our communities and to bring the gospel to our communities. We are not people who are defined by the ashes but by the joy and life we have from God and bring to others.

Bishop David spoke of the following points in his report:

- District Restructure – District Church Council has been reduced by two members and Pastors Josh Muller and Geoff Havelberg were thanked for their service. The CFYYAM Department has been restructured following extensive consultation and there are currently two new positions advertised. During the rest of this year we will be reviewing chaplaincy ministry within our District. Friends of the Deaf have wound up and we thank those who have served on this group over many years. The partnership with Magill is going well.
- Where to from here? – In the aftermath of General Synod we acknowledge that many people are hurting for varying reasons and the College of Bishops are working through the deeper issues and questions facing the church.
- Pastors – the call process is currently being reviewed nationally, but the major frustration that parishes are experiencing is the lack of pastors. ALC are currently reviewing their training programs. One of the outcomes of the recent Royal Commission was that pastors must undertake formal supervision and regular reviews, which we want to be a positive experience to support our pastors as their work can be emotionally and spiritually draining.
- Lay Preaching – ALC are currently developing a course for this which will enhance the capacity of lay people to support their congregations.
- A safe church – please value the compliance measures we have in place as we care for the vulnerable in our community.
- Leaders of Christian Churches – we are being asked to contribute to difficult pieces of legislation.

Andrew Waldhuter from the LLL presented St Petri Lutheran Church Nuriootpa with the Mission Stimulus Grant for 2019 which will assist with their Messy Church program. Sharon Green told the gathered delegates and visitors of their program and that they will be hosting the 2021 Australasian Messy Church convention.

Mission Resources Grants were presented to Mallee Lutheran Parish for their connecting with people at country shows project; St Mark's Lutheran Church Mount Barker to assist with the development of their LINK space and Victor Harbor Lutheran Church for signage on the Adelaide Road which will advertise happenings at the church.

where love comes to life

Lutheran Disability Services Acting CEO Sandy Harrison spoke of the work that LDS are doing in conjunction with the NDIS and how they are growing to now serve 72 clients with over 100 staff. They are blessed to have so many staff feel they are called to work for LDS and the mission opportunities this presents.

Lutheran Community Care Executive Director Rohan Feegrade said he was excited to be working for LCC and was looking forward to sharing their story with as many people as he could. Rohan told the story of 'Mark' from Davoren Park who credits LCC with helping him to turn his life around and the powerful work that is being done in all LCC locations.

Simon Rodger, Chairperson of LCC presented the proposed merger of LCC and LDS which has been endorsed by District Church Council and both organisations following the LCA Aged Care and Community Service Governance Review. There are a number of benefits for the merger, including improved governance of both organisations, reduced risk for the District and assisting with future funding sustainability as government is looking to work with larger organisations. The proposal was presented to synod delegates who voted overwhelmingly to support the proposal.

District Finance Consultant Stephen Kroker presented the audited financial reports for the District and the District Holding Ltd. Stephen explained the major changes which have occurred in the past two years and acknowledged the work by volunteers and staff to make a successful transition to a complete financial picture. The District Holding Ltd, which holds property in trust for congregations and other Lutheran entities within our District had a major change this year, in that whilst we have always held this property there has been no formal arrangements for this. During the past 12 months Declaration of Trust documents have been provided to all entities which will allow them to include the property value in their balance sheet. Stephen also spoke of the loans that the District guarantees for the LLL. This figure has increased significantly in recent years, particularly lending for our learning communities and is something that the District needs to be aware of. The 2019 budget was presented and it is expected that it will be a balanced budget. All the proposals relating to the financial reports and the budget were passed.

Pastor Stephen Schultz presented on "Ministry Structure in the LCA – Structuring ourselves for growth in the 21st Century". Please refer to his report for details on the presentation, conversation and results.

Our Synod Day ended with a devotion by Pastor Andrew Vanderwal about voices with reference to John 10:27. Jesus' voice speaks into every aspect of our lives. Do we listen and follow the voice of the one shepherd?



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