The Hon Senator Simon Birmingham at St Paul, Blair Athol SA

LEA wishes to thank Andrew Messenger (Principal, St Paul Lutheran School, Blair Athol SA) and his community for the invitation for me to attend the recent opening and dedication of new St Paul facilities. The Hon Simon Birmingham, Minister for Education and Training, opened the new facilities on Tuesday, 16 February 2016. This gave Andrew, John Proeve (LSA Executive Director) and me the opportunity to discuss various matters with Simon. It has also paved the way for both Stephen Kroker (LEA Business Manager) and me to meet with Simon in his Adelaide office later this month.

Thank you to Andrew Messenger for his invitation to both Simon and me to open up these opportunities.

School baptisms? Congregational baptisms?

LEA was recently asked by a member of a school community – an expectant mother – whether her soon-to-be-born baby could be baptised by the local Lutheran pastor at the local Lutheran primary school during a Friday morning school chapel service.

While my reply was to ask her to discuss this matter with the local pastor as well as the Lutheran school principal, which she willingly undertook to do, I also looked up the LCA’s Statement on school worship which is available at: http://www.lutheran.edu.au/assets/Uploads/pr/policies/Mission%20Ministry%20Worship/Worship%20StatementAAAAA.pdf

In reference to baptism, the statement says:

*Baptism is the sacrament of entry into the Christian church. It happens in the context of the people of God who gather together to grow in faith and love. Thus, in the LCA, baptism is clearly seen as belonging to the ministry of the congregation. The congregation is the institution in which Christ’s gathered community is to be found. The question which the LCA and Lutheran school communities grapple with is whether it is appropriate to baptise in the context of school worship.*

*Baptising a student in a Lutheran School setting can be simple or complex, depending on the structure of the school. It is a simple matter in a school where there is a direct relationship between an LCA congregation and the school. Any pastoral acts done in the school can legitimately be seen as pastoral acts of that LCA congregation, and one would assume that its pastor has oversight of the pastoral acts that are done in it. The issue becomes more complex when there are a number of LCA congregations which support it, or when the school is sponsored by a district of the LCA.*
Baptism can take place in a congregation within a school. While the baptised person is at school, this congregation may be best placed to provide ongoing pastoral care. However, when baptism happens in a school, links need also be developed with the LCA congregation that is best placed to care for the person and their family beyond the time that the young person is a student at the school. Where natural links with an LCA congregation do not exist, the school should seek to build bridges, and develop links with those LCA congregations that are well-placed to meet the ongoing pastoral needs of the students and their families.

Baptism of a student or staff member in the context of school worship must be accompanied by instruction. Such instruction will go beyond the normal teaching of the Christian faith in the classroom and the proclamation that is part of school worship, because it presupposes commitment to the faith.

Where there is a direct relationship between the school and an LCA congregation, instruction prior to baptism and after it will normally be the responsibility of the pastor of that congregation. Where there is a worshipping community within the school itself, it is the responsibility of the school pastor to see that such instruction is given as part of his duty to provide pastoral care.

LEA encourages all principals and pastors to openly and positively discuss these important matters and continue to be open to your respective communities and their needs. LEA also acknowledges the great ministry taking place across Australia in Lutheran education.

Thank you, principals for your leadership in these ministry areas

**LEA logo**
A number of Lutheran early childhood Services and schools have enquired about the use of the LEA logo. The LEA logo is available on the LEA website for ECS and school usage. [Click here to download from the LEA website](#).

**Growing deep**
[LEA leadership and formation framework]
Thank you for all school and regional leadership teams for so readily immersing yourselves in the Growing deep rollouts which are well underway. I also wish to acknowledge the leadership, energy and collaboration of LEA staff, Anne Dohnt and Shane Paterson, as they support the various Growing deep rollout sessions.

**Luther@500 conference**
The Australian Lutheran Institute for Theology and Ethics (ALITE), in cooperation with the teaching staff of Australian Lutheran College (ALC), is hosting an international conference on the theology of Martin Luther to mark the 500th anniversary in 2017 of the Lutheran Reformation.

The Luther@500 conference will be held from 28 June to 3 July 2016 at the Catholic Leadership Centre in East Melbourne, Australia. It will explore, positively and critically, the reception of Martin Luther’s theology today and its significance for Christianity in the future. The exploration of Luther’s theology will be three-dimensional: ecumenical, global and future-focused.

Six international Luther scholars, as well as several ALC and other Australian Lutheran scholars, will present papers based on original research and thought. Of special interest to Lutheran educators will be the paper of Prof Thomas Kothmann, University of Regensburg, on ‘Luther the Educator: Luther’s Vision of Learning and Teaching and Its Global Realisation Today.’

Further information is available in the attached flyer or at [www.luther500.com.au](http://www.luther500.com.au). Online registration is now available on the website.
LEA Business Manager
[Stephen Kroker]

School business managers and bursars please note:

- **Sick Leave Emergency Fund**
  The payout rate has been declared for claims for schools that are members of the Sick Leave Emergency Fund. Claims for 2015 will be paid at $35 per day. The claim form is now available on the LEA website. [Click here to access]

- **Staff Entitlement Transfer**
  Details of entitlements for staff moving to another Lutheran school should be transferred within one month. The Staff Entitlement Transfer form is available on LEA website [Under Publications and Policies/Administration – log in access required].

LEA federal news

**Australian schools called to stand united and say bullying. No way!**

[15 February 2016]

Australian schools will mark the sixth National Day of Action against Bullying and Violence on Friday 18 March 2016. Chair of the COAG Education Council and Northern Territory Education Minister, Peter Chandler, is inviting Australian schools to ‘take a stand together’ against bullying and violence. ‘The National Day of Action calls on schools and communities to get involved, put their anti-bullying programs in the spotlight and educate the community about dealing with bullying and violence,’ Minister Chandler said.  
[Read the full media release]

**Exodus from public to private schools stops**

[The Age, 4 February 2016]

The long-running exodus from public schools to the non-government sector has halted, with the proportion of Australian students in public schools increasing for the first time in decades.

According to new data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics released on Thursday, 65.2 per cent of Australian students attended public schools, up from 65.1 per cent the previous year. The proportion of students in non-government schools dropped from 34.9 per cent in 2014 to 34.8 per cent.

In Victoria, 63 per cent of students attended public schools in 2015, up from 62.8 per cent the previous year. In NSW, 65.3 per cent of students attended public schools in 2015, up from 65.1 in 2014. NSW public school enrolments grew by 1.1 per cent over the year, on par with the 1.2 per cent growth in the non-government sector. This is a shift from the long-term trend, which saw enrolments in independent and Catholic schools surge by almost 10 per cent from 2004 to 2013.
while public school enrolments grew by just one per cent over the same period. Read the full article from The Age

**Labor’s struggle to remain ‘the education party’**

[The Conversation, 1 February 2016]

Bill Shorten is playing perfectly to the Labor campaign script. Find a school in a suburban growth area, get the cameras rolling while you sit and laugh with kids, stand against a wall replete with colourful paintings and promise billions of dollars to fix the nation’s schools.

Let the election games begin.

Labor’s commitment to (once again) fund the final two years of the Gonski school funding reforms signals a strong intent by the party to position education as a wedge issue in the upcoming federal election. School funding is a powerful card for Labor, not only because it can capitalise on the Coalition’s retreat from Gonski, but also because funding strikes an emotive tone in the public imagination.

The 2011 Gonski Review cut to the heart of debates about who gets what in Australian schools and revealed gross inequalities across the nation. A fairer needs-based school funding model, the review argued, was central to improving the quality and equity of Australian schooling. Federal Labor has capitalised on union support and a broader public appetite for Gonski. State Labor parties have followed suit, campaigning hard on school funding and resourcing in recent elections.

Shorten now sees a fresh opportunity to re-assert Labor as the Gonski saviour. Read the full article

**Be recognised nationally**:

**2016 Australian Training Awards Open Now**

The Australian Training Awards are the peak, national awards for the vocational education and training (VET) sector. For over 20 years, the Awards have recognised the outstanding achievements of apprentices, trainees, vocational students, training practitioners, businesses, secondary schools and registered training organisations for their contribution to skilling Australia.

There are 18 categories presented at the Australian Training Awards. While a majority of the Awards receive entries via the state and territory awards programs, there are seven awards that are available by direct entry. Applicants may have the opportunity to reach the national stage in November this year and gain Australia-wide recognition for the work they do.

**Australian Training Awards direct entry categories include:**

- Individual
  - Lifetime Achievement Award
  - National Achievement Award
  - Excellence in Language, Literacy and Numeracy Practice Award
- Business
  - Small Employer of the Year Award*
  - Australian Apprenticeships – Employer Award
- Registered Training Organisation
  - School Pathways to VET Award
  - International Training Provider of the Year Award **

*Small Employer of the Year Award is direct entry for NSW, VIC, WA, SA and NT
**International Training Provider of the Year Award is direct entry for all states except WA

Applications close on Tuesday 31 May 2016. For more information, visit www.australiantrainingawards.gov.au

The 2016 Australian Training Awards will be held in Darwin on Thursday 17 November 2016. For real time updates you can find the Australian Training Awards on:

- Twitter
- Facebook
- LinkedIn
- Youtube
An international conference on Martin Luther’s theology in the ecumenical and global context, today and tomorrow.

28 June – 3 July 2016
Catholic Leadership Centre, Melbourne, Australia

Oswald Bayer
Luther ahead: from promise to fulfilment

James Nestingen
The contemporary significance of Luther’s teaching on the communicatio idiomatum

Franz Posset
Our Martin: Catholic sympathisers yesterday, today and tomorrow

Risto Saarinen
Luther’s theology of giving and the gift

Kirsti Stjerna
Luther for the future

Theodor Dieter
Martin Luther’s ninety-five theses: reconstructing a ‘debate which did not take place’

For further information and online registration, please refer to

www.luther500.com.au
Tuesday, 28 June
4.00pm Conference registrations open
Catholic Leadership Centre,
576 Victoria Parade, East Melbourne
6.00pm Official Welcome & Opening Reception
Launch of Luther Bible 1551: Selected Illustrations

Wednesday, 29 June
8.30am Morning Prayer
9.00am Keynote 1: Theodor Dieter: Martin Luther’s ninety five theses: reconstructing a ‘debate which did not take place’
10.00am Morning Tea
10.30am Discussion Groups; and Plenary Q+A (Keynote 1)
12.15pm Lunch
1.45pm Keynote 2: Franz Posset: OUR Martin: Catholic sympathisers yesterday, today and tomorrow
3.00pm Discussion Groups
3.45pm Afternoon Tea
4.15pm Plenary Q+A (Keynote 2)
6.30pm Dinner

Thursday, 30 June
8.30am Morning Prayer
9.00am Keynote 3: Risto Saarinen: Luther’s theology of giving and the gift
10.00am Morning Tea
10.30am Discussion Groups
11.30am Plenary Q+A (Keynote 3)
12.15pm Lunch
2.00pm Simultaneous Short Papers
3.00pm Afternoon Tea
3.30pm Simultaneous Short Papers
6.00pm University of Divinity Reception
7.30pm Public Lecture: Oswald Bayer: Luther Ahead: From Promise to Fulfilment

Friday, 1 July
8.30am Morning Prayer
9.00am Keynote 4: Kirsi Stjerna: Luther for the future
10.00am Morning Tea
10.30am Discussion Groups
11.30am Plenary Q+A (Keynote 4)
12.15pm Lunch
2.00pm Simultaneous Short Papers
3.00pm Afternoon Tea
3.30pm Simultaneous Short Papers
5.30pm Devotion in the Tongue of Luther: German Lutheran Trinity Church, East Melbourne
6.00pm Optional Conference Banquet*, Park Hyatt Hotel, 1 Parliament Place, East Melbourne

Saturday, 2 July
8.30am Morning Prayer
9.00am Keynote 5: James Nestingen: The contemporary significance of Luther’s teaching on the ‘communicatio idiomatum’
10.00am Morning Tea
10.30am Discussion Groups
11.30am Plenary Q+A (Keynote 5)
12.15pm Lunch
1.30pm Optional Excursion* - details to follow
Dinner and Evening Free

Sunday, 3 July
9.00am and 11:00am Invitation to Worship, including Bach Cantata
Details to follow
*These events will incur an additional fee

For further information and on-line registration, please refer to www.luther500.com.au