

SchoolLink

THEME ACLE5

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Worship draws us together

One of the highlights of ACLE is always the worship. We look forward to the opportunity to come together as one, brothers and sisters from our diverse sites of learning across the nation joined together in praise of our Lord and Saviour Jesus. No matter the differences in our contexts, worship draws us together and reminds us of our shared mission and purpose.

This was especially evident at ACLE5 where worship was seamlessly woven throughout the whole program not only in the worship services each day but also through the messages of Adam Yeager and the many opportunities to pray and give praise together led by an enthusiastic and talented worship band.

The opening worship took us on a visual journey back to our historical roots in the Reformation, through to our present. Bishop John Henderson highlighted the conference theme, that reformation starts with transformation through people. He reminded us that we were saved by grace through faith which is a gift from God and that we are created in Christ Jesus to do good works. Bishop John encouraged us in this task highlighting that we are not working alone but God has called and equipped us for our vocation and that he intends that we receive personal blessing and joy through this service.

Day two opened with 'the Hills School's flash mob.' What an inspiring start to begin worship! Bishop David Altus then continued with the conference theme, concentrating on *eco-reformation*. He shared his personal beliefs regarding eco-reformation in his thought provoking sermon and urged us to remember

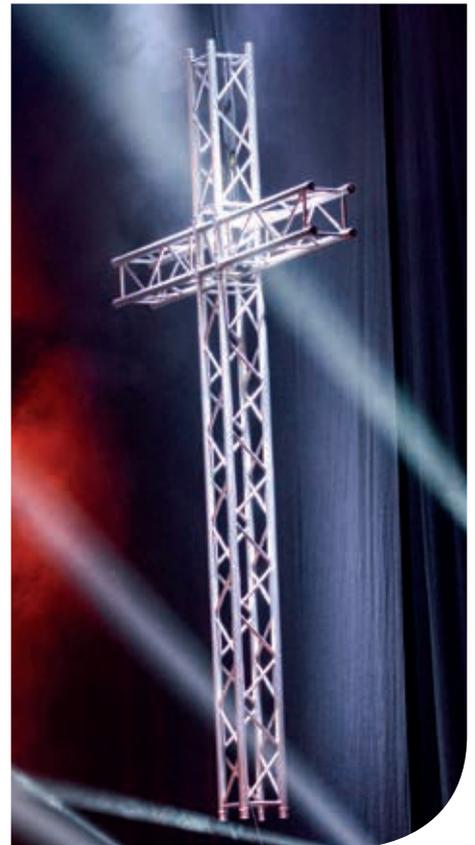
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that true reformation is a transformation from the inside out that is only possible through Christ. This message provided us with a powerful lens through which to consider the various speakers and workshops that were presented for the rest of the day.

The ACLE5 closing worship was a beautiful ending to an amazing three days of fun, fellowship and learning together, focusing on equipping us for *ego-reformation* – our purpose. Over one thousand people joined together to give thanks to God for our learning communities and the people who serve in them. Pastor James Winderlich acknowledged the gospel message had already been powerfully shared by Pastor Nadia Bolz-Weber in the previous session and picked on her message of the need for forgiveness as he led us in the confession and absolution of sins.

ACLE5 closed with the power and beauty of the Lord's Supper as we celebrated the Risen Christ with each other, excited and fully equipped to return to our individual communities

Anne Marschall
Principal
Good Shepherd Lutheran School, Angaston SA



Bishop John Henderson



Bishop David Altus



Rev James Winderlich leads closing worship



Day 1: Edu-reformation

Whose problem is it?

I am a good teacher. My kids get good results, the data proves it. I don't have behaviour problems in my class because I get on well with kids, they respect me. I get on well with their parents and have open and honest communication with them. I get involved with extra-curricular stuff at my school, sport, arts events and the like. I get my marking done promptly, I always have my reports done on time. I am good at what I do. I don't need to change, I am doing well.

Versus:

I am a good teacher. My kids get good results, the data proves it. I don't have behaviour problems in my class because I get on well with kids, they respect me, I get on well with their parents and have open and honest communication with them. I get involved with extra-curricular stuff at my school, sport, arts events and the like. I get my marking done promptly, I always have my reports done on time. I am good at what I do. What can I do to improve myself, how can I do this better?

Reformation begins with self

It is very easy, and a trap for new players, to look at the challenges that confront education and think that it is everyone else's problem – the teachers that still work in a chalk and talk industrialised model, the administrators

who refuse to get on board with PD and the allocation of funds towards physical changes to the learning environment, the families who push back when we try something new, the government, the funding model, the education authorities and their lack of flexibility, 'I would love to change but the Australian Curriculum demands ...', (you fill in the blanks). We should be careful that we don't slide into thinking that we have it all together and have nothing to learn, or at least nothing to improve or that it is someone else's fault that we can't.

It is now over ten years since Sir Ken Robinson gave his famous address about the industrialisation of education and the need for change. We are now almost 20% of the way through the 21st century. Embedding ICT, enabling opportunities for innovation, creating space for creativity, challenging our built environment and altering our pedagogical habits is a given. The edu-reformation has happened, we are swimming in its wake, eating its fruit and already graduating its students into the working world.

So, what did Day One of ACLE5, Edu-Reformation, have to offer?

For me there were two key messages. From Sir John Jones, 'get personal.' From Greg Whitby, 'get busy'.

'Every child that sits in front of a teacher in a classroom is better than the teacher at something. Find out what it is', says Sir John

Jones. His exhortation to focus on the child, the relationship, to challenge the paradigms of a traditional educational approach and move beyond a simple cognitive approach was refreshing. If our idea of educational success rests on the idea that a student's capacity to simply regurgitate what is in the teacher's head in a way that is pre-determined by the teacher back to the teacher then we are missing something. He labels this shallow learning, and he is right. We need to get personal with kids, make it about the heart, the relationship, the engagement. We need to make a magical connection, to find that thing that lights the spark of deeper learning, learning that lasts, wisdom over knowledge, synthesis and application over cognitive regurgitation. My words not his.

Edu-reformation has to be about doing it differently, about knowing it differently. Fancy furniture and trendy applications of ICT in the classroom and breaking down industrialised departmental approaches are not enough, we have to be bold enough to know that the students bring the curriculum with them. Find it, nurture it, light it. Do not break the bruised reed, do not snuff out the smouldering wick.

While this all sounds lovely we often come away from these mountain top experiences and within a few short weeks are a little deflated. We slide back into the routine and confines of our school day lives and lament our individual capacity to make any sort of difference. It is in



Keynote speaker: Sir John Jones

this space that we can turn to Greg Whitby for our inspiration. While his keynote style many have seen, you cannot fault his industriousness. I was inspired by his directness, his immediacy of action, his no-nonsense approaches to simply implementing what we know is right. Question homework, open schools in spaces that are not traditional, appoint the right people to run schools whether they be educators or from different sectors, take on bureaucrats, change learning spaces, leverage governments, reform systems. In short just do it. Once again if we are to usher in the new, if we are to squish all our playdough together and start again then there is no better time than now. Or should I say, if I am to usher in the new, if I am to squish all my playdough together and start again then there is no better time than now. Because after all, whose problem is it?

Shane Altmann

Principal

Faith Lutheran College Redlands

Why we became educators

As a Lutheran educator, it was quite a transforming experience to be part of the ACLE 5 event. Any cobwebby jadedness was whisked away as we were inspired to embrace our wonderful calling. And the word – which we heard throughout, gave power, true hope and optimism to our abilities, despite our humanness.

The first day of ACLE5 explored the theme of reformation and transformation through *People*, that is, *edu-reformation*. The program included a reflective walk, worship, fellowship and keynote sessions with recognised leaders in education. The day focussed on our grounding in the Reformation which led to how we are called to embrace the human ability to create new ideas and paradigms in both ourselves and others with invention, passion, warmth and righteous indignation.

Day One began just before dawn on the grounds of Australian Lutheran College in North Adelaide with 500 Steps. About 50 Christians across denominations, regions and nations met under the exhortation *[t]o act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God* (Micah 6:8). Together we lit the Christ Candle and followed it from ALC to the conference site, holding devotions at various significant sites. One of these was Piltawodli where we considered the experiences of the Kurna people and the two young Lutheran teachers who felt so passionately that all people need to hear the word in their mother tongue.

The first keynote presentation was led by Sir John Jones, who discussed ways in which the needs of young people can be met as we grow into our increasingly changing future. Whether he knew it or not, he built perfectly on the great Reformation text from our opening worship: Ephesians 2:6-10 – where we heard how Jesus

is our purpose – he shows us who God is and who we are.

Sir John reminded us that in Western culture, the purpose of schooling was to produce people who would obey orders for a future of industries and armies. This was enabled through an education that wielded standardisation, inequity, control, conformity and compliance – attributes that remain evident in education today despite society's changing values and needs. Now, in a community which values democracy and which has an unforeseeable future, Sir John declared that education needs to embrace and give agency to creativity, ingenuity, agility, adaptability and sociability. And the good news is that students already have these qualities when they arrive at school!

Sir John asked, 'How will we reform our present Industrial Age education system to meet the needs of our future, enact social change and transform humanity?' He went on to provide inspiring and achievable answers. He spoke to our hearts with stories, quotes and catch phrases, drawing laughter and tears. He enabled us to reconnect with why we became educators in the first place and inspired us with ways in which we could actually reform education and affect social change, for example:

- » Engage in 'double loop thinking' – if the outcome is undesirable, rethink your mental model of the situation rather than simply rethinking the action.



Keynote speaker: Sir John Jones

Day 1: Edu-reformation continued

- » Education is about inspiring passion. If education was about imparting knowledge, then teachers would not be needed. Google and textbooks do not teach love and passion – teachers do.
- » Find 'Syd'. YouTube Ian Wright and the impact his teacher Syd Pigden had – it paints the picture better than words. Syd had deep passion, warmth and a righteous indignation. He took notice of Ian, smiled, believed in him, gave him hard things to do, told him how he was doing without comparing, asked brilliant questions, let him find and make sense of answers, made lessons interesting and told stories. The effect was life-changing. We've all got a Syd inside us – find him.

The following worship gave strength to Sir John's call to weave the magic. In it, God promised to uphold each of us in our vocations (Psalm 138:3) – he answers us, makes us bold and strengthens our souls.

The keynote sessions continued with Greg Whitby, Executive Director of Schools for the Catholic Education Diocese of Parramatta. He shared some of his inspiring innovations regarding the transformation of the nature of education in the digital age. He opened our minds to the creative work taking place with the use of new technologies and school environments to enhance new pedagogies in education. Greg encouraged us to rethink previously known education models and to consider closer partnerships with organisations in business, government and community sectors.

It was a great privilege to come together as a faith community and engage in rigorous professional and spiritual dialogue. The resulting discussions and mindsets that have sprung into our schools and centres are testament to the richness of our encounter with the continuing Reformation.

Rebecca Geue
St Peters Lutheran School, Blackwood SA



Keynote speaker: Greg Whitby

ACLE5 highlight The fourth 'P'

People, Planet, Purpose ACLE 5 what was your highlight? What a difficult question to answer.

To me, there were so many aspects that were highlights, including the worship, fellowship, breakout sessions, the venue, the guest speakers, and the buzz that was around the convention centre, to name a few. So what created that buzz? I think the theme summed it up nicely, we were there because we serve people, we were there because we serve the planet on which we live in, and we were there because we serve the One who gives us purpose. However, I think there is one more P word that could be added to the ACLE 5 theme that helped create that buzz.

Sir John Jones challenged us to realise that the future job market is dramatically changing, the jobs we know and assume will be around forever can be and most probably will be, completed by machines in the near future. We are currently having a new building built at our school, St John's Lutheran School, Kingaroy Qld, and just last week I was watching the bricklayers building a wall, and it reminded me of a picture Sir John had up on the slide show. It had a mechanical arm laying the bricks to build a wall without a person in sight. The ingenuity of the people who created this machine is absolutely amazing but it challenges our thinking of the future jobs as, even within the bricklaying industry, it is not going to be the same as it was. The same could be said about any profession, including the teaching profession, with the multitude of websites, gadgets and robots that could deliver the content and processes to students without a teacher in sight. So what is it that the mechanical bricklaying machine or the robots or the internet can't do or have that we have? Sir John Jones says it is **passion**, and I have to agree with him.

Passion is a key ingredient that influences those around us. It is the spark that can get a fire going, passion for the purpose to serve people and the planet for Christ. To share your passion is a gift, a gift that we as teachers can use to have a profound impact on the future.

To share your passion, you need to build relationships, be patient, listen, and have joy in what you are doing. Kids will remember the joy and passion you had for a subject and hopefully for them. They won't remember all the content you presented to them or the assignments you set, but they will remember you because your passion had an influence on them. When I think back on my own schooling, I remember the passion my teachers had for teaching and for me, which is why I am doing what I am doing today – teaching, and I wish to thank all my teachers for that gift.

So the real highlight for me from ACLE 5 was, yes, the very well organised program of great presenters, but more inspiringly, seeing so many people who are passionate about Lutheran education and the students in our care. May God continue to bless everyone as they passionately serve people, our planet for the purpose of Christ and his love for us.

Wes Brauer
Curriculum Coordinator
St John's Lutheran School, Kingaroy Qld

Day 2: Eco-reformation

It starts with you!

I recently asked my kindergarten children, 'Why is God's creation important?' The answers were varied (and as any early childhood teacher would understand, some not particularly related to the topic at all), but many encompassed the idea of creation giving us life and a place to live. One little philosophical friend had a good chat with me about the topic later in the day, after she had had some time to think. She said, 'Miss Matjec, God is the boss of the world. He made all the stuff so that we can eat. Everything that lives needs to eat to keep healthy. The world gives us everything we need and it does special stuff. It also looks really pretty' (Violet, aged 4, LLWK). What an awesome understanding of the world this little person has.

The world does give us everything we need to live. However, we (the human race) have abused and devastated our natural environment in so many ways that for many species of plants and animals, the damage is already done, and they have become extinct. We need to work towards changing our lifestyle and understanding of the fragile ecosystems of earth and to slow down the rate of devastation on our wounded planet. Hopefully one day we can move towards fixing some of the damage we have created. Education is the key. It is our responsibility as educators now. It is not a next generation issue. How much of our earth will be left for the next generation if we don't act now?

The idea of 'stewardship' encourages us to have a lifestyle of partnership with God: growing, serving and giving. *The Lutheran education earthcare charter* provides six principles and missions for earthcare education and a guide for exploring and understanding the dimensions of our precious world. It gives us a mission to not only listen to and celebrate nature, but also to make a commitment to work towards healing and restoring planet earth, as its stewards, assigned by God.

'The time has come to celebrate earth as a wonder of God's creation, a cosmic site for celebration, a caring nurturing mother, a precious planet, a web of mysteries. At the same time, we need to recognise that the past mindset, greed and ignorance of recent generations of ... humans, has led to the exploitation and pollution of many domains of earth. It is therefore time to take action ... (Habel, 2017; 3). In the Bible, in Matthew 18:3, Jesus tells us to 'become like little children'. Ask yourself, how can I take on a childlike nature and see the world through the eyes of a child?

There are key principles in early childhood that apply to everyone: identity, connectedness, wellbeing, active learning and communication. 'A kindergarten child who is connected with and contributes to their world shows increasing respect for the environment by caring for it, investigating and understanding the difference between natural and built environments and exploring the interactions between people and the environment' (QKLG, 46) (*).

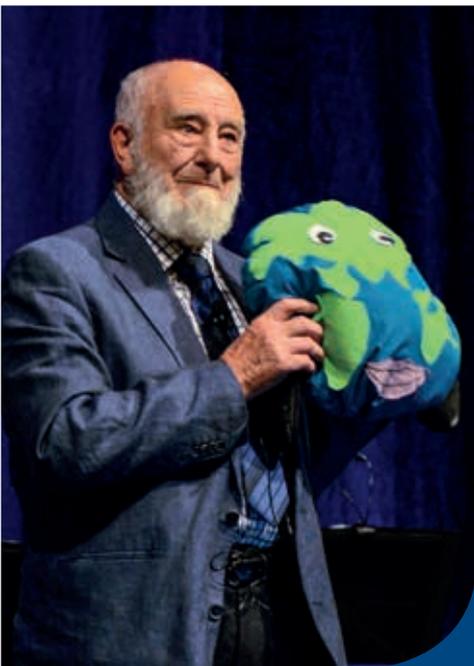
Investigating and caring for the natural environment around us is embedded in many early childhood programs and the children take on our sustainable practices without a second thought. It has become a normal part of our everyday life. Can it become a normal part of your everyday life too?

There are simple changes we can make in our lives that will help to slow the destruction of our environment: consider having your coffee in your own reusable cup, use containers to take your lunch to work instead of plastic wrap and bags, purchase natural cleaning and skin care products that don't pollute our waterways, reduce/reuse/recycle, grow your own fruit and vegetables, carpool, walk or use public transport, take your own bags to the grocery store, donate unused clothes to an op shop, shop locally, buy Australian made and biodegradable where possible. Small changes in everyday life can make a big impact to our world. Eco-reformation starts with you!

Educators are in the business of hope. Let's enable our students with the knowledge and resources to change the world and help our environment, one small step at a time, as we walk alongside them in this journey.

(* Queensland kindergarten learning guideline, 2010

Sarah Matjec
LORDS, Pimpama Qld



Keynote speaker: Rev Dr Normal Habel



Keynote speaker: Dr Tim Flannery



Keynote speaker: Jacqui Remond

Day 2: Eco-reformation continued



ACLE 5 break-out sessions

A reflection from an early childhood perspective

On July 5th to July 7th I attended the Australian Conference on Lutheran Education (ACLE5). The theme was People, Planet, Purpose. On Thursday 6th July, day two of the conference the theme was Planet, focusing on Eco-Reformation. I was very excited about attending the whole conference but more so about the focus on Planet and my ongoing responsibility to God's creation as a Christian citizen. Through the lens of a very passionate early childhood service leader and teacher, I was able to look, listen and reflect on the information presented and how this will relate to my early childhood context. A message that I kept hearing throughout the day was that any change in our relationship with planet earth needs to be a transformation from the inside out and that we have a unique place as human beings in this world to develop a sustainable and respectful relationship with our surroundings.

The presentation that I personally was interested in was by Professor Tim Flannery, who gave a very informative presentation about climate change targets and carbon negative technologies. From one who sometimes finds climate change information overwhelming and confusing, Tim's presentation was surprisingly refreshing with an underlining message of positivity and hope. The messages I interpreted from this presentation were: that change can happen if we put our energy into productive and innovative solutions instead of being destructive; that one of the keys to making change is to foster young children's imaginations, to help children imagine possibilities and solutions for the planet and climate change into the future; that optimism is

key to keep on going against all science, social and political challenges when facing climate change obstacles; and actively support future initiatives happening in the local and global community.

Following Professor Tim Flannery, I enjoyed listening to Norman Habel and Jacqui Redmond speak about how the relationship between the scientific and spiritual dimensions help us to become agents of ecological conversion by developing a new earth consciousness. Norman Habel, the author of 'The Earthcare Charter and 95eco-theses: Foundations for earthcare planning', challenges us to celebrate the wonder of God's creation by re-thinking our relationship with planet earth and what this means in terms of active engagement with the earth. Jacqui Redmond's presentation 'Care For our Common Home...' challenged me to think about how I could play a part in the holistic care of social, human and environmental ecology in my educational and spiritual setting.

The key messages I gained from the above keynote speakers presenting on eco-reformation were: although science is the enabler for a better world, we also as a global society need a strong moral compass where our Christian beliefs come into effect; science will not fix it alone; we need to change the way we think, feel and act in the way we live on earth; it is critical to integrate all disciplines of faith, culture, science, knowledge and practices to come together in order to fight climate change; there needs to be a holistic approach and global consciousness when focusing on climate change. That to cultivate and care for creation, it is of critical importance to engage young children to become sustainable citizens by continuing to engage their sense of wonder in the environment and natural elements and

ecologies. As teachers we need to guide young children to be responsible in sustaining God's earth to help combat climate change.

What did I take away from the conference that can be integrated back to the early childhood context? After listening to all of the presentations throughout the morning I was beginning to formulate a plan in my mind of how I could implement practical programs and initiatives to focus on People, Planet, Purpose. I kept coming back to this question: 'How do I support my educators to teach young children to honour creation through ecological conversion?' Many of the ideas and inspiration I gained were by visiting the Tanunda Lutheran Kindergarten in the Barossa valley and by listening to the presentation 'Honouring Education: the Hundred Languages of Children'. What resonated with me was how the children are made aware of God's creation through play and how to take care of it whilst connecting these concepts within Christian values. Through play, children focus on how to become better environmental citizens as they are taught about the natural environment and encouraged to explore, learn and take care of this natural space through time. On final reflection, I believe that if children's sense of awe and wonder of the natural environment is nurtured throughout the early years, then it is safe to say they become better equipped with knowledge and awareness to find the possibilities and solutions for the planet and climate change for the future.

Angela Wright
Director
Nazareth Lutheran Early Learning Centre,
Woolloongabba Qld

Day 2 of ACLE began with worship during which Bishop David Altus positioned the audience to look within, preaching that eco-reformation must start inside us, with an ego reformation. He reminded us that pollution starts from our own heart, when we display greed and selfishness. As Luther preached, 500 years ago, transformation can only take place when we recognise that we are not the centre of the universe, transformation begins from the inside out. Bishop David challenged us to renew and restore all things we have broken, to get our hands dirty in love for the world and to teach children in our care to do the same.

Reminding us of our core responsibility as educator's, to care for God's children, Bishop David delivered this conviction: *'I believe the children in front of you each day are more than 'slime plus time', but were lovingly woven together in their mother's wombs, by the ultimate 'Dream Weaver' who created human life in his own image to relate to him in a unique way, even allowing us to reject him.'*

He also challenged us to reflect on our own relationship with Christ, saying *'I believe that in Jesus Christ, God has effected the climate change that matters most – changing forever the atmosphere between me and God.'*

Keynote: Professor Tim Flannery

Tim Flannery began by talking about our personal awakening to environmental issues, by drawing an analogy to Luther's awakening and the Reformation. This was a very poignant introduction for delegates from Lutheran schools all around Australia.

Flannery initially posed the question, *'How much do humans need to take responsibility?'* Tim talked of the many opportunities that could help climate change and proposed it was not all about sacrifice.

Flannery's appeal to educators: The single most valuable resource is our imagination to see a better future. *'We must see the possibilities of a better future and foster and develop the energy of youth to improve the world. Share the hope and vision for a much better world than the one we are heading towards.'* We need to inspire children by keeping them in awe and wonderment and keeping them engaged with the environment.

Flannery suggested we use the household electricity bill to challenge children to minimise electricity use. We can do this by aiming to reduce the household electricity bill for the next quarter. As an incentive, the money saved can be given to the kids, providing families with a way to educate their children about their environmental footprint.

Keynote: Jacqui Remond, Catholic Earthcare Australia

Remond spoke about Catholic Earthcare, an ecological agency of the Catholic Church in Australia, inspired by Pope John Paul II. Their vision is for 'an ecologically sustainable and resilient Australia, where Catholic communities play an active part in the holistic care of social, human and environmental ecology'.

Ecological conversion: Remond inspires us to look within for conversion and to look to Christ to undergo change to allow us to respond with ecological conversion: *'A solution at the economic level can be found only if we undergo, in the most radical way, an inner change of heart, which can lead to a change in lifestyle and a change of unsustainable patterns of consumption and production. A genuine conversion in Christ will enable us to change the way we think and act.'*

Our students and future generations need to be equipped to navigate the future. Remond called for a plan of action to make a difference including reflection, contemplation, pray, liturgy and affirmative action. We need contemplation and action to respond effectively to care for our common home.

Break out: Earth is a Cosmic Sanctuary

The staff from Cornerstone College, shared a four-week year 7 Christian Living unit with links to the Christian Studies Curriculum Framework. To help students to start exploring

the scale and size of the universe and creation, the staff introduced us to the website <http://scaleofuniverse.com/>. Students can zoom into the universe and explore the human in relation to all living things. In lesson four of the eight lesson unit, students plant a succulent and care for it over a few weeks. In the final lesson, students are asked to give the plant to someone else with instructions for care. This helps students to understand the responsibility of caring for God's creation as our creator intended. Christian Studies teachers may find some inspiration in this concept for their approach to creation in lessons.

Conference dinner

As day turned into night, ACLE delegates attended the official dinner which included an audio-visual feast celebrating creation. Delegates were inspired by TJ Krause, a year 10 Tatachilla student, who shared his touching personal story and encouraged delegates to shake their God created bootie and clap along to his rendition of the song *Happy*. The opportunity to strengthen relationships with our colleagues in Lutheran schools, from all around Australia, was enjoyed by all.

May God walk with you as you go forth in your personal and professional journey to care for his magnificent creation.

Anastasia Strong

Head of Senior School
Redeemer Lutheran College, Rochedale Qld



Gala Dinner



TJ Krause at Gala Dinner

Lutheran education earthcare charter

The *Lutheran education earthcare charter* principles and missions are relevant in preschool settings. Staff members value our relationship with planet earth, and endeavour to instil in children a love of nature and all of God's creation. We encourage active engagement with earth, and celebrate earth as a wonder of God's creation.

As part of our Christian Studies curriculum we learn about and celebrate God's creation of the universe. God's creation influences our whole program; we acknowledge God as the creator of all the beautiful things in the world. We have a sensory garden, where we invite children into a space where they can look around with appreciation and use their senses to create wonder. We have swan plants that attract Monarch butterflies, and we have watched caterpillars eat the swan plant leaves, change into chrysalises and then emerge as butterflies. Children have observed the life-cycle of Monarch butterflies closely inside in aquariums, and then we have released the butterflies onto our swan plants in our sensory garden to start the process again. We also observed the life-cycle of silk worms, with a mulberry tree in our sensory garden to feed mulberry leaves to our silk-worms. We have the living eggs project at the kindergarten, observing chickens hatching from eggs, and then growing into adult hens that lay eggs. Children participate in caring for the chickens, interacting with them, handling them, feeding them and giving them water to drink.

Our Christian Studies creation program is purposeful in immersing children in experiences and imagery of nature, with staff members

modelling a sense of wonder. We incorporate a sense of wonder through various techniques, such as 'I see..., I think... and I wonder...' Children are encouraged to question, discover and investigate further.

The earth teaches us about nature, and we encourage children to appreciate the beauty of nature through various mediums. Through inquiry we encourage children to inquire, discover and research, which leads to asking further questions. When children ask questions, we endeavour to seek answers through researching together. This social constructivist approach is a key to learning. In kindergarten co-learning occurs through experimentation, google on iPads, books and guest speakers. We often do trial experimentation to find out what will happen. Children have shown great interest in the life cycles of chickens, butterflies and silk worms, which has led to wondering about other creatures.

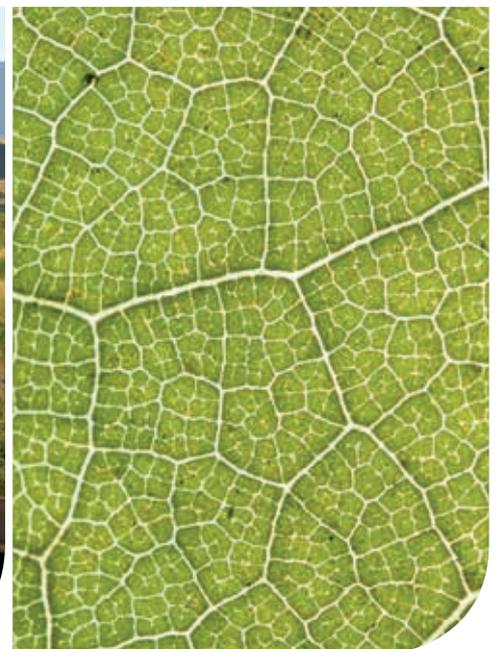
In our Early Years Learning Framework, Outcome 2 is about children being connected with their world and how they can contribute to it. It states '[c]hildren explore, infer, predict and hypothesize in order to develop an increased understanding of the interdependence between land, people, plants and animals'. At Salisbury Lutheran Kindergarten we have plenty of sand play, digging in the dirt and children love making mud pies. We have some natural areas to play, and we are planning to increase our nature play area with a natural creek bed with river stones, rocks and native shrubs, and a hand water pump so children can pump water

from the rain water tank. They learn about sustainability when they learn that they can only use water when there is water in the tank. Children participate in planting vegetable seedlings and flower seeds, water the plants, and pull out weeds. They enjoy picking the produce which we use in cooking activities.

We teach children about endangered species and that we all need to care for our world, so that animal and plant species don't become extinct.

We have learnt about 'earth as a caring mother' in Christian Studies; that God loves us and provides everything that we need to survive on planet earth, including love, shelter, water, food, clothes, air, sun and gravity. We teach the children about the properties of different planets, and through research we discovered that earth has all the perfect conditions for people to thrive, including oxygen, water, warmth and gravity, whereas other planets have differing conditions.

We learn about caring for our world, and emphasise the importance of recycling correctly. We learn to reuse, reduce and recycle, and we visit the NAWMA (*) education centre to understand the importance of recycling, and to see first hand how it works. It is important that preschool children learn how to recycle appropriately, so that they will become responsible adults and look after our environment. They learn what items can be recycled, what items can be composted and what items are waste and need to be taken to landfill. We play games, sing songs and use



coloured bins to promote an understanding of bins for recycling, green waste and rubbish. Children become more responsible when given challenges to think about the sustainability of our planet earth.

At Salisbury Lutheran Kindergarten we take the earthcare charter very seriously as an important part of our program and as we praise God.

(* Northern Adelaide Waste Management Authority

Jenny Schapel

Director

Salisbury Lutheran Kindergarten, Salisbury SA

The *Lutheran education earthcare charter* was launched at ACLE5. The charter is designed to be integrated into the school curriculum through six principles and missions to foster in our students an understanding for our home and a desire to care for, and protect, it.

- » Earth is a site for celebration
- » Earth is a book of nature
- » Earth is a web of mysteries
- » Earth is a family tree
- » Earth is a caring mother
- » Earth is a wounded planet

Rev Dr Norm Habel spoke passionately about how privileged we are to live on this planet and the way that earth has been taken for granted in the past. He stated that now is the time for us to celebrate earth as a wonder of God's creation, recognise that the past mindsets of people have led to exploitation and pollution of many

domains of earth, and take action to find ways to heal the wounds and restore planet earth.

During the breakout sessions, Norm joined with Jacqui Remond from Catholic Earthcare to discuss ways in which schools can implement this charter. They used the session as a discussion forum for people to share what was happening in their schools already that would be the starting point for integrating the charter into schools. Jacqui shared how Catholic schools were integrating their own document into schools and the need for all staff to be committed to the cause, because it is a joint endeavour and important to also have students and parents involved as much as possible in leading the implementation. Through this, it is more likely to become part of the culture of the school, and will be more sustainable in the long term.

Participants were given six key implementation steps which included:

Whole school planning (beginning with a steering group involving all stakeholders with public announcements to the prepare the school community for implementation)

Staff education (hosting a workshop to educate staff in the biblical and scientific bases of the principles and having formation exercises)

Curriculum integration (staff working with the steering group to develop ways to integrate the principles across the curriculum)

Ecological footprint (discover the school's footprint as part of classroom programs and explore the ethical implications)

Caring for country (complete research projects to evaluate the bio-geographic dimensions of the school and find ways to transform areas that have deteriorated, invite Aboriginal elders to read the landscape of the country with students)

Community partnerships (spread the word in the wider community about the school's commitment to earthcare and invite partnerships with local community groups)

Schools represented in the session were able to share ways in which they are already actively engaged in projects and activities which will be integrated into their implementation of the earthcare charter. One of the blessings of being in a system such as Lutheran Education Australia is that we can learn and pull ideas from each other. A *Lutheran education earthcare charter* website has been launched and can be accessed through the LEA website. Schools such as Concordia have also created a weebly which shares all the wonderful activities that are happening in their school around earthcare.

It is exciting for all Lutheran schools in Australia to be embarking on this journey together, as we show our love and respect for our God who created this earth and entrusted it to us. It is our responsibility to care for it and make sure it is in a viable state for the generations to come.

Rebecca Gunia

Deputy Principal

Lutheran School Wagga Wagga NSW



2017 Teacher Honour Roll

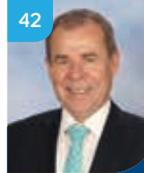
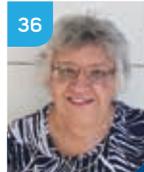
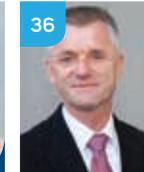
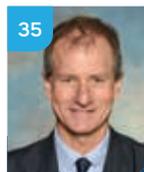
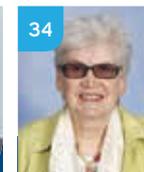
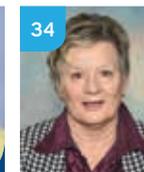
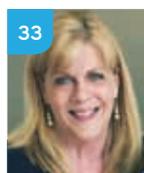
At each of the past Australian Conferences on Lutheran Education, Lutheran Education Australia has produced an Honour Roll of people who have given significant service of 30+ years to Lutheran education. These people may have served as teaching staff, principals or directors. For ACLE5, the 2017 Teacher Honour

Roll displayed the names of 108 people who have provided a combined total of 3584 years of service to Lutheran education.

God has blessed our church, Lutheran education and communities across Australia through the service of these people. LEA

acknowledges and thanks these and all people across Lutheran education for their leadership and service.

Stephen Rudolph
Executive Director
Lutheran Education Australia

47  Trevor Kloeden	45  Robert Hoff	42  Stephen Rudolph	42  Lester Saegenschnitter	42  Les Seiffert	41  John Smith	40  Rosilyn Frieberg	40  Neil Schiller	39  Yvonne Folland
39  James Gerhardy	39  Michael Groves	39  Graeme Handreck	39  Chris Ruediger	38  Andrew Leske	38  Eric Wilson	37  Bronwyn Holliday	37  Craig Lieschke	37  Anthony Mueller
37  Laraine Nelson	37  Gordon Rackley	37  Margaret Whitbread	36  Inta Gertners	36  Neville Grieger	36  Ev Krieg	36  Stephen Miegel	36  Michael Paech	36  John Proeve
36  Barbara Riehl	36  Gregory Schneider	36  Peter Schubert	35  Annabel Biagi	35  Christopher Chapman	35  Denis Clarke	35  Bronwyn Dolling	35  Leon Kroehn	35  Barry Krueger
35  David Modra	35  Sue Prideaux	35  Leanne Reichstein	35  Andrew Thiele	35  David Turnbull	35  Janelle Turner	35  Peter Weier	34  Ute Buettner	34  Joy Doecke
34  Susan Kuchel	34  Peter Leske	34  Debbie Schultz	33  Anna Burger	33  Andrew John	33  Christopher Male	33  Shane Paterson	33  Kim Phelps	33  David Radke

LEA salutes staff who have taught in Lutheran schools for thirty years or more.



Day 3: Ego-reformation

The message ... the world needs to hear

To present to a high level conference like ACLE 2017 on the third and last day is perhaps not one of the easiest gigs around. Participants have sat and listened for two days, many were perhaps already thinking about the trip home and their plans for the weekend, and no doubt more than a few heads were still fuzzy after the great dinner the night before. The organisers, however, gave us a program for Day 3 which really brought the whole conference together.

In many ways, the double theme for this day could have been: Finish the conference on a high, and, have something to think about as you go out.

Our presenter for much of this day was Pastor Nadia Bolz-Weber, a pastor and author from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Pastor Nadia shared with us her ministry at the Church of Sinners and Saints, a church specifically set up so that everyone will feel welcome there. Her talk elicited a great response from participants, as her passion for the gospel oozed through her every word. She reminded us that all people, including ourselves, are searching for the meaning which only the gospel can bring in our lives. The need for repentance, a continual, lifelong, turning back to God and committing our lives to him; not so we can be saved, but because we already are.

Pastor Nadia's passion, and her acceptance and openness to all people, even those who don't necessarily accept her or what she does, served as an inspiration for all who heard her to go out and not just preach and teach, but live the gospel in our own lives also.

A health and wellbeing session with Michelle McQuaid not only kept us going on this final day, but also reminded us of the importance of exercise, of relationships, and of how the two can be combined together. She reminded us of the importance of positive emotions, of finding and fanning our passions in life, and of making sure that we do not just describe ourselves as 'functioning' (as 70% of us do), but to seek and work on ways that we can be thriving as we move through each day. Michelle encouraged us to find our strengths, to build relationships, to foster meaning in our lives, and to develop a growth mindset in which we celebrate our successes as we keep on moving forward.

We were taken to the story of Jesus meeting with the woman at the well in the second part of Pastor Nadia's presentation. In relating, expanding, and applying this story to us today, Pastor Nadia showed us what it means to live in, for, and by the gospel. In the longest conversation he has with anyone in all four gospels, Jesus found this lady's wound, and he healed it.

In the words of Pastor Nadia, 'Whatever the deepest wound you have is, the living water of Christ's compassion can find it, will find it, has found it.' What words to ring in our ears as we left ACLE 2017! So many good speakers, so many old friends to catch up with new ones to make, so much positive networking and support from others who work in Lutheran schools. But over it all the great, compassionate, unconditional, umbrella of God's love and grace in Jesus for each one of us. A very powerful reminder of what we do and why we do it as we live in this grace and share it in our Lutheran schools each day.

After all this, we came together again to worship our amazing God, on this occasion also coming forward together to experience and receive his grace in a very real way as we shared the meal of Holy Communion. It felt like we had not just figuratively but literally come away, gone up on the mountain to pray and be fed, and now renewed, restored and refreshed we were once again being sent out as disciples to carry out the ministry to which we are called. The message of the gospel, of God's grace, is one the world needs to hear. Thank God that through our Lutheran schools we have a means to take this message out widely.

Pastor Andrew Koehler

Chaplain

Good Shepherd Lutheran College, Darwin NT

I heard grace, and love and peace

Pastor Nadia Bolz-Weber moved on to the stage and made a joke. 'This morning I tweeted that I, a female pastor, am speaking to 1000 Lutheran educators on the other side of the world, in a synod that doesn't ordain women. I asked the Holy Spirit to be here!' With a glance to where the fog machine was doing its thing on the stage, she smiled and said, 'Maybe that's her!'

I was astounded by the similarities to Martin Luther revealed in that moment. Luther was a pivotal figure who saw things differently. Here, a bold, radical theologian stood before us, unconsciously demonstrating that just as Luther used the new Gutenberg Press to spread his rethinking of the church's direction quickly, far, and wide, 500 years ago, today



Keynote speaker: Pastor Nadia Bolz-Weber

Nadia was using social media, the newest means of communication, to do the same thing. Throughout her presentation, Nadia mixed Lutheran theology with her own insights, which is also a trait reminiscent of Luther. Further, she models the reformer in being deeply pastoral in her position of having a strong desire to use the gospel to give people freedom, with repentance and forgiveness holding a central position.

Is the Reformation in us? It is if we dare to rejuvenate what it actually is to be Lutheran. When Luther wrote the 95 theses the first line began, 'Repent.' Nadia reminded us that our theology originated in the Reformation: that we live in response to a gift from God, not earned, in fellowship with other sinners. Are our churches places where we can talk freely about our failures and fears? Where we can bring our questions and our doubts? How often do we get real about how our 'falling short' robs us of abundant life and keeps us in shame? (Nadia commented that shame as an energy force could replace all fossil fuels!) How often do we acknowledge that Jesus talked about forgiveness so much of the time?

The quest for self-improvement, which we see in churches and everywhere, is likened by Nadia to being the modern selling of indulgences. We do not need to try to be so super-duper good that we never need God. Christian faith allows for imperfection. In fact, Nadia says, 'It is our jagged edges of humanity that connect us to each other and to God.' In God's economy, our greatest sin is our greatest gift, our greatest teacher. It is the damaged thing that will be restored and grow. Just as water finds its lowest point and fills from there, the living water of Christ's compassion will find our lowest place; can find it, has found it. Grace is a force, which frees us. Nadia calls each of us to be one on whom the freely given grace of God finds a place to do its thing.

Identifying any torment that we feel about the gap between our real self and our ideal self puts words to a tension that our culture colludes in creating. Our ideal self is an aspirational mirage where we do all the things we 'should' such as trying to be healthy, nice, lose weight and so on, to attain more qualities through spiritual effort. Nadia says the gap will always be there. No one has ever yet become an ideal self. Fortunately, the self that God has a relationship with is our actual self, which he loves as it is without reservation. We need to know we are lovable as we are – us, in all our sinfulness. We need to know that salvation is neither by the law nor by fulfilling our list of what we 'should' do. If in error, the law becomes confused with

the gospel, then people feel forced into pride, hypocrisy or despair. Rules and comparisons then abound and freedom vanishes.

'Let it go,' seems to be Nadia's response to the diminishing church. The church does redeeming work. Live things can arise from dead things. We do not need to preserve that which once was good. From Isaiah we know God's word will achieve that for which he purposes it [Isaiah 55:11]. Long after we go, the word will remain. The church will not be dead. People will still gather in the name of the triune God. The word of God gives hope and reveals forgiveness is real. Our hearts belong to the gospel, not the institution. We will not lose anything that matters.

What are people hearing from Pastor Nadia? I hear grace, and love and peace. 'I am imperfect.' Nadia is vulnerable, transparent, open, and affirming, which creates a space around her where we can step close. I see a person absolutely drawn through the gospel to follow Christ and bring others with her. Nadia asserts that we Lutherans have been entrusted with the gospel; entrusted with a feast to share and that people are ready. The culture around us will never preach the gospel, administer sacraments or proclaim forgiveness of sins!

The theme of this day was purpose. It is clear that our relevance in mission and ministry has endured since Reformation times. In our contemporary settings in Lutheran schools, as educators and in all other roles, our call remains to draw on our Lutheran faith identity, and respond as agents of the continuation of the good news.

According to Nadia and reinforced by Michelle McQuaid a speaker on wellbeing, negative thoughts burden us heavily. Nadia's congregation had a ritual of writing down and symbolically burn the damaging mantras that seemed to repeat in people's minds. Michelle had many tips on self-compassion and teaching kids to thrive by looking after our own wellbeing first. To find information on this please visit the resources below.

- » <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=42-hh-iMJJI>
- » www.positivityratio.com
- » self-compassion.org
- » **PERMA (Positive emotion, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning, Accomplishment)**

Terry Goessling
Chaplain
Immanuel College, Novar Gardens SA



Keynote speaker: Michelle McQuaid

God loves our actual self

After two amazing days of worship, messages and fellowship, Day 3 dawned. The focus was *People, Planet Purpose: ego-reformation*. Day 3 began with the much-anticipated keynote address by Pastor Nadia Bolz-Weber. Nadia started by sharing some of her experiences growing up and feeling like a misfit in her family and community. Her message for the day was based around new life – the very essence of the reformation of self. She contrasted the law – the gap between the ideal self and the actual self – and the gospel, which she characterised as 'the wizard of Oz – because, because, because!'

Nadia based her message on the story of the woman at the well (John 4:7–30), the longest story of personal interaction in the Bible. The woman's actual self was wounded and broken from her life experiences. And yet Jesus met her in a place that was part of her daily life and showed her the depth of his knowledge of her and the depth of his love.

In Lutheran schools and early childhood services, we have the privilege of carrying that exact message to our students and communities. God is not waiting until we become our 'ideal self', he meets us right where we are in our everyday lives, knowing the best and worst of us, and still has great love and compassion for us and our situation. This is the message we are impelled to share in our educational settings, bringing the possibility of life and hope to those whom we touch through our schools.

The self God loves is our actual self. The self Jesus died for is our actual self. This fact releases us from the bondage of trying to be

Day 3: Ego-reformation continued

'good enough' and allows us to let the Holy Spirit work through our actual self, flaws and all. It releases us from trying to earn what has already been freely given to us. This knowledge gives us the opportunity to experience a daily reformation with God, to let go back to him those areas where we failed the day before, and to begin anew each day, allowing for the birth of new opportunities, relationships and vocation.

As a staff we also reflected on the fact that grace needs to be 'done'. Grace is an active word. It can be talked about, but it is best understood when observed in the everyday interactions that occur within a school community. Grace is learned through our interactions, but we observed that grace is often most clearly learned through the people we would not most commonly associate with grace, and this was borne out to us by the person whom Jesus chose to meet and interact with.

We were then involved with another keynote speaker, Michelle McQuaid, who shared with us ways of looking after our wellbeing and placing value on ourselves so that we are in a position to carry out our work effectively. She pointed us back to the PERMA focus of wellbeing –

positive emotion, engagement, relationships, meaning and accomplishment.

Michelle encouraged us to know our strengths as individuals and to use them wisely, but suggested that we can overuse them to our detriment at times. Michelle suggested that we all have unrealised strengths within us, and that we should not be afraid to explore areas which are not currently strengths, but which may have the potential to grow into a new strength. She encouraged us as individuals and staff teams to build a culture which supports one another and has gratitude for one another, valuing the different strengths of the team and helping one another to grow in new ways.

Michelle provided resources that we can take back to our school life with us to follow up on the various aspects of PERMA, such as the VIA survey on strengths.

After morning tea Nadia again took the stage for a Q&A session, with a variety of questions coming from the floor. It was refreshing to see all topics discussed openly and candidly.

It was then time for the final worship of the conference. Once again our talented musicians

and conference chaplain provided us with a wonderful opportunity to rest in God and refresh ourselves in his word and through the shared sacrament of communion. As a staff, it felt so special to commune with fellow Lutheran education staff, and uplifted us in being part of something bigger, for Lutheran education but most of all united by our work in sharing the gospel in each of our schools and early childhood services.

Kathryn Krieg

Principal

St Jakobi Lutheran School, Lyndoch SA

Whatever the deepest wound you have is, the living water of Christ's compassion can find it, will find it, has found it.

ACLE5 highlight: A return to Lutheran education: What's so special?

A return to Adelaide and Lutheran education, after living and working outside of Australia for the past ten years, has required some readjustments! I have been very fortunate during my time away, to access a range of high quality international professional learning opportunities. So, when returning to Lutheran Education SA/NT/WA (LESNW) last year, and hearing about plans for ACLE 5, I was attracted to the conference themes and quality of the keynote presenters.

During my engagement with ACLE 5, I discovered some strong similarities but also significant contrasts from other conferences I had attended. While I expected that there would be opportunities for worship and focus on Lutheran education, I found myself engaging in a completely different way as part of a unique group of educators who shared a common belief about God's role in all aspects of the themes presented.

While there was a clear focus on contemporary issues in education through the theme *People, Place Purpose*, the unique aspect was the strong and explicit weaving of God's work and presence within these themes.

So often when I attend professional learning, I am inspired by presenters to let go of the old, and take on board current research based strategies. This was certainly the case throughout ACLE 5, but the motivation, inspiration and source of energy came from somewhere very different! The truly unique aspect of this conference was the focus on HOPE.

At times we can feel exhausted about what we need to do and depressed about what isn't happening in our learning communities. In contrast, I was left feeling uplifted, being reminded that ultimately God has all things in control. It's not just up to me, my ideas and my ability to make things happen. Collaboratively developing effective strategies to bring about change and innovation is crucial to our roles in Lutheran education. However, our unique gift is being able to connect to God the creator and sustainer, who provides the energy and power to make all things new and to give us the strength and wisdom way beyond anything we could generate ourselves.

At ACLE 5 I also experienced a spirit of celebration of who we are as Lutheran educators, a deep sense of connection, collaboration, and love. It was beautiful to watch people reconnect with colleagues from the past, and in my case a past student who had become a teacher in a Lutheran school. Such a gift. I am sure that those staff members new to the Lutheran system, could see the connection beyond their school, town, city, and state to something much more substantial.

ACLE provided me with a significant opportunity for professional, personal and spiritual, growth, inspiration and reflection, reminding me in a very meaningful way of why I have returned to Lutheran education.

Mignon Weckert

Educational Leadership Director
Lutheran Education SA/NT/WA

ACLE5 highlight



Conference highlights were: worship, catching up with friends, outstanding keynote speakers

ACLE5 highlight: Passion and purpose

Having attended previous ACLE conferences as an educator it was with some apprehension that I prepared to attend as a council member. What would it be like 'stepping back'; what messages might there be for council members; would it be worth the monetary investment associated with attendance? These questions soon evaporated after hearing Sir John Jones mention 'passion and purpose'; this phrase became a personal highlight of the conference, the message being repeated in different ways by different speakers.

Educators are caught in a tide of change, so much of which deals with the minutiae: ongoing 'initiatives' in curriculum, reporting or accountability demands sap energy and ignore the bigger issue at stake: the preparation of young people for the changing and unknown future. How do schools prepare for this when today's innovations are likely to be tomorrow's history? Sir John Jones' message was both simple and complex: 'The good news is that teachers make the difference; the bad news is that teachers make the difference'. Educators who bring passion and purpose to their work, along with effective practice, lay the foundations that will equip students for this future.

Professor Flannery's quietly spoken passion was evident in his presentation of issues surrounding climate change; he is an example of an individual whose passion drives his purpose, the education of Australian's on this debate. Such passion was echoed by Rev Dr Norm Habel who grounds earthcare with theology and encourages students young and old to become passionate about planet earth. Educators who generate environmental awareness with passion and purpose

influence the creative, scientific and technological leaders needed to care for our world and future quality of life.

Passion exuded from Pastor Nadia Bolz-Weber who, in her inimitable way, reminded us that 500 years on the gospel still has the power to change lives and bring purpose to them. Her understanding and preaching of the gospel was a personal highlight, and judging by the response of the audience, also for the majority of others.

In retrospect ACLE5 was a powerful experience and I left confidently, knowing that our schools are blessed with passionate staff who educate with both an ethical and a faith purpose. Conferences come to an end, but the personal lessons and highlights of the 1000+ attendees can endure as they return to their work renewed with passion and continue to build school communities that inspire others to the same.

Anne Maczkowiack
College Councillor
Grace Lutheran College, Rothwell Qld

ACLE 5 highlight continued

ACLE5 highlight: The reformation...

The Trinity *Head, Heart and Hand* vision resonated with me throughout the ACLE5 Adelaide conference. My *heart* was engaged when Sir John Jones spoke to us about *People*, weaving our magic in schools as educators. He lifted us up to feel important, reminding us of the difference we make, and focused on every unique individual student, as God's child. Asked his philosophy of education, we received a powerful response 'children, children, children'. Sir John also reinforced the importance of student-teacher relationships, encouraging us to truly engage, to challenge, to nurture, and guide our students to seek solutions to their own problems and in turn for us to learn from our students. Sir John reminded us of the gifts we give as teachers. We provide students with opportunity, instill passion for life-learning, self-belief, as we immerse ourselves in 'their world' so they can create a better world for all.

The conference theme shifted from *edu* to *eco* reformation on the second day. My *head* was engaged with a focus on our planet. The speakers implored us to take care of this most precious planet created by God. Imagination is the most powerful resource we have to improve the future for the planet. We need to continue to open our mind to possibilities, engage our heart and strengthen our will. Lutheran Education Australia's *Lutheran education earthcare charter* provides some great advice and resources to work together on this powerful earth movement.

More challenges were delivered on our final day at ACLE5 when it began with an inspiring and thought-provoking address from Pastor Nadia Bolz-Weber, founding pastor of House for All Sinners and Saints.

She made a powerful statement 'God loves our actual self not our ideal self'. Nadia explored this idea, sharing stories from her less than perfect past (as we all have). We do not have to be saints to earn God's love and grace. Her message reaffirmed the teachings of Martin Luther with an emphasis on the gospel, 'GRACE is the force that frees us'.

Worship infused the whole experience with opportunities to pray and celebrate our relationship with God and reminded us of our purpose. It was uplifting, renewing and there were many times when we felt completely relaxed in God's presence. Pastor Nadia reminded us of God's gift to us and encouraged us to relax more often in our personal relationship with God.

Our *hands* will be engaged as we take up the challenge of reformation. We were reminded by Michelle McQuaid to take time for ourselves even when the business of life will inevitably take over. Think about the way in which you can reform yourself to live in a better relationship with God, to take some time for yourself, nurture your wellbeing, enabling us to better care for others and our planet. Let's reflect on our purpose and 'weave our magic' for the betterment of the children in Lutheran education using our *Head, Heart and Hand*.

Carolyn Thistlethwaite

Head of Campus – Early and Junior Years
Trinity Lutheran College, Ashmore Qld



ACLE5 highlights: Worship, catching up with friends, outstanding keynote speakers

When chalk walks the talk



Walk My Way walkers ready to leave Hahndorf - Photo D Modra

When a group of teachers from Lutheran schools visited refugee camps in Djibouti in July 2016, little did they know that their experience would springboard hundreds of people walking through the cold and wet of the Adelaide Hills a year later in an event called **Walk My Way**.

The teachers were part of a group led by the Lutheran church's overseas aid agency, Australian Lutheran World Service (ALWS).

The team visited three camps in Djibouti – Ali Addeh, Holl-Holl and Camp Obock, caring for

refugees from war-torn Yemen and Somalia, and countries like Ethiopia. The aim was to train refugee school teachers in modern teaching techniques – but according to Andrew Weiss, Science KLA Leader at Cornerstone College in SA, the Australian teachers learned much more.

'I learned first-hand that anyone can become a refugee, because they're people just like you and me. People are living in horrible conditions, but there's real understanding that education brings hope... the refugee students I worked with had dreams of being doctors and pilots.'

ALWS took the lead in organising **Walk My Way**, a 26 kilometre trek through the Adelaide Hills, that followed the trail taken by Lutheran pioneer women (refugees themselves) as they carried fresh produce grown by the German settlers to the new city of Adelaide. The women left Hahndorf at midnight, carried up to 60kgs of produce, and walked barefoot to save precious shoe leather for church on Sundays!

Dale Gosden, school pastor at Endeavour College SA, said the link to Lutheran heritage of **Walk My Way** was very powerful.

'I thought ALWS did a fantastic job of linking our own heritage and stories of religious persecution with the stories of current refugees.'

'Our students were very interested in the stories of refugees and inspired to be able to do something to help... It was fantastic to see how many people from the church were willing to be involved.'

In fact, more than 90 volunteers from local Lutheran congregations supported the 271 people who walked the 26 kilometres of **Walk My Way** (and the one who ran!).

ALWS set an ambitious (crazy!) fundraising target of \$130,000 – enough to help 5,000 refugee children go to school (@ \$26 each). God blessed the event in an amazing way, and more than 1,400 people donated more than \$133,000!

Concordia College SA student, Emma Strelan, who filmed **Walk My Way** for her year 12 media studies assignment said 'It was a great opportunity for people from all over the church community to come together for one cause.'

'I learned first-hand that anyone can become a refugee, because they're people just like you and me'

When chalk walks the talk continued

It was awesome to see elderly people walking alongside parents, teenagers, and children. Everyone I talked to knew exactly why they were there doing the walk, and wanted to see change in the treatment of refugees. It was a blessing to be involved.'

Emma's media teacher at Concordia, David Modra, said, 'I saw students use **Walk My Way** to be servants to those in need by walking the road through the mud and puddles and raising funds. Students in my teaching field used their creative media gifts in practical service.

We need to find more ways like this for young people to gain a sense of belonging to our church, and have it included as an official part of their education.'

Meanwhile, other Lutheran schools that could not be part of **Walk My Way** on the day (4 July 2017) ran their own events at other times.

Sue Ellis, a member of the Djibouti Teacher Training Tour, who led Encounter Lutheran College SA in **Walk My Way** action said 'As an educator and a parent, my heart was truly challenged. **Walk My Way** allowed us to truly focus on others, and our response to God's love for us, in a way that can make a real difference.

'The walk itself was the most wonderful experience in so many ways...my memories are not of the cold and wet and mud, but the warm, loving sense of truly responding to God's call to *love one another*.'

The team from Encounter, where there are 475 students, raised more than \$11,000!

Meanwhile, Australia's smallest Lutheran school – St Peter's at Dimboola Vic, with only 28 students – did their own walking, including carrying buckets of water, and raised \$1,300!

What's truly humbling is that refugees at camps at Kakuma and Dadaab in Kenya, and also in Djibouti, did their own **Walk My Way** walk to support us in Australia as we walked to support them!

We give thanks to God for **Walk My Way** – for the blessing it was to everyone involved here in Australia, and to the more than 5,115 refugee children supported to go to school in East Africa.

Walk My Way shows that when we 'walk the talk', love truly does come to life!

Jonathan Krause
Community Action Manager
Australian Lutheran World Service



Students from Cornerstone College SA head out on the second half of Walk My Way after a sausage sizzle stop over at Stirling - Photo ALWS



These children walked with their mother out of South Sudan and reached safety in northern Uganda in February 2017. Here they were welcomed by a Lutheran World Federation team, supported by ALWS in Australia. Education is vital to restore hope for children like these who have lost everything - Photo LWF / C Kastner

International educational partnerships strengthened and grow through ACLE5



International guests at ACLE5

At the invitation of Lutheran Education Australia and LCA International Mission, principals and teachers of some of our partner churches in Indonesia, Papua New Guinea and Malaysia enthusiastically joined with others who gathered in Adelaide for ACLE5 2017.

Nine of the international guests came from Lutheran schools in North Sumatra, and represented schools which have been participating in the LCA International Mission's educational reform consultations which have been taking place over the past five years. Most of these schools have also begun to form partnerships with some of the Australian Lutheran schools. Papua New Guinea sent a representation of eight educators from across their Lutheran school system. The two educators from the Lutheran Church in Malaysia (LCM) attending ACLE5 have both spent time in Australia visiting and learning about Lutheran educational practices in LEA early learning centres over the past twelve months. With the support and encouragement of the leadership of the LCM Ms Denise Gan and Ms Yaw Choo are tasked with the responsibility of establishing a new early learning centre at the Mont Kiara church complex in Kuala Lumpur in the later part of this year and support their church as it seeks to develop a Lutheran education curriculum and system within the Lutheran Church of Malaysia.

Partnerships are about relationships and ACLE5 provided a great opportunity for face to face exchanges and a strengthening of relationships. As partnership between the people in the Lutheran schools in these three countries and Australian Lutheran schools continue to develop and expand, it becomes clearer with each visit that each system and community has strengths and wisdom to share with the other. The partnerships are growing with respect for each other and with a deepening understanding of what we share in common as brothers and sisters in Christ and what we can learn from each other.

It was in the framework of these growing partnerships that we started gathering on the weekend before the ACLE5 to build relationships between us.

The first relationship building process was to find warm clothing for 18 people who rarely experience cold weather and leafless trees! One of the first trips together was to Glenelg on a blustery, wet and freezing day. Walking the jetty and taking selfies as the cold blustery wind pushed us around was, in hindsight, the perfect way to break the ice between the delegates.

On the day prior to ACLE5, we joined in the worship service and activities, farewelling the walkers at St. Michael's Lutheran Church,

Hahndorf SA, as they made their way to Beaumont for the ALWS *Walk My Way* event. This also gave the Indonesian guests an opportunity to showcase their beautiful voices, as they sang several songs in their own language at the conclusion of the service.

Mr John Proeve, Director for Lutheran Education SA/NT/WA (LESNW) introduced us to three Lutheran schools from the LESNW district. The first was St. Michael's Lutheran School, Hahndorf, and included a brief introduction to the oldest continuing Lutheran school in Australia, established in 1839.

From there we travelled to Lobethal Lutheran School. The international guests felt a connection at both the St. Michael's and Lobethal Lutheran schools and their small, humble beginnings, and they were able to gain ideas and vision for their own schools and their contexts. Principal of Lobethal Lutheran School, Mick Emmett, gave an informed tour of the school, established by the Lobethal Lutheran congregation in 1842, specifically to care for the children of its members. The tour included the viewing of the blend of the old and the new classrooms, which combine both those which served the school in the early years, and the more modern and spacious areas built in recent years. Included in the visit to the Lobethal Lutheran school was

International educational partnerships strengthened and grow through ACLE5 continued

the opportunity to view the Lobethal Archives and Historical Museum next door, gaining an understanding of the early German and English history of South Australia. They were also able to view some early Aboriginal artefacts.

Finally, we were welcomed, fed and given a tour of Immanuel College, Novar Gardens SA, by Principal Kevin Richardson. The tour included the student-designed senior school area, the impressively equipped music, technology, art, sport and home economics areas. The Indonesian guests were especially excited to meet Dr Neville Highett at Immanuel, as a former principal of the school and now the LCA International Mission education consultant actively involved in the support of education reform in schools of the Lutheran churches in Indonesia.

Educational, personal and spiritual hopes and dreams were shared throughout the week over meals, bus trips, walks, and conversations as we unpacked issues that were raised at ACLE5.

In many cases challenges and joys are similar – love and respect for the children we educate and a desire to use our God given teaching gifts to the best of our ability. In other ways the cultural differences challenged us to see and acknowledge the different ways we achieve this.

The time spent with our ACLE5 guests provided each of us with the opportunity to walk alongside our near neighbours in order to learn, experience and grow, and to discuss educational issues, but it was more than this. Through openness and a willingness to listen

and hear another's journey, we saw God's work and blessings through different eyes.

Different systems, different countries, different cultures – similar tasks, goals and purpose – loved in grace by the same Lord and Saviour.

If you'd like your school to unpack what a partnership with a school or community from a neighbouring country might look like, contact Erin or Nevin at lcaim@lca.org.au or phone (08) 82677300

Nevin Nitschke
Erin Kerber
LCA International Mission



Our international guests enjoyed meeting Australian animals and visiting Adelaide Lutheran schools

People Planet Purpose

Over 1100 people gathered at the Adelaide Convention Centre in July 2017 to celebrate the fifth Australian Conference on Lutheran Education (ACLE). The theme of ACLE5 was *People Planet Purpose* and for three days teaching and support staff from Australian and international Lutheran schools and early childhood services were challenged in their thinking, practice and approach.

The objectives of ACLE are to:

- » promote the culture and identity of Lutheran schooling in Australia
- » engage those who work in Lutheran schools with some of the major issues facing education
- » promote an understanding of Lutheran education
- » promote fellowship and camaraderie amongst those who work in Lutheran schools

In developing the conference theme *People Planet Purpose*, the ACLE5 Planning Committee, in this Jubilee celebration of the Reformation, proposed the following

Day 1: PEOPLE edu-reformation

The most valuable asset of Australian Lutheran education are its people – teaching staff, support staff, governors, parents, community and especially our students.

Day 1 focussed on deeply challenging delegates to consider and reform – an edu-reformation – in how they understood and approached the daily task of teaching to enhance learning. Many of the ways we have traditionally identified effective teaching were challenged on Day 1. Some of our long time assumptions about how to promote student learning were questioned. How educators across Lutheran education construct the best in learning design and student and parent engagement may need our edu-reformation.

Day 2: PLANET eco-reformation

As people of Lutheran education, ACLE5 delegates were challenged to take seriously our relationship with God's creation and especially planet earth, our God-given home. Scripture teaches us that not only do we show respect for God as Creator by respecting God's creation, but also that all of God's creation is deeply interconnected (Romans 8:18-25).

On Day 2 ACLE delegates were engaged to consider the needs of our planet and our responses as ongoing learners. The *Lutheran education earthcare charter* was launched with

its purpose to assist the people of Lutheran education to:

- » be able to discern wisdom in God's creation
- » discover the interconnectedness of people and nature
- » hear the stories of the groaning of earth under the increasing pressures of human existence
- » be people who observe all creatures and so better understand God's creation and our responsibilities in respecting and preserving all forms of life

Day 3: PURPOSE ego-formation

The final day of ACLE5 focussed on the ego-reformation. This is not to suggest that ACLE concluded with a praising of ego, self or me. Rather it focussed on the transformation and reformation that occurs to me when the Spirit enters the inner self, my soul – the ego – and fills me with a love of Jesus as Saviour.

ACLE5 participants were challenged to:

- » consider how, as people of Lutheran education and with God's blessing, we can live, educate, serve and inspire our young people with a deep ongoing commitment to, and respect of, God's creation
- » ponder on the deep mystery of ego in the light of God's love, through Jesus, amid life and work and all of its joys and uncertainties



People Planet Purpose

- » better realise and even feel uncomfortable with one's own responsibilities to live and work in this media-driven world of consumerism with a deeper appreciation of God's precious creation

Two months after ACLE5, I ponder, did we succeed in our purposes for this conference?

Perhaps the people of Lutheran education who have written their ACLE reflections for this edition of SchoolLink provide some glimpses for us.

May God continue to bless the LCA and the people of Lutheran education as we learn, serve and minister together in the light of the gospel.

Serving the Lord together

Stephen Rudolph
Executive Director
Lutheran Education Australia

