

What makes a Lutheran school
Lutheran and is that an
important question anyway?



A small task for you to complete

What makes a Lutheran school Lutheran?

Is that an important question anyway?

Lutheran schools in Australia

- * Lutheran schools have existed in Australia since 1839
- * Second largest system of non-government schools in Australia
- * Currently 83 schools and 40 kindergartens
- * Recognised by community as providing quality education
- * LCA known in community due to schools
- * Schools an integral part of development of Lutheran Church in Australia
- * LEA views sought by governments

Lutheran schools and Mal!

48 of my 65 years spent in Lutheran schools/institutions as a

- * student

- * teacher

- * principal

- * lecturer

- * Strong commitment to and support for Lutheran schools

So why am I asking these questions?

Changes I've noticed

- * composition of staff
- * composition of students
- * makeup of curriculum,
- * teaching methodologies
- * behaviour management methods
 - * pastoral care practices
 - * marketing strategies
- * changes in LCA's teacher accreditation requirements

Comments from our AFL stars

- Barry Hall (Sydney) at training:
 - “You guys pair up in groups of three and then line up in a circle.”
- Commentator and former Hawthorn champion Dermott Brereton:
 - “Luke Hodge, the 22 year old from Hawthorn who turned 23 a few weeks ago”
- Ben Cousins (formerly West Coast):
 - “We actually got the winning goal three minutes before the final siren but then they scored and won”
- Terry Wallace (Richmond coach):
 - “I never comment negatively on umpires and I’m not going to break the habit of a lifetime on that stupid prat!”
- Gary Lyon, ex-Melbourne player to another ex-Melbourne player David Schwarz
 - “Have you ever thought about writing your autobiography David?”
 - Schwarz:
 - “On what?”

Possible answers to 'What makes a Lutheran school Lutheran'

- * Lutheran principal and critical mass of Lutheran staff, say 50%
- * critical mass of Lutheran students, say 50%
- * majority of Lutherans on school board/council
 - * ownership of school being Lutheran
- * the wording of the Constitution of the school
- * centrality of the gospel within the school – 'LCA and its Schools' statement
 - * emphasis on grace and forgiveness in the school
 - * caring Christian community
 - * right balance of Law and Gospel

First phase of Lutheran schooling in Australia

- * Prussian background to emigration of Lutherans in 1838
- * Kavel – 1839, first school at Klemzig, SA
 - * Fritzsche – 1842, college in Lobethal
- * 1846 – split between Kavel and Fritzsche
 - * 1890 – Concordia College (ELCA)
 - * 1895 – Immanuel College (UELCA)
- * 1900 – 100 Lutheran schools throughout Australia

Difficulties and waning support - 1900-1945

- * Development of state education (free)
 - most Qld Lutheran schools closed
 - many Vic Lutheran schools became state schools
- * WW1 – all SA Lutheran primary schools closed

Second growth phase 1966-2000

Reasons for growth:

- * federal government grants
- * union of the ELCA/ the UELCA to form the LCA
- * growth in population throughout Australia
- * starting Lutheran schools in urban areas
- * establishment of Lutheran Teachers College (LTC)

Statistics showing growth

Year Schools Teachers Luth Students

Luth

1967 29 193 **90%**

3592 **72%**

1983 62 623 **75%**

9956 **53%**

2004 82 2488 **48%**

30000 **21%**

2007 83 2834 **41%**

33000 **19%**

Actual answers to Science/Biology questions from primary students

Q. What happens to your body as you get older?

A. When you get old, so does your bowels and you get intercontinental

Q. What is the fibula?

A. A small lie

Q. What does 'varicose' mean?

A. Nearby

Q. What does the word 'benign' mean?

A. Benign is what you will be after you be eight

Bartsch “Why a Lutheran School”

p 20

“There have also been changes which raise questions as to whether some Lutheran schools still see themselves related closely to Lutheran confessional theologyIt is vital that those factors which characterise a Lutheran approach to schooling are identified and retained and if possible enhanced.”

Koch 1990

“ With the rapid expansion of Lutheran schools comes the need to rethink and reaffirm relevant theological foundations. If this is not done there is the danger that expediency and tradition will determine practice rather than purposeful, theological thinking.”

The LCA and Its Schools - 2001

“ The church ..operates kindergartens and schools... in order to make available...a formal education in which the gospel of Jesus Christ informs all learning and teaching, all human relationships and all activities in the school. Thus through the school the church ...bears Christian witness to students, parents, teachers, friends and all who make up the world of the school.”

Janetzki - "The Church Teaches"

p 82

"For basically the school is Lutheran ...when the authority, the ideology, the means, the processes – the school as a living organism – has as its ultimate authority Lutheran theology, drawn from the Holy Scriptures, divine revelation and the Lutheran Confessions"

Janetzki again on p 109

There is only one way to find out what is Lutheran and that is from the Lutheran Confessions. No discussion on what is Lutheran, apart from the Lutheran Confessions, is relevant. No school, no seminary, no congregation, no church has the right to use the term 'Lutheran' and determine for itself what it means to be Lutheran....the Lutheran badge or mark of identification in Christendom and the world is to be found only in the Lutheran Confessions.”

Tom Christenson – USA Lutheran

“ What makes our institutions Lutheran is a vision of the educational task itself that is informed by a tradition of Lutheran theological themes and principles embodied in practice...We are Lutheran by means of our educational vision, a theologically informed orientation...We are Lutheran institutions by virtue of being informed by a theologically shaped anthropology and epistemology.”

My contention as to “What makes a Lutheran school Lutheran.”

A knowledge of the key teachings of the Lutheran Confessions by council members and especially principals and staff members and the application of these teachings into the policies and practices of the school.

LCA teacher accreditation requirements

1988 – one year DipLEd through LTC

1992 – 80 credit point GradDipTh(Ed) through Luther Campus/Seminary

2005 – 40 credit point GradCertEd through ALC

2006 – Pathways – BLEA produced program – graduate study with ALC only required by Christian Studies teachers and those in certain leadership positions

Key Lutheran teachings for Lutheran schools

- * Justification by grace, through faith, because of Christ
- * Creation and Original Sin
- * Law and Gospel
- * Two Kingdoms
- * Theology of the Cross v Theology of Glory
- * Saint and Sinner
- * Vocation

Pre-service Lutheran Strand

- * Enrolled in an education degree at a tertiary institution
- * Include 4 ALC theology/education units in the course through cross-crediting
- * Attend formation activities during teacher training
- * Final prac in a Lutheran school
- * Graduate with an education degree and preparedness to teach in Lutheran schools

I repeat my contention as to What makes a Lutheran school Lutheran

A knowledge of the key teachings of the Lutheran Confessions by council members and especially principals and staff members and the application of these teachings into the policies and practices of the school.