

December 2022

LEA SERVICE AWARD

Denis Clarke

**For service to Lutheran education
1984 – 2022**

The Lutheran Church of Australia thankfully acknowledges the faithful and committed service of Denis Clarke to Lutheran education for 38 years.

After leaving school at the end of Year 10, Denis completed a four-year apprenticeship in Carpentry and Joinery followed by one year as a journeyman. Denis found his master/boss to be a tough man who demanded exacting standards from his employees. At first, Denis thought that he was just being picky, but soon realized that he was bringing out the best in him. Denis then decided to go to university and become a Manual Arts teacher. His first posting was to Toowoomba as, at that time, all first-year teachers were told to go west. He spent three years enjoying country life before taking on a posting to the Sunshine Coast.

Denis and his wife worshipped at the small Caloundra congregation of St Marks. It was here in 1982 that Pastor Ken Thamm asked Denis if he would be interested in joining the 'establishment committee' of what now is 'Immanuel Lutheran College'. The Sunshine Coast Lutheran Primary School had already been established in 1979 and later changed its name to Immanuel Lutheran College. It was a very exciting time where master plans were created; building contracts signed; Adrienne Jericho was appointed as the first principal of the College and official openings being the culmination of hours and hours of work. 1983 saw the first college council formed for Immanuel and Denis was appointed as secretary.

In 1984, he was appointed as teacher of Manual Arts at Immanuel Lutheran College. This position lasted 22 years before Denis decided on a fresh start at Faith Lutheran College Redlands.

Denis has always enjoyed a challenging teaching environment, being one that is young and developing its identity and place in the community. The vibrancy and enthusiasm of staff and students have always energised his passion for teaching. Faith was a perfect fit for Denis. His appointment at Faith lasted over 16 years. In July 2022 Denis began his retirement and now looks forward to the challenges and joys that brings. Some of his final words were "God has been good, and He will remain at my side".

His service to Lutheran Education, the Lutheran Church, his students and God have been outstanding and spanned over 46 years. We are grateful for all he has brought to our staff and students for generations. Denis is much loved and will be missed.

Denis' faithful and conscientious service to his Lord and the Lutheran Church of Australia, through his service in Lutheran education, has been outstanding and is humbly recognised through this Award.

**Assoc Prof Lisa Schmidt
Executive Director
Lutheran Education Australia**

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