

Term four thanks

It was a great honour to present the Valedictory Address at Concordia College's Valedictory Service in the Adelaide Town Hall recently. I look forward to future involvement in Dimboola, Tarneit, Toowoomba, Adelaide, Kingaroy, Brisbane and the Barossa in the weeks ahead.

I also apologise that I will not be able to accept all of the invitations to Valedictories, end of year services, LEA Service Award ceremonies and similar, but do wish to genuinely thank all Lutheran principals and schools who so kindly welcome me into your unique communities.

May God continue to bless your service and leadership for the remainder of Term 4 and as you plan towards 2019 and beyond. Please be encouraged to send your invitations for early 2019 functions to LEA to assist in planning Lisa Schmidt's 2019 calendar.

National apology to survivors of child sexual abuse

On Tuesday, 23 October 2018, the Prime Minister, Scott Morrison, delivered a National Apology to the victims and survivors of institutional child sexual abuse at Parliament House in Canberra.

In an emotional speech, the Prime Minister said an apology allowed Australia to confront 'a trauma, an abomination, hiding in plain sight for too long. Nothing we can do now will right the wrongs inflicted on our nation's children. Even after a comprehensive Royal Commission which finally enabled the voices to be heard and the silence to be broken, we will continue to struggle', he said. 'Mr Speaker, today as a nation, we confront our failure to listen, to believe and to provide justice. And again, today, we say sorry, to the children we failed, sorry.'

Mr Morrison announced a number of initiatives including the establishment of a National Centre of Excellence and a National Museum, and said the government was actively working on 104 of the 122 recommendations addressed to the Commonwealth, with the 18 remaining recommendations 'being closely examined' in consultation with states and territories.

While institutions were asked not to formally attend the ceremony, many welcomed the National Apology.

In a statement from the LCA Bishop, John Henderson, Bishop John wrote:

... as Christians we can agree that saying sorry to people we failed to protect is absolutely the right thing to do. Our responsibility goes beyond personal innocence or guilt. We have a shared responsibility as a nation-wide community. The church is its people and congregations, and under Christ we need to confess that in the past we have failed many of God's little ones, and commit ourselves to doing better as a church and as individuals.

Earlier this year, through the (former) General Church Council, the LCA signed on to the Commonwealth Government's National Redress Scheme for people who have experienced child sexual abuse in institutional settings. At that time I wrote in an eNews, 'the LCA is acknowledging the wrongs done to those who have experienced child sexual abuse in our church, and making a commitment to support them. This action is consistent with the commitment made by our General Synod in 2015 to care for and protect children while engaged in church activities.' The scheme will receive applications and determine appropriate redress over a ten year period. We are pleased to participate in this scheme. It allows us not only to say sorry but to do sorry as well.

Prayer: God of true love and healing, we pray that the Prime Minister will speak the right words for this occasion, and that his words will be well received. We give thanks for the work of the Royal Commission into Institutional Child Sexual Abuse, which uncovered so many crimes against children and gave us cause for shame and repentance. Help us now to joyfully take the opportunities before us to support people harmed in Lutheran institutions and to improve our child protection, and to follow Jesus' teachings and example more closely.

We pray especially:

- that all people who have been betrayed and sexually abused can find help to flourish in life—to love, trust and find joy—in spite of their bad experiences, and for all who offer such help;

- for the families and friends of people who have been abused, seen and experienced the harmful impact on them firsthand, and pursued justice with them or on their behalf;
- that the loving actions of Christian believers might help draw people alienated from church and faith because of sexual abuse back into Christian communities and a living hope in Christ our Saviour;
- for willingness on the part of Christians throughout Australia to give gladly and generously to support redress for people sexually abused as children;
- for the workers in the LCA's Professional Standards Department and for the Bishops as they shape the church's response to the problem of child sexual abuse and as they take the lead in responding to complaints of abuse in Lutheran institutions;
- and that Lutheran schools, youth camps, child care and aged care facilities can promote a culture of respect, decency and caring concern for all, especially those most vulnerable.

LCA General Synod

The Board for Lutheran Education Australia met last Saturday, 27 October 2018, to discuss the following business:

- **Election of new Board Chair** due to the resignation of Dr Neville Highett as Chair. Neville has been a Board Director since March 2012 and Chair since February 2014. His dedication, leadership and service to Lutheran education has been outstanding. He also served as principal at Immanuel College, SA, from 1999 to 2002.
The newly elected Board Chair is Mr Brett Hausler. Brett is Company Secretary and General Counsel at the Australian Energy Market Operator Ltd (AEMO) and heads the Governance Department. He has served on the Council for Lutheran Education Vic, NSW and Tas as well as Luther College Council
- The **General Synod resolution relating to Lutheran education** (see below) and, with the 2019 LEA Executive Director, Dr Lisa Schmidt, and the three regional directors, Julian Denholm, Dennis Mulherin and John Proeve, to plan 2019 joint discussions and collaborations between BLEA, DCCs and the three regional education councils
- **BLEA membership**: One vacancy is yet to be filled

General Synod resolution:

BE IT RESOLVED that General Synod:

1. *celebrates Lutheran education in its many forms across Australia, welcomes the mission and ministry opportunities that the LCA's schools and early childhood centres provide, and commits the church to supporting on-going improvements in collaborative ministry, governance and relevant administration.*
2. *acknowledges and affirms:*
 - *the strong commitment of the Lutheran education sector as a whole to mission and ministry through the LCA's schools, teachers, staff and leaders;*
 - *the strong commitment of the Lutheran education sector as a whole to upholding and growing Lutheran identity and culture through a Gospel-centred focus on the education and development of young people;*
 - *the commitment of the Lutheran education sector as a whole to a vibrant, sustainable Lutheran education sector into the future, underpinned by strong relationships and a desire to work together for shared goals and outcomes.*
3. *directs GCC and BLEA to develop and resource action plans to support the collaborative engagement of schools, congregations, districts and the LCA in mission and ministry.*
4. *directs GCC and BLEA to develop in collaboration with the three regions and the districts a coordinated approach to Commonwealth government funding.*
5. *affirms the governance authority of the BLEA in the following five key areas of responsibility, and commits to enabling the BLEA to develop strategic direction for the whole Lutheran education body by working collaboratively with each of the education regions:*
 - *setting strategic direction and policy for Lutheran education;*
 - *strengthening Lutheran identity;*
 - *establishing risk policies;*
 - *establishing policies for formation, leadership succession and development;*
 - *enhancing culture (including facilitating and driving greater collaboration across the Lutheran education body)*
6. *affirms the role of education regions as part of the national Lutheran education body and requests GCC and BLEA to work with the districts and the education regions to collaboratively define the scope of the entities within the Lutheran education body and set the relevant boundaries by clarifying governance and management accountabilities and responsibilities at regional and local levels. This includes developing relevant reporting arrangements and enabling a greater governance focus on mission and ministry through schools and ECCs.*
7. *requires regional and national governing boards to be aligned to comply with LCA policy about being skills-based and to ensure appropriate separation between governance and management (eg employees of the system are not board members but may be consultants).*
8. *affirms that flexibility be provided for local school governing bodies to allow for increased participation by non-Lutheran members, whilst maintaining a majority of Lutheran members, and allowing for a model where a governing body may have oversight over more than one school.*
9. *directs GCC and other relevant bodies to determine a streamlined loans approval and guarantee process.*
10. *directs the GCC to ensure all relevant LCA Constitutions and by-laws are revised to enable the agreed changes to be addressed.*
11. *requires that regular reports on progress of the above recommended actions be submitted to GCC by all relevant stakeholders / parties.*

Installation: Dr Lisa Schmidt as LEA Executive Director

Please note that Dr Lisa Schmidt will be installed as the LEA Executive Director on Sunday, 10 February 2019 at Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Flinders Street, Adelaide. While the service time will be confirmed in the near future, principals are encouraged to send greetings to Lisa for this important event. Some may even choose to attend. Please direct your greetings to lea@lutheran.edu.au



Australians together

Australians Together are looking for a talented leader with a strong knowledge of the education sector and trends in curriculum, to join its team as Education Team Leader.

Please see the [Job Advertisement](#) if you think you may be able to lead, manage and inspire their Education Team. The successful candidate will be part of a movement making a difference in our nation through education and curriculum.



Live and promote peace – together with more than 700 Protestant schools around the world

Would you like to stop bullying at your school and reflect with your students how to treat each other with love and respect? Is it a major concern for you to create a peaceful and secure learning environment for both students and teachers? Then join the worldwide network GPENreformation and take action!

The “Global Pedagogical Network – Joining in Reformation”, abbreviated as GPENreformation, is an international non-profit network of Protestant schools and their supporting organizations. It promotes worldwide exchange and learning from and with each other to improve educational quality at Protestant schools. In the context of the network’s current Peace Education Period running until the end of 2021 a new project has been launched this spring. It is open to all school forms and aims to explore how peace and discord manifest themselves in the school context and where the causes can be found. You can find the accompanying materials and instructions for teachers and students available for free [here](#). Feel free to pass them on to student leaders and interested teachers e.g. for Christian studies. Take action for your school culture and become part of the great digital GPENreformation peace exhibition by submitting your findings! Simply visit the website www.gpenreformation.net, sign up for free membership online and get started.

This project is part of a long-term initiative to develop a valuable tool kit assembling suggestions, materials and project ideas of how to promote a peaceful living-together at Protestant schools. During the process both students and teachers will be invited to introduce their ideas via eLearning project phases and international meetings. Feel invited to join the global community on this exciting journey!

If you want to know more about the network and the opportunities it offers, please visit the [website](#), have a look at the [flyer](#) or get in touch with Bianca Kappelhoff, the network’s contact person for Australia (Mail Bianca.Kappelhoff@gpenreformation.net, Phone 0412 470 750).

LEA Service Awards

Principals – as you plan for your end-of-year rites and ceremonies, you may have long serving teaching and support staff and members of councils who will be retiring from their service to Lutheran education. If they have completed 20 or more years of service, please nominate them to receive an LEA Service Award. [Click here for further details including nomination form](#)

Stephen Rudolph
Executive Director
Lutheran Education Australia

In the footsteps of Luther

After experiencing the joy of the LEA Principals *Lutherlands* study tour in July 2014, a plan was hatched to offer a similar professional development opportunity to the staff of St Peters Lutheran College at Springfield and Indooroopilly. Various options were considered which included making this available to other local Lutheran Schools. Eight St Peters staff signed on for the two-week Spring Break Germany tour. We were so blessed to have an exceptional tour leader, St Peters Lutheran College Senior Chaplain, Pastor Thomas Böhmert, born and bred in Dresden, with excellent local knowledge and German language skills.

In the words of new St Peters Springfield Principal, Craig Schmidt, 'This was a tremendous learning and cultural experience, not only enriching our understanding of the history of the Reformation and the foundations of the Lutheran Church, but also the general history of Germany and the region, particularly over the last 500 - 1000 years.'

We visited significant sights connected to Martin Luther, including Wittenberg, Eisleben, Eisenach, Wartburg Castle, and Erfurt. Also included were such places as the Bach museum, Goethe's house and museum (Weimar), the Jewish museum (Berlin), Stasi Museum (Dresden), two schools, Berlin, Torgau, Leipzig, Dresden (and a night at the famous Opera House to see Carmen), and the deeply affecting Buchenwald work camp.



The two school visits were quite a contrast: the Hundertwasser-refurbished Luther Melanchthon Gymnasium at Wittenberg was an inspiration. The 800-year old Dresden Kreuzchor School of the famous boys choir, was a very special visit as this is Pastor Thomas' alma mater! Our tour group also commented that the atmosphere in the Kreuzschule (as a Lutheran school) was very familiar and different from the Hundertwasser gymnasium.

Additional highlights also included Sunday morning worship. On the first Sunday, we attended the Berliner Dom service, with the much-needed English translation and magnificent organ music, featuring Bach. The second Sunday were worshipped in the Evangelisches Augustinerkloster in Erfurt, the old monastery where Luther became a monk. We were all delighted when Pastor Thomas was asked to do one of the bible readings in the service.

We feel honoured and blessed to have had this very unique opportunity for rich and deep learning.

Jill Lange-Mohr

Federal matters

Australia's first off-grid, solar and battery-powered classroom

[1 November 2018]

Minister for Energy, Angus Taylor, says the Australian Government is supporting Hivve, an Australian technology start-up that has created Australia's first off-grid, solar and battery-powered classroom at Bracken Ridge State High School in Brisbane. Following trials supported by the Australian Government through the Australian Renewable Energy Agency (ARENA), the Hivve classroom's technology creates power to run its climate-controlled, state-of-the-art learning space as well as feed excess power back into the school network. The Hivve classroom in Brisbane includes rooftop solar PV and a Tesla Powerwall battery for energy storage which will ensure the students can continue to learn when the sun isn't shining while reducing energy costs. [Read more](#)

Making space for science

[31 October 2018]

Grants between \$2,000 and \$20,000 are available to Australian schools and community organisations, encouraging practical skills, creativity and entrepreneurial thinking. Minister for Industry, Science and Technology Karen Andrews announced applications for the Coalition Government's Maker Projects grants will open on Thursday 8 November. "The Coalition is providing \$1 million in grants through the Maker Projects program, supporting the development of science, technology, engineering and mathematics skills among Australia's youth," Minister Andrews said.

[Read the full media release](#)

Report reveals health of young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

[31 October 2018]

Minister for Indigenous Health, Ken Wyatt, says the health and wellbeing of First Australian teenagers and young adults is the focus of a unique new report released today. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Adolescent and Youth Health and Wellbeing 2018 report reveals specific, national data on 10-24 year olds for the first time. The positive outcomes highlighted in this Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) research show where concerted and targeted efforts by First Nations families, communities, government and health care organisations are getting results. Sixty-three per cent of First Australians aged 10-24 assessed their health as either 'excellent' or 'very good'. [Read the full media release](#)

NATSIEC is a biennial Indigenous education conference

[29 October 2018]

This conference brings together educators, community members, leaders and students. The NATSIEC 2018 conference program features 40 workshops, 10 keynote plenaries, cultural performances and conference dinner. Further information and online registration available at: <https://natsiec.edu.au/program-summary/>

Australian Homestay Network

[29 October 2018]

The Australian Homestay Network (AHN) currently provides accommodation solutions for a number of Lutheran schools and it has a new service to complement international student offerings.

Since 2008 AHN has placed more than 50,000 students from 179 countries in safe, culturally-enriching and supportive homestays throughout Australia. AHN is preparing to launch its Study Tour Programs Australia wide in January 2019. This decision was prompted by demand from education agents and also follows the successful launch of its Study Tours product in the USA. AHN can enhance international student programs and promote Lutheran schools on the world stage. The benefits of, and further information about, AHN study tours is available at <https://www.homestaynetwork.org/> - or Email AHN Global Tours Program Manager, Jacqueline Pentland, jmanche@homestaynetwork.org

New funds to support next generation of school leaders announced

[29 October 2018]

New funding of \$1.5 million over the next three years for school leaders was recently announced by the Menzies Foundation. "We are thrilled to launch the inaugural Menzies School Leader Fellowship Program, which is open today for applications from school leaders, principals, assistant principals and lead teachers in Victorian primary and secondary schools," Ms Liz Gillies (CEO) said. "This new program aims to support the development of leadership capability in schools. We are keen to identify and support emerging school leaders. Applications close 21 December 2018. Application forms available at: <https://www.menziesfoundation.org.au/schoolleaderfellowship>. [Read the full media release](#)

Responding to institutional child sexual abuse

[22 October 2018]

The Healing Foundation has today released a cultural framework to drive healing responses and ensure action on the recommendations made by the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. The release of the framework coincides with Prime Minister Scott Morrison's apology to abuse survivors and aims to address the inaction that followed the 1997 Bringing Them Home Report, which outlined 54 recommendations to redress the impact of removal policies and tackle ongoing trauma - most remain unresolved. With more than 14 per cent of respondents to the Royal Commission coming from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, the effects of institutional child sexual abuse are overwhelming. [Read the full media release](#)

Australian Student Wellbeing Framework

[19 October 2018]

The Australian Government Department of Education and Training recently announced the release of the Australian Student Wellbeing Framework. The Framework builds on and extends the previous Framework and remains the central national reference point on student safety and wellbeing for all state and territory governments, non-government education authorities and the Australian Government. It provides a vision and a set of guiding principles to assist all Australian school communities to develop positive and practical safety and wellbeing policies and practices.

The Australian Student Wellbeing Framework continues to support school communities to address contemporary issues facing schools and to build learning environments where students feel safe, supported, included and connected.

The Framework is live on the Student Wellbeing Hub at www.studentwellbeinghub.edu.au where educators, pre-service teachers, parents and students can explore the importance of the key elements and principles for whole-school safety and wellbeing. You may like to visit the Student Wellbeing Hub, or sign up through the website to receive the newsletter for regular updates.



Ministers welcome national guideline for autism assessment and diagnosis

[16 October 2018]

The Coalition Government has announced a new national standard for diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder (ASD), improving diagnostic consistency across Australia. Minister for Families and Social Services, the Hon Paul Fletcher MP, and Minister for Health, the Hon. Greg Hunt MP, today welcomed the release of the national guideline, funded by the National Disability Insurance Agency. About 164,000 Australians, including 136,000 children and young people under the age of 25, have ASD. That represents a 79 percent increase from 2009. [Read the full media release](#)

National survey of parents on education launched

[9 October 2018]

Parents get to have their say on what they really care about when it comes to education, including funding, with the launch of one of the most comprehensive surveys of its kind in Australia.

The Australian Parents Council (APC) survey (<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Q32ZQ22>) aims to gauge parent sentiment on a range of current education issues, including the implementation and impact on families of changes to school funding. Questions also cover teacher quality, individual education for every child, testing, stress, technology, bullying and more. [Click here for further information](#)