



Section 13

2014 Convention of Synod

Ministry and Mission

DEPARTMENT OF MISSION AND MINISTRY-2014

MISSION AND MINISTRY PRIORITIES

D.I.S.C.I.P.L.E.

In conversations with congregations where the director has had the opportunity to share this model of Christian life, he has noted that none of what he is presenting is new. Our members and pastors know these spiritual disciplines already. However, by 'pulling' them together in an easy to remember acrostic, he is endeavoring to remind our congregations that all of these elements are needed for a growing discipleship life under God.

For those who know of Christian Schwartz's work in Natural Church Development (NCD) will understand his 'minimum barrel' picture which shows that a stave barrel cannot hold water above the level of the shortest stave. So it is with our life of discipleship under God.

- D** Daily Bible reading (Hebrews 4:12)
- I** Intentional daily prayer (Colossians 4:2; 1 Timothy 2:1);
- S** Sunday worship each week (Exodus 20:8)
- C** Christian Community – participation in a Small Group (Acts 2:46; Hebrews 10:25)
- I** Involvement with those inside and outside the Church in service (1 Corinthians 12:12; Ephesians 2:10; James 2:26)
- P** Purposeful giving – Biblically based finances (Malachi 3:10; Matthew 23:23; Acts 20:35; 1 Corinthians 16:2)
Leading others to Christ (Matthew 28:19,20; John 20:21; 1 Peter 3:15)
- E** Enjoying this gift of life (John 10:10; Philippians 4:4)

As those who have received the gift of faith, it is our joy to share this with others.

As noted in last year's report the director has made sharing this across our District (and beyond) a priority for the department. Some congregations wish to look at their strategic planning initiatives, SWOT analysis, KPIs, etc., all of which are valuable in their own right. However, we know that it is God who makes the Church grow as noted in Matthew 16:18; we join with Him in being sent (John 20:21) and we are therefore well served by ensuring that ministry and mission initiatives are bathed in prayer and surrounded by Godly people who are immersed in the Word.

Congregations at times wish to 'take stock' of their situation and see where their greatest areas of strength reside and also where they have opportunities for growth. The National Church Life Survey (NCLS) which is undertaken by congregations every five years (same timing as the National Census) provides a wealth of information which is both timely and relevant. Due to the length of time NCLS has been operational and the willingness of congregations to participate, a valuable database of information has been built up disclosing trends and changing areas of congregational focus. While congregations received their NCLS report data soon

after the 2011 survey, it can still easily be made available through District Office should congregations wish to examine themselves under the nine key areas of:

Internal Core Qualities:

- Faith
- Worship
- Belonging

Inspirational Core Qualities:

- Vision
- Leadership
- Innovation

Outward Core Qualities:

- Service
- Faith-sharing
- Inclusion

However, it should be noted that congregations do not have to wait until the next census (2016) to see how they are travelling under these headings. District Office can arrange for a NCLS survey to be undertaken within any congregation in a timely manner (costs are extremely reasonable). This would provide an up to the moment analysis of the views of the congregation showing areas that have both grown and decreased since the previous survey.

A new NCLS initiative is the production and distribution of the Community Social Profile. Congregations may already have these to hand and if not, they will soon be arriving. District Office has arranged for the bulk purchase of these packs at a discounted rate of \$198 for congregations which is viewed as a worthwhile investment in ministry and mission. The community connections pack is organised under six headings:

- Population
- Education
- Employment and income
- Households and families
- Housing
- Culture and religion

Some interesting information to come out of the data is that Australia's population is ageing, will double over the next fifty years with most growth coming from immigration and by 2028 Perth will have overtaken Brisbane as Australia's third largest city. How does the Church position herself in this environment?

In the field of education women are both catching up and overtaking men with educational qualifications. Research has disclosed that on average Church attenders are more highly educated than the general population.

Research has disclosed that the greatest influencer on those coming to faith in Australia is:

- Mother 52%
- Minister 35%
- Father 30%
- Peers 21%
- Grandparents 20%

Does this mean that the church needs to spend more time educating parents to pass on the faith to their children? How do we minister to and equip peers and grandparents who are clearly also significant faith influencers?

It is the desire of the Ministry and Mission department to have each congregation produce a mission plan in due course. More information will follow on this initiative. Each mission plan will be of course different for each congregation as they look at the unique areas that God has placed them into and the giftedness of the members and leadership to change lives and receive the blessings that follow a life lived under God's care.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

- Prayerfully seek God's guidance for the purpose and vision of the ministry
- Develop, review, implement and maintain an effective vision-led strategic ministry plan for the ministry in conjunction with Council for Ministry and Mission
- Engage in a continuing program of study and research in relevant areas of missiology in order to be able to teach, mentor and coach others
- Engage in the study of society and its trends as they relate to the life and mission of the church using resources such as the *National Church Life Survey* (NCLS) and *Christian Research Association* materials in order to assist the Church to communicate with the people from surrounding cultures
- Assist in equipping pastors, lay workers and congregations to understand God's mission through his church and to develop appropriate team-based mission initiatives in their contexts
- Provide resources and training to assist congregations in new ministry and mission initiatives to envision, plan, evaluate, reflect and set future direction for ministry and mission
- Encourage all members of the LCAQD to see their lives as being a DISCIPLE of Christ and to engage in a lifestyle of discipleship
- Work with Lutheran Education Queensland (LEQ), Queensland Lutheran Early Childhood Services (QLECS), Lutheran Community Care (LCC) and Lutheran Youth of Queensland (LYQ) and other District agencies to promote mission
- Work collaboratively with the other department directors of the LCAQD
- Work cooperatively with the Ministry and Mission Directors (or equivalent) of other LCA Districts and the LCA Mission Director
- Network with other Christian denominations, organisations and para-church groups
- Conduct pre-call meetings in vacant parishes

FAR NORTH QUEENSLAND REPORT

Volunteers in Mission (ViM's)

ViMs have an important role to play in assisting God's work in Northern Queensland. This has been a very successful initiative over the years. We have opportunities for people to serve in both Coen and Wujal Wujal. It is the goal to be able to provide an ongoing presence by our church for the entire year. January and February may provide a break due to the weather and holidays! If you are interested please contact David Spanagel on 0419 023 114. Take it to the Lord in prayer.

Wujal Wujal

The spiritual life in Wujal Wujal has its high points followed by the cries for help when the low times come. The highlight at Wujal Wujal in the time frame of a year is the visit by the group from Immanuel Buderim. They come each year prepared to 'walk beside' local people, encourage them and be involved in a whole range of local activities. There is so much that can be a mutual learning experience, the time is enhanced when it is in the local setting, natural and serene.

Holy Communion Services are held once a month with Baptisms as requested and funerals always conducted following the requests of the closest family.

BAPTISM AT WUJAL WUJAL



Coen

As this is a mainstream town there are always many more town events that need to be taken into consideration when planning a visit. Our services have been irregular here this year simply due to this factor. A highlight was the Baptism service held on the Lama Lama homelands. The natural setting and environment that suits the local residents provided for a wonderful occasion. God's blessing was surely a part of this day. Life in Coen can be 'laid back' or more active according to the way the resident church representative feels is appropriate. It's your choice!

Hope Vale

The ministry here has been maintained in a regular way; Sunday services every Sunday followed by an Aged Care service/meditation at 11.15am, just before lunch being served! While attendance has remained at between 45 - 70 most Sundays there is opportunity knocking across all age groups as follows:

- the group in the 60 year bracket can see things need to change to 'get people back to church';
- the age bracket around 40 are aware that their lifestyle needs to change and that they must 'come back to church'. But that's easier to say than do;
- the age bracket below 35 are keen to share their experiences of learning and to be reminded about what they have learned and be affirmed in this;
- the Confirmation age group are lining up for Confirmation. Some truly heart warming experiences of sharing their understanding to date and then learning and hearing more; and
- the primary age children....what a joy to visit the school, walk down the street, go to the store, join in a family BBQ, a family sing a long – the children gather around keen for attention and a talk about Jesus' love and how we should try to never do anything that pleases Satan.

AGED CARE DEVOTION



CONFIRMATION



THE NEXT GENERATION



Encouragement

God has given us opportunities in a big way, we always plan to do our best and always encourage more involvement across the family structures.

God is good, please pray for the Far North as we work towards our objective of 'Helping people in the north come to know Jesus'.

We serve Him with Joy in our hearts.

FOOTBALL PRACTICE



AFRICAN MINISTRY REPORT TOOWOOMBA, QLD

Our Saviour's currently provides pastoral care to about 45 African people who originate from various regions of Africa; the southern Sudan (Acholi people), the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Burundi and Rwanda. As well as their mother tongues, most of the African members also speak Swahili, the *lingua franca* of central east Africa, and English to varying degrees of fluency.

Around half of the African members are in church each Sunday. To date, African members have worshipped in English together with the Australian congregation, although a separate worship service is being planned – this will be supplementary to Divine Service on Sunday and is intended to have a catechetical focus as well as allowing more elements of African culture to find expression in worship. Translation into Swahili will be provided.

The Sunday School consists almost entirely of African students (up to 20), all of whom have learned to speak English fluently since their arrival in Australia. The African children particularly enjoy singing and craft activities and would like Sunday School to continue even during school holidays! A partnership has been established with the Sunday School children at Nundah congregation which is hoped to be extended in the coming year. Our Saviour's congregation is grateful for their interest and support.

In 2013 a youth choir was established which has met weekly during school terms for practice and social activities. They have sung both English and African hymns during

Divine Service on numerous occasions. African youth have also participated in Christian Life Week camps with great benefit.

The acquisition of a mini-bus in 2013 with the help of donations from individuals in the District and congregations in the Darling Downs zone and a grant from LCAQD has assisted greatly with transport needs on Sundays and youth and other activities during the week, including visiting congregations on the Darling Downs zone for special events such as the World Day of Prayer.



Confirmation



African bus

The establishment of an African Ministry Fund has provided a degree of financial support for the ministry and has enabled various pastoral and educational needs to be met efficiently, for which we thank God. It is estimated that the present level of funding will allow the bus to operate and other needs to be met for the next twelve months.

God willing, there is certainly potential for continued expansion of the African ministry at Our Saviour's. If this is to happen, suitably gifted African men and women need to be prayerfully sought after to assist in this ministry.

It is a privilege and a joy to minister to African members at Our Saviour's. May they continue to grow in their knowledge of God's love for them in Christ Jesus and also be a blessing to this congregation.

ST LUKE'S, LUTHERAN CHURCH, WOODRIDGE

Ministry at St Luke's is remaining steady.

A Christian outreach festival was held last October at Trinder Park Rest Home and had a reasonable turnout. The congregation pulled together nicely with the aid of the community.

The Sudanese ministry is going steady, with regular members attending worship each Sunday. St Luke's sent four representatives (Sudanese Liaison, and three young-adult Sudanese women) to the recent African conference in Melbourne. The conference had a positive impact on the Sudanese women that has resulted in a renewed interest in how they can contribute to ministry as a whole at St Luke's, and further outreach into the Sudanese community.

St Lukes has also been a support to the re-missioning of Hillcrest Family Worship Centre (formerly New Life Lutheran Church).

HILLCREST FAMLY WORSHIP

Most people would have already heard about Hillcrest by now due to the Lenten Appeal this year.

This is an exciting re-missioning project in tandem with the QLD District and QLECS (New Life Child Care Centre & Amana Family Day Care).

Hillcrest will have at its heart the gospel of Jesus and the discipleship of all ages, with a focus on family ministry.

God is already blessing the re-missioning in many and varied ways.

ASIAN MINISTRY

An article on the history of Asian Ministry written by the congregational chairman, St. Mark's, Mt Gravatt in the Congregation's 50th Anniversary Special Publication 2010 noted:

"Asian Ministry today is the result of many years of devotion and dedication of those first leaders who saw the need and those who have joined and taken up the challenges along the way. As we look back over the years and the times of critical changes in this ministry, it is obvious that God wants us to understand and be able to work through the complexities of multi-cultural life. I don't believe He wants us to mix everything into one big grey pot. I know you understand the colour and music that is part of God's gift. I believe He wants us to accept and treasure the differences of language and culture in the way He in His creation planned for us. If we have rights, one must be to worship our Creator in a language and cultural environment in which we feel closest to Him."

1. 2014, a year to celebrate.

The Asian Ministry at Southport, the second Asian Ministry in Queensland after Mt. Gravatt, is celebrating its 10th anniversary this year.

Rev. Brian Shek is in his 15th year of ordination.

The Lord God, the foundation of the Church, is to be praised for His calling and sending ministers into the ministry of evangelising and caring for the Asian Community in this country. The number of adult baptisms in the Gold Coast area in the past 10 years is close to 100. The leaders, both in the wider church and local congregations, both Anglos and Asians, are to be acknowledged for their courage of stepping out in faith when they saw the need for an Asian Ministry. Those who have joined and taken up the challenges along the way are to be thanked for their consistent devotion and dedication to this ministry.

2. 2014 – a year of critical transition

The ministry has experienced real challenges in the past year. Many of the challenges being faced have caused people to resort to prayer as well as promoting more strategic discussions among pastors. Our confidence is in the Lord.

a. Restructuring of the ministry continued.

The ministry model has been reviewed in the past year. It is strategic and highly desirable to develop a model which would:

- encourage ministry ownership of the Asians so that they are more ready to take up their responsibilities in the ministry in terms of making decisions, finance, and management.
- enable ministry partnership with as many congregations and individuals as possible rather than restricted to one congregation.

b. Fellowship and training of Pastors

- It is planned that Asian pastors will meet monthly for fellowship and solid study on Lutheran distinctives and ministry explorations.
- The study will be guided by LCA theologians and experienced pastors.

This would help the ministry to transition into maturity in which good ministerial leadership and effective structures will be indispensable.

- a) A national Chinese Ministry Summit is to be held in Brisbane, tentatively in the last week of July 2014. It is hoped that this Summit would promote good understanding among the stakeholders and solicit discussion on the future direction of the ministry.
- b) Another National Summit on Asian Ministry, to be held late 2014 or early 2015, is also under consideration.

3. 2014 – a year with new opportunity from mainland China.

- a) Migrants from Mainland China have outnumbered those from Hong Kong, Taiwan and South East Asia added together. Mainland China has the most visiting Asian scholars. May the Lord provide the Church with ministry leaders who have a Mainland China background for easier networking and developing mutual trust with these new people in Queensland.
- b) Heresies come with migrants from China.

Previously, most migrants from China had a non-religious atheist background. However, with the rapid growth of the underground church in China, there is a good proportion (estimated 7-8%) of recent migrants from China who are 'Christian'. Most underground churches are led by untrained lay people and result in various forms of heresies. These migrants bring with them different ways of 'Church' as well as heresies. In the past year, the cult 'Eastern Lightning' which denies the Deity of Jesus grew rapidly in Brisbane. They put full page advertisements in newspapers on a regular basis, attacking the traditional churches and their beliefs. They also pretended to be church seekers and joined church activities and bible studies with the intention of taking current members away to their 'church'. The impact on these church members is not to be taken lightly. The impact on outreach is very serious. The general Asian Community in society simply think that the churches are fighting and despise the 'church' for this.

4. Changes and updates

- a) Mr Nicolas Hu has been appointed as Lay Worker for the ministry, with a focus on Asian Ministry at St. Peters, Indooroopilly. Nicolas comes from China, is a recent graduate of Perth Bible College, and is currently a member of St. Johns, Perth.
- b) In other Districts: Sydney has started a new ministry in Ryde;

Melbourne has started a Mandarin ministry in Box Hill;
St. Johns Perth has branched out to Duncraig. Divine Service has started with good attendance of about 25 people.

The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field. - Matthew 9:37-38

GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN CHURCH, NOOSA – MISSION STIMULUS GRANT RECIPIENT OF \$25,000 IN 2013

The aim of Good Shepherd, Noosa, in beginning their Playgroup Outreach Project, was to provide a community service that would meet some real needs identified in the region. In the process their hope was to build links of trust and connection with families not currently connected to the life of the church so that the good news of Jesus Christ could be shared. In essence - a mission outreach project to the local community.

While only 8 months have passed since the Mission Stimulus Grant was awarded, they are seeing real progress in moving towards a wider ministry approach by the congregation.

A key part of their plan was to develop a team approach to ministry that was sustainable long term and congregationally owned. The funding model they are working with reflects this, having chosen to spend their award over a three year period on a sliding scale. Their prayerful hope is of growing congregational support and ownership during that time.

Consequently, a coordinator with a sense of vision was appointed, not just a willing worker, but one who would engage and encourage others to join the team rather than doing it all alone. And furthermore, to encourage those parents attending to be part of the support solutions for each other. As a result, the coordinator's role in their bi-weekly playgroup programme includes the following:

- recruiting and training of congregational volunteers;
- helping playgroup families build supporting networks with each other;
- linking playgroup families with resources and opportunities that may assist them; and
- finding ways of connecting playgroup families with congregational members and with opportunities for spiritual growth.

The congregation believes that the best way of linking families with the body of Christ is through getting to know church members and simply seeing Christ at work in their lives. Two small teams (of three or four congregational members each) have already been developed, one for Tuesday sessions and one for Thursday. Other congregational members have begun making regular contributions of morning tea items for the parents or assisting with set up and clean up. Team members mix in conversation, help run activities and provide the ever present coffee and treats, giving a wonderful witness of Christian service and love to many families, a large number of which have recently moved to the region and are seeking support and connection.

Promotion of the playgroup through word of mouth, Facebook and the church web page has worked very well and brought over 60 families (approximately 140 adults

and children) to the two groups so far this calendar year. The congregation has already seen some spiritual fruit as there has been a small number of families engaging with the worship life of the congregation and some seeking baptism.

The congregation sees real opportunity for further expansion of this ministry in the years ahead. They give thanks to God for the stimulus this money from the LLL has provided, both financially and in local mission direction.

Once again, the last word is left to Scripture; "Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you". John 20:21.

Respectfully submitted,

Neil Bergmann, Chair, Council for Ministry and Mission

With the assistance of:

Jade Bauer, Pastor, Woodridge and Hillcrest

Mark Henderson, Pastor, Harristown, Toowoomba

Mark Nitschke, Pastor, Noosaville

John O'Keefe, Pastor, Director for Ministry and Mission

Brian Shek, Pastor, LCA Asian Ministry Coordinator

David Spanagel, Pastoral Carer, Far North Queensland