

# Professional Standards Newsletter

ISSUE 01 - December 2011



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Indooroopilly  
Chinese Pastors  
Nundah  
Biloela  
Ashmore  
Chinchilla  
Pittsworth  
Rockhampton  
Kingaroy  
Noosa  
Warwick  
Hervey Bay  
Woolloongabba  
Mackay  
Nambour  
Rochedale

## Have you ever heard of a “Blue Christmas”?

Police arriving on your doorstep to let you know of the death of your child; the death of a loved one in hospital; the announcement by a spouse that in their eyes your marriage is over; these are tragic and sad times no matter when they occur. However, if the date happens to be on or around significant dates, like family birthdays, anniversaries, or indeed times of celebration like Christmas, then the pain and the memory can be much more difficult to bear. How do you grieve when everyone else is rejoicing? How can you allow the painful memory to fade when the date simply cannot be missed?

This is why some congregations hold a small “Blue Christmas Service” after the normal Christmas Day celebrations have ended. Those who feel unable to have the usual “happy” Christmas are invited to gather together with the friends who support them to sit in the presence of the Babe of Bethlehem.

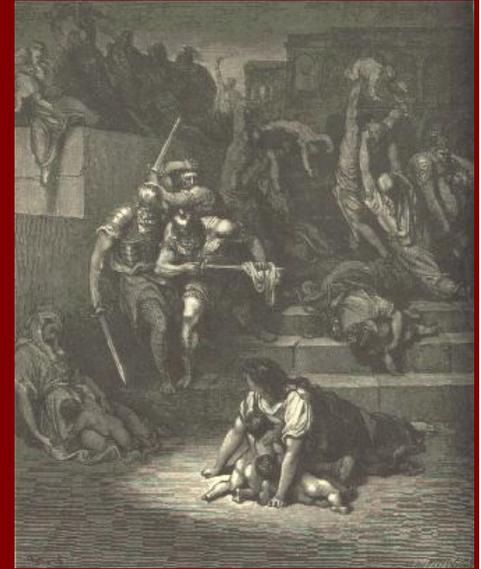
We need to know that we are not alone. We need the space and time to acknowledge and express our sadness, our protest, and our complaint about the harshness and unfairness of life. We need encouragement to live the days ahead of us. We need to hear of God’s love and care for the fragile and vulnerable. We need to sit quietly in his presence.

This may seem to be something new, but there has been sombre tone attached to our Christmas celebrations for hundreds of years. December 28 (the fourth day of Christmas) has been set as the day commemorating the massacre of the Holy Innocents. Sadly this day and its message often remains neglected and forgotten.

*When Herod realized that he had been outwitted by the Magi, he was furious, and he gave orders to kill all the boys in Bethlehem and its vicinity who were two years old and under, in accordance with the time he had learned from the Magi. Then what was said through the prophet Jeremiah was fulfilled: “A voice is heard in Ramah, weeping and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children and refusing to be comforted, because they are no more.” (Matthew 2:16-18)*

This year as you again celebrate with joy the coming of the Babe of Bethlehem into your life may you spare a thought for those vulnerable people who, at this time of year, feel isolated and completely out of step with the vast majority of society. By remaining open to this pain, you then might discover the privilege of being allowed to sit with such a person sharing together in the healing presence of the Christ-child.

Keith Stiller



### 2011—Statistics

#### Those who attended PS Workshops included

<b>Pastors</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>Chairpersons</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>Church Council</b>	<b>58</b>
<b>Lay Assistants/ Elders</b>	<b>52</b>
<b>Sunday School</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>Youth</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>Office</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Other</b>	<b>62</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>325</b>

## A Message from Liz.

Christmas is the time we think of family. It begins with the story of the little family in the shed at the back of the Bethlehem pub gazing in wonder at their new baby.

In amongst the jangle and clatter of the shopping centre Christmas my thoughts turned to the simple Christmas of my childhood in the Scottish tradition. The gifts of a book or some paints, a meal of roast chicken followed by plum pudding enjoyed with my parents and grandparents. Christmas heralded a very busy time for us as the house and garden were scrubbed and cleaned and tidied, mown and weeded, the kitchen a hive of activity with shortbread and black bun, Scotch eggs and pies and the unforgettable smell of a haggis, in preparation for the feasting and celebration of the New Year.

Then of course there were the busy years when my children were small with bikes and billy carts hidden in the neighbours garage and the hilarity of all the dads attempting to put a swing set or cubby house together by torchlight at midnight. Once

again the kitchen was a hive of activity to feed the extended family and the inevitable 'away from home' friends who filled our dining room to capacity.

This year I will spend Christmas Day with my Brisbane family and then the next few days with my Sydney sons and their families so I'll have a double helping of backyard cricket.

During this year Keith and I have been welcomed into the family of the church in congregations the length and breadth of QLD. It has been a joy to engage with you all as we have together considered how best we can tend the flock. And yes I have enjoyed the difficult questions and those robust discussions especially about page 9 in the Supplement. Each workshop has given us new knowledge or insight from someone in the group.

This Christmas also heralds a very busy time for Professional Standards (and no I'm not making haggis) but we are working intensively to complete our policies and procedures so we can assist you further in caring for the vulnerable people in our church family. I ask for your patience as there may be times

**I exhort the elders among you to tend the flock of God that is in your charge, exercising the oversight, not under compulsion but willingly, as God would have you do it – not for sordid gain but eagerly. Do not lord it over those in your charge, but be examples to the flock. And when the chief shepherd appears, you will win the crown of glory that never fades away  
~ from the Bible  
(1 Peter 5:1-5)**

when I will not be available immediately to answer your questions or talk through your concerns

Christmas blessings to all of our church family. May you continue to feel the wonder of the baby born so simply who brings hope and joy to the world.

Liz Crawford



## A Message from Kate.

I began working with the PSU three days a week on October 2011.

Supporting the PSU team in it's every day functions is the main part of my role.

My work history includes a strong background in administration, project coordination and compliance within both private and Government training sectors .

I would be happy to assist you whenever I can. Please ring me on 3512 7284 or [kate.ryan@lca.org.au](mailto:kate.ryan@lca.org.au)

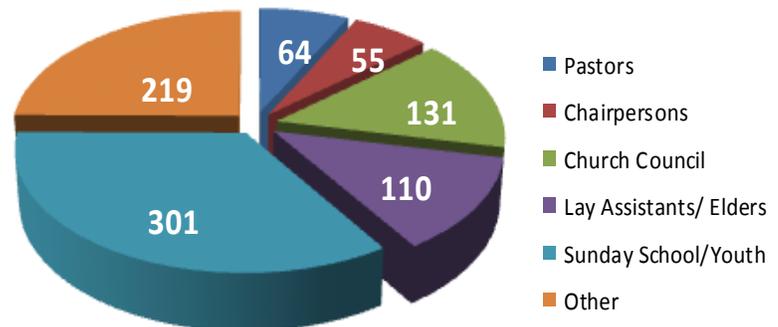
Kate Ryan

**The aim of this newsletter is to give a short report of the activities of the PSU to all those who attend our Queensland Workshops.**

**At this stage our plan is to send them out twice a year.**

**If you do not wish to receive the newsletter please send an email to [keith.stiller@qld.lca.org.au](mailto:keith.stiller@qld.lca.org.au)**

**GRAND TOTALS FOR 2010 and 2011**



**Total number trained 880**

## For Pastors

### Blue Cards

A big thank you to all who have sent in their Blue Card details. There are less than 10 Pastors who have not yet complied to our request.

## For Statisticians

There is a online form that replaces the out of date [Compliance Checklist](#) that is part of the current statistics return. Please use this online form for your 2011 return.

## For Workshop Attendees

Thank you so much for the important work in this area that you all do in Lutheran Congregations throughout Queensland. Caring for and protecting vulnerable people is an essential part of our ministry.

## For Coordinators

If you have been having trouble with the SMO website, please give it another go. The owners of the site had to do a complete rewrite of the software, and there has been a few “glitches” along the way. Unfortunately this all happened just after our Coordinators Training in June. However, everything should now be running smoothly once again. If you find you need assistance, please don’t hesitate to contact us at PSU or the SMO people directly by clicking on the “Contact Us” button, near the LCA logo on the home page of the Safety Management Online site.

## For those Planning a Workshop



If your congregation is interested in hosting a workshop in 2011 please check out the LCAQD website. [A new page](#) has been developed with all the necessary information and a link to an online application form. But get in quickly, already there are no dates available before April 22.

## Response

We’d love to hear from you.

Please tell us what changes have occurred in your congregation since you have attended the Professional Standards Workshop.

Send us a quick [email](#) sharing those things that have worked well and those that still need more work.

Have we made a difference?

## For your information -

A growing number of Australians (both young and old) struggle with an addiction to online pornography. In fact if a recent 'Enough Rope' episode (Channel 10 talk show) is to be believed viewing online pornography has even become 'mainstream'.

We have been made aware of two resources that may help. Both monitor computer usage and send a regular report concerning the sites visited to a trusted friend .

The first is [Covenant Eyes \(www.covenanteyes.com\)](http://www.covenanteyes.com) and the second is [xxxchurch \(www.x3watch.com\)](http://www.x3watch.com). There is a cost involved for both sites.

We would again welcome feedback if you use these services.

## Response

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Have we made a difference?

# A very Blessed Christmas to you all.

Liz, Kate, Keith



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If you don't wish to receive this newsletter twice a year please email [keith.stiller@qld.lca.org.au](mailto:keith.stiller@qld.lca.org.au)