

Saints Alive

News from Australian Lutheran College

Issue 1, 2011

Called to Serve

Introducing the new pastoral students on campus

Comings & Goings



Connection
Small Group Study
launched!


Australian Lutheran College

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From the Principal

“... for we have heard him say that this Jesus of Nazareth will destroy this place and will change the customs that Moses handed on to us.” (Acts 6:14 NRSV)

Change is stressful and can cause heightened anxiety, and fear of loss and destruction. When governments propose change, opposition political parties regularly exploit this anxiety, saying the country will be ruined.



The Christian church has been changing for 2,000 years, and sometimes it has looked close to destruction. Lutherans in Australia have been changing for 175 years and sometimes we too have looked close to destruction. Australian Lutheran College has been changing for 44 years, and that change continues in 2011.

The key challenge in facing change is to stay close to our faith and not to let our anxieties turn us away from Jesus. That way we can lead the change, instead of becoming its victims. The Lutheran Church is a reforming church based on our loving and forgiving God and the sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life. Through faith the Holy Spirit enables us to live free and committed lives in service to our Saviour Jesus Christ.

That's why ALC is also a reforming place, and this is much more than changing the way we function. Our learning programs are agents of change and they equip people to serve and lead in today's world. ALC is here to serve a reforming, changing church. Jesus not only changes our lives, he makes them totally new.

I hope you enjoy reading about the people and events of ALC in this edition of 'Saints Alive' and the ministry we share with you in our changing world.

Thank you for your ongoing support, prayers and encouragement.

Yours in Christ,

Pastor John Henderson

BOARD FORUM

Angaston, in the beautiful Barossa Valley, was home to ALC's third open forum on Sunday 27 March, with around fifty people attending. A special word of thanks must go to the Angaston Lutheran Church congregation, who offered the use of their facilities for this gathering.

The purpose of the forum was to familiarise local people with the developments at ALC, followed by a question and answer session designed to get community feedback on ALC and its programs.

“We want to know what you think,” said Principal Rev John Henderson, “so that we can ensure that what we offer fits what the church needs.”

During question time, a number of people also made comments and suggestions. A Barossa resident commended ALC for a number of its new initiatives being rolled out under the strategic plan over the past few years. “Well done – God has led you in mighty ways,” he said, “and ALC is now serving the church much better through these different ways.”

Forums have previously been held in Brisbane and in Melbourne. ALC hopes to continue in the spirit of community engagement, with more events like this being held in the future. Outside of these forums, community feedback is of course welcome at any time.

Called to Serve

Introducing the new pastoral students on campus

Greg Bensted

Hello! We are Greg, Kathy, Emily and Adam Bensted.

The story of our journey from Kingaroy (affectionately known as peanut country) to the Seminary has been somewhat cyclonic, to use a Queensland term. Early in November 2010, I went fishing with Pastor Mathew Eckermann on his day off—an innocuous enough pastime. The next day I was discussing my application for pastoral studies with Dr Andrew Pfeiffer of ALC, and the rest, as they say, is history. Between that phone discussion and now, we have: wound up our electrical contracting business in Kingaroy, packed up our house and driven to Adelaide, recovered from an operation, sold our house, and are still trying to learn the rules of Australian Rules football. I am not complaining, mind you. I am merely showing that God has a great sense of humour.

On a more serious note, we arrived in Adelaide late on Friday afternoon on the 28th of January this year, and the reception we received was fantastic. As soon as we got out of the car, many hands made light work, from that moment on and over the next two weeks, to make our transition from packing up in Queensland to unpacking and settling into life in Adelaide as smooth as it could be. Many thanks to all involved!

Briefly, I am Greg Bensted, 43 years of age, with a work history involving primary school teaching both in Australia and overseas, mining and construction as a rigger and in materials handling, and electrical contracting. I grew



up in Gladstone on the Central Queensland coast. My wife Kathy grew up on a cattle property in the South Burnett region, and has worked as a school teacher, office manager, and most importantly, done a terrific job of raising our two children. The eldest is Emily, 11, and our son Adam is 8 years old. Kids being kids, they have taken to living in Adelaide like ducks to water. They have settled in well at North Adelaide Primary School and love racing around with the other 'Sem kids'. That's us. Bye for now and God bless!

Matthew Bishop

I've spent the past thirteen years in Canberra as an economic policy adviser to the Australian Government: ten years in the Treasury and the remainder most recently in the Senior Executive of the Department of Finance, leading a range of economic reforms. Hence, there is usually much understanding and head nodding when I explain one of the reasons I'm studying in the pastoral stream at ALC is that I didn't want to work with politicians for the rest of my life!

Beyond becoming less interested in the ways of Sir Humphrey Appleby (of Yes Minister fame), I became a lot more interested in deepening my biblical understanding and developing a sound theological framework that would be suitable for teaching others. I've been interested in studying theology and ministry for quite a while ... indeed, some of my earliest memories are of my grandfather Rev C Albert Zweck, OBE, encouraging me to study theology, in between telling me to follow Jesus and Sturt Football Club—in that order. Now God has removed all the excuses why I shouldn't. So I look forward to



how to bring the means of grace to God's people.

I am profoundly blessed to be married to Melissa, who while bearing much of the adjustment associated with this change in direction nevertheless deeply supports it. God has given us three healthy daughters, aged between 10 and 4½. I don't have a favourite movie, but *The Blues Brothers* gets more than average use. My dream dinner table would be attended by my parents, 'in-laws' and good friends,

coupling what I have learnt about life, leadership and people (and probably not macroeconomics) with what I will learn at ALC on

around a Shiraz from either Clare or the Barossa. Oh, and Sturt would be winning a premiership in the background!

Called to Serve

Introducing the new pastoral students on campus

'If you can't have fun doing something, don't do it'. I just hope and pray that I can live true to that motto while here at ALC.

I am married to Rosie (Roseanne in her professional guise as editor of the SA/NT newsletter 'Together') and Dad to twin sons Rohan and Matthew, who are just about fourteen. They are studying at Underdale High School. I have a 21 year old daughter, Yolande, from my previous marriage, who lives and works in Brisbane.

Until being called to come to ALC, I was a born, bred and avowed Queenslander—really I still am. I call Toowoomba home, as my parents, Darcy and Joyce and brothers Peter and David are there. I have another brother, Stephen, who lives in Brisbane.

Many people have asked, and quite rightly so, 'Why now? What made you decide to come to ALC now?' To that question there is only one answer: God! God has been calling me for approximately thirty years. The deciding moment happened via an opportunity I was given in mid-2010, to lead a men's Emmaus retreat. A couple of passages of scripture that resonate very strongly with me are Isaiah 6:8-9 and Revelation 3:20-22. Both passages have strong messages of challenge. I am convinced I am supposed to be here and with God's guidance will become the pastor He wants me to be.



Geoff Schefe

One of my first year classmates has accurately described me as one of the book ends of our class — being at the oldest end of the book stack. I was a little surprised when advised that I was the oldest first year student in many years—a very young fifty years of age. I am a country kid at heart and by nature, even after thirty odd years not living in the bush. The old saying about not being able to get the country out of a bloke is so true. My motto for life is:

Wayne George

Hi! My name is Wayne George, a South African citizen, with NZ permanent residency, on an Australian student visa, ultimate destination: Heaven! No identity crisis there!

By God's grace, I was born into a loving Christian home to a schoolteacher for a Dad, who is also a Pastor with the Assemblies of God, and a housewife for a mother. I am married to a precious young lady, Samantha. She too has been used by God in various fields of ministry and is a gifted anointed singer. Together we have endeavoured to be of service to God wherever, and however, he chooses to use us. We have an 11-year old son, Liam, who has a passion and gift for playing drums and has an enquiring mind which I trust God will use for his glory in years to come. I am grateful to God for Samantha, for her friendship, her support and her partnership in the ministry. I know that together as a family we will do our best to serve God and his people, and continue to count all success and accomplishments 'a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus' (Phil 3:8).

I always dreamt of being a medical doctor and worked hard toward this end. After matriculating in year 12 I was accepted to the University of Cape Town (UCT), reading towards a science degree. I soon realised that my dream of being a doctor, while being a good idea, was not a God-idea. The Father had greater plans for my life. At an Easter convention service in 1994, I found myself on my knees at the altar, responding to God's call upon my life to enter his ministry. I left UCT and embarked on a four year BTh



degree at the Cape Theological Seminary.

Since graduating from Seminary in 1998, I have been ministering in various capacities, serving as an itinerant evangelist, a pastor with the Assemblies of God, South Africa, an associate pastor with Elohim Ministries, a youth overseer/director, and an in-house Bible school facilitator. I also spent about 18 months in London and preached at a local Camden Town Church, for a few weeks while the pastor was away on sabbatical leave.

I have often had to minister on a 'tent-making' basis, finding secular employment to support my family and myself, thereby not placing any burden on the church. Some of the roles I've occupied are teacher, bank teller, financial administrator, office administrator, air traffic controller, and real estate agency owner/operator.

On 20 January 2009, while still in Cape Town, I saw the internet ad for a family and community worker at Mountainside Lutheran Church, Auckland, for which I applied. I was installed in the position in Auckland on 5 July 2009. The time at Mountainside

was a journey, to say the least—a journey of joyous discovery and growth.

At 35 I am a relatively young man—although the grey hairs tell a different story—with a heart for God, God's people and God's work. I am called to be a preacher of God's Word, and this is what I enjoy doing most. While issuing commands to Boeing 747 pilots as an air traffic controller, clearing them to land, to take off, to climb and descend, was good fun, it does not compare with the joy of sharing the glorious Gospel message!

I believe, beyond a shadow of doubt, that God has called me to the public ministry, and to this end I commenced full-time training at ALC in May 2011 towards completing the GradDipMin, and by God's grace I will be ordained at the end of the year. I believe that when God opens a door, nobody can shut it. So, as a family, we are at rest and at peace in him, and through him!

We humbly request your ongoing prayers, and look forward, on completion of studies, to be of ongoing service to God's people within the LCA/LCNZ and beyond, for many years to come.



Colin Simpkin

We are Colin, Tanya and Bradley Simpkin, and we came from Melbourne to ALC in Adelaide during the floods that affected the eastern states of Australia in January 2011. I grew up in a Lutheran family at Stawell in country Victoria, before joining the Army to do an apprenticeship in electronics. Early in my Army career I met Tanya who was from the small town of Eskdale, near Wodonga in Victoria. I ended up doing 12.5 years in the Army, including postings in NSW, Victoria, Tasmania and almost a year with the UN doing peace keeping work in Cambodia.

I left the Army mid-2000 and worked in Melbourne as a sales rep for various companies, but the majority of my sales career was in the building industry—dealing with architects, contractors and builders. Tanya worked in Retail and Aged Care before we were blessed to receive God's gift to us, Bradley, an IVF baby.

My call to come to ALC to study to become a Lutheran Pastor spanned 20 years before I got the message. God used a number of people (including a non-Christian friend) and many situations to get that message across to me. I felt there were many reasons why I should not be a Pastor, but our God does get what he wants, and as I look back it seems many of the things that have happened in our lives took place to prepare Tan and myself for where we are today.

I played squash many years ago and have been taking advantage of the squash court we have at ALC. As a family we enjoy many outdoor activities—walking, camping, fishing and a bit of tennis.

My favourite bible verse is Isaiah 43:1: *But now thus says the Lord, he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel: 'Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine'.*

Ken Schultz

While I complete my studies for the ministry at ALC, my wife Lyn is working as a dental nurse. We are living in Catherine Court, Wellington Square, North Adelaide, and have moved from Hawthorne (East Brisbane) in Queensland. We have 3 adult children: a daughter who lives in America and two sons who live in Queensland. Our son-in-law, Nick, was recently ordained as a Minister in the Missouri Synod of the Lutheran Church and installed as Associate pastor at St Matthew's Lutheran Church, Grand Rapids Michigan.

I am classified as being in transition at the Sem. I commenced my studies back in the late seventies, completing three years at the Sem. In 1981, I married Lyn (from Pasadena). We returned to the Schultz family farm at Dalby on the Darling Downs where we helped to run and develop various enterprises. The drought started to make its presence felt in 1989, and we spent more time in drought than out of it over the next 15 years.

We sold the farm in 2003 and started work at 'Ironbark', an Outdoor Education Centre of St Peter's Lutheran College at Crows Nest, about 40 km north of Toowoomba. In 2005 we moved to Indooroopilly to run the Boys boarding houses for St Peter's and lived there until the end of 2009. In 2010, Lyn was in charge of boarding at Lourdes Hill College, a Catholic Girls College in Hawthorne, Brisbane.

God's call was never far away as we were heavily involved in church life at St Mark's Lutheran church at Dalby. When my time was finished at St Peter's, I worked part-time at Redeemer

Lutheran College at Rochedale as a groundsman while together we were working out what direction God wanted us to go next. The boarding facility at Lourdes Hill was about to close.

Pastor Noel Noack was in discussion with us as to future involvement in ministry and encouraged me to attend the Specific Pastor Ministry training that is held twice a year at ALC in Adelaide. I did this and helped out at Woodridge, south of Brisbane when that congregation became vacant. I worked there with retired pastor Alan Robinson. It is in an older housing commission area with quite a number of Sudanese people moving into the area and attending church there.

During my time in Adelaide last year, I investigated finishing off my studies at ALC. It was not necessarily a daunting



task returning to study, as I had completed an Advanced Diploma in Family Therapy and Counselling (Christian) while working at Ironbark and had completed an Associate Degree in Residential Care, while working in boarding at St Peters, so I

was used to reading and doing assignments.

Lyn and I will be in Adelaide and at St Stephens until the end of 2012, when the expectation is that I will be ready for ordination as a pastor of the LCA.

Sean McMaughan

My wife Marie and 4-year-old daughter Emily came to ALC from San Antonio, Texas.

Having earned a Master of Divinity in the USA last August, I

am conducting a transition year of study at ALC with the hopes of being ordained and serving within the Lutheran Church of Australia. Dr. McMaughan, my wife, is licensed to practise veterinary medicine in South Australia and

is working at a local clinic. Emily, the shortest but most noticeable person in our family due to her flaming red hair and full-on personality, is in kindergarten and has adapted quite well to Australia.



Favourite movie(s): Caddyshack, Boondock Saints, Luther, Ninth Gate, any Mel Brooks film.

Favourite quote: "Give me an Army of West Point graduates and I'll win a battle, give me a handful of Texas Aggies and I'll win a war!" General George S. Patton, on Former Students of Texas A&M University (Marie and I are Texas A&M Class of '03).

Dream dinner party guest(s): Erwin Schrodinger, Michael Collins, William Wallace.

Favourite colour: Blue.

Favourite pastime: Any code of football, particularly Rugby.

Comings and Goings

Over the past 6 months, ALC has farewelled a number of key staff—most of whom have chosen to move on to a more tranquil lifestyle, otherwise known as retirement. Goodbyes have been said, memories shared and tears shed. But life must go on, and in the midst of saying our farewell, we welcome some new staff to our community.

Meryl Jennings

From 2001 until her retirement at the end of 2010, Dr Meryl Jennings was a lecturer in the School of Educational Theology, teaching in the area of religious education and with specific responsibility for the Lutheran strand students at Flinders University.



In her 10 years on the teaching staff, she gifted the ALC community immensely. Meryl was renowned for the close personal attention she gave to her students, demonstrated among other things by her willingness to spend extra time with those who struggled with their study and essay-writing skills. In 2005, Meryl took on the additional role of Head of the School of Theological Studies. She also played a key role in helping the teaching staff catch up with and stay abreast of the latest developments in educational pedagogy.

During her long teaching career, including 33 years in Lutheran schools and additional time in state schools and Papua New Guinea, Meryl specialised in English language and literature, curriculum studies, information technology and effective classroom practice.

Meryl will be remembered at ALC as being a community builder. One example among many may be cited. When a colleague was being honoured for one reason or another, Meryl invariably wrote the words for an amusing ballad, picking up the peculiarities of the person being honoured, to be sung to a familiar tune as the highpoint of the celebrations. No matter how full her schedule, which included successful completion of a doctorate, Meryl exuded a calm that told one and all that she was interested in them and eager to hear their story.

Greg Lockwood

Dr Greg Lockwood retired from full-time church service in January 2011—forty years after his ordination into the ministry.



Spanning three countries, Greg's ministry was rich and varied. From 1971 until 1987 he served in the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Papua New Guinea: as lecturer and chaplain at Balob Teachers College in Lae, as lecturer and then principal at Kitip Teacher Training School, Mount Hagen, but chiefly as lecturer and then principal of the Highlands Lutheran Seminary, Mount Hagen. Greg's years in PNG were broken from 1981–1983, when he was

granted leave to complete a doctorate in biblical studies at Concordia Seminary, St Louis, Missouri.

The years of ministry in PNG ended in 1988 when Greg returned to Australia to become pastor at Bridgewater, South Australia (1988–1990). The stay at home was short lived, with the next turn in their life's journey, taking Greg, his wife Christine, and their three children, David, Anne and Michael, back to the United States. Greg had accepted a call to serve as associate professor of New Testament and Missions at Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Indiana (1991–2000). Finally, the family returned to Australia permanently in response to Greg's call to become pastor in Bendigo, where he served from 2000–2004, before rounding out his full-time ministry as a lecturer in New Testament studies at ALC (2005–2010).

Skilled in music and the biblical languages, steeped in the Bible, the Lutheran Confessions, and the history of the church, and attentive to the theological education and pastoral care needs of students, Greg would have to be described as an all-round scholar and pastor. He has served the LCA as a member of the Commission on Theology and Inter-Church Relations and briefly while pastor in Bendigo as vice president of the Victoria-Tasmania District of the LCA. In addition to teaching duties at ALC Greg has served variously as

Comings and Goings

postgraduate studies coordinator, vicarage coordinator and teaching staff member responsible for Aboriginal ministry liaison.

Malcolm Bartsch

Dr Malcolm Bartsch has been an integral part of the LCA teacher training process ever since 1983, following service in



Australia and Papua New Guinea as a teacher, chaplain, education advisor and parish pastor. He has long dreamt of a community of practising primary and secondary teachers who can understand and articulate theology in their context. He has written curricula to support this dream, fashioned courses to develop it, and encouraged teachers to see themselves as theologians in context and to skill themselves adequately for this role.

Malcolm's doctoral thesis, *Why a Lutheran school? Education and theology in dialogue*, is a seminal text and likely to remain one for years to come. Malcolm nominates 'The danger of worm theology' (School Link, November 2000) and 'The principal as spiritual leader' (2006) as the two written pieces that he treasures most highly, due to the quality of the discussion and the clarification of issues that followed their publication. Malcolm also gained satisfaction from his role in writing the theological background notes for the Christian Studies Curriculum Framework (CSCF) and his input into Lutheran Education

Australia's spiritual and theological pathways programs.

During Malcolm's employment at Australian Lutheran College, he filled various roles, including a stint as Principal in 1996, Dean of Studies, 2004–2008, and Head of the School of Educational Theology, 2008–2010. He fulfilled these roles with dedication, integrity and quiet passion. Malcolm has long understood the potential and actual role of the Lutheran school sector as a theological irritant of the church. Like the grain of sand in an oyster, the education sector at its best, niggles away and sometimes a pearl results. The sector challenges the church, thinks outside the LCA square, defines a theology in practice, confirms and celebrates the best Lutheran wisdom, and feeds what it learns back into the church in a two way continuous loop. The church is fortunate that while Malcolm has retired, he does not intend to stop writing. As such, he will continue to challenge, question and probe the intersection between theology and education.

Joy Wurst

On the day prior to the June long weekend, ALC farewelled Joy Wurst, long-term administrator for both the School of Pastoral Theology and School of Theological Studies. During her twenty plus years at ALC, Joy fulfilled a number of positions, including secretary to



the principal. It was, however, her final position at ALC that Joy found most rewarding, and she will be remembered fondly by the students, past and present, whom she has supported over the years.

Before she came to ALC, Joy worked as secretary to the LCA's President and the General Secretary. Including her time at ALC, Joy spent a total of 38 years working for the church. What an achievement!

Ines Goegan

On the same day that we farewelled Joy, we also said goodbye to Ines Goegan. Ines was for many years the administrator for the



School of Educational Theology. During this time, Ines provided support to off campus students, mostly school teachers enrolled in the Lutheran Strand. In 2010, when ALC's Registrar left, Ines took on and mastered the new role of Academic Administrator.

Amber Venner

After three years working in the area of Marketing and Communications at ALC, Amber Venner has moved on to start her own business—



Communication Republic. We wish Amber all the best for her future endeavours.

Comings and Goings

Merryn Ruwoldt

In January, we welcomed Merryn as the new Head Lecturer, School of Educational Theology. Here are a few reflections from Merryn ...

I'm not sure that an ALC publication is quite the right forum to admit that my first and greatest passion is not theology, but education, Lutheran schools and Lutheran schooling. Having said that, I'd be the first to agree that being paid to explore the intersection between education and Lutheran theology with a range of in-service and pre-service teachers is pretty much my idea of the perfect job. I suspect that one day I will be unable to resist the lure of working in a school again, but for the time being this is an exciting challenge. Whatever concept of the secular and sacred kingdoms one uses, Lutheran schools so clearly operate simultaneously in both, that to my mind they are the ideal context to think deeply about Lutheran theology in practice. It is a privilege to help facilitate this process, to have the capacity to draw on the collective theological wisdom of the ALC faculty and to

be mindful of the responsibility to help link them and the wider church to the practical theological insights that can be gained from the education sector.

My own teaching career began in Victoria, where I taught Maths and English at Nhill Lutheran School. I moved through the middle management ranks at Luther College, before taking up a senior position at St Martins Lutheran College in Mount Gambier. Along the way I was part of the first Master of Education class at ALC, had two children and then completed my doctoral studies at the Australian Catholic University. I was happily doing my bit to assist the process of fostering useful and enduring core values in the relatively new secondary section at St Martins, when the idea of applying for the position at ALC was planted in my head and stubbornly refused to go away, in spite of my best attempts first to laugh it off and then to ignore it.

I am still in awe of the fact that I replaced staff of the calibre of Drs Malcolm Bartsch and Meryl Jennings. I have a

very different style from that of my predecessors, but so far the institution is surviving the transition, albeit with some raised eyebrows, a lot of laughter, and a willingness from both the leadership and the teaching staff to revisit old questions with new eyes. I am sure that God will use my skills for his purposes in this role, and I hope that I can be a catalyst for some deep thinking in the area of educational theology.

Holly Cartwright

Holly Cartwright joined ALC in January as the new School of Educational Theology Administrator. Upon Ines Goegan's retirement, Holly kindly agreed to take on the position of Academic Administrator.



Joan Ward

Joan Ward joined ALC in February and works part-time as Administrator in the Dean's Office. When not working at ALC, Joan works for the education department.



Rachel Wilhelm

Rachel Wilhelm has replaced Joy Wurst as the new Administrator for the School of Pastoral Theology.



LtoR: Merryn, Lauren, Matthew and John Ruwoldt

Flexible Education

Flexible Education [off campus study] provides study opportunity for lay people interested in studying theology who cannot attend regular on campus classes because of professional or other commitments, or who live at a distance from the campus. Studying by flexible education gives you the flexibility to study anywhere, at any time and at your own pace.

There are currently three main options for off campus study: by mixed mode, coursework, or online.

Mixed mode study incorporates attendance at workshop sessions which are normally scheduled either in January or July school holidays or over two Friday/Saturday sessions. Here students gain an excellent overview of the unit, and interact with the lecturer and peers and have the opportunity to establish study groups and networks amongst themselves.

Students who study by coursework are provided with comprehensive learning packages containing unit outlines, study guides and readers and are encouraged to maintain contact with lecturers throughout the study for support and advice.

Online study may encompass a range of technologies such as the internet, email forums and computer social networks, where available. The use of these technologies allows access to library resources, research information, discussion groups and innovative delivery techniques. Additional learner resource package items are

Distance is no object to studying through Australian Lutheran College. I began studying a Graduate Diploma part-time in Central Queensland through the ALC Flexible Education program. With the support and encouragement of the friendly staff, I completed the course and discovered I have a great love of studying theology.

The dialogue between theology and vocation is something very special, that study through ALC can bring to you. I enjoyed the course so much that I enrolled in another course through ALC and completed the Master of Education at the end of 2009. I particularly enjoyed units such as 'The Christian Teacher as Counsellor' and 'Contemporary Issues in Learning and Teaching', which allowed me the freedom to research and explore issues in the workplace through the lens of theology.

It was easy to have books and articles posted to me from Löhe Memorial Library and the knowledgeable staff proved very helpful. I received a guide to the library for flexible education students, so I knew exactly what I was able to access.

Now my husband is a first year student in the School of Pastoral Theology and enjoying his course tremendously.

Kathy Bensted

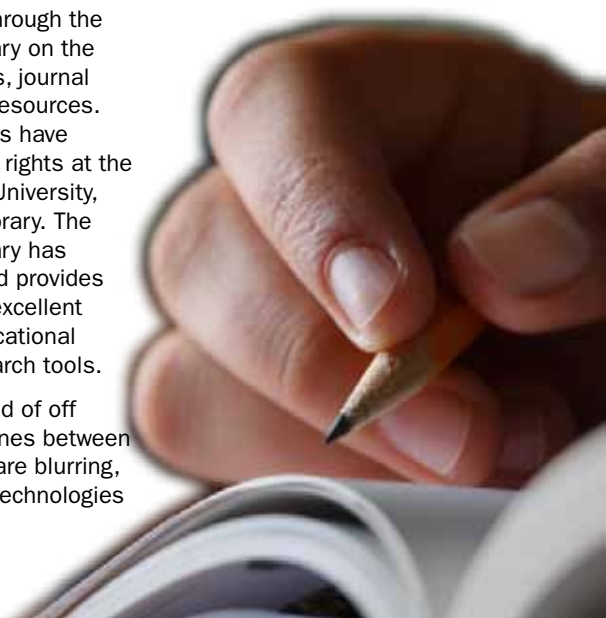
distributed for some units. Where forums are used, one way interaction with other students and your lecturer becomes a reality and the results of discussions can be used in assessment tasks.

Whatever study mode students choose, they have access to a wealth of material through the Löhe Memorial Library on the ALC campus—books, journal articles and online resources. Queensland students have reciprocal borrowing rights at the Australian Catholic University, Brisbane campus library. The Löhe Memorial Library has well trained staff and provides you with access to excellent theological and educational resources and research tools.

In the emerging world of off campus study, the lines between ALC's study modes are blurring, as more ideas and technologies

are developed to help students. Watch out for more developments in this area!

More information on studying by flexible education can be found on the Australian Lutheran College website: www.alc.edu.au/flexible



Theological Education for *Lutheran Teachers*

The issue of theological education for teachers in Lutheran schools is an interesting one. Some early Australian Lutheran communities set up schools soon after they arrived, and then struggled to staff them with teachers who spoke German and English, and were deemed theologically sound.

Sometimes the schools closed for want of a teacher. Sometimes the pastor took on teaching in addition to his other duties. This may bring a wry smile to the face of our current school pastors, who might be justified in wondering what has changed in 170 years. Perhaps not as much as we think, since as a church we still grapple with how to produce and sustain a sufficiently theologically trained workforce for Lutheran schools, which now contain some 40,000 students.

Various models have been used in the past. My School of Education (SET) colleague Ruth Zimmermann and I are both products of the old Lutheran Teachers College internal year, which was a full time year of theological study for graduate teachers. But as society has changed and schools have changed and teachers have changed, the models for delivery of theological training for teachers have changed by necessity. What worked three decades ago would not work today. And so ALC keeps planning together with Lutheran Education Australia (LEA) in a continual quest to keep pace with schools' needs and to deliver timely, effective theological training for teachers.

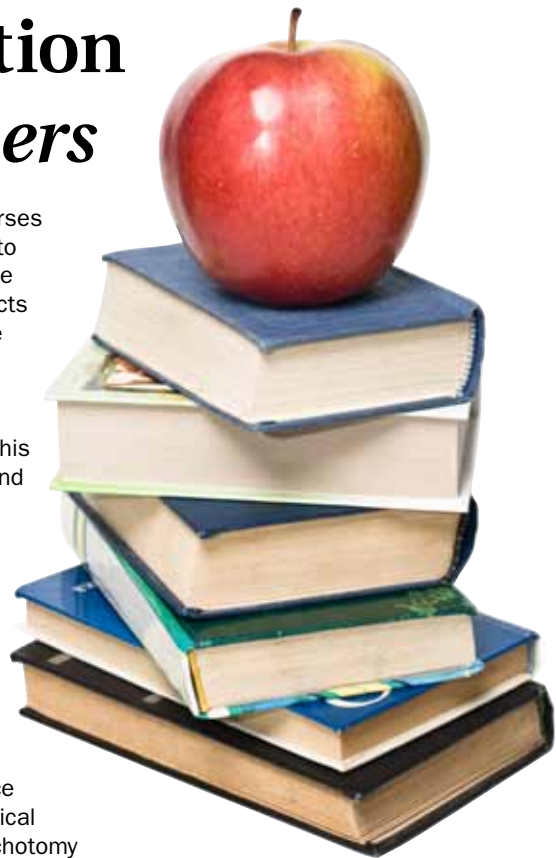
ALC currently offers courses in educational theology to pre-service and in-service teachers. The LEA districts also work with in-service teachers. ALC provides a basic grounding in the Bible and Christian doctrine. Then we take this theological knowledge and consider it further in an education context.

I am fond of the notion of exploring the intersection between theology and education as a descriptor of what ALC education students do. So, for example, once students have a theological understanding of the dichotomy of saint and sinner, they explore

It is where the theological rubber hits the road ...

the implications of a Lutheran understanding of this for, say, the behaviour management policy in a Lutheran school. It is where the theological rubber hits the road, if you like, the place where our theological understanding meets our educational understanding, and we tackle resolving the apparent clashes.

Pre-service teachers do it as well as they can with their as yet untested understanding of education. Masters students bring a living understanding of the reality of schools and classrooms, and some have the capacity to explore theology



within that reality in deep and intricate ways. As they do so, the theology becomes as real to them as their classroom. That's what we want, of course, real practitioners operating consistently from a theological position which they can articulate and apply to achieve sound educational practice and outcomes.

This is no small goal, but it is certainly a worthy one. In 170 years of Lutheran schooling in Australia we have all but lost the German speaking teachers. Some might argue that speaking proper English is a dying art too, but we need to take steps to make sure that the capacity for teachers to understand and communicate theologically is as central as it ever was.

Merryn Ruwoldt

LCA Lay Workers Conference— *reflections*

Having recently been appointed as a Lay Worker with Grassroots Training, I was invited to attend the Board for Lay Ministry's Lay Workers Conference in Queensland in June. After several weeks away from the family already, my motivation to attend was at a low level. But despite that, the conference was full of insights, and it benefited me in many ways.

The conference theme was 'Self Care'. Stress in itself is not always a bad thing (distress can be); in fact, stress is unavoidable. What matters is how we manage our stress and ensure we are looking after ourselves, so we can be better in our relationships, in our family, and in our ministry to others. Our guest speakers really challenged us to consider where we find ourselves along the path to burnout, helping us to recognise signs and symptoms along the way. We were challenged to put some better practices into place and also to consider how we can better support others in ministry around us. Certainly, each of us took away some ideas to improve our own 'self-care' and a sense of urgency to put these ideas into practice.

I really enjoyed the Bible focus time, led by Matt Thiele. I found the quiet times during the studies gave me the space to listen to God as he challenged me to consider some blind spots, or things I would prefer to deny were happening. Some honest discussion and prayer time with my new work colleagues meant we could then become accountable to each other in those areas, as we brought them into the light.

I was very thankful for the willingness of others to share their personal stories about times of 'burnout'—their vulnerability and willingness to be open and speak from the heart. Their stories were a powerful witness and testimony to us all, and it was a privilege to hear them share them.

Another highlight was the time spent networking with others in lay ministry and bonding with my new team. Overall, it was a great conference. Thanks to those who worked so hard to bring it all together.

Robyn Phillips



Connection group study launched!

Grassroots Training chose the Board for Lay Ministry Layworkers Conference held in June on the Sunshine Coast to launch its first small group study, *Connection*, which focuses on discovering effective and biblical ways to share the Gospel in today's culture.

More than 100 people, including ALC's Dan Sawade, Travis Doecke and Rev John Henderson, gathered for the wine and cheese event, and also to hear guest speaker Mark Sayers officially launch *Connection* via Skype.

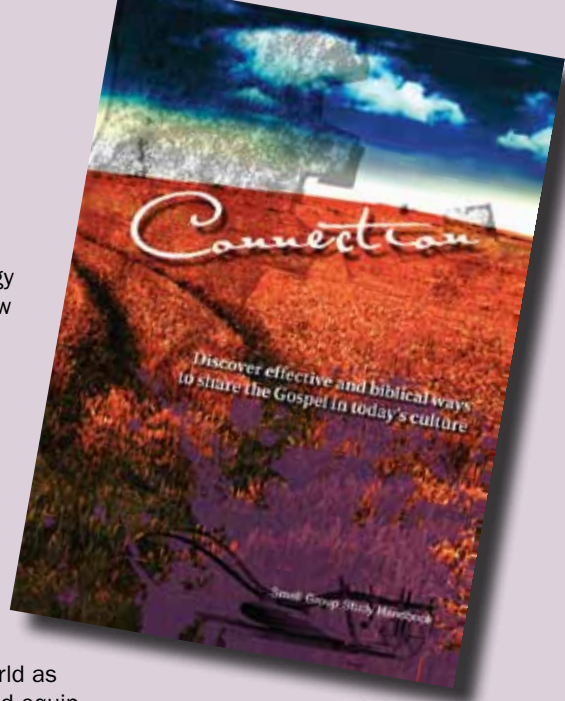
Mark is the Director of Über, a ministry that specialises in issues of youth and young adult discipleship. Mark's group study Ignition, published by Über Ministries, was an inspiration for the development of *Connection*. Due to the recent birth of Mark's twins, he was unable to make the trip from Melbourne to Queensland, so the team linked a Skype video call from Mark to the conference room projector screen.

'Using this new technology is a great example of how Grassroots can reach people regardless of traditional distance and time constraints', said Grassroots Training Curriculum Development Officer Dan Sawade, 'but I really hope the technology works!'

In launching the study, Mark said, 'we need to adapt to the world as it changes around us and equip our people to provide mission and outreach that works in their communities'.

Connection is the first of a series of nine small group studies, each designed to practically engage and skill participants in a variety of ministry areas. Next in the series, *Bible*, guides participants as they 'jump through an overview of the books of the Old and New Testament'.

Grassroots Training has collaborated with the Board for Mission to develop these training



packages, with the Board contributing seed funding for the project.

'The *Connection* small group study is a great gift which is really needed in our church', said LCA Secretary/Mission Director Rev Neville Otto.

'Australian Lutherans love to have material written for their context by Australian Lutherans. That's what *Connection* is. It's also been a team effort involving people from LCA departments and districts and coordinated by Grassroots Training. That's good gospel partnership, and that's a vital ingredient for the mission field today'.

Connection can be purchased from Australian Church Resources at www.acresources.com.au/

LtoR: The Grassroots Team—Robyn Phillips (Grassroots WA Coordinator), Dan Sawade, Shannon Schuster (Grassroots Admin Assistant), Colleen Andretzke (Grassroots Workshop Coordinator), ALC Principal Rev John Henderson and Travis Doecke (Vetamorphus Coordinator)



Several people have told me in recent days that the trouble with the next round of ALC evening classes is that they can't decide which one to attend.

"They're all so interesting, I wish I could attend all three", somebody told me last week. All I could tell her is that it is possible to enrol in at least two of the three topics on offer, because two are on Tuesday—unfortunately they're on at the same time—but the other is on Wednesday. Immediately she brightened up at the prospect, "but I will still have a hard time deciding between the two that are on offer on Tuesdays".

When she heard that the cost was as low as \$45, and ranged down to \$10 for students, she could barely believe her good fortune. "\$45 for six weeks of pure joy", she almost jumped out of her skin. To put the icing on the cake I told her that those who live in Adelaide and the near vicinity still have time to enrol, because the classes start on the 23rd of August. And what's more, each class will be held on campus. By this stage my conversation partner could barely wait to hear all the details.

Dr Stephen Haar, ALC Dean and NT lecturer, will be one of the two Tuesday presenters, with 'Strange and unexplained

stories in the book of Acts'. Stephen writes: Angels, dreams, visions, and supranormal happenings. Not stories from the pen of J K Rowling or J R R Tolkien, but events recounted in the book of Acts. What are some different ways of reading these stories? How do they fit into Luke's overall purpose to show that the church is gifted with divine power to give faithful witness to the risen Christ unto 'the ends of the earth'?

The other Tuesday evening lecturer will be Dr Dean Zweck, who teaches church history and New Testament. Providing background for his topic, 'Luther for the busy person: lively words of grace and wisdom to help you on your journey', Dean writes: Many Lutherans have not actually read or studied what Luther wrote, except for the catechism. In these classes we gain an overview of the career of the reformer, dipping into key writings as we follow the journey of his life. What did Luther say in his sermons, at table, and in his letters, lectures and treatises? What can we glean that will help us on our journey of faith and life?

On Wednesday evenings Pastor Linards Jansons, who teaches in the areas of liturgy and worship, will introduce us to the lives and thought processes

of the chief representatives of the 'new atheism' movement. The title of his course is 'An unholy trinity? Listening to Dawkins, Hitchens and Harris', Linards writes: These and other prominent 'new atheists' have had a considerable impact on public opinion in recent years. This evening class will provide the opportunity to familiarise ourselves with the 'case against God'. While our immediate reaction may be to defend and refute, our first task will actually be to listen carefully, and from there to explore, understand and even critique our own position. Yet, an increased ability and confidence to give an informed faith response will be our goal.

For information about enrolling, consult the website: www.alc.edu.au, or phone reception at 8267 7400 for a brochure and enrolment form. Brochures are also available through your local congregation.

Peter Lockwood
Evening Classes coordinator

Evening Classes

Want to broaden your *appreciation* of the **Bible** and the **Christian faith** ?



Bring a bit of ALC into your life with an Evening Class!

Try **'Strange stories from the Book of Acts'** with Rev Dr Stephen Haar, **'An unholy trinity? Listening to Dawkins, Hitchens and Harris'** with Rev Linards Jansons, or join Rev Dr Dean Zweck for **'Luther for the busy person'**.

Classes are running for 6 weeks in August and September this year. Contact us now to find out more about these engaging community classes. **Don't miss out!**



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