

Editorial

When I wrote the editorial for the May issue of *LTJ* I noted that 2020 is a time when the world is undergoing profound change as a result of Covid-19. In May in Australia and New Zealand there was some hope that the impact of the pandemic on church workers, the church's ministries, and Australian and New Zealand society was starting to die down. As I write this editorial at the end of July 2020, that optimism has passed and we now acknowledge that the virus is with us to stay and will continue to impact our lives indefinitely. All over the world churches, governments and researchers have for these past months been reflecting on what this pandemic will mean moving forward globally and regionally for the environment, economy, and society. In conversation with a fellow researcher at the University of Divinity, he shared that he was planning to explore with airport chaplains across the world what this has meant for their ministry. Their ministry assumes the mass movement of people. In a time when this has slowed to a trickle and international airports around the world are half-closed, the personal impact through job loss, the risk of personal exposure to the virus, and the changes required of their ministry in the airport environment are profound.

Those challenges are occurring within the ministries of the LCA/NZ too. At the time that the May edition went to press, we issued an invitation to workers across the church to submit personal reflections on the question: what will the church look like in a post-Covid-19 world? A range of more specific questions within that larger theme were offered to get them started. In this August issue we publish the bulk of those reflections. We have shortened some of them to allow as many as possible to be published together in this print edition. We encourage you to go to the ALC web site, <https://alc.edu.au/ltj/themes/august-2020>, to read the full-length versions, where you will find greater context for some of the articles and deeper reflection.

While many of the reflections demonstrate a focus on the challenges posed by the virus to worship and what we can learn from these moving forward, others lift up issues of sustainability, the cry from many in society for the hope that the gospel provides, how we will view the command to care for our neighbour, and how the pandemic offers us time to listen to Jesus and to return to life-giving essentials. A number of reflections from workers in Lutheran schools discuss how the virus is challenging us to rethink Lutheran education. Several parishes with cross-cultural ministries share how they are responding to the challenges posed by the pandemic.

To allow the greatest number of Covid reflections to be published we have restricted the number of book reviews in this themed issue. A list of eBooks available through the ALC library, this time without annotation, is again provided. That list offers a selection of recent digital book purchases by the library. Readers, especially church workers, are encouraged to go to the library catalogue to learn about the much more expansive list of digital resources that are available to them.

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