

J U N E 2 0 1 7

SAINTsalive

NEWS FROM AUSTRALIAN LUTHERAN COLLEGE

'A Christian is surely a student, who has begun to *learn* in the mother's womb, and who learns for *eternity*'

LUTHER'S WORKS, WEIMARER AUSGABE
EDITION 32:136,3-5



Life-long learning

Learning for life

'Attention, Israel! God, our God! God the one and only! Love God, your God, with your whole heart: love him with all that's in you, love him with all you've got! Write these commandments that I've given you today on your hearts ... Talk about them wherever you are, sitting at home or walking in the street; talk about them from the time you get up in the morning to when you fall into bed at night.'

DEUTERONOMY 6:4-7, THE MESSAGE



Pastor James Winderlich
PRINCIPAL

Cover photo:
ALC's student community includes people in many phases of life, from teenagers through to people in their so-called retirement years. Mitchell Kitson is a first-year pastoral student at the college, while Bernice Koch is completing a Diploma in Theology.

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Australian Lutheran College is the provider of tertiary theological education for the Lutheran Church of Australia and is a college of the University of Divinity and a member college of the Australian Centre for Advanced Studies.



Learning and living belong together

Have you ever watched a baby curiously discover its own hand and all that it does? We are born curious. That's how we grow and mature. Each encounter with our unique context and the people in it helps us grow and sparks our expanding curiosity. We want to learn.

Learning is an important life skill. As our circumstances change we also need to adapt. To adapt we need to either draw upon what we have learnt in the past or acquire new learning. We often learn best when we learn together.

All of this is contained within the quotation from Deuteronomy 6. It is God's response to the eternal question: Who is God? While God's response appears to be simple—God is God, the one and only—it sparks life-long learning as we seek to understand what this means in each part of our lives.

While learning can be deeply personal it is also a vitally important community-building and community-enriching activity.

Leaders learn for life

Earlier this year I was invited to spend a day at a GROW Leadership event (www.growministries.org.au/who-we-are/grow-leadership). I was there for part of a camp 'intensive' at which young Lutherans began a year-long journey of training for leadership in ministry. My role was to introduce the 'Lutheran story' to our emerging church leaders. Those leaders

were hungry to learn. Along with so many other departments and agencies in the Lutheran Church of Australia (LCA), Grow Ministries serves in outstanding ways.

At ALC we want the whole church to thrive and grow. That's why I like to write about the various other departments and agencies in the church. They are all among ALC's partners.

ALC's mission is to foster a vibrant life-long learning culture within the LCA and beyond. We do this by offering post-secondary, adult learning experiences from certificates right through to postgraduate levels. We offer full-time residential programs and part-time blended learning modes, including online.

Life-long learning seeds, supports and advances our church's vision to *Go and Grow*. Being your companion through that learning is the gift we offer you. As a community, we become co-learners and fellow-servants, equipped and confident to continue living in and living out our faith.

As we launch ALC's 2017 Appeal please remember your contributions bless the whole church. We use your donations to serve and support the LCA's schools, congregations, departments, agencies and overseas partners, each according to its own particular needs.

We are a learning church. Through ALC and the ministry that happens in our local contexts, we commit ourselves to God's invitation to hear and to learn for life.



OUR COMMUNITY

Our ALC community is rich, colourful and diverse.
Here are just five of our stories.



Kayla

Kayla Sunman was brought up in a Lutheran household and educated in a Lutheran school. So it seemed like a 'no brainer' when she finished Year 12 and started a teaching degree that her aim would be to one day work in a Lutheran school.

Once Kayla was accepted into her course at Flinders University her mother, a former graduate of LTC (Lutheran Teachers' College) and teacher in the Lutheran system, encouraged her daughter to pursue Lutheran Strand studies through ALC.

'Studying online is not something I would normally choose to do, purely because of the isolation of the situation, but it allows me the flexibility of studying the Lutheran Strand, in addition to completing my degree full-time and working part-time', Kayla says. 'The units of study provide me with a faith refresher and compared with some of the more mundane subjects covered in my uni course, can be quite uplifting and thought-provoking.'

Kayla hopes her Lutheran Strand studies will set her on the pathway to one day becoming a principal in a Lutheran school. As part of this plan, she aims to also complete a Master's degree in Educational Theology in coming years.

Matthew

Originally from Portland in Victoria, Matthew von Stanke moved to the Canberra area after finishing Year 12 to do an internship at Warrambui Retreat & Conference Centre.

After a year at the Lutheran camp he began a career in teaching, which included working in an alternative education program run by Anglicare and five years as a teacher in an independent Christian school in Canberra. However, Matthew became dissatisfied in his work and sought God's guidance regarding what to do next.

'Eventually, after blowing off the idea a couple of times, God convinced me, or rather, convinced my family, that moving to ALC was the next move for us', Matthew says. He applied for and was accepted into the Pastoral Ministry program.

'Since making the decision to come here and study at ALC, life has been very different, but the support of the ALC community and the congregations that we have been involved with has made settling in a lot easier. The past three years have gone exceptionally quickly and I have relished the challenges of theological study. I am also very much looking forward to my vicarage experience at the end of this year.'



'God convinced me, or rather, convinced my family, that moving to ALC was the next move for us.'

Sharon

As a Ministry Support Worker for the Renmark Lutheran Church in South Australia's Riverland, Sharon Kernich is reminded regularly of the words of Matthew 25:35: 'I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me'.

As her church's first point of contact, it is Sharon's job to welcome and offer a comforting cuppa to those who approach the church seeking emergency food relief. There are significant numbers of people across the Riverland who live with extreme financial hardship.

In addition to her welcoming duties, Sharon provides much-needed support to the parish pastor, prepares the weekly order of service, puts together the congregation's *Family News* and helps out with its Little Stars playgroup.

Sharon has chosen to spend some of her spare time studying a Certificate IV in Christian Ministry and Theology through ALC. 'I have taken on this study as I want to increase my knowledge of the Bible and also feel that this study will help me in my personal faith journey', Sharon says. 'So far I have enjoyed the study and have learnt a great deal.'



Rehab

Rehab Adam left Sudan as a young child and moved with her parents to Australia to start a new life. In April 2016 she made the difficult decision to relocate from Perth to Adelaide.

Having left family and friends behind in Western Australia and having also recently come to faith, Rehab spent much of last year feeling quite unsettled. Worshipping at Bethlehem Lutheran Church and being introduced to the community, she came to hear positive things about ALC. Encouraged, she took the steps to enrol in a Bachelor of Theology.

'Studying theology seemed like a good way to grow my faith to the point where I could comfortably articulate God's word to people and minister to others faithfully', Rehab says. 'While it has been hard getting into the "rhythm" of studying, I have found my course interesting and am feeling encouraged in many ways. Studying on campus has also provided me with some much needed routine and allowed me to feel part of a community.'

Through her studies, Rehab hopes to gain the skills and confidence to work in the church. While she is willing to work wherever needed, Rehab is especially interested in working as a deaconess.



'Whether you move to ALC for a year ... or stay for your entire course, you are bound to make FRIENDS from all over Australia.'

David

The ALC community extends beyond its enrolled students, to include the residents of its tertiary boarding facility.

One of these residents is David Jackson, who is in his final year of a Bachelor of Media Arts degree at the University of South Australia. Originally from Mt Gambier in South Australia's South-East, David completed his entire schooling at St Martin's Lutheran College in his home city. When it came to moving to Adelaide for tertiary studies, thanks to personal connections, he already knew about ALC and its convenient location—near the city and within a short bus trip of his education provider. An added incentive was the fact that he already had friends living at ALC.

ALC's on-campus community consists of families, teens, couples and singles and lots of recreational space in which to get to know each other. 'It is great to see the boarders and the pastoral students and their families come together and enjoy shared events/activities such as mixed netball and quiz nights', David says. 'Whether you move to ALC for a year to adjust to living in the city or you stay for your entire tertiary course, you are bound to make friends from all over Australia.'

Those considering ALC as a boarding option, might be interested in viewing the short film clip put together by David last year as one of his uni projects, at <http://www.alc.edu.au/residential/future-residents/life-in-a-residential-college/>.

Boarding enquiries are welcome year-round and vacancies currently exist.



Course participants take part in self-directed learning, guided by workshop facilitators Dr Merryn Ruwoldt and Dr Stephen Haar.

Changing times for learning methods

Teaching theology is an art that has its own set of special challenges.

It is not the same as having the ability to deliver good lectures. Research and student experience agree that being immersed in a sea of words is not as effective when compared with other methods of fostering learning and understanding.

At the start of 2017 ALC began delivering the Graduate Certificate in Theological Education, a new course for the University of Divinity which is a professional qualification to enhance the quality of learning and teaching throughout the university.

The first cohort, including three members of ALC teaching staff, is currently being challenged with teaching in ways that actively involve students in learning.

Over the past 50 years, there has been a sea-change in the way that theological education has been provided and experienced in Australia.

These changes have been prompted firstly by the changing needs for ministry in the Australian community and secondly by regulatory demands.

Further, there has been a greater demand for theological education that equips graduates for emerging contexts other than local congregations and for vocations other than the ordained ministry. In summary, the world is changing, the church is changing, students are changing and therefore theological colleges like ALC need to change, too.

The ALC Board and leadership support the ongoing development of teaching staff in the practice of teaching, research, leadership and engagement with the church and wider community.

ALC is committed to providing an education experience, based on adult lifelong learning principles, that prepares God's servants for various vocations, ready to serve and lead with faith, integrity, competence and compassion in a diverse and changing church and world.

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changing, the church
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JOIN US!

Come and join us on a transformative, enjoyable and empowering journey of discovery and growth.

We offer high-quality teaching that prepares people to be effective spiritual leaders, educators and workers, who bring life and renewal in the communities they serve. Every year ALC welcomes new students of all ages. Maybe you'll be one of them.

Tertiary accommodation at ALC

In addition to educational programs, ALC provides excellent facilities which can accommodate up to 78 private residential students in their own rooms. All residential students must be full-time tertiary students, studying either on campus or at government universities, TAFE colleges or private educational institutions. To find out more about these facilities, phone the college on (08) 7120 8200 or email residential@alc.edu.au



RESEARCH

opens doors

Following a call by the church, ALC's first professor, Dr Wendy Mayer, began her role as the college's Associate Dean for Research in January this year.

Wendy is known internationally for her research on early Christian preaching and the life and works of John Chrysostom, and has the task of advancing ALC's research culture.

'For a church which is intentional about living and growing, and being relevant in the contemporary world, research is essential.'

She is passionate about research and is keen to share that passion with the church.

'While research can often be challenging and confronting, it can also help us to look at ourselves, our identity and our behaviour in new ways and lead us in unexpected directions', Wendy says. 'This applies to us not only as individuals, but also as a church. For a church which is intentional about living and growing, and being relevant in the contemporary world, research is essential.'

She says research helps take the guesswork out of a situation and helps us to identify what we do well and value in ourselves.

It also requires us to acknowledge what we do less well and provides informed guidance for improvement.

Wendy's multi-faceted role at the college is to provide academic leadership to ensure the excellence of research at ALC; lead in planning staff research directions and ensure a research-focused culture is developed within ALC; develop and maintain partnerships which enhance the standing of education staff nationally and internationally; supervise postgraduate students; and engage the church in research.

Commenting on Wendy's appointment, ALC Principal Pastor James Winderlich said: 'Wendy's appointment is exciting, not

just for our college but also the church. Our college wants to actively support the LCA to grow as a learning community. That begins with a curiosity about our varied identity and a curiosity about the diverse contexts in which we live and serve. Research is a way that we can satisfy our curiosity. This leads to learning, followed by a renewed curiosity. Learning is life-long.'

The last part of her role is one Wendy considers the most exciting for the LCA. She is keen to hear from anyone in the wider church engaged in or who has recently completed research.

'We are now a much more educated church than 50 years ago', she says. 'Finding out who is out there and what knowledge they have is an exciting prospect for the LCA. One of my plans is to create an inventory so that I can network researchers together.'

'The more people talk to each other, the more it sparks off new directions in their own research, as well as creating larger projects in areas like aged care or domestic violence that can prove of benefit to not just the church, but Australian society.'

If you are considering postgraduate studies or have partially completed postgraduate studies but put them on hold, Wendy is also keen to hear from you.

Wendy is also the new Director of ALC's research arm—the Australian Lutheran Institute of Theology and Ethics (ALITE). The mission of ALITE is to initiate, support, and promote research projects based in Lutheran theology and ethics, and to assist in their contemporary application within the LCA and beyond. ALC seeks to develop partnerships with institutions and agencies which are interested in research collaboration with ALITE.

If you have a research project in mind that you think would fit ALITE's aim to engage community with leading research projects, please contact Professor Mayer at alc@alc.edu.au

Training teachers for Lutheran schools



Many people fondly remember the era of Lutheran Teachers College (LTC). While today's program of theological education for pre-service teachers is different, ALC still works with trainees across Australia to assist them to become accredited Christian Studies teachers and to obtain positions in Lutheran schools.

Most available ALC graduates from 2016 secured a teaching position by the time school began in 2017—an encouraging outcome since graduate teaching positions are scarce. Lutheran schools are very supportive of ALC graduates.

'I find the staff at Good Shepherd College [Hamilton Victoria] have been so supportive and made me feel part of a team. I feel really blessed to be part of such a wonderful school and profession', reflects ALC graduate teacher Heidi.

ALC staff are excited when our students turn their first years of teaching into a graduate adventure. Young teachers prepared to do this are eagerly embraced by the more remote Lutheran schools.

'I am up here in sunny Queensland [Redeemer Lutheran College, Biloela] enjoying the warm weather and meeting new people. It has been great to be surrounded by such friendly, kind, supportive people in my first year as a teacher. God is good!', ALC graduate Nicole says.

But while some ALC teaching graduates head interstate or to the country by choice, most find work closer to home and can make their transition to independence a gradual one.

One example is Courtney, who writes 'I have been very blessed with my school [St Jakobi Lutheran School, Lyndoch South Australia] and my class. My mentor teacher takes my class to allow me extra planning/assessing/observing time. The support I have received from my mentor and principal has been wonderful ... Overall, I thank God every day for the challenges and blessings he gives me. I am learning more about myself than I ever have, and I am loving being a part of each child's journey through life'.

Young teachers who enter the profession with a teaching method in Christian Studies are highly valued in Lutheran and other Christian schools where the subject is compulsory for students. Apart from their classroom work, it is not unusual to see them take up Christian Studies Leading Teacher roles within a relatively short time, and many return to complete postgraduate studies at ALC in preparation for a variety of other leadership roles within Lutheran schools.

LTC may be a part of history, but its work goes on in contemporary ways. ALC's theological and education staff are proud to support Lutheran Education Australia by helping to train teachers for its schools.



Teacher graduates win positions

Lutheran schools begin the process of employing Australian Lutheran College Strand students around September each year. In 2016/2017, first year teachers who had completed the strand were employed in the following Lutheran schools:

- Bethany Lutheran Primary School, Raceview Queensland
- Concordia Lutheran College, Toowoomba Queensland
- Crossways Lutheran School, Ceduna South Australia
- Good News Lutheran College, Werribee Victoria
- Good Shepherd Lutheran College, Darwin Northern Territory
- Immanuel Lutheran School, Gawler South Australia
- Living Waters Lutheran School, Alice Springs Northern Territory
- Maitland Lutheran School, Maitland South Australia
- Navigator College, Port Lincoln South Australia
- Redeemer Lutheran School, Biloela Queensland
- St Jakobi Lutheran School, Lyndoch South Australia
- St John's Lutheran School, Eudunda South Australia
- Trinity Lutheran College, Gold Coast Queensland
- Trinity Lutheran College, Mildura Victoria
- Unity College, Murray Bridge South Australia
- Vineyard Lutheran School, Clare South Australia

A significant number of first-year teachers also found positions in the wider Christian school sector.

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Partner
with us!

We hope you have enjoyed meeting some of our students in this issue. These people have stepped out in faith to follow God's call into ministry – as pastors, lay workers and teachers, or simply to be better equipped to carry God's love into their world, perhaps even into your world.

There's a face missing from this photo wall – and that space is reserved for you. Your care, prayers and your financial support make it possible for ALC to train these people for ministry – which makes you part of our ALC community too.

Thank you for your ongoing support.