

branches of the vine

Newsletter of the South-Western Qld Lutheran Parish incorporating the Chinchilla Ministry Area (Chinchilla, Miles, Downfall Creek and Charleville), Dalby Ministry Area (Dalby and Macalister) and the Diaspora Ministry Area (Roma, St George, and Glenmorgan/Meandarra).

January 2020

Spirit filled living

Church planting and spirit-filled living was the focus for SWQ Parishioners who attended the New Horizons conference in South Australia and SENT conference in Brisbane (in August and September 2019). The conferences coincided with the launch of a new book and resources by Noel Due and Steen Olsen, called *Spirit Filled: Normal Christian Living*.

The Spirit Led Leader was the theme for New Horizons. Dalby's Dale and Tracy, and Chinchilla's Pastor Mark, Keith and Rhonda were among about 80 people gathered in Adelaide Hills for three days of Bible teaching, prayer, networking and development.

LCA Pastor for New and Renewing Churches Rev Dr Due said there was a new movement underway in the LCA/NZ involving churches, pastors and parishes from every district. "It started small, but it is gaining momentum. And it is the future. It is church planting and the renewal the Lord brings through it....It is simply built around the belief that the Lord delights to see new people come to faith in Jesus and to be formed into communities of worshippers in the Word and Spirit."

>> Pastor Mark's conference reflections pg2.



'Sent' to 'New Horizons'

For St Mark's members Cameron and Kirstine Brauer and Carlin and Chris Ruhle (pictured), attending the SENT conference revealed the pivotal role of the Holy Spirit in strengthening congregations, and in reaching into communities through church planting.

The sessions focussed on the importance of relational evangelism and how the Holy Spirit drives and empowers congregations in different ways. In facing the problem of declining numbers of members in Lutheran churches across Australia, speaker Noel Due suggested that the question should not be 'What do we do to fix things?' but instead, 'What is the Spirit saying to the churches?' He reminded us that in the book of Acts, the church was constantly on the move – driven by the Spirit. The Spirit is strong, always moving forward, though not in a linear path. The path we walk on with the Spirit is not under our control, and could very well take us to places we would not normally choose to go.

The dynamics of family and congregations have shifted over the generations.

The most recent National Church Life Survey gives confronting facts, such as that we are now often in communities that view regular church attendance as once per month – not weekly.

That's why church planting today is driven by relational evangelism. To reach someone not connected to a church, we need to build a relationship from the ground up. Just like other relationships, church planting takes time, there's no instant growth.

We are excited to see where the Spirit is leading the LCA and identifying the parts that we can play personally and together in our parish to listening to the Spirit's direction to fulfil God's mission for us.

>> *How to find SENT and New Horizon resources see pg2.*



Farewell to Pastor Ron>>>

Dream Small

St Mark's Dalby said farewell to Pastor Ron and Judith Buchold in a moving service officiated by Bishop Paul Smith. (An earlier farewell had been held at Macalister as seen in the last issue of BOV). The service included a presentation of handmade gifts and the song "Dream Small" a celebration of the many ways Pastor Ron served His Lord and the congregation through encouragement and empowerment. Ron and Judy have now retired to South Australia.



Pastor Mark Hampel >>>

Misson starts with intentional conversation

By and large it seems our LCA has forgotten how to evangelise and bring people to Christ. We have the worst conversion rate of any church! New Horizons reminded us that intentional, relational evangelism is such a good and natural way to bring people to Christ. It's not rocket science; it's kind of common sense. But it's not really been as focused and integral a part of the life and practice of our LCA faith communities as it could have been. Jesus, on the other hand, was very deliberate and intentional in the time and attention he gave to a few people, his disciples.

Our institutionalised approach (build a school, aged-care facility, childcare centre, camping ministry) to spreading the kingdom is really not working. The sowing, sowing, sowing of the gospel, without any thought to the gathering of the new believers into Christian community, is really not faithful to the New Testament.

There is a big culture gap between the way our faith communities worship and what people exploring the Christian faith are comfortable with. Go to the people, where they are at. Spend time with them in conversation. Be focused and intentional about it, not letting churchly duties crowd this time out of your life. Be there for them and point them to Christ along the way, as the Spirit leads, and you discern when the time is right. This journey takes time. Much time.

The energy margins are vitally important. If a person is so busy with keeping the church-going, there is

little or no energy left to be with the 'not yet believer'. We need to offload churchly duties from at least some people so that they can move into this missional space.

Pastor Mark



Learn more about intentional, relational evangelism, through the video resources available at www.lca.org.au/departments/local-mission/new-and-renewing-churches/renewing-churches/new-horizons/

Or chat to members who went to last year's LCA conferences.

- SENT - Chris and Carlin Ruhle and Cameron and Kirstine Brauer; and
- New Horizons - Pastor Mark Hampel, Keith and Rhonda Bruggemann, and Dale and Tracy Pukallus.

Parish fellowship Weekend

On the weekend of 7-8th September, members from across the parish gathered in Dalby for food, fellowship, learning, church business and 'Call' meeting.

The weekend kicked off with a Graeme Beattie workshop on relational evangelism, **Stories of Grace & Hope.**

The purpose of the workshop was to inspire, encourage and equip participants to be able to freely and sensitively share their own stories of grace and hope with people in our friendship and relational networks who, as far as we can tell, do not have a life-giving relationship with God through faith in Jesus Christ.

Graeme pointed out why our personal relationships matter. He challenged participants to think about the key factor that first brought them to a personal faith in Christ, then he shared a survey of 8000 active South Australian church members (Dean Hampton, "Down the Track", Ruminations, 1991):

Walk- In 5%, Crusade or TV .0001%, Minister 7%, Church Program 3%, Door to Door Visiting 1%, Sunday School 4%, and Friend/Relative 80%.

Workshop participant Glenice Kruger said one of the highlights of the workshop was the exercise in "Deep Listening.

"We broke into pairs, for this exercise and we had to both share with each other, and actively listen to each other. We listened with empathy and paid attention to what was being communicated verbally and especially non-verbally. By listening intently to the other, it encourages them to express what they feel and think."

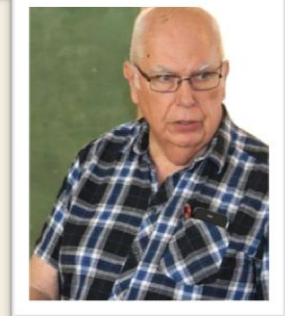
Active Listening is listening to the person's body language (55%), tone of voice (38%) as well as actual word content.

Graham also spoke about the need to be self-disciplined so that our listening doesn't turn into lecturing, defending our view point, interrogation, moralising, analysis or just looking for our chance to have our turn and talk about what we want to talk about.

"I suppose it's about learning to keep our mouths closed and listen carefully to what is being verbalised, so we get an understanding of their story/situation that way we don't put someone off who needs someone to listen to them," Glenice said.



Stories of Grace and Hope workshop (above) with guest presenter Graeme Beattie (right)



Pastor David Schmidt (above), Director of LCAQD's Ministry and Mission Department led the parish weekend service which included a memorable children's address.

New Minister for Dalby & Macalister

We are delighted to advise that Pastor Joel Pukallus has accepted the call to the Dalby Ministry Area.

Installation Service
Pastor Joel Pukallus
Sunday 26th January at 2pm
Followed by afternoon tea

SWQLP Council >>>

The following Council members were elected for 2020 at the Parish meeting.

Steven Stiller, Chair
Ian Peters, Vice Chair
Kerin Kowald, Secretary
Lois Strand, Treasurer
Members:
Pastor Mark Hampel
Tim Patch
Dale Stiller
Pastor Ken Von Pein
Brian Weier

Ken's Korner

The catechism – Holy Communion.

This brings an end to my writings on the Catechism. This brings us to Holy Communion or The Lord's Supper.

As the name suggests it is us in faith gathering together around Christ and being fed by Jesus Himself as we gather together. He gives Himself to us and for us. The miracle is that He gives us the sacrifice of his Body and Blood which he shed for us on the Cross. Communion is not something we do for him but rather something He does for us and in us. His sacrifice becomes our sacrifice for our sin and we are made one with Him and each other. In Him we are assured of God's forgiveness. Our baptism is made valid for us again no matter how far we may feel we have strayed. This is costly grace and when we remember what He did for us we can only give thanks and use our lives in the service of Christ and each other. Our hearts are renewed and we can joyfully get on with being Christian. This is good news.

Our enemy hates the Sacrament and uses all sorts of tricks to keep us away. We may be too busy or think we don't need to come because we think we are not too bad. Another trick is we have failed to love God and our neighbour as we should. This makes us feel guilty and not worthy. We feel uncomfortable with those who come regularly. We may have not prepared ourselves properly. We have certain sins we find hard to give up. When you look at the commandments as explained in the catechism and feel we have not done too bad you have not heard Christ. The Sacrament is for those who know they have fallen short and have faith in what God has done for them in Jesus Christ. Notice how he gets us to look at what we have done or failed to do. How sincere we are when we come. We may even think it's dependent on how faithful we think the pastor is. We may not like the pastor and so the list goes on.

The Catechism is very clear as to who is worthy - Those who have faith in these words - Given and Shed for You for the forgiveness of Your sins. In other words those who feel the weight of their sin and desire forgiveness in and through Jesus Christ. And Jesus does not disappoint us when we come in faith no matter how guilty we may feel or how much we may struggle with our unbelief. We receive His sacrifice which He poured out for us and declares - You are forgiven – Go in peace.

This is good news. This gives us confidence in sin and rise up to joyfully go and serve our love. We are forgiven and so then we can neighbour who struggles with his or her sin. understand them in their struggle. In we proclaim the Gospel as we eat and drink, and our neighbour.

For me communion is the high point of our not only a doctrine but a living reality. God reminds us that His promise to us in our for real. God declares - You are my child where you have come from or whatever you done God's peace be with you as you read old Catechism.

We have a treasure. Let's use it .

Pastor Ken vonPein



to own our
neighbour in
forgive our
We can
communion
to ourselves

worship. It's
again
Baptism is
no matter
may have
and study the

Chinchilla turns 50

Terence Kleidon >>>

Trinity Lutheran Church celebrated its 50th Anniversary on 15th September 2019. The day started at 9.00am with a cuppa in the hall. At 9.30am the service started under the awning at the front of the church. Three pastors were in attendance. Pastor Mark Hampel (Chinchilla 2016 -), Pastor Mike Alfson (Chinchilla 1982-1986), and Pastor Noel Noak (ex-officio LCAQD).

Pastor Mark did a re-enactment of the opening 14/9/1969 by handing the Keys of the Church to Val Simms, wife of the late Charlie Simms (builder of the church) to open the doors and let the congregation in with the singing of The Church's One Foundation. Pastor Noel read the Bible Readings and Pastor Mike preached the Sermon with a slide show of when he was the minister here.

About 140 members and guests were in attendance with just over 100 communing. After the service Greetings were read from Pastor's Neil Stiller (1971-1975), Heinz Ludwig (1992-1995) and Murray Smith (2010-2015) and past members and fellow Congregations. The late pastor Nitschke wife Margaret and daughter Grace were at the service.

A fellowship lunch proceeded in the hall with much laughter and reminiscing. Cutting of the Anniversary Cake was by Pastor Alfson and Linda Cox (nee Stanke), as Linda was Baptised at the opening of the Church in 1969.

A joyful afternoon had by all.

~ Terence Kleidon, Secretary.



A Few Historical Facts....

- 1966 St Pauls and St Johns united and at a combined meeting of the congregations a decision was made to relocate to a new site in Sheriff Street
- 1967 Formal merger of the congregations with a decision to call the congregation Trinity Lutheran church
- 1968 St Paul's church was moved to new site
- 1969 work commenced on new church building in January
- The hand and dove above alter carved by Vivienne Bruggemann
- 1969 14th September Dedication Service was held.

PASTORS

- Pastor Nitschke 1967-1970
- Pastor Neil Stiller 1971-1975
- Pastor Theo Mackenzie 1976-1981
- Pastor Michael Alfson 1982-1986
- Pastor Steve Jaensch 1987-1991
- Pastor Heinz Ludwig 1992-1995
- Pastor Ben Mogg 1995-2001
- Pastor Robert Haak 2001-2003
- Pastor Heath Pukallus 2004-2009
- Pastor Murray Smith 2010-2015
- Pastor Mark Hampel 2016-current

Macalister church building celebrates 60 years

With praise and joy the Service for the 60th Anniversary of Macalister Redeemer Lutheran Church Building was held on the 8th December, 2019. The original Dedication of the Church building was on the 20th December 1959.

The morning started with a cuppa at 9.30am followed by a 10.30am Thanksgiving Service. We were privileged to have 1st assistant Bishop Mark Vainikka conduct the service for the day. He and his wife Minna came out Sunday Morning to join with us for the Service and luncheon afterwards. About 50 people members and visitors came to celebrate with us. Some of the past members are elderly and with the heat in the days leading up to the Service some of them did not attend. Past Minister Pastor Robin Hoffman was in attendance and other past Ministers and members sent greetings and apologies for their inability to attend due to family commitments close to Christmas and distance to travel.

During the lunch after the Service the Anniversary cake was cut by Dulcie von-Pein oldest member and Spencer Weier youngest member with the help of his mother Chelsea. Apart from past members who celebrated with us we had visitors from other Congregations within our Parish being Roma Fellowship, Chinchilla and Dalby. Our Congregation looks forward to being able to worship into the future with Our Lord and Saviour in the Macalister Community. Praise the Lord for his witness in this community. ~ Trish Muller



Just a bit of History of Macalister

Pre 1947 Families around Macalister attended Services in Dalby

1947 Formation of the Congregation on 8th June

1947 Sunday School started, went into recess in 2012 and reformed again in 2017

Services before the Church was built were held in homes and a member's barn

1958 discussion on Purchasing Land in Macalister to Build a Church on

1959 Purchase of Land and Building of the Church

December 20th 1959 Church Dedication

1962 Ladies Guild commenced

1989 Demountable purchased for Sunday School Rooms

June Dedication of the Christian Education centre



Sharing the message of Christmas

This message of hope and love was shared through food, music, gifts, activities and live animals at the Dalby Live Nativity hosted by St Marks and the combined churches Live Nativity coordinated by members of St Mark's and the Tara Anglican church.



'Grow' connections across generations

Dalby and Chinchilla Ministry Areas are taking part in Grow Coaching - an interactive process that helps individuals, ministry teams and congregations to practise vibrant faith in a changing world. Grow Ministries (an arm of LCA) is intentionally with congregations over a two-year program to help us re-think child, youth and family ministry in the 21st century using 10 guiding principles (see bottom right).

Our first cluster meeting was held in October where members from Chinchilla and Dalby learnt more about what it means to move from a "silo" ministry to intergenerational ministry.

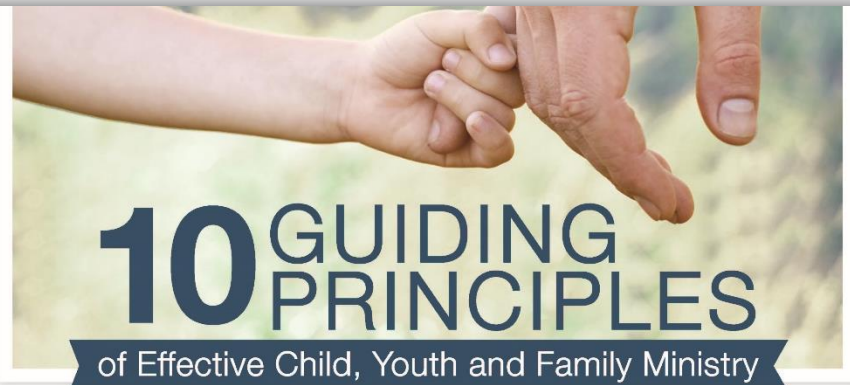
The next cluster training is on Saturday 1st February in Chinchilla. All members are welcome to attend this training.

It's a great opportunity to explore the possibilities of how we create genuine intergenerational connections and support lifelong faith formation.

Learn more about Grow Coaching at www.growministries.org.au/who-we-are/coaching/



Members from Chinchilla and Dalby who attended the first Cluster training



The goal of Grow Ministries is to support and equip congregations to move from isolated programs for children and young people to an intergenerational ministry culture that nurtures faith for life.

Intergenerational activities at Chinchilla. These young members are going with their mentors to visit a member who is unwell.



1 LEADERSHIP

Leaders in homes and congregations have a strong understanding of the nature and practices of effective child, youth and family ministry, and their role within it.

2 INTERGENERATIONAL

Meaningful intergenerational church experiences are intentional and valued.

3 FAITH AT HOME

Faith is integrated into family identity and practice.

4 MENTORING

Children and young people have multiple adult mentors of vital faith.

5 LIFELONG FAITH FORMATION

People of all ages are disciplined in faith through the different stages of life.

6 PEER RELATIONSHIPS

Faith formation is encouraged by building Christian relationships through quality, age-specific ministry.

7 PERSONAL CRISIS

People of all ages are engaged in a Christian community that provides support during times of personal crisis.

8 GIFTS AND TALENTS

Opportunities are given to discover and express gifts and talents.

9 ACTS OF SERVICE

Opportunities are given to participate in acts of service that show the love of Christ.

10 MISSIONAL

Ministry practices and approaches have a strong missional focus.

Vickie Schuurs >>>

Bringing hope in times of drought

In amongst the difficult drought, there have been some amazing connections made between city and country congregations of the LCA.

Prompted by the impact of the drought on our farming families, the St Peter's Lutheran Church, Alberton donated 215 Christmas Gifts, all categorised in groups for adult male/female, age groups for boys/girls/toddlers/babies.

These gifts were dropped off in Dalby to the Lutheran Drought Aid Qld group. Together with the help of Pastor Ken vonPein these Christmas gifts were distributed to families around the Darling Downs, Southern Downs, Maranoa, Warrego and South Burnett areas.

The generosity shown by the Alberton Church community was extraordinary.

It has been an honour and a privilege to be the conduit between city and country – seeing the smiling faces of this city community giving to such a cause and the tears from the recipients at the overwhelming reality of the generosity given, and not being forgotten – especially by this congregation.

We give thanks to God for all his goodness. He is our hope, he is a Saviour.

~Vickie Schuurs

City-country sharing brings hope

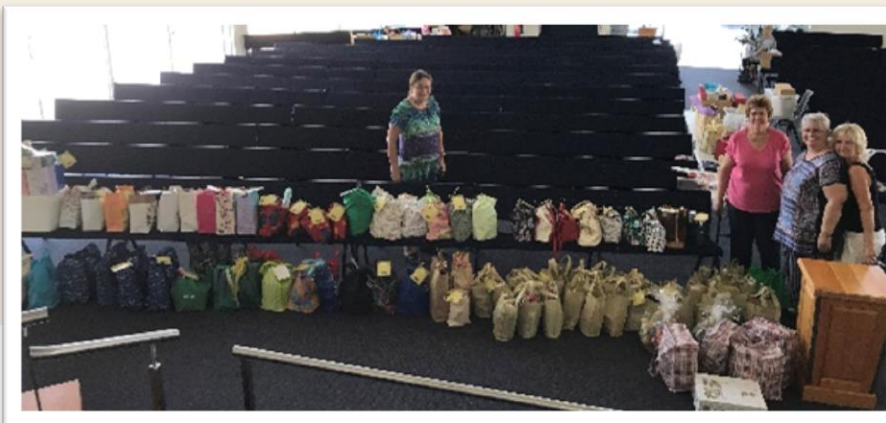
Our Parish was delighted to receive a visit from around 20 members of all ages (including youth) from Good News at Middle Park (Brisbane) who wanted to see first-hand how the drought was impacting people so they could take information back to the city to devise ways to help.

The weekend road trip (6-8 Dec) was hosted by Dale and Tracy Pukallus, who arranged for the group to spend time at a dairy farm at Maclagan, a cattle farm at the Bunyas, and grain and cotton properties near Dalby and Lake Broadwater, had dinner with members from St Mark's Dalby and worshipped in Dalby on the Sunday.

The group is already actively working with their congregation to come up with ways to help people in drought-stricken communities. Their care and compassion has been such a blessing!



Gifts being distributed at Glenmorgan and St George.



St Peter's, Alberton packing up their gifts.

Around the Diaspora Ministry Area Glenmorgan/Meandarra

Pastor Ken does many kms sharing The Word around the Diaspora Ministry Area visiting Roma, St George, Glenmorgan and Meandarra,

Here's some images from worship at St George.



What's on >>>

JANUARY

26 Jan - Pastor Joel Pukallus' Installation Service
Dalby

FEBRUARY

1 Feb - Grow Ministries Cluster Meeting,
Chinchilla – all welcome!

5 Feb – Parish Council meeting, Chinchilla

7-9 Feb – Dalby/Macalister Family Camp – All
welcome!

MARCH

21 Mar – Parish Ministry meeting, Chinchilla

25 Mar – Dalby Churches Together, (possibility
Pastor Joel guest speaker)

APRIL

2 Apr – RI Easter services, Presbyterian Church

6 – 8 - April - Holiday Fun Time, Dalby

Share your news!!

Branches of the Vine welcomes news from all over the Parish.

Have a story from the parish that you'd like to share? News, events, milestones?

Help us share the message of how God's love is coming to life in your region.

Please contact the Branches of the Vine Editorial Team –

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Next issue April-May-June | Submissions due by March 15