

September
2026

*“We cannot
have faith
through
our own
reason or
strength”*

In this issue

Bishop	P1
District News	P2
District Synod	P3
Welcome to Jalal	P4
Clem Zanker 100th	P5
DCC News	P6
St Paul's College	P7
Warrambui	P8-10
Prayer Gathering	P11
Healthy Congregation	P12
Being a Lutheran	P13
Prayer Calendar	P15
Upcoming Events	P16

The Great Co-Mission: We are all called ...even you

Years ago, I had a deeply confronting discussion. I was sharing my excitement with a fellow Christian about sharing the goodness and love of Jesus and was encouraging them to do the same. But they showed resistance, stopped me, arguing that we don't need to do anything because salvation depends entirely on God, rendering our efforts useless.

They are partly right. The ultimate results — when, how, and whether people come to believe in God's love and forgiveness—depend entirely on God – Father, Jesus and Holy Spirit.

As Christians have confessed for centuries through the Apostles' Creed (**"I believe in God the Father Almighty"**), we have an all-powerful God. Furthermore, as summarized in Luther's Small Catechism explanation of the third article of the Apostles Creed, we are reminded that we cannot have faith through our own reason or strength; **it is the Holy Spirit who calls us through the Gospel and creates faith.**

Yet there is more to the story and our relationship with God. Despite being almighty and the sole creator of faith, God chooses not to work alone. **Throughout Scripture, we see Him inviting imperfect people to join His mission of saving**



From the Bishop
Richard Schwedes

others. Think of figures like:

- **Moses** (Exodus 3-4)
- **Jonah** (Jonah 1)
- **Lydia** (Acts 16:14-15)
- **Paul** (Acts 9)
- **The early scattered believers in Asia** (1 Peter)

None of these were perfect, yet God called them anyway. Today, that same call extends to you, to me, to the person sitting next to you in the pew, and even to those who aren't yet sitting in a pew. We are all invited to share the Good News: that God loves everyone deeply and has provided a way for us to live with Him now and for eternity.

And this means our primary focus as a Christian and a collection of Christians is to be involved in God's mission. We are called primarily to sharing Jesus, emphasising His unconditional, ongoing love for everyone.

*“God invites
imperfect people
to join His mission”*

LCA NSW and ACT District is *Walking together* IN MISSION by:



- Supporting congregations and ministries in mission and ministry
- Supporting congregations in transition
- Developing and supporting alternative models for ministry
- Planting and renewing congregations
- Developing and supporting networking and connections
- Developing and supporting leadership – through the Bishop leading leadership teams

DISTRICT NEWS for your prayer and care

Calls

- Pastor David Cherry (Wagga Wagga) has accepted the call to Immanuel Novar Gardens SA.

Centenary Birthday

- Pastor Clem Zanker celebrates his 100th Birthday on 24 September 2026

Welcome into Membership

- Jalal Evangelical Lutheran Church (Pakistani) was welcomed into membership of the LCA at District Synod

Deaths

- Pastor David Wundersitz died on 10 Aug 2026, aged 83. Born in Leeton, Pastor David served Canberra 1993-1997.
- Pastor Byron Klein died on 31 August 2026, aged 91. Born in Albury, Pastor Byron was ordained at Jindera in 1959, and served Forbes 1959-63 and Newcastle 1963-67.

Unfortunately, when some people engage with Christians, even Lutheran Christians Jesus' love and grace is not what comes to mind, but rather they are hearing and seeing rules, judgment, and control.

When we perceive that rules matter more than Jesus love, our witness is diluted.

Whenever I catch myself falling into a legalistic posture of condemnation, I am instantly re-oriented by the words of Jesus:

"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him." (John 3:16-17)

So how do we keep focussed on living a life of sharing God's love?

8 Practical Tips for Responding to God's Call

1. Be a person who constantly receives God's love and grace through worship, bible reading and devotions
2. Listen daily: Pay close attention to what God is doing and the promises He keeps.
3. Remember the purpose of the law: When rules confront you, recall that the law's true intent is to lead us into a relationship of loving God and loving others, as outlined in Matthew 22:37-40. Use these moments to seek forgiveness and lean on God for help showing tangible love.

So how do we keep focussed on living a life of sharing God's love?

4. Build genuine relationships: Make it a priority to spend time with others so they can naturally discover Jesus through knowing you.
5. Embrace diversity in mission: Remember that we are all called, but we don't all have to share God's love in the exact same way.
6. Pass on the credit: Whenever good things happen, direct the praise back to God.
7. Pave the way with prayer: When life gets difficult, seek God's help and offer it to others. A simple "Would you mind if I pray for you?" is a powerful tool.
8. Leave the results to God: Don't stress over perceived "success." Trust God to produce the fruit in His own timing and way through you.

I give thanks for the many people across our district who continue to respond to God's call, sharing the Good News of His great love. May we continue to bless others with the love He has first given us. Amen.

Pastor Richard Schwedes
NSW and ACT District Bishop

2026 National
Church Life
Survey

Your local church is invited to take part in the 2026
National Church Life Survey in September and October!

What is it?

Trusted by thousands of churches for 35 years, the NCLS is a nationwide church survey that takes a snapshot of church health across 20 denominations. It aims to nurture church health and vitality, build effective leadership and strengthen connections with local communities

Why do it?

Local benefits: This survey helps our church to listen to all voices, so we can gain valuable insights to shape the health and vitality of our church.

National benefits: By taking part, our church adds to a vital picture of church life across Australia, highlighting national trends and informing wider society.

2026NCLS.org.au

NCLS
ENABLING CHURCHES

Synod 2026: *The Great Co-Mission*

Jesus tells his disciples, "As you go, make disciples, baptize them, teach them, and know I am with you always." As followers of Jesus, we have been tasked to follow this mission and on August 7-9th Delegates and visitors gathered at Warrambui for our District Synod under the theme "The Great Co-Mission".

Bishop Richard Schwedes set the tone for the weekend by giving us reminders that we are all partners in the Holy Spirit's mission and everything we do should be influenced by mission. Ask yourself "What is God saying to you today? What is God giving you and others? What is God calling you to share with others?"

Our new Strategic Directions Implementor, Michael Dobie, has been building on past Strategic Facilitator Ian Rentsch's foundation, helping a few congregations look at Regional ministry partnerships, and the feedback has been wonderful. Michael encouraged everyone to pray for 5 people every day, and ask God "Who should I talk to?" and "What should I do?" He also emphasised the importance of actions, especially with strategic plans. They don't work because we make a plan and put it in a drawer, they work because we push forward!

Peter Reed gave an update on the Jindera Church plant at St John's School. Many enjoyed hearing about the connections growing between the local congregations and the school and how enthusiastic the kids are to be involved, even those from non-Christian backgrounds. The services look a bit different, being aimed at primary school children, but having them on Friday night has allowed many local congregations to get involved and open more connections among the local community. These connections have led to growth within those congregations and have opened doors for other opportunities that might not have happened.

The standout moment for many at Synod was the official welcome of Jalal Evangelical Lutheran Church into the LCA. They're a church with a heart for mission which aligns with our District's mission focus. They were warmly welcomed into our District family with open arms and a standing ovation. *(Read more about the Jalal fellowship on page 4.)*

Warrambui Board gave an encouraging update. While post-COVID recovery has been slower than hoped, the numbers and future plans are positive and they have their first international school group booked from Hong Kong.



THE GREAT CO-MISSION

MATT 28:19-20

*"As you go, make disciples,
baptize them, teach them, and
know I am with you always."*

Over the last two years Frontier has been offering workshops focused on training and supporting those licensed for Word and Sacrament ministry. These have been well received, especially for congregations in vacancy. Dr Mark Worthing also offers a workshop "Survive and Thrive as a Small Congregation" and next year plans to lead workshops on Pastoral Care. He encourages congregations to contact him with any requests or suggestions for training that could be developed.

Colin Minke from LEVNT stressed the importance of focusing on the different needs for every child and shared that a new Principal has been appointed at St Paul's Henty starting in January 2027. Anthony Schulz, from St Paul's in Walla Walla, celebrated having their highest enrolment number this year, 330 students, and discussed the future challenges of teaching children who have grown up with technology from a young age, many having more interactions with devices than people around them. While Lutheran Media talked about being at the forefront of digital mission and their aim to reach people in the midst of their struggles through podcasts, radio shows and social media content.

LLL CEO Karen Pienaar presented the Mission Outreach Grant to Redeemer Narraweena for new electronic signage, and Wendy Rocks gave her final presentation as CEO of Lutheran Aged Care which was received with great thanks and standing applause for her years of service.

Brett Hausler, LCA EDCO, gave us an update and shared future plans for the new Church House in Adelaide, including an exhibition space with a history and missional focus. Representatives from ALWS and LCA International Mission shared stories on the positive impacts they were having overseas.

LCANZ Bishop Paul Smith introduced the theme of 2027 LCA Convention "Reaching out with open arms in the abundance of God" and an overview of LCA, including our collaborations and interactions both with other churches and internationally, while encouraging us to reach out to pastors and principals around us with offers of prayer and support.

With long-serving DCC member Ward Westphal stepping down, Garth Schultz from Port Macquarie was elected as the newest lay member on DCC.

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DCC members (l-r, back row) Tony von Brandenstein, Pr Darren Jaensch, Bishop Richard Schwedes, Assistant Bishop John Borchert, (front) Jarmo Roeneberg, Jeannie Kenney, Leigh Caldwell, Bruce Arnold (absent Garth Schultz)

We also heard the news that Lutheran Women of NSWACT has gone into recess with the executive structure being farewelled at a district level. Women's fellowship groups are still encouraged to continue at the local level, with zone meetings and congregational groups still being a part of Lutheran Women of Australia. They are planning a state-wide retreat next year with information being shared through eNews and Contact on both local and district level events.

Bishop Richard closed with a message of hope, encouraging congregations to work together and embrace not only our differences but change as well. He emphasised that God is at work in our congregations, and encouraged us all to keep focused on connecting people with Jesus.

Nikki Spaans, Communications

Welcome to Jalal 'Fellowship of Peace'

In June 2014 a small Urdu house fellowship began in Bankstown under the care of Boaz Gill. With a goal to support migrant and refugee families seeking pastoral care, Christian community and a place to worship in their heart language, the group grew until they finally needed a bigger space.

In October 2024, they began meeting in the Living Waters Lutheran Church building, igniting the spark in their heart for Luther and the LCA. Boaz started attending English services at Living Waters where he met Bishop Richard one Sunday who encouraged him to consider becoming part of the Lutheran Church.

Boaz was ordained as a minister in the Brethren church in 2001 in Pakistan. He then moved to Canada in 2004 where he led a South Asian church until 2008 when he moved to Australia to join his family who immigrated a few years prior. Throughout their moves Boaz and his family continued house fellowship gatherings, meeting people where they were, in shopping centres and community spaces, and inviting them home for meals and conversation. Boaz recognised the clear need especially in the migrant and people of colour. "People were longing for Pastoral care, biblical teaching and a spiritual home." Jalal Fellowship of Peace was born and became his first formal pastorate in Australia, and one of the "greatest joys and privileges of (his) life".

While considering Bishop Richard's offer to join the LCA, Boaz enrolled in studies at Luther Seminary and joined in conferences and gatherings that helped him, as well as Jalal congregation see how deeply Lutheran theology already resonated with their own foundations.



Members of Jalal Evangelical Lutheran Fellowship

In Urdu and Arabic Jala means "glory, majesty, honour" and speaks to the congregation's desire that everything they do point to the majesty of Jesus



l-r: Boaz Gill, Bishop Richard Schwedes, Barbara Weber, Sulman Gill, Shaffaf Gill

Christ, not just in their worship and fellowship but in their mission and daily lives too. The name also ties to Boaz's father, Pastor Jalal Masih, one of the pioneers of the Brethren Church in Pakistan. The name reminds the congregation that our identity and purpose are rooted in the honour and majesty of Christ, not ourselves.

Jalal has a real heart for overseas mission, especially in Pakistan. They are very passionate about education, supporting literacy programs for all ages, and operating Jalal Academy of Peace, which offers after-hours support for students who cannot afford private tutoring. Their ministry also includes women's empowerment programs, medical camps, emergency relief during natural disasters and crisis, and developing and supporting congregations and pastors who serve with very little or may be experiencing difficulties, including isolation.

As Boaz describes Jalal, "Jalal Fellowship of Peace is a small congregation with a big heart. We are grateful for the love and welcome we have received from the Lutheran Church of Australia. Our prayer is to be a Christ-centred, Spirit-led, relational, and missional church that brings hope, unity, and encouragement wherever God leads us. We look forward to continuing this journey with humility, gratitude, and faith." They are excited to be joining the LCA and grow in the wider life of the church.

Nikki Spaans and Boaz Gill

Pastor Clem Zanker celebrates 100 years



Pastor Clem Zanker

On the eve of his 100th Birthday, Pastor Clem Zanker shared some memories and insights with Nikki Spaans.

A lot has changed since 21-year-old Pastor Clem Zanker was ordained in 1948. Annual pastor's salaries are no longer 208 pounds (\$416), men and women no longer sit on opposite sides of the church, and women now play a greater role in the wider

church, including the ordination of women.

On April 4th 1948, the 2nd Sunday of Easter, he was ordained in his home congregation, Holy Trinity Appila in South Australia. He remembers that "it was a time of joyful anticipation, with perhaps not a little trepidation at the magnitude of the responsibility considering my age of 21 years and the minimal contact Seminary training in those years had with real parish life. We were really thrown in at the deep end and by the grace of God were able to survive." Like many pastors he can't pinpoint the moment he felt called to be a pastor, but there was never any doubt that the Lord had His hand in the direction Clem was heading.

The year after his ordination Clem was asked to be involved in Sunday School administration, which led to 35 years of educational administration that our district benefited from when he joined us in 1970.

Joining the NSW ACT District

After initially declining calls to Temora and Shellharbour in the 1960s, Pastor Clem accepted a new call to the Temora Parish in 1970.

Shortly after arriving, he was appointed as Zone Counsellor of the Central Zone and the District's Youth Pastor. As Zone Counsellor he was encouraged to organise the first Central Zone Conference. The main challenge? The scattered nature of the Central zone, which stretched from Tamworth to Yerong Creek, and Canberra/Bathurst to Griffith. Despite the distances Clem was able to get the conferences started, being held 5 times during his time in Temora. These conferences were a wonderful time of fellowship, allowing all zone members to worship together and share District matters, with all members of the zone invited to attend.

If being Youth Pastor and Zone Counsellor wasn't enough, Clem was also asked to edit a newsletter that would gather information from across the District committees. These issues were then run through the duplicator and sent to the congregations to share with their members. This humble newsletter was the very first iteration of our quarterly "Contact"!

At the 1971 Synod, Clem was elected as District Secretary, which he continued until leaving the district in 1977. As secretary he took on the responsibility of organising the

Interparish Fellowship Program, where parish members exchanged parish visits over a 2 year period. Unfortunately, this added role meant that the roles of Youth Pastor and Newsletter Editor would soon be handed over, but he continued serving as Zone Counsellor until 1974.

In 1977 Pastor Clem left the NSW ACT district. Before and after Temora he served in two different Zones in QLD, which involved being chairman not only of the Zone Conference but also of the Zone pastors, and spiritual advisor to the women of the zones. He also spent 11 years as Secretary of the QLD district Pastors conference.



Pastor Clem baptizes his great grand-daughter Arabelle Franke, pictured with her parents Peter and Rebecca Franke, in 2018

Retirement

Clem retired in 1991 and settled into Wagga Wagga, where he remains today. A quiet retirement it was never to be! He continued helping with worship in Wagga Wagga, as well as locum work in many vacant parishes all over the district. Often staying for up to ten weeks at a time, these locations included Yerong Creek, Temora, Bathurst/Orange, St Marys, Epping, Newcastle, Port Macquarie and Tamworth. In 1995 he went to New Zealand to serve the Northern Manawatu (Fielding) parish for four months.

On April 5th 1998 Bethlehem Wagga Wagga celebrated the 50th anniversary of Pastor Clem's ordination, then his 60th and 70th anniversaries in the following decades. From 1998-2001 Clem served on the constitutions committee for Synod.

In December 2001 Pastor Clem's wife Margaret's health began to decline, so Clem decided to only take services closer to home. He served the Yerong Creek Parish until it dissolved in 2010, and then at Milbrulong every 4-6 weeks.

On 13th January 2013 Pastor Clem concluded his formal ministry of publicly leading the worship of God's people with a service at Milbrulong. He continued as an organist at Wagga until 2020.

continued next page

Pastor Clem states, "This ministry has been possible only by the grace of our Lord and with Margaret's active assistance. And finally, by God's forgiving grace we look



forward with joyful anticipation to the perfect worship and service of our Lord in the heavenly home

Pastor Clem Zanker and his son, the late Pastor Tim Zanker, in 2008

together with angels and archangels and all the company of heaven."

And as a final word of encouragement to the younger generations he says, "Continue to look to Jesus as your hope for the future, in line with Hebrews 12, "Let us throw off everything that hinders . . . let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith."

Special Birthday Blessings to you, Pastor Clem!

Nikki Spaans

District Church Council News

Alternative models of ministry that best serve the District

A number of regions in the NSWACT District have begun to consider Regional Ministry Partnerships.

- The Regional Ministry Partnership of Forbes, Parkes, Orange, Tamworth, Dubbo and Gilgandra has now developed a timetable and will be gathering locally to discuss the next steps.
- Earlier this year the congregations in the Southern Riverina met to begin discussions, and a number of meetings have now taken place.
- Canberra congregations have been meeting regularly and may consider a similar path in the future.

Supporting Congregations with Word and Sacrament training

Frontier School of Mission has supported the work of lay leaders in congregations with well attended workshops on lay reading and lay preaching. The final workshop in this series will be held in the Central West on 12th September.

Ministry in the District

Michael Dobie was welcomed as the new Strategic Plan Facilitator and we look forward to working with him in this important area. Michael has much experience with strategic planning, and is keen to help congregations implement their plans and visions, as well as assisting them with the development of the necessary skills, and mentoring local leaders.

DCC would like to thank Ian Rentsch for the considerable work and faithful service that he has performed in the District over the past few years. The Bishop highlighted that Ian has presented a paper for church consultants with a more strategic approach, and this paper has now been submitted to GCB for the benefit of the wider church. We have been richly blessed by Ian's contribution to the many congregations who have been considering how they can best serve their communities in the future, and we hope that he will enjoy his retirement.

NSW and ACT District Governance

The LCA held a governance symposium on 14th and 15th August in Adelaide. The NSW and ACT District was represented by Bishop

Richard, District Administrator Stephen Fogerty, Mission Director Michael Dobie, DCC Treasurer Bruce Arnold, also Pastor Ian Rentsch, Anita Short, Pastor John Borchert and Pastor Mat von Stanke.

In addition, the LCA invited Jacob and Kate Traeger to present on church planting, and Darren Jaensch to perform the role of Chaplain. This was an important event, giving all Districts an opportunity to share their vision of the future of the LCA, as we prepare for General Synod in 2027.

Constitutions

The DCC approved the new constitutions of St Luke's Albury and St Matthew's Central Coast. These constitutional updates are required to ensure our Lutheran Church congregations remain compliant with the latest legal requirements pertaining to not-for-profit entities. The district administrator has sent updated models to all congregations and parishes and is ready and willing to assist to help make the update process as simple as possible.

Safe Church Training

DCC was pleased to note that most congregations are meeting their Safe Church requirements. However, it is important for all congregations to ensure that members and pastors are up to date with Working With Children Checks, Working with Vulnerable People, and Safe Church renewals. Congregations also need to note that under no circumstances can a person be working directly with children or vulnerable people without these checks, as this can result in a fine and possible criminal conviction.

Leigh Caldwell, on behalf of District Church Council





**ST PAUL'S
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WALLA WALLA, NSW

*"A Christ-centred Community
Valuing People and Learning"*

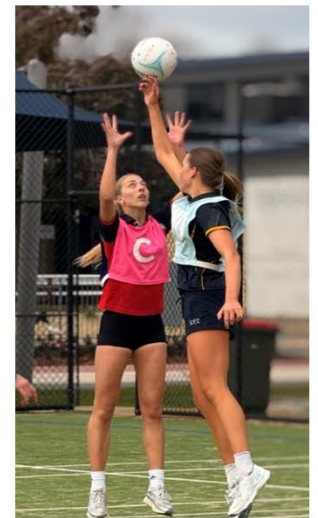
CHAPLAINCY 2026 | After 17 years of service to St Paul's College, we farewell Chaplain Robbie Wenke and thank him for his faithful commitment to our students, staff, and families. Since joining the College in 2007, Robbie has served in a variety of roles, most recently as College Chaplain. We thank him for his care, guidance, and servant-hearted leadership, and wish him and his family every blessing as he continues to grow his local business. We are delighted to welcome Mrs Meagan Edwards as our new College Chaplain. Currently a teacher and Head of Christian Studies, The Rite Journey, and Service Learning, Meagan brings a strong passion for faith and community. We look forward to her leadership and care as she supports our College community.



DISCOVERY DAY 2026 | St Paul's College recently welcomed around 100 families for our annual Discovery Day, giving prospective students and families the opportunity to experience life at the College. Families explored our agriculture, equine, boarding, and learning facilities, while Year 5 students took part in hands-on activities across industrial technology, science, agriculture, and sport. Discovery Day is a wonderful opportunity to experience the facilities, learning opportunities, and supportive community that make St Paul's unique. We are proud of the way our students enthusiastically showcase our College and help future families feel welcome in our community.



CALDWELL CUP | Victory Lutheran College and St Paul's College recently came together for the annual Caldwell Cup, celebrating friendship, community, and healthy competition. This year's event saw the exciting addition of soccer and volleyball alongside the traditional AFL and netball competitions, creating even more opportunities for students to participate and connect. It was fantastic to see students embracing the day with enthusiasm, sportsmanship, and encouragement for one another. The Caldwell Cup continues to be a valued opportunity to strengthen relationships between our Lutheran school communities, and we are excited to welcome Victory Lutheran College to St Paul's when we host the event in 2027.



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WARRAMBUI NEWS

September 2026

Prayer Points

- Upcoming Camps in September, To be blessed and enriched.
- For growth in bookings and blessing of our marketing activities
- The creation and fruitfulness of our Youth & Young adults Ministry.
- Ongoing regular rain for our water supply and tanks.

Praise Points

- For a strong team that builds community through love
- Successful formation of new interns for 2027 and their ongoing visa application,
- For increased booking and exposure in Sept—Nov.

Centre Director's Update

Faithful Steps, Fruitful Seasons

“Let love and faithfulness never leave you; bind them around your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart. Then you will win favour and a good name in the sight of God and man. Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.” — Proverbs 3:3-6



As we step into the final quarter of 2026, we do so with hearts full of gratitude and expectation. God has been faithful, and His faithfulness invites us not simply to look back with thanks, but to move forward with courage.

Proverbs 3 calls us to hold love and faithfulness close, to trust the Lord with all our heart, and to submit every plan, opportunity, and challenge to Him. This is the posture that shapes fruitful ministry: walking one faithful step at a time, believing that God is already preparing the path ahead and bringing growth in His season.

We continue to give thanks for the ongoing opportunities to reach the broader community with the love of Jesus. In 2026 and looking ahead to 2027, Warrambui has seen an average increase of 5% in non-Christian groups engaging with us compared with previous years. Alongside this, there has been growth of 10% or more in new churches, Christian charities, and youth ministries coming to Warrambui to encounter God and build relationships. These are more than numbers; they are reminders that God is faithfully drawing people into places of welcome, service, reflection, and hope.

Galatians 6:9: “Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.”

We are also deeply thankful for the steadfast commitment of existing groups and schools who continue to book with us year after year. The school sector remains consistent, with a slow but steady 3% increase in schools coming to Warrambui. Even where growth is gradual, we see the hand of God at work, reminding us that fruitfulness often comes through faithful service over time.

Bookings are now moving on a positive trajectory. Although the year began slowly and placed us behind expectations, the steady increase in the second half of the year means we are on track to finish in a similar position to last year, with more than 100 bookings. Encouragingly, we are also seeing more bookings already in place for 2027 than in the previous two years. In this, we are learning again to trust the Lord with all our heart, rather than leaning only on what we can see in the moment.

Our marketing and rebranding work is also progressing well. Brochures and marketing material are now online, and a campaign is being developed to reach key audiences in the fourth quarter of 2026 and beyond. The new website is expected to be fully functional during September, helping open new opportunities through social media, Google, and email campaigns. We pray that these tools will be used not simply to promote a place, but to invite more people into the life-giving hospitality and ministry that God continues to grow here.



Catering has entered a new phase of excellence, continuing to provide high-quality food and strong standards recognised by clients and council inspections. The team is also expanding what is offered, including salad bars for healthier additions to basic menus, specialised care and menus for coach drivers, extra menu options for guests at the retreat hut, and six new buffet-focused menu options. Through these practical acts of service, hospitality becomes a visible expression of God's care.

Internship and ministry remain a significant



focus of development, and we are thankful for the way God is shaping this area into a fruitful expression of service and witness. It is a joy to encourage and support local district congregations and schools, while also seeing how PNG culture is being used to share the gospel with new groups who may not otherwise be open to hearing it. In this, we see God gently opening hearts and creating new pathways for connection, hospitality, and faith conversations.

Our interns continue to excel in hospitality, cleaning, activities, and ministry, going above and beyond in their faithfulness to the gospel and the mission of Warrambui. Their willingness to serve with humility, energy, and joy is a reminder that fruitfulness often grows through faithful obedience in everyday tasks. Their training through Frontier School of Mission, together with

John 15:5: "I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing."

with certificates in hospitality, cleaning, communication, and customer service, is equipping them not only with practical skills, but also with confidence and purpose for fruitful service now and into the future. We pray that God will continue to guide their steps, strengthen their calling, and use their gifts to bless many who come through Warrambui.

We are also excited to share that a pilot program is underway to reinstate **youth and young adult's** ministry at Warrambui, serving our Lutheran district while also connecting with the wider body of Christ. We see this as another sign of God's faithful work among us, preparing new pathways for young people to encounter Jesus, grow as disciples, and build lasting connections in His body.



The first camp was successfully held in May 2026, and planning is already underway for the next gathering in January 2027. The aim is to run two of these camps each year, with a focus on discipleship, connection, and

unity.

As we trust God to make the path straight, we are praying that this ministry will bear fruit in young lives, strengthen relationships across our district, and encourage a shared sense of purpose in Christ. Tricia Williams, together with a team of excited and committed members, is working alongside us to help make this dream a reality. Stay tuned for more news as this ministry

continues to take shape and grow in God's timing.

On a personal note, Fiona and I are settling in well and are grateful that Warrambui and the wider community are becoming home.

Connections and relationships are growing in many areas, and although our family remains in Queensland, we trust that God our Father has brought us here for such a time as this and for the season ahead. We are also delighted to share that we are now proud grandparents of another two grandchildren, bringing the total to 13. Wow — God is good!

So, as we enter the final quarter of 2026, may we keep our eyes on the prize and walk humbly with our God in faithfulness and obedience. The fruit we see is His gift, and the path ahead belongs to Him. As we trust Him, acknowledge Him, and submit our plans to His leading, we can be confident that He will continue to make our paths straight and bring fruit for His kingdom.

Together in his service.

Bernd Hahnert
Centre Director



"Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight." — Proverbs 3:5-6

Inter-Regional District Prayer Gathering

It's on again! Our next Inter-Regional District Prayer Gathering is on Saturday morning, October 10th from 10am. Find a hub near you, or join us online!

One of our greatest challenges in Australia is the geographical isolation. This is certainly true of the NSW & ACT District. Our District Prayer team continues to work on ways to overcome this so that we can do the important work of praying together about how we join God on his mission in our District.

As you probably know, the District Prayer Team supply monthly updates to help our congregations and intercessors pray for our District Prayer Calendar and other events. We hold monthly prayer meetings online. We send out updates via email and a WhatsApp group. And we hold various Prayer Gatherings.

Most recently, we have started gathering in hubs on a Saturday morning for morning tea. We then hear an update from our District Bishop on some of the what's happening in the District, including points of praise, thanks and requests he would like us to commit to prayer. We then pray about these in our hubs, followed by lunch together as people are able.

This Inter-Regional District Prayer Gathering model was first trialled back in February. It went so well that we are repeating this on October 10th and we would like you to be there.

This time we've grown, so that we now have at least one hub in each region. Hubs in October are in Port Macquarie, District Office, Tuggeranong, Albury, Temora and online.

If you're interested in being part of the day, please register on the district events page nswact.lca.org.au/events or with your local hub leader listed on that page and in this newsletter. (Please note, registering for the District Office hub is essential to make sure you can access the building on the Saturday).

If you have any questions, would like to be part of any of the updates mentioned above, or would like to host a hub next year, please contact Pastor Darren on 0458 774 757 or darren.kupke@lca.org.au

May God bless you as you connect with him in prayer.

Darren Kupke for the District Prayer Team.

Inter-Regional District Prayer Gathering Saturday 10th October, 10am -12pm

Please join us for a District Prayer Gathering –
either with your regional hub or online!

Starting with a cuppa at 10am

with Bishop Richard sharing from 10:30.

We will then pray in our regions

and finish with an optional lunch.



Hub Locations and contacts:

RSVP with name and mobile no. is essential for joining District Office hub and to aid with catering by Monday October 5th at nswact.lca.org.au/events or using details below.

- **St Peters, Port Macquarie** (David 0414 521 661, david.thompson@lca.org.au)
- **District Office, Bella Vista** (Veronica text:0416 246 872, vlschwedes@gmail.com)
- **Good Shepherd, Tuggeranong** (Cheryl 0416 030 323, cherylturek@hotmail.com)
- **St Luke's, Albury** (Nikki 0449 554 795, nikki.spaans@lca.org.au)
- **Trinity, Temora** (Darren 0458 774 757, darren.kupke@lca.org.au)
- **Online** – if you can't join in person (contact Darren or Cheryl)

PRAYER GATHERING



Being a Healthy Mission-focused Congregation

There are many things that lead to a congregation being healthy and mission focussed. The following are a list of things that each member and each congregation are encouraged to reflect and act on.

It is not expected that we are perfect in any of these, but rather it is best to use these as prompts for us to consider where God may be calling you to focus on or attend to.

So consider being part of a healthy mission focussed church by:

- Recognising that we are part of God's church – being called to **focus on Jesus and His mission**
- Seeing that a key Lutheran principle is that **every congregation should have pastoral oversight and support** (Augsburg Confession IV), where there is no called pastor the Bishop is your pastor, and if you are in a vacant congregation you are encouraged to contact the bishop if you need assistance.
- Encouraging **every member of the congregation** to see themselves as called and encouraged to be active as part of the Body of Christ. 1 Cor 12:27
- **Focussing on Prayer** – especially on the life and health of congregation, a healthy prayer life involves praying by yourself, with others from your congregation and others in the wider LCA NSW ACT and LCA. Contact Pastor Darren Kupke to be more involved, email darren.kupke@lca.org.au.
- **Collaborating** – Aim to work well with others including other members, nearby congregations, church agencies, other denominations and community groups.
- **Outreach/Community connecting** – nurture personal connections, see your life as being Jesus and sharing

Jesus with others, be involved in connecting with the school, aged care facilities, activities that connect with people in your community.

- **Worship that engages** – God comes to us through His word, His sacraments and His community. Help people to worship well in ways that help them receive from God, hear the Gospel more clearly and in ways they can understand.
- **Pastoral Care** – Help your congregation be a community where everyone is caring for each other, encourage pastoral visits by the pastor and lay people, visit people who are new, on the fringe, sick or going through some difficulties.
- **Regularly celebrating Pastoral Acts** - Publicly celebrate pastoral acts including baptism, first communion, confirmation rite, welcome to our congregation, funerals and weddings.
- **Encouraging ongoing learning** in your congregation by leading or attending such things as bible studies/devotions, new member preparation, revitalising the congregation courses, first communion, confirmation and pre-marriage counselling.
- **Making Hospitality a priority** – by being invitational, welcoming, accommodating others, and being a member of your church to bless and benefit others more than yourself. Talk with others about what good hospitality may look like in your context.
- **Encouraging and participating in leadership and administration**

Bishop Richard Schwedes

Join ALWS WALK MY WAY

Get involved by participating and donating to support children in need

CANBERRA

Saturday 19 September 2026

Begins at St Peters Reid 10.30am

To register or donate visit <https://canberra.walkmyway.org.au/>

SYDNEY

Saturday 7 November 2026

Begins at St Pauls Sydney 10.30am

To register or donate visit <https://sydney.walkmyway.org.au/>



Join us as we step out to protect refugee girls in danger of child marriage through the life-changing gift of education.

Being a Lutheran means... we see Baptism as God's work not ours



At times I am asked why some churches baptise adults and others baptise infants. The reality is that is probably more correct to say that some churches baptise adults only and others baptise all people.

And as Lutherans we are people who baptise people of all ages, infants, toddlers, teenagers and adults. Recently

we have experienced a number of adult baptisms in some of our congregations and I pray for more.

Sometimes this is challenged by others, partly because scripture does not appear to be clear on when a person should be baptized. There are examples of adults being baptised and examples of whole households being baptised in the bible.

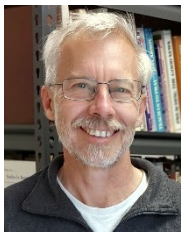
A key to understanding why we baptise people of all ages is not just because the church has been baptising people of all ages for many - there is evidence that infants were being baptised since at least 200AD - but rather people of all ages are baptised because God is doing the work and not us when we are being baptised. Check out Titus 3:4-7

When we were baptised as a child or adult we were baptised with water and God's word. It is at this point that God proclaims to us and the world that He is giving us forgiveness of sins, saving us from sin, death and the power of the devil through the actions of Jesus so we can have the new loving life with God forever. (See Luther's Small Catechism on Baptism).

This also means we can live in a new identity that we are always a loved child of God invited and encouraged to live sharing His Gospel through words and actions.

Bishop Richard Schwedes

Frontier School of Mission



**Dr Mark
Worthing**

5-day Intensive: **Jesus and the Gospels** **7-11 October 2026, Port Macquarie**

An understanding of who Jesus of Nazareth is and how he is portrayed in the Gospels is fundamental to the church's task of mission today. In this unit, taught by Dr Mark Worthing, participants will learn basic skills of reading the four Gospels. They will look at the different portrayals of Jesus in the synoptic Gospels and in the Gospel of John. There will be a focus on how Jesus was understood in the Gospels and how various groups view Jesus today.



frontier.lca.org.au



Convention of General Synod 2027

1 - 4 October 2027 · Brisbane Exhibition and Convention Centre

Further details on the LCA's 22nd Regular Convention of **General Synod 2027** can be found on the LCA website www.lca.org.au click on 'The Latest' then 'News' for more details



LLL Mission Outreach Grant

By providing competitive Financial Services to the LCA,  are able to provide Mission Funding to the Church. The District of NSW and ACT has been awarded a **\$25,000** Mission Outreach Grant for the Fiscal Year 2026/27.

Applications are now open. Closing Date 31st March 2027

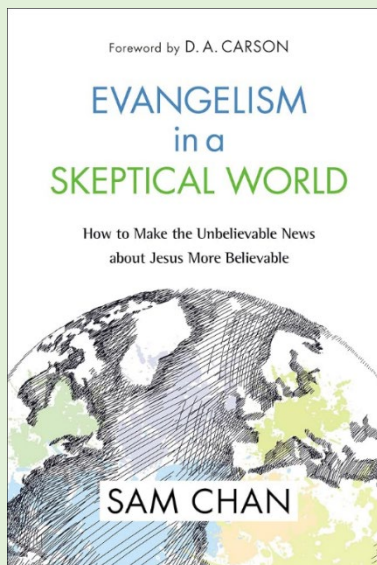
The Grant may be awarded to a single proposal or divided among multiple applicants, therefore submissions of all sizes are encouraged. Applications will be assessed through the usual Committee based process. The Grant will be issued in

June 2027

For more information please contact
Bishop Richard Schwedes on 02 8660 1200



Book Review: Evangelism in a Skeptical World



Sam Chan is an Australian evangelist that has explored, researched, and practiced being an evangelist in a variety of cultures, including numerous cultures in Australia.

He recognises that many methods of evangelism are not effective for all situations or ones that used to work no longer work. In this book he explores various methods to communicate the timeless message of the gospel in culturally relevant ways.

In a post-Christian, post-churched, post-reached world, most Christians feel unable to tell their friends about Jesus. Dr. Chan combines the theological and biblical insights of classic evangelistic training with his own and hard-won insights from missiology on contextualization, cultural hermeneutics, and storytelling.

Every chapter is illustrated with real-world examples drawn from over fifteen years of evangelistic ministry across the globe. These are methods that really work—with university students, urban workers, and professionals—getting past the defensive posture that people have toward Christianity so they can seriously consider the claims of Jesus Christ.

Field-tested and filled with unique, fresh, and creative insights, this book will equip you to share the gospel in today's world and help as many people as possible hear the good news about Jesus.

To discover more about
Evangelism in a Skeptical World visit

<https://lutheranmission.blogspot.com/2026/09/book-evangelism-in-skeptical-world-how.html>

Join us in prayer
with and for our District
Online Prayer Meetings
first Tuesday of each month from 7pm

For details contact:

Darren Kupke

darren.kupke@lca.org.au

Cheryl Turek

communitydev@

mygoodshepherd.org.au



The sale of used postage stamps raises thousands of dollars to support God's mission in the world.

So far, nearly \$550,000 has been raised!

Used stamps can be sent to:

- Marie Bahr, 452 Kemp St Lavington NSW 2641
- Ruth MacConachie, 16 Village Bay Cl Marks Point NSW 2280
- District Office.

For more information, or to become a stamp receiver, contact Andrew Cecil apjc61@gmail.com
0480 708 658

Lutheran women in NSW and ACT
are encouraged to keep in touch
and continue meeting for fellowship:

CANBERRA & COOMA

Ladies Fellowship Day

Saturday 7 November, 10am-1pm

at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church Cooma

'God's loving kindness in our journey as women'

LUTHERAN WOMEN

Ladies Retreat 2027

Weekend 12-14 March 2027

Warrambui

SAVE THE DATE

60th Anniversary Celebrations

Saturday 22 May 2027

Wagga Wagga

For more details contact Cheryl 0416 030 323

To advertise women's events, fellowship days,
and share news of your gatherings in NSW
and ACT, please contact District
Communications Officer Nikki
nikki.spaans@lca.org.au 0449 554 795

District Prayer Calendar to join the District Intercessors prayer list email office.nsw@lca.org.au

	Parishes/ Congregations	Pastors and Church Workers (and family)	Location
September	6 Albury Aged Care	Pr David Jarman (Nicole)	Albury
	13 Burrumbuttock	vacant	Trinity Bethel Holy Cross Burrumbuttock St Peter's Gerogery Bethlehem Jindera
	20 Henty	Pr Darryl Shoesmith (Shirley)	St Stephen's Culcairn St Paul's Henty St John's Pleasant Hills
	27 Henty Lutheran School	Anna-Marie Bothe Principal	St Paul's Lutheran School
	4 Jindera Lutheran School	Anna-Marie Bothe Principal Peter Reed Church Planter	St John's Lutheran School
October	11 Lavington	Pr Will Frost (Keegan, Lenya)	St Peter's Lavington
	18 Wagga Wagga	Pr David Cherry (Kayla, Esther, Eloise)	Bethlehem Wagga Wagga Bethlehem Milbrulong
	25 Wagga Wagga Lutheran School	Hollie Kinning Principal	Lutheran Primary School
	1 Walla Walla	Pr John Borchert (Charmaine)	Salem Alma Park Zion Walla Walla
November	8 St Paul's Lutheran College, Walla Walla	Anita Morton Principal	St Paul's College
	15 Frontier School of Mission	Pr Mark Worthing	
	22 Jalal Pakistani Campbelltown	Boaz Gill	Jalal Evangelical Lutheran Church, Campbelltown
	29 Retired Pastors	Contact District Office for details on retired pastors helping out in vacant parishes at this time	
	6 District Committees	District Church Council, all other district committees	
December	13 Strategic Directions Implementation	Michael Dobie (Karen)	
	20 NSW and ACT District Office	Pr Richard Schwedes Bishop; Stephen Fogerty Administrator; Nikki Spaans Communications; Kaye Simpfendorfer Receptionist	



NEPAL FLOOD DISASTER

*** Our Lutheran action through ALWS ***

- ✓ \$250,000 step-of-faith commitment
- ✓ Tents, blankets, tarpaulins and solar lights
- ✓ Emergency food rations
- ✓ Water, sanitation and hygiene
- ✓ School uniforms, books and stationery
- ✓ Livestock restocking
- ✓ Ongoing community development
- ✓ Delivered by the Lutheran World Federation Nepal



Donate now:
alws.org.au * 1300 763 407



Upcoming Events

- September 19** **Walk My Way**
ALWS fundraiser, Canberra
- October 7 - 11** **Frontier Intensive**
'Jesus and the Gospels' Port Macquarie
- October 10** **Regional/District Prayer Gathering**
jointly in person and online
- November 7** **LW Canberra Fellowship Day**
Cooma
- November 7** **Walk My Way**
ALWS fundraiser, Sydney

2027

- January 15 - 17** **Storm-Walking Saints Retreat**
young adults camp (18+) Warrambui
- March 12 - 14** **LW Retreat**
for women of all ages, Warrambui
- March 28** **Easter**
- May 10 - 12** **Mission and Ministry Conference**
District pastors and lay workers, Warrambui
- May 22** **LW 60th Anniversary Celebration**
Wagga Wagga
- June 11 - 14** **Better Blokes**
for men of all ages, Warrambui
- September 26 - 29** **LCA General Pastors' Conference**
venue tbc
- October 1 - 4** **LCA General Convention**
Brisbane

Sign up to the new **District eNews** sent to your inbox each month, email

nikki.spaans@lca.org.au

Like and Follow the District Facebook Page to keep up to date with news and events.

Search Facebook for LCANSWACT, or go to www.facebook.com/LCANSWACT

If you have an event you would like advertised online through the District channels please contact our

Communications Officer

Nikki Spaans, email

nikki.spaans@lca.org.au



Contact Newsletter

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 Bella Vista NSW 2153

Phone (02) 8660 1200

Email:
kaye.simpfendorfer@lca.org.au

www.nswact.lca.org.au

Assisting regional people coming to Sydney or Canberra

If you are coming to Sydney or Canberra for hospital treatment and require pastoral care, or if you know someone moving to Sydney or Canberra for work or study, please let your pastor know.

You can also contact District Office and we will endeavor to put you in touch with a pastor who may be able to visit.

District Office
 02 8660 1200



FOR COMPLAINTS & TO REPORT ABUSE IN LCA

If you have experienced abuse or have witnessed poor behaviour from someone working for, or connected with, the Lutheran Church in Australia or New Zealand, or if you believe that someone else in the church is at risk, it is important that you let us know.

Phone 1800 644 628 (Australia)
 0800 356 887 (New Zealand)

Email complaints@lca.org.au

Post PO Box 519, Marden SA
 5070 Australia

Mobile phone text message
 +61 (0) 438 320 218

