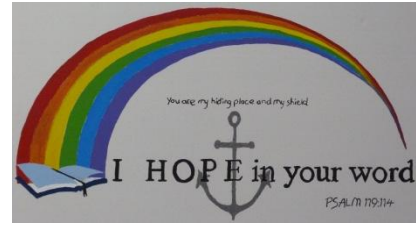


# LCAWA DISTRICT CONVENTION 2012

*ST JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH, ESPERANCE*

*I HOPE IN YOUR WORD – PSALM 119:114*



Esperance might be a long way to travel for some convention delegates but the members of the St John's congregation rolls out the welcome mat with such gusto that the trip is well worth it.

On Friday night there was a boat cruise around the port which gave plenty of opportunity to reconnect with old friends and meet new ones while nibbles and drinks were passed around. There were even a couple of dolphins swimming alongside for those with a sharp eye.

Saturday morning brought more greetings and chatter as we entered the church that had been decorated for the theme "I Hope in your Word" which refers to Psalm 119:114 but also to the fact that the word Esperance actually means "Hope".



The morning started with a time of worship during which Pastor Greg spoke about how our district has been going through some tough times with Pastors and school principals moving on and some congregations no longer able to afford even a part-time pastor but (and it is a big but) he reminded us that loss doesn't make you a loser; Christ through his loss had the greatest victory.

After a welcome from the congregational chairman, Mark Wandel it was time to get on to the business side of the meeting which proceeded with good humour and great care for each other and each congregations needs and suggestions.

Pastor Mike Fulwood was appointed as vice president due to the departure of Pastor Adrian Kitson.

Pastor Milo and Anna Velebir were sorely missed during the weekend and prayers for them where often raised to our Lord.

LCA Mission Director Dr Pastor Steen Olsen facilitated a number of sessions throughout the weekend, called "Think Spots" they were a great way to break up the "business" part of the weekend and get us all thinking about mission in a number of different ways.

There was a great quote from one of the sessions; “Mission is about taking church into our community not about getting people into church”. We were reminded that mission is about relationships and about getting people to a relationship with Jesus not about getting them into church.

After lunch on Saturday we stood and clapped while singing “Marching in the Light of God” which made sure we were all awake for Pastor Greg’s president’s report.

Pastor Greg expressed his appreciation to Dr Steen Olsen not only for visiting us at convention but also for his visits to help our ailing district during the previous 6 months.

He talked about the changes in the district with Mark Rathjen leaving his principal’s job at Living Waters after 15 years; Pastor Adrian Kitson accepting a call and Pastor Paul Hannola being reassigned outside the state.

Although on the face of it his report seemed a bit depressing he pointed us to good things that are happening. Pastor Michael Parker and his church at Ocean Keys are supporting Parkwood by having services there on Sunday mornings and evening services at Ocean Keys. Lay people are being raised up to serve their congregations by being authorised for Word and Sacrament ministry and Glenn Crouch in Kalgoorlie is currently undergoing Special Ministry Pastor training.

Final paragraph of Pastor Greg Pfeiffer’s report:

*“And so, as this year begins, we acknowledge the challenges, but also we affirm that God’s promises are sure and that we can indeed hope in his Word! I am actually quite excited about the big things I see God doing in our tiny District.”*

The report from the Faith for the Future Project was encouraging as a possible tenant is interested and money has been received from the LLL for a Mission Stimulus Grant. “Getting Church back into the world – F4F gives us resources to do that.”

Saturday night we had dinner at the Deep Sea Angling Club we steaks the size of dinner trays being cooked on BBQ’s and placed on the table cut into smaller pieces. One steak could feed a table of 10!

Kerry, the Castletown Primary School Chaplain; gave her testimony about being called into chaplaincy and we were blessed to have her sing to us as well. The Hope FM director also shared with us about the work at the radio station.

Marj Welke was persuaded to speak and started by NOT telling us about travelling to Esperance in 1963 with 6 kids, 5 goats and other assorted things but she DID tell us that through it all God was right there beside them.

Rebecca Kramer got everyone to stand up and sing “Rise and Shine” with the actions and then treated us by singing a lovely song of praise.

Neil Wandel shared with us about witnessing where he is working at CPH bringing to mind the things that Dr Steen had been talking to us during the day.

Of course the night would not have been complete without Peter Hoffrichter getting up to share something special with us; he jumped up on the bar and read to us a poem titled “You Ask Why I follow this Jesus?” to the delight of all.

Sunday morning brought us together again for some more uplifting worship during which the projector bulb blew but that was OK because we just kept going with the wonderful service as most knew the liturgy well enough to proceed to sing and say the words.

Another projector was found for the meetings afterwards thanks to the Briar family. After morning tea we heard from the encouraging news from the Lutheran schools in our district and from Lutheran Youth and Lutheran Women and Faith Inkubators.

Lunch on both days was well catered for by the host congregation and the weather was beautiful to sit outside to eat and talk.

The weekend was a wonderful opportunity for all the delegates to enjoy fellowship, to be encouraged and to return to their congregations across the state with Faith for the Future!

