

## M & M FEST—'SEEKING GOD'S FUTURE'

By Karen Crouch and Graeme Lienert

The Mission and Ministry Conference held during the March long weekend was a feast for the mind, body and soul.

A wonderful time to catch up with old friends and make new ones as we delved deeper into ways to serve together in deeper and richer ways.

The small group seminar format seems to have been a winner and the chance to meditate on God's Word and pray together was a blessing.

From Bishop Mike's perspective the M&M was a great success. Some highlights include:

- ✦ Broad selection of electives – great variety for attendees – positive comments all round
- ✦ Presenters high quality and enthusiastic
- ✦ Good connections made with Grow Ministries for future work
- ✦ Finances – well within budget
- ✦ St Johns team outstanding organisation and support
- ✦ Combined worship a highlight on Sunday morning

According to Bishop Mike Fulwood this was a big ticket item in terms of his time and input and great to see such a positive outcome.

Graeme Lienert said "A moment at Ministry and Mission festival under the theme of 'seeking God's future' Hosted at St Johns Lutheran Church Perth on 3/4 March where much was said about where we are in life as a person, as we joined in a journey articulated in Exodus - a story of a journey of promises, based on faith and hope, about opportunity, challenges, losing ones way then finding it - To eventually reach the Promised Land - learning about manna, unleavened bread and survival in the desert - with our weekend finishing with a child-like moment eating 'fairy' cake with delicious sweet cream. What a weekend - What a privilege - may we continually remind ourselves of the opportunities, gifts we have in life today. And be thankful for that."

Sunday morning worship was held in the front courtyard area of the church and the big glass doors at the front of the new building were pushed back to make room for some to sit inside looking out and others (including the musicians) were outside under shade.

Feedback was exceptionally positive in all areas of the weekend from the theme, hosts (St Johns), catering, outdoor service, electives and ministerial leaders. Many individuals rated the M & M as the 'best ever'. Well done St Johns and LCA (WA) District.



## PASTORS CONFERENCE

By Karen Crouch

Just before M & M Fest the Pastor's and some of their wives gathered together for the day at Bethlehem Morley Lutheran Church.

They were joined by 3 armed forces chaplains, Airforce, Army and a familiar face from the Navy, Milo Velebir.

It was a lovely day for the pastors to catch up with each other and what is happening in our widespread district.

The Pastors also farewelled Pastor Rodney Witmitz and Pastor Richard Schulze who have accepted calls to SA and Victoria respectively.

Pastor Peter Hage was elected as Assistant Bishop until the next Synod to take over when Pastor Richard leaves after Easter.



L - R Front: Pastors Fui Tshun Ku, Steve Liersch, Glenn Crouch, Milo Velebir  
2nd Row: Andre Meyer, Richard Schulze, Mike Fulwood, Matthew Bishop  
Back: Peter Hage, Tony Traeger, Mark Kleeman, Rodney Witmitz, Jason Pokela



Armed Forces Chaplains L -R:  
Paul Quicke (Army), Mark Kleemann (Airforce), Milo Velebir (Navy)

Some sat inside and some outside as we worshipped together



WA Bishop,  
Pastor Mike  
Fulwood preaching  
outside on Sunday morning



Some of the musicians getting ready to start our worship time

The keynote stream at the recent M&M Fest was entitled 'Seeking God's Future'.

Bishop Mike unpacked this theme in four Keynote addresses.

The content is summarised below:

### ***Keynote 1: Where are we headed?***

Many in the church are asking questions these days. We are facing an uncertain and uncomfortable future which is marked by spiralling change.

Whilst responses to this change may be many the church has always had a faith which grounds us even though we are surrounded by uncertainty. For example Hebrews 11:1 reminds us that "Faith is the assurance of things hoped for and the certainty of things unseen."

What can we learn from the Word as we face an uncertain journey?

As a template let's look at the Exodus journey of God's people. They had a promised destination (so do we) but the interim journey was uncertain and was lived with the daily need for trust.

We see that the people had many responses to their uncertainty and not all of them were helpful.

On the negative side they; romanticised the past and wanted to go back to Egypt, imagined giants in their way, turned on their leaders, and turned to idols of their own making.

Do we do any of these things as we face uncertainty?

Yet in the wilderness God's people also discovered the reliability and trustworthiness of God who revealed himself as close and caring.

Uncertain times can also be the purifying fire that refines faith and which God uses to prune his church so that it becomes even more fruitful.

Can we in faith embrace uncertainty in the knowledge that God is with us?

### ***Keynote 2: What is the direction of our journey?***

Uncertainty does not simply result in passive and aimless waiting. God gives direction to our searching in Jeremiah 29.

Immediately after promising a future hope to his people despite their current uncertainty (note that this was spoken to people in captivity) he directs them to seek HIM. God himself is the answer to our searching - HE is our future - our hope - our promise.

The Apostle Paul shapes the nature of this seeking God when he writes in Philippians - "I want to know Christ—yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings..."

Note that he seeks to know both the suffering sacrificing servant Christ, and the risen glorious Christ.

As we encounter Christ more deeply his transforming work is done in us.

This intimacy shapes us for our future and directs our steps.

### ***Keynote 3: Pack Light***

God's Exodus people prepared for their journey with their cloak tucked into their belt and their staff in hand. Jesus sent out the seventy two disciples on their mission trip with no purse, bag or sandals. Their preparations for these journeys indicate readiness and responsiveness. Surely these are valuable characteristics for a church on a journey in a changing time.

From the beginning Lutherans have grappled with the question of what is essential to the church. Excommunicated from Rome they searched the Scriptures for the answer to the question "What makes the church the church?" and found that the solution was remarkably simple.

Where the gospel is preached truly and where the Sacraments are celebrated in accordance with the command of Christ - THERE you have the church.

This is a light pack- essentially all we pack is CHRIST (who comes to us in Word and sacrament).

Christ alone, Grace alone, Faith alone, Scripture alone.

This light pack can be taken anywhere, it can be expressed in many ways and it helps us to adopt a ready and responsive stance.

### ***Keynote 4 - Fix your eyes on Jesus***

There is no doubt that an uncertain journey is difficult even though it is sustained by the promise that God has placed before us. How do we hold to our course in the light of the challenges we may face on the way?

Critical to this is the practice of remembering.

In particular what is helpful is the Hebrew remembering practised by the Old Testament people of God. This was more than just looking backwards. The Israelites practised a remembering that recognised that the God of the past was also the God of the present and the future. He is active today.

The promises spoken in the past are real for today and we must keep them before our attention if we are to persevere.

Paul describes our journey as being like that of a marathon runner and urges us to "fix our eyes upon Jesus the author and perfecter of our faith" – Christ Jesus.

Our conference closed as we sang and prayed together –

*"Turn your eyes upon Jesus, look full in his wonderful face.*

*And the things of earth will grow strangely dim in the light of his glory and grace."*

## DISTRICT CHURCH COUNCIL UPDATE

Here is a brief summary of discussions at the March and April DCC Meetings.

- ✠ We farewelled Richard Schulze and thanked him for his time as Assistant Bishop in the WA District. Richard is heading to Luther College in Croydon Victoria as chaplain. We accepted the nomination from the WA Pastors' Conference of Pastor Peter Hage to fill the casual vacancy as the Assistant Bishop until Synod 2019. St John's has kindly supported this and DCC looks forward to having Pastor Peter on DCC. Pastor Peter will be installed to this role on Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> April in a brief rite at St John's.
- ✠ We acknowledged the lack of clear process in farewelling Simone Micke from her role as Administration Assistant to the Bishop. Simone left her role in late February. It was DCC's intent to publicly thank Simone at the M&M Fest, but Simone was not able to attend the M&M Fest due to the death of her father. I would like to take this opportunity again to thank Simone for the role she fulfilled and she will be missed by us at DCC and I know she will be missed by the wider District. As a result of this change these are the contact details for Bishop Mike ([0417 179 093](tel:0417179093) or [mike.fulwood@lca.org.au](mailto:mike.fulwood@lca.org.au)) for Bishop matters or for other District matters – DCC & Financial - use [admin.wa@lca.org.au](mailto:admin.wa@lca.org.au).
- ✠ DCC also needs to come to new arrangements re postal contact – please do not use the current PO Box advertised at Alexander Heights as this will be closed. In the interim please send mail to 25 Hillsborough Avenue Baldivis 6171.
- ✠ DCC acknowledged the success of the M&M Fest, and especially the wonderful work that St John's did, both behind the scenes and during the event. We have had many positive reports back, including from the presenters who were also inspired by the passion and enthusiasm of WA members. Issues with the registration process have been noted for future conferences.
- ✠ District Administrator Fred Kroeger is continuing to visit congregations as part of the DCC initiated conversation about budgeting and congregational contributions. DCC is extremely thankful for the positive tone of these conversation and is appreciating the input and response received so far. It is planned that Fred will visit with all congregations before a budget for 2018/19 is presented to Synod delegates via email for approval.
- ✠ In response to input from the above visits a District REG (Regular Electronic Giving) account will be opened to allow individuals to make donations to support the District budget. DCC encourages that any donations made be in

addition to the regular and much needed local offerings that individuals are committed to.

- ✠ Graeme Lienert was nominated and accepted the position as the WA Lutheran Church representative on the WA Council of Churches.

### ***LCA Governance positions Nominations***

**Background:** Before the coming Synod are decisions about the way in which the church is governed including proposed changes to the makeup of General Church Council and our LCA Church Boards. Trials of new structures in these areas have been in place for some time and reports on the outcome of these trials will be presented to Synod.

This complicates the nomination process a little as it is possible that elections will take place for the Boards and the General Church Council in two different ways depending on the outcome of the vote on structure and governance.

Information on the nominating process for Synod can be seen by visit this website below or the nominations page on the LCA website.

<http://www.lca.org.au/about-us/structure-governance/nominations/>

NB. It is open to individuals and to congregations to make nominations. Nominations can be to any Board that is listed as well as to GCC. Nominations need to be in by 15<sup>th</sup> May. If you would like further information regarding this, please contact either Bishop Mike or Monika. ([monika.tropiano@lca.org.au](mailto:monika.tropiano@lca.org.au))

### **Prayer Points**

- ✠ Thanks for a renewed sense of purpose following the M&M Fest
- ✠ For the Dalyellup community as they continue to worship on the school grounds after it has been sold to Baptist Education Resources
- ✠ For Living Waters Lutheran College, that families will be encouraged to enrol their children at the college

As your representatives on DCC, we have a desire to serve you and the whole WA District. If there is something that we need to know about, or something that you wish to share, please do not hesitate to contact us.



# SEASONS OF WORSHIP AS THE RHYTHM OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

ADVENT, CHRISTMAS, EPIPHANY, LENT, EASTER, PENTECOST

By Pastor Peter Hagee

Our Church Year, reminds us that as Christians we live according to a different rhythm and set of seasons from the world, even though we live in the world. Jesus prayed concerning his disciples that they would remain protected while not belonging to the world but still being in the world. ***'I will remain in the world no longer, but they are still in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name, the name you gave me, so that they may be one as we are one... I am coming to you now, but I say these things while I am still in the world, so that they may have the full measure of my joy within them. I have given them your word and the world has hated them, for they are not of the world any more than I am of the world.'*** (John 17:11,13-14)

We may be in the world, but we do not belong to the world. Our church year is a gentle reminder that we need to keep living according to God's grace, and not be overly influenced by the world's concerns.

- ✿ The Christian's New Year starts with **Advent** (at the end of November / start of December) and is a time of humble repentance and hopeful joy; the world's New Year starts on January 1<sup>st</sup> with parties and carefree excess.
- ✿ At **Christmas** Christians remember that God gives us the gift we need - a Saviour; at Christmas the world telling others what gifts they want.
- ✿ On **January 1<sup>st</sup>** Christians celebrate the Naming and Circumcision of Jesus (8 days after his birth) – his first shedding of blood as a real human being for our redemption; while the world celebrates purely for selfish pleasure.
- ✿ **Epiphany** is a special season in our Church year that reminds us Jesus came as saving Light for the whole world and calls us to witness this light and life to others; the world doesn't know Epiphany and in Australia people simply escape to take time for themselves and not necessarily think about what others need.

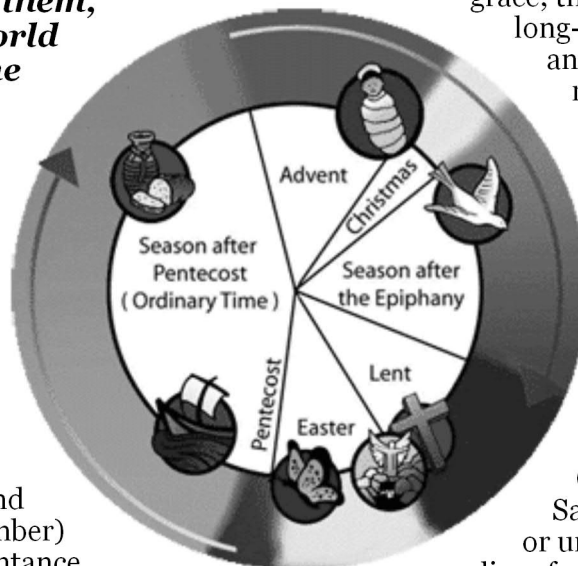
✿ **Lent** begins with **Ash Wednesday** (pre-empted by Shrove 'fat' Tuesday, called 'Mardi Gras' in French) and is a season of reflection, restraint and remembrance of Jesus suffering and sacrifice for our salvation; the world loves Mardi Gras, but doesn't understand that it's not just about having a party, but is giving up and letting go of our worldly pleasures and offering our time to God in preparation for a truly enjoyable celebration in the season of Easter.

✿ **Easter** (like Christmas) is not just a day but a Season. Christians pray and prepare for 40 days of Lent in order to properly celebrate for 50 days of Easter. Jesus' resurrection is the crown and culmination of our Christian faith, and it deserves to be celebrated long and intentionally by getting together with others who share this amazing grace; the world sees Easter simply as a long-week end to overindulge in food and chocolate and to get away rather than getting together.

✿ **Pentecost** marks the end of our Easter celebrations and through the gift of the Holy Spirit leads us into the season of growth and mission in the world, reminding us that we do not exist to satisfy our own desires and longing, but are called to live and love and serve for the glory of God our Creator, Redeemer and Sanctifier; the world doesn't know or understand Pentecost. The world lives for itself and pursues its unquenchable thirst for more and more... more wealth, more thrills, more indulgence.

Christians are different. We are not of the world, even though we are in the world. Our worship and our church year keep reminding us we are to live in thanks to God for all he has done for us, by sending Jesus into this world, and redeeming us through his birth death and resurrection. And we respond to God with our thanks and praise to the glory of his holy name.

***'My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one. They are not of the world, even as I am not of it. Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth. As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world. For them I sanctify myself, that they too may be truly sanctified.'*** (John 17:15-19)



## LCAWA CHILDREN & FAMILY MINISTRY NETWORKING & RESOURCE DAY



LYWA will be hosting this fantastic event, on **Saturday 11th of August**, in the metro area. This will be an opportunity for all those involved in ministry to children and their families, within the Lutheran church in

WA, as well as anyone who has a particular interest in this area.

LYWA envisages this to be a day of discussion and networking, learning from each other and exploring resources. LYWA also hopes that as a result of this event, a district-wide approach to this ministry area will be established.

More information will be released in coming months. In the meantime, please put **Saturday 11th of August** in your diaries. All enquiries can be directed to Serica Yurisich ([lywa@wa.lca.org.au](mailto:lywa@wa.lca.org.au))

### APPROXIMATE 2018 PUBLICATION SCHEDULE

Article Deadline	Publication Date
20 June	24 June
27 September	30 September
5 December	9 December

Please email your items to: [waneews@wa.lca.org.au](mailto:waneews@wa.lca.org.au)

Current and old WA Lutheran News are available for download from the new website and also from:

<http://www.esbconsult.com/lcawanews/>

On the website you can also sign up to get an email informing you of when there is a new newsletter ready for download.

Karen Crouch, Editor, WA Lutheran News

Thank you for your patience when there are delays



Graeme Lienert getting into the fairy cakes



## 2018 Events in WA

Date	Event
5 May	LWWA Convention at Trinity, Narrogin
18-20 May	Dads & Kids Camp
11 August	LCAWA Children & Family Networking & Resource Day
25 August	Lutheran Women WA Fellowship Day
21 October	60th Anniversary St Paul's Lutheran Church, Albany



When: Friday 18—Sunday 20 May

Where: Manjedal Activities Centre (Gilwell side)

For more info and the registration form email to:

[lywa@wa.lca.org.au](mailto:lywa@wa.lca.org.au)