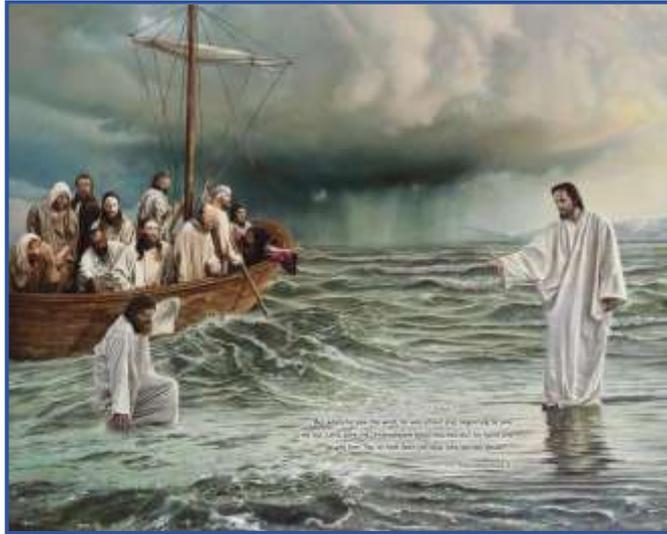


# LEVNT NETWORKS

28 April 2016  
Issue No. 06

*LEVNT Networks is distributed fortnightly  
Please ensure that ALL staff and school councillors receive this communication*

## The Immediacy of God's Love



***“Immediately (Jesus) made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead to the other side...” (v. 22) ... “But immediately Jesus spoke to them ...” (v.27) ... “Jesus immediately reached out his hand and caught him ...”(v.31) Matthew 14: 22, 27, 31***

I'm always struck by the use of the word “immediately” in the Gospels. It denotes an incredible sense of urgency. Immediately ... right now ... this minute. It seems like most, if not all of Jesus' Gospel miracles carry the spirit of immediacy. The blind man instantaneously receives sight. The haemorrhaging woman encounters Jesus and at once stops bleeding.

Peter immediately walks on water (and immediately sinks when he realizes what's happening, but that's another story!) It makes me wonder: Where is the urgency in our ministry with our students? Do we see our CARE of them as urgent? Or, maybe we look at it from a mere risk and compliance angle—what happens if we don't act?

The Gospel IS urgent. It's happening right now, this minute, immediately. In everything we say and do, we proclaim the Good News of the Risen Christ.

- When we spend extra time to tutor a student we are proclaiming Christ.
- When we comfort a student during times of family trouble, we are proclaiming Christ.
- When we encourage a student that lacks confidence, we're proclaiming Christ.
- When we tell a troubled student that they are loved and precious, that they are God's beloved, we are proclaiming the Good News.

The results may not be immediate, but the proclamation is—Jesus loves you right now and always.

**Paul Weinert**  
Director  
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# GOODNESS GROWS

## OUR PLANET · OUR PEOPLE · OUR PURPOSE

During the week beginning Sunday, 01 May to Saturday, 07 May, all Lutheran schools across Australia will be setting aside a particular time to reflect on their contribution to educating young people within the tradition and theology of the Lutheran Church.

Across Australia we have approximately 85 schools and 56 early childhood centres that seek to provide the very best possible education for our students. Each of our schools and early childhood centres has its own proud story and history. We must always, therefore, acknowledge the many staff, students and parents that have gone before us and served our respective school communities. For it is from their commitment and efforts that today we are able to continue to ensure our Lutheran schools in Australia continue to thrive.

I am sure that each of our LEVNT schools has planned a number of activities during this special week. Please know, that along with all LEVNT staff, I convey my best wishes and God's blessings to your school community and I thank you for all that you do for Lutheran education.

Resources for schools celebrating National Lutheran Schools Week (NLSW), the theme **Goodness Grows - Our Planet, Our People, Our Purpose**, which have been developed by Australian Lutheran World Service (ALWS) are recommended for your use.

Please visit [ALWS website](#) or [click here](#) to access resources for schools.

**Paul Weinert**  
Director

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## LEVNT NEWS

### SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT Quality Schools Project

By now all schools would have sent their data to RADII in readiness for the quality schools survey. Thank you for this extra effort to collate the emails and phone numbers. I appreciate that in some circumstances it has been problematic. I look forward to engaging further with you once you have received your respective Quality School report as you discern how the report may inform and support your current school improvement (strategic) plan.



Quality  
Schools

### LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT



**growing deep**

Leadership and formation framework

Earlier this year, Lutheran Education Australia (LEA) launched *Growing Deep*, the framework for leadership & formation. This is indeed a seminal document and will significantly shape our work in Lutheran education across Australia as we journey forward. In time, each school will no doubt consider how to infuse *Growing Deep* within the ethos of its school. Should you seek any support in the roll out of *Growing Deep* please do not hesitate to contact our LEVNT Office.

### LDP 6

Last week I visited Adelaide to meet the participants of Leadership Development Program 6 (LDP). I must acknowledge their commitment to undertake the two year program – thank you and I hope that it is an enriching professional experience. I must also thank those who have volunteered to act as mentors for the LDP participants. This is a testimony of the collegial nature of LDP.



### Emerging Leaders Day

At present we are in the process of planning the content for the next Emerging Leaders Day scheduled for 17 June. Venue yet to be announced. Participants are encouraged to confirm their attendance and any suggestions for topics to be included on the agenda for the day.

### GOVERNING COUNCILS

#### Annual Gathering of School Council Chairs

School Council Chairs have recently been notified that the annual planned gathering of School Council Chairs for **Saturday, 07 May** has been cancelled. Chairs have subsequently been sent a number of alternative dates for their consideration. More details to follow.



#### Opportunities for School Council workshops

LEVNT is able to offer school council development workshops on site with the entire School Council. The focus of these workshops will be negotiated and planned with individual Councils. Topics that School Councils may wish to consider include:



- ✦ membership succession planning
- ✦ developing school strategy
- ✦ policy development
- ✦ reviewing school council performance, and
- ✦ clarifying roles and responsibilities.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you would like some assistance with these or other school governing topics.

**Don Walkley**  
Interim Assistant Director  
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## FOR TEACHERS IN LUTHERAN SCHOOLS WHO ARE BEGINNING THEIR TEACHING CAREERS

A Beginning Teachers' Day has been scheduled for Monday, 16 May from 9.15 am – 3.00 pm. This day is for graduate teachers who have joined Lutheran schools in the last 1-3 years. The day will be held at The Quality Hotel, 265 Mickleham Road, Tullamarine, to allow teachers from regional areas to attend. Further details can be found on the registration form below. **Please register by May 6.**

We hope that principals will encourage beginning teachers to attend this day so that they can develop an appreciation of being part of the wider Lutheran system while gaining support for their work in our schools as well as having time for reflection on their journey so far. Morning tea and lunch will be provided at no cost to participants. Please contact me at [liz.pietsch@levnt.edu.au](mailto:liz.pietsch@levnt.edu.au) if you have further questions.

# Beginning Teachers Day

For teachers in Lutheran schools who are in the early years  
of their teaching careers

Monday, 16 May 2016

9.15 am – 3.00 pm

at

The Quality Hotel, Melbourne Airport  
265 Mickleham Road, Tullamarine

- An opportunity for recent graduates from Lutheran schools to meet together
- An opportunity for recent graduates to learn about the Lutheran school system and what it means to be part of the Lutheran school “family”
- An opportunity for recent graduates to share their joys and challenges
- An opportunity for recent graduates to gain tips and ideas for the journey
- An opportunity for recent graduates to engage in professional conversations
- An opportunity for recent graduates to hear from those who have travelled a similar path – and have survived!

Please register your interest to attend:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact details: Mobile: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Dietary Requirements: \_\_\_\_\_

(Please include any dietary requirements)

Please post or email this form to:

[liz.pietsch@levnt.edu.au](mailto:liz.pietsch@levnt.edu.au)

Education Officer - Formation

LEVNT

755 Station Street

BOX HILL VIC 3128

Phone: 03 9236 1271 (direct line)

Mob: 0402 041 214

Morning tea and lunch will be provided at no cost to participants/schools.





**The impact of giving grades on student performance**

There has been a great deal of discussion in some quarters on the effect of grade-giving on students’ ongoing learning. Grades describe a student’s performance (in relation to a set reference point, such as a curriculum achievement standard, or against other learners) but do not on their own give information on what a learner can do, or what they can do to improve. Dylan William has been at the forefront of this discussion (see for example, <https://www.teachermagazine.com.au/article/in-conversation-dylan-william>), highlighting the need for teachers to **focus their efforts in communicating to students how they are progressing towards a learning goal, and what they need to do next to achieve that goal.**

William cites a number of studies which demonstrate that when students are given a grade alone on an assessment item, they show no learning gain on a subsequent related task, while students who receive comments which focus on achievements (feedback) and possible improvements (feed forward), students subsequently show a 30% achievement improvement. The staggering result however, was for the groups of students who received both the grade/score and comments: these students also demonstrated no subsequent gain in scores (a detailed summary of these studies can be viewed at: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xjZ87Pai\\_5M](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xjZ87Pai_5M))

| Feedback Type       | Achievement | Attitude  |
|---------------------|-------------|---|
| Scores              | No gain     | High scorers: positive<br>Low scorers: negative |
| Comments            | 30% gain    | High scorers: positive<br>Low scorers: positive |
| Scores and comments | No gain     | High scorers: positive<br>Low scorers: negative |

Source: Butler (1988) cited in William 2011

***In effect, the presence of a score distracted students from making use of the qualitative feedback given them.***

So what does this mean for a classroom teacher? We ARE required to assign grades on (at least) twice yearly reports to parents. Parents and students ARE entitled to useful and meaningful information about learning progress against a particular reference point (such as the curriculum at the grade level). For students who are progressing towards the senior years of schooling, we have a responsibility to communicate clearly about their performance and prepare them for the standards they will be measured against in their senior years. We ARE NOT required to place a grade or score on every piece of work – and in doing so, we may distract our students from the valuable feedback we are giving them about how they can take the next steps in learning (as they often focus almost exclusively on their grade and how they compare to others). While we as teachers need to know how individual assessments lead to an overall grade, it is effective qualitative feedback that will support ongoing learning progress.

*What do your students do when you hand work back? Do they think? Do they compare?*

***Want to read/view some more?***

Dylan William discusses feedback that focuses on the ego vs that which focuses on thinking and learning <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MzDuiqaGqAY>  
 Prof Geoff Masters (ACER) discusses making A to E grading more meaningful to parents <https://www.teachermagazine.com.au/article/a-e-grading-does-it-show-individual-growth-and-progress>  
 This section of ESA’s Effective Feedback module includes an audio file which suggests a process for providing grades without compromising the effect of feedback: <http://www.pixelassembly.com/pLearn/assessmentForLearning.html/#?pg=10>. It may not be practical in every circumstance, but can give ideas about how to create space for your feedback to be processed without becoming fixated on grades.

**Upcoming Networks meetings**

- **Tuesday 3 May** Central Primary Curriculum Leaders (Southbank)
- **Thursday 19 May** Riverina Curriculum Leaders (Jindera)
- **Student Wellbeing Network** First meeting will be held this term at the Quality Hotel, Tullamarine on a date soon to be set.

**Vicki Schilling**  
 Education Officer – Curriculum  
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# “The Spotlight” SUNSHINE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL



## Our history



We are often asked to share about our unique history and our unique school site. Our school history began in 1958 when Mrs. Isabel Bell had a vision for a Christian school to be formed in the locality of Sunshine, Victoria.

Twenty four years later her vision was finally realized with Sunshine Christian School commencing in 1982 under the banner of the Uniting Church of Australia. In 2003 it became necessary for the school to seek new governance or risk closure.

A new partnership was formed with the Lutheran Church of Australia, which enabled the school to remain open. This collaboration saw the school become a member of Lutheran Education Australia in 2004 supported by a new partnership formed with St. Matthew's Lutheran Church, Footscray.



Many people don't realise how physically small our campus is – our whole site is less than 40m x 40m (see image right). Our small campus and capped enrolment of 100 students, allows us to maintain our small family feel. Our many languages, nationalities and religions, bring great richness to our school.

## Sport

As we have a very small play space, we involve ourselves heavily in intentional programs to foster physical health. We recently joined School Sport Victoria and have competed in inter-school athletics and cross country with some pleasing results.



## “The Spotlight” SUNSHINE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL (cont’d)



### A focus on future skills

Through close partnership with Independent Schools Victoria, our school has become a lead school for teaching coding in junior primary. **Mrs Heather Francis** was invited to present on the topic at a recent coding conference along with some of her students. The event was a great success and our school will be presenting again at a repeat conference in May.



### Staff News

At the end of 2015 we farewelled three longstanding servants of our community, **Mrs Diane Blenkiron** (P/1 teacher), **Mrs Jacq Klammer** (3/4 teacher) and **Mrs Wendy Barnes** (Bursar). A flurry of new appointments has seen our school staff grow to 14. The following staff members were installed into their ministry at Sunshine Christian School at our supporting congregation, St Matthew’s Lutheran Church, Footscray earlier this year:

**Mr Damian Pietsch**

Curriculum Coordinator, University of Melbourne Project Lead

**Mrs Susan Arena**

P/1 Classroom Teacher, Christian Studies Teacher

**Mr James Milesi**

3/4 Classroom Teacher, Christian Studies Teacher

**Mrs Sandra Galea**

Business Manager

**Ms Charlotte Salusinszky**

Student Support Officer

**Ms Carmen Milic**

Student Support Officer



**Tom Brennan**  
Principal

## KAREN DUAL LANGUAGE BOOKS PROJECT

### Background

The concept of creating dual Language Karen-English books for children developed from a Nhill Community Action Network meeting in late 2014. A decision was made by Wimmera Southern Mallee Local Learning and Employment Network to approach the Nhill Lutheran School to invite students in Years 4-6 to create dual language books. Our school was chosen for this project because students are learning the Karen language as part of the curriculum. Students were given design specifications to prepare their books. Eight students from the class completed writing, designing and illustrating a dual-language book.

### Project details

Wimmera Southern Mallee LLEN provided graphic design services to compile the children's art work and manuscripts. Plaw Ganemy-Kunoo and Jeffrey Ehtamee Khinshwe assisted the students with the Karen translation and with proofreading the manuscripts. Wimmera Southern Mallee LLEN arranged for the printing of 800 books which will be available for the Karen Cultural Day on 20 May 2016. The official book launch will be held at 2.00pm on that day.

### Book Distribution

WSMLLEN will distribute copies to the Nhill public library, three school libraries, the Hindmarsh Let's Read program to Karen families,

the student authors, translators and the remaining books will be available for sale to the community. Nhill Lutheran School will also donate copies to our sister orphanage school in Myanmar.

**Tara Pritchard**  
Principal



## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Details of AIS NSW Professional Development for 2016 can be found at:  
<https://www.aisnsw.edu.au/CoursesEvents/Pages/default.aspx>



Details of ISV VIC Professional Development for 2016 can be found at:  
<http://www.is.vic.edu.au/services/professional-learning/calendar/index.shtml>



## EMPLOYMENT WEBSITE

Below is the website where schools place employment advertisements and for staff to seek employment. It would be useful if this website could be advertised in staffrooms for their information. <http://www.teachers.on.net/leavacancies>



## LEA Executive Director

[Stephen  
Rudolph]

### Fire at St Andrews Lutheran College, Tallebudgera Qld

LEA is saddened by the news from Tim Kotzur, Principal, St Andrews Lutheran College, Tallebudgera Qld, of a fire last Monday evening which has destroyed a significant part of the senior school.

Tim is working with his community as well as the policy and fire brigade to ensure St Andrews continues to operate as best as possible given the difficult circumstances for senior school staff and students.

The support of the local St Andrews community, LEQ regionally and all Lutheran schools and principals across Australia at such a time, is deeply appreciated, as Tim and his team lead in the days and weeks ahead.

May God give Tim and all at St Andrews strength, courage and patience in such challenging circumstances.

### LEA key funding messages

1. provide a basic funding entitlement for all Lutheran schools that keeps pace with costs in government schools and ensures each Australian student receives a world class education
2. provide additional needs-based funding for schools, families and students who are disadvantaged because of factors such as indigeneity, location, disability and socioeconomic / cultural disadvantage
3. provide families affordability and accessibility in their choice of schools in a way that encourages diversity, yet does not penalise private funding contributions to education
4. ensure that all systems and school authorities have equal access to recurrent, targeted, capital and other funds through transparent and nationally recognised funding protocols
5. allow systems and school authorities to effectively and confidently operate schools in a stable and transparent environment with predictable and annual funding indexation



[top], Federal Minister for Education and Training, and with the Hon Kate Ellis MP [above], Federal Shadow Minister for Education and Early Childhood

### Affirming core principles for a funding model

The present school SRS funding system, undergirded by the Gonski principles, has seen a substantial change to school funding in Australia. The SRS funding system is in its third year of operation (2014-2017) and has tried to establish a stable and predictable approach to federal funding.

However, the unfortunate vagaries of the political cycle, Commonwealth and State/Territory relationships, national financial constraints and implementation difficulties have resulted in uncertainty about a long term model and an incomplete inconsistent transitional roll out.

LEA supports a means-tested, sector-blind and needs-based approach to school funding. LEA supports an improved funding approach for the future where the core principles of equity and sustainability are the key drivers and system funding predictability is provided.

In conclusion, LEA encourages candidates to strive for and provide a long term

national funding model that is equitable, predictable and sustainable and allows systems to effectively and confidently operate schools in a stable and transparent environment with predictable and annual funding indexation.

#### LEA's view of current funding proposals:

**Coalition:** LEA is concerned that the Coalition's existing funding policy would see school funding increase at the rate of the consumer price index (CPI) from 2018. LEA does not support this policy as funding increases need to keep pace with real education costs and with indexation linked to AGSRC increases. LEA requests from the Coalition clarity of its 2018+ funding for Lutheran systems and until this is confirmed, cannot support the Coalition's policy. (LEA awaits the 2016 Federal Budget to ascertain any change to the Coalition's current policy)

**Labor:** LEA acknowledges the Labor Party's 'Your child. Our future' policy which will assist all Australian schools with an additional \$4.5 billion in funding expected in 2018 and 2019. Subject to the Federal Labor Party being able to align all states and territories to the SRS model, LEA is pleased to support this policy.

#### Commonwealth funding growing faster than states

Commonwealth funding for schools has increased at 36.7% in real terms over the past ten years while recurrent funding from state and territory governments has only increased by 4.6% in the same period, according to the new secretary of the Australian Department of Education and Training, Dr Michele Bruniges, who presented at the Senate inquiry into school funding recently.

Dr Bruniges, in pointing out the disparity in funding increases over the past decade, reminded senators that school funding is seen as a partnership between the Commonwealth and state and territory governments. 'The (Commonwealth) government has been clear that it will work with states and territories to deliver stable and sustainable funding into the future for all schools' Dr Bruniges said. She also noted that while the Senate inquiry is considering school funding, there is some consensus that funding is not the key factor in improving student outcomes. 'Teacher quality, school autonomy, parental engagement and rigorous curriculum are just as important as money to make a real difference to student outcomes, and the Commonwealth is working with the states and territories to focus on those four key areas, she said.

When asked about the prospect of school funding cuts, Dr Bruniges said there would be no cuts. 'Funding ... will continue to increase year on year post 2018. We are not looking at any form of cut, funding will continue to increase.'

Despite the prospect of increasing school funding in 2018 and subsequent years, Lutheran Education Australia, together with the National Catholic Education Commission and ISCA, have consistently stated that the Coalition government's current policy of increasing school funding beyond 2017 at the rate of the consumer price index is inadequate and is not supported.

LEA has expressed concerns over this policy to Senator Birmingham as it may very well impact on:

- Lutheran school fee levels increasing
- Limiting parental right to choose their school of choice
- Possible program and staffing cuts in Lutheran schools
- Limiting a Lutheran school's ability to adequately address student needs
- Possible force parents to make extremely difficult choices

This policy also ignores the fact that over the past decade, school costs have risen at twice the rate of CPI.

#### Government announcement on financial reporting

LEA is pleased to advise that the extension of transitional arrangements for non-government school financial reporting to the Australian Charities and Not-for-profit Commission will avoid an escalation of red tape and duplication in reporting for at least another year.

Last week Assistant Treasurer, Kelly O'Dwyer, announced that the transitional arrangements which allow non-government schools existing reporting mechanisms to fulfil the requirements under the ACNC legislation, have been extended to include the 2016 and 2017 school years.

LEA acknowledges the efforts of the National Catholic Education Commission's Executive Director, Ross Fox, in playing a key role to see this extension delivered.

## ALEA Conference

[16-17 September 2016]  
Hanoi Vietnam



Principals are encouraged to consider attending the ALEA Conference being held in Hanoi during September 2016.

Further information is available on the [ALEA 2016 Conference](#) web page where you will find:

- Details regarding conference programming and networking opportunities.
- Information about [workshops and training](#) that will be offered during three sessions, with a wide variety of topics.
- [Registration is open](#) with online payment available.
- [Conference rates](#) are available at the Sofitel Plaza by using the preferential code CISH16
- [Networking tables](#) are available by sending an email to [conference@asialutheraneducation.org](mailto:conference@asialutheraneducation.org)

## Statement on school worship

In an earlier LEA news, principals were reminded of the LCA *Statement on school worship* as it relates to baptisms. In this edition the paragraph on Holy Communion is outlined as follows:

*Communion may be celebrated regularly in Lutheran schools within a congregational setting. It is worthwhile restating that the congregation is a community of baptised believers who together share a common confession of faith, hear the word of God, celebrate baptism and the Lord's Supper, and are led by a called and ordained pastor. This definition is distinct from the common understanding of congregation as a legally constituted organisation within the LCA or another denomination.*

*Attendance at such services must be voluntary. Participation in Holy Communion is available to those who share our Lutheran understanding of it.*

*The pastors who preside at such services are responsible for the instruction and ongoing pastoral care of communicants in these services.*

For the full statement please go to:

<http://www.lutheran.edu.au/assets/Uploads/pr/policies/Mission%20Ministry%20Worship/Worship%20StatementAAAA.pdf>

Principals are positively encouraged to table this statement appropriately (eg, with your school leadership and ministry teams, school pastor, school council and/or staff) as you consider your school's ministry in its unique context.

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