



3 June 2009

104 Jeffcott Street  
North Adelaide SA 5006

## Your Personal Invitation To See What God Grows

John Henderson - *Principal, ALC*

Dear Fellow Lutheran,

When I took up the role of Principal of ALC in February, I didn't realise one of my first tasks would be to write a fundraising letter.

So I'm not going to.

I would rather share with you some of the exciting growth that God brings to our church when we join together and sow the seeds.

'Growth' I hear you say.

You only have to read some of the letters in recent issues of *The Lutheran* to hear how much people are hurting ...

... when we look around church on Sunday and see so many empty pews

... when we remember the children we watched growing up, who became young people, and now we're not sure where they are.

....when we struggle to find enough Pastors to meet our church's needs.

So, where is the growth, and how can I feel so confident about the future for our church?

I invite you to read through the little leaflet we've enclosed and you'll

soon see how God is growing the seeds you sow when you support ALC. (Jesus' words in Matthew's gospel remind us that when seed is sown in good soil the harvest can bear fruit 100 times.)

Look at the Chinese ministry at St Stephens in Adelaide.

Pastor Joel Ng, studying Lutheran Confessions and Liturgics at ALC, says when church council asked him to project numbers in 3 years time, he couldn't because things are growing so quickly!

Then there are the teachers strengthened in their faith and understanding through ALC studies, who now feel confident and equipped to witness to their students in our Lutheran schools. Like Rebecca Bell who left everything behind to join 'Living Waters' in WA "cos God told me to."

You see growth when you look at young men like Paul Hannola who God called from a PhD in Forestry Management to be a grower of people, not trees, as a Pastor.

When I look back over history, our church is very resilient.

So many times we could have / should have self-destructed, yet God has carried us through. The same can happen now.

We cannot fall into despair. We must always keep our eyes on Jesus so we can be ambassadors of hope to the world. And to help us do that we must have people suitably equipped for service.

That's why – and I guess this part is fundraising – I invite your support for the ministry of ALC today.

The gift you give right now can support a pastoral candidate through a subject, provide a vicar with in-church training, strengthen a lay-worker's theological foundation, or equip a teacher in a Lutheran school with a fuller understanding of the good news of grace.

Your help is also vital to make sure no one misses out on the opportunity to serve because of money or geography.

These can be the seeds of growth for our church. They start with you.

To give your donation, simply complete the Ministry Slip enclosed.  
Or phone Neil Kirk, our Business Administrator, on 08 8267 7400.

I've been a Pastor for 27 years, and I know how open-heartedly generous Lutherans can be ... even at the toughest of times.

I also know we like to make sure we get 'bang for our buck'!

So it was good news that donations to ALC are tax-deductible in Australia. It means when you donate direct to ALC you receive a tax benefit – which you can re-invest in ministry at no extra cost.

Put simply, you can do more for the same amount of money.

*(Last year \$109,977 was donated directly for the work of ALC. The tax-deductibility benefit on that amount had potential to free up at least another \$30,000 for ministry. At no cost to anybody.)*

ALC is, and always has been, the most important work of our church.

The hopes and dreams of many in our church are grounded in this place. So it's natural to have strong feelings about what happens here, and high expectations of ALC and the ministry workers we equip for service.

As I begin work, I see enormous opportunities for us to work together, being responsive to the call of the Holy Spirit, remembering our identity as Lutheran Christians who live in the freedom of the gospel.

Yes, there may be things from the past we are called to leave behind.

And as we look at what our church needs from ALC in the years ahead, there will be challenges we face and decisions that may be hard.

To grow for the future we need to skill people to work in a connected way – connected with God's Word, and also connected with the community, the soil of people's hearts in which the kingdom grows. There are no shortcuts to faith lived out in community.

And so our Pastors need to be able to listen, to respect, and to respond to people. They must be able to function and operate in the world.

We are constantly looking at our ALC courses and teaching methods.

More and more we need a 'portable' ministry, going into new communities to take up the work of the Gospel where it is needed. And when we meet people with needs, we must be able to show them the church has something for them.

ALC is the lifeblood of the church.

And if our hope is that ALC will make a difference for our church, to help us grow again, then simply we must sow the seeds that pay for it.

On behalf of the farmers, mine-workers, nurses, Africans, Asians, young people, seniors – and every other kind of person you can imagine – being equipped here at ALC, thank you for your support!

Yours in Christ,

**Pastor John Henderson**

Principal ALC

**PS:** You know best how God has blessed you to support the work of ALC. We appreciate whatever you are able to do. Remember, to claim your tax benefit this year, please send your donation before 30 June. Thank you!