



LCA SA/NT District  
**Department for Mission**



Director  
Dr Steen Olsen

## **Notes on the African Ministry Gathering**

**Good Shepherd Lutheran Church  
388 Montague Road  
Para Vista SA 5093  
Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2013**

6 months have passed since the 1<sup>st</sup> AFRICAN MINISTRY GATHERING was held at Albert Park. On 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2013 the 2<sup>nd</sup> of these meetings was convened at Para Vista Good Shepherd church.

Following a combined lunch generously put together by women members of the congregation, we moved into the church proper for a brief time of worship, led by Pastor Peter Deng.

The Scripture reading was taken from Psalm 91, verses 1 to 8, and was read in English and Nuer.

### **African AFL Initiative**

With the Gathering officially underway in the church hall, Mal Thiel talked about Aussie Rules Football. Mal has been to Vanuatu where he taught young people football. When young people complete primary school in Vanuatu there is not much for them to do. Mal was able to bring a Christian perspective to the boys he taught Aussie Rules, and these young people now had a purpose.

Mal is currently working with the Port Power and Kilburn Football Club to coach African youth aged 8-17 years at Kilburn. The program will run for 10 weeks, starting on March 26. More details from Adrian Tuckfield on 8447 9965.

### **Novo Youth Camp**

Adam Ridley imparted information about the upcoming Novo Youth Camp for years 7 – 12 at Cornerstone College, Mt Barker from 19 – 22 April, saying that funding is available for 20 young African students to attend. Cost will be reduced from the normal \$150 per person to \$30 for the first child of a family, \$10 for the second and free for a third. This does not include the cost of a t-shirt or the bus fare to get there (if applicable). Campers will stay in classrooms and so will need to bring their own bedding. More details from Adam on 0405 456 650.

### **Lutheran Schooling**

Deputy Director of LSA (SA/NT/WA) Loyd Fyffe gave an overview of Lutheran schooling in South Australia. Some African people present wondered about how their children could access Lutheran schools, recognizing that Lutheran education would assist African students to grow in their faith and in their identification with the Lutheran Church. Loyd suggested that families should make an appointment with their local Lutheran School principal to discuss possible fee reduction. He

promised to make principals aware of the need and to encourage more thought as to how these newer members of the LCA might be assisted to send their children to Lutheran Schools.

One other question raised was that of the mobility of the African population – the fact that most do not own their own homes, they often have to move rental accommodation. This fact would make attendance at a particular Lutheran school difficult and raises the issue of transferability.

### **Housing**

A very pressing matter for African people is the question of housing, and Christine Mattiske from Lutheran Community Housing gave a highly informative talk on what to many of those present is an extremely vexing problem. Christine stressed the fact that Lutheran Community Housing is an independent organisation and not part of the LCA. The LCH Mission Statement includes all denominations, not just Lutherans.

Their Mission Statement is that all may come to know Jesus through the provision of housing, but it is the Government which makes decisions on who is allocated housing and how much rent is charged.

The LCH looks after about 800 houses, but only runs about 450. The rest are looked after for groups who are not Lutheran. Furthermore LCH has little control or say in who goes into their houses. The days of community housing being inexpensive and easy to obtain are over.

Rents are set by the Government. The criteria used in the past depended on the income of a family but they are now moving to being a portion of market rents in the private sector. Therefore LCH is unable to control rents or give a lower rent rate to tenants. Proof is needed to show that a family is in financial stress, but it is not easy to prove to the government that people are in need.

The Government scrutinizes applicants for community housing and tells LCH who to supply.

The waiting list for adequate housing is huge with very few 4 bedroom houses in the system.

The question was posed if it was possible to give priority to Africans, but Ms Mattiske went back to their Mission Statement and government regulations, which do not allow them to favour one particular group.

Much frustration was voiced by the African people present. They often have large families and yet can only get 3 bedroom houses. They may be forced to move to different parts of town that they do not know and where they do not have support networks.

LCH is able to work with churches that have land to build housing.

Finally the question was raised if the LCA could do something to pressure government to provide more community housing. Opportunities for housing can be greater in country areas. It was suggested that if clusters of houses were made available to particular language groups they could support one another.