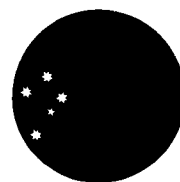


27 November 2024



**LUTHERAN
CHURCH**

OF AUSTRALIA

**SOUTH AUSTRALIA
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Affirming Our Faith and Mission Together in the LCA-NZ

At Synod 2024, the Lutheran Church of Australia and New Zealand (LCA-NZ) prayerfully considered a proposal on ordination. This proposal aimed to provide a way forward that embraced the diversity of perspectives within our church while striving for unity. Delegates — pastors and laypeople — voted with a clear majority of 269 to 108, exceeding the two-thirds threshold required for theological matters.

The respect shown by all participants at Synod was a testament to the grace and humility with which we approached this challenging issue. Our hope was, and continues to be, that this spirit of respect would extend to all corners of the LCA-NZ as our congregations, entities and individuals reflect on the decision.

We acknowledge that this decision has been met with joy by many, while others are experiencing deep struggle. To those wrestling with their conscience, we extend compassion and understanding. Respecting their journey of discernment is vital, even as we continue to walk together as the body of Christ.

We grieve the pain felt by some, just as we have grieved for those who, in the past, found themselves struggling in a church that did not permit the ordination of women. These struggles remind us of our human limitations and the imperfection of our unity. Lord, have mercy on us all.

Yet, in the face of accusations that we have forsaken God's Word or turned away from the Gospel we need to respond. These claims contradict the very essence of our faith and our lifelong journey as followers of Christ nurtured within the LCA-NZ. We reaffirm that our church is grounded in the Gospel of Jesus Christ: saved by grace alone, through faith alone, as revealed in Scripture alone.

The day after Synod, as was the case the day before, we are still baptized children of God. We remain committed to God's Word, which is 'God-breathed' and makes us 'wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus' (2 Timothy 3). We gather as God's people in worship around Word and Sacrament, receiving the true body and blood of Christ for the forgiveness of sins. This commitment has not changed.

We are deeply concerned by narratives that question the faithfulness of the LCA-NZ to God and His Word. Only God has the authority to judge the faithfulness of His people. Such judgments are both hurtful and unhelpful. We are all sinners in need of grace, and our focus must remain on the Gospel, which brings life and hope to a broken world.

where love comes to life

Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever. It is His forgiveness and grace that sustain us—not human demands or interpretations. We encourage all who are troubled to trust in this unchanging grace. The LCA-NZ has not forsaken the Gospel. We have not abandoned our commitment to God's Word. Rather, we remain deeply committed to sharing the good news of Jesus Christ with a world in need, well equipped by our rich Lutheran theology to do this.

We see countless members of our LCA-NZ who have this heart for the Gospel and for sharing it with others. This is where our energy belongs: in proclaiming Christ's love and engaging in His mission. We trust in the promise that Jesus is with His church — His one holy, Christian, and apostolic church — to the very end of the age. May the Lord of the church continue to bless and guide us as we live out His mission together.

Yours in Christ

The District Mission Directors

(Pastors Brett Kennett, Ian Rentsch, David Schmidt and Stephen Schultz)

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