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September 2020

Dear fellow Christians, and leaders of LCA NZ ministries and organisations

## **The LCA's Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP)**

*To our bishops and pastors, congregations and church plants, synod delegates, schools and early childhood centres, community service and aged care organisations, boards, councils, and staff of all kinds – there are so many of you I cannot name everyone. Thank you all for your service in the name of our Saviour Jesus Christ. To Him be praise and glory forever.*

In this package the LCA NZ is sending you an important document that has been a labour of love for our church, and which we pray will bring you blessing. It represents the continuation of a journey begun when, as brothers in Christ, the late Pastor George Rosendale, from Hope Vale in Far North Queensland and Dr Lance Steicke, the then President of the LCA, led a formal rite of reconciliation between the Lutheran Church of Australia and Indigenous Lutherans during the 2000 Synodical Convention (see <https://www.rap.lca.org.au/2020/05/15/historic-reconciliation-steps-recorded/>). Prior to this ground breaking event, the LCA published important materials which you can also find on the new RAP website.

The information in this pack will tell you what a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) is. Together, we can continue the work begun back in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries through what were then known as Lutheran missions, marked at the turn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century by foresighted leaders, and now continued in 2020 through this fresh format, with the invitation for us to get involved in our local ministry and professional settings.

Our Reflect RAP is a public document, recognised by Reconciliation Australia. RA's CEO, Karen Mundine writes in her message, 'RAP organisations across Australia are turning good intentions into positive actions, helping to build higher trust, lower prejudice, and pride in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures.'

The Lutheran RAP is a framework we can use in our organisations and ministries to increase our awareness, sensitivity, and inclusion. It can help us identify any personal or systemic prejudices or disadvantages among us, which otherwise we might not readily see or acknowledge. For instance, the lack of recognition of First Nations voices in our decision making processes is a hot topic in the LCA NZ.

Many of you are already well down the path of reconciliation. Others are just beginning, and you can take it at your own pace. Yet, as Karen Mundine realistically reminds us, the path can be long and often bumpy. It may teach us things about ourselves and others that make us uncomfortable. It will challenge our accepted ways of thinking and doing things. It will rouse feelings in us. Such rocks and potholes can be the Spirit's way of showing us how to more

confidently live out our belief that God creates us in love, to liberate us from the fear that can drive us apart, and to gain a deeper appreciation and acceptance of each other.

Therefore I pray:

*O Lord, source of all life, give us your grace, First Peoples and other Australians alike, to learn more about each other, listen to each other, and grow together as your children. Help us to admit the obstacles we face in doing that, and confess them before you. Forgive us, Lord, where we have wronged each other and you. As you have set us free to serve, teach us to serve each other more completely. Let this RAP aid us in doing the best we can, with the power and ability you give us through your Spirit. In Jesus name we pray. Amen.*



Pastor John Henderson  
Bishop, Lutheran Church of Australia and New Zealand

Adelaide September 2020