

Our Identity

In the words of the classic Lutheran way of summarising the Christian faith, we at St Petri believe that we are saved **'by grace, for Christ's sake, through faith'**. In other words, there is nothing we can do to earn God's favour or to gain eternal life. Through his death and resurrection, Jesus Christ has won all this and more for us.

What follows is that:

We are confessional. St Petri confesses the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as 'the only source and norm of its faith, doctrines, and life', and accepts the ecumenical Creeds and the Lutheran Confessions 'as true expositions of the Word of God'.

We are gospel centred (evangelical). We proclaim the gospel ('good news') of Christ's life, his crucifixion, resurrection and ascension. We witness that, despite our ongoing idolatry and brokenness, we are forgiven, healed, saved and justified by God's grace for Christ's sake through faith alone.

We are sacramental. We live our life together in the community of the Triune God, the Christian Church, as we are served by God in the rhythm of the Liturgy. By his proclaimed and enacted Word (preaching, liturgy and sacraments), the Spirit calls, gathers and enlightens us.

We serve, as we are freed and empowered by Christ in faith to love and serve our neighbour and be faithful stewards of God's creation. God is at work in the world, and we partner with him in his mission to "bring all things under Christ" as we serve him in our vocation and stations in life.

We are ecumenical. St Petri is a local sign of the 'the one holy, catholic and apostolic church', and as such, resolves to serve and actively promote Christian unity and witness in our community.

We are synodical. We walk together as individuals, congregations and agencies to bring to life the purposes and plans of the LCA, nationally, and within our own SA/NT District.

St Petri is shaped by these understandings of what it is to be a local Lutheran church in mission, and therefore these expressions of our identity inform how we respond to the opportunities of our time and place.

Our Vision

Our vision is to see God's love in Christ coming to life in people in our local community, through St Petri congregation, as we joyfully receive, live and share the gospel (cf 1 John 4:9-12).

Our Mission

God grows us as his people to a mature faith in Christ—a faith that comes to life through effective witness and ministry, so that people everywhere may know Christ and his love.

Our mission is to share the love and hope of Jesus with everyone.

Our Values

Our values are derived from our Lutheran identity: we live in ‘grace alone, faith alone, scripture alone’, **all summed up in ‘Christ alone’**. What we value is grounded in God’s saving work through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. We are freed by God’s grace to participate in his vision and mission for the world.

Through **faith** in Christ, by the work of the Holy Spirit, we are a church:

Shaped by the Gospel of Grace

The love of God in Christ is an undeserved gift from God. It is the transforming agent and motivation for all we do in ministry and mission.

For Christ’s love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. (2 Corinthians 5:14)

We humbly come before God, who alone strengthens and equips us for our tasks. We gather with fellow believers, feed on God’s word, proclaimed and enacted in the Liturgy, by which he empowers us to grow in love for God and for one another, living in our vocation and stations in life. We serve our community and care for God’s world.

United in Christ

We are blessed by God with diverse backgrounds, talents, skills and opportunities. The Spirit brings us together as members of the body of Christ through one baptism. We declare our unity in our confession of the Christian faith, as summarised in the Small Catechism, and more fully expressed in the Book of Concord.

Blessed by Relationships

We acknowledge that the Christian faith is communal in nature. God’s love is most often seen and experienced most clearly and fully within relationships. So, we support and respect one another. We are committed to living in peace with each other if at all possible and as much as it depends on us. We listen to and learn from one another, to sustain and build up one another and our community in the bond of love.

Inspired by Compassion

We are called to love in actions as well as by words. We strive to serve with the heart of Christ and we serve with the gifts of the Spirit. We join with Jesus in especially serving those people who are suffering, disadvantaged and marginalised, and we strive to wisely care for all of God’s creation.

Marked by Integrity

As faithful stewards of God’s blessings, we strive for excellence in all we do. We use effectively and efficiently the gifts we have been given, knowing that, to whom much is given, much is required. We are accountable to the people we serve, to each other, to our wider community and to those who have entrusted resources to us.

As a local Lutheran church in Nuriootpa, with the vision to see God’s self-sacrificing love in Jesus coming to life in our community, we are committed to working together, empowered by God, to share the love and hope of Jesus with everyone.

Our 2015-18 Focus

After much conversation, prayer and dwelling in God’s word, along with much consultation in various settings and forms for two years, taking into account our size, our existing ministries, our heritage and story so far, our resources, the needs of our local and church community, and the opportunities we see to share the love and hope of Jesus, we, the existing Church Council believe the following foci in mission are those that the Lord is specifically calling us to work in for the next three years.

Focus 1: Ministry with Youth and Families

Focus 2: Sunday Morning Gathering (and possible third worship gathering)

Focus 3: Ministry with Children and Families

Focus 4: Adult Faith Formation

Focus 5: Ministry with Seniors

Focus 6: School Connections

NOTHING CURRENT HAS TO STOP

In no way do we intend to curtail, diminish or downplay the many and various ministries among all ages of people that are currently happening at St Petri. All of our people of all ages, backgrounds, gifting and calling are important to the leadership group of this congregation.

Just because we believe the Lord wants us to focus on ministry with children, young people and families, does not mean we will not continue to do what we are already doing, or undervalue in anyway what great ministry is already happening at St Petri.

St Petri is a larger church and so is an “options size” congregation. As such, we are obliged to ensure that all of the above mentioned areas of our ministry (and many others) are always active and fruitful to the best of our ability.

However, we believe that ***our congregation would be best served by focussing in on one or two areas of most need and opportunity, so that we be more fruitful*** in the Lord’s calling to share the love and hope of Jesus with everyone.

For the next three years, with this belief in view, we will continue to ensure that all our various areas of mission and ministry continue on, and yet, we will be focussing on children, young people and their families, and further enhancing our Sunday morning gatherings, which might include the addition of another worship service at a time other than Sunday morning.

WHY THESE FOCI?

FOCUS 1: YOUTH AND THEIR FAMILIES

It has become clear that we live in a community with a large number of children aged 10-18. There are around 860 children aged between 0-9 (12% of population) and 340 teenagers (5.0% of population) in the 5355 Postcode. There are around 670 families with children under 15 in our postcode (36% of population).

Our church campus is centrally placed between three schools with direct link into one (Redeemer), and informal links to another (Nuriootpa). We also have a direct link to Faith Lutheran College in Tanunda. There are a lot of young people and families with whom we can share the love and hope of Jesus!

We are aware that there are significant groups of young people established in the Barossa Valley and that of late, St Petri has become a spiritual home for some of these young people. We see this as an opportunity to work with these young adults and help them grow in their faith and service in the gospel.

We are aware that any local congregation who wants to do its best to remain healthy, vibrant, and growing needs to engage the young and their families. We see the need to revamp and re-align our current ministries with children and young people and further develop them as we create new opportunities for young people, and their families, to worship, serve and grow in faith and love.

We see the next three years as an opportunity to give this a major push and see where the Lord leads. We want our children, young people and their families to find life and vitality and gospel faith among us and to grow in their own faith and love at St Petri.

FOCUS 2: SUNDAY MORNINGS

It is our belief that Sunday morning is our “prime time” in mission and that we need to work together to ensure our Sunday mornings are faithful and fruitful in the gospel. We see the opportunity to gather all ages of people in various ways for various purposes – not only worship, although liturgy, sacraments and the proclaimed Word are our heart and centre always.

We acknowledge that if people, not previously connected to St Petri, wish to do so for any reason, they will most likely come to one of our Sunday morning gatherings, and so, Sunday morning remains a “prime time” for welcoming the stranger in our midst.

We see the need to ensure that our current two worship services run very well, with attention to detail, always striving for excellence (not perfection!). It is our responsibility, as God’s called and gathered people, to always display a very obvious awareness and welcome to the stranger among us. We believe it is essential for St Petri to commit to a heightened awareness of, and willingness to accommodate children, youth and their families (to match our prime focus as above), always firmly centred on the gospel in preaching, music, liturgy and sacraments.

We are also aware that there is an opportunity and need to establish a third worship service at a time other than Sunday morning. We believe that this would help many people benefit

from regular worship – especially those who, for many reasons, can't worship on Sunday morning, and increase our overall worship attendance. Committing to a third worship service needs resources and organisation. These things need to be in place *before* we begin this third service. This could take some time to enact.

FOCUS 3: CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES

It is our belief that, given our current resources and situation, it would be wise to enact this focus within our primary youth and family focus – at least at the beginning.

We acknowledge that the shape of ministry with families with younger children is vastly different to that of ministry with teens and their families. Yet we see the need to engage our young children and their families in meaningful ways for support and learning of the Word. For this reason we plan to combine the two foci in the short term until each might stand alone.

FOCUS 4: ADULT FAITH FORMATION

We have heard many times that our own people, and people not directly connected to our congregation, long for, enjoy and need faithful biblical teaching. We have enacted various adult learning opportunities over these last three years and all have been very fruitful. We believe we need to increase the opportunities for all of our people, and many people not yet in the sphere of St Petri, to engage with the Word of God in various ways, times and means – from children doing a “Faith 5” on Sunday morning during the sermon, to confirmation, to adult learning opportunities on biblical books, or current issues and anything in between.

Small Groups

A significant part of our adult formation in faith is the smaller group gatherings. This focus includes support of existing groups and the establishment of new groups over time.

New people learning

Another part of this focus is the teaching process we need to establish for those new to our community – be they parents of a child being baptised or a person who has sensed the call of the gospel with us and wants to know more. We see the opportunity to settle on a process of learning that helps new people, or people reconnecting with us, to learn of our story, and our theology and practice (particularly in liturgy/worship).

FOCUS 5: MINISTRY WITH SENIORS

We are aware that our senior people are vitally active in ministry, community witness, prayer and Bible study and, in wider LCA and ecumenical ministry initiatives. ***Our seniors are a power house of mission!***

We are also aware that Nuriootpa has a high number of senior people. We have learnt that many seniors live alone and appreciate support and friendship. There are around 730 seniors living alone in our postcode (27% of population). The largest concentration of single seniors live within walking distance of our church campus.

We see the opportunity to engage and empower our seniors to continue serving in all of the abovementioned ways, and to further develop these as we also engage in any other possible ways to support and work with our seniors – within St Petri and in our local community.

We plan to continue all the ministry we currently have with seniors and are keen to support and resource this further where possible.

FOCUS 6: SCHOOL CONNECTIONS

This focus matches with the first two. We believe that it is important for St Petri to foster deeper relationships with the three schools within 1km of our church campus and strengthen the relationships we already have with Faith Lutheran College.

We are aware that the school with whom we have the most direct link and for whom we have direct responsibility is Redeemer. We believe we need to work with the school and serve in the school community in as many ways as we can imagine, seeking to support staff and families in whatever ways appropriate, in the sure hope that the gospel will do its work, and people will come to faith in Jesus in and through our service.

What our focus means

RESOURCES WILL BE TARGETTED

If we are going to fully engage in ministry with children, youth and family for the good of our families in our own church and in our community and for the well-being of the church and its future mission, we will need to accept that our resources and facilities will need to match this focus when and where possible.

We will all need to ask questions like:

- What can I do to support children, young people and their families at St Petri?
- What might we need to do to make our buildings and facilities more child, youth and family accommodating?
- What messages do we need to give to children, youth and their families when they gather at St Petri for any kind of gathering – be it worship, outreach event, Bible study etc?
- What do we want our building and facilities to communicate to this group of people and, indeed, to all people?
- How can we include children, young people and families in what we currently do, and what initiative might we take in creating more opportunities for teaching, supporting and relationship building with children, youth and their families?

NOT EVERYTHING WILL BE APPROVED

Saying 'yes' to something sometimes means saying no to another thing. St Petri is a large vibrant community of committed people who love to serve! We have many ideas and request for ministry initiatives, and this is a good thing. However, because we believe that we need to focus our resources and attention on the abovementioned areas, it will mean that, at times, we will either need to postpone a great idea, say 'no' to a great idea or only offer minimal support for a great idea.

MORE EFFECTIVE CONGREGATIONAL LEADERSHIP STRUCTURE

It has become clear that the current way we lead the congregation in mission is ineffective in some ways. We have learnt that there is a more effective, simple and hopefully fruitful way to structure our leadership at St Petri.

Currently, we have a Church Council which is split into a Ministry Team and an Administration Team. The Ministry Team is made up of people who give their time freely to discuss and make decisions regarding St Petri's ministry from month to month. We are grateful for this, as we are for those on the Administration Team.

The Administration Team is there to support the ministry of our congregation in all administrative aspects from buildings, finances, wages etc.

What we find is that, in this model, the Church Council lacks one very important thing. It lacks the ability to oversee the overarching direction and plan for mission for our congregation. Ministry Team ends up having a huge agenda that is unwieldy and so, it loses the ability to get above the detail of organising and doing various tasks, and stay focussed on the overarching shape and direction of where we are leading the congregation.

To deal with this lack of overall leadership direction and ability to stay on track with this Mission Plan, we believe we need to re-structure our leadership for 2015.

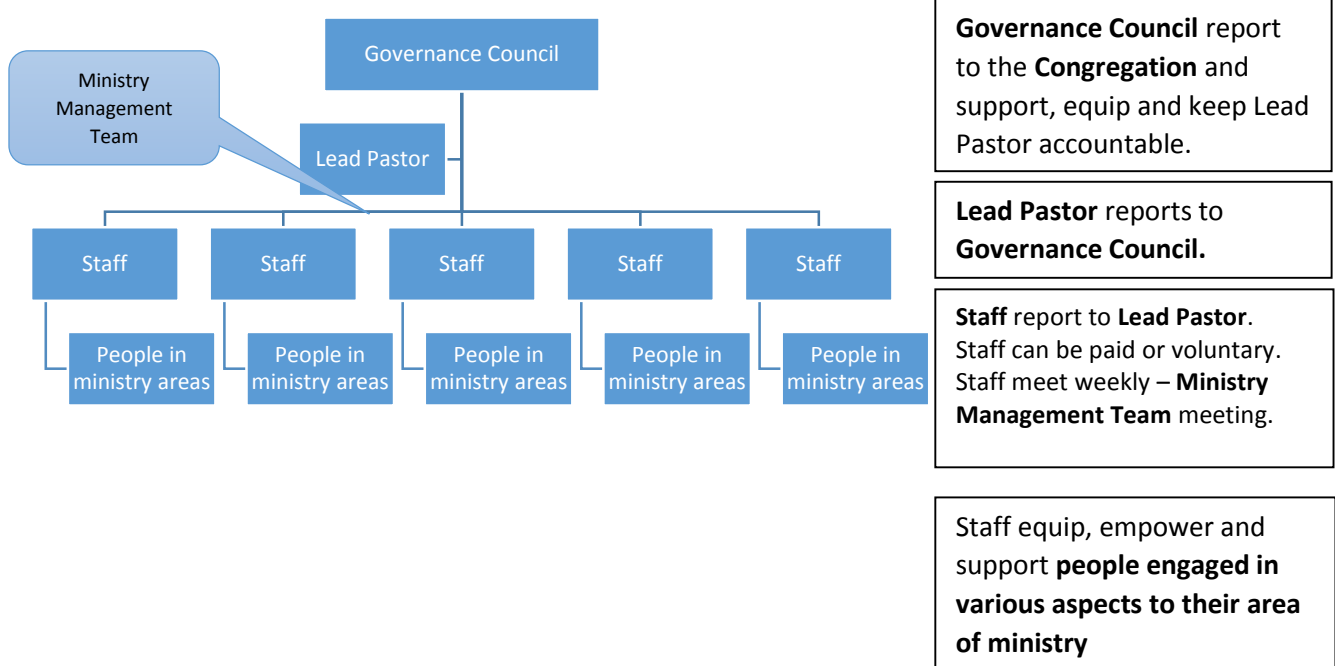
We will be moving a motion to this effect at the upcoming AGM in November. We welcome comment on this.

MOTION: To better support our emerging ministry plans, we move that, for a trial period of 12 months, St Petri establish a single Governance Council to replace Church Council, Ministry Team and Administration Team.

A Governance Council will not engage in management of the many tasks of various areas of our ministry, and so, will be more able to focus on the overall plans, direction and future planning of the congregation's mission.

A Governance Council will improve accountability for staff, and those who participate in various aspects of our ministry, in terms of more effective management and more accountable financial structure.

In this motion, we are suggesting that we separate overall governance of the congregation from the day-to-day management of our ministries, so that the Governance Council can stay above all the detail of the many areas of ministry, and oversee the general direction and shape of our ministry and plan for the future. This leaves the Lead Pastor and paid and unpaid staff to get on with the many tasks of leading and supporting all of our people engaged in the many areas of ministry and mission.



The Governance Council meet five times a year to keep the congregations ministry focussed on the Mission Plan. It has between seven members elected annually by the Congregation at the AGM. They oversee the financial plan of the congregation.

The Staff (paid or voluntary) will meet weekly to manage the ministry of St Petri day-to-day. This becomes, in effect, the “Ministry Team” of old, but now with paid and voluntary staff.

Voluntary staff are people who either put in many hours already, or control a significant area of ministry making it up.

The weekly meeting of staff is called the **Ministry Management Team**. It is led by the Lead Pastor. Staff are directly supported and accountable to the Lead Pastor for day-to-day running of our ministry, all under the overarching authority of the Governance Council and ultimately the congregation.

STAFFING

Administrative Staff:

We see that our current administrative staffing level is adequate for another 12 months. We have a 1.2 Parish Secretary role (shared by two people, Rosie Edwards and Maureen Turner – until July 2015 – Maureen has indicated that she will be resigning from the role at this time. We will need to employ another part time person in this role then). We have a 0.5 Finance Officer, Peter Lange.

We believe that this “Finance Officer” role needs to be re-shaped into more of a **“Business Manager”** role to cope with the many tasks required of the current Finance Officer, and to include the role of policy development. Peter really operates as more of a business manager anyway, and the title and terms of that role need to more accurately reflect reality.

Re-shaping this role into a Business Manager role allows Peter to then make decisions more freely and enact the Mission Plan as required according to the congregation's approved budget which the Governance Council oversees.

We believe it would be wise to appoint a small **Finance Team** and **Building Development Team** to work with and support the Business Manager and provide wise counsel on financial matters and future building plans.

We see no need to increase our level of paid staffing for cleaning and grounds management.

Ministry Staff

We see the need to assume responsibility for maintaining the Child and Family Encourager (CAFE) role that Sue Vogt fulfils within the congregation through the Hand in Hand Family Centre to the current level of 0.4. As the Zinnbauer Funding comes to its end at the end of 2015, we believe we need to cover the full salary of the CAFE position.

We believe it is wise to keep the Ministry Assistant role fulfilled by Carol Voigt at its current 0.6 level. The Ministry Assistant role is very important because it allows greater flexibility in covering multiple areas of ministry depending on need. The Ministry Assistant works very closely with and under the direct guidance of the Lead Pastor, and allows the Lead Pastor to not get too caught up in too much detail and, at times when needed, to create a new ministry initiative.

We believe the Cottage Manager, Kerry Craig, needs to be maintained at the current level of 0.6 under the same structure with any increase in profitability going toward increasing her paid hours.

New Staff

It is our belief that to focus on ministry with children, young people and their families, we need to employ a full time **Child, Youth and Family Director**.

We would be appointing a person with the appropriate skills, training and experience in the area to gather all of our current people who are engaged in this area and significantly further develop our scope and level of activity.

IN THE NAME OF CHRIST

We, the current Church Council, commend this Mission Plan to you trusting that the Lord of the Church will lead us in his mission to bring all things into Christ in our part of the world, and use us to carry out the works he has already prepared for us as we continue to "work out our faith in fear and trembling", imitating him who gave his life for us, and calls us to give our lives for this community that everyone may know the love and hope of Jesus Christ.

In his name

Pastor Adrian Kitson

On behalf of the St Petri Church Council, 2014.