

HISTORY

OF

THE ELCR

1966-1996

Essay presented by

Pastor Gavin L Winter

3 November 1996

Trinity Congregation

Toowoomba

1. WHY THE ELCR WAS FORMED - MERGER OF THE ELCA AND UELCA (1966)

On a Sunday afternoon, at 2.00 p.m., 20 March, 1966, a group of approximately 50 people gathered together. The venue was the CWA Hall, Kilkivan, about 3 to 4 hours drive north of Brisbane, Queensland. Pastor Frederick Kleinig, a Lutheran pastor of 65 years age, commenced the proceedings by conducting a short service. His text was John 10:27-28, "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand."



1. CWA Hall, Kilkivan, Queensland

On conclusion of the service, the gathering appointed a Chairman (Hector Winter) and Secretary (Ben Jeffers) for the day. The Chairman then posed the question, "Do you who are gathered here this afternoon wish to organize a new church body?" After discussion on the matter, the following motion was put and carried unanimously,

"that we, the groups represented here (namely Kumbia, Murgon, Gympie, Maryborough and Woombye), organize into a Federation of congregations."

REASONS FOR FORMATION OF ELCR

Thus the first steps had been taken in officially organizing a new church body, later to become known as the Evangelical Lutheran Congregations of the Reformation. But why was this Federation formed? What were the doctrinal reasons behind its existence? And were these reasons based on the Scriptures?

The narrative of the events surrounding the merger of the ELCA and UELCA which resulted in the formation of the LCA, together with the reasons for the formation of the ELCR, are given in **HOW ARE THE MIGHTY FALLEN**, authored by Pastor Gavin Winter in 1986.

This history explains in detail the following key points:-

- the sound, orthodox nature of the former Evangelical Lutheran Synod in Australia (later in the 1940's known as the ELCA) during the 1920's and 1930's;
- the false doctrinal basis of the United Evangelical Lutheran Church in Australia (UELCA), being the evil Open Questions Principle, the idea that we may believe as we please in certain areas of doctrine;
- the desire to form one Lutheran church in Australia, earlier discussions failing because of the many differences in doctrine which existed between the two churches;
- the beginning of doctrinal negotiations in 1942, which until 1948 did not result in progress towards union;
- the change taking place in the ELCA in the doctrine of church fellowship in 1948, allowing prayer fellowship with the UELCA even though doctrinal agreement had not been reached;
- the drawing up of the Theses of Agreement, adopted by both churches (the ELCA in 1959). This statement had as its basis the evil Open Questions principle, and allowed for doctrinal differences between the two churches;

- the final "break-through" coming in 1965, with the adoption of the **Document of Union** by both churches, another compromise statement, not settling in a Scriptural manner the differences that existed;
- the declaring of fellowship between the ELCA and UELCA on 28 November, 1965, and final amalgamation resulting in the Lutheran Church of Australia in October, 1966.

COMPOSITION OF ELCR

The vast majority of members and congregations of both churches were quite happy to give their consent to this union and became a part of it. However there were some from the ELCA who for conscience reasons could not see their way clear to take the same action. This included one former ELCA Pastor, Pastor F.G. Kleinig, one congregation, "Trinity" Congregation, Woombye, as well a number of former lay members of the ELCA.

Having severed their connection from the ELCA mainly in the early months of 1966 (some left in the months and years following), small congregations were formed, beginning their worship services and other congregational responsibilities. Congregations now existed at Kumbia, Murgon, Gympie, Maryborough and Woombye, all towns in the state of Queensland. Most of these congregations for a time worshipped in private homes. Each congregation called Pastor Kleinig as their shepherd, and despite his age being 65, the normal age of retirement, since the Lord had a vital job yet for him to perform, he began to use his many gifts to provide for the spiritual needs of his members. Indeed in Pastor Kleinig, the Lord wonderfully fulfilled His promise to provide His Word for those who cling to Him (Jer 3:15).

PASTOR KLEINIG

Who was Pastor Kleinig? Born in Kapunda, South Australia, in 1900, he lived on a farm and attended local Christian Day Schools, before entering Concordia College, Adelaide, in 1916. His original desire was to be a Day School teacher, but he decided to study for the ministry at Concordia Seminary (ELSA), graduating in 1924. He served congregations at Caboolture (Queensland), Denial Bay (South Australia), Kumbia and Kingaroy Parish (Queensland), and after a number of years out of the ministry at the Gatton and Gympie Parishes (Queensland).



2. Pastor F.G. Kleinig

Pastor Kleinig was known for his solid knowledge of Lutheran teaching, his powerful yet simple Law and Gospel preaching, his determination to hold fast to the truths of God's Word, and his detailed knowledge of the history of Australian Lutheranism. Having re-entered the ministry of the ELCA in 1959, he noticed the many changes that had taken place in the ELCA in regard to the coming union. Much time was put into studying the doctrinal issues involved (particularly the doctrine of Church Fellowship), the Greek of the passages in the New Testament involved, as well as the historical issues that had divided the two churches. This study convinced him that the proposed union was not a God-pleasing one.

Despite the fact that he finally as a Pastor had to take a stand alone, his love for the Word of God and for purity of Lutheran teaching moved him to sever fellowship from the ELCA which he could no longer regard as orthodox. This he was prepared to do even though he had no guarantee that members would follow him. Now having no call, he gladly began to serve those who were prepared to follow his stand, and thereby publicly state their agreement with God's Word. The future he trustingly put into the Lord's hands, knowing that God never forsakes those who are loyal to Him.

After only a brief time as their Pastor, he saw that there was now a need to formalize the bond of fellowship that existed between these congregations. Many blessings could result from

forming a synod or Federation of the congregations under his charge. For this reason he was moved to call the public gathering at Kilkivan in March, 1966.

LESSONS:

1. Be on your guard against false teaching (Matt. 7:15-16).
2. Thoroughly instruct the lay people in the Word of God, not only the fundamentals, but also the non-fundamentals (Acts 20:27).
3. The progress of false doctrine is often slow and almost unnoticeable (Gal. 5:9).
4. God cares and provides for those who cling to Him and His Word (1 Pet. 5:7).
5. In times of crisis, God provides faithful leaders and shepherds whose example we are to follow (Heb. 13:17).

2. THE FORMATION AND EARLY DAYS OF THE ELCR (1966-1967)

FIRST GATHERING OF ELCR MEMBERS

The town of Kilkivan had been chosen for these early gatherings because of its central location to the congregations that Pastor Kleinig served. At the first of these there was a unanimous desire to form a new church body faithful to the teachings that had formerly been held to by the ELCA. Representatives from each congregation were asked to meet at a future date and undertake the task of drawing up a proposed constitution for the new Federation.

Several names were considered, **Federation of Evangelical Lutheran Congregations**, **Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Reformation** and **Evangelical Lutheran Church**. Later a slight adaptation of the second name was decided upon, the term **Congregations** inserted instead of **Church** to stress the authority God has given to the local congregation. Thus it became known as the **Evangelical Lutheran Congregations of the Reformation (ELCR)**.

The hearts of all present were filled with true joy to know that again they could be a part of a church determined in all points to cling to Scripture. Also they were thankful they had a faithful shepherd who would faithfully preach to them the truths of God's Word, and not allow Satan to introduce his destructive and poisonous error. All appreciated the great sacrifice Pastor and Mrs. Kleinig made by not requiring a salary of his congregations and living off the old age pension they received. Decisions were made to cover car running and printing expenses for their pastor.

FORMULATION OF CONSTITUTION

Between Kilkivan and Gympie, Queensland, is a small area with toilets and picnic tables called **Fat Hen Creek Rest Area**. This roadside stop was the venue for the meeting of representatives of congregations to formulate a suggested constitution to be put to the new Federation for adoption. It was held on Monday, 18 April, 1966. A number of visitors were also present.

With help from the Constitution of the Lutheran Churches of the Reformation (LCR), America, the committee, under the guidance of Pastor Kleinig, formulated the suggested constitution. Outstanding features of this constitution were:-

- a. the thorough statement of the doctrinal position of member congregations (positiva), as well as negativa (statements condemning false doctrines in the visible church);
- b. detailed notes on the Scriptural understanding of Rom. 16:17-18, a vital passage in the doctrine of Church Fellowship;
- c. a statement of four basic rules of Scripture exposition;
- d. the importance placed on the Scriptural rights and authority of the local congregations of the ELCR;
- e. measures taken to ensure that Federation officials do not intrude upon the powers of the local congregations.

CONSTITUTING CONVENTION

Pentecost Sunday, 29 May, 1966, was another significant day in the history of the ELCR. The Constitution Committee had completed its work and it was now up to the new Church Body to officially accept and adopt its constitution.



3. First ELCR Council, 1967: Noel Priebbenow, Herb English, Pastor Kleinig, Hector Winter, Lyle Zanow, I.A. (Ben) Jeffers.

On this afternoon, the representatives of the afore-mentioned congregations again gathered at Kilkivan. The proceedings were begun by Pastor Kleinig at 2.00 p.m. with a short service. Article by Article, point by point, the proposed constitution was read and examined, and with a minor number of changes, adopted. Thereupon a provisional Council was appointed, composed of a representative of each of the congregations. They were:- Kumbia- Hector Winter (Chairman); Gympie- Herb English; Murgon-Lyle Zanow (Treasurer); Maryborough- Noel Priebbenow; Woombye- I.A. (Ben) Jeffers (Secretary). Only one of these members still remains in the Council in 1996, I. Jeffers, who is the current Chairman of the Federation.

It was also on this day that the decision was made to seek affiliation with the LCR (Lutheran Churches of the Reformation) in America.

PASTOR KLEINIG SERVES THE ELCR

Shortly after the ELCR was formed, a preaching place was established at Toowoomba/Dalby, consisting for a start of several families who had requested Pastor Kleinig's services. From this time onward, the congregations were served every three weeks, with the Pastor spending one weekend in the Toowoomba/Dalby area, one weekend serving Kumbia/Murgon, and the third caring for the souls in Maryborough, Gympie and Woombye. As of January, 1967, the membership of the Federation was 108 souls.

For a Pastor past normal retiring age we can see the zeal and love for the Lord this man had, to maintain the energy to travel up to several hundred miles on some weekends to serve his members. His flock truly appreciated with grateful hearts his devotion in proclaiming God's pure Word, as well as instructing the Confirmation classes and conducting Bible studies in their midst. If it were not for this faithful man of God, these souls would have had no servant of the Lord to shepherd them. The Lord used him as His tool in performing a vital task for His children.

It was during these years that, apart from many other fine sermons, Pastor Kleinig began his series of Blackboard and Catechism sermons. In the former, using a blackboard and chalk, the preacher outlined such vital doctrines as the **True and False Religions** and the **Visible and Invisible Churches**. As well, the lay people were well instructed in God's Word with a thorough study of the teachings of Luther's Catechism. Sometimes Pastor Kleinig spent three or four sermons (some of over one hour's length) on the one commandment. All who heard Pastor Kleinig preach can recall the powerful yet simple way he presented God's Word, many of the sermons still remaining etched in their memories.

One striking feature of his sermons was the regular references to the two vital doctrines of the Bible, Law and Gospel. The Law was preached in all of its depth and severity, the listener being reminded again and again in different ways of the sin which covers his every thought, word and deed, God's great wrath over him as he is by nature, and his utter inability to save himself by his own good works. Yet his preaching of the beautiful Gospel message was ever so sweet, pointing the listeners to the dear Saviour Who suffered and died on the cross for their sins. As well he stressed the Third Use of the Law, the duty of the Christian, out of love

to the Saviour, to lead a Christian life. What a great blessing it is to the ELCR that most of these sermons are still on tape today and available for those who wish to listen to them. As well, Pastor Kleinig took studies of Genesis, Jonah, Daniel and Acts, as well as numerous individual studies on doctrines of the Bible. Some of these sermons and Bible studies are at present being put into print and will be a great blessing to the Federation in the future.

ELCR CHURCH PAPER

One of the first major projects that Pastor Kleinig began was the printing of a **church paper**. The title which he chose for it was **STEADFAST IN THE WORD AND FAITH**, a title taken from Dr. Luther's explanation to the Third Petition of the Lord's Prayer in his small Catechism. **Steadfast** is still the official church paper of the ELCR today. The first edition was published in July 1966. The chief purpose of this paper was to instruct the readers in the doctrines of the Word of God. The Editor put special emphasis on dealing with those areas of special need to his readers, including topics such as the Christian Home, Christian Giving, and admonitions to remain loyal to the Scriptures. Frequent reference was made to matters connected with the union of the ELCA and UELCA, and the doctrine of Church Fellowship which played such an important role in the demise of the old ELCA. As well, news of the general church situation in Australia and America, and general news of events in the ELCR was included.

For the first few years, **STEADFAST** appeared about once a month. But after a number of years Pastor Kleinig was not able to keep up this rigorous schedule due to instability of health. Over the years since its first issue, this church paper has been a wonderful blessing to the ELCR, as well as others who wish to know of its doctrinal stand.

From the start **STEADFAST** had been and still is a paper issued free of charge, the only cost being for postal expenses to those desiring it sent by mail. The policy of the ELCR has been, as decided at a Council Meeting in August, 1967, "that all expenses in connection with **Steadfast** come out of Mission Collections." It has always been regarded as a form of mission work, spreading the Word of God to those needy souls who desire it. Over the years, the dedicated service of the Federation Typist, Marie Winter, has enabled this medium of Christian Education regularly to be put in print.

ELCR YOUNG PEOPLE

Older members of the ELCR today speak highly of the wonderful spirit of unity and fellowship that existed in those early days. Many enjoyable times were had by young people who began to meet for activities, particularly over weekends. In 1967 at a camp held in Woombye, a decision was made to form a young people's group, and a committee asked to draw up a constitution. At later Camps this was adopted and the Luther League became the official young people's group in the ELCR, under the supervision of the congregations.



4. Luther League Camp, Woombye, 1967

Over the years, the ELCR Luther League has served wonderful purposes amongst its young people. As well as encouraging the study of the Scriptures and assisting our young people to remain faithful to the Word, it has provided opportunities for recreation and enjoyment in accord with the Bible. Many have found their life's partner through activities provided for the youth.



5. Luther League Camp, Caloundra, 1971

PASTOR KLEINIG'S FIRST ANNUAL REPORT

Let **Pastor Kleinig** sum up his feelings as presented in his first report to the First Annual Convention of the ELCR, at Kilkivan, 15 January, 1967.

"By the grace of God we were permitted to form our ELCR last year, not just for the sake of being something new, something different. We did so for the purpose of retaining in our midst, for ourselves and for our children, the Word of God in its truth and purity. Let us never forget, this was by the grace of God. Most of us will remember the strenuous efforts that were made to dissuade us; how meeting after meeting was held; how numerous private approaches were made, in order to make us waver and finally capitulate. But the Lord in His mercy granted us the necessary conviction and strength to act according to our conscience, and like Luther, to say 'No'.

"And so we are here today. Let us thank God for that; and may our constant prayer be,

O grant that in Thy Holy Word
We here may live and die, dear Lord;
And when our journey endeth here,
Receive us into glory there."

Pastor Kleinig placed the following admonition before his hearers which we would do well to take note of today:

"Moreover, please always bear in mind that our ELCR will remain faithful to the Word of God only as long as our individual members remain faithful to the same. As the members, so the church, is a truth which requires no proof." (Steadfast, Feb. 1967, pp.2-3).

LESSONS:

1. God wants us to turn back to our first love to Him (Rev. 2:4).
2. Follow the example set for us by our founding fathers (Heb. 13:7).
3. Appreciate the many battles our fathers have fought so that we may have the pure Word. (Jude 3).
4. Orthodox and faithful pastors are a great blessing to the church (1 Thess. 5:12-13).

3. TWO PASTORS SERVE THE ELCR (1967-1969)

For a man in his late 60's, it is quite remarkable the amount of work Pastor Kleinig was able to manage during those first 18 months of the ELCR's existence. With 5 congregations to serve, Kumbia, Murgon, Maryborough, Gympie and Woombye, as well as a preaching place in the Toowoomba/Dalby area, the pressure upon him was great as he faithfully served the Lord through the preaching of His Word. But it soon became obvious that if Pastor Kleinig continued on with this workload, that soon his health would suffer. Within a number of years it would be simply impossible for him to do all of the work by himself because of his age. The need was seen for another Pastor to be called to assist Pastor Kleinig. But there were no Pastors available in Australia who were faithful to the Word of God. All other former ELCA Pastors had deserted the pathway of God's Word in its truth and purity through their fellowship with and membership in the new Lutheran Church of Australia. What was to be done?

CONTACT WITH THE LCR

Similar to the former ELCA, so also the Missouri Synod had become corrupted with false doctrine, particularly in the area of Church Fellowship. A number of concerned pastors organized the State of the Church Conferences in the early 1960's. When these failed to arrest the decline of Missouri, pastors and congregations severed their connection with Missouri. The LCR was organized in 1964 at Chicago, Illinois.

For a number of years, Pastor Kleinig had been in correspondence with Pastors from the LCR in America, particularly Pastor Cameron A. Mackenzie, then the Administrator of this group, and Pastor Harold W. Romoser. Pastor Kleinig explained in detail the happenings within the ELCA as it progressed towards union; and in turn received valuable advice and guidance from these men, as well as detailed information on the happenings within the Missouri Synod, as well as the Lutheran Church generally. This help assisted in confirming to Pastor Kleinig that he had taken the correct step in severing fellowship from the ELCA. When the constitution of the ELCR was being formulated, the appointed committee looked for help towards the Constitution of the LCR, though with numerous alterations and additions as were seen necessary. It is only natural that the ELCR after its formation would look to the LCR for fellowship.

ELCR SEEKS FELLOWSHIP WITH THE LCR

At the Constituting Convention of the ELCR, 29 May, 1966, a unanimous resolution was passed to seek fellowship with the LCR. This was accepted at a Convention of the LCR the following month, and thus the bond of fellowship was established.

Fellowship contacts with the LCR consisted for a start in expressions of greetings between official gatherings of the two church bodies, exchange of letters between Pastors, general assistance in guarding the doctrine and practice of the church through exchange of church papers etc. Upon a request from the ELCR, a doctrinal essay by an LCR pastor was presented at the annual Fellowship Day held at Gympie on 13 September, 1970. The essay was written by Pastor Dale Ness entitled **Christian Stewardship**. In the year 1967 an exchange of a far greater kind took place.

PASTOR HUNTER CALLED FROM AMERICA

When the ELCR first began, the need for additional man-power was seen to assist Pastor Kleinig with his pastoral work. Early in 1967 a suggestion was made for a letter to be forwarded to the LCR enquiring as to when a suitable minister would be available. However communication arrived from Pastor Romoser of the LCR, the reply to which explained what the ELCR was able to manage in regard to salary and housing, requesting also financial assistance from the LCR.

Within several weeks, a letter had arrived from the LCR offering Candidate Keith Hunter as one willing to accept a call. A Council Meeting was held on 17 May, 1967, at Gympie, to consider the matter. At this meeting it was unanimously resolved to recommend to all congregations of the Federation to empower the Council, in the name and on behalf of the ELCR, to extend a Call to the Candidate to serve as the second Pastor in Australia. The matter of renting of a house in either Nambour or Gympie was also suggested for investigation. Application was made to the LCR for assistance towards providing for the new Pastor. At that stage it was thought that Candidate Hunter would arrive in Australia on 13 July. The Installation date was set aside for 23 July, at Woombye.

Who was Candidate Keith Hunter? Keith Armstrong Hunter had been trained in Concordia Seminary, Springfield, USA. This was a Seminary of the Missouri Synod. Sadly, however, the leaven of false doctrine by this time had already spread well and truly through this now heterodox church body. Upon graduating from this Seminary, Keith Hunter recognized the false teachings within Missouri, and for conscience reasons left the Synod. He turned to the LCR and offered himself as a candidate for the ministry. Hereupon he was recommended by the LCR to receive a call to Australia to serve in the ELCR.



6. Pastor Kleinig, Pastor and Mrs. Hunter (and child), Mrs. Kleinig



7. Pastor and Mrs Hunter (and son) at Installation

A further Council meeting was held on June 14, 1967, at Gympie. A letter was read from the LCR indicating that Candidate Hunter had been found sound in doctrine to the satisfaction of the LCR Council. Having received permission from the congregations of the ELCR, a Call was extended to Candidate Hunter, with an accompanying letter stating the requirements of the Pastor, as well as the obligations towards him. This call was duly accepted by Pastor Hunter. The Federation was grateful for the assistance of the LCR towards Pastor Hunter's salary.

ARRIVAL AND INSTALLATION OF PASTOR HUNTER

With much eagerness the arrival of the new Pastor was awaited. Quite a number of ELCR Councillors and members were present at Brisbane Airport on Friday, July 14, 1967, when Pastor Hunter's plane arrived from San Francisco. With joy he was welcomed to Australia, together with his wife, Connie and first son. Pastor Hunter was then taken to Kingaroy to spend some time with Pastor Kleinig, to get to know him and help in settling into his new charge. Shortly after this, Pastor Hunter made his way to Gympie, settling into a rented home.

The installation took place the following Sunday at Woombye, July 23, 1967, Pastor Kleinig conducting the service. Many attended from throughout the ELCR to welcome the new pastor. Much prayer was given to the Lord that He would bless the work of the two pastors and establish a harmonious relationship between them. An interesting observation was the presence of several observers from the Lowood area, where about 10 years later a congregation was formed which would join the ELCR.

PASTORAL WORK IN THE ELCR

To assist the Pastors in their work, it was decided to divide the ELCR into two parishes. Pastor Hunter served Maryborough, Gympie and Woombye, with a preaching place at Brisbane, and Pastor Kleinig served Kumbia, Murgon and Toowoomba/Dalby. Also a manse was purchased at Gympie for a cost of \$7,000. In 1969 the baptised membership of the ELCR was 153 souls.

Annual Conventions were held, on a suitable day early in the year. Since there was only time after the opening service to discuss the business of the Federation, it was decided to hold a



9. Gathering of ELCR, Fellowship Day, Toogoolawah, 1969



8. Pastors Hunter and Kleinig, 1969

and the presentation and adoption of an essay on doctrine. This was to follow the fine custom as practiced in the former ELCA. It also encouraged as many as possible of the lay people to be present. The first Fellowship Day, set aside for this purpose, was held in Toowoomba, on September 8, 1968. Over the years since this day, many spiritual blessings have

resulted from the doctrinal papers that have been written by our pastors.

Two new congregations joined the Federation in 1969. The first was a group of lay people who for doctrinal reasons left the LCA and formed their own congregation in Biloela. Having received a visit from the pastors of the ELCR, they applied and were accepted into membership of the Federation. This congregation, first served by Pastor Hunter, continued for a number of years, but then disbanded when the majority of members shifted to other congregations.



10. Members of Biloela Congregation, 1972

In the same year, ELCR members from other congregations came to reside in the Brisbane area, due to work and study opportunities. Lay reading services were begun, and soon a congregation, "Immanuel" Brisbane, was formed. This congregation was accepted into membership in the ELCR in 1969.

This same year saw the Brisbane and Toowoomba congregations forming a separate Parish. Called "Bethlehem" parish, it now went about seeking a third Pastor to call. The following year the parish almost called a pastor. However problems arose, and the matter was not proceeded with. In 1968 preaching services were begun in Toogoolawah. Members from here in due time travelled to and became a part of Toowoomba Congregation.

A major project that the ELCR undertook was the printing of an **Essay on Church Fellowship**, by Pastor Th. Nickel. This essay, originally presented in the old ELSA in 1902 in connection with the Heidenreich controversy, was translated by Pastor Kleinig and appeared in **Steadfast** in 1967. The great value of this explanation of a vital doctrine of God's Word moved the Federation to seek to have it reprinted in Booklet form. This was achieved in 1969 with the help of a Maryborough printing company. The initial printing proved so popular that a second printing was soon required.

LESSONS:

1. Put much effort into seeing that doctrinal unity exists before fellowship (1 Cor 1:10).

4. DOCTRINAL CONTROVERSY SPLITS THE ELCR (1969-1971)

In general during the first years, the pastors and congregations experienced doctrinal harmony. However soon the storm-clouds of controversy began to arise, which finally caused members to leave the Federation.

STORM CLOUDS GATHER

In America the practice of women wearing a head-covering in the public worship service had begun to wane for a number of years. However in Australia it was generally observed by the ELCA up to the time of the union. However the Scriptural principles behind this practice (1 Cor. 11:2-16) had not been stressed by many Pastors and were generally forgotten. With the arrival of Pastor Hunter and with his approval, a number of ladies began to attend worship services without the head covering.

In 1969 private discussions on the matter took place, involving study of the passages of God's Word involved. Soon two positions began to emerge, the one supported by Pastor Hunter that this was a matter of Christian liberty, the second supported by Pastor Kleinig that here was a command of God that we are in duty bound to observe today. Private discussion increased during the early part of 1970, until at a meeting in 1970 of Bethlehem Parish (Toowoomba/Brisbane), a resolution was adopted requesting the Pastors to place the matter

before their congregations and draw up a statement to be submitted to the next ELCR Convention.

NO AGREEMENT REACHED

However the Pastors, despite study of the Scriptures and discussion with LCR pastors, could not reach agreement, and the matter continued to ferment. Pastor Kleinig wrote several papers on the matter which were considered by Federation members. The matter came to a head at the 5th Annual Convention of the ELCR held in Kingaroy, 5 March, 1971. After a statement was read out by Pastor Hunter, debate took place in which feelings were strongly expressed. Due to the fact that the matter was now causing public controversy, a Council meeting held 27 March, 1971, recommended a series of meetings be convened, attended by the Pastors, Council members and representatives from congregations not represented on Council, at which the head covering matter could be discussed particularly on the basis of the original Greek.

Four meetings resulted in April, May and June 1971, comprising about 24 hours of discussion, all being held at Kingaroy. At the last of these meetings, held 28 June, 1971, a statement was presented, drawn up by Pastor Kleinig, entitled **The Controversy**. In brief it stated that because of the principles of God's Moral Law stated in previous verses, the wearing of the head covering in the public worship service is commanded by the Apostle Paul (1 Cor. 11:10), as a practice to be observed by all Christians until the last day. This statement was voted on by this meeting, and adopted by 8 votes to 3. The votes against were those of Pastor Hunter and two representatives of his congregations.

PASTOR HUNTER LEAVES THE ELCR

Hereupon, on the following day, 29 June, 1971, in a public letter to his parish, Pastor Hunter announced that he had severed fellowship with Pastor Kleinig and all those who accepted his position on the head covering. Congregations of the ELCR were asked to declare their positions on the matter. This took place over the following weeks. It resulted in two congregations as well as other lay people (altogether approx. 40 members), together with Pastor Hunter leaving the ELCR.

EFFECT ON THE ELCR

This was indeed a sad day for all concerned. Satan indeed worked great harm in a church which was as yet only young. It was a great test for all members of the ELCR as to their loyalty to the Word of God, and their preparedness to stand fast on its sacred truths no matter what the consequences. Families were torn apart doctrinally, resulting in much tension on both sides. Personality conflicts did take place, where Satan happily caused conflict between people who were former brothers in the faith. Where in a moment of weakness a Christian, even though he may be standing for the truth, acts in a way not becoming a Christian, there he should in true sorrow ask the Lord for His forgiveness. However there must be no compromise with the truth, even though it may cause family division and other hardships. The Lord Himself prophesied such parting of ways where Christians, out of love to the Saviour, are forced to take a stand for the truth (Matt. 10:34).

The heat of controversy had also taken its toll on the health of Pastor Kleinig. Now in his early seventies, with his workload suddenly increased, his health began to suffer. Humanly speaking, it seemed impossible for our faithful teacher to continue indefinitely. How would God who had so graciously provided over past years, provide now for the future? Even as this storm was breaking, the Lord was providing the answer.

Because of the serious difficulties that had now been finalised, a Special Convention was held on 1 August, 1971, at Kingaroy. Here **The Controversy** Statement was officially and unanimously accepted by the congregations of the ELCR. From experience gained during the controversy on the head covering matter, a Doctrinal Committee was established, composed of Pastors and 3 laymen appointed from congregations, to discuss questions of doctrine placed before them, and make recommendations to the ELCR based on the Word of God.

The Doctrinal Committee was also given the responsibility of supervising the training of future pastors in the ELCR.

WHAT OF FELLOWSHIP WITH THE LCR?

Until this time, the ELCR had been in fellowship with the LCR in America. However, now the situation had developed whereby the LCR was at the same time in fellowship with the ELCR, as well as Pastor Hunter and his followers. This situation could not continue indefinitely.

Already in 1970, the ELCR had officially approached the LCR about a matter of concern in regard to Selective Fellowship. Though the LCR was not in fellowship with the Wisconsin and Missouri Synods which were both heterodox, they were prepared to fellowship with Pastors and lay people belonging to these groups. The ELCR took the position that such contact involved unionism, church fellowship with those teaching contrary to the Word of God. Though correspondence went back and forth in 1970, no satisfactory resolution of the matter was reached.

Thus after Pastor Hunter and his followers left in 1971, these two matters remained unresolved with the LCR. The August 1971 Convention of the ELCR decided to ask the LCR to declare its position on these matters. Since by February 1972 it was clear that the LCR still held to its position in regard to head covering and selective fellowship, on this basis fellowship was suspended and finally terminated in March 1973. God's Word commands, after due admonition, that fellowship be severed with those who do not hold to His Word in its truth and purity. Since 1973 there has been no further fellowship contact with the LCR.

LESSONS:

1. Do not compromise the Truth even in minor points of doctrine (Phil. 4:1).
2. If at all possible train your own Pastors so that you can be sure of their doctrinal purity.
3. For the sake of God's Word, we may be required to make earthly sacrifices (Luke 14:27).
4. Be careful not to allow the sinful flesh to gain control especially in the heat of controversy (Eph. 4:31).
5. If you are faithful to the Lord in life's battles, He will graciously care for you (Luke 12:7).



11. Vicar A.D. Grieger

5. PASTOR KLEINIG ASSISTED BY A VICAR (1971-1973)

Already while the matter of the head covering was being debated, the Lord was providing for the pastoral needs of the ELCR. Early in 1971, a letter was received by Pastor Kleinig from a lay missionary, Audley Grieger. He was serving the LCA in a missionary capacity to the aboriginals in Coober Peedy, South Australia. He became aware of the decline in doctrine in the LCA, and after 6 years as a missionary, decided, together with his family, to leave the LCA and apply for membership in the ELCR.

In April 1971 this application was accepted, and after this Mr. Grieger was appointed as a Vicar under Pastor Kleinig. At the same time he was asked to continue theological studies with the purpose in view to be eligible for a call in the ELCR. Vicar Grieger attended as an observer the committee meetings held to discuss the head covering matter, and indicated his agreement with the position taken by the ELCR. He then continued his work as a Vicar to Pastor Kleinig. As well as performing pastoral work in all congregations, he began theological studies under Pastor Kleinig, especially in the areas of Dogmatics and Church History.

ANOTHER STUDENT

In 1972 a young member of the ELCR, Bryce Winter, offered to study for the ministry. After leaving High School, Bryce had received two years

instruction as a teacher, and upon graduating taught in Taabinga Primary School for 2 years. During this time, Bryce had the desire to become a Pastor, even contemplating at one time studying in America in the LCR. He also began preliminary studies in Old Testament Hebrew, New Testament Greek and German.

After Vicar Grieger began his studies, in 1973 Bryce studied full-time under Pastor Kleinig with him. Thus Pastor Kleinig was able to train two students at the same time.

NEW CONGREGATION AT KINGARROY

Founding congregations of the ELCR had existed at Kumbia and Murgon, about an hour's drive apart. However when membership in the Murgon congregation grew smaller, and in order to enable the building of a new church, it was decided to disband the two former congregations, and form "Good Shepherd" Congregation, Kingarroy. At once work commenced on the building of a new church in Knight Street, Kingarroy. The better block building was a wonderful blessing to the congregation, members of which until that time had worshipped in private homes and hired halls. The church was dedicated on Reformation Day 31 October, 1971.



12. Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, ELCR, Kingarroy

PROBLEMS ARISE

It was around this time that problems began to arise amongst the young people of the ELCR in the area of worldly dress and appearance. Indecent dresses had become the fashion amongst worldly women, and long hair began to be worn by the men. Sadly, it was not long before these sinful practices made their inroads into the church.

A stand had to be taken. With the motive of concern for the souls of the youth, Pastor Kleinig spoke out concerning these things, particularly at young people's gatherings. He pointed out the admonition of the Lord in 1 Tim. 2:9, "that women adorn themselves in modest apparel," and the statement of God in 1 Cor. 11:14, "Doth not even nature itself teach you, that, if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him?" Young people were urged, out of love to Christ, to heed God's command. A paper on this matter was written by Pastor Kleinig, placed before the congregations of the ELCR and adopted.



13. Good Shepherd Congregation, Kingarroy, 1984

VICAR GRIEGER LEAVES THE ELCR

Sadly with some, the ways of the world had taken hold, and it required much patient instruction and admonition for them to understand and obey God's will. To assist the young people in this matter, guidelines were adopted by the congregations to promote unity in practice in the Federation. These guidelines were applied in the spirit of Christian love and in conformity with the Formula of Concord, Article X.

To these guidelines Vicar Grieger took exception. Also some other matters arose for which Vicar Grieger had to be admonished. Charging the Federation and Pastor Kleinig with legalism, he resigned in July 1973, both from his position as Vicar, as well as from membership in the ELCR. His family at the same time severed their connection with the ELCR.

However in his opposition to worldliness, since the Scriptures are plain, Pastor Kleinig did not budge. Though it brought sadness to the members of the church to lose a worker, loyalty to God's Word was more important. Once compromises are made to Satan, he will steadily eat away at the teaching and practice of the church and thereby destroy souls and grab them for his kingdom.

LESSONS:

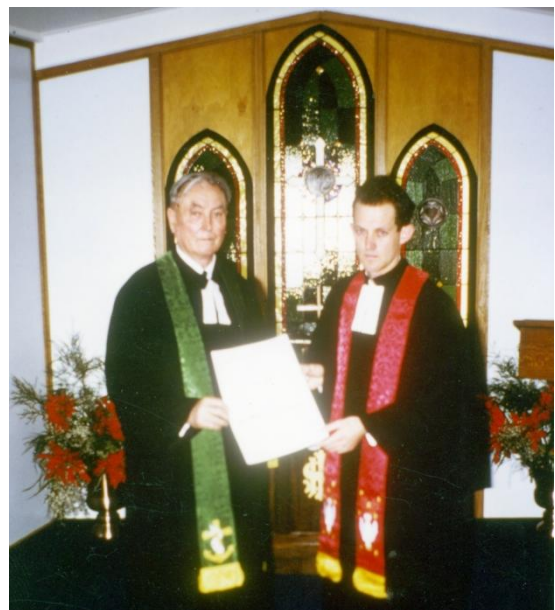
1. Be on guard against all forms of worldliness (Rom. 12:2).
2. Take a stand against error immediately before Satan gets a foothold within the church (Rom. 16:17-18).
3. See to it that Pastors have been trained thoroughly in the Word of God (Matt. 28:19-20).
4. When people apply for membership from outside the church, not only see to it that they are thoroughly instructed in God's Word, but also that they agree totally with our position in doctrine and practice (Amos 3:3).

6. TRAINING AND ORDINATION OF A SECOND PASTOR (1973-1975)

Already while Vicar Grieger was serving the congregations of the ELCR, Student Bryce Winter had begun with his studies for the ministry under Pastor Kleinig. After Grieger left the ELCR, the student continued his studies, at the same time beginning preaching work, Confirmation instruction and other pastoral assistance. His theological course was thorough, including the subjects of dogmatics, church history, pastoral theology, Greek, Hebrew, German, Catechetics, Homiletics and Exegesis.

Pastor Kleinig's age and declining health by this time were greatly restricting his ability to serve his congregations, particularly where long distances of travelling were involved. Sometimes congregations waited 6-8 weeks between preaching services. However the keenness of members for the Word of God showed in their diligence in maintaining lay-reading services and other congregational activities. There was a desperate need for a younger, fully trained and orthodox pastor to care for the needs of our congregations.

This need was fulfilled when Student Bryce Winter, having graduated from his studies on 5 July, 1975, accepted the call extended to him by the congregations of the ELCR. He was ordained and installed at Kingaroy on Sunday 13 July, at a service conducted by Pastor Kleinig, his ordination text being Jer. 15:19-20. A manse was purchased for the new pastor in Avoca Street, Kingaroy, and was occupied when he married several months later.



14. Pastor Kleinig and Pastor Bryce Winter at the latter's ordination.

LESSONS:

1. See to it that young men are encouraged to train for the ministry (Matt. 9:38).
2. God has promised to provide pastors for those who are faithful to His Word (Jer. 3:15).
3. Be thorough in training of pastors (Acts 20:28).

7. PASTOR KLEINIG RETIRES FROM THE MINISTRY

ANOTHER PASTOR TRAINED (1975-1980)

It was about this time that Pastor Kleinig notified the Federation of his retirement from the active ministry. Yet he still had a major task to perform in the training of a second student for the ministry.

Pastor Bryce Winter from the beginning had a large workload to undertake, with the shepherding of four congregations, as well as preaching places in Maryborough, Biloela, Canberra, Sydney and Melbourne. Satan had also not gone to sleep, with many pastoral problems having to be dealt with by the pastor. Amongst these was the application of God's Word (Deut 22:5) in connection with the breakdown that was beginning to occur in regard to the distinction of the dress between the man and the woman. Difficulties of this kind required all of the Pastor's theological knowledge and pastoral patience and wisdom in order to bring about a Scriptural resolution of them.

STENSKE FAMILY - AMERICA

It was a joy to the members of the Federation in the late 1960's to come into contact with a family of four in Los Angeles, California, who loved the Word of God. The mother of the family, Helma Stenske, had done a valuable work in translating from the German into English **The Judge is at the Door**, a fine commentary on the Book of Revelation by Pastor Peters. This book had been advertised in an overseas magazine, which when seen by Pastor Kleinig assisted in establishing contact with them. After finding this family in doctrinal unity with us, they were accepted into fellowship with the ELCR in 1974.

Many blessings were received from the spiritual contact with them, particularly with Jess, Helma's son and the spiritual leader of the family. It was a sad loss when both Jess passed away in 1978 and Helma in 1981. Since that time, contact has continued with Frieda Stenske, Jess's wife, who became a member of Kingaroy congregation to place her directly under the care of a pastor.

STUDENT GAVIN WINTER

In 1976, Gavin Winter, a second-cousin of Bryce, began part-time studies for the ministry, while



16. Pastor Bryce Winter, Pastor Kleinig (em.) and Pastor Winter Gavin, at Brisbane, 1981

completing his final year 12 at High School.

The following year his full-time studies began, training under

Pastor Kleinig (now retired from the active ministry) and Pastor Bryce Winter. On the completion of his part of the training in 1979, Pastor Kleinig and his wife made their final move to Brisbane, so that they could be cared for by members of their family. As a student Gavin began to preach during this first year

of full-time studies, and in other ways assisted with the pastoral work in the Federation.



15. Pastors Bryce and Gavin Winter at the Latter's Ordination, Kingaroy, 1980

After successfully graduating, the student accepted a call to serve the congregations of the ELCR as associate of Pastor Bryce Winter. The ordination and installation service took place on 29 June, 1980, the service being conducted by Pastor Bryce Winter. The text for the ordination service was the same as that of Pastor Bryce Winter when he was ordained in 1975. This was a joyous occasion for the ELCR for now they again had two pastors to serve the wide-flung membership of the church. Pastor Gavin Winter continued to live in his parent's home at Kumbia, near Kingaroy, an arrangement which delayed the need for the purchase of a second manse.



17. Our Saviour Lutheran Congregation, ELCR, Lowood, 1980

LOWOOD CONGREGATION JOINS



18. Our Saviour Lutheran Congregation, ELCR, Lowood, 1996

In 1977, for doctrinal reasons a small group severed their connection with the LCA and formed "Our Saviour" Lutheran Church, Lowood. Seeking the spiritual care of the ELCR, to gain understanding of its doctrinal stand, they received instruction in the Word of God for about 12 months.

First services were held in a private home, later in the Lowood High School and CWA Hall. Upon expressing complete agreement

with the doctrinal position of the ELCR, this congregation was accepted into fellowship and membership in the ELCR on 16 April, 1978. With God's gracious blessing they were able to build their own house of worship which was dedicated on 13 January, 1980.

When in 1993 a majority of Lowood members decided to leave the ELCR, taking this church building with them, the remnant reformed the congregation, and after worshipping in a private home and hall for almost 3 years purchased their own church building and hall at Tarampa, not far from Lowood.



19. Our Saviour Lutheran Church, Lowood, dedicated 1 December, 1996

ALL CONGREGATIONS BLESSED WITH CHURCH BUILDINGS



20. Trinity Lutheran Congregation, ELCR, Toowoomba, 1980

During this time, other congregations were given by the Lord the gracious blessing of a house of worship. "Trinity" Congregation, Toowoomba, purchased a building already established at Harlaxton, Toowoomba, which was dedicated 28 September, 1975. When circumstances brought the need for a change, the congregation built a new church on a larger block of land at Highfields, near Toowoomba, the dedication taking place on 28 August, 1988.



21. Trinity Lutheran Church, Toowoomba, dedicated 1988

"Trinity" Congregation, Woombye, who had brought with them their church building after leaving the ELCA, after a number of years found that the traffic noise on the major Bruce Highway, located next to the church, was becoming a nuisance to the conduct of services. This building was sold, and a block of land close by purchased. A building was erected which was dedicated on 3 July, 1977. This continues to be a house of the preaching of the pure Word for the congregation.

"Immanuel" Congregation Brisbane, since its formation in 1969 had worshipped in a hall at Camp Hill. It produced a wonderful thrill to the members to obtain an available church building. This was purchased and dedicated on 12 December, 1979. Though only small in size, it is a double story building, including a hall at the base for church activities.

All congregations having their church buildings has proven a great blessing to the ELCR.



22. Trinity Lutheran Congregation, Woombye, 1987



23. Trinity Lutheran Church, Woombye, dedicated 1977

LESSONS:

1. See to it that only the pure Word of God is proclaimed in your church building (John 8:31-32).
2. Be thankful for the faithful work of servants of the Lord like Pastor Kleinig who have brought to us the pure water of life (Heb. 12:1-2).
3. Make certain that there is doctrinal unity before the hand of fellowship is extended (1 Cor. 1:10).

4. Do all you can to encourage others who wish the pure Word of God (Eph. 4:3-6).



25. Immanuel Lutheran Congregation, ELCR, 1984



24. Immanuel Lutheran Church, ELCR, dedicated 1979

8. A PERIOD OF CONSOLIDATION AND GROWTH (1980-1996)

Both Pastors now began to work together in serving all congregations of the Federation. This was of benefit to the new Pastor, allowing him to work together with one more experienced at the beginning of his ministry. Also it gave opportunity for all members of the ELCR to share in the gifts of their two pastors.

However the need was soon seen to give to each Pastor the congregations for which alone he was responsible. In this way every member would know to whom they should go as their shepherd. This resulted in the decision to divide the Federation into two areas, with one pastor to serve over each area. Pastor Bryce Winter was asked to serve Toowoomba and Kingaroy congregations, with Pastor Gavin Winter serving the remaining three congregations, Brisbane, Lowood and Woombye. A second manse was built at Reinbotts Road, Lowood, in 1983, to assist in this arrangement.

However though each Pastor was called to serve specific congregations, all congregations of the Federation agreed to support both Pastors. It was felt that this would assist in encouraging a oneness of purpose which could easily be lost if the ELCR was divided into parishes as happened at the time of its formation. This system to date has worked quite successfully. Since the Kingaroy Manse by this stage was becoming too small for the family of Pastor Bryce Winter, a block of land was purchased and a new manse built at Graham St., Kingaroy, in 1985.

DOCTRINAL DIFFERENCES ARISE - 1983

Satan is ever on the lookout to find an opportunity to introduce his poison of error and thus destroy souls. With evil glee he saw a matter arise in the Federation, particularly in Lowood and Brisbane Congregations which was the cause of about 30 members leaving these two congregations.

The dispute arose over the ELCR Luther League hiring a Campsite at Laidley belonging to a Catholic High School. It involved the use and control of the Campsite for the Weekend, in return for the payment of a sum of money. A number of lay people, first in Lowood congregation and later in Brisbane congregation objecting strongly to this, charging the ELCR with error and false practice.

In response the pastors, the Doctrinal Committee and soon all congregations stated that though the Bible forbids



26. Pastor Kleinig, 1979, now retired

Church Fellowship with false teachers and false teaching churches (Rom. 16:17), it does not forbid secular fellowship (buying and selling) with them, provided we do not in any way support or promote the spread of their false teaching. Despite patient instruction in the matter, a number would not withdraw their charges, and used them as a basis for severing fellowship from the ELCR.

Sadly, amongst those who left was Pastor Kleinig, now retired for over 8 years, but who because of his age could no longer properly judge and discern such a matter of doctrine. His leaving brought great sadness to all in the Federation, particularly to the two pastors he had so faithfully trained. However it did not diminish the great esteem and appreciation they held for him because of the tremendous work he did for the Lord in their early years. In 1987 he peacefully passed away in the Lord.

PRINTING WORK

Early in the history of the federation, good devotion and sermon books were hard to obtain. The need was desperate to print our own orthodox Lutheran material to allow more of God's Word to be used in the homes of our members, and also to get Scriptural material into the hands of those outside the church who desperately needed it.

With the replacement of the original Roneo Duplicators with more up-to-date photocopiers, printing machines and computers, this task has been made easier. Over the years a concerted effort has made available reprints of such fine books as Law and Gospel (Koch), The Judge is at the Door (Peters), Crumbs (Zorn), Book of Devotion - The Psalms (Kuegele), The Good Shepherd (Lochner), the Australian Lutheran Hymn Book and Tune Book, and numerous others. One of the most valuable efforts has been the production of two volumes in a four volume series of the sermons of Pastor Kleinig, which when finished will provide sermons for each day of the church year.

Though soundly orthodox printed material is still scarce, none of our members have reason to be without a good selection of literature suitable for devotions and private study.

MISSION FIELD - SOUTHERN AREA

During the late 1980's and early 1990's, contact was made with ELCR Pastors by various individuals and families particularly in Tasmania, South Australia and Victoria. This interest in the pure Word led to the decision to establish a Mission Fund one of the primary purposes being to assist the Pastors in traveling to these areas. Also it allowed money to be spent on other mission efforts in the areas of our local congregations. As well, in 1988 the southern area was declared a Mission Area so that special effort could be concentrated on bringing the Word of God to souls in desperate need.



27. ELCR Council, 1994

Back: Pastor Gavin Winter, Ben Jeffers, Lindsay Winter, Neil Winter, James Schirmer

Front: Reg Herrmann, Wayne Winter, Pastor Bryce Winter

1. Be ready always to judge the doctrine and practice of your church (Matt. 7:15-16).
2. Study the Bible and orthodox Lutheran literature daily (John 5:39).
3. Do all you can to encourage others with the pure Word (1 Pet. 3:15).

God has blessed these efforts with persons seeking membership through doctrinal unity in the areas of Adelaide, Nhill and Naracoorte. Existing members in Sydney, Melbourne and Canberra have also received more frequent visits from our pastors. It was also a joy to see a Mission congregation established in Tasmania where the teachings of God's Word are being studied with a view towards congregational membership in the ELCR.

In 1992 a preaching place was also established in Delungra, in northern New South Wales, with these members belonging to the Brisbane congregation.

LESSONS:

9. WHAT OF THE FUTURE FOR THE ELCR?

The history of the ELCR has shown that to retain the pure Word requires a stout and stiff battle.

On the part of **Pastors** it requires of them faithfulness to preach all the doctrines of God's Word in their purity. Those two vital doctrines of Law and Gospel must be preached, the Law as a severe message to point out sin and punishment, the Gospel as a sweet comfort to lead to Christ the Saviour. They must warn their hearers of the times in which we live, especially urging them to avoid ungodly worldliness. Souls must be warned against error, and carefully shepherded during times of temptation and trial. They must even be prepared to make sacrifices in order to bring the pure Word to lost souls.

Christian **Lay people** cannot expect all the work to be done by their pastors. They must be diligent in their attendance at worship and Bible studies, giving every attention to the important messages there placed before them. Above all they should believe this Word in their hearts and make it a goal always to obey God's Word in their lives. Knowing that often error enters a church through its leaders, they must be constantly on their guard that even the least error is not proclaimed by their pastors. Christian love for souls, patience and wisdom must be shown when others stray away from the Word, that they may be admonished in a way that will bring them to a knowledge of their sin and back on the road to heaven.

Families must have God's Word in their homes and practice strict yet loving discipline on their children. **Children** must honour respect and obey their parents, appreciating the valuable heritage of God's Word that has been passed onto them. **Older ones** must set a good example to the youth, knowing that the young are the future of the church. **Younger people** must be aware that they will especially be the target of Satan's attacks, being diligent that they are not lead astray by the evil ways of the world.

All of this and more must be done not through fear of God's anger or threats of the Law, but from fear and love of the Saviour who shed His precious blood on the Cross to redeem us miserable sinners.

As a Federation there is a desperate need for suitable men to train for the ministry. We must not expect quick growth in these last days, however we should not hide our Christian faith under a cover either, but have the duty, where God gives us opportunity, to bring this saving message to others. If we have regarded the struggles of the past to be hard, let us remember that as we near the Last Day the battle of Satan against Christ's Church will intensify and require of us even more difficult struggles to remain true to Christ.

Are you up to the task? Can God depend on you faithfully to fulfil your duty? Will you continue to retain your first love for Him and His Word (Rev. 2:4)? Does your heart really stand for the Saviour?

Friends, only God knows what the future really holds for us. But as to the future, we can cling firmly to His promises that He will continue to keep with us His precious Word as long as we continue to hold fast to Him (Rev. 2:10; Rev. 3:10-11).

May our prayer be to Him that He give to us the zeal for the Lord with determined and lasting efforts to do all in our power to continue to walk the pathway God has placed before us, that in eternity we may receive the crown He has prepared for us.

A SUMMARIZED HISTORY OF THE ELCR

- 1966** Mar. 20 - **CWA Hall, Kilkivan.** Approx. 50 people who had severed their connection with the ELCA met. They unanimously decided to organize a new church body.
- Apr. 18 - **Fat Hen Creek Rest Area,** near Kilkivan. A committee of five met to draw up the draft ELCR Constitution.
- May 29 - CWA Hall Kilkivan. Constituting Convention of the ELCR. Constitution adopted. Name **Evangelical Lutheran Congregations of the Reformation** chosen. Sought fellowship with the LCR.
 - First **Council Meeting** held.
- Jun. 24 - Received into fellowship by the LCR.
- Jul. - **Steadfast** commenced.
- 1967** Jan. 15 - **First Annual Convention** of the ELCR, at the CWA Hall, Kilkivan.
 - Membership of 108 souls. 63 communicant members.
- Mar. 25 - **Federation Luther League** decided formally to organize at Woombye.
- Jun. 14 - At a Council Meeting at Gympie, it was recommended to call Pastor K.A. Hunter.
- Jul. 23 - Woombye, Pastor K. Hunter installed by Pastor Kleinig.
- Oct. 8 - **Special Convention,** Oddfellow's Hall, Kingaroy; decisions to divide into two parishes, to become incorporated, to purchase a manse at Gympie (\$7,000).
- 1968** Jan. 21 - **Second Annual Convention,** Woombye. Membership 125 souls. \$7,513.63 total income (ELCR).
- Jan. 29 - Luther League Constitution adopted.
- Sep. 8 - **First Fellowship Day** at Toowoomba.
- 1969** Jan. 19 - **Third Annual Convention,** Kingaroy. 153 souls.
- 1970** Feb. 1 - **Fourth Annual Convention,** Toowoomba. Decisions to print Nickel Essay; form a third Parish; investigate the LCR re their attitude to the Nickel Essay and selective fellowship.
- 1971** Mar. 7 - **Fifth Annual Convention,** Kingaroy. Head Covering matter discussed.
- Apr. 26 - A.D. Grieger's application for membership accepted; appointed as Vicar to Pastor Kleinig.
- Jun. 28 - Last of the committee meetings on the Head Covering matter. Pastor K. Hunter together with approx. 40 souls left the ELCR.
- Aug. 1 - **Special Convention,** Kingaroy. Formation of Doctrinal Committee.
- 1972** Feb. 27 - **Sixth Annual Convention,** Kingaroy. Fellowship with LCR suspended.
- 1973** - Student B.L. Winter began full time studies with Vicar Grieger for the ministry under Pastor Kleinig.

- Mar. 4 - **Seventh Annual Convention**, Kingaroy. Severance of fellowship with LCR finalized.
- Jul. 11 - A.D. Grieger left the Federation over matter of worldliness.
- 1975** Mar. 9 - **Ninth Annual Convention**, Kingaroy. Reported that the Stenske family were in fellowship. Baptised membership 147.
- Jul. 13 - Ordination of Pastor B.L. Winter at Kingaroy.
- Sep.13 - Last official act of Pastor Kleinig - retired.
- 1976** Mar. 21 - **Tenth Annual Convention**, Kingaroy.
- **History of ELCR** written by Pastor Kleinig.
- 1977** Jan. - Student Gavin Winter began full-time studies for the ministry under Pastor Kleinig.
- 1980** Jun. 28 - Ordination of Pastor G.L. Winter at Kingaroy; both Pastors serve all congregations of the ELCR, preaching on a rotation basis.
- Baptised membership 182.
- 1983** - Lowood Manse completed; Pastor G. Winter shifts to Lowood.
- Aug. 21 - About 30 people, including Pastor Kleinig, leave the Federation over the Laidley Camp matter.
- 1984** - ELCR divided into two areas. Pastor B.L. Winter to serve Kingaroy and Toowoomba. Pastor G.L. Winter to serve Brisbane, Lowood and Woombye.
- 1985** Jun. - Pastor B.L. Winter moves into new manse at Kingaroy.
- Baptised membership 179.
- 1993** - Majority of Our Saviour, Lowood decide to leave the ELCR.
- Our Saviour Congregation, Lowood reformed.
- 1996** - 30th Anniversary of formation of ELCR.
- Dec. 1 - Dedication of Our Saviour, Lowood.

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