

Lutheran Churches in Australia

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2018

These are all the Lutheran Church bodies in Australia, to the best of my knowledge. I apologise in advance if I have made any mistakes and welcome corrections.

English Lutheran Churches

Lutheran Church of Australia (LCA)

The largest Lutheran synod in Australia, the *Lutheran Church of Australia* (LCA) was formed in 1966 when the two Lutheran synods of that day, the *Evangelical Lutheran Church of Australia* (ELCA) and the *United Evangelical Lutheran Church in Australia* (UELCA), united into one Lutheran synod. The LCA has churches all over Australia and some in New Zealand. The head of the LCA is the synodical bishop. The LCA is also divided in districts with each district having their own district bishop.

The LCA is an associate member of both the *Lutheran World Federation* (LWF) and the *International Lutheran Council* (ILC).

The LCA is a member of the *National Council of Churches in Australia*.

The LCA has official altar-pulpit fellowship with the *Evangelical Lutheran Church of Papua New Guinea* (ELCPNG) and *Gutnius Lutheran Church of Papua New Guinea* (GLCPNG) and a 'Recognition of Relationship' with the *Lutheran Church of Canada* (LCC).

The LCA also has missions to the Australia Aboriginals.

The LCA also has German, Finnish, Chinese, Indonesian and African congregations in Australia, which are considered members of the LCA.

The LCA is also in fellowship with German, Latvian, Swedish, and Estonian congregations in Australia, which are not considered members of the LCA.

Evangelical Lutheran Congregations of the Reformation (ELCR)

The third largest synod in Australia, the *Evangelical Lutheran Congregations of the Reformation* (ELCR), formed in 1966 from a collection of ELCA congregations who refused the LCA Union of 1966 over the issue of the doctrine of Open Questions. The founding pastor of the ELCR was F. Kleinig.

The ELCR is based mainly in Queensland with congregations at Brisbane, Toowoomba, Tarampa, Kingaroy, and Woombye, and also has one congregation in Melbourne, Victoria, and a few preaching places in South Australia, Victoria and Tasmania.

The ELCR is in fellowship with Pastor Stuart Wood and the independent Lutheran congregation of *Bible Lutheran Church* Los Angeles, California.

Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Australia (ELSA)

The *Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Australia* (ELSA) official formed in 1989. The ELSA was formed from the *Faith Lutheran Parish* (FLP) in Queensland. The FLP split from the *Evangelical Lutheran Congregations of the Reformation* (ELCR) in 1971 over the practice of Head-Coverings. The FLP was started by a Pastor K. Hunter, whom the ELCR had called from the *Lutheran Churches of the Reformation* (LCR), in the USA.

The ELSA currently has one congregation in Maryborough, Queensland, with preaching places at Nanango, Biloela and on the Gold Coast, Queensland.

The ELSA is in fellowship with the *Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod* (WELS) and the *Evangelical Lutheran Synod* (ELS), and is a member of *Confessional Evangelical Lutheran Conference* (CELC).

Evangelical Lutheran Synod (ELS)

Our Redeemer Lutheran Church, Kallangur, Queensland is a member congregation of the *Evangelical Lutheran Synod* (ELS), USA. In 1999, *Our Redeemer* rescinded their membership in the *Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Australia* (ELSA). *Our Redeemer*, however, remains in full altar-pulpit fellowship with the ELSA.

Our Redeemer as a member of the ELS is in fellowship with the *Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod* (WELS), and is a member of *Confessional Evangelical Lutheran Conference* (CELC).

Orthodox Evangelical Lutheran Church (OELC)

The *Orthodox Evangelical Lutheran Church* (OELC) is a small synod based solely in Queensland. The OELC formed in 1973, after they split from the *Evangelical Lutheran Congregations of the Reformation* (ELCR) over disagreements over worldliness, the immodest dress of women, and the length of hair worn by men. The OELC was founded by a Pastor A. Grieger, who had joined the ELCR in 1971 after leaving the *Lutheran Church of Australia* (LCA).

The OELC meets mainly in house-churches and has members in Maryborough, Caboolture, Brisbane, Toowoomba and the Sunshine Coast, Queensland.

Australian Evangelical Lutheran Church (AELC)

The *Australian Evangelical Lutheran Church* (AELC) is the second largest synod in Australia, based solely in Queensland. The AELC officially formed in 1993. The AELC was formed from pastors and congregations that had left the *Lutheran Church of Australia* (LCA) over the period of 1990-1993. The AELC formed due to a continued growth of Liberal Theology being promoted in the LCA. There were a number of issues of disagreement between the LCA and AELC, chief among these were, the Inerrancy of Scripture, Creation/Evolution, the Immortality of the Soul and the role of women in the church.

The founding pastors of the AELC were C. Priebbenow, V. Grieger and M. Grieger.

The AELC has previously served congregations across Australia, however, as of the present time the AELC serves only seven congregations in Queensland, located at Minden, Marburg, Lowood, Toowoomba, Aubigny, Oakey and Greenwood.

In 2015 the AELC declared altar-pulpit fellowship with the *United Lutheran Mission Association* (ULMA), in the USA.

Living Waters Community Church, Mildura

Living Waters Community Church Mildura, Victoria split from the Holy Trinity Lutheran Church of the *Lutheran Church of Australia* on October 31st 1993. *Living Waters* attempted to remain a part of the LCA but their proposal was rejected by the LCA Victorian District Church Council.

Independents

The term *Independents* is used to refer to a collection of independent pastors and congregations which split from the *Australian Evangelical Lutheran Church* (AELC) in 2008. The *Independents* split from the AELC over the issue of Lay Consecration with the latter rejecting.

The *Independents* are based in Queensland and South Australia with congregations at Hivesville, Marburg, Minden, Toowoomba, and Greenwood, Queensland, and Nuriootpa and Hahndorf, South Australia, with preaching places at Mildura and Doon, Victoria.

Steadfast Evangelical Lutheran Church

Steadfast Evangelical Lutheran Church, Tanunda, South Australia is an independent congregation which split from *Peace Evangelical Lutheran Church*, Nuriootpa, South Australia (*Independents*) in 2010 over disputes concerning Closed Communion.

In 2012 *Steadfast* declared altar-pulpit fellowship with the *Church of the Lutheran Confessions* (CLC), in the USA.

Living Water Fellowship, Wagga Wagga

Living Water Fellowship Wagga Wagga, New South Wales, split from *Bethlehem Lutheran Church* Wagga Wagga (LCA) in 2012, over a number of disagrees concerning the nature and purpose of church, the essence and purpose of a pastor and the nature and purpose of a congregation's external ministries.

Living Water Fellowship affirms the practices of Lay Preaching and Lay Consecration and allows women to perform both of these roles.

Living Water Fellowship is a member congregation of the *Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ* (LCMC), in the USA, an association of independent congregations.

Redeemer Christian Fellowship (RCF)

Redeemer Christian Fellowship (RCF) was founded by a small group of families from various non-Lutheran backgrounds who had left their previous congregations and began meeting in Easter of 2014. Eventually the group formed a congregation and called Pastor Troy Harris, an ordained former Anglo-Catholic, who had also served in Evangelical churches, to be their pastor. Pastor Harris was rostered with the *Independent Lutheran Diocese* (ILD) of the USA at the time of calling and the congregation was formally incorporated in 2016. The congregation is mission-focused and is largely composed of converts to Christianity and former non-Lutherans. It has plans for two more church plants by the end of 2018.

RCF holds to the historic episcopal model of church government and regards Apostolic Succession as a useful part of its witness and the basis for future church unity. In October of 2017 Pastor Harris was installed as bishop, and as of April 2018 it also has a local deacon and a missionary priest overseas. Theologically it is highly conservative and somewhat High Church or Evangelical Catholic and worships according to a modified Swedish Rite translated by Ps. Harris. In practice RCF has both high and low church styled services. RCF holds a consecrationist position on the Lord's Supper and rejects Philippism or receptionism. Communion is restricted to members but the clergy are given authority to make exceptions under certain very strict conditions, and the reliqua is to be consumed. RCF also rejects congregational voting on matters of faith and morals, believing that doctrine is to be received, not voted upon, with ancient episcopal consensus and the Lutheran Confessions being testimonies of the received Apostolic faith.

RCF has cordial and fraternal relationships with like-minded Lutheran churches abroad, as well as with several Orthodox and Continuing Anglican churches. It is interested in pursuing altar and pulpit fellowship with other churches and is currently in talks with some.”

As of 2018 the RCF have ceased its fellowship with the ILD.

Growth Lutheran Network (GLN)

Growth Lutheran Network is a network of Lutheran congregations based in Perth, Western Australia which formed in 2015 after the removal of a pastor from the *Lutheran Church of Australia* (LCA). Disgruntled pastors and members of the LCA had begun discussions in 2014 over dissatisfaction of the direction of the LCA. Following the removal of an LCA pastor, M. Parker, the GLN was formed in early 2015 being joined by another pastor, G. Balodis. The GLN also began the training of a pastor in training, A. Snell.

The GLN currently has only a single congregation at Alkimos, Western Australia, which is an outer coastal suburb of Perth.

Aletheia Lutheran Church, Sydney (AALC)

Aletheia Lutheran Church is a global outreach mission of the *American Association of Lutheran Churches* (AALC). A branch of this outreach mission is located in Sydney, New South Wales. The *Aletheia Lutheran Church* mission was founded in 2015 by Pastor Chris Roseborough and the *Kongsvinger Lutheran Church*, AALC. The mission is a global outreach for those broken and bruised

by the Visible Church. Services are held online using “Go To Meeting”. Gatherings are generally 3 hours of interactive Christian instruction, questions, clarifications, and fellowship. A typical gathering begins with the Divine Service. The Sermon is followed immediately by a period of question and answers. When the Divine Service concludes, Sunday School is held on various topics. On July 18th 2018 *Aletheia Lutheran Church* was recognized by the AALC as an official outreach mission.

Living Grace Church, Toowoomba

Living Grace first emerged in 2000 as a church plant of the *Lutheran Church of Australia’s* (LCA) Wilsonton-Glencoe Lutheran parish. In 2002, *Living Grace* became its own LCA congregation. In 2008 the congregation suffered a split with members moving to the LCA’s Emmanuel Lutheran congregation.

Living Grace was a Pentecostal Lutheran congregation which was connected with the *Toronto Airport Church* and promoted the *Toronto Blessing* and the *New Apostolic Reformation*. *Living Grace* and their Pastor, Edgar Mayer, even started the *Lutheran Renewal* a Pentecostal organization in Australia dedicated to the spread of the *New Apostolic Reformation*. After conflict arose in 2017 *Living Grace* decided to leave the Synod. *Living Grace* was “peaceful dismissed” from the LCA on August 27th 2017, which means that they can return at anytime if they so choose. But while *Living Grace*, sought to retain their “Lutheran” teachings, they dropped the name Lutheran, lest they appear unwelcoming to the community, and instead called themselves *Living Grace Church, Toowoomba*.

Non-English

LCA Fellowship

There are a number of non-English Lutheran churches in Australia, many of which are in fellowship with the *Lutheran Church of Australia*:

Latvian Evangelical Lutheran Church Abroad (LELCA)

Following *World War Two* Latvian refugees fled to Australia. Amongst these refugees were Lutherans.

The *Latvian Evangelical Lutheran Church Abroad* was originally a branch of the *Evangelical Lutheran Church of Latvia* (ELCL) but in 2016, the LELCA established itself as a separate church body.

The LELCA currently has congregations in Melbourne, Sydney, Canberra, Brisbane, Adelaide and Perth.

In Strathfield, New South Wales the Latvia Lutheran Church and the Latvia Uniting Church are united into the single *Latvia Evangelical Lutheran Uniting Church*.

Evangelical Lutheran Church in Germany (ELCG)

The *Evangelical Lutheran Church in Germany* as a diaspora Australia. This diaspora first arose in 1923 when *Martin Luther Lutheran Church, Sydney* split from the *United Evangelical Lutheran Church in Australia* (UELCA). In 1934 *Trinity Lutheran Church, Melbourne* would also leave the UELCA. Melbourne would establish a second congregation in 1960, *St. John's Lutheran Church, Melbourne*.

In 1972 the ELCG in Australia would declare fellowship with the *Lutheran Church of Australia*.

The ELCG currently only has the one congregation in Sydney and the two in Melbourne.

Church of Sweden Abroad (SCA)

The *Church of Sweden Abroad* in Australia is a branch of the *Swedish Evangelical Lutheran Church of Sweden*.

The SCA currently has congregations in Sydney and Melbourne.

Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church Diocese Abroad (EELCDA)

The *Estonian Church Abroad* (ECA) first established an Estonian congregation in Sydney in 1943. In 2010 the ECA was renamed the *Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church Diocese Abroad*.

The EELCDA in Australia is a branch of the *Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church*.

The EELCDA currently only has one congregation in Sydney.

No LCA Fellowship

There are a few non-English Lutheran churches in Australia that are not in fellowship with the *Lutheran Church of Australia*:

Danish Seamen's Church and Church Abroad (DSCCA)

In 2004 the *Danish Church Abroad* and the *Danish Seamen's Church* united to form the *Danish Seamen's Church and Church Abroad*.

The DSCCA is a branch of the *Evangelical Lutheran Church in Denmark*

The DSCCA has two congregations in Sydney, one in Melbourne and one in Brisbane.

Norwegian Church Abroad (NCA)

The *Norwegian Church Abroad* in Australia is a branch of the *Church of Norway*, which started in 2004.

The NCA currently only has one congregation in Sydney.