



LUTHERAN YOUTH OF QUEENSLAND

YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY
EVALUATION

MARCH 2014



LUTHERAN CHURCH
OF AUSTRALIA
QUEENSLAND DISTRICT
where love comes to life

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Table of contents	2
Acronyms	3
Executive summary	4
Introduction:.....	5
Purpose of Evaluation.....	5
Scope.....	5
Approach	5
Composition of team	5
Findings and Recommendations against the Terms of reference	7
Findings	7
Recommendations:.....	9
Analysis in support of the findings and recommendations	11
Key drivers for effective YA ministry: contemporary literature and study	11
<i>The spiritual narrative of YAs – the secular worldview influence</i>	11
<i>Amnesia, then self validation</i>	12
<i>The spiritual narrative playing out in YA life.....</i>	14
Implications for YAM in LCAQD.....	14
<i>Filling the ‘grid’.....</i>	14
<i>Teaching and inquiry: what content?</i>	14
<i>Research findings on teaching and inquiry.....</i>	15
<i>Engagement with the mystery of the Christian faith.....</i>	16
<i>Training for church community.....</i>	17
Assessment of Current YA engagement with LCAQD: Data	18
2011 Census.....	18
Comparison with other sources	19
Identification of the underlying reasons why young adults have remained involved in the LCAQD	22
Box 1: Survey background.....	23
Community.....	23
Family	24
Box 2: Faith formation in the home, church attendance and the LCA's approach.....	25
The faith journey: what explains not wandering?.....	26
Youth group	27
CLW.....	28
Box 3: The importance of CLW.....	29
Worship and YAs	30
Underlying reasons for lack of involvement	34
General	34
Box 5: Nobody told me how hard moving churches is... ..	35
Box 6: Youth group in hindsight: less games, more study please	38
Drilling down	39
Consultations regarding reasons for lack of involvement	40
Appendix 1: Terms of Reference	42
Appendix 2: Persons consulted for LYQ YAM evaluation.....	46
Appendix 3: Bibliography	47

ACRONYMS

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
BCYFM	Board for Child, Youth and Family Ministry (LCA national board)
CLW	Christian Life Week
CoW	LCA Commission on Worship
LCA	Lutheran Church of Australia
LCAQD	Lutheran Church of Australia, Queensland District
LYQ	Lutheran Youth of Queensland
NCLS	National Church Life Survey
YA	Young Adult
YAM	Young Adult Ministry
YAMC	Young Adult Ministry Coordinator

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A well known feature of the YA 18-25 population is that they literally defy summarizing. This is a time in life where differences in need explode. As one YA respondent to the survey said: 'There's nothing general to be said about the engagement with this age group'. Hence, this is yet another complex ministry area with many competing demands.

The message of this evaluation is that Christian YAs are, for the most part, finding it tough going in the secular world. They exist alongside a largely secular cohort who validate their own 'truth' in the search for the YA 'holy grail' of authenticity. Self-defined personal truths are determined from a much greater and faster array of information and options than ever before. Yet there is less engagement with the institutional and communal filters of the past, including the church. Christian YAs while abutting this world, are also a product and part of it – the lines are blurred.

With truth such an important commodity, LYQ rejoices and is confident in Christ's promise that 'I am the way, the truth and the life' (John 14:6).

If there were just one message to take away from the evaluation, it is that Christian YAs are seeking substantially more teaching and inquiry in both this time of their lives and as they lead into it. But the teaching approach is not unfettered: it needs to be cognizant of the reality that YAs want to have a large role in the validation process. Accordingly, it's about engaging in a way that understands the fragility, busyness and search for meaning of this period for many YAs.

Beyond content and its meaning, YAs who responded to the survey also want greater intergenerational community and 'mentoring'. Community is highly valued amongst YA and becomes the lens through which they experience life and faith. This provides a remarkable opportunity to influence the truth validation process. YAs attach a high importance to worship. While the reality that Christ sustains and serves his church through worship might be the underlying, yet not necessarily recognised, reason for this, such a high importance of worship for YAs makes the gift of worship a perfect opportunity to further enhance participation and strengthen connections.

Accordingly, the recommendations of this evaluation are built around three P's:

- *Preparation*: better preparing youth and YAs for the faith challenges in YA life and almost inevitable transitions to other congregations;
- *Participation*: better supporting the participation of LCAQD YAs in congregational life; and
- *Proficiency*: professional development of LYQ YA staff to better support preparation and participation of LCAQD YAs.

The recommendations respond to the core findings of analysis conducted against the Terms of Reference at Appendix 1. The evidence base for this evaluation is threefold: an online survey to which 321 persons responded; consultations with YAs, YAM professionals, Lutheran pastors and LCAQD staff; and a review of contemporary YAM literature including international and Australian YAM study results.

'When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth' John (16:13). This promise fulfilled in the life of each baptized Christian encourages, sustains and transforms LCAQDs YAM to address the challenges set out herein.

INTRODUCTION:

Purpose of Evaluation

The Terms of reference for the evaluation are at Appendix 1. In short, the main point of the evaluation was to assess current young adult engagement in the LCAQD, identify the drivers of effective young adult ministry practice (against LCAQD experience and contemporary YAM theory) and assess current YAM capacity in the LCAQD.

Scope

The ToR specifically required evaluation of YAM practice at congregational and district levels.

Approach

The evaluation was conducted with reference to three main sources: consultations, a voluntary survey and a literature review.

Consultations were conducted in mid-December 2013 with district staff, pastors in rural, regional and city based parishes, YAM practitioners and a number of YAs. See the list of consultations at Appendix 2.

An online survey was conducted from 17 January 2014 to 15 February 2014. See Box 1 for survey background.

A literature review was conducted with reference to major Australian and international YAM research and theory. Materials were scoped on recommendation of YAM experts, LCA pastors, Löhe Memorial Library librarians and cross references within the literature itself. The literature review is found at '*Key drivers for effective YA ministry: contemporary literature and study*'. Appendix 3 contains a full bibliography.

Composition of team

A reference team drawing on *inter alia*, YAs and YA practitioners was appointed from the LCAQD to oversee the YAM evaluation. The members were:

- Mr Aaron Glover, Director, LYQ
- Mr Sean Conry, Community Chaplain, Good News Lutheran Church, Middle Park.
- Mr Tom Schmidt, YAM Coordinator, LYQ and former Youth Worker, Immanuel Lutheran Church, Buderim, Qld.
- Ms Sarah Mayer, former Youth Leader, Corinda Lutheran Church, YA participant
- Ms Beth Doohan, Child, Youth and Family Ministry Co-ordinator, St John's Lutheran Church, Bundaberg, Qld.

Mr Matthew Bishop was engaged by the LYQ Council to conduct the YAM evaluation. Mr Bishop is a fourth year student at Australian Lutheran College studying for the ordained ministry of the LCA. Prior to this he was a senior public servant with the Australian Government in central economic agencies. In 2013 he

conducted a national evaluation on child, youth and family ministry for the LCA's BCYFM (Grow Ministries). In consultation with the reference team his duties included project management, consultations, designing and analysing the survey, initial draft report drafting, and communicating outcomes and key decisions points, including with the Bishop – Qld District and LYQ Council.

Mr Bishop worked on a day to day basis with Mr Glover and regularly consulted with the reference team, especially Mr Schmidt who provided extensive additional analytical input.

Administrative assistance was ably provided by Mrs Candice Truss, LYQ YAM Development Officer.

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS AGAINST THE TERMS OF REFERENCE

This section provides an overview of main findings and recommendations.

FINDINGS

1a: Quantify the number of young adults involved in the LCAQD and the trend of their involvement.

7,043 18-25 year olds were reported as Lutheran in the 2011 National Census. The YAM Evaluation Survey had 321 respondents, of which 266 are currently Queensland residents. Around 165 worship at least monthly in a Lutheran congregation, although not all in Queensland. 175 of all responders were 18—25 years old: 149 reporting as Christian (of which two-thirds worshipped weekly); 9 as 'sort-of' Christians; and 17 as non-Christians. Around 14 per cent of respondents who grew up Lutheran no longer attend a Lutheran church.

NB: Surveys of these type are usually biased toward responses that report strong spiritual activity: typically more involved Christians are more likely to be motivated to complete such a survey. That said, it has also been observed that reported levels of engagement (for example, church attendance), can often be inflated as well. See Mason (2007).

2a: Identify the underlying reasons why young adults have remained involved in the LCAQD (survey based).

- (i) CLW has been extremely effective; the studies reviewed for this evaluation appropriately meet requirements of depth/inquiry/orthodoxy, and are effective for the age group.
- (ii) Lutheran YAs most value at church: welcoming and non-judgmental community, preaching; Holy Communion; Bible application to everyday life; and singing.
- (iii) Family, community and opportunities to participate are the key reasons YAs remain involved. Additionally, there was evidence of strong 'inbuilt' spirituality: for example, 'something was missing' was the main reason YAs gave for why they came back to the faith after a period of 'wandering'. There is a robust LYQ community and a desire to be involved. This builds on evidence of strong inter-generational home-based faith nurturing and supports the LCA's child, youth and family ministry paradigm and priority of faith formation in the home, notwithstanding congregational based opportunities identified herein for more teaching.

2b: Identify the underlying reasons why young adults haven't remained involved in the LCAQD (survey based)

- (i) This is a busy time of life for many YAs when personal resources are stretched. There are often other priorities.
- (ii) Generally youth group teaching/Bible study is seen (in hindsight) as 'lightweight' and inadequate in quantity. There is inadequate preparation/discussion (including in congregations and with families) for post high school transition in faith life and the possible move to a different congregation from that of their youth.
- (iii) There was high reporting of frustration with: feeling judged and not accepted by older congregational members; a perceived lack of teaching on the Bible's content

and its relevance to the secular world they inhabit; limited opportunities for meaningful intergenerational community; and perceptions of older members gatekeeping key elements of congregational life, including worship and ministry areas.

(iv) Respondents reported dissatisfaction with what they saw as little specific focus at present on young adult ministry: they feel 'forgotten' after youth and unsupported through this major transitional period of leaving school and commencing a 'new' life. There is evidence of minimal inter-congregational coordination and follow-up for YAs who are relocating.

(v) The church's less liberal approach to moral/lifestyle issues, compared with societies', was a prominent concern in a not insignificant number of survey answers. Key issues are pre-marital co-habitation and homosexuality (especially for responders who are less regularly engaged with church), and there is confusion over reconciling church positions with secular viewpoints. There is high concern that there should be good pastoral care in this area.

2c: Identify the key drivers of effective young adult ministry as outlined in contemporary young adult ministry theory (external evidence base)

(i) Substance matters: this includes authenticity, high quality teaching, opportunity for questions/search/inquiry, engagement with the mysteries of Christian faith, YAs wanting to see conclusions for themselves and undertake practical service in the field. The literature (Australian, US, UK) stresses the tendency and high risk for misleading conclusions of YAs creating and validating their own 'truths' without question or challenge. Hence, the role of youth worker as 'theologian', not just friend and relationship builder, is crucial, but often is not understood and not adequately invested in. For Christians, their validation takes place in the context of an ever more secular society with an increasingly faint memory of the teaching and practice of the historical Christian tradition.

(ii) 18-25yr olds as 'mosaics' (Kinnaman: 2011) is an apt description... they have a wide and diverse 'mosaic' to choose from; authentic engagement is the most persuasive in this environment.

(iii) YAs are looking for a Christian framework by which they can better understand and engage with the challenges of the secular world: YAs report that they are generally not adequately equipped to handle the *strong anti-Christian polemic / distorted view of Christianity* that they face each day.

(iv) Often there is too much focus in congregations/church bodies on what Baby Boomers and older GenXers think will work for YAs, including on matters like seeker sensitive worship, which thwarts a greater desire for engagement with Christian mystery.

(v) YAs have a strong desire for community; they are open to meaningful intergenerational connections and learning opportunities, especially where not judgmental, but genuine and honest.

3a: Assess the LCAQD's capacity and ability to nurture the faith and engage with young adults who have grown-up in the LCAQD.

Mixed capacity and ability to nurture own.

(i) **Congregation level:** YAs are seeking greater teaching depth and a chance to be involved, accepted and contribute: there are mixed outcomes across congregations. Youth groups have greater potential to support inquiry in, and teach, the faith. That said, the evidence of strong home-based faith nurturing is

in part due to congregational level support factors. Opportunities abound for better inter-congregational coordination of relocating YAs. Not every congregation can or needs to structure around YAM, but they can support efforts across the synod.

Regarding **Worship 'style'**: substance/understanding is the most important. Overall, (but not absolutely) there is a preference for modern sound and service orders that facilitate engagement with 'mystery' and come across 'organically' (but the key aspect is authenticity). There is a plea not to compete with contemporary entertainment: it is not the church's role, nor can it do it as well. 'Respect' is highly valued – in practise this is about a feeling there should be more respect for YA preferences; a reasonably sized group promote openness to mixed forms of worship.

- (ii) **LYQ capacity:** CLW as preparation for *aspects* of YA is strong. *The Gathering* is an emerging and important 'mechanism'. Limited opportunity at present for reconnecting with lost YAs. There are high and complementary skills and experience in the current LYQ team; minor redirection and development required.

3b: Assess the LCAQD's capacity and ability to reach out and evangelise young adults.

Some capacity to reach out and evangelise YAs: question of extent.

- (i) **Congregation level:** From survey and NCLS, congregations appear relatively inward focused.
- (ii) **LYQ level:** See the third sentence of 3a(ii) above. Limited opportunities at present for wider evangelism to non-Christians.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The following recommendations are primarily directed to LYQ for action unless otherwise stated.

Preparation: *Better preparation of youth and YAs for transition to other churches and getting out in to the world post high school*

1. Develop an approach to improve the quality and quantity of theological and biblical content in youth programs (12-17 yrs), including sourcing of content and its roll-out. This should be done in consultation with the LCA's Grow Ministries (BCYFM) to identify and communicate the use of youth ministry resources that will enhance the spirituality of young people into adulthood.
2. The LCAQD, through LYQ, should strongly consider the funding of a CYFM Coordinator to train and resource youth ministries so that they are better equipped to spiritually assist teenagers in the preparation for adulthood.
3. Run a daylong workshop on survey outcomes targeted to congregations with the most active youth groups. This would include raising awareness on the need to talk about future church transition and ways to incorporate a greater teaching/inquiry component into youth groups.
4. Prioritise communication to youth across LCAQD regarding the three main future faith challenges for young adults identified through this evaluation: lifestyle, spirituality and transition to other congregations.
5. CLW: develop and include a unit at each CLW on future faith challenges (lifestyle, spirituality and transition) for those emerging YAs attending camp.

6. Develop cross-over of district youth at CLW as they get older, especially amongst those who are likely to relocate at the end of year 12.

Participation: *Better supporting the participation of LCAQD YAs in congregational life*

1. Publish and disseminate, with support of the Bishop, formal advice on sharing of personal information in the district to improve identification of YAs in transition.
2. In the next three months, host a worship service for all Lutheran tertiary students with debrief afterwards of survey results and preliminary discussion on ways to strengthen YA connections.
3. LYQ staff to develop, for board approval, and implement over the next six months, an action plan for comprehensive communication with all LCAQD congregations and their YAs on transition to and integration into Lutheran churches in the Brisbane area.
4. Over the next nine months devise a strategy for longer term connection between 'lost' Lutheran YAs (and friends) and Brisbane congregations. A key step is to contact 'lost persons' and offer opportunities to reconnect in congregations, small groups and YA events. Given the strong demand for community and 'mentoring', there is merit in an intergenerational team from across Brisbane being involved in this ministry under the direction of the LYQ YAM coordinator. Trial in Brisbane; roll-out thereafter.
5. In consultation with the LCAQD Bishop, LYQ staff should facilitate a dialog with the CoW regarding:
 - a. the worship aspects and findings of this evaluation; and
 - b. the scope to contextualize approved LCA worship for YAs in ways that adequately hold together worship's function and form.
6. Medium term: to address strong reporting of YAs being confused by the disconnect between their faith and secular worldviews, develop and roll out (to use in, for example, CLW, *The Gathering* and modules for youth) materials to help them develop a strong Christian world view in the midst of secular culture, including as it relates to defending/sharing their faith.
7. Continue running an annual *The Gathering* and provide a small subsidy (e.g. 15%) to YAs who bring a 'lost' friend. Develop and include a unit each *Gathering* on current faith challenges (lifestyle, spirituality and transition) for YAs in attendance.
8. Increase congregational awareness of the financial difficulties that many young adults face and scope practical support such as local congregational meals bank, help with transport, and a 'food parcel/support service' for young adults in transition to independent living.

Proficiency: *Professional development LYQ YA staff to better support preparation and participation*

1. Support the YAMC in understanding ways to more effectively communicate with YAs on human sexuality in the context of approaches consistent with LCA understanding.
2. Support the YAMC to undertake/audit at least foundational units in the B Theol program at Australian Lutheran College on: *Introduction to Worship/Liturgics, Hermeneutics, Spiritual Formation and Philosophy for Theology*. (Dependent on RPL and availability of online learning/short courses etc)

ANALYSIS IN SUPPORT OF THE FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Key drivers for effective YA ministry: contemporary literature and study

The spiritual narrative of YAs – the secular worldview influence

Christian YAs interact with a wider society that is increasingly secular. The section below lists some characteristics of the wider worldview that YAs tend to hold of God, how that view has been formed and how this might influence a Christian YA's outlook. In these matters independent research across the UK, US and Australia on YA spirituality has been relatively convergent on key concepts.

The secular worldview of God and his relevance has influenced many Christian YAs as they quite rightly and necessarily interact with their non-Christian peers. Gen Y spirituality researchers have dubbed this secular worldview the 'happy midi-narrative' (HM-N) (for example Collins-Mayo 2010). This is a 'midi-narrative' in the sense that the research '... concluded that young people had no 'meta'narrative or big picture of the universe and their place in it... [rather] a common story among young people as to what their *personal* lives were about' (Hughes: 2010: 61, my emphasis).

Collins-Mayo, drawing on Savage et al 2006, defines the HM-N. It is a life outlook where the aim is to be happy largely by being oneself and 'connecting to others and the universe (without harming them)' (2010: 18). Happiness is meaningful and an ideal in itself. When bad things happen that threaten this ideal, there are family and close friends who offer unconditional love, along with popular arts and culture to derive meaning from, which will help one to move from the bad experience back to happiness. Having received this help, a YA can grow and rediscover happiness. Collins-Mayo warns that 'the search for the happy ideal should not be taken to suggest that young people are hedonistic and amoral: happiness is relational and requires that others are not harmed' (19).

Hughes notes that 'The term 'midi-narrative' seems very appropriate to describe what the CRA [Christian Research Association] has found through its research among young people in Australia' (2010: 61). He reports the key to life for YAs is feeling good, developing a good circle of friends and experiencing times of excitement. Relationships counterbalance 'the materialistic world in which most young Australians live' (Hughes 2010: 61).

In this model God is essentially reduced to a 'resource for difficult times. Hughes notes of his Australian research that 'When asked to describe God, many young people speak of a man who watched over them, as One who always wanted the best for them, as One who could get them out of trouble' (63).

In the USA the equivalent to this model is 'Moralistic Therapeutic Deism' (MTD). It increasingly influences the YA Christian worldview. Smith explains that:

This 'religion'... consists of a God who created and orders the world, watching over human life on earth. This God wants people to be good, nice, and fair to each other, but does not need to be particularly involved in their lives, except when he is needed to resolve a problem. Being happy and feeling good about oneself is the central goal in life. When they die, good

people will go to heaven. These tenets form a *de facto* creed that is particularly evident among mainline Protestant and Catholic youth... (42).

Smith notes that the focus of MTD is on obtaining subjective well-being rather than repentance and forgiveness of sins, and that God is reduced to a figure whom acts as combination of a Divine Butler and Cosmic Therapist (42).

These 'belief' systems subtly influence and infiltrate core Christian belief. One issue is that MTD (and to a lesser extent, its more secular counterpart HM-N) sounds not inconsistent with aspects of Christianity, such as love for neighbor and 'God is love'. But as Smith says:

This religious creed [MTD] appears... as a parasitic faith that cannot sustain its own independent life, but must attach itself to established historical religious traditions, feeding on their doctrines and sensibilities, and expanding by mutating their theological substance to resemble its own distinctive image (43).

Put simply, this is **not** Christianity. Smith continues:

The language – and therefore experience – of Trinity, holiness, sin, grace, justification, sanctification, church, Eucharist, and heaven and hell appear, among most Christian teenagers in the USA at the very least, to be supplanted by the language of happiness, niceness, and an earned heavenly reward (46).

And for Lutherans, the works basis is directly counter to the understanding of justification by faith in Christ.

Amnesia, then self validation

Collins-Mayo focuses on the collapsing memory of the historical Christian tradition to explain the rise of the HM-N (and logically by extension, MTD). She draws on the work of Hevieve-Leger and Hauerwas who:

talk about the importance of community (past and present) and tradition for the appropriation, application and maintenance of faith and values. The faith community ... provides a 'chain of memory' and... embodies tradition and story ... the chain of Christian memory for young people is under severe strain since most are not part of faith communities. This makes transmission of the Christian faith difficult which in turn has implications not just for what people believe, but for how they live their lives on the basis of their beliefs. Hauerwas ... is clear in his view that people integrate the Christian faith into how they live their lives through the church or not at all (10).

With rates of church attendance and engagement at low levels for young adults, yet interest in spirituality still as high as ever ('people still need a basis on which to make sense of their lives...' [Collins-Mayo: 11]), the issue becomes where they find this spirituality and have it validated in order to form part of their background narrative to life. Typically the church performed this role in the past, or smaller groups within it. Collins-Mayo notes that 'Faith is most readily transmitted where there is strong group validation' (61). However, most of the validation for young people now occurs on an individual basis, and is reinforced by smaller 'mutual' groups:

The individual is still her main determining point of validation. She is not subject to institutional or group say-so, but nevertheless gains security of faith

by recognizing the authenticity of others' beliefs and, through social interaction, the authenticity of her own faith position (Collins-Mayo: 61).

The issue is that if Christian memory and consciousness is not adequately infused into these situations, then the self-validated belief is unlikely to be consistent with the usual notions of Christianity. Mason, an Australian researcher, puts it this way:

Nonetheless there is a recurring theme in many responses – perhaps most, which is highly significant as an indicator of a key characteristic of Gen Y spirituality. It is the supremacy of the authority of the individual's personal experience and personal judgment on all matters, doctrinal or moral, and avigourous rejection of the authority of religious institutions, of their right to impose or urge their teachings on their adherents or on society more generally (2007: 118).

He goes on to note that while this is not so different to the previous hundred years or so, 'it seems to have reached a certain completeness, the level of an absolute and taken—for—granted truth, only over the last three generations' (2007: 118).

Research within the LCA concurs. Hedt notes that 'For digital natives, truth is seen as unstable and dependent on culture, rather than a timeless reality' (191). He goes on to say that:

The instability of truth is a huge challenge to engaging spirituality and mission, especially as much Christian teaching and spiritual formation is still based on propositional, creedal truth-claims about the nature of God and God's work in the world (192).

And the tendency to self-validation and quasi/counter-Christian viewpoints is amplified by the YA's technological world and its facilitation of social interaction: 'the tools of social media have a stunning potential to build a self-centred world which once commentator has referred to as 'the Youniverse' (Hedt: 192).

This issue is intimately connected with another hallmark of contemporary YAs: the search for authenticity. Hughes says:

One of the greatest sins identified by the younger generations is inauthenticity. Believing in something just because you have been told to is an example of this. There is a determination to make up their own minds (2010: 77).

Authenticity is everything – and YAs decide what is authentic whether older generations like it or not. This doesn't change the authenticity of Jesus Christ as understood through the center of the historical Christian tradition, but it does require an understanding of how to engage. Lewis et al make a good point. From the start their YAM manual stresses authentic communication and relationships, but by focusing on the authenticity of Jesus Christ – 'that being the most authentic relationship we will ever have' (10-11). In the same manner, Collins-Mayo sees teaching and inquiry with Generation Y as an opportunity:

It is undoubtedly the case that the Christian memory is very faint and in many respects Generation Y are largely unstoried or memoryless generation. On the other hand this offers unexpected opportunities for mission and for the church to present itself and its traditions in its own authentic ways (20).

The spiritual narrative playing out in YA life

David Kinnaman's detailed US research on why YAs leave the church draws many of the above aspects together. He summarises, as follows, six broad reasons why YAs drop out of church in the US and sometimes lose their faith altogether: 'They find the church to be: ... overprotective ... shallow ... anti-science ... repressive ... exclusive [and] ... doubtless' (Kinnaman: 92-93).

He recognizes that these issues are probably not that different to previous generations. But he notes that's what different this time is the potential for it to be 'more combustible' in terms of 'burn[ing] the bridges that once connected them to their spiritual heritage' (92). He contends that 'cultural moment' (92) is different. By this he means there is greater access: 'new technologies and digital tools provide unprecedented access to information, analysis, opinions, relationships and worldviews' (43) and that there has been a permanent downgrading of Christian authority: there are 'new questions about who and what to believe' (55). Moreover, there is 'discontinuity of the next generation' (92): this is found in 'unprecedented levels of disconnection from relationships and institutions' (48).

The YAM survey found many of the same issues amongst responders. But the answers on questions about their faith journey also showed stickiness in their Christian faith, which had led to their return back to regular (monthly or more) worship. That said, it needs to be remembered that the YAM survey results are biased towards those engaged enough in the first place to answer and will not capture a good share of those who have disengaged.

Implications for YAM in LCAQD

Filling the 'grid'

The above is only the tip of the iceberg of findings on the wider context and drivers of contemporary YAM. However, these findings alone generate a number of implications for LCAQD YAM.

The first relates to the role of youth workers, leaders and the LYQ YAMC as 'theologians'. A salient point in UK youth work, but of considerable value to reflect upon in the Australian context, is that:

Youth workers provided the young people with examples of how to live out the reality of the Christian faith but the young people did not understand that this is what they were trying to do. Youth work has proved itself adept in building relationships but less able to provide young people with an understanding of the Christian narrative (109).

Killaman notes that 'young Christians are exposed to a variety of religious content, often without the grid for evaluating it' (55). Given that youth workers are closer to the YA faith-validating locus of smaller 'mutual' groups and the individual themselves, there is a key role and responsibility to populate and explain the 'grid'. The 'grid' itself is an explanation of the Christian faith – the grace and work of the Triune God for the saints of all time, including those alive today.

Teaching and inquiry: what content?

In Lutheran terms the 'grid' of the Christian faith is best summarised in Luther's Catechisms. Hebart, drawing on Luther, dubbed the Catechism's teaching the 'path of faith':

The first section of the Catechism thus deals with the nature and basis of the path of faith: the second section, beginning with the third article of the Faith [the Apostle's Creed], is concerned with the means that God provides to keep all Christians on that path, in view of human sin the attacks of the devil, and all kinds of temptations (xxxiv).

This is not a suggestion to rote learn the Catechism, as valuable as many Christians have found that in time of spiritual attack and need. Nor is it a suggestion to use one-way teaching techniques devoid of inquiry. That the faith can be taught and received in a stimulating, pedagogically appropriate and culturally relevant way is proved by the quality of the 2012 CLW study 'Back to Basics', which was based on the teaching on the creed from Luther's Small Catechism.

Instead it is reminder of two important things. Firstly, in the Lutheran Christian tradition it is not necessary to invent anything new to do the job of presenting and examining the faith. Secondly, the path of faith will then lead naturally into a wider inquiry of the Christian faith and the sort of questions the YAs in the YAM ministry survey said they are looking to have answered as they think through faith issues in a secular world. For example, creator and creature, how the world's way of glory is diametrically opposed to God's way as revealed in the cross, how God gives all Christians vocation, and frameworks for thinking through and living in the sacred and secular 'kingdoms'.

Research findings on teaching and inquiry

Indeed, although writing outside of the Lutheran understanding, Killaman encompasses a number of these concepts as key to engaging with YAs on the faith and reducing 'drop-out'. He nominates 'rethinking relationships' (202), 'rediscovering vocation' (206), and 'reprioritising wisdom' (210). It may sound like Kinnaman has taken little notice of his research subjects: he recognises throughout that they are not necessarily interested in being told anything (for example, see page 55 on *Authority*). But this chapter is written as directly to YAs as it is to those with an interest in YAM.

On *rethinking relationships*, he writes

rather than being defined by segregated age groups however practical they may seem, I believe we are called to connect our past (traditions and elders) with our future (the Next Generation). Christians are members of a living organism called the church... (204)

From there he quotes Hebrews 12:22–24 making the point that 'intergenerational relationships matter on earth because they are a snap shot of Zion...' (204). He suggest a number of practical implications for the different age groups of each church.

Broadly speaking, the YAM survey identified intergenerational engagement on faith and church issues as the second greatest unmet need amongst YAs – a yearning that is not adequately fulfilled in the churches they attend according to the survey (keep in mind that this is wider issue than just for LCAQD as a good number of survey respondents are from outside the LCAQD).

In relation to *rediscovering vocation*, it is difficult to conceive of a more Lutheran way of giving significance to everyday life, something else that YAs told us in the survey they yearn for. Kinnaman:

... In Christian tradition, vocation is a biblically robust, directive sense of God's calling, both individually and collectively. Vocation is a clear mental picture of our role as Christ-followers in the world, and what we will put on earth to do as individuals and as a community. It is centuries-old concept that has, for the most part been lost in our modern expression of Christianity (207).

While there might be some different emphases in specific Lutheran teaching on vocation, this is at least a helpful hook, including through a conversation on what the differences are and where they stem from.

On *re-prioritising wisdom*, Killaman's focus is becoming wise as 'we seek Christ in the scriptures, in the ongoing work of the Holy Spirit, in the practices and traditions of the church, and in our service to others' (210). Clearly there is a role for teaching and inquiry here. This brings us back to sound catechesis – the root word of which was used by St Paul to denote Christian instruction in Galatians 6:6 (Kolb: 345).

Engagement with the mystery of the Christian faith

The reading for this study also identified the extent to which YAs wish to engage with the mystery of Christian faith. This is not only true for Christians, but also appears to be a better area on which to engage for non-Christians. This is nothing new – St Paul wrote to the Colossians:

I became [Christ's churches'] servant according to God's commission that was given to me for you, to make the word of God fully known, the *mystery* that has been hidden throughout the ages and generations but has now been revealed to his saints. To them God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this *mystery*, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. (Col 1:25-27; NRSV)

American youth pastor Dan Kimball writes:

I sense a renewed hunger for theology and an interest in discussing the mysteries of God. Emerging generations are starving for depth in our teaching and preaching and will not settle for shallow answers (178).

The mysteries he nominates in the latter half of his book include not only the teaching of the faith, participation in the Lord's Supper and concentration on prayer, but also engagement with Christian symbols, art, hymnody, and pastoral care.

This is nothing new for the Lutheran tradition. And it is the sense of what those completing the YAM survey also said: essentially that substance and authenticity is essential in worship, and that the church should not try to compete with contemporary entertainment. (That is not to say they don't want modern sound though – see discussion below on worship issues at the end of the section *Identification of the underlying reasons why YAs have remained involved in the LCAQD*).

Similarly, Collins-Mayo notes the engagement youth workers and others achieve when:

... building a sense of place (residential), connecting young people to the Christian story (videos, Christian courses, story telling), to ritual with sacred connotations (such as the labyrinth or prayer) and to symbols with sacred meaning (such as religious symbols imagery around the building) (2010:115).

One of the reasons this works is that this is *part* of the authentic church and authenticity rates with YAs. This is why Collins-Mayo concludes by stating ‘... the primary social responsibility for the church is simply to be its own authentic self’ (117).

Training for church community

Lastly, it shouldn’t be assumed that YAs know how to be involved in a church even if they have been going all their life. Daughtery speaks of the need to engage with young people on church involvement, and for them to be encouraged to think in advance of the challenges they will face. He encourages them to move from ‘consumer complaints’ to active stake holding, to be honest in the context of loyalty friendship and humility, to have an eye for the positive, and to become part of a better way forward (101-108). He recognizes it’s not easy, noting that ‘Getting involved in the life of the church, along the lines I’ve been talking about, is actually bit of an art that needs to be developed over an extended period of time’ (107).

It became apparent from the survey that many YAs are not prepared in LCAQD, or other churches, for the challenge of post high school age church life. For many this is a time of considerable transitional period in their lives. Accordingly, the recommendations concerning ‘preparation’ in part aim to address this across LCAQD.

ASSESSMENT OF CURRENT YA ENGAGEMENT WITH LCAQD: DATA

2011 Census

In the 2011 Census conducted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics, 7,043 18-25 year old Queenslanders reported as Lutheran. 4,427 26-30 year old Queenslanders reported as Lutheran. 52.3 per cent of the 18-25 year old Lutherans reporters are female. Table 1 shows Queensland Lutherans grouped by generational types (as classified by Australian company McCrindle Research). Generation Y, the focus of this study, at the time of the 2011 Census made up 16.8% of those identifying as Lutheran in the census.

Table 1: 2011 Census – Queensland Lutherans by generation

McCrindle grouping	Years of birth	Number	Share of Qld Lutherans
Builders	1925-1945	12,161	15.4
Boomers	1946-1964	19,693	24.9
Gen X	1965-1979	15,541	19.6
Gen Y	1980-1994	13,290	16.8
Digital natives	1995-2010	16,642	21.0

Source: McCrindle 2012 & ABS 2011 Census of Population and Housing (sourced through TableBuilder)

Table 2 shows 18-25 year old 2011 Census data for those reporting as Lutheran by place of usual residence. Around 20 per cent live in greater Brisbane; regional representation is strong with Ipswich, Toowoomba, Gold Coast and Wide Bay areas accounting for almost 40% of the total.

Table 2: 2011 Census – 18-25 Queensland Lutherans by location

Area	Number	Share (%)
Brisbane – East	203	2.9
Brisbane - North	161	2.3
Brisbane - South	412	5.9
Brisbane - West	354	5.0
Brisbane Inner City	297	4.2
Cairns	205	2.9
Darling Downs - Maranoa	365	5.2
Fitzroy	319	4.5
Gold Coast	630	9.0
Ipswich	760	10.8
Logan - Beaudesert	465	6.6
Mackay	219	3.1
Moreton Bay - North	309	4.4
Moreton Bay - South	217	3.1
Queensland - Outback	297	4.2
Sunshine Coast	400	5.7
Toowoomba	695	9.9
Townsville	209	3.0
Wide Bay	508	7.2
Migratory - Offshore - Shipping (Qld)	0	0.0
No Usual Address (Qld)	13	0.2
Total	7,039⁽¹⁾	

Source: ABS 2011 Census of Population and Housing (sourced through TableBuilder)

⁽¹⁾ Rounding accounts for difference with 7,043 reported in text above.

Comparison with other sources

The Australian Census conducted by the ABS simply asks for each household's religion. It does not report levels of church attendance or other spiritual activity. It is not uncommon, including in the Lutheran case, to see large differences between the Census data and activity on the ground. Part of this difference is driven by affiliation with church bodies such as schools (especially relevant for this age group given the presence of Lutheran schooling in Queensland), church run welfare sector groups and aged care providers. However, for the purpose of this evaluation, the 2011 Census can at least be thought of as 'potential': there are large numbers who feel a strong enough connection with the Lutheran church to have 'Lutheran' reported for the Census.

The National Church Life Survey (NCLS) uses adult attenders on a particular Sunday as its statistical base. Its statistical groupings by age do not align with ABS age groupings so some approximation needs to be made for the purpose of comparison.

The 2011 NCLS reported that only 7 per cent of the survey responders were in the age group 20-29 – around 230 persons (NCLS: 20). Around 5 per cent, or 170 were aged 15-19 (20). In terms of trend, since 2001, there has been an 11 per cent drop

in the number of attender's children aged 15+ who attend church at the same place. While 5 per cent now attend a Christian church elsewhere, 8 per cent have ceased attending anywhere at all (rounding appears to account for an imprecise reconciliation with the 11 per cent drop).

Of the 321 YAM evaluation survey responses, it was calculated that there were 140 Queenslanders identifying as Lutheran and around 65 were 18-25 years old. The difference between the NCLS data and the survey is likely explained by the smaller penetration of the latter. Of all Lutherans growing up, around 85 per cent claim to attend a service at least monthly. 55 per cent of these claim weekly attendance. Some caution should be applied to attendance rates: Mason notes 'inflation of self-reports of attendance is a well-documented phenomenon in many countries' (2007: 10). By way of a broad point of comparison, McCrindle (2013) research reports only 8 per cent of Australians attend church at least monthly.

Attendance at CLW has grown 45 per cent over the past four years (see Table 3 below). Box 3 in the next major section on the *Underlying reasons why YAs have remained involved in the LCAQD* contains more information on the significance of the CLW ministry to YAs and LCAQD.

Table 3: CLW attendance by youth 2009-2013

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Leaders and Participants	307	356	408	438	444
Annual Growth rate (%)	-	16	15	7	1

Source: LYQ data

Consultations generally expressed a less positive picture. There was a sense, backed up with a number of specific examples, that YAs moving from country to city are finding it hard to connect with city congregations. But while the survey reported 26 country to city moves, it also showed over 2.6 times that amount of inter-city and intra-city moves. Such moves are just as much of an issue as country to city moves. Within congregations, some consultations identified a large core of YAs who while known to the pastor, are at best minimally involved in the life of the LCAQD congregations, be that worship, small groups, various ministries, committees or other activities. The section *Underlying reasons for lack of involvement* explores this further below.

By way of broader context, Hughes notes that the proportion of young people aged 18 to 30 who attended church as a child is considerably less than in previous generations (2010: 66). He also reports from the 2009 Australian Survey of Social Attitudes that shows those aged 18 to 30 in 2009 attend church at much lower rates than when there were 11 to 12 years of age – see Table 4 below.

Table 4: Religious service attendance at Age 11-12 ad Current Attendance of Young people 18-30 Years of Age - percentage.

All figures %	Monthly	Yearly	Never	Missing
Age 11-12	28	36	32	4
Current	8	31	61	0

Source: Hughes 2010: 66

One of the difficulties with this evaluation was getting a good understanding of the picture within LCA congregations of the number of YA contacts, including for the purpose of LYQ connecting with YAs in transition between congregations due to locational moves. There appear to be a number of misunderstandings within LCAQD, especially at congregational level, on issues concerning data and privacy that the LCAQD Professional Standards Unit has subsequently prepared clear advice on. The details are outside the scope of this report. But to avoid the same sort of issues being faced in the future, and to help facilitate LYQ better supporting YAs in transition, it is recommended that LCAQD publish and disseminate, with support of the Bishop, formal advice on sharing of personal information in the district to improve identification of YAs in transition.

IDENTIFICATION OF THE UNDERLYING REASONS WHY YOUNG ADULTS HAVE REMAINED INVOLVED IN THE LCAQD

The objective of ToR 2.a. was to 'Identify the underlying reasons why young adults have remained involved in LCAQD'. Accordingly, the following section is based on the consultations and YAM survey results which were the main forms of data gathering for this evaluation. It focuses on several broad themes: the importance of community, the role of family in faith formation (Box 2), the faith journey of respondents, the role of youth group, CLW (Box 4) and worship practises.

Background information on the nature and scope of the survey is contained in Box 1.

Box 1: Survey background

The survey ran from 17 January 2014 to 15 February 2015 (the Saturday of the 2014 *The Gathering*). It was conducted on the polldaddy.com survey website. Initially LYQ contacts were invited to participate. Later other contacts, including those accessing the LYQ homepage and responding to Facebook invitations, also participated.

It is well known in the international literature that Christians are more likely to respond to this sort of survey, especially regularly worshipping Christians (see Mason: 100). It appears the YAM survey was no exception although that does not discount its value if interpreted with this context in mind.

Of the 321 persons who responded: 283 identified as Christian, 22 as non-Christian and 16 as 'sort-of' Christian. 200 responders had grown up in the Lutheran church – around 85% still identify as Lutheran, although not strictly within the LCAQD. 257 survey responders attend worship at least monthly – almost 72% of these each week.

The survey asked questions around several main themes, mostly with set options to choose from including (although normally with an 'other' and subsequent comment option):

- Transition to new congregations and the extent of preparation for such an event;
- Spiritual background and current spiritual activity of family;
- Faith journey to this point, including youth group and CLW attendance, family devotions/faith talk and times of 'wandering away from the faith';
- Spirituality and current church attendance of friends;
- Significantly, for all regular and non-regular worshippers, two free field questions:

Two things I think the church/Christian faith does not understand about 18-25 year olds are (if older, please cast your mind back)...

How can the church best serve people of your CURRENT age group at this time of their lives?

Being open ended, these questions were used to solicit a large amount of qualitative data on experience, preferences and general attitudes.

- For non-Christians, questions on current spirituality and their journey there; and
- For everyone, demographic, geographic and family related information, some of which was optional.

All survey answers were anonymous so as to meet Australian Government ethical research requirements. To encourage participation, respondents had the chance to win a 32GB iPad mini for completing the survey – names and addresses for competition purposes were provided separately from the main survey.

Not all of these areas are reported on in this report to the same degree. However, the survey and its many stories will remain a valuable resource to LYQ as future directions are set.

Community

Community rated extremely importantly for YAs as a factor in their ongoing involvement. For both regular and non-regular worshippers, a welcoming community

is what they most highly value at church: 67 per cent for regular attendees and 78 per cent for irregular attenders. This is ahead of the sermon, music and receipt of the sacrament. 52 per cent of regular attendees had friends already going to a new church they start going to when they move locations. Consultations noted how YAs tend to follow their friends when looking for new churches, including across denominational lines. In free field comments on ways the church could better 'serve' YAs, small groups dominated responses, as did requests for more meaningful intergenerational engagement. Talking with other Christians is the second highest answer (behind prayer) to the question on what the most important spiritual practices for staying connected to God are. All of this shows just how intimately community is bound up with faith.

It was beyond the scope of the survey to directly test the 'quality' of relationships across the LCAQD, even if it were possible. Clearly there are people that feel welcomed and accepted, and others who do not.

On transition to a new church, regular worshippers took about a year to feel comfortable in their new church where they did not already have friends going there compared to the one to two months for those with friends. Offering a specific YAM activity / opportunity for fellowship also reduced the amount of time it took to settle in.

Family

Family, in terms of upbringing and also continued faith engagement over the YAs life, plays an essential role in LCAQD in explaining ongoing involvement. Box 2 explores these issues in detail, including within the context of the LCAs underpinning child, youth and family ministry approach of faith formation in the home.

Box 2: Faith formation in the home, church attendance and the LCA's approach

Martin Luther's small and large catechisms of 1529 set the Lutheran emphasis on the importance of faith formation in the home. The generation of Lutherans now increasingly parenting emerging YAs grew up with LCA Board for Congregational Life resources such as *Growing as God's People* (confirmation), with their parents at the time having access to courses such as *Masterplan*. In late 2001 the LCA embraced the *Child in Our Hands* strategy with the purpose of promoting a culture of empowering and equipping parents to be the primary faith educators of their children. In 2008 it introduced the *Faith Inkubators* package of materials for children from primary school age to youth, with special congregational and family 'add-ons', once again built on the same 'faith formation in the home' paradigm as earlier initiatives. The LCA's Board for Child, Youth and Family Ministry oversees ministry in these areas. A more recent initiative has been the roll-out of the *Taking Faith Home* suite of materials, produced out of Queensland by Pastor Greg Priebbenow, which go to the heart of sharing the relevance of the Scriptures in the highs and lows of each family member's day.

There was evidence from the survey of the importance of faith formation in the home for setting later worship patterns and individual spirituality. While worship attendance does not necessarily equate to being Christian, it has been used here because the Lutheran understanding the Divine Service is where the Christian is especially exposed to the 'means of grace' through whom they are 'connected to Christ, and the Holy Spirit works both faith and good works in [their] lives' (Veith :44). Perhaps reflective of this, persons growing up Lutheran reported they valued receipt of Holy Communion and the sermon second and third highest respectively when attending church; for non-Lutherans, the majority Protestant, Holy Communion was ninth, but sermon was still third. (The most highly valued feature of church for both Lutherans and non-Lutherans respondents was a welcoming community.)

Table 5 shows the survey results for all respondents who identified as Christian growing up. There is a strong connection between regular worship as a child/youth and as a YA. Around two thirds have participated in home devotions while growing up. Around 80 per cent attended youth, and three quarters of all Lutheran responders (growing up) had attended a CLW. Hence, at least for those responding to the survey, there appears to be strong correlations collectively and individually between participation in various faith based activities prior to 18 and current indicators of Christian identification (note that the nature of the survey curtailed collecting information on the counterfactual).

Regarding devotions, the greater the frequency, the greater the pattern of later church attendance. Of the 60 persons who had devotions when growing up at least a few times a week, 98 per cent now attend church at least monthly (78 per cent weekly), while of the 112 who had devotions 'sometimes', 85 per cent attend at least monthly (59 per cent weekly).

There appears to be a slight reduction in later worship patterns for those who were Lutheran growing up and attended a Lutheran school: 83 per cent of those who were Lutheran growing up and attended a Lutheran school, worshipped at least monthly (51 per cent weekly), while for those Lutherans growing up who did not attend Lutheran schools, 86 per cent attend at least monthly (57 per cent weekly).

Parental involvement matters for latter church attendance too. Table 5 below shows YAs with a parent currently regularly worshipping also report high rates of regular worship themselves. Similarly, having someone they can talk with at present about spirituality makes a difference to church attendance even within this cohort of survey respondents who are already biased toward worship attendance: for YAs growing up Lutheran, 76 of regular worshippers have such a person, while for non-regular worshippers it is only 57 per cent.

The road to teaching the faith for many parents is often hard and without thanks – especially at the time. These results remind of the importance and blessing of each devotion, each church service and every little bit of bringing the Triune God into their children’s lives.

Table 5: Responders growing up Christian - experience then and now

	Survey: all Christians %	Grew up Lutheran %	Grew up Christian (non-Lutheran) %
Prior to 18			
Regular worshipper	86	87	82
Family devotions	66	65	69
Attended youth	79	80.5	73
Attended CLW / ‘often’	54 / 35	75.5 / 43.5	21 / 12.5
Now			
Worship at least monthly / weekly	86 / 60.5	84.5 / 54.5	90 / 77
Never attend small group	44	51.5	24
Parent involved in church regularly: regular / non-regular responders	86 / 76	87 / 74	85 / 83
Talk with significant older adult about spirituality: regular / non-reg attender	73 / 58	76 / 57	68 / 67
Have discussed with an adult the likely issues in moving to a new congregation	14	16	7

The faith journey: what explains not wandering?

Question 48 of the survey asked participants who currently identified as Christian if they had ever had a time when they wandered away from the faith since turning 18. 51 per cent said they have.

Wandering is an important issue. The collective ‘wisdom’ of the past, including gleaned from some consultations, is that people always return once they have children – meaning “there is not much to worry about”. There are many reasons to be cautious in adopting such an approach. To look at just three: Firstly, it does not bear up in the survey data. The survey showed that only 3 of 136 persons who came back to the faith after wandering away did so because of children. It’s far more common to come back for other reasons – the chief one being because of sense that

'something' was missing (essentially the Holy Spirit working on the conscience that has been shaped to God over the believer's lifetime). And of course, the survey did not capture those who have wandered away and not come back, despite having children! Secondly, the twenties are when most people permanently give up on the faith if they are going too; for example, Killaman shows in relation to faith that 'the choices made in the first adult decade set the direction of life...' (32). Thirdly, and most important, even if it is not necessarily a bad thing for Christians to wander away and discover they really do have a God-given conscience that calls them back, it always comes at the personal cost to them of foregoing a significant amount of pastoral care in the meantime; not least absolution and receipt of Holy Communion. For that reason alone there is much to be said for following up, helping with transition, talking about issues and being in a position where pastoral care can be offered, even if not accepted.

Social and demographic factors certainly play a role in remaining engaged with church in the YA years. Of the 49 per cent of respondents (131 in total) who say they have not wandered away from the faith after turning 18, 44 per cent still live at home with parents or a childhood primary care giver compared with only 33 per cent of those who said they had wandered away. Correlated with that, they are also younger: 34 per cent were under the age of 25 compared with only 24 per cent of 'the wanderers'.

Yet it's not entirely about family. The highest reason people gave for remaining in the faith was that they had family *and friends* they were involved in spiritual activities with (62 per cent said this). 40 per cent noted they were also involved in a specific church activity such as leading bands, teaching or youth activities (the answers summed to greater than 100 given respondents were asked to choose three reasons for remaining in the faith).

Small group activity is potentially important: 53 per cent currently attend a small group at least fortnightly (71 per cent of these are weekly small group attenders). Small group attendance of 'the wanderers' who had come back was only 35 per cent at the moment. Yet it is difficult to draw too sure a conclusion as there is a mismatch between their time of wandering and what they are reporting about *current* small group attendance; moreover, not all churches offer small group ministry.

22 per cent of the non-wanderers answered they thought 'having been taught well, including confirmation and/or school' had kept them in the faith. This was the fourth highest reason, coming in just after 'the Holy Spirit'!

Youth group

77 per cent of the respondents identifying as Christian attended youth group up to the time they turned 18. The highest answer, at 63 per cent of respondents, to the way that youth group contributed to the Christian faith was 'meeting friends who have continued on the Christian journey and been a support'. The next highest answer was that youth group gave a 'better understanding of Christian community'. Once again both of these answers highlight the importance of community to YAs.

However, youth group is a 'mixed bag'. The next major section on *Underlying reasons for lack of involvement* discusses the extent to which YAs looking back now see youth group as a missed opportunity. Yet the answers above nevertheless show that youth group forms a vital function in keeping youth connected to other Christians, and thereby encouraging them in their faith.

CLW

CLW is an integral part of LYQs focus and operations in the LCAQD and is highly regarded by those who attend. From the survey feedback it can be seen that it is important for connecting faith with challenges faced in the secular world. There are opportunities to leverage off of its strengths to make stronger connections between youth across different parts of the LCAQD for the purpose of easing later transition to a new congregation. The expectation and reporting of moving worship participation at CLWs provides the perfect platform to incorporate some inquiry and teaching on the uniquely Lutheran understanding of worship. See Box 3 entitled 'The importance of CLW' and the next section on worship.

Box 3: The importance of CLW

103 of the 321 survey respondents attended a Christian Life Week camp as often as possible in their teenage years to the age of 18. And another 52 attended sometimes. To the question 'in what way if any did Christian life week contribute to their Christian faith you have now?', the four most popular answers were (respondents could choose up to three):

- Meeting friends who have contributed on the Christian journey and been a support (58 per cent of all respondents);
- It provided a place where I could discuss the deeper issues of life which I have been able to draw on (40 per cent);
- It gave me a love of worship (34 per cent);
- I had what I would describe as a big Holy Spirit inspired God moment that impacted my life in a significant way (33 per cent).

Once again the importance of community in faith formation is apparent. Evidence from the survey and consultations showed that strong networks are formed at CLWs which can help with later connections in transitioning to new churches because of locational moves. For many attenders there is a strong element of spiritual formation while at camp. This can have a large impact on identification of vocational calling. One example is solid representation amongst younger ALC pastoral students that have previously been part of LYQ CLWs, including as leaders and directors. Moreover, being a leader at CLW is associated with higher levels of subsequent church attendance (90 per cent compared with 73 per cent) and slightly higher rates of subsequent small group attendance.

CLW evidently allows an opportunity for deeper theological and spiritual reflection than what is typically possible in a shorter youth group meeting. The 2012 and 2013 studies analyzed for this valuation were of a high standard in directing discussion, inquiry and teaching to a sound understanding of the Christian faith and its out-working in youth and YAs lives as servants of Christ.

It is interesting that rates of regular church attendance are exactly the same when comparing Christians that have been to CLWs with those who have not. Perhaps even more counter intuitive, someone that has never been to a CLW was more likely to attend a small group at least monthly than the responders that had attended CLW 'sometimes' and 'as often as possible'. This highlights how a challenge with CLW attenders is managing a potentially ongoing expectation of so-called 'mountaintop' faith experiences. The worship and intimate sharing of faith at a leisurely pace in a close-to-nature environment is literally impossible to match at church and youth group. It's here that having a better understanding of 'receptive spirituality' may bear Lutheran YA's in better stead.

From the survey it was clear that CLW advantages YAs in three main areas. It is by far the most likely forum in which discussions about future faith challenges and issues in transitioning to new churches are discussed. Attendance at CLWs is also associated with lower rates of reporting a time when a respondent had wandered away from the faith. CLW attenders that had moved to a different church had also settled in quicker; only 15.5 per cent were not comfortable with their new church compared to the 21 per cent of respondents that had never attended CLW.

The challenge for CLW planning is to better leverage off of its relationship building capacity by more often mixing city and country youth, especially as they near times of relocation. Mixing leadership and directors across regions would provide a more synodical focus that some respondents sought. Another opportunity is the need to talk more with older attenders about future church transition and faith challenges.

Worship and YAs

The survey demonstrated that worship activity is a key focus of YA spirituality. On that basis this report addresses worship matters under the reasons why YAs have remained involved, recognising that it is in worship that Jesus Christ sustains his church. That said, the survey reported not insignificant concerns with worship from not insignificant numbers of respondents with more variety of responses on this matter than any other major theme. Accordingly, of all the issues assessed in this evaluation, the following discussion should be seen as straddling reasons why YAs have remained and not remained involved.

Survey data

Worship issues rated third overall as a category of comment in the free field answers. This was behind a desire for greater teaching content to help make sense of Christianity and its engagement with the secular world, followed by a concern that generally there be a greater intergenerational focus in congregations. Hence, while worship didn't rate the highest, it was still important for a good number of respondents.

While survey free field answers mainly referenced liturgy and music, there was also a focus on sermons, and to lesser extent, the use of prayers and creeds. But beyond the form, issues of congregational conduct were also referenced, especially the potential for worship to facilitate intergenerational connectedness in the context of the need to respect diversity in tastes and preferences.

The regularly worshipping Christians, which included non-Lutherans, advised that at their church they value songs the fourth highest (behind a welcoming community, the sermon and application of the Bible to everyday life and culture) and good music the eighth respectively. For those who do not regularly worship, good quality music and singing worship songs rated third and fourth respectively.

The preferred musical style is of a modern variety. Several responses indicated a strong affinity to the Hillsong genre of modern praise and worship music. Question 28 on two things the church does not understand about YAs had 13 answers request more modern music; four noted that many YAs prefer older musical forms, even choirs. Question 29 on how the church could better serve respondents had 12 people suggest the use of more modern musical forms. As liturgy and music were often mentioned together, there was a similar overall preference for less structured liturgy. One respondent noted a preference for 'organic' liturgy – a phrase that seems to capture the mood of YAs unhappy with 'approved' orders or what they see as 'going through the motions' in worship. Nevertheless, some respondents stated a very strong preference for older liturgical forms. A number of respondents noted the church should not try to compete with modern 'multimedia' entertainment methods: it can neither do this well, nor is that its place.

Yet it was much more complicated than facile and tired two-dimensional contemporary/traditional and song/hymn divides. Something deeper was at play whereby there emerged a genuine desire for worship to bring all people together. Seven responses to Question 28 noted the potential for blending of song forms and liturgy types to enrich worship, and for some, to promote intergenerational connection. Related to this, many respondents simply indicated a desire for greater engagement in worship, with words such as 'experience' and 'real' featuring heavily. As noted earlier, YA worship 'specialists', such as Kimball note in the US context '...

a renewed hunger for theology and an interest in discussing the mysteries of God' (178) which resonated strongly with the YAM evaluation survey answers.

A statement from the survey, on what church could do more of, which captured the essence of the above paragraph was:

...sometimes we like a mix of both old and new - music, messages, etc. Need for relevant, Bible based, Christ focused sermons/messages is more important than flashy show/pumped up music.

Divine service or serving the Divine?

The Lutheran understanding of worship has at its heart a deep engagement with the mystery of God. The LCA website explains that:

Lutherans believe that worship isn't so much about what we do, but about what God does for us. We simply respond in prayer and praise to the God who comes down to our level. The focus in Lutheran worship is not on how we feel but on how God comes to us. We believe that worship is a treasure because it is as close as we get to heaven on earth, because God is there, forgiving, speaking, listening and feeding us - getting us ready to worship him in the world with the gift of our lives (LCA: 2014).

It's often easy to see worship strictly in terms of the sacrificial side – the worshipper's reaction to God, and how it makes them 'feel'. This appears to be the framework implicit in the statements of many of the YAs who specifically mentioned worship in the survey. While some people may be frustrated that YAs don't have a greater understanding and appreciation of 'sacramental' side of worship (what God does for us), the challenge is that the reporting of 'boredom' with certain forms of worship is nevertheless very real. While a more sacramental understanding of the function of worship may build a greater tolerance to less preferred worship styles (for all generations), it is important to remember here that the attitude of many YAs is not one of rejection of worship, but of a deep desire to re-imagine it in a new way that is both meaningful and relevant to them.

The challenge for LCAQD is how to contextualise worship for YAs to help them experience the richness of our worship understanding while also working with them to develop alternate worship forms and expressions that fit within the teaching of the LCA.

An important guiding principle as this matter is further assessed and addressed is the recent reminder to the LCA by Bishop John Henderson that:

The ancient church maxim *lex orandi lex credendi* (the law of praying is the law of belief, or 'as we worship so we shall believe and live') still holds true. To be a healthy believing, praying, and acting church *where love comes to life* the LCA needs to nurture good worship practices. In many places these are slipping away and being replaced by populist demands driven by divergent theologies and the constant temptation to force God to prove that his Word is true.

Structuring the LCA's mission on sound worship practices is an important step of bringing out the best of what being Christian and 'Lutheran' means. Without a firm base in worship our mission work results in religious activism to goad people into action through the law, but does not invite them into the

presence of a loving God through the gospel promise. It is not enough to say that we worship God in all we do, because without cultivating good biblical and Christ centred worship practices ultimately our attempts at worship and prayer will fall away. Good worship drives us to rely on God and his message. (2014)

'Good worship' and resourcing

Accordingly, as a first step there seems scope to mix the very serious commitment of YAs to worship with an increased awareness, if not discovery, of worship as the Triune God's Divine Service to his people. This is likely a need that extends beyond YAs. Addressing this simple, but profound mystery, is the foundational imperative for then addressing what approaches to take with the 'what' of worship, such as liturgy, service planning and songs.

In this regard, LYQ has considerable potential to be a valuable dialogue partner with the CoW given the extent of findings from this evaluation and the depth of feeling demonstrated by the YAs who contributed. There is opportunity here to work together to provide alternative forms of worship that connect with young adults, and address the feedback from YAs that there is considerable demand for 'fresh' and 'engaging' worship that still expresses the fundamentals of the Divine Service.

Moreover, LYQ could contribute leadership in this area across LCAQD, including through youth and YA studies, and the conduct of worship at CLWs and YA worship services. In this regard, a good starting point, *inter alia*, is the LCA's CoW website (<http://www.lca.org.au/commission-on-worship-statements.html>). For example, their online presence contains a number of statements regarding Lutheran worship that could easily be converted by the YAMC into studies suitable for youth groups, small groups and LYQ's camping ministry in the same way that Luther's explanation of the Apostle's creed was used in 2012. Further, the above remarks by Bishop Henderson were made in the context of an announcement on increased funding for CoW's online presence and functionality.

Likewise, music choice need not be a trade-off between better theology and modern sound. The key is discernment. A good example is the following statement, which assesses the strengths and weaknesses of the popular Hillsong genre of praise and worship music.

At their worst, Trinitarian, sacramental, and ecclesial dimensions are muted, while a subjective and individualistic piety betraying a theology of glory is accented. On a positive note, when these songs reflect Scripture they remind us of the power of simplicity and the importance of the affective dimension in church music (Jansons, 30).

There are a large number of Christian music writers devoting energy to deep theological sentiment and Biblical reflection, yet with a dedication to modern musical forms and expression. These include Emu Music (a collective of song writers, of whom many are Australian, with an extensive song bank, including on specific themes such as Advent and the Atonement), Keith Getty and Stuart Townend. But as with any song or hymn brought into worship, discernment is always required. Moreover, songwriters such as Mark Petersen, based at Holy Trinity in the Adelaide CBD, publish free updated hymn tunes suitable for modern bands that overcome problems with archaic language and unsuitable musical meters. This is just a fraction of the sort of offerings available in addition to the usual sources such as Hillsong.

The challenge is to engage with the substantive issues and start having the conversation...

UNDERLYING REASONS FOR LACK OF INVOLVEMENT

The objective of ToR 2.a. was to 'Identify the underlying reasons why young adults **haven't** remained involved in LCAQD'. This section proceeds in two parts. Firstly there is a consideration of the thematic issues from across the survey and consultations. Many of the views covered in this section are from those already quite heavily engaged in their congregations: their inclusion is more my way of identifying what could be done better, or areas in which the LCAQD might have become a little blindsided. The second area drills down into those groups that could be identified as either uninvolved in the LCAQD or involved only at the margin.

For both sections a helpful part of the survey has been two questions with free field answers (referred to earlier and repeated here for convenience):

- Two things I think the church/Christian faith does not understand about 18-25 year olds are...(if older, please cast your mind back):
- How can the church best serve people of your **current** age group at this time of their lives?

The following sections don't draw exclusively on these, but they have been an important part of arriving at the findings.

General

YAs are extremely busy, like everyone. But the busyness for YAs also includes dealing with whole areas of life that are often being done for the first time: living out of home, relying more on own income, having more flexibility around study schedules, working through the maze of issues that friendships and adult formation represent. This adds anxiety and time to the usual pressures, and often just a need to 'escape it all'. YAs reported in the survey that older adults seem to have forgotten this.

Another practical matter, although with ministry implications, is the precarious financial existence that some YAs experience. 50 per cent of the survey respondents aged 18-25 did not live at home or with their childhood/teenage caregivers. More than a few mentioned just how much they value a meal, a bag of groceries, a lift somewhere or even some help paying a bill. This is an area that appears somewhat overlooked in the context of so many other needs across LCAQD. The recommendations suggest this area be further scoped.

Box 5 reports the obvious but apparently overlooked issue of the importance of speaking with YAs about future faith challenges and practical issues with changing churches (for the myriad of reasons this occurs).

Box 5: Nobody told me how hard moving churches is...

The survey and consultations revealed inadequate preparation of YAs for the challenges involved in moving churches. Breaking into new communities involves simply that. One YAM specialist noted during consultations that it doesn't matter how friendly everyone is, it still takes time to understand the jokes, preferences and context for what happens in the new place. For country movers to the city, there was a perception that some of the Brisbane churches are not as welcoming as they could be. It is understandable that comparisons will always be made with former pastors, musicians, worship styles and multiple factors from the past – after all, for many people these things have deeply fed and sustained them spiritually.

The survey reported that of the regular worshippers who had moved church since turning 18, only 15, or 13 percent, had discussed with someone they trusted from their childhood or teenage church how difficult it might be to transition into a new community. The survey provided evidence that these YAs settled into their new church sooner than those who hadn't, although the small sample size of the former group requires caution in too robust an interpretation. Nevertheless, 100 YAs moving churches had never had a discussion on the sort of difficulties this might involve. 33 per cent of these had taken at least a year, if at all, to feel comfortable at their new church compared with 20 percent of the respondents who had spoken about such things.

It was a surprise to the YAM evaluation team that only 9.8 per cent of the 172 persons who had attended youth group and were still Christians had talked about the sort of difficulties they might have 'transitioning to other church communities once future life changes made this necessary'. This seems a wasted opportunity. More positively, 57 per cent of CLW attenders have had this type of discussion.

Speaking with youth and YAs about future challenges in moving churches will in no way solve all faith issues. Yet it is very practical and manageable discussion to have that at least helps with taking a more 'aerial' view of some of the challenges that YAs confront in a new worship community. Publications such as *Sticky Faith: Everyday ideas to build lasting faith in your kids* address these issues and provide excellent practical suggestions. The recommendations herein direct LYQ toward raising the profile of this issue in the LCAQD, developing resources to share and explicitly building discussion into the CLW curriculum for older attenders.

Deep desire for more teaching

In terms of ministry, the main issue was a desire by YAs to gain a deeper theological understanding and preparation for life that enables them to better grasp the significance of the Gospel in their lives and understand how their faith relates to the secular world: its questions, opinions, values and lifestyles. This includes:

- a desire for deeper and more detailed Bible study and preaching – moving beyond the Sunday school approach;
- a longing for better understanding from 'the church' of the extent and difficulties of interactions with non-Christians that young people face;
- a subsequent widespread request for better preparation for engagement in the secular world;
- wanting help with a heartfelt desire to evangelise – both the message and its delivery;

- desiring more opportunity for inquiry, discussion and journeying on the way, and resistance to being lectured and spoken down to;
- facilitation of environment where YAs can express doubts free from being patronized;
- help with arriving at better understandings without 'pat' or 'brush off' answers;
 - A not insignificant number raised the need for more detailed inquiry and teaching around morality and human sexuality. A better understanding of the pathway to the church's position on these matters was requested; as was better preparation and help with engaging with the world, and as one person put it, 'staying pure in a sex saturated world'.
 - : Morality for its own sake is not seen as enough – which potentially suggests a lack of engagement with the freedom of the Gospel.
 - : Responses to questions by YAs on sexuality and lifestyle appear from the survey to act as somewhat of a litmus test for whether the person speaking has anything else worth listening too about Christianity. For this reason the recommendations suggest the YAMC be given some 'space' to deepen understanding of the issues and how to engage in discussion on them.
 - : The way these issues are engaged on, taught about and handled have considerable potential to drive or lessen involvement. The LCA's Commission on Theology and Interchurch Relations paper on Human Sexuality is much anticipated in LYQ in terms of setting some frameworks, improving the tone of discussion and offering advice on pastoral care.
 - Note that from the survey, it's not just homosexuality or premarital sex that are identified as issues. Pornography, alcohol use and sexual abuse received some attention (there were no allegations of sexual abuse, rather the difficulty of dealing with it). 'Singleness' was also an issue in around a half dozen responses – a sense that there should be more acceptance and teaching/discussion on these issues.
- A general openness to learn in small groups but also appreciation and desire for teaching within the worship service. In this regard there is a strong appreciation of the sermon as a teaching vehicle (even if there is more to a sermon than that).
 - For example, the regular worshippers were asked to indicate what three things they most 'liked' about sermons. The top three answers were as follows:
 - : 70 per cent said those sermons that 'help me with applying the Bible to my own life',
 - : 53 per cent said those that 'teach how a Bible text relates to world issues; for example: politics, wars, the environment, concern for the oppressed...', and:
 - : 51 per cent said those that 'unpack and teach me about the mystery of the Christian faith'.

Intergenerational connectedness

There was widespread reporting (although nothing in this survey was universal!) of a strong desire to be in an intergenerational church community. This includes:

- intergenerational worship (some still prefer specific YA service; there is a pulse of respect and desire for more acceptance by older people of other ways to do things – see above discussion on worship for further detail);
- wanting more opportunities to be ‘discipled’ or ‘mentored’ in the faith by older persons;
- greater acknowledgement by older members of YA’s ability to serve, and for there to be more opportunities to serve, although not just ‘dumped with it’ but given guidance where requested;
 - A general sentiment was a request that more be expected from YAs, and that there be greater encouragement from older members for YAs to discover and use their gifts.
- specific invitations from older members to be involved in what they do at church;
- establishment within congregations of support networks for YAs.

Youth: more work, less play

Box 6 reports on survey data around concerns that youth group was a period in which better foundations for YA life, and application of the faith to the secular world, could be laid down. It should be noted that this is being reported in hindsight – youth currently aged 13-17 might have different ideas.

Box 6: Youth group in hindsight: less games, more study please

Many YAs reported that youth groups did not provide sufficient teaching on the Bible and opportunities to explore the faith in detail. It seems that in hindsight they want more 'work' and less play – not that the 'work' needs to be, or can be, boring.

This position was summarised from consideration of answers to the following free field question:

What one thing could your Christian youth group have done better to prepare you for being a Christian adult?

Here is a representative sample of the answers:

Talk about real issues rather than airy fairy crap

I think there was a great sense of, 'kids just want to come and hang out and have fun and socialise' and for me, that wasn't the point.

Teaching on the hard topics

Dealing with real life issues, e.g. sexuality, bullying, family struggles.

*Don't just play games. Teenagers may seem to really like that kind of stuff, but everyone needs to know how to relate to God. Address the real issues facing teenagers, don't pretend it's all cute and cuddly out there. Don't playHoney if you love me.**

This is a great opportunity to assess scope for using youth group in more productive ways for faith formation. There is an opportunity for congregations and LYQ to work in partnership with the LCA's BCYFM (Grow Ministries) who have both resources and support available in youth ministry. It should be noted there are already strong connections between LYQ and BCYFM that can be harnessed through the LYQ Director's membership of the BCYFM. Moreover, the LCAQD YAM evaluation recommends that LYQ further consider how they can assist congregations in this area and that the LCAQD, through LYQ, consider the employment of a CYFM Coordinator to assist in this area.

[*see http://www.jubed.com/youth_ministry/view/Honey-if-you-love-me for details!]

Institutional inertia

Another issue is what may be termed institutional inertia. Mostly this is about churches continuing to do things the way they have done in the past. What annoys young adults is a perceived lack of willingness to meaningfully consult on other options when it comes to worship, committees, financial priorities and ministries. Frustrating also is a lack of explanation for why things must stay the same. This is not to saying 'change' is justified. Instead, it appears there could be stronger dialogue with YAs to identify and discuss areas of interest and concern.

NCLS data

By way of statistical context, the 2011 NCLS results for LCAQD noted 19-25 year olds attending a Lutheran church have reported a 12 per cent drop in satisfaction of YA activities offered at their place of worship since 2001 (from 51 per cent to 39 per cent). This compares with only a 5 per cent drop in satisfaction from all attenders in what is offered for YAs. At the very least this suggests a growing gap

between what YAs are wanting in order to be satisfied and what all attenders think it will take, or are willing to do.

Drilling down

Within the survey there were good sources from which a better look could be taken at why church involvement is minimal or non-existent. 16 persons reported as 'sort of' Christians: 14 worshipped quarterly or less (9 of these never) of which 11 of these were Lutheran growing up. The key themes that came through in the question on the two things the church does not understand about this age group were:

- the need for acceptance;
- the complexity and busyness of this stage of life; and
- issues with mainstream Christianity's views on 'moral' matters.
 - Humanity sexuality dominated responses raising moral/lifestyle issues, especially what are seen as outdated views on homosexuality. There was an overall tone of 'if it doesn't hurt **you**, why worry about it?'
- There was little consensus about how the church could best serve people of their current age group. Broadly, the main answers indicated a desire for:
 - more Bible teaching across a range of issues from apologetics to applying Scripture to everyday life;
 - understanding that one size does not fit all;
 - greater care of people is needed, including physical care such as provision of meals and practical help from time to time;
 - staying in touch;
 - and a more open-ended approach to discussing matters of faith and working with people having difficulties with 'the' Christian position.

27 Christians reported as attending worship quarterly or less (3 never) of which 20 grew up Lutheran. The key themes that came through in the question on the two things the church does not understand about this age group were:

- the need for less judgment and more understanding;
 - human sexuality was a big theme for this group as well, but had a harder 'edge', including the need to be more accepting of both homosexuals ('it is not a choice' etc) and lifestyle choices such as pre-marital cohabitation and sex;
- the need to better explain scripture and its connection to their everyday lives;
- that YAs are very busy people and church will not always be a priority in the context of a busy life – 'this does not mean we are not Christian'.

Their answer to how the church can best serve people of their current age was varied. But overall, it could be summed up as:

- be more welcoming, accepting, and encouraging rather than judgmental;
- preach the Gospel (not current affairs) and often remind of the Good News; and
- 'allow' more flexible worship (timing, more modern styles and provide material out of church such as sermon podcasts).

- A 'good' number of respondents in this category had young children. They expressed frustration with what they sense as a lack of support when it comes to accepting them (and their noise/mess/movement) in corporate worship and responding to their issues around the unsuitability of worship times.

Consultations regarding reasons for lack of involvement

A number of consultations gave helpful insights on reasons for detachment or low levels of involvement. The busyness of YAs (and an associated lack of priority therefore to church involvement) was prominent. LCAQD and congregational personnel showed they do have a good understanding of how busy people in their congregation and district are — YAs included.

More generally, across the consultations in terms of what drives the low priority attached to church involvement by some Christian YAs, there was recognition that:

- it can be difficult to overstate the sensitivity of YAs – it does not take much to offend them or put them off of participating, especially where older people make negative comments;
- YAs want to be involved, especially in decision making, which older people find hard if YAs are minimally involved (this is somewhat of a vicious circle);
- gaining a sense of community can be elusive. It often just takes time and commitment to feeling a bit uncomfortable for a while (the survey showed that of those relocating to new churches, the ones worshipping more frequently feel at home sooner); and
- moral issues for YAs, especially regarding human sexuality and lifestyle, are particularly pronounced in terms of their perception of being accepted.

Appendix 1: Terms of Reference

LYQ Young Adult Ministry Evaluation

Terms of Reference

Background

Lutheran Youth of Queensland, a department of the Lutheran Church of Australia Queensland District, was formally given the responsibility for ministry to tertiary students and young adults in 2010.

Young adults have been intrinsically involved with Lutheran Youth of Queensland's ministry since its inception, particularly as the means of ministry delivery as volunteer leaders in our holiday camp programs. Despite this history of involvement and partnership in ministry, Lutheran Youth of Queensland acknowledges that it isn't an expert in effective ministry to young adults.

Churches members and ministry workers in the Lutheran Church of Australia Queensland District have reported a decline in young adult (18-25) attendance at church and expressed their exasperation at the difficulty of ministering to and involving young adults in church. This experience and sentiment is anecdotally shared with mainline churches across all denominations.

Lutheran Youth of Queensland committed in their current Strategic Plan 2013-2015 to conduct research into young adult ministry with the purpose of understanding why young adults aren't connecting with churches and how the LCAQD might better minister to young adults.

Evaluation Objectives:

1. Assessment of current young adult engagement in the LCAQD:
 - a. Quantify the number of young adults involved in the LCAQD and the trend of their involvement.
2. Identify the drivers of effective young adult ministry practice:
 - a. Identify the underlying reasons why young adults have remained involved in the LCAQD.
 - b. Identify the underlying reasons why young adults haven't remained involved in the LCAQD.
 - c. Identify the key drivers of effective young adult ministry as outlined in contemporary young adult ministry theory.
3. Assessment of current Young Adult ministry capacity in the LCAQD:
 - a. Assess the LCAQD's capacity and ability to nurture the faith and engage with young adults who have grown-up in the LCAQD.
 - b. Assess the LCAQD's capacity and ability to reach out and evangelise young adults.

Scope of Work:

The evaluation will review Young Adult Ministry practice in the LCAQD including ministry practice in congregations and at a district level.

Key issues and content:

1. LCAQD Young Adult Ministry Context (relevance, effectiveness)

Lutheran Youth of Queensland and the District's congregations provide a variety of ministry support and activity to and with young adults with the purpose of engaging them in the ministry of the Church and growing their faith. The evaluation team will review and comment upon:

- The size, significance and trend of the involvement of young adults in the LCAQD.
- The nature of the relationship between Lutheran Youth of Queensland and the Queensland Lutheran congregations with regards to young adult ministry.
- The effectiveness of Lutheran Youth of Queensland's current programs and services in supporting young adults directly and equipping congregations.
- Seek to understand the ministry challenges that congregations face in regards to young adult ministry.
- Seek to identify 'bright spots' of young adult ministry success within the District and their underlying drivers

2. Effective Young Adult Ministry Practice (sustainability, effectiveness)

It is suspected that there is a strong decline in young adult engagement with the LCAQD and institutional church generally. There remains however some young adult engagement within congregations and Lutheran Youth of Queensland. The evaluation team will therefore review and comment upon:

- The underlying drivers of effective young adult ministry as described in contemporary ministry theory.
- The underlying reasons why young adults still engaged with the LCAQD have remained.
- The underlying reasons why young adults no longer engaged with the LCAQD have left and whether these drivers are different for those worshipping elsewhere versus those no longer worshipping.
- The strengths of the LCAQD's young adult ministry approach that needs celebrating and enhancement.
- The weaknesses of the LCAQD's young adult ministry approach that need addressing.
- Recommendations of key strategies and focus areas that Lutheran Youth of Queensland should address to support and deliver effective young adult ministry within the LCAQD.

Evaluation Methodology:

The evaluation should involve a survey (phone and/or electronic) of LCAQD Pastors and young adults (those who are still involved with the LCAQD and those who aren't) that seeks to broadly quantify current practice, issues and trends. Interviews (phone or face to face) should be conducted with key ministry leaders in the LCAQD and a selection of surveyed young adults (some who are still involved with the LCAQD and some who aren't) to gain a

deeper understanding of the underlying drivers that are influencing ministry effectiveness. The evaluation should also involve an analysis of recent ministry theory and research.

To present and discuss the key findings and recommendations with LYQC.

Provisional Schedule

Preparation:

Finalisation of Terms of Reference,
Review of appropriate literature,
Clarification of the expected tasks,
Preparation of evaluation instruments (Survey questions, interview questions etc.)
Evaluation leader meets with LYQ Director
Finalisation of Evaluation Team,
Distribution of documentation to Team Members
Finalisation of evaluation schedule

The final report must cover all aspects outlined in the scope of work and run along the following lines:

Preliminaries:

- Title page
- List of contents with page numbers
- Acronyms
- Executive Summary

Main Text

- Introduction (including purpose of evaluation, scope, approach, composition of team, constraints)
- Observations and Findings
- Analysis and Conclusions
- Recommendations

Annexes

Key Milestones:

By mid September 2013	Appointment of evaluator and team
By mid October 2013	On-line surveys conducted
By end October 2013	Interview priorities identified
By end November 2013	Face to Face interviews conducted
By mid December 2013	Submission of draft findings from surveys and interviews

Christmas Break

End January 2014	Submission of feedback and production of final draft report
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12 February 2014	Presentation of Final Draft Report to LYQC
End February 2014	Final Report (incorporating feedback from LYQC – approved for wider distribution)

This timetable and itinerary is subject to change (within the agreed dates)

Evaluation Coordination:

The LYQ Director will act as the primary contact with the Evaluation Team and will be available to assist the Evaluation Team leader during the term of the review.

Composition of the Evaluation Team:

Anywhere from 1 to 5

Possible members:

Tom Schmidt, Youth and Young Adult Ministry Coordinator, Immanuel Lutheran Church, Buderim

Sarah Mayer, university student at UQ and member of LSF

Sean Conry, Community Chaplain, Good News Lutheran Church, Middle Park

Beth Doohan, Child, Youth and Family Ministry Coordinator, Bundaberg

Juliette Warnes, Leadership Trainer, Lutheran Youth of Queensland*

*unable to participate in team

Appendix A - ToR

Background Documents:

- Lutheran Youth of Queensland Strategic Plan 2013-2015
- 'Young Adult Exodus' Case Study by Tom Schmidt
- 'Young Adult Community Proposal – May 2013' by Tom Schmidt
- 'Final Report' Stage 1 for the SA-NT District of the LCA by Spirited Consulting

Appendix B - ToR

Qualification for the External Evaluation Team: (note: The Team Leader should have as many of these as possible)

- Understanding of church practice and culture
- Consultancy experience
- Research experience

Appendix 2: Persons consulted for LYQ YAM evaluation

Regional:

Rev. Stuart Kleinig, St Marks, Dalby

Rev. Andrew Vanderwal, Emmanuel Lutheran Fellowship, Toowoomba

Rev. Brenton Fielder, Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Toowoomba

Rev. Milton Fritsch, St John's Ipswich

Mr Tom Schmidt, formerly Youth Ministry Coordinator, Immanuel Lutheran Church, Buderim; also consulted in capacity of LCAQD YAMC position.

Brisbane

Ms Sarah Mayer, (former) Youth Worker, Corinda

Ms Keryn Vezos, YAs coordinator St John's, Eight Mile Plains

Ms Danika Hampel, Student Life Missionary

Mr Sean Conry, Community Chaplain, Good News Lutheran Church, Middle Park

Rev David Schmidt, Prince of Peace, Everton Hills

Rev Matt Thomas, Our Saviour, Rochedale

Young adult small group in Wishart

Young Adult focus group for those moving from regional/county areas to Brisbane

LCAQD office

Bishop Noel Noack, Bishop, LCAQD

Ms Sue Kloeden, Executive Director, Lutheran Education Queensland

Rev. John O'Keefe, Director for Ministry and Mission, LCAQD

Mr Aaron Glover, Director, LYQ, LCAQD

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