CHRISTIAN STUDIES
CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

Lutheran
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Australia

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FOREWORD

Whilst there is a genuine interest in the spiritual dimension of life today, the teaching of religious education, or what is called Christian Studies in Lutheran schools, remains both challenging and problematic. Teachers strive to engage students in exploring issues that are personal and yet communal, drawing on a rich heritage of understandings, yet placed in a contemporary context. Teaching and learning in this context requires trust and openness, especially as the teacher and student in the Lutheran school often have had significantly different spiritual experiences.

The production of the LIFE curriculum in the late 1990s was an important development for Lutheran Education Australia (LEA), since it was the catalyst for raising a number of key issues in Christian Studies. We were all very proud of this published curriculum resource—a first for Lutheran schooling in this country.

The professional development that accompanied the implementation of LIFE created an awareness of further issues through the questions of classroom teachers. The existing understandings of the purpose of, and appropriate teaching methodologies for, Christian Studies were challenged. Christian Studies was now regarded as a central learning area in the Lutheran school.

In 2002 a national collation of the Christian Studies audits summarised the needs that were emerging from the school level. It became apparent that while LIFE is a valuable collection of curriculum resources, it does not provide a curriculum framework consistent with other learning areas. Education officers in Lutheran school regional offices and the National Christian Studies Coordinator, working together in response to the needs of classroom teachers, and using their own professional study and understanding of the issues, helped generate a framework for further work.

The development of a national Christian Studies Curriculum Framework (CSCF) has resulted from collaboration between regional offices and the national LEA office and in consultation with the Australian Lutheran College (ALC). It was also made possible through the professional contributions of classroom teachers, either through drafting the initial statements or providing feedback from the trial phase.

Anne Dohnt, Dominique Jaaniste, Sue Kloeden, Louise Mason, Marion Nott and Malcolm Bartsch are acknowledged for their leadership in this project. The following teachers wrote the initial draft statements: Tania Long and Amanda Wakefield (Beginning Years); Deidre Priebbenow and Rachel Schilling (Band A); Lyn Coote and Kylie Johannessen (Band B); Shane Jurecky and Brenda Lipsys (Band C); Julia Boulton and Lucas Von Hoff (Band D); Dominique Jaaniste and Andrew Long (Band E). In addition, many others have contributed to the vision and provided helpful feedback.

LEA is committed to supporting this framework with ongoing professional development and the identification and generation of resources. National and regional directors, education officers and principals are working together to implement the CSCF into Lutheran schools and early childhood services and to respond to identified needs so that Christian Studies will continue to grow and thrive.

The framework is commended for use in Lutheran schools as classroom practitioners now take up the challenge of CSCF at an exciting time for Christian Studies. May teachers be rewarded with students who continue to search and ask challenging questions.

Lutheran Education Australia

2015

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INTRODUCTION

Background

The Christian Studies Curriculum Framework (CSCF) is part of Lutheran Education Australia's (LEA) ongoing provision of resources for the teaching of Christian Studies in Lutheran schools which began with the Australian curriculum LIFE, launched in 1998. Both LIFE and the CSCF are grounded in Lutheran theology and informed by the Lutheran Confessions. The CSCF provides a sequence of learning that is developmentally appropriate for students in the early years (Beginning Band) and progressing through to Year 12 (Band E). The CSCF aligns with the structure and terminology of other Learning Area (syllabi, allowing for opportunities to plan, integrate and assess Christian Studies in line with those documents. In addition the CSCF provides a map whereby teachers can plan for and monitor the growing understanding and mastery of concepts that belong to this domain of learning.

The organisation of the framework along with the content was developed to meet the current needs of the diversity in Christian Studies classrooms as identified through a national audit. The content has been organised into four major strands: Christian Beliefs, Christian Church, Christian Living, and Christianity in the World. These strands identify the major understandings and processes essential to develop religious literacy from a Christian perspective. Christianity in the World, in particular, introduces learners to the relationship between Christianity and other religions and belief systems which learners encounter in an increasingly pluralistic and global society...

Context

Lutheran schools are attended by students who reflect the diverse range of cultural and religious/faith positions in Australia including a variety of religious traditions, non-religious perspectives and Christian denominations. The CSCF provides for religious education in the classroom. It acknowledges that Christian Studies is set within the context of the whole Christian education experience of the school that includes both a faith perspective and an educational perspective. The BLEA 2012 statement *Christian Studies in the Lutheran school* (▶▶ see Appendix 1) articulates this concept as follows:

> Christian Studies is a learning area that belongs to the formal curricular program of the Lutheran school and as such should operate within the same parameters as other learning areas, with appropriate assessment and reporting, timetabling, budget, staffing and resourcing. Teachers who have responsibility for the teaching of Christian Studies are supported professionally by meeting the accreditation requirements of the LCA *Staffing Policy for Lutheran Schools* which provides them with the opportunity to reflect on their spirituality and to articulate a personal vision for teaching Christian Studies.

> Christian Studies is an essential and distinctive part of the Christian education program, which is the total life of the school and which is expressed through the culture of the school, all teaching and learning activities, the worship program, pastoral care for students and staff, behaviour management policies and practices, voluntary Christian groups and activities that address the personal spirituality of staff and students.

> The students who participate in Christian Studies bring a wide range of faith, life and spiritual understandings and experiences embodied in differing worldviews. This diversity has implications for the planning and teaching of school-based Christian Studies programs and the need to accommodate varying levels of biblical literacy and engagement. While faith responses or commitment to Christ are not a general expectation in the formal curriculum, there are areas of the broader framework of Christian education where these can be actively nurtured and expressed. [BLEA, 2012].

The LEA Educational Framework (2002, revised 2005) summarises the ethos of Lutheran schools and beliefs about learning and learners which underpin the CSCF (▶▶ see Appendix 3).

Rationale

The Christian Studies Curriculum Framework (CSCF) places theology in an educational setting providing a series of conceptual maps of Lutheran teachings summarised in the key ideas of each strand of the CSCF and articulated in the theological notes that accompany each of those key ideas.

The CSCF allows for the investigation and critical examination of key Christian beliefs, Christian worldviews, personal beliefs, attitudes and values, and provides opportunities to respond to the challenges presented by the range of perspectives encountered in the content. With its focus on both the cognitive and affective domains the educational context and approach of the CSCF provides an avenue for the Holy Spirit to create and nurture faith in Jesus as students 'hear, explore and reflect on the word of God in an atmosphere of openness' [BLS, 1999: 6].

The CSCF is a national curriculum which provides a starting point for planning and an end point for teaching in Christian Studies, clearly outlining what students in all Lutheran schools will know and be able to demonstrate at the end of each band level. It gives a clear way for assessing and reporting on student understanding in Christian Studies.

The CSCF document is a spiralling framework for schools to create a scope and sequence that enables students to broaden and deepen their growing understandings. It provides direction for teachers to plan and develop their own units for their own students in their own context. The accompanying theological notes are the foundation for both teacher understanding and selection of biblical and theological content relevant for their students. The framework encourages the use of a wide range of resources: spoken, written, visual and digital text; families, peer groups and communities and LIFE, a comprehensive and supportive resource for teachers of Christian Studies.

The CSCF introduces students to the world of religion and spirituality, which are integral components of the fabric of all cultures. Students are equipped with language, symbols, metaphors and imagery to appreciate the Christian story, read and interpret the rich heritage of biblical text, Christian writings and history, other religious literature, and deepen their understanding of self and their own cultural, historical and political background. The educational approach in CSCF acknowledges that all people are on a lifelong journey of faith expressed in many dimensions of life, for example, relationships, community life, the environment, religious beliefs and traditions, situations of human need and suffering, ethical and justice issues. It presents to students a Christian worldview and a pathway for making meaning in their lives.

Knowledge of other people's belief systems and the analysis of the complex interplay of factors that contribute to an individual worldview enriches students' ability to make sense of the world.

Opportunities for reflection and refinement of personal beliefs, values and life choices, and application of knowledge and understanding to the breadth of life – intellectual, emotional, personal, relational, spiritual – challenge students to consider the role and contribution they can make towards creating a more just, harmonious and compassionate world. In keeping with the intent of LEA's *A vision for learners and learning in Lutheran schools*, it is hoped that by engaging with the content and processes of the CSCF students will be empowered to become mature, participating citizens who are:

> … individuals, aware of their humanity and open to the influence of the Holy Spirit, who are growing in and living according to a cohesive worldview, while living in community and reflecting characteristics of God through core values, especially love, justice, compassion, forgiveness, service, humility, courage, hope, quality and appreciation. [LEA, 2002, revised 2005]

There is no assumption that students and teachers share a common set of beliefs, yet respect and sensitivity to one another is developed through genuine, open dialogue.

The CSCF requires a Christian Studies classroom learning environment in which students can explore a range of religious and non-religious perspectives they encounter in an increasingly pluralistic Australian society, determine the source of their own beliefs and values and understand the role religion plays in society. A collaborative learning environment acknowledges and respects that students have diverse backgrounds, needs and interests. Students are mentored to:

- become articulate, empathic and discerning members of their communities
- listen to and identify the issues underlying discussion
- enter into open, respectful dialogue with people whose religious, philosophical, ethical views are different
- present an informed, well-defended personal position

The processes of inquiry, discussion and reflection underpin the acquisition of those qualities and skills.

THE PEDAGOGY OF CHRISTIAN STUDIES

The CSCF is supported by the following pedagogical principles, in which both teaching and learning:

- are characterised by authenticity, imagination, flexibility and high intellectual quality
- are learner centred and future focused
- reflect beliefs about learners, learning and learning communities as expressed in the Lutheran Education Australia Lifelong Qualities for Learners
- are grounded in the theological understanding of the worth and giftedness of each person and the nature of relationship with self, others, the environment and God
- are engaging, dynamic and unfolding
- are inclusive of the diverse needs, backgrounds and worldviews of students and teachers
- reflect the classroom learning environment set within the rich context of Christian education provided in Lutheran schools and early childhood services
- create quality relationships between all learners – teachers and students
- create connections between the mysteries, rituals, languages and practices of the Christian faith and with other learning and other communities
- invite, challenge, support and empower students to construct meaning, grow in spiritual maturity and be transformed in their relationships with self, others, the environment and God
- These principles are now developed further and applied to the context of the learning environment.

Learner centred

Students each bring their unique worldview shaped by their experience of life and prior learning. The pedagogy of Christian Studies must open doors that connect the content of the framework with the learner's world – both the inner life and perceptions of the external world. If learning is to be personally meaningful it is imperative that students own the journey of discovery, that they can ask their questions, that they can articulate, however capably, their growing understanding and that they are free to choose how they will respond to the ideas and concepts they encounter. This approach requires a relationship of trust between teacher and student whereby students can contribute to the shape and direction of a unit of work. Students and teachers acknowledge, respect and interact with the multiple journeys of discovery present in the learning environment. Students are challenged to see themselves as members of various communities – classroom, family, church, local, global – from whom they can learn and draw inspiration and to whom they can contribute and make a difference.

The role of the teacher

Teachers use their knowledge of students – their needs, interests, contexts, prior learning – along with their understanding of the theological map of the framework to make decisions about the most appropriate content knowledge, elaborations, contexts and ways of knowing for students. They select a range of teaching strategies and learning experiences to create meaningful inquiry and learning. They negotiate units of work to engage students on a journey of learning that resonates with students' life questions and equips them with the necessary knowledge and skills to demonstrate the learning statements. Teachers plan for and embed a range of assessment strategies to provide students with constructive feedback and to inform reporting processes. They also provide opportunities for students to reflect on their understandings, attitudes and faith. In the learning process, teachers are reflective, intuitive practitioners who learn, adapt their practice, grow in their knowledge and faith, and model a compassionate life of action.

Approaches and methodologies

Diversity and change are a reality of the classroom, Christian communities, religious traditions and the world of students. Learners need access to a range of ways of making meaning. The CSCF encourages the use of a range of strategies that acknowledge, accommodate and draw on this diversity.

Pedagogical approaches to learning along with the utilisation of, for example, cooperative strategies, thinking skills, multi-modal resources, multiple intelligence strategies, allow students to explore and respond to the concepts within the CSCF in ways that are relevant and meaningful in their journey of constructing understanding. Effective pedagogy promotes the sharing of ideas and stories, links to other learning and provides choice, accountability and opportunities for reflection and action.

Continued educational research into how learning takes place along with professional development informs teachers' pedagogy and empowers them to make decisions about the most effective approaches for students in their classes.

The learning environment

Teachers play an important role in creating an exciting, supportive, inclusive and collaborative learning environment which helps students to explore and discover their spirituality. Such a learning environment values students' different perspectives and fosters critical dialogue. It empowers students and encourages them to be actively involved in their learning.

The learning

The pedagogical approach in Christian Studies makes learning personally relevant, creates deep thinking and brings students to a place where they act on the challenges, values and beliefs communicated in the theology of the framework. A significant aspect of learning involves developing religious literacy which gives students theological and philosophical frameworks for what it means to be human and provides them with opportunities and means to make life choices. A person is religiously literate when he/she can make sense of and engage with texts, practices and beliefs of a religious tradition. Being religiously literate enables people to access and communicate their experience of spirituality.

Authentic learning that brings new understanding, transforms and challenges students to take action requires a rich learning environment where students:

- are challenged to think critically and laterally about increasingly complex issues
- are given a range of strategies to solve problems
- are engaged in meaningful debate
- are stimulated to think in new ways
- interact with a range of people, data and media
- make coherent links with prior learning and experiences
- listen and are genuinely listened to
- share their growing understanding
- have opportunities to be still and reflect
- embrace the new and different with thought, creativity and respect
- respond in a multiplicity of ways
- make meaningful connections between learning and their experience of the world

▸▸ Refer to Appendix 4 for a summary of the above points in The Pedagogy Design Process chart.

Link to Lifelong Qualities for Learners

Pedagogy of Christian Studies is closely linked to LEA's vision for learners as expressed in the Educational Framework and Lifelong Qualities for Learners documentation (LEA, 2002, revised 2005) which articulates the principles of a meaningful education in Lutheran schools. ▸▸ See Appendix 5 for more details of the link between the Lifelong Qualities for Learners and the Christian Studies Curriculum Framework.

STRUCTURE OF THE FRAMEWORK

The CSCF supports continuity for all teachers and learners in Christian Studies in Lutheran early childhood services and schools from the age of 3 to Year 12 (13) of school.

Strands and Key Ideas

Strands describe and group the core content and learning statements of the framework. There are four strands in CSCF: Christian Beliefs (CB), Christian Church (CC), Christian Living (CL), Christianity in the World (CW). Each of the strands is of equal importance. Within each strand there are three key ideas which together identify the fundamental concepts for each strand.

- The **CHRISTIAN BELIEFS** (CB) strand is about the trinitarian nature of God – Father and creator, Son and saviour, Holy Spirit and helper – as summarised in the Nicene and Apostles' creeds. Luther's catechisms provide a Lutheran perspective of these beliefs. As Father and creator, God is the source of all life and reaches out in blessing and love for his children. Through the Son and saviour, God fully reveals his plan of salvation for all people and invites all people into a relationship with him. As Holy Spirit and helper revealed at Pentecost, God calls and inspires people to live in truth and love.

  - **Key Idea 1** Christians believe God is one God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit
  - **Key Idea 2** The person and work of Jesus the Christ is central to Christianity
  - **Key Idea 3** A Christian worldview is shaped by the biblical teaching of sin and grace

- The **CHRISTIAN CHURCH** (CC) strand is concerned with the dynamic and diverse nature of the Christian community and how the Christian community gives expression to belief in worship, prayer, fellowship and sacraments. For Christians the Bible is sacred and central for life and faith. The Bible contains the story of God's plan for the salvation of people. God's love and grace are celebrated in the worship and prayer life of Christian communities.

  - **Key Idea 1** Christians believe the Bible is God's word
  - **Key Idea 2** The Christian community is shaped by and shapes its cultural and historical contexts
  - **Key Idea 3** Christians pray, worship and celebrate the sacraments

- The **CHRISTIAN LIVING** (CL) strand is concerned with Christian teachings about living in relationship with God and how this inspires Christians to live in love and service in the local and global community. Each person is unique and valued, made in God's image, with particular gifts and abilities. God creates human relationships and provides structure and purpose for these relationships. The love and forgiveness God shows people is to flow into Christians' relationships with others. Jesus provides an example of living a life of service and love. Christians are called to live by the law of love and serve the world by working for peace and justice at all levels of society.

  - **Key Idea 1** Christians believe that God creates people to live in relationship with him and with each other
  - **Key Idea 2** Christians are called to love and serve all people
  - **Key Idea 3** Christians have a responsibility in and for the world

- The **CHRISTIANITY IN THE WORLD** (CW) strand explores the diverse religious and cultural expressions of belief and life. Christian communities in Australia exist in a society that has become a place of religious as well as cultural pluralism. Lutheran education in Australia, as part of society, also experiences this pluralism. Christians believe that God creates all people to live in relationship with him and recognise that people find expression for their spirituality in different ways. This multi-religious, cultural and diverse spiritual landscape provides a range of philosophical and ethical frameworks for living that present challenges and opportunities for Christian communities.

  - **Key Idea 1** Religious beliefs and ideas shape people's thinking and actions
  - **Key Idea 2** People express their spirituality in various contexts within and beyond Christianity
  - **Key Idea 3** People make decisions using a range of religious perspectives and ethical frameworks

Bands

Bands (Beginning–E) provide the levels of the framework for use from the age of 3 to Year 12 (13) of school. The bands reflect the developmental characteristics of the learners while recognising that within each band there can be great diversity in the backgrounds and prior learning experiences of the learner. Each school determines at which year level a band begins and ends. This will vary from state to state and be a whole school decision.

Band levels correspond to different stages/levels in different states, typically

Beginning — 3–5 year olds (also appropriate for first year of school)

Band A — years 1, 2, (3)

Band B — years (3), 4, 5

Band C — years 6, 7, (8)

Band D — years (8), 9, 10

Band E — years 11, 12 (13)

Learning statements

There are twelve *learning statements* per band. They describe what students know and are able to do as a result of their learning in Christian Studies. They are measurable and observable, developmental across the bands and reflect the scope and complexity of the curriculum. They are demonstrated in a range of contexts over time. Some students will require more time to demonstrate achievement of learning statements.

▸▸See Appendix 6 for summaries of learning statements at each band level.

Scope statements

Scope statements are provided for each level of each strand and key idea. They bring into focus the main concepts and knowledge to be developed in each learning statement. They show the progression from one level to the next and serve as a guide to develop the increasing complexity of the learning statements across levels.

Students know... (knowledge and elaborations)

Content *knowledge and elaborations* identify what students need to know and engage with to demonstrate an understanding of the learning statements at each of the band levels. The context and focus of units will determine the choices that teachers make about content knowledge relevant for demonstration of the learning statement, ensuring a deep, rich and balanced program addressing all key ideas within the cycle of a band (2–3 years).

Students can... (ways of knowing)

Ways of knowing are examples of the processes through which students can demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the content specific for their respective bands in a range of contexts. *Ways of knowing* can serve as a basis for determining whether the learning statements have been achieved at the expected level. *Ways of knowing* are not a list of activities to be completed in a unit of work.

PLANNING FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING IN CHRISTIAN STUDIES

The CSCF learning statements which are the basis for planning, learning, assessing and reporting in Christian Studies describe what it is that students will know and be able to do. They facilitate integration of Christian Studies with other learning areas.

The pedagogical approaches that will support the intent and integrity of the framework are those that manage the learning in authentic, imaginative and flexible ways, allowing students to initiate investigations, pose questions, engage with ideas and resources, connect with their interests and deepen their understandings The CSCF does not prescribe any one approach to teaching in Christian Studies. However, teachers will select an approach that honours the pedagogical principles which underpin the CSCF, is appropriate to the context and needs of the unit and facilitate student journeys of inquiry. Teachers select an approach that:

- is inclusive
- is personally relevant to students
- equips students to address their questions
- is stimulating, exciting and intellectually challenging
- creates space for transformation
- gives opportunities for action and response
- integrates relational, cognitive, affective and spiritual dimensions to promote connectedness, meaning and empathy
- creates a rich religiously literate environment

Whole school planning

Schools and early childhood services have a high level of flexibility in interpretation and application when devising units of work based on the CSCF. School, student and teacher contexts will influence decisions schools make regarding allocation of band levels and the manner in which the learning statements of each band will be addressed. Sufficient time for units, appropriate staffing and resourcing, professional development and a process of consultation will ensure the effective implementation of the CSCF (▶▶see Appendix 2). The school program is to be dynamic and unfolding, enabling students to make links between key ideas presented over the duration of a unit, over the range of units delivered in a year of study and over a student's time at the school. Teaching in Christian Studies assists students to develop, articulate and act on their understanding of the world.

Time allocation

The Board for Lutheran Education Australia (BLEA) policy is that all schools have a minimum of 90 minutes of formal Christian Studies per week. This does not include the time allocated to class or school worship. Christian Studies is considered a learning area and should receive the same timetabling considerations as other curriculum areas.

The allocated time in **primary schools** is to be divided into significant blocks of teaching time. It is imperative that **secondary schools** allocate sufficient time for teachers and students to complete the course as outlined in the CSCF with academic, theological and pedagogical integrity.

Teaching the key ideas of the CSCF provides focused learning opportunities in **early childhood services** for the whole class or small groups, planned and facilitated by the teacher/leader. There may be a set time each day, the length of which will depend on the developmental stages of children in general and the specific group of children in particular. Devotion time is seen as worship time and is not included in the time allocation of Christian Studies.

▶▶See Appendix 2 for a complete description.

Learning through inquiry

Inquiry is a powerful pedagogical tool to deepen understanding in a personally engaging manner.

> Inquiry learning involves students forming their own questions about a topic and having time to explore the answers. Students are both problem posers and problem solvers within inquiry learning. It is a collaborative process in which both students and teachers work together negotiating aspects of the curriculum. Inquiry learning encourages learners to examine the complexity of their world and form concepts and generalisations instead of being told simple answers to more complex problems. It is based on the belief that students are powerful learners who must be actively engaged in the process of investigating, processing, organising, synthesising, refining and extending their knowledge within a topic.

(Wilson, J. & Wing Jan, L. (2003) *Focus on Inquiry: A practical approach to integrated curriculum.* Melbourne, Australia: Curriculum Corporation)

Essential skills and dispositions

For effective learning to result from a Christian Studies program various skills and dispositions are to be developed. The aim is to create a community of learners who are free to express their views and travel their own spiritual journeys. The classroom can be a meeting place where students can share their diverse understandings, uncertainties, perplexing questions, beliefs and faith in God. The classroom is to be a safe and supportive environment which provides opportunities for stillness and reflection, recognising that growth and transformation take time.

CSCF skills and dispositions focus on the relational, cognitive, affective and spiritual dimensions of religious literacy:

- listening skills to hear, discuss and respond sensitively to the diversity of perspectives within the classroom
- discussion skills in which clear reasoning processes are employed
- ability to dialogue critically with diverse viewpoints
- social skills which allow students to accept and honour each person's uniqueness and respect each person's need for privacy and personal space
- interdependence and collaboration with other students
- celebration of difference and strengths within the group
- knowledge and awareness of cultural similarities and differences
- the ability to own and ground one's beliefs and ideas
- the ability to reflect on one's spiritual journey

Creating units of work

Engaging, stimulating units of work require clear expressions of purpose that state how student understandings and skills in Christian Studies will be developed.

A range of factors contributes to the selection of learning statements and includes:

- student development, needs, prior learning, background, learning styles
- student issues, questions, personal relevance and interests
- concepts being studied in other learning areas
- significant events on school and community calendars

Teachers have great flexibility to create units of work that meet the needs of their students and are able to draw on a rich array of topics and contexts. Using the CSCF, units of work can incorporate learning statements from one or more key ideas within a strand or in different strands. Units can vary in duration.

The scope statements and content knowledge and elaborations in the CSCF outline the intent and concepts to embed in a unit so that an understanding of the selected learning statement(s) can be developed. The content knowledge and elaborations describe suggested ways that students can demonstrate their understanding of the concepts within the context of the unit.

The learning experiences within a planned unit of work should:

- be related to the learning statements
- be sequenced to maximise development of concepts and knowledge
- encourage and address students' questions
- develop critical, lateral thinking
- invite investigation, participation and creativity
- use a wide range of teaching strategies to cater for the diverse needs of students and the range of learning styles
- use a multiplicity of resources to create a rich religiously literate environment
- develop partnerships with the wider community, eg, local congregational and cultural groups, service organisations
- give room for explicit instruction, joint construction, independent learning
- encourage learners to take control of their learning
- offer multiple challenges
- address the cognitive, affective and spiritual dimensions of learning
- provide opportunities for reflection and action
- give students opportunities to apply and demonstrate their learning at various phases of the unit
- develop the appropriate components of Lifelong Qualities for Learners

No single proforma is prescribed to plan units of work. Teachers will be directed by their school in type of proforma and detail of unit plans. However, the chosen proforma needs to include:

- unit title and duration
- band level, year group
- strand(s), key idea(s) and learning statement(s)
- unit overview and purpose
- essential question and deep understanding
- specific knowledge and elaborations
- assessment *as, of, for*
- student needs, prior learning, interests, questions
- special consideration for individuals or groups of students
- links to Lifelong Qualities for Learners
- links to achievement standards of other learning areas if appropriate
- sequenced learning opportunities
- relevant resources
- unit reflection and evaluation

⇥ Refer to Sample Unit Planner in Appendix 7 for creating units of work.

Assessing and reporting

Assessing

Assessment describes the ongoing process of purposeful gathering, analysing and reflecting on evidence gained from student work to make informed judgements about students' demonstration of learning. Learning statements in the CSCF describe the learning that is to be assessed. Assessing student learning is interactive involving both students and teachers in the process of making judgements about current and future learning. Collection of evidence for assessment must therefore be planned, focussed and systematic, reflecting the scope and increasing complexity of outcomes across band levels.

A balanced approach to assessment will incorporate:

- *assessment of learning* – summative assessment collected from various assessment opportunities in a unit of work, used to determine students' level of performance and for reporting students' progress in Christian Studies
- *assessment for learning* – information gained by teachers about student learning during the course of a unit to improve the learning work for students, used to shape curriculum planning, learning and teaching practices
- *assessment as learning* – opportunities students have to monitor their learning; opportunities during a unit of work to identify, evaluate and reflect on how they are learning, what they are learning, make connections with other learning and understanding and set goals for future learning (Earl, 2003)
- Achievement standards for each band comprise concepts and content drawn from learning statements and scope statements together with evidence of student learning demonstrated through ways of knowing.

Effective assessment practices will provide a comprehensive collection of relevant data from a variety of sources and assessment strategies across a range of contexts to give sound judgements about student learning and achievement of learning statements. Evidence will come from the following sources:

- observation
- consultation
- focussed analysis
- self and peer assessment

Students need to be clear about what they are expected to know and do to achieve the learning statements. Assessment opportunities are to flow meaningfully from the learning experiences within a unit, giving students ongoing feedback and many varied opportunities and contexts to demonstrate their developing mastery of the learning statements. Some students will require more opportunities to demonstrate the learning statements.

It is important that teachers work together

- to develop a common understanding of expected performance
- to form consistent, professional judgements, based on criteria, about achievement of learning statements
- to moderate evidence gained from student work within and across band levels

Where appropriate, students should be involved in formulating the criteria for acceptable performance and reflecting on their understanding of the concepts within the learning statement(s). Decisions need to be made about which key points in a unit will facilitate the gathering of important student data about achievement of the learning statement(s). Although only knowledge, process and communication are assessed, the importance of the affective objectives in a unit remains and may be addressed through student reflection, self-assessment and/or action.
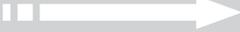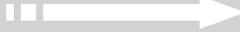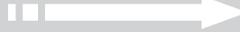
Reporting

The results of learning and achievement of learning statements are to be recorded and communicated, with timely and useful supporting documentation, to students, parents, teachers and others who support the student learning process. Reporting in Christian Studies is to be consistent with reporting in other learning areas. It needs to reflect the pedagogy and intent of the CSCF, the purposes for reporting and support the needs of those who are to receive the report. The nature of student records and learning profiles is a decision of schools.

CHRISTIAN BELIEFS

LEARNING STATEMENTS:
CONTENT KNOWLEDGE AND WAYS OF KNOWING

CHRISTIAN BELIEFS

Key Idea 1: Christians believe God is one God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit

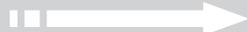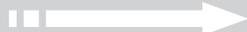|	Beginning	Band A	Band B	Band C	Band D	Band E
learning statements	**CB 1.1** Children explain their ideas about God and who God is	**CB 2.1** Students discuss and describe Christian beliefs about God and the blessings God gives people	**CB 3.1** Students explore and report on Christian beliefs about the nature of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit	**CB 4.1** Students analyse Christian beliefs about the ways God reveals himself as one God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit	**CB 5.1** Students explore and reflect on the nature of God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit – as creator and sustainer of each individual and all things	**CB 6.1** Students examine Christian beliefs about the nature and actions of God and evaluate their relevance to daily life
scope statements	An understanding of who God is, is central to and forms the basis of all exploration and understanding of the Christian faith. The nature of the created world and people point to God but Christians look to the Bible to tell them who God is and what he does.	Christians believe that God is eternal, ever-present, transcendent and personal. He is creator and sustainer, giving the world to his created people to enjoy. His love is revealed in the gifts of Jesus, the Holy Spirit and the Bible. He is a God who blesses richly from the bounty of his love, grace and mercy.	Christians confess that God is one yet three persons. The three persons point to the different aspects of the work of God – creator, saviour, helper – revealing his loving and forgiving nature to people. The Christian creeds emphasise the unity, community and interrelatedness of the three persons.	Christians believe that God has chosen to reveal himself as triune God through specific revelation in his word. Exploring the mystery of the trinity is made possible through the language, imagery, symbolism and use of metaphors in the Bible. These identify the rich, multi-layered aspects of a personal God.	The belief that all life begins with an ever-living, sustaining creator gives meaning and purpose to the Christian life. The majesty, complexity and goodness of God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit – are revealed in the created order and through his specific revelation. People are dependent on God and creation to survive and are called by God to value and treat his creation responsibly.	The Christian belief that God continues to be an active source of goodness and beauty in the world challenges people's view of themselves, the world and the role they play. God is honoured when people honour their sexuality, creativity, spirituality and relationships. People are co-creators/sustainers with God when they explore, invent, create, preserve, protect, heal.
students know... (knowledge and elaborations)	Christian beliefs about God • God made the world • God creates and loves all people • God is all-powerful • God is everywhere • God sent Jesus to save people • God keeps his promises • God always listens when people talk to God • God helps people to love him, themselves and others • God and his love lasts forever	Christian beliefs about God • God is forever • God is everywhere and always with people • God is good, loving and forgiving • God created the universe and gave the world its beginning • God loves the world and takes care of it • God cares for everyone and everything • God is revealed through scripture in the Old and New Testaments • God is Father, Son and Holy Spirit God's blessings • the gift of God – Father, Jesus and Holy Spirit God blesses people with the gifts of • the created world • heaven • other people • freedom • the Bible • life • forgiveness	Nature and roles of God • God is three-in-one • God, the Father, creator of all things then and now, preserver of creation • God, the Son, Saviour and teacher • God, the Holy Spirit, helper and guide for people of the Old and New Testaments and people today • the work of God in salvation – redeems, justifies, sanctifies Relationship between Father, Son and Holy Spirit • presence at creation, life-giving • Jesus' personal relationship with the Father (eg, praying, names, Father's will) • birth and baptism of Jesus – presence of Father and Spirit • support during Jesus' temptation • Jesus the Word of God • Jesus' promise to send the Holy Spirit to help and teach • the story of Pentecost • link between the fruit of the Spirit and the nature of God the Father and Jesus The Christian creeds are summaries of Christian beliefs about the trinity	Attributes of a personal God – loving, patient, compassionate, angry, merciful, forgiving, forbearing, righteous, faithful, loyal, wise, emotional, powerful Names and titles given to God in the Bible (eg, Jehovah Jireh ie provider, king, Father, "I am who I am") God reveals himself • through his word • as person (eg, in the garden of Eden) • through the incarnation – Jesus the word of God among us • as creator, provider, protector, preserver, sustainer, healer • through continuing creation The mystery of the trinity Imagery, symbolism and metaphors in the Bible reveal a multi-layered understanding of God • hand, king, husband, cloud, fire, mother hen • lamb of God, bread of life, living water, vine, good shepherd • dove, flame, wind • bear and cubs	The nature of God – the action of the trinity • owner, creator and sustainer of the universe • creator of human life in his image, source of a person's identity, security and meaning • complex, intelligent, powerful being as shown in the intricacies and beauty of creation • participation of Jesus in creation • Holy Spirit is the Lord and giver of life, calls and guides people to see the nature and power of God Significance of belief in God as creator and sustainer for individuals regarding • exercise of personal freedom • care of creation • appreciation of an individual's personal value • relationship with God, people and creation • celebration of life and beauty in a broken world The nature of creation • rhythm and order of God reflected in life • everything God creates is good, self-generating, with specific functions and purpose for life • God uses the built creation as well as the natural creation for good • interdependence of all life forms – nature • interconnectedness in the created order – human community • all human life is a gift Scientific perspectives – new discoveries; complexity and interconnected nature of the universe; limits of science in explaining life and the universe Scientific and religious approaches regarding the origin and purpose of creation – creationism, intelligent design, evolution	Biblical images of the personal and communal nature of God – the trinity (God of relationships not a theoretical construct) Biblical images of God that confront preconceptions and conventional ideas of God (eg, from Job, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon, Hosea, mother images of God, hard sayings of Jesus) Paradoxical concepts • heaven and hell • law and gospel • goodness and suffering God is active in people's personal lives: • the work of the Holy Spirit in people's lives • God's work to bring people to faith • God's presence in and through suffering • vocation Challenges to the biblical teaching of creation – pantheism, deism, individualism, materialism, dualism, gnosticism, atheistic evolution Contribution of Christians to people, community and created order in the fields of • medicine • art, drama, music, architecture • science, mathematics • environment • politics • sociology, psychology Fostering of excellence in relationships, sexuality, creativity, parenting

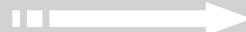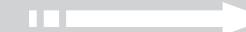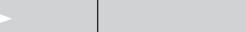| students can... (ways of knowing)					
• explore ideas about God as creator, helper and friend • retell, in a variety of forms, the creation story and other Bible stories about God • observe the complexity of creation • make connections between their experiences and Christian beliefs (eg, rainbows, in the garden – discussion about God making flowers) • participate in group discussions about God • brainstorm their ideas about God • list God-made and man-made objects in the surrounding environment • share their ideas about God and what God is through a range of mediums • construct and explore their own questions about God/Jesus • listen to the story of Jesus' life • use a range of Bible stories to identify ways Jesus was a friend (make connections with **CB2**) • illustrate ways in which God shows his love for people	• identify words in songs, poems and the Bible that describe the nature of God • retell biblical stories that focus on different aspects of God's nature • represent God's goodness, love and forgiveness through the arts • share their responses to different accounts of the creation story • describe their understanding of God • investigate the order and patterns of the natural environment and reflect on what it may reveal about God • portray God's creation through various art media • use sensory experiences to investigate the wonder and beauty of creation and to reflect on God as creator • identify things God gives to people • suggest different ways people can respond to God's gifts • describe ways Christians give thanks to God for his gifts (eg, prayer, sing a song, draw a picture) • discuss why God's gifts are important to Christians • plan a creation celebration • describe ways God helped people such as Noah, David, Daniel	• describe the different works of God as Father, as Son and as Holy Spirit • using a variety of texts, songs, hymns, prayers and creeds compile descriptions of the nature and attributes of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit • using a variety of mediums, represent biblical images of the three persons of God • retell the key events of the Pentecost story and identify changes the Holy Spirit brought to the lives of people • respond to information gathered from various Christian texts (eg, creeds) and media resources about the roles of God the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit • demonstrate or illustrate an understanding of the interconnected roles of Father, Son, Holy Spirit • identify the presence and work of the three persons of the trinity in different key biblical events (eg, creation, work of the prophets, birth of Jesus, coming of the Holy Spirit) • discuss key Christian beliefs and write own creeds • identify and compare stories of the Spirit at work in the lives of Old Testament leaders and prophets	• locate and discuss the significance of biblical symbols and metaphors for Father, Jesus, Holy Spirit • trace the use and meaning of a metaphor/title for God (eg, king) in the Old and New Testaments and identify what it communicates about God • identify people's experiences of and responses to the attributes of God (eg, all-knowing, all-seeing, all-powerful, patient, forgiving) in biblical times and today (eg, Christians) • research ways God revealed himself and communicated to people in both Old and New Testaments • identify Jesus' teachings about God and how Christians have interpreted them through song and images • examine the influence of the Holy Spirit on various biblical characters (eg, King Saul, Paul) • compare various cultural and artistic representations of the Triune God and create new meaningful representations for a selected audience • analyse a selection of biblical texts to show how they illustrate the Christian doctrine of the trinity • create a profile of God • discuss the limitations of human language to describe God • comment on different artists' representations of God and what they suggest about the nature of God • (linking with **CB2**) discuss the view of God that is communicated through the life of Jesus	• investigate the natural order in creation and evaluate what this order reveals about the nature of God • compare different biblical accounts of creation (eg, Job, Psalms) and analyse what they reveal about God's relationship with his creation • illustrate how God continues to sustain creation (eg, laws of nature, life cycles, procreation, role of people – natural world and world of work) • critically reflect on Christian interpretations of the power of God and the intricacy of creation as depicted in a variety of media (eg, poems, artwork, songs by Christian writers) • analyse Christian beliefs about God's ongoing presence and intervention in the world (eg, does God intervene to avert or cause disasters?) • discuss the role of the Holy Spirit in leading people to a realisation of the nature of God the Father as creator, God the Son as redeemer • analyse and discuss how God works through people to maintain, sustain and grow creation (eg, built environments, use of knowledge and resources, communication) • identify structures in society which help people maintain order in their lives • identify principles of care and responsibility for the created order • evaluate different governments' policies on the environment in light of biblical principles • develop an action plan which honours, nurtures and fosters all aspects of God's creation • identify the features and limitations of scientific and biblical explanations about the origin of the universe • compare and contrast religious beliefs and scientific theories about the origin, intricacy and complexity of creation (eg, how does the process of evolution align with the creation accounts?)	• deduce people's understanding of God by studying characteristics of the God people don't believe in • report on how Christians accommodate the paradoxical nature of God (eg, heaven/hell, inclusive/exclusive, saint/sinner, law/grace) • summarise historical ideas of God and chart their influence on current thinking about God • critique how different ideas about the nature of God influence the way people approach life • research the history of the Christian creeds, identifying and reflecting on key areas of disputation then and now • create a profile of the view of God that emerges from a reading of a range of Old and New Testament texts on how God relates to people in a variety of contexts • arrive at a position on the relationship between God's goodness and human suffering • formulate a response to the question, *are there three gods or one?* through a study of Christian and non-Christian perspectives on the trinity • examine ways people (including themselves) can be co-creators with God • examine confronting biblical passages on the nature of God, identifying the current values and practices that these challenge • compare Christian and non-Christian responses to crises in the environment or the search to cure diseases or response to human suffering and their motivations and rationales • propose a charter of excellence for community life, providing biblical support • provide an analysis and comparison of various views, beliefs, theories on the origins of the universe

Achievement standards for each band comprise concepts and content drawn from Learning Statements and Scope Statements together with evidence of student learning demonstrated through ways of knowing.

CHRISTIAN BELIEFS

Key Idea 2: The person and work of Jesus the Christ is central to Christianity

	Beginning	Band A	Band B	Band C	Band D	Band E
Learning statement	**CB 1.2** Children identify stories about Jesus and discuss what Jesus said and did	**CB 2.2** Students gather and present information about the life and teachings of Jesus	**CB 3.2** Students research the social and cultural context in which Jesus lived and draw conclusions about how he chose to respond to people and events	**CB 4.2** Students investigate and evaluate the significance of Jesus the Christ, his life, death and resurrection for Christians	**CB 5.2** Students analyse and interpret the message and identity of Jesus the Christ for all people	**CB 6.2** Students research, analyse and discuss claims that Christians make about Jesus the Christ
scope statements	Jesus' birth, life (actions and words) and death reveal his unique nature and purpose. Listening to stories about Jesus and to stories Jesus told gives people a clearer understanding of the love and care God has for each person.	For Christians, Jesus is more than a good person or role model. His death and resurrection demonstrates God's power over sin and makes it possible for people to be made right with God. God invites people to place their trust and faith in Jesus for their salvation. Jesus continues to be an advocate, to lead, encourage and save people.	Understanding the life, teachings and times of Jesus gives a contemporary reader an insight into the powerful and radical message God communicated in Jesus. This equips the learner to reflect on the application of Jesus' actions and words to personal and social life today.	Christians believe sin has been a barrier between people and God since the Fall. People were never able to meet the conditions of the covenant made at Mt Sinai. No action or plan of people could overcome this barrier. Only God can save. Jesus' death and resurrection instigates a new covenant which gives the full measure of God's grace.	Christians believe the immense love and grace of God is revealed in the identity of Jesus. Fully human, Jesus knows and identifies with the temptations, limitations and suffering of people. Fully God, he has complete control of life, having conquered sin, death and Satan. Each gospel writer focuses on this unique identity of Jesus reflected in his life, work and teachings.	Teachings and claims related to Jesus' identity, purpose and mission have been contested in both Christian and non-Christian circles since Jesus' time. For example the challenge to the key Lutheran teaching that Jesus is both fully human and fully divine confronts the claim that Jesus has the authority and power to overcome sin and death and save people. Claims about Jesus are both a source of unity and division.
students know... (knowledge and elaborations)	Stories about Jesus' life • birth • childhood • family • death and resurrection • relationships Stories about what Jesus did Stories about how Jesus loved and cared for all people (eg, healing stories) Stories Jesus told	Jesus as human and Son of God • Jesus' birth, childhood • Jesus' adult life • Jesus' death, burial and resurrection • Jesus at God's right hand Jesus' ministry • Jesus' teaching about love, forgiveness • Jesus' teaching about the way to live • Jesus interacted with all kinds of people • Jesus helped and healed people	Social, historical and cultural context • social groups in Jesus' time (eg, Samaritans, Gentiles) • people Jesus interacted with and the significance of this (eg, outcasts, women) • religious groups (eg, pharisees, zealots) • Roman occupation • cultural and social codes (eg, purity laws, punishment, customs, social status, gender, religious observances, patriarchal society) • lifestyle (eg, foods, dress) • geography and climate Jesus' life in his social and cultural context • biblical accounts from the gospels • Jesus confronted the social and cultural contexts of his day • ways people responded to Jesus' challenge to the restrictions • the social and cultural contexts of the parables The significance and application of Jesus' life for the contemporary context	Jesus' life – fully human • Jesus demonstrated God's love for all people • Jesus wept, slept, was hungry, tired, disappointed, angry • Jesus was tempted and overcame temptation • Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane • Jesus lived in obedience to God, his Father • Jesus' teachings (eg, the law of love) • Jesus, an advocate for the poor and marginalised of his day • a life of prayer Jesus – fully God • redeemer and saviour • lived the perfect life • fulfilled Old Testament prophesies about a saviour • conquered sin and death • an atonement for people's sin • restores people's relationship with God • new covenant established with God • eternal life for Christians Relevance of Jesus for people today The witness the four gospels and epistles provide to the life and message of Jesus	Identity of Jesus • birth, death, resurrection • miracle worker, healer • teacher • intercessor – represents all people before God • the only way to salvation – Jesus as a present reality and a future hope • revolutionary nature of Jesus' identity – Jesus' rule as king • historical, cultural and social images of Jesus • Jesus fully human and fully God – implications for all people Four gospel portraits of Jesus The message of Jesus • what Jesus communicated about himself, and God the Father • paradoxical nature of Jesus' teaching (eg, you must die to live, give to receive) • implications for Jesus' followers People's response to the identity and message of Jesus, historically and in the contemporary context	Biblical claims regarding • Jesus as saviour, messiah, redeemer • authority of Jesus – stated in the gospels, Paul's letters, Old Testament • Jesus' divinity (eg, the Alpha and Omega) The confronting nature of Jesus • Jesus is the 'means of salvation' – not just a role-model to be followed • the confronting nature of Jesus' teaching and actions • Jesus, the wisdom of God – stumbling block to Jews; foolishness to Greeks – confronts contemporary society's view of itself • the continuing Christian debate regarding the nature of Jesus (fully God/fully human) beginning with the early church The claims of Jesus address people's ultimate questions and therefore demand a response Other religious, historical and secular claims about Jesus

students can... (ways of knowing)					
• share Bible stories of Jesus • make and use puppets to tell stories about Jesus • identify pictures of Jesus in a picture Bible • design and construct an artwork that symbolises Jesus' resurrection (eg, clay empty tomb, mini garden) • describe and sequence the stages of Jesus' life on earth (eg, baby, child, adult) • construct their own questions about Jesus • identify Jesus' family and friends • recreate stories of Jesus' interaction with people • identify the ways Jesus loved and cared for people • share what they are learning about Jesus • retell the Christmas and Easter stories	• discuss names given to Jesus • role play major events in the life of Jesus • identify a special event in Jesus' life and retell or illustrate the story • describe the people that Jesus met and how he showed love for them • explore and present findings of the way artists, songwriters, films and books portray Jesus • identify the different messages found in Jesus' teaching, illustrating their understanding • construct scenarios which explore what Jesus might do in selected situations • create symbols to illustrate Jesus' role and purpose • explain and reflect on the importance of Jesus in Christmas and Easter celebrations • identify stories of forgiveness in the Bible and tell of times when they have felt or acted the same way (eg, Joseph, the forgiving father) • dramatise or illustrate scenarios to explore forgiveness • discuss the message of some of the parables Jesus told	• research and exhibit information about life in first-century Palestine • explore and present information highlighting significant events in Jesus' life • collect and display information from a range of texts – bibles, encyclopedias, picture books, film – to identify the nature and practices of the different cultural and social groups with whom Jesus interacted • examine and retell Jesus' interaction (words and actions) with and response to people of different cultural and social groups • translate stories from Jesus' time into a contemporary setting • compare and evaluate depictions of Jesus drawn from stories in the gospels and various artists' representations • compare the needs/fears/joys of people living in Jesus' time with people living today and discuss the relevance of Jesus for people then and now • analyse the context and message of the parables Jesus told and apply the message to their own context • contrast actions of Jesus with those of contemporary society	• compare the links the gospel writers make between Jesus and the Old Testament writings • compare covenants God made with Abraham, Moses, David with the new covenant Jesus speaks of to his disciples on the eve of his death • compare the four gospel accounts of the birth, death and resurrection of Jesus, identifying the message of each writer • analyse the ways films have depicted Jesus' last days and compare with a gospel account • discuss reasons the writer Paul gives for the necessity of Jesus' death and resurrection • document the relationship between Jesus and God the Father • analyse Jesus' actions, parables and teachings to consider what he reveals about the relationship God wants to have with people • explain why Jesus' death and resurrection is a demonstration of God's love for all people • debate the relevance of Jesus' life, death and resurrection for today • sort and categorise the details of Jesus' life given in the creeds/gospels and give reasons for the inclusion and exclusion of some details • create visual representations of significant themes in the life of Jesus such as obedience, sacrifice, covenant, mission, forgiveness • identify and justify choice of stories from the gospels that show Jesus as fully God and fully human • compare and contrast the gospel accounts of key events and teachings in Jesus' life • show links between the Lord's prayer and Jesus' other teachings	• systematically collect, record and organise a profile on Jesus, highlighting the human and divine nature of Jesus • explain the significance of titles given to Jesus in the Bible • create a multi-media documentary of different cultural, social and historical perspectives of Jesus, incorporating art, music, movement, poetry, reports, biblical content • compare and contrast the identity of Jesus presented by the four gospel writers • analyse Jesus' teachings to debate the relevance of Jesus' message for the world today • identify the challenge of Jesus' message to issues of social justice and equity, conflict and service • contrast Jesus' leadership style with contemporary leaders, leaders of totalitarian regimes, , imagining life with Jesus as a king • research biblical claims about the purpose of the death and resurrection of Jesus • reflect on and illustrate the Christian belief that Jesus is 'the way, the truth and the life' • trace the developing understanding of Jesus' identity and purpose in the Apostles', Nicene and Athanasian Creeds	• research and differentiate between the various claims of several religious/spiritual leaders, including Jesus, concerning Jesus' identity • identify, explore and debate the claims Jesus makes about his identity and mission that are controversial for students • record a succession of entries in a reflective journal responding to the claims made about Jesus • compare, review and present the manner in which Jesus is portrayed in the media with other religious/spiritual leaders • evaluate how some Christian sayings and practices could undermine the claims of Jesus (WWJD, Crusades, 'Gentle Jesus, meek and mild', 'God helps those who help themselves', military images of God) • document and role play early church debates about the nature of Jesus and find their modern counterparts • evaluate how modern western society's emphasis on scientific thought and knowledge might act as a stumbling block to claims Christianity makes about Jesus • describe and explain how various Christian sects and/or other religious teachings respond to the Christian belief that Jesus is God

Achievement standards for each band comprise concepts and content drawn from Learning Statements and Scope Statements together with evidence of student learning demonstrated through ways of knowing.

CHRISTIAN BELIEFS:
curriculum statements

CHRISTIAN BELIEFS

Key Idea 3: A Christian worldview is shaped by the biblical teaching of sin and grace

	Beginning	Band A	Band B	Band C	Band D	Band E
	CB 1.3	CB 2.3	CB 3.3	CB 4.3	CB 5.3	CB 6.3
Learning statement	Children demonstrate an awareness of the Christian belief that God creates people and loves them unconditionally	Students analyse rescue stories from the Bible	Students investigate and summarise what the Bible says about sin and grace	Students examine and reflect on the impact of sin, evil and grace in the world	Students apply Christian beliefs about the intrinsic value of human life within the context of sin and evil	Students propose a response to crises and conflicts in the world, applying a Christian understanding of sin and grace
scope statements	Christians believe God is a God of love. No action of a person, good or bad, will alter the love God has for them. God's love is manifest in the act of creation, in particular the creation of people, with whom he establishes a friendship that he continues to seek, foster and sustain.	The Bible teaches that in rejecting God's friendship and God's instructions people become lost in a broken world. God's love overcomes people's failings, reaching out to save and restore them. People often repeat their mistakes, needing continual forgiveness and guidance. God's love and faithfulness are constant and unfailing.	The Bible teaches that people's wilful disobedience has serious consequences for this life and eternity. Selfishness, pride, greed and revenge result in broken relationships. The root of sin is lack of trust and faith in God. God's unconditional love and forgiveness of sin is demonstrated in the gift of Jesus' saving sacrifice.	According to the Bible, the fruit of sin – disharmony, judgement, death – is evident in all areas of life, the created world, human relationships and individual self-concept. The repercussions have been devastating and cumulative, traced from one generation to the next. God's love and forgiveness breaks the destructive cycle of sin bringing hope and an overflow of goodness and grace.	Lutherans understand that God's righteousness and justice require that sin is punished. God's continuing love, mercy and compassion for each person is revealed in the incarnation, the sacrificial death of his own Son, the gift of the Holy Spirit – God bearing the judgement of sin himself. People are free to reject his gift of forgiveness and disobey him.	Christians believe they are called to the ministry of reconciliation, which means that they are to share the message of God's love and forgiveness and be people that bring forgiveness and healing to broken relationships. This is part of working in partnership with God, to be his voice and hands, to bring new life and hope to a suffering world.
students know… (knowledge and elaborations)	Created by God • God creates people different to other living creatures • God creates people with bodies, feelings and the need to be with other people • only people can think about God Stories about God's love (eg, first story of creation, Noah, Abraham, Exodus, birth of Jesus, Jesus welcoming little children, miracle stories) • God loves all people • Jesus is a special friend to everyone God's love continues • for people even when they do wrong • when things go wrong God loves people no matter what they do What people can do when they make mistakes	Bible stories which highlight God's love for people in spite of their failings (eg, Adam and Eve, Exodus story, Joseph, Moses) Analysis of rescue concept, people's need of rescue, the concept of sin Consequences of sin for • how people feel • relationships with others • the environment • people's relationship with God What God does to rescue people • how God demonstrates his love and care • forgiveness Different ways God rescues • God gives his laws • God heals • God works through circumstances • God works through other people's love and care • God's ways are unpredictable and unexpected Ways people respond to being rescued	Adam and Eve's sin impacts all people What makes Adam and Eve's actions sinful God's response to sin • justice, punishment • provides laws to protect people and their relationships • forgiveness • love and reconciliation • sending a saviour – Jesus • Biblical images of sin (eg, falling short, enemy of God) People's response to sin • feelings of guilt, shame, remorse, • confession, repentance, need for forgiveness Bible stories that show God's grace and mercy God acts to bring forgiveness and reconciliation • God's Son became a human being to save the world • Jesus died and rose to save all people from sin and death • the gift of the Holy Spirit to renew, strengthen and guide • the gift of eternal life	Images of good and evil • the cycle of grace – sin – grace • God's friendship with Adam and Eve • a broken world – sin and evil ruin God's creation. • patterns of relationship with God and people, eg, people sin, ask for forgiveness, relationship restored • origins of sin – fall of creation, devil • human strengths and limitations of character Impact of sin and evil on the world • breakdown of God's creation (eg, hurricanes, earthquakes) • broken relationships, eg, divorce, violence, harassment • human and environmental disasters (eg, war, famine, pollution) • evil corrupts good order • separation from God, death Evidence of grace in the world • new beginnings • God uses people to inspire, comfort, support others • comfort of grace, forgiveness, resolution, reconciliation, restitution • God provides social structures for the welfare of all people (eg, law, police, family, marriage, government, church) Effect of God's promise of new life now in the Spirit and life eternal Luther's teaching on • faith alone • grace alone	Human condition • God's special creation is humanity • God gives people talents and abilities equipped for their role on earth • sinful nature – people experience separation from God, others and in themselves as a result of sin • human sin has consequences for God's creation • earthly life has an end Human failure does not negate human worth • human worth does not depend on people's talents, abilities or achievements; illness, handicap or age, race, colour or gender • human worth comes from God, who loves all people equally, evidenced by God sending his Son for all people without exception • God accepts the sinner – God and Jesus reach out to people who have sinned (eg, King David, Peter) • Christians are called to love their enemies and forgive those who have hurt them • God's provision for human beings • Jesus' response to suffering • impact of human sin and evil on God	Manifestations of evil • natural evil • community evil • institutional/system evil • moral/individual evil Human beings and the problem of evil • free will • original sin • spiritual dimension of human beings • need for salvation and saviour • new creation through Christ – Christian as 'fully human' A Christian perspective • theology of the cross versus theology of glory • grace and ungrace • salvation by grace alone • justification by faith • repentance • forgiveness • sanctification • transformation • eternal life • God's presence in a broken world • biblical concepts of reconciliation Responses to evil • revenge • indifference • models of reconciliation (eg, South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission) • a compassionate life

students can… (ways of knowing)					
• share stories, songs and Bible verses about God's love • retell stories about God's love and forgiveness • describe God's love • brainstorm ways God uses people to show his love • make an artwork to illustrate God's love for people • describe the similarities and differences between people, and God's love for all people • demonstrate that they are unique by studying self and creating a self-portrait, comparing their skills • share/describe ways Jesus was a friend to people • identify and express their thoughts about what they are learning about God's love • discuss how they feel when they make mistakes, do something bad to another person or when someone hurts them • use language skills to solve relational problems • role play actions that communicate being sorry and actions that show people forgiving others	• explore and discuss examples from the Bible which illustrate God's love for people and his plan of restoring people's relationship with him • discuss how God's rules guide people to live God's way • create a series of symbols and rituals that illustrate how God rescues people • describe feelings associated with wrongdoing and forgiveness • describe how God brings good from human failure • contrast the consequences of wrongdoing with acts of love and kindness • retell Bible stories that show why people needed to be rescued • identify examples of times God uses people's wrongdoing to bring good in a situation • identify ways God rescues in Bible stories • respond to Christians sharing the way God has loved and forgiven them	• investigate events that occurred in the garden of Eden and recount and reflect on people's actions and God's response • present findings of an exploration of Bible verses that describe what Jesus gives Christians • explore the action and teachings of forgiveness in the Bible and reflect on the significance of forgiveness in relationships • examine and explain what Christians believe builds and destroys relationships • visually represent a personal understanding of sin and grace • compare fictional stories of hurt and forgiveness with biblical stories • report on God's solution to sin • write a psalm of confession to be used in a worship time • compare the effect of sin with the effect of God's love	• examine and explain the reasons for the breakdown in human relationships and suggest ways to restore relationships • investigate, discuss and illustrate the battle between 'good' and 'evil' using contemporary subject matter (eg, movies, books) drawing comparisons with biblical imagery • analyse the pattern of relationships between God and people, showing the effect of sin and grace in relationships (eg, nation based – Judges stories; individual based – King David) • imagine and express God's response to how people/groups deal with social and environmental issues • describe the difference God's love and forgiveness can make to people whose lives have been affected by sin and evil • investigate and present the difference knowledge of God's promises has made to the way people have chosen to live their lives • list causes and effects of injustice and prejudice among people and document how forgiveness and mercy bring healing and wholeness • reflect on the action of God in a person's faith journey, identifying God's grace in the situation • describe what Christians believe about death and eternal life • create flow charts of God's restorative actions	• collate and share responses to personal feelings of unworthiness and contrast with examples of passages that highlight what the Bible teaches about self-worth (Eph 2:4, 5; Matt 10:30, 31) • express ways the worth and value of each person can be fostered • trace the relationship between God and people (the good and the bad) in a range of contexts and propose what this reveals about the complexity of the human condition • create a celebration of people's 'specialness' to honour the significance and worth of every individual in the context of a broken world (eg, through a collage of movement, mime, Bible readings, personal reflection, Christian testimonies and songs) • investigate and report on the life and work of Christian persons, suggesting how their work and life has eased suffering and brought healing in the name of Christianity • analyse how Jesus treated sinners, the sick and the marginalised with dignity and suggest how this could be applied in daily relationships • investigate and analyse what self-help resources reveal about the nature of human life and compare to biblical perspectives	• review a film evaluating the way it supports the biblical view of free will as both a vital part of a person's humanity and a contributor to human suffering • compare and contrast philosophical, Christian and other religious responses to world conflicts such as terrorism and war • contrast different results of applying a theology of the cross and a theology of glory to social issues such as unemployment, violence, personal freedom, poverty • predict the possible outcomes of applying a model of reconciliation such as Reverend Tutu's Truth and Reconciliation Commission to people subjected to genocide (eg, Rwanda, Bosnia) • present a proposal on how conflicts within relationships, ranging from personal to global, can be resolved applying an understanding of sin and grace • reflect on how they (students) resolve conflicts in their own lives and identify strategies and principles they would find helpful in their relationships • participate in a forum to resolve an issue of relevance to the local community • prepare devotional material based on Jesus' response to sin and conflict • research responses to a conflict situation with a view to be engaged in an action to address the conflict (eg, letter writing)

Achievement standards for each band comprise concepts and content drawn from Learning Statements and Scope Statements together with evidence of student learning demonstrated through ways of knowing.

CHRISTIAN BELIEFS:
curriculum statements

CHRISTIAN BELIEFS

THEOLOGICAL NOTES

CHRISTIAN BELIEFS

Theological notes

KEY IDEA 1: CHRISTIANS BELIEVE GOD IS ONE GOD: FATHER, SON AND HOLY SPIRIT

A 'god' is the term for that to which we are to look for all good and in which we are to find refuge in all need. Therefore, to have a god is nothing else than to trust and believe in that one with your whole heart . . . Anything on which your heart relies and depends, I say, that is really your God.

(Luther, Large Catechism, Kolb, Wengert: 386)

CHRISTIANS CONFESS GOD AS FATHER, SON AND HOLY SPIRIT

Human beings look for 'god'. It may be expressed in terms of looking for 'identity, security and meaning' (Kolb 8–9). St Augustine (354–430) expressed the human longing for god in the well-known prayer: 'O God, you have made us for yourself, and our hearts are restless until they find rest in you' (Confessions I i). This search for God has led people to many different concepts about God.

On the basis of Scripture (eg Matt 28:18–20; 2 Cor 13:13), Christians confess God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. God is three in one, and one in three. While we may speak about 'one God', Christians do not emphasise the unity of God at the expense of the trinitarian nature of God. Nor do we lose the unity of God through an overemphasis on the 'three persons'.

This confession of God is a truth of faith, not a truth of reason. It is a way to speak about the mutual communion that exists between the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. In representing this mystery of the trinity, the Nicene Creed confesses that:

> We believe in one God, the Father Almighty . . . and in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, begotten from the Father before all ages . . . and in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Life-giver, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified. (Kolb, Wengert 22-23)

In exploring the relationship of Father, Son and Holy Spirit within the trinity, C S Lewis (147) speaks about the 'dynamic activity of love [which] has been going on in God forever and has created everything else'. He continues (148), 'that in Christianity God is not a static thing — not even a person — but a dynamic, pulsating activity, a life, almost a kind of drama. Almost . . . a kind of dance.'

GOD IS REVEALED AS FATHER, SON AND HOLY SPIRIT

'Natural revelation'

'Natural revelation' looks for God through traces of himself which he has left in his creation. However, only by faith can these traces be seen as pointing to God. They are inadequate in themselves to provide any complete picture of God and may instead lead people to create God in their own image.

There are at least five ways in which we might glimpse God: in nature, in history, through conscience, by reason, through emotions. Some of these have been used in attempts to develop 'proofs' of God (eg nature – 'cosmological', 'teleological'; reason – 'ontological'). However, these same avenues may lead people to see God as 'either a cruel tyrant or a pathetic fraud' (Silcock 10).

'Specific revelation'

Christians recognise that we can know God only because God finds us (Luke 15:3–7) and reveals himself to us in Scripture. Only through the special revelation that comes to us in Jesus Christ (John 1:14; Heb 1:1–2), through the proclamation of the gospel, do we know God as loving, merciful, kind and forgiving (cf **CC1**). Once we know God in faith, we can also see the world with eyes of faith and recognise the traces of God in the world (Ps 19:1).

God reveals himself as 'person'

Christians believe that God reveals himself as 'person' (Exod 3:14) with whom we have a relationship (cf **CL1**). God is not simply an impersonal divine force. Various attributes are ascribed to God which reflect this personal nature (eg loving, caring, forgiving, etc). God is also seen as both immanent and transcendent.

God reveals himself as Father, Son and Holy Spirit

Christians believe that God reveals himself as three persons, but as one God. This deep mystery of the Christian faith cannot be explained: it can only be believed because of God's revelation of himself and the way in which God works in the world as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. As indicated earlier, this doctrine of the trinity can be seen as thoroughly scriptural (eg Matt 28:18–20; 2 Cor 13:13), although it is not fully developed in written form as a doctrine of the church until the fourth century. There are many ways of trying to illustrate the relationship within the trinity (eg triangle, three states of water, the apple, the cloverleaf, etc) but nothing can really 'explain' the mystery of the trinity. There are also ways of speaking about the trinity to emphasise different aspects of the work of God (eg God over us [Father], among us [Son], in us [Holy Spirit]; creator, saviour and helper, creator, reconciler and life giver/sustainer; creator/preserver, redeemer and sanctifier, etc).

The Christian belief in the trinitarian nature of God is summarised in the Nicene, Apostles' and Athanasian creeds. Luther's Large and Small Catechisms provide an important Lutheran commentary on these creeds.

[It is important to try to help students to think and to speak about God in a trinitarian way. It is also important that this way of speaking about God is used in worship and particularly in prayer. Very often prayers are addressed to 'God', or 'Father', or 'Jesus' rather than to 'Father, Son and Holy Spirit'. Because of the Lutheran emphasis on the centrality of the gospel and the work of Jesus Christ, relating to God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit can be under-emphasised.]

God the Father

'Father' is a name for God (Eph 3:14–15). It is not a metaphor or an image to describe God. We should not attempt to understand the fatherhood of God on the basis of earthly fathers, but earthly fathers should be modelled on the fatherhood of God.

Although the use of 'Father' as a name can be seen as problematic, to change the name of God used by Christ, and which Christ gave us to use in the Lord's Prayer ('Our Father'), is to change the God we are addressing, because in biblical thinking to change a name is to change the person. The Bible uses both male and female images to describe God, but the triune God revealed in the Bible is genderless – neither male nor female. However, the difficulty of gender specific pronouns (he/him/his) remains.

Although all persons of the trinity are involved in all of God's work (eg Father, Son and Holy Spirit are all involved in creation), work which is specifically related to the Father is that of creating and preserving the universe (see below).

God the Son

The earliest confession of Jesus Christ in the church is probably 'Jesus is Lord!' (1 Cor 12:3). However, God the Father used 'Son' for Jesus already at his baptism (eg Matt 3:17) and Jesus used the name for himself (eg John:19–23).

[**Note**: the person and work of Jesus Christ will be dealt with in **CB2**.]

God the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is the third person of the triune God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Because people often think of the Holy Spirit as 'spirit' or 'power' or 'life-giving force', the Holy Spirit is often referred to as 'it' rather than a person with his own identity in the triune God together with the Father and the Son. The Holy Spirit has also sometimes been referred to as 'the shy member of the trinity'. This is not because the work of the Holy Spirit is somehow less significant than that of the Father or the Son. The Holy Spirit is centrally involved in all of the mighty works of God. However, much of the work of the Spirit is to point people to Christ as their saviour and to continue the ministry of Christ in the world. In this way the Spirit points away from himself to Jesus and the Father. Jesus emphasised in his discussion with Nicodemus (John 3:8) that the work of the Spirit is essential for the Christian but that, like the effect of the wind, the work of the Spirit is seen by its impact and its results in the life of the Christian.

CREATION AND PRESERVATION OF THE UNIVERSE

All life and all existence begin with the ever-living creator. Creation is the result of the will of God and emphasises that we are completely dependent on God for our existence. 'In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth' (Gen 1:1). While creation is most often related to God the Father, it should be seen as involving all three persons of the trinity. All things were created through the Son (John 1:10) and the Holy Spirit is confessed as the life-giver.

However, creation is not simply God's action in the past, but God continues to create (cf **CL2**). Luther captured this continuing creation of God in his explanation to the first article of the creed: 'I believe that God has created me together with all that exists. . .' My life, therefore has meaning and purpose.

It is not hard to believe that some supreme power created all things. The beauty and order of the universe tell us that. But even the most advanced study of the universe cannot tell us **who** its creator is or **why** the universe has been created. We can know the creator only because he has made himself known to us in his word — especially through the Word

who became a human being, God's Son, Jesus Christ. The Bible tells us that the creator of the universe is not some impersonal force, but God, our wise and loving heavenly Father. What makes Christian teaching about creation different from any other is that we view the creation of the universe with the eyes of faith in Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit working through the biblical witness reveals to us that Jesus is the focus also of the creation story (John 1:2, Col 1:15–17, Heb 1:2).

The Bible does not answer all questions about the origin of the universe. That is not its purpose. It is the legitimate domain of science to investigate questions of origin. The Bible is more concerned to lead us to know the creator and the relationship between the creator and his creation than it is to teach us to know everything about the creation.

The Bible tells us the following:

- **God created the universe out of nothing.** The universe is not eternal, matter is not eternal. God created the primeval material — the atoms and molecules (Heb 11:3).
- **God created all things 'by his word'.** They came into existence because God wanted them to and because God used his power (Ps 33:6). The Bible does not offer scientific explanations of the 'how' of creation; it simply tells us that God is the creator. The universe is God's (Ps 24:1,2).
- **God created in an orderly way.** Genesis 1 brings out the 'rhythm' and orderliness of God's creative work as God creates order out of chaos. In each stage of creation, God speaks, another stage of creation is completed, and God sees that his creation is good. This creation is not the result of some struggle with an opposing force as in the creation stories of other ancient religions (eg Babylonian creation stories). (There is no dualism, nor any separation between the 'sacred' and the 'secular'.)
- **God's creation was good.** There was perfect harmony in God's creation. Everything was just the way the creator wanted it to be. God is not responsible for the disharmony, disorder and evil we observe and experience now (cf **CB3**).
- **God looks after the universe he created.** God set up the laws of nature (day and night, the seasons, the laws of physics, etc) by which the universe continues to exist in an orderly way. God is not limited by these laws, however. God continues to work within his creation, and he may use his power to bring about 'supernatural', miraculous events.
- **God still preserves his creation:**
    a) by providing for the needs of all creatures, especially human beings (Ps 145:15,16; Matt 6:25–34). This includes things like medicine and technology;
    b) by protecting his creatures, especially human beings (Matt 10:29,30). [The Bible also speaks of the angels as serving God by protecting people (Ps 91:11,12)];
    c) by making humans caretakers of God's creation (Gen 1:28, 2:15). We are to value and preserve the environment God allows us to enjoy (cf **CL3**);
    d) by working through people as participants in God's ongoing creation (cf **CL2**).

THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Holy Spirit participates in all of the mighty works of God

As one of the three persons of the triune God, the Holy Spirit is active wherever God is speaking or acting. The Nicene Creed speaks of the Holy Spirit as 'the Lord and giver of life'. He is the life-giving breath of God (Gen 1:2; 2:7; Ps 33:6; 104:27-30) through whom all things were created and continue to be preserved.

The Spirit was active among the Old Testament people of God, showing his divine power particularly through people like the judges and kings (eg Judges 3:10; 6:34; 1 Sam 10:6; 16:13) who spoke and acted by the power of the Spirit. The Spirit also worked through the prophets (Isa 61:1; Micah 3:8) who spoke the word of God to the people. The prophets also looked forward to the time when God would send the Holy Spirit to his people in a full and special way (Joel 2:28,29), anticipating the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-12).

The work of the Holy Spirit is linked closely with the life and work of Jesus Christ. Jesus was conceived in Mary's womb by the power of the Holy Spirit (Luke 1:35). At his baptism by John the Baptist the Holy Spirit descended on Jesus in the form of a dove and anointed him for his ministry in the power of the Spirit (Mark 1:9-11). The Spirit then 'immediately drove Jesus out into the wilderness' (Mark 1:12-13) where he was tempted by the devil. The close tie between the work of Jesus and the work of the Spirit is most clearly developed in the parting words of Jesus to his disciples (John 14-16) where Jesus promises to send them the Holy Spirit [the 'Paraclete': the counsellor, helper, guide, comforter, advocate]. The Holy Spirit will teach them and remind them of all Jesus has said (John 14:26), will 'testify' on behalf of Jesus (John15:26) and guide the disciples 'into all the truth' (John 16:13-15).

Following his resurrection, Jesus 'breathed' the Holy Spirit on his disciples (John 20:19-23) giving them his authority to forgive sins on his behalf (cf CB3). After his ascension, Jesus kept his promise on the day of Pentecost by pouring out the Holy Spirit on all people (Acts 2:16-21) in a clear demonstration of divine power (Acts 2:1-12). The sound of the mighty wind and the tongues like fire were signs of the Spirit's powerful presence and operation. The Spirit transformed Jesus'

disciples from doubting, fearful followers into people of strong faith who boldly witnessed to the truth about Jesus as the promised Messiah. Through the powerful, Spirit-filled preaching of the disciples, the Spirit changed the hearts and lives of thousands of people as they confessed their sins and were baptised in the name of Jesus whom they acknowledged as their only saviour (Acts 2:37-42).

The Holy Spirit creates and sustains faith in the life of the Christian

Martin Luther in his explanation of the Third Article in the Small Catechism says this about the work of the Holy Spirit [Kolb, Wengert 355-356]:

> I believe that by my own understanding or strength I cannot believe in Jesus Christ my Lord or come to him, but instead the Holy Spirit has called me through the gospel, enlightened me with his gifts, made me holy and kept me in the true faith, just as he calls, gathers, enlightens, and makes holy the whole Christian church on earth and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one common, true faith. Daily in this Christian church the Holy Spirit abundantly forgives all sins – mine and those of all believers. On the Last Day the Holy Spirit will raise me and all the dead and will give to me and all believers in Christ eternal life. This is most certainly true.

Luther here concentrates on the major work of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Christian. The work of the Holy Spirit in bringing people to faith in Jesus Christ is so radical that the Bible speaks about it as a 'new birth' (John 3:3-8; Titus 3:5,6). By nature every human being is spiritually dead towards God (John 3:5-6; Eph 2:1; 1 Cor 2:14). The Holy Spirit leads people to recognise their sinfulness and spiritual helplessness and to repent and believe in Christ. No-one can come to faith without the Spirit's powerful work (1 Cor 12:3) [cf CB3 additional material on 'grace'].

For many Christians this work of the Holy Spirit begins through the sacrament of baptism. The Holy Spirit works through the word of God [cf CC1] and the sacraments [cf CC3] which are therefore sometimes designated 'the means of grace' The Holy Spirit also brings each believer into the church as the body of Christ [cf CC2] in which the Spirit continues his work in their lives through the ministry of word and sacrament.

The gift of the Holy Spirit is also portrayed by St Paul as a 'down payment', 'first instalment' or 'deposit' because the Spirit is a guarantee of what is to come (2 Cor 1:21,22; 5:5; Eph 1:13,14). Since the Holy Spirit continues the work of Christ, he guarantees that the life believers now enjoy in Christ will be brought to a joyful completion when Christ returns.

The Holy Spirit makes Christians holy ['sanctification]

When the Spirit brings people to faith in Jesus Christ, he not only provides forgiveness for their sins, but also transforms their lives. He makes people holy, not only in their status before God ['justification'] but also in their living ['sanctification']. The Spirit produces 'fruit' in the life of the believer: 'love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control' (Gal 5:22,23). While in this life Christians are always sinners and saints at the same time (cf CB3), yet by the Spirit's power they grow in holiness (Eph 4:22-24; Rom 12:1,2) becoming more and more 'Christ-like' in their words and behaviour. This is not their own doing, but the Holy Spirit working within them, forming their life of discipleship (Gal 2:20) (cf CL2 and CW2).

The Holy Spirit also helps Christians to pray according to the will of God and intercedes for them when they are unsure how to pray or are unable to pray for themselves (Rom 8:26,27). It is by the power of the Holy Spirit that as children of God we dare to come to God with the cry 'Abba Father' (Rom 8:15; Gal 4:6) (cf CB3).

The gifts of the Spirit

As well as producing 'the fruit of the Spirit' in the life of Christians, the Holy Spirit also distributes 'the gifts of the Spirit' to them for the purpose of ministry. There are three main passages which speak about these gifts: Eph 4:11 [which list various roles or functions in the church] and Rom 12:6-8 and 1 Cor 12:8-10, 28-30 [which speak about various gifts for ministry in the congregation].

Misunderstanding about the gifts of the Spirit led to problems in the congregations already in the early church. St Paul had to deal with people trying to construct a hierarchy of gifts, valuing some more highly than others. Paul emphasised that all gifts are given by one and the same Spirit (1 Cor 12:11) for the edification and growth of the whole church (1 Cor 12:7) and not for the personal benefit of individuals. While the 'fruit of the Spirit' is present in all believers, no one person has all the gifts of the Spirit, but the Spirit 'allots to each one individually just as the Spirit chooses' (1 Cor 11:12).

Again in the church today there are those who emphasise the more 'spectacular' gifts such as speaking in tongues or working miracles. However, some of the other gifts, such as helping, administrating, showing mercy, giving generously, leading, showing compassion, cheerfulness and hospitality may be even more important in building up the church by supporting and encouraging others.

The Holy Spirit continues to work in the church today through the gifts he gives to people for service. These may be other gifts than those mentioned in the New Testament. It is important for Christians to learn to recognise their own gifts and also the gifts of others so that working together the church is built up to the glory of its head, Jesus Christ.

Some issues and questions for discussion and reflection:

- This key idea is part of the strand called 'Christian Beliefs'. It therefore provides the opportunity to present clearly and consciously the Christian understanding of the triune God and how this confession of faith shapes the Christian worldview. However, this does not remove the necessity to 'own and ground' this belief in God, recognising that many students may not share in this confession of faith in God.
- How do we speak about 'god' to students who have no concept of 'god'?
- Are students looking for 'god', or are they more concerned with some general experience of 'spirituality'?
- Is the 'God of Abraham' worshipped by Jews, Christians and Moslems the same god?
- What do various symbols or artistic representations of God reveal about God?
- Explore the image presented by C S Lewis of the trinity as dynamic and moving, like three persons engaged in a complex dance, where each person contributes and is necessary for the dance to be performed.
- Are there any theological issues in opening our worship 'In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit', or 'In the name of God our Mother, Lover and Friend'?
- How can we deal with the relationship between science and the Bible when considering the origins of the universe? (cf also **CW1**)
- How can we help students see themselves as part of God's 'continuing creation'?
- Is there a tendency in Lutheran schools to separate the 'sacred' and the 'secular'?
- If the Holy Spirit wants all people to come to faith in Jesus, why don't all people believe? (Consider Matt 22:1–14; 23:37–39; Acts 7:51.)

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KEY IDEA 2: THE PERSON AND WORK OF JESUS CHRIST IS CENTRAL TO CHRISTIANITY

Then the high priest said to Jesus, 'I put you under oath before the living God, tell us if you are the Messiah, the Son of God.' Jesus said to him, 'You have said so.' (Matt 26:63–64)

Jesus said to his disciples, 'But who do you say that I am?' Simon Peter answered, 'You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.' (Matt 16:15)

Thomas answered Jesus, 'My Lord and my God!' Jesus said to him, 'Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe.' (John 20:28–29)

The most crucial question in life for every person is the one addressed by Jesus to his disciples. Either Jesus Christ is who he claims to be, or he is a disillusioned fraud. Christians believe that how this question is answered determines not only how we live in this life, but where we spend eternity.

While this key idea considers the person and work of Jesus Christ in particular, what Christians believe about Jesus Christ permeates all areas of the Christian Studies curriculum and the life and work of the Lutheran school. While one outcome of this key idea will be that students hear the story of Jesus, there will also be the prayer that through the work of the Holy Spirit, students will meet and be met by Jesus Christ or that they will grow in their already existing relationship with him.

THE PERSON OF JESUS CHRIST — JESUS AS DIVINE AND HUMAN ('CHRISTOLOGY')

True God

Jesus is true God. This is what makes Jesus unique. He is more than a great teacher, wonderful model and inspiring spiritual leader. He is the Son of God 'from eternity'. That means, there has never been a time when Jesus did not exist as God's Son ('the Word', John 1:1–3). Jesus is 'God incarnate', that is 'God in the flesh' (John 1:14). If we want to know what God is like, we look at Jesus (John 14:9). He shows us the power, glory, wisdom of God, and especially the love of God (John 1:17,18).

It is God himself who is our Saviour. The Son of God 'humbled himself'; he did not always and fully use his divine qualities (power, glory etc). In order to save us, '*he gave up everything and became a slave, when he became like one of us*' (Phil 2:7). So great was his love for sinful human beings, that the Son of God experienced all the misery, pain and suffering of sinful human existence and even hell itself (Matt 27:46) in order to rescue them from sin and its consequences.

Jesus' resurrection is central to the Christian faith. It shows that he is truly God, that in raising Jesus from death God has accepted Jesus' perfect sacrifice for the sins of the world, and that death can no longer hurt human beings as the punishment for sin.

A real human being

Jesus is truly human. The Son of God became a human being **for us**, to take our place — to live the perfect life we are supposed to live but can't, to take our sins on himself and pay the penalty we deserved. He died our death and went through the hell of being forsaken by God.

Jesus lived a truly human life. He was born as a truly human baby (but without sin). He developed physically and mentally (Luke 2:40). He went through normal human experiences. He got tired, he was hungry and thirsty, happy and sad, pleased and angry. The one difference was that his life was perfect; he obeyed his Father in absolutely every respect, even though he knew that this would mean sacrificing his innocent life to pay for the guilt of the whole human race.

Jesus' suffering and death were real. He felt what any of us would feel. In Gethsemane, for example, he was 'deeply distressed' and said: '*I'm so sad that I feel as if I'm dying*' (Mark 14:34). He felt the shame of the soldiers' mockery and the pain of their scourging, the weight of the cross, the agony of crucifixion and the torture of being forsaken by his Father.

Jesus' resurrection was real. The same human body that suffered, died and was buried became alive again. More than 500 eyewitnesses said they saw the risen Jesus. In the forty days after Jesus' resurrection his followers saw how Jesus' body was no longer restricted by the physical laws of time and space. Jesus' self-humbling for us is over. Now he is in an 'exalted' state; he always and fully uses his attributes (power, glory etc) as God.

Still today Jesus is God in human flesh. A human being — one of us — is forever at God's right hand, as the advocate who intercedes for us, as the Lord who rules all things for our benefit. We can follow him through suffering, death and resurrection to live forever with bodies that will be glorified like his (Phil 3:20,21; 1 John 3:1–3).

Difficulties with this teaching

Although the Bible teaches that Jesus Christ is both fully human and fully divine, it took the early church until the Council of Chalcedon in 451 to settle controversies about the two natures of Jesus Christ. Various attempts were made to deal with the miracle of the incarnation (Jesus becoming a human being) which denied either the full divinity of Jesus Christ or his full humanity. For example, some people taught that Jesus only seemed to be human ('docetism'). Others taught that Jesus Christ was not really divine. One group of these, led by Arius, taught that Jesus was subordinate to God the Father: if not, then God has divided into two — the Father and the Son — and therefore God is no longer one. The extended section in the Nicene Creed (325) dealing with Jesus Christ, grew out of this dispute. These same heretical teachings emerge from time to time in current thinking about Jesus Christ. Only if Jesus Christ is truly God and truly a human being can he be the saviour of the world.

The teaching of the incarnation (Jesus as both fully divine and fully human) highlights a key emphasis of Lutheran theology, its paradoxical or dialectic nature. Lutheran theology seeks to hold in creative tension a number of apparently contradictory insights from revelation: law and gospel, saint and sinner, sacred and secular, left- and right-hand kingdoms, etc. As with the humanity and divinity of Christ, all of these aspects of theology must be clearly distinguished but never separated: they must always be retained in creative balance.

THE WORK OF JESUS CHRIST ('SOTERIOLOGY')

The work of Jesus Christ is connected inseparably with his person. Only because Jesus is fully human and fully divine can he be the saviour of the world. There is a long tradition in Christian theology which sees the work of Jesus Christ under three 'offices': prophet, priest and king.

Prophet ('revealer')

The Old Testament prophets spoke on behalf of God. Jesus claimed this status for himself: 'No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known' (John 1:18). People who heard Jesus recognised that he spoke with a special authority (Matt 7:29; John 7:46). Jesus taught regarding our relationship with God and our relationship with one another — both the 'vertical' and the 'horizontal' relationships.

When Jesus began his ministry, he announced that the kingdom of God was here. In his person the loving, saving rule of God had come to human beings. In parables about the kingdom he told people what it is like when God rules with his grace. Jesus' miracles were 'signs of the kingdom'. God's loving rule was in action when Jesus healed the sick, raised the dead, forgave sinners and ate with outcasts.

Jesus' clearest and most profound revelation of the love of God came through who he was and what he did. Through Christ, God revealed his love for the world in his death on the cross to bring all people back into a right relationship with God (2 Cor 5:19–21; Rom 5:8). But this revelation of God in Christ is seen by human reason as 'foolishness' and 'weakness' (1 Cor 1:18–30). Only in Jesus Christ do we have hope — his revelation shows the impossibility of any attempts we may make to try to put ourselves right with God.

While he lived on earth in his humiliation (Phil 2:5–8), Jesus proclaimed God's word directly through his teaching and life: now in his exaltation (Phil 2:9–11), he continues this 'prophet office' first of all through the pastoral office (where the pastor functions as Christ's mouth) as well as through the witness of his people.

Priest ('substitute and victim')

Jesus Christ is the priest who offered himself as a sacrifice for his people (Heb 9:26), but who also remains forever the mediator between God and his people (1 Tim 2:5).

Jesus Christ has taken our place (our substitute) in the face of all that threatens and accuses us. He came to serve and give his life as a ransom (victim) for sinners (Mark 10:45). Jesus Christ is the 'suffering servant' (Isa 52:13 – 53:12), the one who humbled himself to death on the cross (Phil 2:8). Jesus has freed us from the curse of the law (Gal 3:10–14). He has paid the penalty for our sin and has turned away the wrath of God on account of our sin (1 John 2:2; Rom 3:25a). Jesus frees us from our sin and guilt through the forgiveness of our sin (2 Cor 5:21). This is the forgiveness we receive through the sacrament of holy communion.

Because Jesus is now 'at the right hand of the Father', he continues his priestly role as our advocate (1 John 2:1), who mediates for us, representing us to God, and God to us. Because he is both God and a human being, Jesus Christ is our high priest, continually interceding for us (Heb 7:25). Because he has suffered temptation, we can approach the throne of grace, trusting in God's mercy and help (Heb 4:14–16).

[**Note**: in speaking about the work of Jesus Christ, it is important not to play one person of the trinity against the other. Dr Jeff Silcock (83) expresses the concern this way: It is not as if Christ buys God off through his self-sacrifice. *It's not that God was formerly angry and has now become loving because of his Son's innocent death on the cross. God has never been anything but love.* And it was his love that drove him to send his Son to the cross, just as it was the Son who

out of love willingly obeyed his Father's will in the Spirit for our salvation. This is a profound mystery that we will never understand. Faith simply accepts it with gratitude and gives glory to the triune God.]

King ('victor' and 'ruler')

Jesus is the king who has won the victory for us over sin, death and Satan. Through his death on the cross, Jesus has finally defeated these enemies and has also broken the power of the law over us. This victory is clearly demonstrated for us in Christ's resurrection. In our baptism, we have been united with the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ (Rom 6:3–11) so that we now share in his victory.

Jesus is also the king who is a servant. His throne was his cross and his crown was made of thorns. He rules in the church through his love and mercy, demonstrating his love in washing his disciples' feet (John 13:1–20). His commandment is that we love one another (John 13:34–35).

Jesus rules as king now at 'the right hand of the Father' although his kingdom is not visible (cf **CC2**). Christ's ascension is his 'enthronement' and enables him to be everywhere at all times and no longer confined in time and space. Jesus will also return as king at the end of time (Col 3:1–4) and judge the living and the dead (Matt 24:27–44; 25:31–46). He will then reign forever in glory with the saints.

Christ as example

Some people see the life of Christ simply as a model for human living. While the life of Christ can certainly be seen as a model which we can try to imitate (1 Pet 2:21–25), there are aspects of his life (eg the significance of his suffering and death for the sins of the world) which are unique to Jesus Christ. There is also a danger that we see our own efforts as contributing to our salvation. It is very easy to slip into legalism or moralism which puts the emphasis on our efforts rather than the saving work of Jesus Christ.

The 'joyous exchange'

Luther spoke of the work of Jesus Christ as the 'joyous exchange' of Christ's innocence for the sinner's guilt and sin. Kolb (154–155) summarises Luther's position as follows:

In his passion and death Christ absorbed into himself all the evil that clings to his people. Substituting himself for sinners, he gathered onto his own back all the sin and guilt that condemn them to death. He took the entire evil of each individual with him into his tomb and deposited it there. This tomb is the only place in God's creation into which the Father does not look. Having assumed our suffering and death upon his own person, Christ trades them for life itself.

FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST

To believe in Jesus means more than just acknowledging that what the Bible says about Jesus is true. It means trusting Jesus as our only hope of being rescued from our guilty condition and from the punishment we deserve. More than that, it means living and dying with the confidence that because of Jesus, God is always for us and nothing can separate us from God's love (Romans 8:31–39). Jesus Christ is both universal and unique. He is the only savior for all people, whether or not they have faith in him.

Some issues and questions for discussion and reflection:

- This key idea is part of the strand called 'Christian Beliefs'. It therefore provides the opportunity to present clearly and consciously the Christian understanding of the person and work of Jesus Christ and how this confession of faith shapes the whole life of the Christian and the world of the Lutheran school. However, this does not remove the necessity to 'own and ground' this belief in Jesus Christ, recognising that many students may not share in a relationship with Jesus.
- What presuppositions about Jesus Christ might students bring into the school context?
- In the Lutheran school context, do we 'explain' Jesus Christ, 'proclaim' Jesus Christ, 'confess' Jesus Christ?
- What understanding of Jesus Christ comes through the songs used in school worship?
- Where do we tend to see more emphasis placed — on the divinity of Christ or on his humanity? What does this do to our understanding of the person and work of Jesus?
- Is it important that Jesus is both God and a man now?
- Who died on the cross? God? A man?
- What concerns might there be with the popular slogan 'WWJD' — 'What would Jesus do?'

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KEY IDEA 3: A CHRISTIAN WORLDVIEW IS SHAPED BY THE BIBLICAL TEACHING OF SIN AND GRACE

> God proves his love for us in that while we still were sinners Christ died for us. (Rom 5:8)

> Human beings are a special creation of God. Originally they were created without sin. However, sin has destroyed the original harmony of God's creation. All relationships have been affected by sin (cf **CL1**).

SIN AND EVIL

What is sin?

There are various words and expressions in the Bible to describe sin, for example, transgression, rebellion, revolt, iniquity, missing the mark. However, sin is also more profound than that: it is the total breakdown of the relationship between God and human beings. It is not simply wrong actions, thoughts, words or feelings; it is above all a condition, a disease that infects every human being (Rom 5:12; John 3:6).

The origin of sin

The Bible provides no explanation for the origin of evil. It simply confronts us with the reality of evil already in the Garden of Eden, where the snake becomes an instrument of evil and deception.

When God created human beings, he did not create robots or puppets. Adam and Eve had free will to choose to obey God or to disobey him. This also meant they could choose to sin. God put one restriction on Adam and Eve's life in the garden: they were not to eat the fruit of one tree (Gen 2:15–17). The devil tempted them to question why there should be any restrictions at all. Why shouldn't they be on the same level as God? The first sin set the pattern for every sin — human beings wanting to be like God (idolatry), doing what they want instead of what God has commanded.

The first (original) sin contaminated the whole human race; it corrupted human nature completely (Eph 2:1–3). Jesus indicates that evil comes from within a person, from the heart (Matt 15:10–20, cf Gen 6:5). The sinful nature we inherit from our parents is not just neutral towards God; it is actively opposed to God (Rom 8:7). We can never live up to the standard of goodness God expects: perfect love for God and for all people. As history and our own experience teach, any human being is capable of the greatest wickedness (Matt 7:17).

However, the depth of our sin cannot ever be fully understood simply through human reason alone. God's word tells us that we are all sinners, and it clearly teaches that because of our state of sin ('original sin'), we are all pronounced guilty by the law and deserve to die. We are all born in this state of sin which condemns us in the sight of God, not because of what we *do*, but because of what we *are*.

The effects of sin

Sin brought into the world guilt, disharmony, suffering and death — spiritual, physical and eternal death. It has resulted in broken relationships with God, ourselves, other people, and the whole of creation.

- Sin has broken our relationship with God (Gen 3:7–10), and there is nothing we can do to restore that relationship. In fact, by nature we now try to put ourselves into the place of God's and be like God (idolatry).
- Sin leads to internal turmoil within ourselves (Rom 7:19), as we deal with guilt, bad conscience, fear, insecurity, despair and other results of our broken relationship with God.
- Sin immediately led Adam and Eve to a broken relationship with each other: they were suddenly ashamed of their nakedness (Gen 3:7). This also led to a pattern of blame, disagreement, self-centredness, hatred, anger and violence with the murder of Abel by Cain (Gen 4:1–16). Sin continues to have its devastating consequences for all human relationships.
- Sin also has its profound effects on human relationships with all of creation. Nature now tends to work against human beings (Gen 3:17–19), and can unleash massive destruction on human beings. Human beings also abuse their mandate to take care of and preserve creation.

As God had warned, sin also brought death into the world. God in his mercy did not immediately destroy Adam and Eve. In fact, he clothed them in skins and blessed them with children. However, they would now one day return to the dust from which they had been created (Gen 3:19). As far as our natural relationship with God is concerned, we are dead in sin (Eph 2:1–3; Col 2:13) until God rescues us and gives us life through Jesus Christ.

By choosing to disobey God, human beings lost their free will in spiritual matters. While we are free to choose in the sphere of everyday things (what to buy, where to go, whom to marry, etc), we have no choice in spiritual matters. We are unable to choose God and turn freely to him. By nature, because of original sin, we rebel against God. Luther, in his explanation of the third article in the Small Catechism, puts it this way: 'I believe that by my own understanding or

strength I cannot believe in Jesus Christ my Lord or come to him, but the Holy Spirit has called me through the gospel . . .' We cannot choose God — it is God, in his mercy, who chooses us.

Because of who we *are* (original sin) this determines what we *do*. Our state of sin leads us to actual sins of thought, word and deed. Kolb (98–100) provides a helpful classification of actual sins (sins of commission and omission, habitual sins and occasional sins, individual sins and communal sins, etc) which may be useful for pastoral care. Although all sins show the breakdown of our relationship with God and in this sense all sins are 'equal' before God, some sins may be more dangerous spiritually for a particular individual than others. This is a pastoral issue rather than a theological one.

> The 'theodicy' question: 'How can evil exist if God is truly good and completely powerful?'
>
> There is no completely logical answer to this question. Many answers have been attempted, and not all reflect what the Bible teaches. Kolb (80–85) provides a very good treatment of these various options.
>
> The Bible does suggest some ways of looking at the problem, but it remains part of the mystery of the hidden God. Silcock writes (49), 'God may *permit* evil but he is not the *cause* of evil. God opposes evil. He does not initiate it, but he can and does use evil to serve his good purposes (Gen 50:20).' 'God does not use suffering to punish us but he can use it to shape and discipline us (Heb 12:5–11) as well as to develop Christian character (Rom 5:3–4)' (Silcock 50).
>
> We can bring our complaints to God (cf Pss 44, 74). Jesus himself felt the agony of being abandoned by God. He has experienced suffering, and God shares in the suffering of all his creation. While the gospel doesn't explain suffering, it does proclaim God's ultimate triumph over evil, and God's presence with us now in our suffering as God suffers with us. God suffers with those who suffer, weeps with those who weep, etc.

God's response to sin

Because God is holy and just and loving, he cannot simply ignore human sin. Sin has its consequences. However, already in the Garden of Eden when sin came into the world, God's ultimate response to sin was clear. His plan was to show his love and mercy to all of his creation, and his promise of a saviour (Gen 3:15) was fulfilled in Jesus Christ.

God has two ways of dealing with the power of sin and the reality of evil in the world. One way is through keeping sin and evil in check through the law. This is the realm of justice. God works through the 'political use' of the law to ensure that his creation functions in the way it was created to function. For example, in commandments four to ten, God protects various human relationships (cf **CL1**). God operates through the government, through human reason and custom, using coercion, reward and punishment (the 'left-hand kingdom'). In this way God tries to preserve his creation and have people live together in peace and justice. However, sin still has its devastating impact.

God's second way of dealing with sin and evil was to send Jesus Christ so that the power of evil could be broken and sin could be forgiven. This is the realm of mercy (cf **CB2**). Through Jesus' death and resurrection, God has provided the only way for human beings to once again be in the state of harmony and fellowship which God had intended, a state of harmony with God, themselves, other people and the whole of creation. Whoever believes in Jesus Christ has eternal life (John 3:16) as a present reality (John 3:36; 5:24) and as a future hope (1 John 3:1–3; 1 Pet 1:3–9). This eternal life is one of the gifts given to us in our baptism when we become children of God (Rom 6:3–11).

GRACE

The way in which God responds in mercy to sin is a gift of sheer grace. Forgiveness which is offered in Jesus Christ is given by God completely without conditions, freely, with no strings attached. God forgives sinners and accepts them as his children not because of anything which they can do but because of what Jesus has already done for them (cf CB2). St Paul is very clear when he says that 'while we still were sinners' (Rom 5:8) and regarded as 'ungodly' (Rom 4:5; 5:6), 'Christ died for us'. We are saved by grace through faith because of Jesus Christ (Rom 3:24).

Human thinking finds it difficult to accept the grace of God. Because humans tend to think in terms of reward and punishment they want to feel that somehow they can contribute to, or earn God's forgiveness. However, God's grace does not depend on any prior action or attitude on their part, nor does God look for 'good qualities' or the potential for change in their lives before he is ready to forgive. God gives his gift of grace without prior conditions.

But how can a person receive the gift of grace? This is also by means of a gift – the gift of faith. In his Small Catechism Martin Luther writes in his explanation to the Third Article of the Creed (Kolb, Wengert, 355):

> I believe that by my own understanding or strength I cannot believe in Jesus Christ my Lord or come to him, but instead the Holy Spirit has called me though the gospel, enlightened me with his gifts, made me holy and kept me in the true faith...

Some Christians say that they have been 'saved by faith'. Speaking in this way can give the impression that their forgiveness is based on their faith as a 'good work' on their part. They see their faith as a precondition for receiving

the gift of forgiveness. It seems that they have by their own decision put their faith in Jesus Christ. However, faith and forgiveness are both the gift of grace given through the Holy Spirit (cf CB1 and CC3). Lutheran theology speaks very precisely: 'We are saved by grace through faith on account of Christ'.

The comfort in all of this for Christians is that their life with Christ is not dependent on the ebb and flow of their faith, but on the work of the Holy Spirit in their lives. Their God given faith allows them to hang on to the promises of God just as a drowning person clings onto a rope thrown to him from a boat. The hand can only trust in the rope and receive the rescue it offers.

God's gift of grace is also the means through which the Holy Spirit works in the life of the Christian developing the fruit of faith in their lives (Gal 5:22,23; Col 3:12-17). Through God's grace the Holy Spirit works to transform the life of the Christian making it conform more and more to the model of Jesus Christ (Rom 12:2) (cf CB1).

Saving faith, forgiveness in Christ and the fruit of faith through life in the Spirit – all of these are the result of God's gift of grace in the life of the Christian.

Jesus used the parable of the workers in the vineyard (Matt 20:1-16) to try to give some insight into the mystery of unconditional grace. At the end of the day, all of the workers received the same payment irrespective of whether they had worked all day in the hot sun, had spent only half a day in the vineyard or worked merely one hour before receiving their payment. All received one denarius, the stipulated day's pay for a hired worker. God's gift of grace is also the same for all. It is not something which is earned, but is freely given by God to all, not on the basis of their good work, but out of the goodness of God. The response of Jesus to the thief on the cross (Luke 23:42,43) provides another insight into the gift of grace: 'Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise'.

SAINT AND SINNER

Even though by the grace of God Christians are made right with God through the forgiveness of sin (justification), Christians always also remain sinners. Before God Christians are both sinners under the law and 'saints' (forgiven sinners) under the gospel. Only after resurrection and the final judgement will sin be destroyed. Until then, Christians will always live in the tension of 'saint and sinner'. As we live in this tension, we recognise the reality of sin in our lives, but we also focus particularly on the fact that in Christ we are also already 'saints'.

The Holy Spirit is active in the lives of Christians. The Spirit helps Christians to live holy lives in the way God planned for them to live (the life of 'sanctification'), using the law of God ('third use of the law') as a guide for their lives. Even though Christians will fail, the Holy Spirit helps them to develop the fruit of the Spirit in their lives (Gal 5:22–25; Col 3:12–17) and to grow more Christ-like as they mature as Christians (Eph 4:13–16).

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

Confession and absolution is sometimes dealt with under the heading the 'office of the keys'. This relates to the authority Christ has given to his church to forgive sins or not to forgive sins (Matt 16:19; 18:18; John 20:22–23). Christ has authorised his pastors to use two 'keys' on his behalf: the key to 'loose' sins, forgiving those who repent of their sins, and the key to 'bind' sins, declaring unforgiven the sins of those who do not repent. [For much of his ministry, Luther regarded confession and absolution as a third sacrament (cf **CC3**).]

Public and private confession and absolution

While pastors are responsible on the basis of their ordination to exercise the office of the keys publicly, any Christian may hear the confession of a penitent sinner and give them absolution and assure them that God in Christ has forgiven their sins (Matt 18:15–18).

Public confession and absolution is normally part of the worship service. The people confess their sins publicly, and God forgives them through the words of the pastor who speaks on behalf of God.

Private confession and absolution occurs when Christians go to their pastor or to another Christian in private to confess their sins and receive absolution. This can be a very powerful practice when people are troubled by particular sins in their life. They hear words of forgiveness related directly to those things which are heavy on their consciences. This goes far beyond counselling (although it may arise because of it), because it is letting God deal with our sin rather than trying to ignore it, cover it over, or deal with it ourselves.

Confession

When we confess our sins publicly or privately, we acknowledge what God has already said to us in his word — that we are sinners who have sinned against God and our fellow human beings (Ps 51:4–5). Confessing our sins is something which we do, but it is not a 'good work' which 'scores points' with God. We are confessing so that we can hear God's sin-destroying and life-giving words.

In the Small Catechism, Luther teaches that before God we need to confess all our sins, even those of which we are not aware. However, in private confession, we should confess only those sins we are aware of and which trouble our conscience. Here Luther suggests using the ten commandments as a mirror to show us the sins in our lives.

Absolution

Absolution is the heart and centre of confession and absolution. We confess in order to receive forgiveness. Through the pastor, or through a fellow Christian, we hear God himself pronounce forgiveness. Jesus says, 'Whoever listens to you, listens to me.' (Luke 10:16).

[**Note**: It is very important in public worship that when there has been confession of sins, the words of absolution are clearly proclaimed. God's word does what it says: God forgives through the words of absolution. Often the absolution may be missing, or it is expressed as a prayer ('may God have mercy and forgive us our sins. . .) rather than as a declaration of God's forgiveness ('for Christ's sake, God forgives us our sins . . .').]

Although the words of absolution are spoken, forgiveness is only received by faith. This presupposes a life of repentance. In this way, the Christian is living in his/her baptism. Daily through 'contrition and repentance' our sinful nature is 'drowned' and the 'new person . . . come[s] forth and rise[s] up to live before God in righteousness and purity forever' (Kolb, Wengert: 360).

Christ has also given the authority not to forgive sins but to bind them to the conscience of the impenitent person. When this is done, it is always with the prayer that through this very solemn act the sinner will realise the severity of their situation, confess their sins and receive absolution.

Some issues and questions for discussion and reflection:

- When we say that in relation to salvation we have only one 'choice' — to reject the grace of God — what do we mean by this? How does this relate to 'free will'?
- How would you react to the statement: 'Your approach to education depends on your understanding of original sin'?
- What role do angels play in God's care and protection of human beings? (Some useful references: Matt 18:10, Ps 34:7; 91:11–12, Heb 1:14, Matt 4:5–7)
- How does the theodicy question present itself in the Lutheran school context and how can it be addressed?
- If people are involved in a human tragedy or disaster (eg tornado, terrorist attack, war, etc), how can we answer the question, 'Where is God in this situation?'
- What do we teach about eternal life? Do we emphasise the present reality or the future hope? What about eternal death?
- How might we use the understanding of Christians being both 'saint and sinner' in dealing with students in the school context?
- Can we expect greater evidence of 'holiness' in the lives of students and teachers in Lutheran schools than in schools of other agencies?
- Under what circumstances could confession and absolution be practised in the Lutheran school?
- How can the Lutheran school handle obvious and public instances of sin in the school community?

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CHRISTIAN CHURCH

LEARNING STATEMENTS:
CONTENT KNOWLEDGE AND
WAYS OF KNOWING

CHRISTIAN CHURCH

Key Idea 1: Christians believe the Bible is God's word

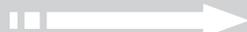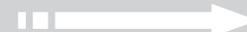|	Beginning	Band A	Band B	Band C	Band D	Band E
learning statement	**CC 1.1** Children tell what they learn about God and his story in the Bible	**CC 2.1** Students investigate and explain significant features of the Bible and its importance for Christians	**CC 3.1** Students recognise and analyse biblical textual features and investigate the purpose of the Bible	**CC 4.1** Students develop skills to examine scripture and analyse its cultural and historical contexts	**CC 5.1** Students examine the nature and purpose of the Bible as God's inspired word and critically discuss its relevance to contemporary contexts	**CC 6.1** Students justify their responses to challenges presented by different ways in which biblical text is read and interpreted
scope statements	Stories are significant means of communicating and transmitting truths held by communities from one generation to the next. The Bible is Christians' authoritative source on matters of faith, belief and life. Biblical stories tell people who God is, what he is like and what he does.	The Bible contains many narratives written by different authors in various forms. The Bible is the story of God and his relationship with people, having Jesus as the central focus. Each author tells the message God has revealed in people's lives, community and history. Christians believe the Bible tells them what to believe and how to live.	Literary forms of the biblical narrative are recognised by their textual features, use of language and literary conventions. Knowledge of these is key to understanding the message and purpose of the Bible. God's relationship with people and his saving plan is the common thread which links the biblical narratives, inviting a response from listeners and readers.	The Bible is an ancient text written in and for a world removed from the experience of contemporary readers. Uncovering the culture of writers and listeners of the original text gives insights into the meanings of the text for those people. It also assists current readers to make meaning for their context.	Christians believe the Bible is the human documentation of divine action in the world. Although a message given to specific people, the Bible has relevance for all people, for all time. Christians base their beliefs in God on the whole canon of the Bible. They understand the purpose of the Spirit-inspired message is to bring people to faith in Jesus.	Christians believe the Bible is God's truth set within a community of faith which offers guidelines and safeguards, yet its interpretation is not static. Contexts, different modes of reading the text and a variety of perspectives (eg, cultural, social, historical and gender) offer rich and different insights into meaning. The message of Jesus is central to interpretation.
students know… (knowledge and elaborations)	The Bible has many stories telling people • God loves them and all people • about Jesus and his life • God made the world and cares for it The Bible is God's word Christians believe the Bible reveals the truth about God The Bible is God's way of telling people about him God gave the Bible to people What the Bible says about God is true The Bible is set in a time and place different to today	Significant features of the Bible • a collection of stories by different authors • contains different forms of writing • stories and style of writing reflect the different times in which people lived • organised into books and chapters and verses • contains many stories about God's people • there are two distinct sections of the Bible – Old Testament, New Testament (the written word) • the Old Testament is about God's journey with his people, up to Jesus' birth • the New Testament tells about God's people after Jesus was born Bible's importance for Christians • through it God reveals himself and his love for people in Jesus Christ • teaches about God • can guide Christians in their living The Bible is published in different formats, versions and presentations Bible stories can be told in different ways and the key messages remain the same The Bible does not tell everything about God and the world	Biblical textual features • recounts – components (eg, setting, events, conclusion), point of view, characters, events • parables – language (eg, allegory, metaphor, simile, symbolism), purpose and messages, fictional and unnamed characters • miracle stories – threefold structure (problem or need, action, reaction), types (eg, healing, exorcism, nature), symbolic action • psalms – types (eg, praise/lament, faith/struggle, trust), poetic structure, imagery, repetition, purpose • letters • history • proverbs – wise sayings The Bible is God's word • God communicates with people through the Bible, progressively revealing himself and his plan for salvation through Jesus and his will for people (purpose) • written by people whom God inspired in different places and times • people have had access to God's word in different ways at different times – oral tradition, scroll, individual books, collection of books, electronic, Braille Overview of Bible's story, the key people, events, God's will for people	Contexts of the Bible • authors, dates, purposes, key themes, key ideas of books of the Bible • cultural and social background to biblical stories • historical development of the Bible (eg, oral, written, printing, translation) • the history of how the biblical canon was agreed upon Examining scripture to learn about God's message for his people • people use a range of tools to investigate biblical passages • biblical reference materials (eg, handbooks, concordances, encyclopedias, dictionaries, commentaries) as aids to biblical interpretation • maps, diagrams, timelines and charts • Bible translations – variety, accuracy, purpose • different interpretations of scripture (eg, liberal, literal) • the Bible is interpreted in light of Jesus and the gospel	Nature and purpose of the Bible • God's word to people • leads people to God through the Holy Spirit • ultimate authority for what Christians believe, teach and how Christians should live • informs doctrines of the church • scripture informs scripture • law and gospel in the Old and New Testaments and its continuing relevance today Differences between Protestant, Orthodox and Catholic canons Authenticity of the Bible • documentation • knowledge of oral and written traditions • non-biblical sources (eg, Tacitus, Josephus, Jewish Talmud) • historical and archaeological evidence Relevance to Christians in a contemporary context • authority of Bible (inspired by God, testifies to Jesus) • types of truth (eg, historical, literal, scientific, metaphoric, religious, moral with reference to biblical interpretation) • application of scripture in contemporary social scenarios (politics, media, social behaviour)	The biblical text (both Old Testament and New Testament) is God's revelation to people and is the basis for Christian doctrine and belief Canonical context and acceptance of biblical text Literary style, forms and structures of the Bible (eg, genealogy, law codes, history, wisdom literature, proverbs, mythical, apocalyptic) The historical context of the biblical text (Old Testament and New Testament) Range of approaches to reading and interpreting biblical text eg, • author centred • text centred • historical-critical • source criticism • redaction criticism • form criticism • Bible as sacred text Christian individuals and denominations have different approaches to reading and interpreting the Bible (eg, Lutherans read the Bible through the lens of law and gospel, Lutherans believe the Bible is revealed word of God)

students can... (ways of knowing)

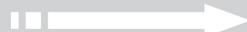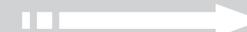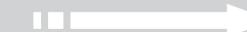|					
• identify a Bible using some familiar characteristics (eg, pictures, the word Bible) • name and relate some information about people in the Bible (eg, Jesus, Mary, Noah, Abraham, Joseph) • retell some Bible stories • sequence pictures of Bible stories • observe and explore a range of different Bible formats (eg, children's Bibles, different languages, size, covers) • compare and contrast Bible times to 'here and now'	• discuss their understandings about the Bible • analyse similarities and differences between the Old and New Testaments (eg, using a graphic organiser) • identify and classify people, places and things from scriptural texts • describe images of God using verses from the Bible • compare different presentations of the Bible and identify how they are different or the same • identify aspects of the Bible that guide our lives (eg, ten commandments, Jesus' commandments) • retell Bible stories using their own words • retell Bible stories and identify messages about God and how to live • describe the importance of the Bible to Christians • recognise biblical content in songs and poems • discuss and describe the differences between various forms of the Bible and the merits of each eg book, picture books, video • make a list of what the Bible tells people about God	• recognise and differentiate between the various textual features in the Bible • use textual features in the Bible to collaboratively construct various texts for contemporary purposes (eg, psalms) • explore the message and purpose of parables and other stories that are allegories (eg, write a parable to portray a Christian message) • analyse the purpose and structure of miracle stories • identify and research the people God inspired to write the Bible (eg, create a gallery of portraits, including descriptions and significant writings of these people) • dramatise a recount from the Bible showing knowledge of the setting, characters and events • describe the purpose of the Bible (eg, develop a class book of similes such as the Bible is like a map) • develop a list of similarities and differences in the gospel accounts of the nativity • construct a time line of the Bible	• use biblical references to investigate the author, date, purpose, key themes and ideas from books of the Bible • examine and use a range of reference tools to aid interpretation and analysis of Bible stories (eg, handbooks, concordances, maps, encyclopedias) • analyse how different translations of the same passages can broaden, narrow or enlighten meaning • examine key stories about Jesus to contrast the different gospel presentations of Jesus and identify the gospel writer's message • investigate the intended audience for each of the gospels and examine stories to consider the message to the audience • compare and contrast the different gospel accounts of the passion • describe and record the historical development of the Bible (eg, timeline, chart) • analyse the impact the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls had on people's views about the accuracy of the Bible • discuss and evaluate the criteria used for the selection and inclusion of books in the Bible • research and explain the historical changes that led to a wider audience having access to the Bible (eg, printing press, translations, Reformation) • map and describe the process of translation for different language groups • report on current translation projects (eg, Indigenous language groups) (language and cultural groups)	• analyse Bible passages from different perspectives such as history, story, myth, metaphor and consider truth in these passages • critically examine fundamentalist interpretations of scripture that have been used to justify political purpose (eg, apartheid, Ku Klux Klan, status of women) • examine Bible passages that have shaped the doctrine of different Christian denominations, making the links between denominational teachings and practices • develop a student guide to biblical interpretation which considers issues such as literalism and liberalism • present a documentary which explores the belief that the Bible is God's inspired word, rewrite a Bible passage for contemporary readers and/or issues, taking into consideration the historical, social and political contexts to recognise relevance to contemporary settings • identify and compare different interpretations of a passage, giving reasons for the interpretations and variations	• outline the interrelationship between author, use of language, historical events, purpose, message and the effect on a reader in biblical texts • compare and contrast the emphasis and structure of how the four gospels tell the story of Jesus • summarise a range of methods Christians use to read and interpret biblical texts and apply to a specific passage (eg, Genesis 1–11) • apply the Lutheran understanding of law and gospel to a range of situations • examine and identify the biblical foundation for the mission statements of various Christian organisations and/or denominational statements on a range of life issues (eg, social justice, homosexuality, women's ordination) • research and report on how the Bible has been used at various times to justify a particular structure for society (eg, political) • contrast Christian and Muslim approaches to the Bible as sacred text • present the results of reading of biblical texts from several perspectives (eg, male and female perspectives, Christian and non-Christian perspectives, different denominational perspectives)

Achievement standards for each band comprise concepts and content drawn from Learning Statements and Scope Statements together with evidence of student learning demonstrated through ways of knowing.

CHRISTIAN CHURCH

Key Idea 2: The Christian community is shaped by and shapes its cultural and historical contexts

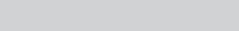|	Beginning	Band A	Band B	Band C	Band D	Band E
learning statement	**CC 1.2** Children identify different Christian churches in their community	**CC 2.2** Students draw conclusions about the purpose of the Christian church in the local community	**CC 3.2** Students research key events in the history of Christianity and reflect on their significance over time and place	**CC 4.2** Students examine the development of Christian communities to compare how beliefs and practices of these communities reflect their social and historical contexts	**CC 5.2** Students critique the interaction of the Christian church with society, past and present	**CC 6.2** Students assess various contexts and challenges facing the Christian church today and propose possible future paths for the church
scope statements	The Christian church comprises gatherings of people who meet to celebrate their common faith in God. The buildings in which they meet reflect significant aspects of their beliefs, culture and individuality. Buildings change and even disappear, but people continue to congregate to worship God.	Christian communities share many characteristics of families. They share a common identity and belief. They encourage and help one another grow in faith. They look after one another, giving practical help where needed. This care extends to the rest of the community. They believe God has called them to share his message of love and forgiveness.	The Christian church has undergone significant growth since its creation by the Holy Spirit, recorded in the book of Acts. The gospel message quickly spread to peoples of different lands, cultures and languages and continues to do so. Historical events, social structures and new discoveries have effected change in both the influence and expression of Christianity over time and place.	Christian communities are both human and divine. Christians believe God's presence is revealed in the message, practices and lifestyle of each community. The manner in which each community expresses itself reflects its time and cultural identity. A rich diversity of Christian communities over time and place are joined in their common faith in the lordship of Jesus.	Christians believe the chief task of Christian communities is 'to make disciples of all nations', through proclamation of the gospel, modelling of transformed lives, worship, service to all people and continued meeting and support of one another. Christian communities – human, flawed, limited – are continually forgiven and renewed by God.	The Christian church has experienced much change – supremacy, rejection, indifference, persecution – and survived. The challenge has always been to faithfully live out the gospel. Each generation of Christians has to consider afresh how to use the gifts it has been given to communicate the good news and hope of God in ways that are relevant and meaningful for its community.
students know… (knowledge and elaborations)	Christians are people who love Jesus There are many church buildings in a community Church buildings have certain features People make choices about the church community they wish to belong to Purpose of church buildings Christian worship • one place in which Christians worship is church buildings	Community of believers • people who believe in Jesus are in God's family • the Christian church is the community of believers created by the Holy Spirit • church buildings are special places where Christians meet to worship God • the two meanings of church as building and community of believers The church is active in worship • Christians meet together to worship God witness • sharing the faith with the community (eg, carols by candlelight, vacation Bible school) nurture • growing in understanding of God (eg, Sunday school, family devotions) fellowship • Christians meet together as a church to help and encourage each other service • serving the community (make connections with **CL2**)	(The broad overview of the historical development acts as a structure for future band levels) The history of the Christian church • definition of Christianity • Old Testament roots of the church • the early church – Holy Spirit and the day of Pentecost • Paul's missionary journeys • persecutions • freedom to worship Communities of believers living in different times and places • the disciples – martyrs and missionaries' role in spreading the Good News • the Reformation – Luther and the rise of Protestant Christianity • development of Christian denominations • Christianity in Australia today • communities of believers who share the good news of Jesus with others Different worship practices in the Christian church • changes in worship practices • different denominational worship practices The significance and application of the development of the Christian church for the contemporary context	How social and historical contexts shape the church • early and medieval church • Spanish inquisition • influence of Constantine • split between Orthodox and Roman Catholic Church Three main branches of Christianity – Eastern Orthodox, Roman Catholic, Protestant Significant events, movements and people that shaped the church • Reformation, Renaissance • important historical Christian figures (eg, St Francis, Luther, Calvin) • pilgrim fathers, Lutheran Church in Australia • proliferation of Christian denominations • persecuted church today • priesthood – apostles – ordained ministry How practices reflect social contexts of different Christian communities – urban, rural, Indigenous, overseas, internet • how beliefs/history have shaped expression of sacraments, rituals • artefacts, icons • hierarchical structures of organisation • physical structures (eg, fonts, altars) • architecture • means of communication	Revisit development of the Christian church • from Pentecost to the present day • community of people with diverse backgrounds • survival of the church – past, present and future Interaction with local and global community • religious wars (eg, Ireland, crusades) • Luther's influence on education • Henry VIII • fall of communism • popes' encyclicals • positive and negative interactions between church and society (eg, political parties and lobbying, working for peace, aid organisations) • inner-city ministry • youth ministry • Christian education • aged care • schools, hospitals • international aid agencies Mission of the church as described in the Bible The church functions and is active in: worship witness, nurture, fellowship and service	The Christian church • the Holy Spirit works through the institution of the church to create Christian community as a blessing to the world • biblical images of the church as community • biblical, historical and contemporary examples of Christian communities (eg, Corinthians, Calvin's Geneva) Relationship between the Christian church and its context • society's perceptions (positive and negative) of the Christian church • the reality of worldwide trends in the Christian church (eg, growth in Africa, church in China) • relationship between changes in society and changes in the Christian church Issues and pressures facing the Christian church and how it responds • the changing spiritual climate in society • lack of denominational loyalty • demographics, money, political/economic conditions • challenge of relevance The ways various Christians and Christian denominations deal with the changing nature of society (eg, Amish, home church, Methodism, Internet Church) Essential Christian beliefs which may draw criticism and rejection from society (eg, divinity of Jesus, sanctity of life, social justice) Relevance of five functions of the church for a changing society: worship, witness, nurture, fellowship and service

students can... (ways of knowing)

• observe and comment on church buildings • design and create a model of a church building using a range of materials • locate the presence of Christian churches in the local community • cooperate as a group to discuss and share their ideas about churches • identify church building characteristics (eg, altar, cross, arches, stained glass windows) • talk about the churches children attend or know about • talk about why people might go to church • talk about the functions of key features in the interior of a church (eg, the baptismal font, cross, altar)	• express the Christian understanding that people who believe in Jesus are in God's family, the church • identify churches in the local community • collect evidence to show the features of different church buildings and compare how they are different and/or similar • retell the Pentecost story and explain what this means for people today • explore Bible stories of people in the early Christian church • explain ways the church acts as a family and cares for people • interact with members of the local church and identify their roles or responsibilities • record ways people hear about Jesus today • present findings of what Christians do as Christian church	• present and explain the important contribution of Paul's missionary journeys (as recorded in Acts) in the spread of the Christian church • identify and present significant events that have occurred in the history of Christianity (eg, a timeline) • investigate and display information from various sources about life in the early church (eg, the role of early martyrs and missionaries) • discuss reasons why Christians experienced persecution and explore if persecution still occurs today • explore stories about Martin Luther and the Reformation and sequence key events • read Luther's small catechism and identify key teachings • gather information and present findings about the different Christian denominations represented in the class, the school (eg, conduct a survey, compare celebrations) • explain ways Christians have witnessed throughout history	• describe roles played by cultural contexts, church traditions and the authority of the Bible in practices and beliefs of various denominations • describe, record and sequence the historical development of the Christian church, using various techniques • examine historical religious reformers and present findings about the impact of their beliefs on the church (eg, Luther, Calvin, St Francis) • investigate and compare the internal and external physical features of various denominational buildings (eg, spires, shape, baptismal fonts, cathedrals, altar arrangements) and what those differences mean • compare how practices of the early Christian church have changed over time and place (eg worship practices, baptism, communion, fellowship, liturgy) • create a set of rituals for a specific school worship event • examine and draw conclusions about the impact of martyrs for the people of their time and today	• research and evaluate ways the church has interacted with and influenced political parties in Australia • critique the youth ministry outreach of Christian churches within the local area and their effectiveness (eg, design a web page for young people) • compare and contrast examples of positive and negative interactions between the church and the community – both local and global (eg, religious wars) • analyse the advantages and disadvantages of Christian education as opposed to public education and assess its contribution to the community • create a visual display that expresses and acknowledges the church as a community of people from diverse backgrounds, with a rich past and a promising future • examine the religious education program in the state system and/or own school and justify its inclusion • create an exhibit which defines and explains each function of the church, giving examples within the community (school and church) • outline a rationale for the church's involvement in education, aged care, welfare, overseas aid and celebrate its contributions • analyse Bible passages that describe the mission of the church and evaluate the mission of the church today (eg, create and present an advertising campaign) • report on the lives of early Christians and their interactions with their communities • compare and contrast difficulties faced by Christians in different times and places	• examine and present the impact of persecution on the Christian church in both the past and present • compare and contrast the current situation of the church in Australia with the church in Africa, Asia or Latin America • critically analyse contemporary media reports relating to the church • survey how various Christian groups have responded to the changing nature of society and identify unchanging aspects • assess the contribution that the Christian church makes to society in areas of service, justice, peace and the public arena • critically assess various contentions about the contemporary situation and future of the Christian church (eg, ordination of women, sanctioning same sex marriages) • propose ways the Christian church can make a difference to society • assess the strengths and limitations of the Christian church being involved in politics • summarise Paul's teaching, in his letters to Corinth, on what builds up and what destroys a Christian community • survey, examine and report on a range of Christian communities to assess the link between organisation, purpose and meeting the church's and the world's needs • debate to what extent the church is God in the world

Achievement standards for each band comprise concepts and content drawn from Learning Statements and Scope Statements together with evidence of student learning demonstrated through ways of knowing.

CHRISTIAN CHURCH:
curriculum statements

CHRISTIAN CHURCH

Key Idea 3: Christians pray, worship and celebrate the sacraments

	Beginning	Band A	Band B	Band C	Band D	Band E
learning statement	**CC 1.3** Children share their experiences of Christian prayer, worship and celebrations	**CC 2.3** Students research and describe key Christian practices and celebrations	**CC 3.3** Students investigate and describe the purposes and significance of worship and sacramental practices of the Lutheran church	**CC 4.3** Students compare and contrast the origins, intention and diversity of Christian worship practices	**CC 5.3** Students analyse worship, the sacraments and prayer as vital to the Christian experience	**CC 6.3** Students explore and discuss Christian beliefs about the meaning and mystery of sacrament for Christians
scope statements	The relationship Christians have with God is expressed in their worship practices. Christians join together to hear and respond to God's loving acts. Prayer is a way that Christians can tell God their appreciation and share their needs.	Christians believe that God is present in a special way in their worship and prayer. In baptism they receive God's Spirit, the gift of faith and forgiveness. The symbols and rituals that accompany worship and significant celebrations point to God's life-giving actions.	Forgiveness of sin and new life in Jesus are central truths celebrated by all Christians. Christians in the Lutheran church are reminded of these truths in their liturgical worship. They believe that God acts in and through the concrete elements of water, bread and wine. These are the means whereby God provides his blessings.	Christian worship has its roots in the Old Testament symbols, rituals and sacred places which have played a significant role in worship, providing stability and continuity in changing environments. Worship practices reflect people's beliefs and response to God, infused with people's individuality and creativity. Christians celebrate significant events in God's dealings with people and important moments in life.	Private and corporate worship are two significant dimensions of a Christian's relationship with God. Private prayer is not bound by time or place. It allows a person to express his/her personal sense of awe and need. Christian public worship and sharing in the sacraments unites and supports people in their faith. It becomes a source of witness to others of their devotion to God.	Christians believe the sacraments of baptism and holy communion contain the mystery of God's presence, creative power and redeeming action. Through faith Christians are linked to the baptism, death and resurrection of Jesus, which unites them with all of God's people past, present and future. God speaks, God acts and God gives life – recurrent themes in the Bible.
students know... (knowledge and elaborations)	Prayer is a response to God's love Prayer is talking to God People can talk to God any time, anywhere Worship is a time when people hear about and respond to Jesus' love Worship/chapel/devotion is special time with God Christmas, Easter and specific events (eg, end-of-term service, marriage, baptism, birthdays) are celebrations	Christian prayer • prayer is talking to God (praising asking, confessing, thanking – PACT) • God listens to and answers prayers in various ways • Jesus taught people about prayer and how to pray – the Lord's prayer • people can pray anywhere, any time One of the functions of the Christian church is worship • in worship people respond to God's love and hear God's message • Christians worship in a variety of ways Key Christian celebrations – rituals, meanings, symbols, practices, events Baptism • God gives people new life through baptism • baptism brings people into God's family • denominations practise baptism differently Christmas and Easter – significant festivals in Gods' saving plan	Prayer • together in worship people communicate with God in prayer • an individual's prayer life has its roots in corporate prayer Context in which worship takes place • church buildings, the ordained ministry • community of believers • the whole of life as an act of worship In worship God acts • worship is when God reveals himself by his word and actions • the Holy Spirit is present in worship – in the sacraments and God's word • people receive God's love and forgiveness People respond by • honouring and praising God • sharing in the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's supper • sharing their faith • living life as a response to God Sacramental practices of the Lutheran church – baptism, Lord's supper and how these are the same and different in other Christian churches Features of a church community Seasons and symbols of the Lutheran church year	Christian worship has grown and developed throughout history • places and features of worship throughout history (eg, temple, gothic cathedrals, chanting, incense, confession) • historical development of the elements of corporate worship and impact on Christians today (eg, sermon, confession, prayer) • Bible references about private forms of worship, especially prayer (eg, God promises to hear and answer prayer, Jesus' teachings) In worship God acts in word and sacraments and people respond in a variety of ways • praise and celebrating as community and God's family • God speaks through the word • in baptism, the gift of the Holy Spirit and new life (inspiration, encouragement) is given • in holy communion, confession, forgiveness, renewed life is experienced • sacraments help build community • prayer • expressive worship (eg, music, songs, dance, writings, paintings) Ritual in worship Diversity in worship practices within the LCA and the Christian church (eg, informal, formal, home church, internet church)	Worship, the sacraments and prayer are a vital part of the Christian experience • prayer – natural outcome of an ever-growing relationship between God and his people • worship brings God's action into people's lives and is a response to God's action in people • God's worth is proclaimed and acknowledged • Jesus comes to people through word and sacrament in worship • the Holy Spirit helps and guides all people through word and sacraments • benefits of the sacraments Worship involves all aspects of life • worship is more than just rituals – it involves all facets of life • many forms of worship and prayer • value of prayer and worship in people's lives Beliefs and practices of different Christian denominations in relation to the sacraments	Humans are created as spiritual beings and seek to find meaning in and for their lives Divine encounter in the sacraments The communal and liturgical aspects of Christian worship give shape and direction to people's lives and communities Christian rituals – tangible enactments of what Christians believe that embody what is ultimately mysterious Use of the concrete to communicate the spiritual (eg, bread, wine, water) Christian responses to the sacramental experience

students can... (ways of knowing)					
• experience and talk about various worship forms (eg, devotion, Sunday church service, chapel) • listen to and talk about people praying • participate in preparations for prayer and worship • talk about rituals such as lighting and blowing out the candles and what they mean • talk about and demonstrate prayer postures such as folding hands, closing eyes and why people do them • talk about how people pray at different times and occasions and in different ways • prepare for celebrations meaningfully and discuss what is happening and why • describe why people might worship • illustrate or describe a personal worship experience	• recognise that prayer is being with God in a special way and can be experienced alone or with others • identify things Christians can pray about and formulate simple prayers • practise techniques to enhance prayer (eg, listening, stillness, visualising and attentiveness) • investigate and retell biblical accounts of Jesus praying (eg, the Lord's prayer, Jesus in the garden) • design a prayer space (eg, a garden within the school) • identify objects commonly used in Christian worship (eg, Bible, altar, candles) and investigate their significance • identify parts of worship to plan and present a class/school worship • explore Bible stories about baptism • explore the Christian teaching that through baptism people become members of God's family • explore the rituals, events, symbols and practices related to Christmas and Easter	• describe and investigate the various spaces, areas and features within a church building (eg, plan an ideal church building) • investigate and explain the elements of worship and activities that take place during worship with particular emphasis on the sacraments and prayer (eg, prepare a worship service) • identify the significance of and differentiate between the seasons of the Lutheran church year (eg, visually represent the seasons) • gather and share information about the purposes of worship • explore and record symbols evident in the local Lutheran church and explain their significance • produce a song, dance, artwork, prayer, service formats, for a worship service in a specific church season or for an event of significance such as a baptism	• gather information about historical places of worship and identify significant aspects (eg, temple, cathedral) • research why people value community worship and summarise their findings • investigate the elements of worship and identify why each aspect is important (eg, Bible readings, prayers, confession) • interpret the Lord's prayer in his/her own personal way (eg, words or images) • discuss and compare different worship experiences in Christian denominations • reflect on how the arts can enhance people's worship experiences (eg, music, art, dance) • respond to the Christian message through various means (eg, words, songs, pictures, actions) • identify Lutheran means of grace (God's word, baptism, holy communion) and examine their impact on people for daily living • explore the sacraments of baptism and holy communion to identify what they reveal about God and his people • critique the school's worship practices • explore different forms and traditions of Christian prayer and meditation	• present various forms of prayer and identify what they demonstrate about the place of prayer in a person's relationship with God • identify the place of baptism in the lives of the early Christians and explain its importance in current Christian practices • examine different rituals of worship and describe their significance • use ritual and drama to communicate God's message for a worship service (eg, interpret a Bible passage through tableau, freeze frame, mime, dance) • describe and share different forms and experiences of worship, assessing the purpose and validity of each form of worship • analyse denominational differences in belief and practice of the sacraments • analyse the significance of the sacraments to the different denominations • compare and contrast the worship practices of the school and local congregation and consider reasons for similarities and differences and any challenges this creates • provide arguments for and against the practice of the sacraments in school worship	• explain how the use of rituals in various denominations communicates key beliefs and promotes hope, affirmation, belonging and community • identify the need for and the use of rituals in their own lives and create a ritual that endeavours to meet a particular need for themselves or the community • represent the meaning Christians draw from their experiences of the sacraments • reflect on their response to rituals in the school community (worship, graduation, stillness exercises), their family (birthdays, weddings, funerals, Christmas) and the wider community (ANZAC dawn service, Australia day) • research the key events linked to the sacraments as described in the gospels, demonstrating the relationship between the events and the meaning the sacraments have for Christians • make recommendations to enhance the worship experience of the school community • critique school's worship and design rituals that reflect students' understandings and struggles of faith to include in future worship • participate in the creation of a school worship event, recording and explaining the significance of the chosen rituals, words and order of the worship event

Achievement standards for each band comprise concepts and content drawn from Learning Statements and Scope Statements together with evidence of student learning demonstrated through ways of knowing.

CHRISTIAN CHURCH:
curriculum statements

CHRISTIAN CHURCH

THEOLOGICAL NOTES

CHRISTIAN CHURCH

Theological notes

KEY IDEA 1: CHRISTIANS BELIEVE THE BIBLE IS GOD'S WORD.

The Church accepts without reservation the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, as a whole and in all their parts, as the divinely inspired, written and inerrant Word of God, and as the only infallible source and norm for all matters of faith, doctrine and life. (LCA Constitution II1)

WORD OF GOD

God does not leave us to work out for ourselves who God is, what kind of God he is, what he wants from us, how he feels towards us, and what he does for us. God graciously communicates with us. The 'word of God' is God's self-revelation; it makes God known to us so that we can honour, love and trust him as our God.

'Word of God' can mean different things:

- Although God has spoken 'in many and various ways' (Heb 1:1), his final and definitive revelation is in Jesus Christ (Heb 1:2–3). Jesus Christ is the living word who became a human being (John 1:14). In Jesus Christ, God has made known his will, purpose and nature.
- 'Word of God' also refers to the written word of the Old and New Testament Scriptures. This written word testifies to Jesus Christ, who is the living and incarnate word (John 5:39).
- 'Word of God' also refers to the gospel of Christ, the message about what God has done in and through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ for our salvation.

'Word of God' is offered to us in three basic forms:

- the written word — the Bible
- the proclaimed word – the preached word and the spoken witness of one person to another. Luther in the Smalcald Articles (III,4) speaks in this regard of 'the spoken word, in which forgiveness of sins is preached to the whole world (which is the proper function of the gospel) . . . the power of the keys [confession and absolution] . . . the mutual conversation and consolation of brothers and sisters' (Kolb, Wengert: 319).

[**Note**: in the first generation of the church, Jesus' followers (apostles, evangelists, prophets etc) proclaimed the word of God as they had learnt it from Jesus and as they were led by 'the Spirit of truth' (John 14:26; 16:13).]

- the sacramental word (cf **CC2**)

THE BIBLE — THE WRITTEN WORD OF GOD

So that we and all people of all time can know the word which God spoke through the prophets and apostles and through Jesus Christ, the Word who came in human flesh, God has also given us his written word, the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. The Bible is a library of books, the written word of God, written in human words by human beings. [The number of books varies, for example, between the Protestant version (66 books) and the Roman Catholic version (which includes the apocryphal books).]

The Bible is human and divine

The Bible is both fully human and fully divine. It is a human book because God used the personality and style of the human writers (their language, literary methods, knowledge of nature and history, experience of God, etc). It is a divine book because the Bible was written by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and God is its author (2 Tim 3:16; 2 Pet 1:21). How the Holy Spirit 'inspired' the writers is not explained. Just as Jesus Christ is both fully human and fully divine, so too the Bible is human and divine in all its parts. This cannot be explained rationally, but is accepted in faith.

Christ is the centre of the Bible

The Bible is *christocentric* — its centre is Jesus Christ. Jesus challenged his hearers to recognise that the Scriptures testify to him (John 5:39). In Luke 24:25–27, Jesus also explained the Scriptures to the two disciples on their way to Emmaus in relation to himself. Although Jesus was speaking here about the Old Testament writings, his words apply equally to the New Testament.

Martin Luther continually stressed the insight that if Scripture in not seen in the light of Christ, then the Bible becomes just an ordinary book and its teachings will be misinterpreted.

The Bible is God's word

The relationship between the Bible and God's word can be viewed in different ways. Some people teach that the Bible **contains** God's word — that is, there are parts of the Bible which are not God's word. Others (sometimes called 'fundamentalists') teach that the Bible **is *the*** word of God — that is the Bible, rather than Jesus Christ who is *the* word to which the Scriptures bear witness, is the centre of faith. The position of the LCA is that the Bible **is** God's word through which God speaks particularly through Jesus Christ.

Some people (sometimes called 'liberals') view the Bible as purely a historical document and do not accept the authority of the Bible as a whole. Some Pentecostal groups see the Bible as being **potentially** God's word: only if the Holy Spirit breathes life into it does the Bible become more than lifeless words.

The authority of the Bible

All Christian groups recognise the authority of Scripture although they may understand this in different ways. However, there are two basic approaches to understanding the authority of Scripture.

- The 'formal principle': this sees the authority of Scripture based on its divine authorship — it is divinely inspired and its ultimate author is God.
- The 'material principle': this sees the authority of Scripture based on the fact that it testifies to Christ, the Lord of Scripture — he is the one who speaks through Scripture.

These two principles should not be played off against each other. To stress only the 'formal principle' ends in fundamentalism, where the Bible is put above Christ. To stress only the 'material principle' ends in liberalism, where Christ is played off against the Bible, and passages not speaking directly about Christ are ignored. [**Note**: this debate between the formal and material principles emerges from time to time in the LCA.]

Dr Jeff Silcock summaries as follows (111):

> In Lutheran theology, following Luther, pre-eminence is given to the material principle, so that we can say that in the final analysis the authority of Scripture (and this is true especially of the OT) is to be found in Christ, to whom it testifies. In other words, Scripture's ultimate authority is located in its gospel content. Luther also taught us to look for Christ wrapped in swaddling cloths of the OT, for he is already present there in veiled form, for the OT contains nothing else than Christ as he is preached in the gospel.

Because the Bible is word of God, it is true, and is the ultimate authority for what we believe and teach and how we should live. The Lutheran Confessions state: 'that God's Word alone ought to be and remain the only guiding principle and rule of all teaching and that no person's writing can be put on a par with it, but that everything must be totally subject to God's Word' (Kolb, Wengert: 528–529). Luther said: '. . . the Word of God — and no one else, not even an angel — should establish articles of faith' (Kolb, Wengert: 304).

The Bible is inspired

The Bible is the inspired ('God-breathed') word of God (2 Tim 3:16). The Scriptures are Spirit-filled and breathe the Holy Spirit as they testify to Jesus Christ (John 14:26; 15:26; 16:13–14). Human beings spoke and wrote as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. This is a statement of faith which is simply assumed in the Bible (2 Pet 1:21) without any further explanation. It is pointless to speculate on how this inspiration occurred, just as it is futile to try to demonstrate the 'truth' of the Bible by historical or rational means.

Christians also believe that it was the Holy Spirit who guided the selection of the writings which make up Scripture (the 'canon' of Scripture) to the exclusion of other contemporary writings. The 'canon of Scripture' is the list of inspired books which the church regarded as composing the Bible.

> The determination of the Old Testament canon probably began after the exile and was finally settled by the second century AD. There were differences in the Hebrew and Greek ('Septuagint') versions. The Greek translation was probably made during the last two centuries before the birth of Christ and contained additional books which are commonly referred to now as the 'Apocrypha'. There are also some other variations between the Greek and the Hebrew versions. The New Testament writers seem to have quoted from both the Hebrew and Greek versions. Both versions were used in the early church but at the time of the reformation the reformers rejected the Apocrypha whereas the Roman Catholic Church retained it. The apocryphal books of the Old Testament are still retained in Roman Catholic Bibles today.

> The New Testament canon was not settled until the end of the fourth century. The 4 gospels and the 13 epistles attributed to Paul were accepted by the middle of the second century. Doubts were expressed about the books of Hebrews, James, Jude, 2 Peter, 2 and 3 John and Revelation. One criterion used for selection was the suitability of the texts for reading in public worship.

The Bible is infallible

When we confess that the Bible is the infallible or inerrant word of God, we are confessing that it is truthful in its content and it says what God intended it to say. It is completely trustworthy in all matters which relate to our salvation. It does not mislead us in our relationship with God. This is a statement of faith: when the Holy Spirit leads us to faith, he also gives us confidence in the Scriptures as God's word.

While we believe that the Bible is infallible in relation to all matters of salvation, this does not mean that it is infallible in matters such as history and science. Nor does it mean that there are no inconsistencies or that it is necessary to try to harmonise various accounts which are recorded from different perspectives (eg the creation stories, the dating of the crucifixion, etc). 'Rather, these features are a reminder that *God has condescended to give us his divine words in servant-form by using the weak, frail words of human beings*' (Silcock 110). This is another example of theology of the cross — that God's power is concealed behind human weakness.

The purpose of the Scriptures

In the Bible God makes known his marvellous plan for saving the fallen world ('salvation history'). God called Abraham and gave him the promise that he would be the father of God's chosen people through whom God would bless all people. God rescued his people Israel from slavery and made his gracious covenant with them. Israel was not faithful to God, yet God remained gracious to them and preserved a 'remnant' from whom the promised Savior would come.

God's saving plan reached its climax in the coming to earth of his Son, Jesus Christ, to live, die and rise again as the Saviour of all people. Jesus is the focal point of the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. The Bible's chief purpose is to lead us to Christ, to give us 'the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith in Christ Jesus' (2 Tim 3:15 TEV).

[**Note:** It is important that students become familiar with the whole of Scripture. There is a danger that students are introduced only to parts of Scripture (eg the early chapters of Genesis, the stories in the gospels) and that the story of God's dealings with his people in Old Testament times, and the historical and cultural background to the whole Bible is not sufficiently developed. There is also a danger that 'salvation history' jumps from creation and fall to the life and death of Jesus Christ, without addressing all that happens between these events. The significance of Jesus' life, work, death and resurrection can be fully understood only against the totality of revelation in the whole of Scripture.]

THE INTERPRETATION OF SCRIPTURE

The interpretation of Scripture (called 'hermeneutics') addresses how we are to understand Scripture and apply it to the current context. This is not simply an academic exercise. We are dealing with the word of God and so it is also a spiritual exercise. Any study of the Bible should always be accompanied with prayer, as we need the help of the Holy Spirit, the chief interpreter of the Bible, to open us up to the truth.

As indicated earlier, the Bible is both human and divine. Because it is a human book, it makes use of various literary forms in order to present God's word to people from differing generations, cultures, historical backgrounds, etc. For example, there are narratives, parables, pictures, visions, poetry and symbols. Some things are meant to be taken literally, other things are obviously figurative. Interpretation of Scripture begins by trying to understand what the text *says* within its historical and cultural context. For this purpose, we can use appropriate techniques and processes of analysis. We can then proceed to try to determine what the text *means* for our current context. This may not always be easy.

In the process of interpretation, the interpreter always stands *under* the biblical text, not *over* it. The first step, therefore, is to listen to the text to try to hear what it says and try to bracket out any preconceived ideas or cultural presuppositions. It is difficult even for the most faithful interpreter to exclude personal agendas, and so 'the whole life of the interpreter of the Scriptures must be a life of repentance' (Kolb 203).

Since the time of Luther and the reformation, there are a number of principles which are applied to the interpretation of Scripture.

Scripture is clear

Scripture is clear in its message of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. The Bible does not use any secret or mysterious language. However, this does not mean that all passages of Scripture are immediately clear and comprehensible. God's wisdom is 'unsearchable' and his ways are 'inscrutable' (Rom 11:33). Peter complains that some of Paul's writing was 'hard to understand' (2 Pet 3:16). Some passages (for example, in Revelation) will always remain a puzzle. We cannot ever claim mastery over Scripture, but the Holy Spirit always brings to us from Scripture the clear message of all we need to know for our salvation.

Scripture is sufficient

Because Scripture tells us all we *need to know* for our salvation (Luke 16:29; John 20:30–31), it is 'sufficient'. The Bible may not tell us all we *want to know*, about God and his creation, but that is not the purpose of Scripture. We have no need for further writings to supplement the Bible (cf the Book of Mormon).

Scripture is powerful

Scripture is powerful (Jer 23:29; Heb 4:12), because through it the Holy Spirit brings people to faith and strengthens them in their faith and Christian life.

Scripture interprets Scripture — the unity of Scripture

A key principle of interpretation is that 'Scripture interprets Scripture'. The assumption behind this is that, in spite of the rich diversity in scripture, there is an overarching unity of Scripture. The interpretation of a particular passage should not be in contradiction with what the Bible teaches as a whole. This also means that, viewed from the perspective of faith, there is unity between the Old and New Testaments.

This principle means that where a passage is seen to be obscure, it is understood in the light of clear passages. Clear Scripture is used to help interpret more difficult passages. This also leads to the use of study resources such as commentaries, concordances, word studies, parallel passages, similar images, etc, to help understand particular passages or concepts.

Where there is a passage which is difficult to explain, it is the Lutheran approach not to base a major teaching or practice on the text. While every effort is made to understand what God may be saying to us, this approach frees us from having to try to find an explanation to everything which is said in the Bible.

Scripture is 'christocentric' (centred on Christ)

Since Christ is the centre of Scripture, all passages must finally be interpreted in the light of Christ and the gospel. No interpretation can be in conflict with the gospel. This is central for Lutheran hermeneutics. It guards against Scripture being misunderstood as a book of teachings, wise sayings, etc which are unrelated to Christ. While all Scripture is authoritative word of God, not all statements in the Bible are of equal value and importance. For example, while Old Testament dietary laws or family tree details have their place in the total message of the Bible, they do not have the same importance and value for us as does the witness to Jesus' resurrection.

In order to keep this focus on Christ and justification by grace through faith for the sake of Christ, Lutherans see **law and gospel** (promise) as the central teaching of the Bible. God is seen as working in the world through his word in two ways — as law and as gospel. Through the law God maintains and preserves the world ('political use'), but particularly through the law ('theological use') he exposes sin. Through the gospel, God reveals salvation by declaring the forgiveness of sins. The law is sometimes seen as Christ's 'strange work' (as judge and lawgiver) rather than his 'real work' (as saviour of the world). The proper distinction of law and gospel is necessary to ensure that the focus always remains on what God in Jesus Christ has done for us. Confusion of law and gospel inevitably leads to a focus on our own part in trying to 'earn salvation'. However, separating law and gospel also leads to problems: without the gospel, the law will either produce pride or arrogance in the person who does not recognise his/her sin, or despair in the heart of the repentant; without the law, people do not recognise their need for the gospel (Matt 9:12).

Scripture is interpreted within the context of the church

The Bible does not belong to an individual. There is a history of interpretation of the Bible within the Christian church. It is the task of the church, through the office of public ministry, to teach people how to read and interpret Scripture. To ignore the tradition of interpretation places one in danger of ending up in error.

For the Lutheran church, the **Lutheran Confessions** provide a summary of the teachings of Scripture. Their authority is derived from the authority of Scripture and they need to be continually tested against Scripture. The Lutheran Confessions see themselves as continuing to teach what the church has always taught and confessed (they begin with the three ecumenical creeds). They continue to guide people as they interpret Scripture. They define what it means to be 'Lutheran': this is why teachers in Lutheran schools promise to teach according to the Lutheran Confessions when they are installed as teachers.

THE PROCLAIMED WORD OF GOD — THE LIVING VOICE OF GOD'S WORD

The word of God is dynamic. It is not only to be read and studied; it is to be proclaimed as good news to all creation (Acts 1:8). This happens through the preaching of God's word, through confession and absolution, through 'mutual conversation and consolation' (Kolb, Wengert: 319) of Christians with each other as they speak God's word to each other, and through witness to the gospel to those who have not yet come to faith.

It is important, however, to retain the close connection between the written and the proclaimed word of God. The written word remains the ultimate authority for the church in determining doctrine and as the basis for the proclaimed word.

In preaching the word, the preacher applies the written word to people's hearts and lives through the proper distinction of law and gospel. 'Whoever listens to you listens to me' (Luke 10:16). One of the main reasons for coming together for worship is to *hear* God's word read and proclaimed. Luther called the church a 'mouth-house' rather than a 'pen-house'

(Silcock: 113) to emphasise that the church does not assemble around a book but around the proclaimed word of God, which is, however, based on, and must be faithful to, the written word of the Bible.

The proclaimed word of God (as with the written word of God) is not simply conveying information. It has power to do what it says, both as law and as gospel (Isa 55:11). It is a *performative* word. As law it confronts the sinner and accuses and judges. As gospel it forgives and frees and rescues us from the wrath and judgement of God. This is much more than simply speaking about law and gospel; it is proclaiming law and gospel, the living voice of God's word.

God's word is also a living word, since it is contemporary and speaks to all people today as it has spoken to, and been contemporary for, all people throughout history. While the message remains the same, the word needs to be reinterpreted and reapplied to address a variety of conditions and specific cultures.

The public ministry

While all Christians ('priesthood of all believers') have the responsibility to proclaim the word of God to each other and to witness to those not yet members of the body of Christ, Christ has instituted the office of the ministry for the public proclamation of the word of God and the administration of the sacraments (AC V, Kolb, Wengert: 41). On the basis of his call and ordination, the pastor carries out ministry of word and sacrament publicly on behalf of the congregation. He exercises this ministry in and for the congregation on the authority of Christ [cf CC2].

Some issues and questions for discussion and reflection:

* The Lutheran church stresses the importance of the Bible in the life of the church and its members. How would you assess the use of the Bible in your school and congregation?
* How can we encourage students to develop a love for the Bible?
* How much do we work in schools with the actual text of the Bible, and how much do we speak 'about the Bible' rather than use it? In what ways do we mask the scriptures by our use of secondary material?
* What is the place of telling Bible stories in the school context?
* What use is made of the Bible in the formal rites and rituals of the school (eg valedictories, presentations, sports day, school assemblies, installation of school leaders, etc)? What does this show about the place of the Bible in the day-to-day life of the school?
* How are students helped to become familiar with the totality of Scripture and not just particular sections?
* In what ways is God's word heard and proclaimed in the school context?
* What is meant when a Lutheran school says that it is 'gospel centred'?
* How might law and gospel be understood in the Lutheran school context?

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KEY IDEA 2: THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY IS SHAPED BY AND SHAPES ITS CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL CONTEXTS

The Holy Spirit . . . calls, gathers, enlightens, and makes holy the whole Christian church on earth and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one common, true faith. Daily in this Christian church the Holy Spirit abundantly forgives all sins — mine and those of all believers. (SC II,6; Kolb, Wengert: 355, cf LC II, 61–62)

THE CHURCH

When the Bible talks about church, it does not mean a building or a worship service or an organisation created by human beings. The church is people — the people of God. The church consists of all who believe in Jesus Christ as Lord and saviour.

The Greek word for 'church' in the New Testament is *ekklesia*, which refers to an assembly of people called together for a particular purpose. In the New Testament it has the basic idea of a group of people who are 'called out' to form God's special community. In the Old Testament the people of Israel were God's special people called out from all the nations, set apart ('holy') to receive God's gracious blessing and to be a blessing to all nations. In the New Testament this privilege is given to Christians (1 Pet 2:9–10). The *ekklesia* belongs to God, because God has called it into being and works through it (Acts 20:28). The *ekklesia* can be a specific community (or communities) of believers from a household (Rom 16:5; Col 4:15; Phlm 2), a city (1 Cor 1:2) or a province (Gal 1:2).

The New Testament uses a number of designations for the church to emphasise different aspects of the nature of the church: for example 'saints' (2 Cor 1:1), 'believers' (Acts 2:44), 'servants/slaves' (1 Cor 7:22), 'people of God' (Acts 18:10), 'household' or 'family' (Eph 2:19; 1 Tim 3:15), 'bride of Christ' (Eph 5:25), 'body of Christ with Christ as the head' (Rom 12:5; Eph 1:23; 1 Cor 12:12). Other pictures for the church include a living temple in which Jesus is the cornerstone and Christians are the bricks which have been laid on the firm foundation and support each other (Eph 2:20–22; 1 Pet 2:5), the vine and the branches (John 15:1–7) and the shepherd and his sheep (John 10).

Created and maintained by the Holy Spirit

The church is created and maintained by the Holy Spirit working through the 'means of grace' — the gospel and the sacraments. Augsburg Confession Article VII states: 'The church is the assembly of saints in which the gospel is taught purely and the sacraments are administered rightly' (Kolb, Wengert: 43). The church has been called into being and is preserved by the Holy Spirit through the means of grace, but the church is also the divinely appointed means by which Christ, through the Holy Spirit, creates the church.

Note that the Augsburg Confession defines the church liturgically — as the people of God gathered for worship around the means of grace. It begins with God's action towards his people. The church is not simply a 'club' of like-minded people who get together but, as each person is brought to faith by the Holy Spirit, they are also brought into the family of the church. Luther says, 'God be praised, a seven-year-old child knows what the church is: holy believers and "the little sheep who hear the voice of their shepherd"' (SA III,12; Kolb, Wengert: 324).

A confession of faith — the true church is hidden

We confess, 'I believe in . . . the holy, catholic church'. The church is always an object of faith, because it can never be empirically verified. 'True believers' cannot be identified by any kind of test. However, we can be sure that where the Holy Spirit is active through the preaching of the word of God and the administration of the sacraments according to Christ's institution, there the church is present. God has promised that his word does not return to him empty (Isa 55:11). God's word and the sacraments are therefore recognised as the 'marks of the church'; where these are present, the church is present.

However, the church as an institution also includes non-Christians, hypocrites and even public sinners (those who do not intend to deal with their particular sin) (AC VIII; Kolb, Wengert:43). Only God knows who are really true members of the church, because only he can see into human hearts. Jesus uses the parables of the net in which both good and bad fish are caught (Matt 13:47–50) and the field of weeds among the wheat (Matt 13:24–30; 36–43) to indicate this situation and also to warn against trying to separate these two groups. Only at the end of time will this judgement take place (Matt 25:31–46).

For this reason, the church is in the strict sense 'hidden'. While we can be confident that those who faithfully hear the word of God and receive the sacrament are members of the 'true church', it always remains hidden within the local congregation with all of its turmoil, pride and factionalism. It remains a confession of faith.

Attributes of the church

The Nicene Creed speaks of the church as 'one, holy, catholic and apostolic'.

one

The church is 'one' because all believers are united in Christ. Even though there is outward division and disunity within the church, there is only one 'communion of saints'. The church, the body of Christ, is one, just as Jesus and the Father are one (John 17:20–23). The unity of the church is a gift of God and does not depend on human efforts (see further **CC3**).

The church is also one across all time. It exists in time and also outside of time. It consists of all who have been, all who are, and all who will be members of the body of Christ. We catch a glimpse of this in the liturgy of holy communion when we are invited to praise God 'with angels and archangels, and with the whole company of heaven'.

holy

As mentioned above, the church as a human institution cannot be described as 'holy'. However, the church as the body of Christ is holy because Christ is holy. This holiness is a gift of God, an article of faith, a theological fact. Through the working of the Holy Spirit those who make up the church are 'saints', even though they still remain sinners living by the grace of God until the day of resurrection.

There is the temptation by some Christians to try to 'cleanse' the church of those who are not showing the fruit of faith in their lives and to make the church 'holy'. This exercise of 'theology of glory' tries to demonstrate the 'holiness' of the church as a visible reality. Silcock comments (p 164):

The task of sifting the wheat from the weeds, or separating the sheep from the goats (Matt 25:31–46) belongs to the Lord of the church, and he will do that on the last day when he returns to judge the living and the dead. Meanwhile he warns us not to try weeding out those whom we think are not Christians in case we pull up the wheat with the weeds. Christians follow Christ in showing patience and love, just as the gardener gave the barren fig tree a second chance before even thinking about cutting it down (Luke 13:6–9).

Although the church must not try to make the church more 'holy', the church does have to exercise discipline where individuals remain impenitent of obvious and open sin. The church follows the principles laid down by Jesus Christ in Matthew 18:15–18, but in doing so must be very careful not to become judgmental and spiritually proud. The last resort in this process is excommunication — refusing to allow the person to receive holy communion. The ultimate purpose of church discipline is to help the individual to acknowledge their sin and seek forgiveness. This leads to restoration of the person back into the community (cf the whole chapter of Matthew 18).

catholic

There has been some reluctance in Lutheran circles to use the word 'catholic' as an attribute of the church because of association with the Roman Catholic church. The word 'universal' is sometimes used instead.

The designation 'catholic' emphasises that the church exists all over the world, wherever Christians gather around word and sacrament. A congregation is the church of Jesus Christ in a particular locality. There are members of the holy, catholic church in all Christian denominations and local communities. In Revelation (7:9) we see a vision of the universal and international character of the church.

The Lutheran church is sometimes described as a 'confessional movement' within the church catholic. Even though the reformers had to break with the institutional church of their day, they were insistent that their teaching was thoroughly 'catholic' because they taught what the church had always taught. They simply wished to correct what they saw as false teachings which had crept into the church. For this reason, the Book of Concord begins with the three ecumenical creeds which have been confessed by the church through the ages.

apostolic

The church is 'apostolic' because it is founded on the apostolic word and it has the task of preaching and handing on the word to each new generation (Eph 2:19–22). The apostolic character of the church emphasises the historical roots of the church and the continuity between the church and Jesus Christ through the apostles whom he appointed; it also stresses the ongoing mission of the church.

[Denominations such as the Anglicans and Roman Catholics speak about the 'apostolic succession' in a particular way. This relates to the 'laying on of hands' by a bishop in the rite of ordination, which is seen as ensuring the historic continuity of the apostolic teaching through the ordained ministry of priests and bishops. Lutherans see the apostolic succession through the teaching of the apostolic word.]

Functions of the church

Traditionally the functions of the church are listed as worship, witness, nurture, fellowship and service. Sometimes the function of preaching is also identified separately.

worship

Worship is the central activity of the church as God's people respond to what God has done for them. From it flow the other activities of the church. [A more extensive treatment of worship is given in **CC3**.]

witness

The church continues the mission which Christ began while on earth when he commissioned his followers to make disciples of all nations (Matt 28:18–20). Just as the Father sent the Son, and the Father and Son sent the Holy Spirit to continue the ministry of Jesus, so Jesus sent his disciples (John 20:21) to evangelise the world.

This is not an optional task. We are called to be witnesses to the gospel in our homes, schools, communities, and wherever we interact with others. Mission is the work of every Christian and every congregation both in the immediate situation as well as globally. Only when Christ returns will the mission task of the church be over.

Within the Lutheran school community, the witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ is crucial. While this is not the prime function of a school as an educational institution, it is the responsibility of Christians as they live and work in the context of the school.

nurture

While the church does not have a responsibility for general education, it does have the task of nurturing its members in the Christian faith (John 21:15–17). This function, which is related to the sacrament of baptism (Matt 28:19–20), is sometimes called 'catechesis'. The church which baptises must also teach. This responsibility of the Christian community cannot simply be transferred to the Lutheran school. However, the Lutheran school may be able to assist in the nurture ministry of the congregation.

fellowship

Human beings are created for relationship (cf **CL1**). When the Holy Spirit leads a person to faith, that individual is also incorporated into the fellowship of the church. This is not a fellowship established by human beings for their purposes, but brought together by the Holy Spirit for God's purposes. Luther (SA III,4; Kolb, Wengert: 319) speaks of aspects of this fellowship as 'the mutual conversation and consolation of brothers and sisters'. Within this fellowship, Christians support and encourage one another, particularly with the word of God.

The New Testament uses the term *koinonia* to refer to the way the early Christians 'were together and had all things in common' (Acts 2:44). This 'sharing' includes sharing 'in Christ' (1 Cor 1:9), 'in the gospel' (1 Cor 9:23), sacramental sharing 'in the body and blood of Christ' (1 Cor 10:14–17) as members of the body of Christ (1 Cor 12:12–31). This sharing also includes fellowship in the Holy Spirit (2 Cor 13:13).

service

The early church was sufficiently concerned with service (*diakonia*) that seven deacons were appointed to attend to it (Acts 6:1–6). This function of service is explored in **CL2**.

The church as a human organisation

As stated above, in the strict sense, the true church is hidden. However, the church is also a human organisation which operates within a cultural and historical context. As such, it is influenced by that cultural and historical context, and, in turn, it influences that context. Hence the church and the way it works in the community can vary greatly from place to place. It can also be difficult at times to separate the message of the church from the cultural accretions which may have developed around that message. The question can sometimes be asked: 'Are we handing on the message of the word of God, the culture of the church, or some mixture of both?'

history of the church

The history of the church shows the church interacting with society through the ages. It shows how God is present with and for his people. But that history also shows the sinfulness of human beings and the way God preserves his church despite human failures. There are many examples of great faith, but there are equally many examples of stories of human frailty and shortcomings. It is a miracle of God's grace that the church has survived in the face of countless threats from inside and outside the church. As Christians today struggle to be God's faithful church and wonder about its future in an indifferent and hostile world, Jesus' promise remains sure: 'I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it' (Matt 16:18).

There have been many different phases in the history of the church. For the first three centuries, the Christian church experienced persecutions until the Emperor Constantine adopted Christianity as the official religion in 312. Since then,

in the so-called 'Christian East and West', the church has been an important part of society. More recently, people have begun to speak of the 'post-Christian' era in the West with the decline of the church and its influence, while the church has become much more important in the continents of Africa, South America and to some extent Asia.

In looking at the history of the church, students will be able to gain some insights into the complexity of the church and the various ways in which different groups have expressed their Christianity. It will also allow the consideration of issues such as religious intolerance, the relationship between religion and learning, church/state relationships, and the impact of Christianity in such matters as slavery, religious wars, social justice concerns, and politics (cf also **CL3**).

Christian denominations

Although the church of Jesus Christ is one, various Christian denominations have arisen as human beings have disagreed in their interpretation and application of the word and will of God. Every denomination must constantly check its teachings and practice against what the Bible says to ensure that it is being true to God's revelation. At the same time every denomination must acknowledge that the good shepherd has his sheep not only in one denomination but wherever the shepherd's voice is heard (John 10:16).

ecumenism

While there is 'one, holy, catholic and apostolic church', all denominations should be prepared to dialogue with each other on the basis of Scripture, with the prayer that the Holy Spirit will lead them to know and understand the truth of God more clearly (John 16:13) and so bring them into greater outward unity. While the unity of the church is a gift of God, this does not absolve us from the task of trying to work towards the unity of the various denominations. This unity is therefore both a gift from God and a task to which he calls us.

The Lutheran Confessions stress that different ways of doing things in the church do not destroy the unity of the church created by the Holy Spirit (Eph 4:1–5). Church unity or church fellowship must, however, be based on agreement in the preaching of the gospel and the administration of the sacraments. Article VII of the Augsburg Confession states (Kolb, Wengert: 43):

It is enough for the true unity of the church to agree concerning the teaching of the gospel and the administration of the sacraments. It is not necessary that human traditions, rites, or ceremonies instituted by human beings be alike everywhere.

There has been considerable discussion about the phrase 'it is enough' in this article. Some people understand this as implying agreement with the whole Book of Concord, while others interpret this as agreement just in the means of grace (word and sacrament).

church and culture

While the church will try to develop culturally appropriate expressions of Christianity, there is always a degree of tension between the message of the church and the culture. In important ways the gospel is always counter-cultural. It challenges assumptions and values which are part of any culture, since all cultures reflect the nature of sinful human beings. As the church reaches out with its message of salvation in Jesus Christ, it needs to ensure that it is engaging the community in culturally appropriate ways, even though the message of Christ crucified is 'a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ [is] the power of God and the wisdom of God (1 Cor 1:23–24).

Some issues and questions for discussion and reflection:

- How can we speak of the church being present in the school community? What images or concepts might be helpful?
- In what ways can a Lutheran school demonstrate that there is 'one, holy, catholic and apostolic church'?
- How can Christians within the school context witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ?
- How do/can Lutheran schools and Lutheran congregations relate to each other?
- What is the relationship between nurture within the Christian community and the teaching of Christian Studies in the Lutheran school?
- What role does Lutheran 'culture' rather than Lutheran 'faith' play in the Lutheran school context?
- In the current multicultural context of Lutheran schools, what must be retained from the Lutheran tradition and heritage, and what can be discarded?
- In what ways can Lutheran schools foster interdenominational dialogue?
- In what ways can the school reach out with the gospel to the various sub-cultures within the school?

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CHRISTIAN CHURCH:
theological notes

KEY IDEA 3 : CHRISTIANS PRAY, WORSHIP AND CELEBRATE THE SACRAMENTS

WORSHIP

Worship begins in God's action towards his people. In worship God comes to his people and serves them by what he says to them (in the word) and by what he does (in the sacraments). The focus of Christian worship is the Lord Jesus Christ, because through Jesus God most clearly shows himself as the God who loves us, accepts us, forgives us and cares for us.

The second aspect of Christian worship is our response to God's words and actions. We recognise and acknowledge that God serves us, and we show by our words and actions that we believe God is worthy of praise, honour, loving obedience and willing service. We pray to God for mercy and for all our needs. We praise and thank God for his loving mercy. At the same time we acknowledge our own unworthiness (confession of sins).

Worship is sometimes called 'divine service', because in worship God serves us and this prompts us in turn to serve him. This highlights an essential difference between Christian and non-Christian worship. In non-Christian worship the initiative tends to be with the worshippers, who try to establish the connection with their god and demonstrate their own worthiness by the earnestness and intensity of their prayers and other ritual acts (contrast the worship of the prophets of Baal with that of Elijah, 1 Kgs 18:16–39; also the Pharisee and the tax collector in Luke 18:9–14). [There is also an emphasis in some forms of Christian worship on what we do, rather than on what God has first done for us!]

Worship as God's action

Public worship brings us into the presence of the triune God and incorporates us into the heavenly worship (cf the 'invocation' at the beginning of worship).

Jesus Christ is our worship leader who brings us into the presence of the Father, representing us before the Father in intercession and thanksgiving (Heb 7:25; 9:24), and representing the Father to us in proclamation and praise (Heb 2:12). Jesus leads us together with the angels and the whole communion of saints in the performance of the heavenly liturgy (Heb 2:11; 8:2; 12:22–24; 13:15). In this way, Jesus continues to serve us as he served people during his ministry on earth (cf **CB2** — Jesus as 'priest').

Christ's continuing service to his people comes through the 'means of grace': God's word, baptism, absolution, and holy communion. These are the channels through which the Holy Spirit brings the blessings of Christ's service to us. Through these means, the Holy Spirit continues the ministry of Christ in and through the church.

Worship as response

God serves us, and we respond. However, even this response is created in us by the Holy Spirit; God not only serves us first, but God also initiates and enables our response.

Our response in worship occurs at a number of levels:

- in praise and thanksgiving, celebrating what God has done for us (the emphasis here is on the glory of God, not the 'performance' of the worship);
- in confession because we know of forgiveness in Jesus Christ;
- in public profession of faith (the creed);
- in prayers and intercessions for the church and the world;
- in free-will offerings;
- in offering our whole lives in service to God (Rom 12:1).

The form of Christian worship

Worship has its roots in scripture. Already in the Old Testament we see people like Noah and Abraham building altars and praising God for his gracious actions. Worship was also conducted at special places where God had appeared (eg Bethel). Although God cannot be confined in buildings (2 Chr 6:18), God instructed his people to erect the tabernacle and then later the temple as the meeting place for God with his people in worship. God instituted the cult of sacrificial worship, which was administered by the priests, who also mediated God's word to the people and interceded for them before God. These sacrifices of the Old Testament were temporary and pointed ahead to the final and all-sufficient self-sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross. God also gave his people the sabbath day as a special day set aside for worship and special worship festivals (eg Passover, Day of Atonement) which allowed the people to focus on God's mighty acts of deliverance.

Jesus and his disciples observed the worship patterns of the Old Testament. However, like the prophets in the Old Testament, Jesus called for worship that was not mere empty ritual but was sincere devotion (Matt 6:5–13; 15:1–9), 'in spirit and in truth' (John 4:24). As God in human flesh, Jesus himself is the New Testament tabernacle and temple — the 'place' where God's glory is fully revealed (John 1:14; 2:19–21). Jesus promised his followers that he would be present even when only two or three of them came together in his name (Matt 18:20). Christian worship is not restricted

to certain rituals at particular places and times (Col 2:16). The sabbath having fulfilled its purpose, Sunday came to be observed as 'the Lord's day'. On this day Christians celebrate God's supreme work of deliverance through the death and resurrection of Christ.

Jesus did not institute a particular order or pattern of worship for the church. However, he did give directives about essential features of Christian worship: baptism, confession and absolution, reading and preaching of the word, prayer, thanksgiving, the sacrament of the altar, and blessing (Matt 28:19; John 20:23; Luke 24:46–47; Luke 10:16; 11:1–13; Matt 26:26–28; Luke 24:50–51). Jesus also instituted the public ministry (John 20:21–23) for the preaching of the gospel and the administration of the sacraments.

Although there are elements of worship which are essential, since they are commanded in scripture, no particular form or style of worship is commanded by God. Christians are free to choose in the area of forms of worship. [These non-essentials which have been neither commanded nor forbidden in scripture are sometimes referred to as *adiaphora*.] However, decisions in these non-essentials must be made in genuine concern for the welfare and unity of the body of Christ and in Christian love for all members of the body. The Lutheran confessions state:

> We believe, teach, and confess that the community of God in every time and place has the right, power, and authority to change, reduce, or expand such [worship] practices according to circumstances in an orderly and appropriate manner, without frivolity or offense, as seems most useful, beneficial, and best for good order, Christian discipline, evangelical decorum, and the building up of the church. (Kolb, Wengert: 637)

Lutheran worship is **liturgical**. Together with denominations like the Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox, and Anglican churches, the Lutheran church uses common forms based on scripture to express worship. The liturgy helps to maintain the proper focus of worship and allows worship to be carried out in an orderly way (1 Cor 14:40). It is important, however, that the liturgy doesn't become mechanical routine. The liturgy also follows the structure of the traditional church year, which is arranged around the festivals of Christmas, Easter and Pentecost. Vestments, liturgical colours, altars, lecterns, pulpits, candles, etc are also part of liturgical worship.

Whatever forms worship takes, worship leaders must strive for excellence in worship to make the experience as effective and meaningful as possible. It needs to be sensitive to the particular context, relevant to those who are participating, but it cannot compromise the biblical focus and the centrality of the gospel. In the school context it is vital that appropriate emphasis, attention and resources are given to planning and leading of worship.

The scope of Christian worship

Christian worship transcends the boundaries of time and space. It unites us with God's people of all times and in all places. In this way worshippers anticipate their life with the triune God in heaven (Isa 6:1–5; Rev 4). In worship we also join with the angels in praising God (Heb 12:22–24) and anticipate the time when the whole of creation will perfectly praise God in heavenly glory (Ps 96:10–13; Rev 5:13). [This is seen, for example, in the liturgy of holy communion, where we join with 'angels and archangels, and with all the company of heaven' in praising God.]

Worship and fellowship

Public worship is basic to the fellowship which Christians share (Heb 10:24–25). In worship, the Holy Spirit continues to develop the community into which each Christian is incorporated when they come to faith in Jesus Christ (cf **CC2**). Fellowship is strengthened as Christians are fed through word and sacrament and as they share in prayer. Christian fellowship also provides support for Christians as they seek to live a life of worship.

The life of worship

Public worship happens as Christians gather together for worship in the name of the triune God to hear his word, to pray, to sing and to receive Christ's body and blood in the sacrament. Private worship is the daily worship of Christians as they pray, read God's word, worship as family, say grace at meals, etc. It also happens through daily life lived in service to our neighbour. Here worship is linked with vocation. Paul says that we offer our body as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God (1 Cor 12:1), and we respect our body as the temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 6:19–20), using it to the honour of God in service of other people. In this way our public and private worship are intimately tied together

PRAYER

Christian prayer is an expression of the relationship God has established with his people through Jesus Christ. It is a conversation with God which God initiates. Christians speak to God because God has spoken to them and invites them to speak with him.

Christian prayer flows from Christian faith. Christians don't have to pray in order to get close to God, because in Jesus Christ, God has already come close to them. Some Christians tend to see prayer as a 'means of grace'. They believe that they get God's love and forgiveness by praying for it. However, God's love and forgiveness come to them through God's word and the sacraments; prayer is not the reason these gifts come to them, they are given by the grace of God.

God's invitation and promise

Christians pray because God invites them to do so. The Holy Spirit, who has made them God's children through adoption, teaches them to call God 'Abba Father', a very intimate and personal form of address (Gal 4:6; Rom 8:15) (cf Luther's explanation to the introduction to the Lord's Prayer).

Jesus invites his followers to pray (Matt 7:7; Luke 18:1; 21:36). He gave them his own prayer (cf below). He has also given his promise to answer those prayers (John 16:23–24). Praying 'in the name of Jesus' recognises that prayer to God is possible only because Jesus has given Christians that access (John 14:6; Matt 27:51; Heb 10:19–22). He has removed the barrier of sin which prevents God from hearing and answering prayer. Jesus intercedes with the Father on behalf of the members of his body (cf **CB2** — Jesus as 'priest'). Praying 'in the name of Jesus' is not using some magic formula, but it is recognising the basis on which Christians can approach God — with Jesus' credentials and not their own.

The New Testament writers repeatedly urge Christians to pray (eg Rom 12:12; Col 4:2; I Thess 5:17; 1 Tim 2:1; Jas 1:6; 5:13).

God answers prayer

Christians pray with confidence, because God promises to answer prayer which is based on faith in Jesus Christ (John 14:13–14; 15:7; 16:23; Matt 7:7–11; Ps 50:15).

God's answer may be something which God *does* (eg healing, protecting, forgiving). In this situation, God may also work through the person who prays to bring about the answer to their prayer. God's answer may be something which he *says* through his word or through another person. God may respond in a way which is direct and clear, but he may also drive us back to his word in the Scriptures. This is why there is such a close link between prayer and reading and hearing God's word. However, it is important that God's answer to prayer is not seen as being dependent on the level of faith of the person who is praying (eg 'God will answer your prayer if only you believe more fervently, pray more earnestly, trust him more fully, etc').

Christians believe that God's answer to prayer comes in God's own way and in his own time. Often the answer to prayer will be recognised only as people look back on a situation some time later. Christians trust God in his love and wisdom to answer in the way which is best for the situation (Matt 6:32b).

Corporate prayer

Prayer is corporate in nature. Through faith and baptism Christians are united in fellowship with all God's people. Prayer is an expression of that relationship, the 'communion of saints'. The members of the body of Christ pray through Jesus Christ, who is their head and who represents them to the Father. The model for corporate prayer is the Lord's Prayer with its emphasis on 'our', 'we', and 'us'.

Private prayer

Private prayer grows out of corporate prayer. Jesus Christ urges his followers to pray privately for those things which are of concern to them (Matt 6:5–6; Luke 11:1–13). For the Christian, private prayer is an essential aspect of Christian spirituality (cf **CW2**).

The Bible also speaks of the Holy Spirit praying with and for the individual (Rom 8:26–27). This prayer of the Holy Spirit may be at a subconscious level, as the Spirit prays with the Father for those things which the individual may not be able to articulate.

The Lord's Prayer

Jesus has given his own prayer to his followers (Matt 6:9–13; Luke 11:1–4). Rather than simply teach about prayer, Jesus gave Christians his own prayer which they can pray with him, knowing they are praying for those things which Jesus himself prays for.

It is important that the Lord's Prayer does not become simply a convenient 'space-filler' in worship. Here the treatment of the Lord's Prayer in Luther's Small and Large Catechisms can be very helpful for ongoing study both privately and in groups.

THE SACRAMENTS

The sacraments are central in the worship life of the Lutheran church. Together with other 'sacramental churches' such as the Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox and Anglican churches, Lutherans celebrate the sacraments as the word of God in visible form (water, bread, wine) and visible action. In a very special way through the sacraments God is present for his people, giving them his grace and blessing. [The Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox churches, using a different understanding of some aspects of sacraments, also include confirmation, marriage, ordination and blessing of the dying as sacraments.]

What is a sacrament?

The Bible does not give a definition of a 'sacrament'. According to Lutheran understanding, a sacrament is a sacred act or rite that has the following components:

- a physical element or elements (water, bread, wine)
- the command of Christ (Matt 28:19 — baptism; 1 Cor 11:24–25 — holy communion)
- a promise attached to the command (Mark 16:16 — baptism; 1 Cor 11:24–25 — holy communion)

Sometimes in the Lutheran tradition absolution is also considered to be a sacrament, even though it lacks a physical element (apart from the human voice and the laying on of hands). However, it has been instituted by Christ and has his promise (John 20:22–23).

While baptism and holy communion have things in common, they are also different. For example, baptism is performed only once in a person's life, while Christians celebrate holy communion repeatedly.

Lutherans tend to use the phrase 'word and sacrament' in a way which could suggest that God's word (read and preached) is somehow different from the word of God which is combined with the elements in the sacraments. However, it would be correct to say that there is one 'means of grace', the word of God (the word of gospel or promise), which comes to us as written word, preached word and sacramental word ('visible word').

What makes the sacraments valid?

The sacraments are valid only because of the command of Christ and the word of God which is added to the elements. Without the word of God, we have simply water, bread and wine. The sacrament remains valid even if it is wrongly received or used, or if faith is lacking, because the validity 'is not bound to our faith but to the Word' (Kolb, Wengert: 463). The validity of the sacrament also does not depend on the faith of the person celebrating the sacrament.

The sacraments are an objective means of bridging the gap between the death of Christ on the cross and our own time. Each one of us is made contemporaneous with Christ: he baptises us and he offers himself to us in the bread and wine, as he did to his disciples in the upper room during the last supper. The sacraments therefore give us certainty that God is really at work in our lives. Christ establishes and maintains an individual relationship with each one of us while at the same time incorporating and keeping us in the fellowship (*koinonia*) of the church, the body of Christ (1 Cor 10:16–17).

What makes the sacraments effective?

The benefits of the sacraments are received by faith. Faith does not make the sacrament valid, but it trusts in and draws on the blessings which the sacrament offers. The sacraments do not operate automatically or magically; they become effective in the life of the Christian by faith. This faith is also the gift of God. God gives faith in baptism, and this faith receives the blessings of baptism and the benefits of holy communion.

Incarnation and the sacraments: linking creation and redemption

Christians believe that in the incarnation, God became a human being. The creator became part of his own creation. Creation and the work of redemption are linked. This mystery continues through the sacraments, where earthly, created elements take on special significance, bearing the gifts of salvation. Here again we see theology of the cross — Christ hidden in, with and under the elements of water, bread and wine.

Baptism

Luther's Small and Large Catechisms most clearly set out the Lutheran understanding of baptism and its benefits. However, a few specific aspects can be highlighted.

God is the one who baptises

Baptism is the action of God. However, God uses human hands to perform baptism. Some denominations, however, particularly those who do not practise infant baptism (eg Baptist), see baptism as something which we do as a public declaration of our faith. According to this understanding, baptism is simply a sign of faith, and the emphasis falls on what the person does rather than on what God does. For Lutherans baptism is a means of grace through which God claims the baptised as his own and gives them his gifts. Because it is God who performs the baptism, Christian churches recognise the validity of each others' baptisms, providing water is used (either sprinkling or immersion) in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

infant baptism

Infant baptism arises as an issue in Lutheran schools because of the different teachings of the various Christian denominations. This is partly due to the fact that the Lutheran church recognises that there is no clear directive in the Bible to baptise infants. However, it is equally true that Scripture says nothing to prohibit the baptism of infants.

While the Bible does not command nor prohibit the baptism of infants, it does offer the blessings of baptism to 'all nations' (Matt 28:19). Including infants in these blessings is consistent with Jesus' command to let the little children come to him, because the kingdom of heaven belongs to them (Matt 19:14) and the preaching of Peter (Acts 2:39) that the promise of the gospel is 'for you, for your children, and for all who are far away, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to him'. The Bible also speaks of the baptism of the households of Lydia (Acts 16:15) and the jailer in Philippi (Acts 16:33); it is highly likely that infants and small children were included.

The theological understanding of baptism is also consistent with the practice of infant baptism. The promises of the gospel cannot be denied to anyone on the basis of age. Just as infants share in the universality of original sin, they are included in the universality of God's grace. God who gives the gift of faith can give that gift also to an infant. As indicated above, it is God who is active in baptism, giving the blessing of baptism and also the faith which receives those blessings.

There are also historical arguments for the practice of infant baptism (the tradition of the church). There is no evidence in the history of the early church of any controversy over infant baptism. The introduction of a new practice, such as infant baptism, would have raised some level of discussion in the early church. From the earliest documents relating to the church it is indicated that infant baptism was practiced at least as early as the second century. God has preserved his church through history also through the practice of infant baptism (cf Luther's Large Catechism, Kolb, Wengert, 462–464).

baptism in the Holy Spirit

The separation of so-called 'water baptism' and 'spirit baptism' is a recent development in the church. However, the New Testament does not make this separation. While a person may receive the Holy Spirit apart from baptism, those who are baptised have received the Holy Spirit. The New Testament sees 'water baptism' and 'spirit baptism' as one and the same (1 Cor 12:13). Baptism is also carried out in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Thus the Spirit is present and active in baptism.

living in one's baptism

In the Large Catechism, Luther expresses the life of the Christian in this way (Kolb, Wengert, 466–467):

> Thus we see what a great and excellent thing baptism is, which snatches us from the jaws of the devil and makes us God's own, overcomes and takes away sin and daily strengthens the new person, and always endures and remains until we pass out of this misery into eternal glory.

> Therefore let all Christians regard their baptism as the daily garment that they wear all the time. Every day they should be found in faith and with its fruits, suppressing the old creature and growing up in the new. If we want to be Christians, we must practice the work that makes us Christians, and let those who fall away return to it. As Christ, the mercy seat, does not withdraw from us or forbid us to return to him even though we sin, so all his treasures and gifts remain. As we have once obtained forgiveness of sins in baptism, so forgiveness remains day by day as long as we live, that is, as long as we carry the old creature around our necks.

Holy communion

Luther's treatment of the sacrament of the altar in the Small and Large Catechisms is the starting point for a consideration of a Lutheran understanding of holy communion. Luther clearly sets out the blessings received in this sacrament as 'forgiveness of sins, life and salvation'.

Christ's presence in the bread and wine

Lutherans believe that in the sacrament of the altar Christ gives his 'true body and blood' 'in, with, and under' the bread and wine. Christ is truly present in the consecrated elements. Those who receive the sacrament, whether or not they believe, receive the body and blood of Christ. This is a mystery which is based on the words of Scripture (John 6:51–58; 1 Cor 10:16–17). Lutherans do not try to explain how this happens but accept that it does on the basis of Christ's word and promise. Lutherans reject that Christ is only symbolically, or figuratively, or spiritually present in the sacrament. Lutherans also understand holy communion as more than a 'memorial meal', remembering what Jesus has done for us. Since Jesus commanded 'do this in remembrance of me' (1 Cor 11:23–26), Lutherans believe that they participate in the body and blood of Christ because Christ himself is present as he has promised.

being 'worthy'

The close link in previous Lutheran practice of confirmation and first communion has often led to the perception that readiness for communion and 'being worthy' is related to an intellectual understanding of the sacrament. This has been based on a particular understanding of Paul's words in 1 Cor 11:27–34 which speak about 'examining' oneself before partaking of the body and blood of Christ in the sacrament. However, what Paul is concerned about in this passage is rather that individuals recognise that the consecrated bread and wine is more than ordinary food and is in fact the body and blood of Christ.

Luther stresses that the real concern is not the ability to somehow 'understand' what is happening in the sacrament, but simply to trust what Christ is saying, when he says, this is my body 'given for you' and this is my blood 'shed for you for the forgiveness of sins' (Kolb, Wengert, 363). True 'worthiness' is the recognition of our own 'unworthiness' and the need for repentance. What makes us 'worthy' to share in the sacrament is nothing in ourselves, but simply Christ's invitation to come and receive his gifts.

Some issues and questions for discussion and reflection:

- Why do Lutheran schools retain the policy and practice of 'compulsory worship'? Is 'compulsory worship' a contradiction in terms?
- Why do we begin public worship with the 'invocation' ('In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.')?
- Can a non-Lutheran pastor preach in a Lutheran worship service?
- How can we encourage the school community to participate actively in worship without turning worship into a 'performance' which draws attention to the participants?
- What elements of worship are appropriate in Lutheran school worship where not all members of the community profess faith in Jesus Christ?
- In what ways can students see their life as students as part of worship?
- Is there a difference between prayer and meditation?
- People sometimes speak about the 'power of prayer'. What do they mean? Where does the power lie?
- Does prayer change God or us or both?
- How can members of the school community be helped to develop their practice of corporate and private prayer?
- Does God answer the prayers of non-Christians?
- What is the place of the celebration of the sacraments in the school?
- Can we help baptised students celebrate their baptism without discriminating against those who are not baptised?
- Is baptism necessary for salvation?
- Would you be concerned if you learned that the pastor who baptised you had been a hypocritical unbeliever?
- What understanding is there of the sacrament of the altar in the school community?
- How are children in the school community prepared for first communion? What emphasis is there on 'worthy reception'?
- Does God's use of earthly elements in the sacraments have any implications for our understanding of creation and our approach to ecology?

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CHRISTIAN LIVING

LEARNING STATEMENTS:
CONTENT KNOWLEDGE AND WAYS OF KNOWING

CHRISTIAN LIVING

Key Idea 1: Christians believe that God creates people to live in relationship with him and with each other
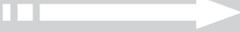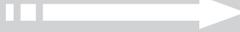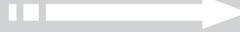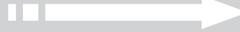
	Beginning	Band A	Band B	Band C	Band D	Band E
learning statement	**CL 1.1** Children describe ways God cares for individual people	**CL 2.1** Students investigate and represent people's relationships with God and with each other	**CL 3.1** Students examine and reflect on the belief that God creates people to live in community	**CL 4.1** Students draw conclusions about the influence of the other on self-identity in light of Christian beliefs about the worth of the individual	**CL 5.1** Students analyse Christian beliefs about the responsibilities of living in relationship with God, self and others	**CL 6.1** Students evaluate ways God-given structures foster the proper functioning of individual and communal life
scope statements	The Bible teaches that God invites people to have a relationship with him because he is their creator and he loves and cares for each person. He has created the world to provide each person with life's necessities. God gives families and communities to help each person grow and thrive. God uses other people to demonstrate his love and care.	Christians believe God's love and care of his created people stems from his desire to be in relationship with them. A relationship with God instructs and motivates people on how to live with one another. Relationships nurture people and enable them to develop their gifts and in turn nurture others.	Christians understand people are created to live in community, so they play an important and responsible role in being co-creators and co-carers with God. Communities are places where people grow and learn to live with one another, interdependently.	The health of communities is dependent on each individual having a clear sense of personal value and dignity. Christians accept that human worth comes from God and is not dependent on appearance, actions good and bad or on others' perceptions. God's unconditional acceptance of each individual liberates each to relate to others, all the while maintaining his/her self-identity.	Christians believe a strong healthy self-concept derives from a relationship with God and positive community life. The continuing development of self-identity involves examining the purpose of life and the contribution that can be made to others. This shapes how relationships are conducted and decisions about personal direction and action.	Christians understand that a healthy self-concept is only one factor in creating a peaceable, well-functioning society. Laws and structures such as family and government enable individuals to flourish and enrich the wellbeing of one another and their communities. A relationship with God enables personal renewal and vision to influence communities and bring positive change.
students know... (knowledge and elaborations)	God made and loves each person as special and unique Attributes and features that make each person special and unique God wants to have a relationship with each person God has created a world which provides for people's needs Bible stories that show God cares (eg, Ruth and Naomi, Jesus and Jairus's daughter, God lets Adam name the animals, Jesus spends time with children) God gives individuals people they can trust and who care for them In Jesus God demonstrates trustworthiness, love and care of others	The relationship between God and people • human beings share a special relationship with God • God creates, knows and loves each person as a unique individual • people are precious because God made them and loves them • God wants a special relationship with each person – love, trust, communication The relationship people have with each other • human relationships are part of God's plan for people • God is shown to us through the ordinary lives of people • God wants people to love and respect one another • God helps people to live in relationship through the gift of his Holy Spirit • Jesus has demonstrated how we can live in relationship with God and others • people need each other to meet their needs	God creates people • God creates and loves all people – male/female, young/old, Christians/non-Christians, all cultures • all people are equal because they are made by God – unique individuals with gifts and talents • God creates people with the ability and freedom to make choices • God places individuals in different communities God's plan for community living • community is part of God's plan for people • people need community – community builds individuals • people in community respect one another – their uniqueness and difference • people help each other and learn from one another in community • there are responsibilities for living in community There are broken communities because people are sinful God gave the ten commandments to protect and build community and to teach people how to live together God forgives people who fail in community	People are created in the image of God • God's view of people can be significant in shaping a person's self-concept (eg, 'God don't make no junk') • people are creative and have free will • sin does not devalue the person • God has redeemed the person • God has given the gift of the Holy Spirit to sanctify each person Role and purpose of people's gifts and abilities • service to others • glory to God God gives all people special gifts and abilities • physical • emotional • intellectual • spiritual • social Influence of the other on self • how society including media impacts on our construct of who we are • how our interactions with others influence and shape our self-identity • what can happen when perceptions of self and others are out of alignment • giving and receiving affirmation • the 'other' is precious and sacred and deserving of respect	Christianity involves an active relationship with God lived out in relationship with others The Christian life is not without its struggles • God's will for people's lives is opposed to selfish desires and wants • Christians are both saint and sinner • God intended that relationships be of mutual benefit to human beings • humans are not capable of living in perfect relationships Causes and consequences of personal and interpersonal conflict and strategies for dealing with conflict in a variety of situations (eg, depression, suicide, family breakdown, anorexia/bulimia, substance abuse) Forgiveness • God offers forgiveness and healing to all people when failure is experienced in relationships • God empowers people to forgive each other • Jesus came to restore the broken relationship between human beings and God and at the same time to redeem all human relationships There are various relationships or connections between human beings – such as physical, emotional, spiritual, sexual or social – all with their own unique responsibilities, challenges and benefits	Identity • a Christian is both saint and sinner • individuals need laws and structures in society • belief about self is an important determiner of identity • God's esteem (value) for each individual person is shown in Jesus' teaching and actions • people are created in and for community/relationships • importance of confession, repentance and renewal God works in and through structures to fulfil his will – marriage, family, government, social order • protection of individual and community life • preservation of peace and good order God works through the Law • protects all of life • points to human failure • guidance for Christian life Gospel • Jesus' teaching on love and forgiveness • restoration • renewal Jesus' interpretation of commandments and structures (eg, family, government, personal conflict) Factors influencing individuals and community life • sexuality, work, gender roles, money, possessions, social codes, fashion, use of time • technological and medical advances, racism/sexism/disability, radical individualism, consumerism, economic/political structures and systems

students can... (ways of knowing)

• express that they are unique through a variety of mediums • share their thoughts on God's relationship with people (eg, draw, scribe their thoughts, tape an interview of their thoughts) • listen to Bible stories relating to God's love and reflect on their understanding • identify experiences of friendship, love and care • identify the many ways people care for them • name people who love them and discuss how this love is expressed in their life • begin to explore the concept of trusting relationships • compare experiences of fear and trust • participate in trust activities • identify ways people believe God cares for them	• describe how God has created people with similarities and differences between individuals (eg, gender, ethnicity) • create a picture of how God sees uniqueness in his creation • list similarities and differences between human beings and animals • discuss what being special means for them • investigate Bible stories of the friendship God initiates with people • investigate ways people express their relationship with God • retell stories of friendship that illustrate the biblical teaching on healthy relationships • describe the aspects of friendship that make them feel good about themselves • identify actions which demonstrate love and respect in personal relationships • explore pictures the Bible uses to help people relate to God • identify people who are important to them and record their understanding of the importance of other people in their lives • reflect on and demonstrate ways people show love and care for others • express God's gift of people through the arts (eg, mural) • share stories that illustrate God's love and reflect on ways people can show love to others	• examine themselves and reflect on how they can use their gifts and talents to build community in the school, family and wider community • use Bible passages and stories to examine the Christian belief that all people are equal • share information about roles and responsibilities of living in families, including God's family • list and compare the characteristics and roles of people in different types of communities (eg, family, school, sporting team) • collate information from Bible stories about ways people use their talents and abilities to care for others • explore stories of Jesus interacting with outcasts in his community and identify how he helped to restore them to their community • reflect on the ability to make choices as a gift from God and what this means for living in community • investigate the Christian belief that social structures and authority are given by God for the welfare of people and give examples • investigate the Christian belief that love and forgiveness are the basis for positive relationships and healthy communities • describe what the Bible says about the way God wants people to live and the reasons he created family • present the findings of an investigation of Bible passages dealing with the concept that 'all people are precious to God' • reflect on the ways Christians respond to God's love for each person • respond to the concept of living in community through the arts • create a code of conduct for 'living in community' in the classroom	• gather information on the gifts and abilities they possess, using surveys, personality tests, questionnaires, and reflect on how this contributes to their self-concept and the ways in which they could use their gifts and abilities to help others • identify how artists and musicians have responded to God (eg, Michelangelo and the Sistine Chapel) • retell the parable of the talents (Matthew 25:14–30) using a modern context and record the message in the story • classify people's roles in life (family, work, social) and analyse the way they serve others through these roles (eg, father, worker, club secretary) • investigate media portrayals of the 'ideal' pre-teen – interests, looks – and critique from a variety of stakeholder perspectives • explore the difference between 'knowing self' and 'self-centredness' • identify/research the people who influenced/challenged Jesus (and how he responded) and evaluate his responses • visually map interactions with others and the impact on 'me' over a specified period of time, then focus on what they have learned about themselves • identify ways an individual can make judgments about how other people can influence them and find support from various sources • explain how the ten commandments promote self-identity • create motivational slogans which focus on God's view of a person • create and present a reflection on individual worth • describe the effect of peers on a person's developing understanding of self • reflect on the difficulties and benefits of 'being yourself'	• describe the advantages and disadvantages of relationships and identify the factors which contribute to conflict within people's relationships (change, stress, selfishness, ignorance, stereotyping) • investigate the impact and influence of individual decisions on others' lives • role play scenarios that show the cause of conflicts and arguments (eg, not doing chores or homework, type of music being listened to) and propose possible solutions to reduce the conflicts • develop skills of conflict management and strategies for dealing with conflict in a variety of situations • consider the things that Jesus valued about people and relationships and analyse how he restored broken relationships • explore the various degrees of intimacy in relationships and propose the values and beliefs that underpin a responsible approach and development of healthy relationships • report on an interview with several Christians about their relationship with God and its influence on their relationships at home, in the workplace, with friends • evaluate the importance of God's commands (eg, the ten commandments) in becoming a responsible person	• describe how Jesus' relationship with God brought hope and positive change to people he met and suggest how this might be possible in contemporary contexts • propose a model for a fair and just society underpinned by Christian principles where the dignity and value of human life is promoted • reflect on the challenges of personal and societal renewal communicated by the gospel • identify links between laws used in contemporary society and the ten commandments • identify the relationship between belief and action in the lives of some biblical characters (eg, prophets, Esther, King David, Paul, Jesus) • differentiate between Christian, societal and personal responses to selected issues • apply the radical message of Jesus (to love God and others) to world issues • examine how Jesus' esteem for each person was interpreted and put into practice by New Testament writers and propose how these can be expressed in the students' own context • critically review the contradictions between what is said and done in the media and/or Christian practice and/or personal choices • contrast the factors that contribute to mental wellbeing with the biblical teaching on God's esteem of individuals • identify the events, people, ideas that have shaped and influenced a student's choices in relation to selected issues • explore the contributions of the marriage relationship to the wellbeing of individuals and society

Achievement standards for each band comprise concepts and content drawn from Learning Statements and Scope Statements together with evidence of student learning demonstrated through ways of knowing.

CHRISTIAN LIVING:
curriculum statements

CHRISTIAN LIVING

Key Idea 2: Christians are called to love and serve all people

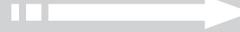|	Beginning	Band A	Band B	Band C	Band D	Band E
learning statement	**CL 1.2** Children hear stories about God's helpers and discuss ways they are helped and can help others	**CL 2.2** Students gather information about how God helps all people and describe how God equips people to help others	**CL 3.2** Students investigate and analyse how God motivates, equips and uses Christians to serve others	**CL 4.2** Students analyse the concept of Christian love and service as a response to faith	**CL 5.2** Students reflect on the concept of Christian vocation and its significance for self and others	**CL 6.2** Students analyse and respond to ways in which Christians and others are challenged to serve, respect and value all people
scope statements	Christian service happens in the context of relationship with God and others. Being a friend and helper of others is being the hands, feet and voice of God in the world. An understanding of God's love and grace is communicated in the love, friendship and help people give to one another.	Lutherans believe God uses people and structures to achieve his purposes in the world. They are God's blessing to all people. God gives each person gifts and abilities to respond to human need and for the benefit of all humankind. Christians see this as God's specific call to how they are to live their lives and relate to others.	Christians believe they are called to live as disciples of Jesus Christ. It is a lifelong learning process whereby the Holy Spirit transforms Christians to reflect the attitude and love of Jesus for others. Christians view service to one's neighbour as a joyful response to the mercy and love God has shown them through the gift of Jesus.	Christians believe that serving God, others and the world is the gospel in action. Christian love and service is a response to God's self-sacrificial love. Servanthood, in Jesus, is characterised by humility, unselfishness and death to self. God's generosity results in thanksgiving.	Christians view their calling as God's gift to the world. Their redeemed, renewed selves pave the way to transform community living as they bring a God-breathed approach in all dimensions of life. Their commitment to love and service of individuals and communities – vocation – opens doors to tell God's story of redemption and for God to heal a broken world.	The Bible teaches that Christian service turns natural human endeavour on its head. Its call for selfless, self-sacrificing giving chafes against the false demarcations and practices in society. Christians are challenged to live and speak into being the principles and ways of the kingdom of God such that God's will is done on earth as in heaven.
students know… (knowledge and elaborations)	God's love for people enables them to love others Stories of Jesus' friends and helpers • Jesus shows people how to live with others through the things he said and did (eg, actions and words of love, care, forgiveness, kindness) • Jesus wants people to be a friend to others • Jesus had disciples and they were his helpers and friends Examples of friendship and service Stories of people who help and care for others God's helpers today	God helps and equips all people • God sustains them through the gift of the created world, families, communities, governments • God gives each person unique characteristics, abilities and gifts through which others can be helped • God gives guidelines and rules (commandments) that show how he wants people to live • God forgives people their sin • God shares the good news of his love (gospel) to others through the words and actions of his followers Examples of how structures such as families, schools, hospitals both help and equip people Ways different roles in society and life help and equip people (eg, parent, teacher, friend, sibling, doctor, manager)	Christian disciples • learn from Jesus about discipleship • live by the law of love – to love the Lord with all your heart and to love your neighbour as yourself • obey and serve God by using their gifts to serve others • show love, compassion and respect • forgive and ask for forgiveness • love their enemies • tell others about God's love • are empowered by the gifts of the Holy Spirit • have the gift of the church and the Bible to help them grow in their faith and knowledge of God's love The role of mission in serving and meeting people's needs • practical help • proclaiming God's word • assisting community structures People God chose to be special messengers – prophets, disciples and current/historical Christian figures • motivation for service • ways of serving God • impact of service • lifestyle • lessons to be learnt	Servanthood of Jesus • motivated by God's .love for all people • inclusive, compassionate, just • challenged unjust authorities and practices • death to self Christian service is total giving • God gives out of his abundance Christian service demonstrated in mission and service • each Christian shares the task of telling others the good news • Lutherans in Australia work together in mission and ministry: - local church programs - Lutheran organisations (eg, Australian Lutheran World Service, Lutheran Community Care) - Missionary activities (eg, Papua New Guinea) • Christian charity organisations work towards serving others (eg, St. Vincent de Paul, Salvation Army)	The transforming power of the Holy Spirit who gives a new heart and new spirit that enables people to love God and neighbour Christians are ambassadors for Christ by the way they live their lives Christian vocation • God does his work in the world through people whether they recognise it or not. Christians recognise this as vocation • everything a person does can be seen through the lens of vocation – living sacrifices for God • Christians view their calling, job and vocation as a way in which they can serve, help and benefit others • discipleship and Christian service – an alternative approach to a secular way of life • Christians serve by attempting to meet the needs of others • more than 'occupation' – includes non-salaried 'work'. It is part and parcel of all the roles in life (eg, sister or brother, son or daughter, student or teacher, friend) • gives meaning and purpose for life Work is an order of creation Notion of enjoyment of work, daily routine as a gift from God God uses everybody for service Importance of balance, rest	Biblical teaching on a selfless life • Jesus' teaching on love, forgiveness and service as the basis for a serving attitude • Christian freedom and servanthood • Sermon on the Mount • biblical view of the neighbour (eg, to whom am I a neighbour?) • place of good works • biblical teaching on the value of all people and the respect needed in caring for others as expounded in New Testament letters • biblical teaching on the cost of discipleship • call for Christians to live a sanctified life with regard to sexuality, marriage, the outsider, family, employer/employee, political, economic Beliefs and actions have consequences for others • what an individual believes about others is an important determiner of how s/he treats others • the rights and responsibilities of individuals within a community • responsibility to God in all things • responsibility to governments Relationship between individual and society/community

students can… (ways of knowing)					
• use a variety of ways to retell the stories of Jesus helping and being a friend to others • model cooperation and consideration to others (eg, willingly take turns using puppets, finger plays) • brainstorm ways friends help each other • participate in a group discussion about what it means to be a friend • participate in games focusing on the giving of positive comments • contribute as a group member to develop a list of acceptable behaviours for the group • listen to Bible stories about Jesus' disciples and discuss ways they helped Jesus • role play the ways they see adults helping others • use problem-solving skills to help others • participate in a service activity (eg, visit an old-age facility, picking up rubbish)	• re-enact stories from the Bible which show how Jesus cared for and treated others with love • participate in a project to support people in the community who need care • identify and describe how they can use their unique characteristics and abilities to help others in the context of family and school communities • list the different roles people play in life, identify the care and help they provide others and list the qualities they need • discuss how the gifts of the Spirit equip people to express their care for others • research social structures that God has provided to care for people and consider their personal role in these structures • investigate and report on how Jesus' disciples continued his work of sharing God's love • identify situations in which people tell others about Jesus in the world today • discuss and reflect on ways Jesus loved and cared for others • report on ways they help out in the family • examine common rules and describe how they support positive relationships	• explore and report on the concept of discipleship through an investigation of Jesus' work • compile profiles of different people who have been God's messengers, showing the link between motivation and action • identify the fruit of the Spirit and explain how they equip Christians to serve others • describe how Christians throughout history have been inspired and guided by the Holy Spirit to serve • report on the outcomes resulting from a life of obedience and/or disobediences in the lives of biblical characters • discuss the various ways people love their neighbour, and show the link with God's guidelines and rules • investigate and document the service given by missionaries to people • explore and show the many ways Christians serve God and people in all dimensions of life • participate in service activities linked to local congregations/community	• present the range of responses different people had to Jesus' acts of service • compare the mission statements of various Christian service organisations to consider biblical basis and motivation for service • analyse Jesus' response to unjust treatment of others • identify people who are treated unjustly in the local and global community • generate ways of serving each other and others in the local community (eg, visiting the elderly, bottle and can drives) • research ways famous and other people have used their gifts and abilities to serve others to consider how God uses all people to serve • research the mission and various agencies of the Lutheran church and make connections with Christian beliefs about service and discipleship (eg, missions, aged-care, Lutheran Community Care) • examine and report on various Lutheran institutions and their role within the community (eg, Australian Lutheran World Service, Lutheran Community Care) • investigate and present information about the work and motivation of Christians and Christian service organisations • describe and compare Christian love with societal views of love	• research and report on the challenge of Christian discipleship for people today • explain, providing examples, the concept that being a disciple of Jesus requires total commitment • investigate Christians' experience of the transforming work of the Holy Spirit in their lives and describe the changes in their lives • research the importance of a sense of vocation in the lives of Christians and compare this with the concept of vocation for non-Christians • reflect on how the events of life and attitudes towards work and service shape the sense of direction and purpose in life • illustrate how a Christian with a desire to serve others might formulate ways to respond to the needs of others • compare and contrast the purpose and direction in life expressed in the lives of Christians and non-Christians and construct a mission statement that outlines a person's values, beliefs and purpose in life • propose ways they can create a supportive environment in the classroom that reflects a Christian view of service • explain Christian understandings of vocation and analyse them in relation to their own lives and others • identify needs, design and implement an action plan to serve the needs of others	• use information from print, electronic sources and biblical text to demonstrate the link between personal choice and its impact on service to others • examine and report on how some Christian communities (eg, monastic, congregations, schools, families) have endeavoured to live out the challenge to serve • identify and defend the beliefs and practices that contribute to a healthy environment in which to raise and educate a child • apply biblical teaching on service to a range of contexts (eg, leadership, career, leisure, friends, partners, dream/goals, parenting) • investigate and give reasons Christian teaching on rights and responsibilities challenges and motivates individuals to be actively involved in the community (eg, in the political/economic systems) • propose changes to the treatment of the marginalised if God's will is done • propose a plan of action to value all members of the school in a demonstrable way • debate the viability of life based on Jesus' Sermon on the Mount • report on Christians who have lived out the challenge of costly discipleship

Achievement standards for each band comprise concepts and content drawn from Learning Statements and Scope Statements together with evidence of student learning demonstrated through ways of knowing.

CHRISTIAN LIVING

Key Idea 3: Christians have a responsibility in and for the world

	Beginning	Band A	Band B	Band C	Band D	Band E
learning statement	**CL 1.3** Children discuss their experiences of God's world and demonstrate how they can care for it	**CL 2.3** Students explore and describe what it means to live and care for the world	**CL 3.3** Students explore and respond to the Christian belief that God has given people responsibility for the world	**CL 4.3** Students explore ways Christians interpret and act on their calling as stewards in God's world	**CL 5.3** Students apply principles of Christian stewardship to social, political, environmental and economic issues	**CL 6.3** Students critique Christian, individual and community responses to the needs of the world and defend a personal position
scope statements	Christians view creation as an act of God's love. It holds great wonder and awe and gives an insight into the goodness, majesty and complexity of God as creator. He invites people to not only enjoy and benefit from the fruits of creation but to also join him in caring for his creation.	Christians believe people are a separate and different creation of God yet share a common creator with the rest of creation. The respect and care that people show to their own kind is to be given to all of God's creation. The health of the world is dependent on people's treatment and use of creation.	Christians believe that God has given the world for people's enjoyment and survival and entrusted people with the care of the world for its survival. This requires a sense of awe, appreciation, foresight and community consciousness so that wise decisions will be made for the good of present and future generations of people and the world.	Christian stewardship views the world and people with God's eyes. It is about restoring and healing damage, sustaining life and goodness, developing and enriching life that it may grow and multiply. It reflects the same love, care and responsibility Christians have for people to bring hope and life where there is darkness. It is living the gospel message.	Beliefs about people, rights and responsibilities are linked to justice issues. Christians believe they are called to be God's ambassadors representing his passions and concerns, resisting oppression and injustice in all dimensions of life and in the created world. They recognise that repentance and God's forgiveness are steps towards justice. They trust in God's continuing goodness in the world.	Christians believe the health of the world, communities and individual people must move beyond theory and words to action. God's continued love and care for the world and humanity is evident in the litany of good works, laws and organisations created to respond to suffering and damage. Christians find their inspiration and a way to live and act in the life and death of Jesus.
students know... (knowledge and elaborations)	God created all creatures and the environment All that God made is good Creation stories and descriptions of the world recorded in a range of Bibles in particular children's Bibles. God has given people responsibility for looking after the world People's actions impact on the world People care for the world in different ways	The world belongs to God • it is God's blessing to people • it is for people to enjoy • it teaches people about the wonder and mystery of God • it provides for people's needs • it is interdependent • it is self-sustaining People live in relationship with the world • God wants people to take care of his world with him People's actions impact on the world and other people • God has placed people in community to love and care for others • one way of caring for others is to care for the world • misuse of the created order has adverse effect on both creation and human life Biblical stories of creation	God's creation • God's creation is for all people – past, present and future • God wants all people to experience dignity and meaning in life • God continues to create • biblical descriptions of people's relationship to creation Responsibility to care for the world • God wants humans to enjoy the world and to take charge of and look after the world • God equips humans to take care and be responsible for the world – • people are accountable for honouring and respecting the natural and built environments • abuse and misuse of the earth • people care for the world in many ways	God wants people to be responsible caretakers of creation (eg, improve land quality, preserve endangered species) Stewardship in the local community Rights and responsibilities in the community Christian stewardship • appointed by God to serve the interests of his created world • managers not owners, servant role • values for living, choices for action • trustworthiness, applying wisdom • community consciousness • Christians are God's representatives on Earth God calls people to work for justice and harmony • poverty, equality, gender, ethnic issues • God has created a world that could meet all people's needs if resources were distributed fairly Responsibility to respond to injustices • personal justice • justice in and for community • all people were created in the image of God • all people have the right to thrive – develop their capabilities, work, be treated with dignity and respect, free to speak and act according to their conscience and beliefs • God wants all people to be saved	Responsibility to the global community • Christians strive to establish and maintain peace and justice for all. • social justice issues in the global community (eg, refugees, common wealth for common good, globalisation, political and religious oppression, access to health, treatment of Indigenous communities, war, weapons of mass destruction,) • Christian social action may move beyond secular law • the gospel as a means for bringing peace and justice to a broken world • equity in the workplace, social structures, home Relationship between justification and justice Bible's teaching on a just and loving response to the poor and oppressed Care for the environment • in the short term for the long term • responsible decision-making in the use of the earth's resources • environmental sustainability • biblical teaching on stewardship of creation • interdependence of human life and the environment	Beliefs and actions have consequences (positive and/or negative) for the community as a whole Sociological, historical, Indigenous and popular concepts of community which influence what communities believe about themselves and others The Christian perspectives on community that are counter-cultural (to whom are we a neighbour?) The challenge of Christian teaching for people's role in the community The role stewardship plays in the Christian and wider community Involvement in the community • supporters and advocates for others, community, environment, global village • Christians in government Old Testament prophets on justice Involvement in God's continuing work of creation Examples of Christians who have worked to liberate people from oppression Justice and mercy is part of radical Christian discipleship Salvation values – reconciliation, reformation, renewal, transformation, repentance Wisdom versus foolishness • suffering as a direct result of human sin and folly

students can… (ways of knowing)					
• produce a pictorial record of the beauty and complexity of the created world • create a display of favourite natural objects • list ways of caring for God's world and apply the list in their setting • investigate and describe ways people care for the environment (eg, disposing of their rubbish, recycling used materials, sick wildlife) • demonstrate the care of pets and other creatures • comment on science experiments that explore the wonders of God's world • participate in games and activities to practise ways to care for God's world • contribute to the establishment and care of a garden • talk about how people look after creatures and their pets	• retell the stories of creation (eg, Genesis 1, 2; Psalm 104), highlighting the blessings God has given people through his creation • identify ways that God continues to look after his creation • list different ways people in the community care for the environment • explore ways they can respond to God's creation • plan and develop strategies to care for natural resources or address an environmental issue in their community • imagine and describe future scenarios in which all people take responsibility to care for the earth • explore ways they can take care of people or places in the school environment • plan and participate in a celebration of thanks and praise for God's created world	• explore and describe ways that God has equipped people to care for the world (eg, skills, and abilities people have) • promote the role people have been given to care for the world • propose actions that can be taken by either the school community or themselves to care for the world • gather and represent information from various sources about ways people care for the world • show connections between people and the environment and discuss the significance of this relationship • consider the ways people use the environment and reflect on the ways people maintain a balance between using, enjoying and caring for the environment • respond to environmental issues in the community • summarise biblical views and descriptions of creation • develop protocols for care of the environment	• examine God the creator's role in the world today and how people play a part in maintaining God's creation • identify and compare what motivates environmental groups to take care of the environment • select existing community projects that reflect Christian stewardship of the earth and its people • list areas of need in the world and suggest ways these could be met • develop an action plan to take care of people in need or the environment (eg, collecting food for homeless, organising recycling programs) • discuss and react to Indigenous issues (eg, saying sorry to Indigenous peoples for the way they have been treated in the past, the Stolen Generation, removal from land) • formulate and present procedures for helping refugees and other marginalised people based on compassion and justice (eg, design a manual for the Immigration Department) • use role play to investigate and present findings on Jesus' teaching about social justice (eg, modernise a Bible story) • compare and analyse profiles of advantaged and disadvantaged groups in the world • develop and implement a school community action plan	• identify and analyse personal experiences or situations that have led to an unjust outcome • define and elaborate on global injustices in communities and explore ways to maintain peace and justice • highlight a social justice issue and use evidence to make an inference as to the church's position on the issue • gather evidence of and formulate a response to the church's voice in a current social justice issue • differentiate between secular law and Christian social action and form an opinion as to whether the church has a role within the boundaries of the law • investigate ways Christians respond to controversial global issues such as the uneven distribution of wealth in the world • support a community project addressing issues of injustice and report on what they learnt from the experience • analyse biblical material on God's view of poverty and oppression • draw conclusions about the link between attitudes to the environment and poverty • present a rationale for care of the environment based on biblical principles • develop multiple responses to an environmental issue, examining biblical principles, short-term and long-term effects and the impact of solutions on people and animals • apply Jesus' teaching on 'loving one's neighbour' to economic and environmental sustainability	• show the link between how a community defines itself and how it treats people • identify the different communities to which students belong and assess how they exercise their rights and responsibilities within those communities • analyse the reasons for the problems that exist in the community • apply the challenge of Jesus' teaching on love, care, responsibility and service to a range of contexts (eg, school, treatment of asylum seekers, friendship, the marginalised in society, Aboriginal ministries) • evaluate the degree to which service organisations fulfil Jesus' mandate to love and serve others in the way that they approach the problem and minister to the whole person • analyse the actions taken to meet the needs of people (eg, the poor) within the community and predict the long-term consequences of such actions • present an action plan to address a current need in the community • debate Christian involvement in politics • promote understanding and action for a community project • assess the viability of Old Testament responses to injustice for current issues

Achievement standards for each band comprise concepts and content drawn from Learning Statements and Scope Statements together with evidence of student learning demonstrated through ways of knowing.

CHRISTIAN LIVING:
curriculum statements

CHRISTIAN LIVING

THEOLOGICAL NOTES

CHRISTIAN LIVING

Theological notes

KEY IDEA 1: CHRISTIANS BELIEVE THAT GOD CREATES PEOPLE TO LIVE IN RELATIONSHIP WITH HIM AND WITH EACH OTHER

> *What are human beings that you are mindful of them,*
> *mortals that you care for them?*
> *Yet you made them a little lower than God,*
> *and crowned them with glory and honour.*
> *You have given them dominion over the works of your hands;*
> *you have put all things under their feet.*
>
> *[Ps 8:4–6]*

HUMAN BEINGS ARE A SPECIAL CREATION OF GOD

The crown of God's creation

However we see the process of creation, the Bible makes it clear that human beings are a special creation of God — the climax and crown of God's creative work (Ps 8:4–6). Human beings are unique, different from all the other creatures God created. God formed a human being from the dust of the ground and breathed his breath into that person who became a living being (Gen 2:7). It is important to keep these two aspects together — that human beings are one with the earth (which they share with all creation, and to which they will return) but contain the breath (spirit) of God. This means human beings have a 'vertical' relationship with God, and a 'horizontal' relationship with the rest of creation.

While the Bible uses the terms 'body', 'soul' and 'spirit' to speak about human beings, it is important not to suggest that a human being is made up of three 'parts' (as for example in Greek philosophy). We do not 'have' a body, a soul and a spirit, but we **are** body, we **are** soul and we **are** spirit (I Thess 5:23 — cf Kolb 53–56). It is also important that we recognise that the body is part of God's 'good' creation (Gen 1:31) and should be treated as such. The body will also rise again at the end of time (Phil 3:20–21, 1 Cor 15:35–57).

Human beings are spiritual beings. One aspect of this, which will be considered further below, is the necessity for human beings to live in relationship and to express their humanity in this way. [Further consideration of human spirituality is taken up in **CW2**.]

The life of every human being is sacred, and God demands that we value every human life as he does. This affects the way we consider all stages of human life, from conception to death.

With unique gifts, abilities and characteristics

Each individual person is unique. While there may be many similarities with other persons, no two human beings are identical. God has given each person distinctive characteristics and abilities (cf Luther's explanation to the first article of the Apostles' Creed). These gifts do not establish our worth, because human worth does not depend on people's abilities, talents or achievements; nor is it diminished by illness, handicap, age, or failure of any kind. Human worth certainly has nothing to do with race, colour, gender, distinctive characteristics and abilities, or anything else that distinguishes one human being from another. [The use of gifts is further developed in **CL2**.]

With individual worth and dignity

All human beings, whether or not they realise it, are individual creations of God. This gives every individual worth and value in the eyes of God. All people are of equal worth because they are all creatures of God whom he loves equally (Acts 10:34: 'God does not show favouritism', NIV). This value rests not only on the creative work of God, but also on the fact that Jesus has died for each individual and the Holy Spirit offers faith to each person and lives within each Christian.

Despite the effects of sin, each person has value in the eyes of God. Each person therefore can see her/himself as an individual with worth and dignity because that is the way God sees him/her. On this basis, each person can develop realistic self-awareness, self-identity and self-acceptance through interaction with others. This is a relationship of interdependence rather than independence. Individuals also need to learn how to deal with pressures which come from peers, parents, schools, churches, the media, advertising, and other external influences.

HUMAN BEINGS ARE CREATED 'IN THE IMAGE OF GOD'

What is 'the image of God'?

There is considerable discussion of what it means that people are created 'in the image of God' (Gen 1:27). It does not mean that we look like God, because God is spirit. Nor is it to be seen in reason, speech, intelligence, etc, which sets us apart from the animal world.

'Image' in relation to God

Human beings are created to live in fellowship with God. They are able to know God, believe in God, love God and obey God. To reject this relationship with God is to pervert the image of God and become worshippers of self (idols) rather than God (Ps 106:19–22; 115:4–8; Rom 1:21–25).

Jesus Christ 'is the perfect example of what it means to be truly human precisely because he is also the perfectly loving and obedient Son of the Father' (Silcock 44). However, Jesus is also more than the perfect example; he himself is the image of God (Col 1:15).

'Image' in relation to creation

Part of what we understand by 'image of God' relates to the recognition that human beings were created to function as representatives of God on earth and to be accountable to him for their care of creation (cf 'stewardship' in **CL3**). This mandate was given to human beings when God gave them 'dominion' over his creation (Gen 1:28), and when he placed the first human being in the garden 'to work it and take care of it' (Gen 2:15 NIV).

This responsibility as 'vice-regents' for God means that human beings rule creation on behalf of God. They are accountable to God for the way they represent God and manage the earth. This requires responsible stewardship of creation, taking care of it, and not subjecting it to exploitation to satisfy human greed. It means careful and peaceful ruling of the animal world, again without exploitation or violence. It means responsibility for the welfare of all human beings, irrespective of race, colour, creed and social circumstances (cf **CL3**). As a recipient of God's blessing, it means to mediate God's blessing to his creation.

Are people still in 'the image of God'?

Has sin destroyed the image of God in human beings? There are very different views about this. The Lutheran confessions tend to see that the image of God was lost after the fall. They were concerned that nothing should weaken the understanding of the depth of original sin and the need for Jesus Christ as our only saviour from sin (cf **CB3**). However, this teaching can also lead to a false devaluing of the worth of human beings as the crown of God's creation.

The Bible indicates that even after the fall, human beings are made 'in the image of God' (Gen 9:6), but that this image is now deeply fractured because of sin. This is clear from the way in which human beings abuse their responsibility as carers of the earth and as representatives of God. However, human beings are still functioning as 'vice-regents' for God.

For Christians, the image of God, which has been so deeply damaged by sin, is gradually being restored by the power of the Holy Spirit as they grow in holiness (Eph 4:22–24; Col 3:9–10).

HUMAN BEINGS ARE CREATED FOR RELATIONSHIP

The story of creation (Gen 2:14b–25) shows how highly God values relationships. God created everything to be in a state of perfect harmony. Human beings, created in the image of God, shared in harmonious and mutually beneficial relationships with each other which reflected the relationships within the trinity. Human relationships flowed out of, and were blessed by, a perfect relationship with the creator. Human beings were also in perfect harmony with the animals and all of the rest of creation. Before the advent of sin to distort and destroy those relationships, nothing disturbed them.

Human beings relate to each other at various levels. Each person is related to every other member of the human family, but God has placed us in a closer relationship with some people than with others. Relationships also change, for example parent/child relationships, friendships, work relationships, etc. The closer the relationship, the greater the mutual benefits but also the responsibilities.

The effect of sin

Sin has fragmented the relationships which God had established (cf **CB3**). The account of the fall (Gen 3) clearly shows how all relationships were immediately shattered by the advent of sin: between Adam and Eve (vv 7, 12); between God and human beings (vv 8, 10); between human beings and the rest of creation (vv 15, 17, 18). Within one generation, brother kills brother (Gen 4:1–16). The natural self-centredness of sinful human beings leads to disharmony, conflict, and the breakdown of relationships at all levels. Individuals see themselves as the self-sufficient centre of the universe. Human beings see the rest of creation as provided for their benefit and exploitation (cf **CL3**). The Bible itself gives many examples of the tragedy of broken relationships (cf Gal 5:19–21).

Restored relationships

Jesus Christ came to restore broken relationships (cf **CB2**). By restoring the relationship between God and human beings (the 'new creation'), Jesus also provides healing for all broken relationships: between the individual and him/her self; between the individual and other people; between people and the animals, the environment and all of creation. For Christ's sake God offers forgiveness and restoration and makes it possible for us to try to live in harmonious and loving relationships with one another. It also allows us to offer support and care to those who are experiencing difficulties in relationships (eg marriage breakdown, family strife, unacceptable work situations, congregational tensions, abuse and harassment, bullying, etc).

Christians are asked to consider carefully how they live in their relationships, following the example of Jesus Christ (eg his acceptance of social outcasts, his care for women and little children, etc) and his teaching (eg in Matt 5–7). In the Small Catechism, Luther gives examples of the New Testament teaching of living in human relationships, based on a restored relationship in Jesus Christ (Kolb, Wengert: 365–367).

THE 'ORDERS OF CREATION'

So that people can live in society in the way God planned, God has provided various structures within society to foster relationships. These structures of family, state and church are recognised as 'orders of creation'. They are also seen as the 'stations' or 'places of responsibility' in which Christians live out their vocations (cf **CL2**). God protects these structures through his law ('political use'), creating a safe and supportive environment in which people can live and work, and keeping sin and lawlessness in check. In this way, God's law is seen as part of God's care and protection of his creation (eg commandments 4–10), showing how we are able to live in love in our various relationships, loving our neighbour as ourself (Matt 22:39).

Through the 'family', God provides for the immediate needs of people. For example, marriage is the context in which a man and a woman commit themselves to each other, to love, care for, and trust each other. It is also the context in which God protects human sexuality (sixth commandment). Human sexuality is a good gift of God to be used not just as a physical function, but as an expression of the closest human relationship (Gen 2:20b–25). The sexual relationship, and the ability to create new life, are under the blessing of God (Gen 1:28).

The 'family' (including all who may make up a 'household' or an extended family) is created to provide a safe and healthy environment in which children can grow and mature and develop their own identity. It is also the initial context for education.

Through the 'state' God provides care and protection for all of society. This involves agencies for law and order (government, police, law courts, judges, etc) to provide a safe and peaceful society in which people can carry out their various occupations, each of which contributes to the wellbeing of society (eg teachers and students, employers and employees, farmers, doctors, cleaners, etc — cf 'vocation' in **CL2**).

The Bible recognises that there can be great diversity in human relationships. For example, various social, political and economic systems are depicted in the Bible and no one model is given special emphasis. Jesus did not overthrow the political and social systems of his day (Matt 22:21; cf Rom 13:1–7; 1 Pet 2:13–17), but taught how people are to live in love within these systems.

The 'church' includes all those who are involved in ministry of the word of God, for example, pastors, teachers and other church workers. However, it also includes parents who teach their children in the faith and all others involved in service in the church in any way.

HUMAN BEINGS PLAY THEIR PART IN GOD'S CONTINUING CREATION

God continues to create every individual person (cf Luther's Small Catechism, First Article). Human beings work in partnership with God to create new life (Ps 139:13–16). They are not creators in the same way that God is creator, but God allows them to become partners with him in the creation of new life (procreation).

The responsibility of human beings as stewards of God's creation (cf **CL3**) also relates to their role in continuing creation. The teaching of vocation (cf **CL2**) which sees human beings as the 'masks' through which God operates in the world to provide and protect, is also relevant here, as individuals carry out their God-given roles in home, occupation, society and the church (the 'orders of creation').

Human beings also contribute to creation through their own creativity in the arts, culture, scholarship, etc. Again here, human creativity is to be seen on a different plane than God's creative acts, but this creativity is also part of God's good gifts to his creation and needs to be fostered and celebrated.

Some issues and questions for discussion and reflection:

- With the strong emphasis on individualism in our current context, how do we help students focus on the importance of the community?
- How can we emphasise the uniqueness of individuals without degenerating into individualism? How can we emphasise interdependence rather than independence?
- How can we address current environmental concerns theologically?
- Does a biblical understanding of the individual differ from views currently reflected in educational theory and practice?
- How can we help students develop realistic self-awareness, self-identity and self-acceptance based on the value God places on them as individuals? How can we support students learning to cope with external pressures from peers, the media, advertising?
- How does this key idea provide a Christian perspective on other aspects of the school curriculum (eg health, study of society) and policies relating to bullying, harassment, etc?
- How does the biblical understanding of the human being as one with the earth (created from and returning to dust) but made alive by the breath of God, influence our understanding of human beings?
- Since God regards all life as sacred, how does this affect our attitude to all stages of human life from conception to death?
- How might the teaching about relationships in Christian Studies relate to teaching about relationships in other curriculum areas (eg health, study of society, etc)?
- Should Christians try to change social, political and economic structures?
- What are the implications of the 'orders of creation' (particularly 'the family') for an approach to gay marriages?

References and further reading:

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Kolb, Robert, and Timothy Wengert, eds (2000) *The Book of Concord: the confessions of the evangelical Lutheran church*, Fortress Press, Minneapolis. *[Luther's Small and Large Catechism*: the first article of the creed, the ten commandments]

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KEY IDEA 2: CHRISTIANS ARE CALLED TO LOVE AND SERVE ALL PEOPLE

If anyone is in Christ there is a new creation: everything old has passed away: see, everything has become new! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation.

2 Cor 5:17–18

THE CALL TO DISCIPLESHIP — LIVING THE 'SANCTIFIED LIFE'

Christians are called to live as disciples of Jesus Christ. Because they have been made right with God (justified) by grace through faith in Jesus Christ, God declares them to be righteous and holy. He also makes them holy (sanctifies them) in Christ through the Holy Spirit. In this way they share in God's holiness (the 'fruit of the Spirit'). Sanctification is the lifelong process whereby Christ through the Holy Spirit makes Christians more and more into the people God created them to be; Christ makes them in reality what they already are through faith.

It is important to recognise that both justification and sanctification are the work of God in the life of Christians. Some people regard justification as the work of God, but sanctification as the work of the Christian. However, sanctification is the work of God the Holy Spirit in the life of the Christian. The weaknesses and failures of Jesus' disciples (their desertion, Peter's denial, etc) remind us that disciples live only by God's grace and forgiveness. The more closely disciples follow their Lord, and the more they draw their life from him (as branches in the vine, John 15:1–5), the more they will be like their Father in heaven and show love, mercy and forgiveness to others (Matt 5:48; cf Eph 4:32, Col 3:12–17).

It is also important not to separate sanctification from justification. Although Christians are justified alone by grace through faith and not by works (Rom 5:21–25), yet faith is always accompanied by the works which God commands in the Bible (Jas 2:17). As the Christian strives to live the life of love (*agape*) by the power of the Holy Spirit, the commands of God can act as a guide ('third use of the law'). Even though the Christian is justified in the eyes of God, the life of the Christian continues to be one of tension and struggle and daily repentance against the sin which still lives in him/her (the tension of 'saint and sinner').

The disciple as 'learner'

The word 'disciple' means 'learner'. Disciples of Jesus learn from him who God is and what Gods does, and they learn who they are and how they are to live their lives as God's people. Jesus as 'rabbi' (teacher) reveals to his learners the 'secrets of the kingdom of heaven', often by means of parables (Matt 13:11; 11:25–27) but also by direct teaching (eg Matt 5–7).

The disciple as 'follower'

Disciples are also 'followers'. They identify with their Lord and master and go where he goes. They trust him to lead them. They obey his directions.

It was a common practice in Jesus' day for men who wanted to learn the law of Israel to apply for admission into a rabbi's school. Jesus' disciples, however, did not choose him as their rabbi; Jesus took the initiative and did all the choosing (John 15:16). His choice was not based on their merit, past performance, or future potential. He selected most unlikely people: nobodies from the backblocks of Palestine, uneducated fishermen, political agitators, and hated tax collectors (Matt 4:18–22; 9:9; cf 1 Cor 1:26–31). In addition to the 'inner circle' there were many other disciples (Luke 6:17). In contrast with other Jewish rabbis at this time, Jesus also had female disciples, for example, Martha and Mary, who 'sat at the Lord's feet listening to what he said' (Luke 10:38–42; cf Luke 8:1–3).

The 'cost' of discipleship

To be a disciple of Jesus is not easy; it requires total commitment. When Jesus commanded 'Follow me', people had to leave everything: their professions, possessions and families (Matt 19:27–29). Disciples have to count the cost of following Jesus (Luke 14:25–33). Often the commitment Jesus demands of his followers seems harsh (Luke 9:57–62; Matt 10:37–39; John 15:18–25), but because there is no real life apart from Jesus, nothing dare come between the disciple and Jesus. Following Jesus means saying no to one's self, giving up all earthly security and being ready even to suffer for the sake of the Lord (Matt 16:24–26).

THEOLOGY OF THE CROSS — THE MOTIVATION FOR SERVICE

The motivation for service

A key question relating to service is the question of motivation. Selfless acts of service can be performed for many different reasons by Christians and non-Christians alike. Simply seeing **what** is being done does not indicate **why** it is being done.

Service may be motivated by a sense of care and responsibility for fellow human beings. While this may be based on a number of different motivations, theologically this can be seen as operating from an understanding of God as creator and all human beings as brothers and sisters of God as Father. Within the orders of creation (cf **CL1**), human beings serve each other in their various areas of responsibility in society.

Service can also be the result of legalistic or moralistic motivation. Individuals can engage in acts of 'service' because they feel that it is their 'Christian duty', or because they feel that in this way they are somehow 'earning God's approval'.

However, for the Christian, the motivation for service arises from theology of the cross as a response to the love and forgiveness of God in Christ.

Theology of the cross

Theology of the cross is a way of understanding God's revelation and the way in which God works in the church and in the Christian life. It recognises that God can only be fully known in the crucified Christ and that any theology which tries to understand God apart from the cross is a false theology, a theology of glory.

Theology of the cross puts the cross of Christ in the centre of all that Christians preach and teach (cf 1 Cor 1:18 – 2:5). It is a way of speaking about the paradox that God reveals himself through 'concealed revelation', hidden under the opposite of what one would expect. God reveals himself by hiding! The key example of this is the victory of God in Christ on the cross, where victory over sin, death and the devil is hidden under the apparent defeat of Christ as he suffers and dies.

Theology of the cross means that Christians do not constantly look for God in demonstrations of power and majesty and glory, but by faith they see God in the suffering and death of Jesus Christ. Christians do not look for God situated in the heights of heaven, but on earth amongst the weak, the suffering. As St Paul experienced in his own life, God's 'power is made perfect in weakness' (2 Cor 12:9).

This view is very different from that presented by some Christian groups which see outward signs of success (eg material wealth, health and lack of suffering) as indicators of 'living faith'. Dramatic growth in numbers and the 'victorious life of the believer' are viewed as necessary signs of the blessing of God. Such theology of glory does not recognise God in the suffering of God, or that of God's people.

Theology of the cross and service

Jesus Christ, the suffering servant of God (Phil 2:6–11), came 'not to be served, but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many' (Matt 20:28). Christians are called to identify with Jesus Christ in serving others (cf Luther's explanation to the third article in the Small Catechism). This is the cross which disciples of Christ 'take up' as they follow Christ (Matt 16:24).

Service, motivated by theology of the cross, is the appropriate response of the disciple of Jesus Christ. Christians recognise the face of Christ in those who are suffering (Matt 25:40) and they serve Christ by serving those who are in need (cf parable of the 'Good Samaritan' [Luke 10:25–37]).

VOCATION

Christians are called (*voco* = 'to call' in Latin) to faith in Jesus Christ (Eph 4:1–5). They are also called to live a life of service to their neighbours (Eph 2:8–10), serving God by serving others. This service leads ultimately to praise of God as Christians function as salt and light in the world (Matt 5:16). The call to faith (vocation as believers) and the call to serve the neighbour (vocation to serve in the world) are inseparably connected for Christians. Faith is directed towards God; good works are directed to the neighbour.

Vocation at the time of the Reformation

At the time of the Reformation, the term 'vocation' was normally used to refer only to the 'calling' of priest and monks and nuns. This was because these people were regarded as serving God directly in a special and holy calling. The reformers, however, rejected that narrow view and recognised that all God-pleasing work is service to God through service to the neighbour and is therefore to be regarded as 'vocation'. In his commentary on Genesis 20:2, Luther wrote (Luther's Works 3:321):

> when a maid milks the cows or a hired man hoes the field — provided that they are believers, namely, that they conclude that this kind of work is pleasing to God and was instituted by God — they serve God more than all the monks and nuns, who cannot be sure about their kind of life.

Vocation and 'orders of creation'

God uses all people for his purposes as part of his 'continuing creation' (cf **CL1**) as they work within the 'orders of creation' (cf **CL1**). Luther spoke about people as God's 'masks', because it is really God who is hidden ('theology of the

cross') behind the people, both Christian and non-Christian, who are carrying out God's purposes in the world (in both the left- and right-hand kingdoms). Christians see that they are doing God's work in the world because God is working through them.

In carrying out their vocation within their areas of responsibility ('stations'), Christians bear fruit in serving others by the power of the Holy Spirit. In doing so, Christians use the gifts and abilities which they have been given by God for this purpose.

Every person finds him/herself in a variety of 'stations' (areas of responsibility) in life related to the 'orders of creation'. Thus a person can be a child, a parent, a sibling, a grandparent, etc, all at the same time. The person may have a paid occupation, serve on various community groups, have various roles within the congregation, work in the canteen at a school, be a volunteer caregiver, etc. All of these 'stations' become vocations when they are used to serve others, and when that service is done in response to the love of God in Jesus Christ. A person may also find considerable changes in their places of vocation through life. The birth of a child, a new place of employment, the death of a family member, retirement, a change in place of residence, etc, all lead to significant changes in vocation.

Vocation and occupation

The term 'vocation' is often used, also in Lutheran schools, to refer to 'occupation' or 'profession' as a means by which people make money and build up status in society. Often the idea of serving others by using one's gifts and talents for the welfare of others is missing. However, the theology of vocation sees Christians serving in whatever places of responsibility God has placed them. This does not always include a place of paid employment. Unemployed people are still 'in vocation' as members of families, contributors to society, members of the congregation, etc. It is also important that students see 'being a student' as their vocation, and not simply as 'preparing them for vocation'.

The theology of vocation counters the individualistic approach to life which sees striving for one's own advantage as the goal, rather than serving the common good. Seeing vocation as serving our neighbours to the glory of God gives meaning and purpose to life, even in times of difficulty and when one has lost paid employment.

Vocation and 'bearing the cross'

Living in vocation also includes dealing with pain, frustration and failure. This may be due to problems within our relationships, in our work, in our congregation. Satan can attempt to destroy our sense of vocation. We may also be tempted by the power, success and status of our vocation so that we no longer see serving others as the purpose of vocation. We may also feel failure and worthlessness because we fall into the trap of measuring ourselves against the performance of others.

'Carrying our cross' in vocation (Matt 16:24; 1 Pet 2:21) helps us to deal with failure, frustration, conflict and even tragedy in our work. While Christians do not glorify in suffering nor in any way justify suffering or abuse, seeing suffering in the context of vocation helps them to turn to God in prayer and to grow in hope and the certainty of faith.

Vocation and witness

Vocation is also the arena in which Christians witness to those around them through their words and actions. In the daily interactions in their places of responsibility, Christians are able to proclaim the gospel and witness to their faith in relationships which they have established and in which they are accepted and respected. Although the primary purpose of vocation is as part of the order of creation, it also provides the context for witness and showing the 'fruit of the Spirit' (Gal 5:22–26).

THE CHURCH AND CHRISTIAN SERVICE

Christian service (*diakonia*) is one of the functions of the church. It grows out of the worship life of the people of God (*leitourgia*), where God speaks and acts in love and mercy to his people and God's people respond in praise. Service is part of the witness (*martyria*) of God's people to the love of God and is a way of showing faith in action. The 'diaconic' work of the church is tangible evidence of its servant role in the world.

[**Note** the appointment of 'deacons' in Acts 6:1–6. The matter of the 'diaconate' as an 'order of

ministry' is also under discussion in the LCA. This relates to the so-called 'three-fold order' of bishop, priest and deacon, which is the structure of ordained ministry in the Anglican, Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches.]

Some issues and questions for discussion and reflection:

- What kinds of service awards and other awards are appropriate in Lutheran schools? How should the recipients be identified?
- In the middle of great human tragedy and suffering, where is God?
- Is 'striving for excellence' in Lutheran schools consistent with theology of the cross?

- What rationale does the Lutheran school use to support programs of community service by students in the general community?
- 'Service is not a means to an end, but a way of life.'
- Comment on the statement: 'Christians aren't perfect, just forgiven'.
- Does the use of 'vocation' and 'vocational' in Lutheran schools adequately reflect the theology of vocation?
- Do Lutheran schools prepare students for 'vocation' or 'occupation', or both?
- How can teachers in Lutheran schools incorporate the theology of 'vocation' into industrial processes such as enterprise bargaining?
- Are 'gifted and talented' programs in Lutheran schools consistent with theology of the cross and theology of vocation?
- Does it help teachers to see their ministry of teaching as an arena in which they are called to 'bear the cross'?
- Does the doctrine of vocation help us to address the role conflict in which we operate?

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KEY IDEA 3: CHRISTIANS HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY IN AND FOR THE WORLD

Since the God to whom the Christian belongs is the same God to whom all the earth, all domestic, political, and economic life belongs, the Christian has no reason to withdraw from the world of the world — either out of timidity or out of aloofness — but every reason to make the world's work his own, as a worker together with God. Thus as the Christian awaits the new age he is already busy with its kind of life, here and now.

(Schnabel: Lutheran Education 98 (1963), 448)

HUMAN BEINGS AS GOD'S STEWARDS IN THE WORLD

Human beings are created 'in the image of God' (Gen 1:27). Part of what is understood by this is that human beings function as God's representatives in the world and are accountable to God for the care and protection of all of God's creation, human beings, the animals and the natural and humanly constructed environments (cf **CL1**).

Care and protection of the world

Although human beings as God's stewards were given responsibility to 'rule over', 'subdue', and 'have dominion over' God's creation (Gen 1:28), they were also commanded to 'work and take care of' and 'till and keep' it (Gen 2:15). This means that they cannot simply use or abuse God's creation for their own benefit, but are to care for and protect what God has entrusted to them (cf **CL1**).

Human beings are also invited by God to share in the joy of creation (eg Ps 104). Not only are they urged to enjoy creation, but also to join in praising God with and on behalf of creation (eg Pss 19:1–6; 148).

The impact of human sinfulness

Sin has destroyed the original harmony and perfection of God's world (cf **CL1**). This has impacted on all relationships within creation (Gen 3:14–19). Creation now waits to 'be set free from its bondage' under which it 'has been groaning' (Rom 8:18–23). Human beings continue to add to the suffering of creation through their sinful actions, leading to pollution of the environment, land degradation, the loss of endangered species, and the increasing ecological crisis.

People also add to the suffering of others through their actions. The Bible speaks out against those who exploit others, mistreat others, use others for their own purposes, and show lack of care and concern for others in their suffering and difficulties (eg Isa 3:14–15; Jer 5:26–28; Amos 8:1–7). Jesus' teaching about the last judgment shows how important he regarded the care and compassion shown to the hungry, the thirsty, the stranger, the naked, the sick and the prisoner: 'just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me' (Matt 25:40). 'Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful' (Luke 6:36).

People may also cause suffering for themselves through their own actions (eg substance abuse, sexual promiscuity, unwillingness to forgive, etc). While Jesus was quick to point out the dangerous fallacy of trying to link specific cases of suffering to particular causes (John 9:1–3), people do contribute to their own suffering through actions which ignore the boundaries God has provided for human protection in his law. The ten commandments, for example, indicate situations which people may need to address in their own lives to deal with circumstances of their own suffering.

The Old Testament teaching on 'wisdom' and 'foolishness' is also helpful here (cf Proverbs). God, who created order out of chaos to bring the world into being, still preserves and sustains that creation. It is God who has provided the framework in which creation operates, and God's design directs and controls that creation. Wisdom grows from recognising the patterns God has incorporated into his creation and from living in harmony with God's will for creation. Knowledge of God, and the knowledge which God gives also through the gift of reason, provide the context in which wisdom develops: 'the Lord gives wisdom; and from his mouth come knowledge and understanding' (Prov 2:6). Only the 'fool' does not recognise God and the boundaries which he has set (Ps 14:1; 53:1).

THEOLOGY OF THE CROSS AND CHRISTIAN RESPONSIBILITY

Theology of the cross provides the motivation for a Christian response to situations and circumstances in the world (cf **CL2**). In becoming a human being, Jesus Christ identified with people in their weakness and suffering. He still does so. While the suffering of Jesus Christ on the cross for the sins of the world was 'once for all' (Heb 10:10,14), nevertheless Jesus continues to suffer with his suffering people. Hymn 761 (Lutheran Hymnal with Supplement) expresses this in verse 4:

> In every insult, rift, and war,
> where colour, scorn, or wealth divide,
> he [Christ] suffers still, yet loves the more,
> and lives, though ever crucified.

Christ asks Christians to join with him in identifying with those who are suffering and defenceless. He also empowers them through the Holy Spirit. Christians who have experienced forgiveness and reconciliation through the cross of Christ will also seek to take that forgiveness and reconciliation into the world also in the day-to-day circumstances of life, exploring the relationship of justification and justice.

THE TWO HANDS OF GOD — JUSTICE AND MERCY

Lutheran theology speaks about God operating in the world using 'two hands' in order to deal with the problem of sin and evil. One 'hand' (the 'left hand') sees God working with the law in the realm of the state in order to maintain peace and good order and keep sin and evil in check. This is the realm of justice, through which God shows his love and care for the world. The other 'hand' (the 'right hand') sees God operating through the church in the world with the gospel of forgiveness. This is the realm of mercy. God's 'left hand work' is sometimes seen as his 'alien work', because God's nature is to forgive, his 'proper work' (his 'right hand work').

Although Christians are concerned with the work of God's 'right hand' in spreading the good news of forgiveness in Jesus Christ, Christians are also involved in God's 'left hand' work. They are involved in the 'left hand kingdom' as a catalyst for social justice, demonstrating the desire to help create 'shalom', peace, and wholeness, and using the law ('political use') to protect and preserve God's creation and help it to function in the way God wants it to. This is part of their 'vocation' as Christians (cf **CL2**).

Peace and justice

Establishing and maintaining peace and justice in the world is the concern of all people, not only Christians. However, Christians have a particular responsibility and motivation for this which flows from the gospel, which proclaims Jesus Christ as the one who has brought peace into the broken world. He is the 'Prince of Peace' (Isa 9:6) through whom we are reconciled to God and to one another. Through his Holy Spirit, Christians are empowered to work for peace and reconciliation with all people. The gospel is the power that can change human nature, so that peace, reconciliation and justice become realities.

Peace ('shalom') does not simply mean the absence of war (although it includes that). It relates to the total wellbeing and 'wholeness' of every person. Justice includes upholding the rights of every individual person. It recognises the fundamental dignity of all human beings as those who have been created and redeemed by God.

Christian social welfare

The work of Christians in social welfare, for example, grows out of the 'right hand' work of God in the church, but is developed in partnership with governments and other charitable organisations. In this way God operates in the world through both Christians and non-Christians as they function as 'God's hands', acting justly and compassionately for the good of all.

Through the ministry of caring, Christians can make incarnate God's message of love in Christ. Care is offered graciously and unconditionally because the neighbour is in need of care and support, in the same way that the gospel is proclaimed 'without strings attached'.

A prophetic role

Christians need to exercise a prophetic role in society, pointing out specific sins of a society and nation, opposing social trends or proposed legislation, and calling society to repentance.

> Speak out for those who cannot speak,
> for the rights of all the destitute.
> Speak out, judge righteously,
> defend the rights of the poor and needy.   (Prov 31:8–9)

Christians need to become aware of sin as a social and systemic evil as well as a personal reality. Injustice becomes entrenched in structures and systems which oppress people and violate creation rather than serve them. While Christians are to respect and obey proper authority, there may be cases where those in power enact laws which support or practise obvious injustice. In such cases, Christians are called on to 'obey God rather than human beings' (Acts 4:19).

Some issues and questions for discussion and reflection:

- In what ways does the Lutheran school promote education for social consciousness?
- How do Lutheran schools develop an awareness of and sensitivity to suffering in the world and help students to identify with the weak, the vulnerable, and the suffering?
- Should any student be excluded from a Lutheran school because they cannot afford the fees?
- How can a school administrator help to deal with a teacher who is struggling to reach an acceptable level of competence? How can a teacher deal with a struggling student?
- How can students be helped to deal with suffering which relates to circumstances under their own control (eg substance abuse)?
- In what way is the concept of God's 'two hands' useful in helping members of the school community, whether they are Christians or not, understand their responsibility for promoting and working for social justice in the world?
- How do we see the relationship between 'justification' and 'justice'?
- What role does the Lutheran school have in the social welfare ministry of the church?
- In what ways can Lutheran schools exercise a prophetic role in the field of education generally?

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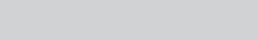
CHRISTIANITY IN THE WORLD

LEARNING STATEMENTS:

CONTENT KNOWLEDGE AND WAYS OF KNOWING

CHRISTIANITY IN THE WORLD

Key Idea 1: Religious beliefs and ideas shape people's thinking and actions

	Beginning	Band A	Band B	Band C	Band D	Band E
learning statement	**CW 1.1** Children identify and acknowledge that people think and live differently	**CW 2.1** Students identify and find out about religious groups in their local community	**CW 3.1** Students research and describe the relationship between Christianity and Judaism	**CW 4.1** Students compare ideas and beliefs about God and the nature of human beings in monotheistic religions	**CW 5.1** Students identify philosophical approaches and religious beliefs and explain how they influence individuals and societies	**CW 6.1** Students review and respond to the dialogue between Christianity and a range of religious and philosophical worldviews
scope statements	People by the very nature of their individuality perceive reality in their unique way and communicate their beliefs and idea of the world through language, story, symbol and ritual.	People are members of communities or groups who share common interests and beliefs and stories. Society has many groups including religious groups to which students may belong. Groups have distinctive characteristics made evident in the membership, purpose, activities, physical expression, rituals, use of language, stories.	Christianity has a history in Judaism. A study of Judaism as expressed in the Old and New Testaments gives insight into the concepts, symbols and practices and stories at the core of Christianity. Christianity interprets the Old and New Testaments in relation to Jesus and attaches a different meaning to the events and concepts it shares with Judaism.	Christianity, Judaism and Islam each have beliefs about the nature of God, the origin of life and the role and purpose people have in the world. These beliefs are influenced by historical and cultural contexts. Philosophy of religion provides significant insights into questions about life and the world. Together they allow people to describe, interpret and evaluate their personal belief system and identity.	People's shared humanity leads them to ask the same big questions about the origin, meaning and purpose of life. Religions and philosophies provide people with knowledge, wisdom, direction and guidance in people's search for happiness and fulfilment. The changing context of life challenges existing views of truth and produces different ways of understanding and interpreting the meaning of life.	Knowledge, critical reflection and respect empower people from different worldviews to dialogue and learn from each other in their search for greater understanding of life and God. Christianity presents the philosophy that life apart from God lacks vision and is ultimately lost. Life's big questions are seen through the lens of God revealing himself in all of life, and specifically in Jesus.
students know… (knowledge and elaborations)	God made people as unique individuals with different ways of thinking People think, and that makes them different from each other and the rest of God's creation People will have different views • people think differently about God • people will do and say things differently because of how they think • people have different responses to the same situation Respect for other people with different ideas and responses is important for living together	Religious groups in local community • different Christian groups (eg, Anglicans, Baptists, Lutherans) can be identified by their buildings, service activities, presence in the community • identifiable features of familiar religious groups • the relationship between core beliefs and practices • identity of school as a Christian community, ie, religious group Christians' core beliefs are made evident in Christian practices, eg, • the focus of the Christian celebration of Christmas and Easter is the belief in Jesus as Saviour • Christians read and live according to the words in the Bible because they believe it is God's revelation • Christians believe God has given them his Holy Spirit to guide their lives • Christians respond to God in worship, prayer, sharing the gospel with others Where appropriate, begin to respectfully explore the practices and beliefs of other religious traditions, in particular those represented in your class and community.	Religion • dimensions of religion – beliefs, origins/beginnings, sacred text and stories, symbols, rituals, worship, leaders, structures • Christianity and Judaism are two religions with distinctive features Judaism: • features – synagogues, rabbi, atonement, prophets • key concepts – chosen, land, promise, Messiah, sacrifice • key events – creation call of Abraham, rescue from Egypt, years in the desert, King David, building of the temple • key practices in the Old Testament – circumcision, sacrifices • key celebrations in the Old Testament – Passover, Sabbath, Purim • Judaism in the New Testament and today – temple, Passover, Pharisees, laws, Jewish leaders • Judaism as practised in Australia today Christianity • features – sacraments, buildings, leaders • key concepts – chosen, children of God, promise, salvation, eternal life, grace • key events– creation, call of Abraham, rescue from Egypt, birth of Jesus, resurrection, Pentecost • key practices and festivals in the Old Testament and New Testament • Christianity as practised in Australia today	The nature of religion evident in Jewish, Islamic, Christian faiths Beliefs about God and people's relationship with God in the Abrahamic (monotheistic) religions • profile of Abraham, the father of Judaism, Christianity and Islam • significance of Jerusalem to all three faiths • beliefs and practices in worship of God Introduction to philosophy of religion • people of all races and times try to answer problematic questions about life, people and the world • how we think about things is grounded in our beliefs • philosophical questions about the existence of God and the origins of the universe • applying logic and reason to religious truth-claims Ways Christianity, Judaism and Islam respond to philosophical questions about the existence of God and the origins of the universe • sacred texts, stories, beliefs • wisdom literature (eg, Proverbs, writings of Mohammed) • writers and leaders (eg, Old Testament prophets, Jesus, Mohammed) Significance of beliefs about God for Australian young people	Religion • eastern mainline religions – Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, Islam, and Sikhism • interplay of culture and religion (eg, the face of Buddhism and Islam in different cultural settings) Religion in Australia • impact of convict beginnings on perception and practice of religion • Christian denominations • growth of Buddhism and Islam • the way different religions have shaped society in Australia • Indigenous spirituality Philosophy • philosophy of religion and its personal meaning • Christianity and philosophy (eg, Saint Augustine, medieval philosophy) • difference between religion and philosophy • terminology (eg, truth, knowledge, wisdom, beauty, goodness) • eastern philosophy (eg, Confucianism) • views of and arguments surrounding the existence of God found in philosophy • concept and nature of truth • philosophical thinking that shapes society (eg, Darwinism) Introduction to early Greek philosophers who had an impact on the development of Christianity (eg, Socrates, Plato, Aristotle)	Religious and philosophical responses to questions about • the origin and nature of human beings • death/afterlife • the problem of evil • rationality/irrationality • free will versus determinism • freedom Significant philosophical movements and philosophers of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries (eg, Enlightenment, existentialism, postmodernism, Kant, Marx, Nietzsche) Different approaches/responses to religious and philosophical thought • literary • phenomenological • sociological, feminist • political, historical, contemporary • revelation of truth Religious relationships • examples of dialogue between Christianity and other religious and philosophical perspectives (eg, God and science, faith and reason) • conflict within religions and between religions • the impact of extremism on religion Christian beliefs about God in the context of other philosophical and religious thought such as • different arguments for the existence of God • historical ideas of who/what God is (eg, animist, pantheist, Greek, Roman, Egyptian) • contemporary ideas of who/what God is (eg, scientific – Paul Davies, Stephen Hawking, Dawkins)

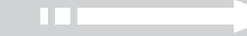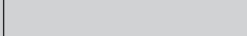| students can… (ways of knowing)					
• participate in discussions and generate questions about ways God has made people unique • listen to and acknowledge other children's ideas in their play • role play different backgrounds and family groupings • participate as a group member to examine basic brain structure (eg, right brain, left brain, perception) and where people's thoughts come from • discuss how people view (perceive) things differently • organise and perform a puppet show to model respect (eg, respecting the roles each child chooses to take, how the characters respond to each other) • experience different roles in their play (eg, leader, follower, director, negotiator) • listen to and recall different cultural stories (eg, poster, video, story, Aboriginal visitor) • share and describe special celebrations in their home • share their ideas of God and listen to those of others	• gather and explain significant symbols and images of Christianity • using art, music, dance, drama, songs, food explore religious and cultural festivals • locate and map various religious groups in the community • draw the identifying features of religious groups in the community • research local cultural and religious festivals • identify the distinguishing factors between religious groups and other groups in their community • listen to and retell stories of the different ways Christian people celebrate festivals (Christmas, Easter) • organise and participate in a celebration of an event on the Christian church calendar • describe special celebrations in their family/religious community • create a portfolio to show how the birth of a child is celebrated in families and religious groups • describe ways that people share the message of God's love with others • examine and recount Bible stories of people's response to God • explain what being a Christian means to people today and how this affects the way they live their life	• research the beliefs and practices of Judaism and Christianity recorded in the Old and New Testaments • retell the stories and contribution of key people in Judaism and Christianity • describe the different ways Christians and Jews celebrate important events in their history • chart the similarities and differences between Christianity and Judaism • illustrate the relationship between Christianity and Judaism • create a glossary of terms, ideas, events, places common to Judaism and Christianity, explaining their various meanings and importance • discuss the different view of Jesus held by Christians and Jews • analyse news items related to Judaism and Christianity • make a collection of symbols, images, stories to show the distinctive features of Christianity and Judaism • retell a biblical event from the perspective of either a Jew or Christian • gather significant symbols and images and explain what they tell about the beliefs of Christianity and Judaism • examine the language used by Judaism and Christianity to describe features of the religions • identify features of Judaism and Christianity as religions • examine the different ways Christianity and Judaism are practised • consider stereotypical portrayals of religious groups and compare with information gathered about these religious groups	• research and investigate the key features of Islam • research the values and beliefs of monotheistic religious traditions and identify some of the similarities and differences between them • identify some of the major differences and similarities in rites of passage of monotheistic religious traditions (eg, bar mitzvah, confirmation) • compare how religious practices impact on cultural, political and environmental practices within a country (eg, festivals, dress, prayer times in Muslim countries) • analyse the significance of life events and their rituals in various cultural and religious contexts (eg, birth, marriage, death) • investigate various texts of monotheistic religious traditions on the ways people should live and analyse the similarities and differences between them (eg, ten commandments, five pillars) • observe and summarise how religious groups live as a minority within a society and analyse the impact on their practices (eg, Muslims living in Christian countries, Christians living in Muslim countries)	• compare and contrast the beliefs and distinguishing characteristics of Eastern religions with Christianity • examine the specific claims to truth made by Eastern religions and how these religions express their spirituality in society • assess the differences and similarities of Eastern religions' practices in Australia and compare that to the practices in their country of origin • explore the meaning of truth through the study of various philosophers and their views of thought and the resulting impact on society (eg, Socrates, Plato, Aristotle) • distinguish between the two worldviews of philosophy – theism and atheism – and consider the impact of these on society • determine various sources of truth in society and inquire into their validity (eg, claims to truth, sceptics, doubt, reason) • report on eastern religious practices that have been incorporated into contemporary Australian society • analyse the importance of spirituality to Indigenous people and how it provides guidance for living and their relationship to the environment	• evaluate how a person's thinking and actions would be different if they were a scientific materialist in contrast to a creation scientist, or Hindu in contrast to a Christian, or a social worker in contrast to a Christian missionary on a selected issue • develop a coherent argument for a particular religious or philosophical position concerning the problem of evil • propose a Christian response to various religious and philosophical approaches to death and the afterlife (eg, epicurean, stoic, natural-process, necessity, karma) • document and display developments in Christianity's relationship with other religious faiths • analyse the similarities and differences a variety of approaches to religious and philosophical thought bring to a particular issue and draw conclusions on which makes for the most powerful argument • report on Christians' changing views on how best to organise society (eg, feudalism, slavery, theocracy, monarchy, democracy) • report on the current relationship and dialogue between Christianity and another religious perspective and propose ways in which they could seek greater understanding • research a current religious tension, analyse its causes and develop and recommend a way forward for the future

Achievement standards for each band comprise concepts and content drawn from Learning Statements and Scope Statements together with evidence of student learning demonstrated through ways of knowing.

CHRISTIANITY IN THE WORLD: curriculum statements

CHRISTIANITY IN THE WORLD

Key Idea 2: People express their spirituality in various contexts within and beyond Christianity

	Beginning	Band A	Band B	Band C	Band D	Band E
learning statement	**CW 1.2** Children begin to explore spirituality by describing experiences of awe and wonder	**CW 2.2** Students investigate spirituality by describing how Christians experience the presence of God in the world	**CW 3.2** Students explore and reflect on expressions of Christian spirituality as described in the New Testament and experienced in the school community	**CW 4.2** Students examine people's need for spirituality and identify how Australians seek to fulfil it	**CW 5.2** Students research secular and religious spirituality and evaluate their impact on societies past and present	**CW 6.2** Students analyse and reflect on the relevance of spirituality in people's quest for meaning
scope statements	The human imagination finds its expression in the creative arts, music, play. It is a means for people to put into concrete form their sense of awe and wonder of life. Christians believe the nature and presence of God in the world remains a mystery. It is often seen and experienced in his created world and through the imagination.	Young people express their spirituality in terms of how they see themselves, their relationships with others and the world around them, and their perceptions of a Supreme Being. Lutherans believe students will draw their understanding of God from their families, their culture, the faith community to which they belong as well as their sense of self.	Christian spirituality is firmly grounded in the belief that God has revealed himself to people in the person of Jesus. Christian spirituality is expressed in the practical outworking of a life of faith. It is nurtured by God through his word, sacraments and Spirit.	Spirituality relates to people's need for identity and wholeness. It crosses the boundaries of religion as people seek to understand what it means to be human and how to live. Christians believe communities, the environment, cultural activities, beliefs, faith in God give people meaning and a sense of connectedness to a world beyond them.	Spirituality is influenced by a person's beliefs and image of God. Christian spirituality is a response to God expressed in the choices and lifestyle of the Christian. It is communal and individual. For example, a spirituality based on materialism will have a different focus and outcome to one based on a belief in God. In some religions spirituality is a way to salvation.	Cultural context plays a significant role in the expression of spirituality. The human quest for meaning adapts to changing needs and circumstances. The Christian church has a rich legacy of spirituality drawn from both scripture and people who have written about their journey to understand and live the mystery of God in the world for new generations of inquirers.
students know... (knowledge and elaborations)	People can see evidence of God in the natural world, by exploring its • complexity • relationships • beauty People can express emotions through means other than words – music, art, drama, dance, touch, facial expressions, body language People do not always have to see something to know that it is present • people or things that are far away, but still there • emotions are real but can be hard to see • people have ideas and thoughts in their heads that are unseen and hard to put into words • wind, air, sound, temperature, taste	God as creator gives people life All of creation reflects God's glory Concepts of faith, trust, acceptance, belonging, safety are the building blocks to developing a concept of God and a sense of the other • people feel acceptance and belonging when they are safe and loved • faith is believing in something and trusting in something • people can experience God through others Symbols, metaphors and stories that describe the experience of God Ways Christians express their faith and trust in God • enjoyment of nature, music, art • the wonder of new life, the night sky, the imagination • sense of the mysterious • people express their understandings about God through means other than words (eg, music, art, drama, dance) The importance of listening in developing a relationship with God (eg, prayer, psalms, being quiet and still) The Lutheran school as a place where God is present	The ways the early Christians expressed their spirituality Christians use a number of ways to help them know God and grow closer to God • silence, retreats • meditating on God 's word • personal prayer times • worship • song, dance, art • using their gifts (gifts of the Holy Spirit) • the sacraments Christian spirituality as expressed and experienced in the school People ask questions and wonder about puzzling aspects of life and experiences such as • faith • the experience of the Holy Spirit • unexplained (personal) experiences • the mysterious, miracles • angels, heaven and hell Some aspects of life raise questions that are difficult to answer	Australian expressions of spirituality • Indigenous spirituality (eg, the Dreaming, relationship with the land) • commemoration of historical events (eg, Anzac Day, Australia Day) • cultural rituals and artefacts (eg, going to the football, sporting clubs) • religious expression (eg, meditation, music) • Christian spirituality (eg, in daily life, in relationships, in worship) People of all ages and places search for meaning • people ask spiritual questions (eg, why am I here? what is the purpose of life? • people make meaning through their relationships with others and belonging (eg, where do I fit with my family, friends?) • people express their spirituality and search for meaning in different ways Ways Christians address spiritual questions and make meaning of their lives and the world • Australia • Indigenous communities • urban and rural settings	Influence of spirituality on society • nature of spirituality • different expressions of spirituality in society, including secular principles for living (consumerism, humanism) • expressions of spirituality in movements with no beliefs in God (eg, New Age, atheism, naturalism) • spirituality of sects and cults with some beliefs about God (eg, Mormonism, Jehovah's Witnesses, Mind Sciences) • the contribution of different movements, cultures and lifestyles to Australian spirituality • how people fulfil the search for meaning with spirituality • Christian spirituality and its contribution to spirituality in society • formation of a personal identity through expression of spirituality and the influence of society on their spirituality • monastic and contemplative orders	Christian spirituality • open to the influence of the Holy Spirit • growing in Christ • growing and developing, not static • personal devotional life, both contemplative and active • the development of identity and the self leads to service of others, not merely personal but global/communal Quest for meaning • the relationship between the inner life and the outer life of the individual • the modern media's portrayal of what gives life meaning (eg, adverts, magazines, soap operas, reality TV, music, lifestyle shows) • people's response to meaning and meaninglessness in Australian society • examples of the breadth and depth of spiritual experience and expression in both religious and non-religious contexts • historical, literary, artistic, musical and contemporary examples of people's quest for meaning and understanding of the world and their place in it

students can... (ways of knowing)					
• investigate how the arts assist people to express feelings and ideas that are complex, hard to talk about • participate in a variety of sensory activities to experience the beauty and wonder of God in creation • describe the unique, complex qualities and beauty of the natural world • explore some of the things that they know are there but can't be seen (eg, people, places, air, feelings like love, fear, happiness) • discuss the relationship between a piece of music they have heard and their feelings • create a collection of objects, pictures, colours special to them • construct imaginative and fantastical structures with a medium of their choice • listen and respond to stories about how others express their sense of awe and wonder (eg, psalms, poems, visual documentaries) • talk about believing in something – how that makes it important and precious and sometimes even private, but sometimes you just want to share it with others • experience moments of stillness • describe how their senses help them experience the world	• make a collage of symbols, images, words to illustrate the goodness of God in creation • listen to stories about God as mystery • explore an emotion such as joy through a range of mediums • find out how people communicate with God • represent their ideas about what God/ heaven might look like • share thoughts about what they feel and know about God • explore biblical verses that describe God • share reasons why some things are important to them • use quiet time to reflect on a story or other experience • explore the natural world and its beauty • talk about images of God – their own and those of others • look at how others have depicted their expressions of God through art, music, dance, drama, media • choose from a range of stimuli images that best represent their understanding of God • discuss the sense of mystery about God expressed in Christian songs and Bible stories • make a list of reasons why people trust God, referring to biblical material and from interviews of Christians they know • examine how the school community reflects God (eg, acceptance, belonging) • represent their ideas about what God might look like • experience times of quiet and stillness	• ask, collate and sort questions relating to the topics covered and examine and respond to various answers and perspectives • share personal understandings and feelings related to the topics explored, using various media (eg, visual, musical, written) • gather information from various sources about faith – including the Bible, stories, picture books, poetry, art work, newspapers and visual media – to create a summary of information, noting stereotypes and symbolic language • compare biblical references of heaven with the way it is portrayed in society (eg, look at images of heaven on television and in movies) • explore the purpose and role of the seen and unseen and reflect on what this reveals to them about God • research and collate evidence that supports the existence of the topic covered in today's society and reflect on what this reveals about God (eg, miracles still occur today and are experienced by people) • research how Christians nurture their faith • develop a set of symbols and/or practices that the whole class can use in a reflective way • compose songs, poems to celebrate the love and goodness of God experienced by people in the biblical stories • create a picture book of how monks and nuns live(d) in relationship with God • recount how people they have interviewed relate to God • investigate Christian meditation • experience times of stillness and reflection	• use a variety of sources to explore people's need for meaning in the world (eg, biographies, interviews, surveys) • collate and discuss questions of life asked by people in the community (eg, why am I here?) • compare various rituals and symbols of cultural and religious events and analyse their significance to the individual (eg, football culture, Indigenous culture) • explore contemporary ways individuals attempt to make meaning and compare it with the Christian tradition (eg, compare Sunday practices) • examine the role of community in fulfilling an individual's need to belong (eg, sporting groups, social groups) • identify and evaluate ways people attempt to answer some of life's mysteries • research various Christian meditation methods and examine the significance for individuals' spiritual meaning (eg, prayer, music) • experience stillness and meditative methods • analyse people's understanding of happiness and how it relates to identity and wholeness	• record the expression of different forms of spirituality in Australia (eg, religious, secular, Indigenous) and the way this is expressed in society • examine how different movements and sects express their spirituality and process this information to convey content and purpose • critically reflect on contributions of various belief systems to the culture and lifestyle of the Australian community (eg, New Age, sects, cults) • explain how societal issues and individual circumstances influence the personal development of a spiritual self (eg, family upbringing, religious beliefs, financial position) • assess the impact of Christianity on Australian spirituality recording its contribution • contrast Christian and humanist spirituality • participate in and reflect on experiences of stillness and Christian meditation • analyse and compare views of spirituality as reflected in music, art and literature	• investigate and critique the attraction to Buddhist and New Age spirituality in early twenty-first century western societies • appraise how the values of a materialist, consumerist society can erode people's sense of meaning and spirituality • analyse the life and writings of a Christian saint or leader to explore how Christian spirituality is both contemplative and active • research stories of people who have changed direction in life to examine the relationship between what a person values and how s/he chooses to live • create a narrative that illustrates a modern person's search for meaning. • compare and contrast a cultural portrayal of what gives life meaning with a religious outlook • create a series of stillness exercises and meditations for the school community, home or self

Achievement standards for each band comprise concepts and content drawn from Learning Statements and Scope Statements together with evidence of student learning demonstrated through ways of knowing.

CHRISTIANITY IN THE WORLD

Key Idea 3: People make decisions using a range of religious perspectives and ethical frameworks

	Beginning	Band A	Band B	Band C	Band D	Band E
learning statement	**CW 1.3** Children make connections between their actions and consequences for themselves and others	**CW 2.3** Students explore and outline ways Christians make decisions about how to live	**CW 3.3** Students describe the connections between what Christians believe and the decisions they make	**CW 4.3** Students apply decision-making processes to ethical issues and explain how and why people hold different ethical positions	**CW 5.3** Students analyse and compare perspectives of different ethical and religious frameworks on contemporary ethical issues	**CW 6.3** Students evaluate and apply theoretical ethical frameworks to complex competing claims of real-life situations
scope statements	Christians believe God created people with the freedom to choose how they will live. This involves thinking about, choosing and deciding on the most positive course of action. There are wrong and right choices which have consequences for individual people and the communities in which they live. This applies to all of areas of life.	Ethical decisions are made within the context of community. The choices individuals make affect their relationships. Christians are guided by biblical principles for living using Jesus' life as a demonstration of how to apply those principles to relationships and community life. Christians can ask for God's forgiveness when they make wrong choices and for strength to do what is right and good.	Beliefs about the nature of God, people and the environment influence the decisions and choices Christians make regarding their treatment of others and the world in which they live. People can behave similarly for different reasons. Christian values embrace God's view of life and how it is lived. This is not limited to what is legal or acceptable to society.	Ethical decisions are complex and difficult. Wise decisions distinguish between a right and wrong course of action to resolve a problem. Knowledge of cause and effect and analysis of different approaches, beliefs about life and right and wrong influence decision-making. Christians depend on God and his word to decide on a course of action.	A range of ethical frameworks have developed over time, reflecting what different people believe about what makes a good life and what it means to be human. Each framework provides a process of reasoning for decision-making which can assist people to understand new ethical problems arising from a changing world context. A Christian worldview embraces biblical perspectives on how one lives an ethical life.	An ethical life applies a consistent set of principles to all areas of personal and communal life. Individual rights, freedom of choice and responsibility to others must be held in balance. New revelations can bring into question existing solutions to ethical issues. Personal action is subject to continual review and evaluation. Firm beliefs and commitment to thoughtful action are important. Christians' faith in God provides direction in their decision-making.
students know… (knowledge and elaborations)	God creates people with the ability to make choices Decisions have positive or negative results There are always different ways to solve a problem People make choices in a variety of situations Different choices have different consequences Consequences can affect self and others and the environment It is important for people to be responsible for their actions because they can impact on others	Responsible decision-making • God gives humans the freedom to choose • people make different choices and there is not always one right decision • people who follow Jesus refer to the Bible to help them make a choice • what Christians believe is important in making decisions • Christians pray for guidance, strength and wisdom when making decisions and trust God to help them • making responsible decisions helps to foster positive relationships with others • people can ask themselves questions to make a better choice Consequences of choices • there are positive and negative consequences for decisions people make • people who follow Jesus know they can say sorry for their wrong choices and know God will forgive them	Beliefs and decision-making • people have different beliefs and this impacts on their decisions (eg, human rights, environmental beliefs, religious beliefs) • people believe different things for various reasons (eg impact of family, peers, religion, experience) • people make decisions based on fact, experience and what they believe • difference between fact and opinion Biblical perspectives affecting decision-making • creation is good and for the wellbeing of all people • all people are created in the image of God • the ten commandments • Luke 12:31, Matt 6:25–34; 7:7,8 • the law of love • God's love and forgiveness for all people • actions arising from selfishness and greed bring unhealthy outcomes such as conflict, damage to the environment, breakdown of community life	Christian frameworks for decision-making (eg, use of the Bible, law of love) Decision-making processes • gathering information about a problem • identifying and analysing issues surrounding an ethical situation • brainstorming ways of approaching a difficult decision • researching solutions • exploring and anticipating implications of approaches to resolving a problem • deciding on and justifying a course of action • analysis and evaluation of solutions Moral and ethical Issues • people attempt to answer difficult questions based on their beliefs, information and feelings • people face moral issues (eg, peer pressure, adolescent tensions) • ethical dilemmas (eg, bioethics, sexual relations) • the consequences of decision-making Different perspectives People use a range of frameworks to attempt to answer difficult questions • cultural frameworks (eg, humanism, greatest good, Indigenous) • personal frameworks (eg, based on individual's personal experience)	Ethical frameworks • historical development of ethical frameworks (eg, utilitarianism, individualism, natural law, situation ethics) • teachings on right and wrong behaviour (eg, moral, immoral, amoral) • definitions of happiness and dimensions of human experience (intellectual, aesthetic, moral, spiritual, physical, emotional, social) and application to decision-making Christian perspectives • connecting God's will and the freedom of choice given to humans • applying Christian code of conduct to everyday decision-making situations Other religious perspectives • Buddhist • Hindu • Moslem • Jewish Exploration of contemporary ethical issues • social matters related to the beginning and end of life • political • economic • environmental • scientific (eg, bioethics)	Nature of ethics • the difference between ethics and morality • the complexity of ethical decision-making • the steps of ethical decision-making • conflict between private and public ethics (eg, does legal equal ethical?) • equally valid yet competing claims • ethical high ground versus practical reality (eg, genetically modified food may pose a long-term health risk yet may also feed starving people) An ethical life from a Christian perspective • natural law • situation ethics (Fletcher) • ethics of Jesus • law and gospel (as an ethical principle) • ethics of vocation and work • ethics and the law • ethics of marriage and family • Christian liberty (human freedom and responsibility) Eastern ethical systems (eg, Taoist, Buddhist, Confucian) Contemporary ethicists

students can... (ways of knowing)					
• share ideas of what makes them happy/sad • participate in activities that explore feelings and emotions • discuss the consequences of what happens when the group's code of behaviour is not followed • use characters (eg, personal dolls, puppets, story) to explore issues such as bullying, hitting • use language as a way to solve conflict • role play different ways of solving conflict • brainstorm solutions to specific problems and identify the range of choices that can be made • explore the consequences of different ways to solve real life problems • identify the poor choices made in situations that have negative outcomes • suggest choices that will produce happy relationships (eg, families)	• use simple decision-making procedures • outline the consequences of choices people make • explore Bible stories in which people make choices, identify what influenced the choices and the consequences of those choices • analyse the purpose and value of rules in the home, school and community • investigate the Christian understanding of forgiveness in relation to decision-making • identify situations where forgiveness is needed • investigate and express ways of showing forgiveness to others • discuss the meaning of responsibility and demonstrate skills needed for making safe and loving choices • describe and communicate how good relationships affect the wellbeing of others • role play peaceful ways of interacting and reconciling relationships	• express personal beliefs and identify the beliefs of others (eg, authors express environmental, materialistic, social justice beliefs in their stories) • examine a relevant ethical issue from a range of perspectives and identify what each group believes (eg, what environmentalists, developers, tourists think of logging in a conservation park) • make decisions on a range of relevant issues based on what they believe and justify why they made that decision • explore the beliefs of organisations, church-affiliated and other, and examine what informs their decisions and the actions they take (eg, ALWS, Greenpeace, Amnesty International, World Wildlife Foundation) • research someone whose beliefs have shaped their actions and influenced the lives of others at local or global levels	• explain the implications of the belief that people have a free will to choose either good or destructive actions • examine and describe various religious and cultural ethical codes for living and their impact on society (eg, ten commandments, five pillars, rights of the individual, Dreaming stories) • analyse historical and contemporary people's responses to difficult moral and ethical decisions and examine the consequences of their decisions (eg, Martin Luther, Dietrich Bonhoeffer) • locate various media reports on moral or ethical issues, identify key ethical issues and analyse the debates surrounding them • explore moral dilemmas in the light of Christian teachings and use various means to interpret the consequences for the individual/group • outline various strategies used by religious and social groups to make effective decisions on moral and ethical issues • critically examine and report on media accounts of ethical and moral issues	• evaluate and analyse how people process right and wrong and identify key characteristics in the process of decision-making from a religious and secular point of view • investigate Christian perspectives on topical ethical issues and evaluate the validity of these perspectives within current settings • compare and contrast historical ethical frameworks and how these are applied in making ethical decisions (eg, arguments for and against) • identify the relationship between free will and God's will and debate the use of freedom in making ethical decisions • investigate dimensions of human experience and assess how they create and sustain human fulfilment • propose solutions to new, emerging ethical issues through the application of Christian principles • research and critique different responses to an ethical issue	• analyse a case study or scenario and retell the process of ethical decision-making from the point of view of at least two players in the story • produce a publication that promotes an alternative ethical stance while exposing the unethical approach present in the media or the corporate world • find and analyse examples of clashes between an Indigenous, ethnic, cultural and western ethical framework to assess the appropriateness of the western legal response to the situation • create an ethical dilemma that highlights the link between values, choice and consequences • map and contrast the different steps taken by adherents of different religions and/or ethical persuasions, who have arrived at the same conclusions on an issue (eg, pacifism, pornography, environmental sustainability) • propose a series of options for someone who is faced with a potential ethical dilemma in the public realm (eg, response to poverty, location of legal injecting room)

Achievement standards for each band comprise concepts and content drawn from Learning Statements and Scope Statements together with evidence of student learning demonstrated through ways of knowing.

CHRISTIANITY IN THE WORLD:
curriculum statements

CHRISTIANITY IN THE WORLD

THEOLOGICAL NOTES

CHRISTIANITY IN THE WORLD

Theological notes

KEY IDEA 1: RELIGIOUS BELIEFS AND IDEAS SHAPE PEOPLE'S THINKING AND ACTIONS

As central to their mission and ministry, Lutheran schools seek to nurture individuals, aware of their humanity and open to the influence of the Holy Spirit, who are growing in and living according to a cohesive worldview.

(Core statement, Lifelong Qualities for Learners)

THE CURRENT LUTHERAN SCHOOL CONTEXT

Since their early beginnings in Australia, Lutheran schools have found themselves responding to an ever-widening and ever more complex context. The small German-speaking Lutheran village primary school of the first German settlers in Australia had to learn to speak English and adapt to the mainly anglo-celtic community that surrounded it. It constantly had to respond to changes as more and more non-Lutherans and non-Christians came into its community. The Lutheran school now relates to a context including both the global community and also the multicultural and multi-faith local community. Many Lutheran schools are enrolling increasing numbers of students from various religious backgrounds, including from the major world religions. If the education provided through the school is to be relevant for its students and prepare them for life in the local and global communities, then students must be helped to understand and interact with those communities.

The challenge for Christian Studies

Students come into the Christian Studies classroom with a wide diversity of religious and philosophical perspectives as well as a range of Christian denominational traditions. Some would see themselves as 'spiritual' but not 'religious' (cf **CW2**). Students need to be helped to see that all of these perspectives are to be respected, as well as other local, national and global worldviews. Not to deal with this complexity is to fail seriously in the responsibility of care for the students. It may also lead students to reject religion as having any relevance to the world in which they live and study and in which they will continue to interact throughout their lives.

A COHERENT AND COMPREHENSIVE WORLDVIEW

Within this multi-faith, multicultural context, Lutheran schools 'seek to nurture individuals, aware of their humanity and open to the influence of the Holy Spirit, who are growing in and living according to a cohesive worldview' (Core statement, Lifelong Qualities for Learners). Religious beliefs and ideas are an integral and fundamental part of this worldview.

Students may or may not be aware that they hold a set of assumptions and presuppositions about the nature of reality (a 'worldview'). They may need to be helped to become aware of these assumptions and presuppositions through self-reflective processes. Their worldview will also be continually developing and expanding as students respond to new insights and experiences and make informed choices which will provide the basis and motivation for living. It will become the integrating framework for all learning and life in the school.

This worldview may, or may not, include a personal faith in Jesus Christ. However, even those who do not identify with a Christian worldview can experience in the Lutheran school a consistent and coherent Christian worldview. If they reject it, they need to know why they do so and their decision must be respected. [Note that Jesus himself in his teaching and parables warned that there would be rejection of his message as well as acceptance.] But through the work of the Holy Spirit, students engaged in a disciplined and structured enquiry to form their own worldview may be led to faith. This is the prayed-for and hoped-for outcome.

A Christian worldview

A Christian worldview seeks to take seriously both the revelation of God through Scripture (particularly as it reveals Jesus Christ) and what can be learned from relating to God's creation through the use of reason. It draws together relevant insights from various sources including other cultures, faiths and worldviews. In doing so, it follows examples of this process contained within Scripture itself. For example, Old Testament wisdom literature drew on input from various societies and cultures in the ancient Mediterranean world, and the psalms, which have become the prayers also of the

Christian church, adopted images, concepts and poetry from the nations around Israel. However, in the context of the Lutheran school, a Christian worldview is determined by the student's relationship with God as Creator, Redeemer and Sanctifier, and is centred on God's revelation in Jesus Christ.

TWO 'DANGERS'

If students in Christian Studies are being asked to explore other religions and philosophies in order to see how religious beliefs and ideas shape people's thinking and actions, there are two extreme positions which must be avoided.

The danger of relativism

Some teachers are rightly concerned about the danger of relativism in studying philosophy of religion and world religions. If students are introduced to the teachings and practices of other religions, is there a danger that the witness of the school to the Christian faith will be compromised? Will all religious experience be reduced to some lowest common denominator so that in keeping with postmodernist type thinking, every individual religious opinion is as valid as any other? How do we allow students to have freedom to explore and examine, but at the same time uphold the 'truth claim' of their own theological tradition?

The danger of particularism

The opposite end of the spectrum from religious relativism is religious particularism or absolutism. This approach can lead to indoctrination, where there is the intention to impart the beliefs and values of the teacher or of the school to the students, often with the motivation that the school or the teachers is doing so in the best interests of the students. Particularly concerning is that this approach does not create and foster 'an atmosphere of respect, care and openness where students have freedom to explore Christianity, their own questions, faith and personal response' (*Christian Studies in the Lutheran School*).

'RESPECTFUL DIALOGUE' AS AN APPROACH FOR CHRISTIAN STUDIES

In order to avoid religious relativism and religious particularism, and to assist students to relate to their current context of pluralism, Christian Studies needs to adopt educational approaches which will encourage students to address issues of current concern and prepare them for a constructive life in the global community as they form and adapt their worldview. However, at the same time, these approaches must take seriously the importance of the faith tradition of the school and uphold the necessity for that tradition to be clearly and accurately articulated.

What is proposed could be seen as a 'respectful dialogue' between the faith tradition of the school and the beliefs and values of other traditions and philosophies, including those which the students bring into the conversation from their own worldview. Such a dialogue would, in common with other learning areas, employ all of the usual learning experiences, and would develop skills and competencies such as critical inquiry and in-depth reflection.

Such 'respectful dialogue' begins with students and teachers becoming more aware through a self-reflective process of their own personal beliefs and religious ideas, and the language, images and metaphors which are used to express those beliefs. Real dialogue is possible only where the partners in conversation are certain of, and comfortable with, their own identity. They need to grow in their understanding of how these beliefs are shaped by the social and cultural context, and how they form the basis for a worldview and a framework of beliefs through which they interpret reality, and which help to give meaning and purpose to life. This first step is crucial if students and teachers together are going to relate positively to the pluralism which is part of their environment in the school and in general society.

For a Lutheran school, this means that it must provide a thorough grounding in confessional Lutheran theology as the beginning point for Christian Studies. Even though many students in the school may not share this confessional framework, it is the one which the school represents and which is expressed through the whole curriculum and in all activities of the school. It provides a worldview which takes seriously both the revelation of God through scripture with its central focus on Jesus Christ, and the insights gained from interacting with God's creation using the abilities God has given to us as human beings.

However, Lutheran theology also recognises that God's revelation is far greater than we as individuals can fully comprehend. God alone is infinite and absolute, and human attempts to 'understand' God are always limited by sinful human nature and the shortcomings of human reason. As St Paul remarks (1 Cor 13:12), we now see only dimly in a mirror, we know only in part. God is revealed in Jesus Christ, but God also still remains 'hidden' (cf theology of the cross, **CL2**). There is always an element of mystery about God.

As well as acknowledging that the perception of God's revelation is always limited because of human sinful nature and that there is therefore the necessity to be ready to modify any current understanding of it, it is also recognised that God operates in the world through both reason and revelation and that the Christian lives in both the world of nature and the world of grace. This not only frees Christians to operate in both of the 'secular domain' and the 'spiritual domain', but

challenges them to take seriously that they 'are in the world, but not of the world' (John 17). Since God operates in an ordered world which has meaning and purpose, it is possible to form an integrated and consistent worldview which allows individuals to come to terms with the fragmented nature of human knowledge.

Working from this as a basis in Christian Studies, and observing the appropriate developmental levels of the students, teachers and students together recognise, appreciate and value the questions addressed to their religious framework by the different attempts to make sense of the world and to search for meaning. This goes well beyond judgmental curiosity about other religions and philosophies, but does not imply adopting or absorbing the beliefs of others. It also moves beyond developing tolerance, patience and cross-cultural harmony, even though these are important in themselves. It allows for learning more about one's own tradition from the insights of other religious and philosophical frameworks and traditions.

'Respectful dialogue' requires open, honest, attentive, thoughtful, sensitive and empathetic listening to the questions, insights, understandings and practices revealed in other approaches to life and to life's ultimate questions. In doing so, individuals may be alerted to issues they have overlooked in

their own tradition; they may find challenges to the way in which they have formed their responses, shaped by their own religious backgrounds; they may discover ways of living and celebrating life which can add new dimensions to their own approaches. They will also be challenged in 'respectful dialogue' to try to communicate their own concerns so that they can be understood and appreciated by those from other traditions, and they need to be ready to answer questions which those other traditions may raise. This requires openness to the other, but faithfulness to one's own tradition.

In all this, the Lutheran school sees itself in a servant role to those within its community. It will work with the attitude of St Paul, who in his mission to the city of Athens (Acts 17:16–34), did not hesitate to challenge the religious thinking of the Athenians. He commended the Athenians for their religious practices, but was also ready to witness to them on the basis of their altar 'to an unknown God' (Acts 17:23) and to quote the Athenian poets (Acts 17:28) to support his testimony as he worked within their cultural framework. However, Paul also challenges Lutheran schools, for the sake of the gospel, to work with the servant attitude to become 'all things to all people, that [they] might by all means save some' (1 Cor 9:19–23).

Limitations of a phenomenological approach

The study of comparative religions has often been presented through a phenomenological approach. This approach has looked at the way different religions or traditions deal with various aspects of their religion or denomination (for example, sacred stories, sacred texts, sacred rituals, sacred symbols, etc). While this may help students come to some understanding of both the similarities and the differences between religions, and while it may be a useful way to begin to raise awareness of other religious traditions, a phenomenological approach tends to look only at some aspects of a religion (often superficial ones) and does not treat the religion as an integrated whole with its own worldview. This approach can also tend to become a sociological examination rather than an encounter with another religion.

Christian denominations

The presence of members of different Christian denominations in the Lutheran school will provide opportunities to explore various approaches to the Christian faith. This will, of course, occur through all key ideas of the CSCF as students become aware of different understandings, practices, rituals, styles and places of worship, etc. However, this key idea allows the intentional exploration of the distinctive characteristics of different denominations, particularly those represented in the school community.

Judaism

The study of Judaism provides the opportunity to understand an important current world religion and one which has had a profound role in western history. However, it also allows students to explore the Old Testament background to the Christian religion as well as the influence of Jewish beliefs, practices, celebrations and culture on the Christian church. Important here will be not only those things held in common between Christianity and Judaism (eg the Old Testament Scriptures), but also significant differences in understanding and practice, particularly relating to the person and work of Jesus Christ.

Islam

The rapid rise of Islam in Australia, the proximity of large Moslem countries such as Indonesia, as well as current world political situations, makes the study of Islam particularly relevant. It is important that students gain a sympathetic understanding of Islam and the various expressions of Islam will need to be addressed so that the extreme forms so often represented in the media are not the major source of information for students. Significant here will also be the difference in the understanding of Allah in the Koran and the biblical teaching of the triune God (cf **CB1**).

Other world religions

This key idea also allows for the exploration of the worldview represented by other world religions (eg Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, Sikhism) and the way in which different cultures influence and are influenced by those religions. The way in which these religions address questions such as the origin, meaning and purpose of life and the nature of human beings can also be examined, and dialogue can be established with relevant Christian teachings. Indigenous religions, especially those of the Australian Aborigines, also need to be considered here, as well as elsewhere in the framework (eg **CW2**).

The gospel as inclusive and exclusive

While sensitive and respectful dialogue can occur in the area of various religions with tolerance for other worldviews and the opportunity to modify one's own perspective, the inclusive and exclusive nature of the Christian gospel must come through clearly in the Lutheran school in order that the Christian faith on which the school is based is clearly and unapologetically presented. On the one hand, God 'desires everyone to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth' (1 Tim 2:4). However, Jesus claims, 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me' (John 14:6). And Peter testifies, 'There is salvation in no one else [than Jesus Christ], for there is no other name given among mortals by which we must be saved' (Acts 4:12).

QUESTIONS RAISED BY PHILOSOPHY

Religion is not the only source of insights into questions about the meaning of life and the understanding of the world. Philosophy raises its own questions as well as challenging insights from religion. Philosophy has also had a profound influence on the way theology has been expressed.

There are a number of areas of philosophy, each raising their own issues and insights and each looking for answers. Through the centuries different philosophical systems and traditions have provided answers for these questions (eg idealism [Plato], realism [Aristotle], modernism, existentialism, postmodernism, etc). Students need to become aware of philosophical frameworks which impact thinking in current societies and to be able to analyse and critique the underlying values and concepts on which those approaches are based. The dialogue with Christian responses to these issues and questions needs to be encouraged in ways appropriate for the developmental level of the students.

Metaphysics

Metaphysics deals with the nature of reality: 'What is ultimately real?' There are a number of different areas of investigation, including:

cosmology

- the study of theories about the origin, nature, and development of the universe as an orderly system
- How did the universe originate and develop? by design? by accident?
- Is the universe moving towards a particular purpose?
- Is the material cosmos all that there is to reality?
- What is the nature of time and space?

theology

- conceptions of and about god
- Is there a god, or gods?
- If there is a god, how can god be described?
- If god is both all good and all powerful, how is it that evil exists?

anthropology

- the study of humankind where humankind is both the subject and the object of the study
- Is a human being anything more than a highly complex machine?
- What is the relationship between soul and body?
- Are people born good, evil, or morally neutral?
- Do people have 'free will' or are their thoughts and actions determined?

ontology

- the nature of being or existence
- Is there a spiritual realm?
- Is reality found in spirit or in matter? Is reality a mental construct?
- Does chaos reign supreme, or is chaos somehow related to order and harmony in our world?
- Is reality fixed and stable, or changing?

- What happens to a person at death?
- Why are human beings on earth?
- Is there a meaning and purpose to human history?
- Can human beings make the world a better place?

Epistemology

Epistemology deals with the nature, source and validity of knowledge. It is an important area of philosophy relating to the process of education. Questions raised in this area include:

- Is it possible to know anything?
- How do we come to know what we know?
- How can we be sure that what we know is reliable and true?
- Is truth relative or absolute?
- Is knowledge subjective or objective?
- What are the limits to human knowledge?
- Is there truth independent of human experience?
- What sources of truth can we rely on? (empirical, revelation, authority, reason, intuition)

Axiology

Axiology deals with what is 'good' or preferable. Important here is also the contrast between what people *say* they value and what they *act out* in their daily life, what they in fact prefer and what they feel they ought to prefer. There are two important areas of concern:

ethics

- what should I do and why (cf **CW3**)
- Does the end justify the means?
- How do we know the difference between what is 'good' and what is 'evil'?
- Are ethical standards and moral values absolute or relative?
- Do universal moral values exist?
- How do we make ethical decisions?

aesthetics

- searching for the principles governing the creation and appreciation of beauty and art
- What is 'beautiful'?
- Should art imitate reality or should it be the product of the private creative imagination?
- How does art help us to perceive 'reality'?
- Are there objective standards to determine what is 'beautiful' and what is 'ugly'?
- Should art deal with the ugly and grotesque as well as the good and the beautiful?
- Does beauty inhere in the art object itself, or is beauty supplied by the eye of the beholder?
- How do social and cultural differences relate to the appreciation of beauty?
- What is 'Christian' art? Is it determined by the content, the artist, the viewer or listener?

Some issues and questions for discussion and reflection:

- Examine current areas of conflict in the world in terms of the religious elements of those situations. How can an understanding of the religious beliefs and ideas which shape individuals, societies and nations help to provide insights into these situations?
- How will issues of religious prejudice be explored in the school?
- Will we confuse young children by introducing other religions to them too early?
- How would you respond to the following scenario?
- A year 12 student, who has been outspokenly negative to the whole question of a religious commitment throughout his/her schooling, confides in you that, after the study of world religions, he/she has been led to become a Buddhist.
- How can we avoid the danger of religious relativism if we take seriously the claims of other religions?
- How can this key idea help students deal with the relativism which they encounter in society?
- How can Lutheran schools maintain an authentic Lutheran worldview based on Lutheran confessional theology, but dialogue respectfully with other denominations and religions?
- How do we help students distinguish between understanding truth claims and the personal acceptance of such truth claims? How far can a teacher go in witnessing to her/his personal beliefs without imposing them ('indoctrinating') on the students?

- Consider some of the questions raised by philosophy and explore the interaction with theology.
- What examples of a 'Lutheran culture' can be identified in the school? Is this culture based on theology or tradition? Does it help to strengthen the school community?
- How is the faith tradition of the Lutheran school explored within the school community? What stories, symbols, rituals, etc are important for this exploration?
- Explore the relationship between 'wisdom' and 'knowledge'.
- Has 'virtual reality' changed our concept of 'reality'?

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KEY IDEA 2: PEOPLE EXPRESS THEIR SPIRITUALITY IN VARIOUS CONTEXTS WITHIN AND BEYOND CHRISTIANITY

O God, you have made us for yourself, and our hearts are restless until they find rest in you.

(St Augustine (354–430), Confessions I i)

HUMAN BEINGS ARE SPIRITUAL

God created humans as spiritual beings, beings who are able to relate to God and to respond to God's revelation of himself. Humans seem to have an instinctive awareness of the existence of a supreme being. They have a 'natural knowledge' of God. This is sometimes referred to as a 'God-shaped hole' which every human being seems to have and which can only be filled by God (Acts 17:27–28; Rom 1:19–20). This spiritual dimension distinguishes human beings from the animals and the rest of creation (cf 'animism', which sees all creation as possessing 'spirit').

Human beings have a need to experience awe, mystery, and a sense of the transcendent. They look for ways to experience and express these emotions and feelings. The question is not whether a person has a spirituality, but rather what kind of spirituality they reflect and express.

Other factors also contribute to human spirituality. Creation suggests the existence of a creator. God's operation in nature and human history point to his existence. So also does human conscience, the awareness of right and wrong. The existence of various religions shows that human beings have a natural tendency towards religious experiences and that they want to live in harmonious relationship with a supreme being, whatever their understanding of the deity may be.

Christians acknowledge that 'natural' religion is the human reaction to God's revelation of his power and wisdom. However, they also believe that only in Jesus Christ do human beings come to know God and live in harmonious relationship with him as a loving and merciful Father (John 14:6).

EXPRESSIONS OF SPIRITUALITY

There has been an increasing interest in spirituality during the past decade. Very often this is not associated with any specific Christian denomination nor with any formal religious context or practice. The remark is often heard: "I am 'spiritual', but I am not 'religious'". As trust in modernism with its positivist paradigm has faded and the postmodernist critique of former meta-narratives of the western world has placed increasing emphasis on ways of knowing beyond the scientific and objective, so an increased interest in spirituality has developed.

Interest in spirituality

Some examples of this interest in 'spirituality' include:

- valuing mystical experiences or moments of awe and wonder
- sensing 'the sacred'
- searching for meaning, identity and purpose (hope) in human existence
- emphasising relationships, trustworthiness and connectedness
- seeking for a sense of wellbeing and happiness
- sensing the interconnectedness of the world as part of the universe
- attraction to eastern religions through their emphasis on meditation
- exploring stillness and silence
- reacting to materialism and secularism
- exploring Indigenous spirituality
- fascination with the occult, satanism, witches, etc
- addressing the affective dimension in religious education
- exploring communication through art, music, dance, drama, etc
- investigating the mysterious and the miraculous

Approaches to spirituality

Individuals may express their spirituality in very different ways based on different presuppositions and approaches to life. Their attitudes and values are reflected in the way in which they live and how they relate to other people. Their spirituality will be influenced also by the cultural context and society in which they live. Examples (in addition to Christian spirituality considered below) include the following:

- humanistic spirituality, which sees human beings as the centre of the universe and human reason providing sufficient answers to the questions of life
- secular or materialistic spirituality, which maintains that there is nothing beyond our material existence
- social or cultural activities which provide some level of meaning for an individual — eg sport, media, 'reality TV', sex, etc
- altruistic spirituality, which actively pursues the welfare of others and is an inspiration for others
- selfish, hedonistic spirituality, which is concerned only with gratifying one's own desires and wishes
- evil, demonic spirituality
- mysticism, which leads to the attempt to feel at one with god through direct contact with god, lifting oneself into the presence of god through self-denial, asceticism, meditation, etc
- meditation leading to complete 'emptiness' — eg Buddhism
- meditation which tries to connect 'god within us' with 'god outside of us' — eg Hinduism
- New Age spirituality, which tries to create one's own reality

Members of the school community, both students and staff, need the opportunity to explore and express their own forms of spirituality. The school can provide a safe environment in which such formation can take place and in which different approaches can be evaluated. Critical will be a sensitive presentation of insights into Christian spirituality while respecting other approaches to spirituality.

Indigenous spirituality

There is an increasing awareness of the importance of an understanding of Indigenous spirituality in Australia for all Australian citizens. Aboriginal spirituality needs to be appreciated in its own right as a response to human spirituality. It can also be explored for points of contact with Christian spirituality. Local resources may be available in the school, and some general introductory references are listed below.

CHRISTIAN SPIRITUALITY

The response to God's action

Christian spirituality does not begin with human action. It is not a process of individuals trying to experience God or attempting to open up a way to God (cf tower of Babel: Gen 11:1–9). Christian spirituality is not trying to ascend to God, but recognising that God descends to us. Christian spirituality is therefore the response of the believer to what God has already done, and it leads the Christian into a life of discipleship and practical Christian living. Christian spirituality is the life of sanctification lived by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Based on the work of Jesus Christ

Christian spirituality is based on God's action in Jesus Christ. Through the life, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ, God has revealed himself as a God of love and forgiveness and has opened up the way to himself (cf **CB2**). This is the action of God's totally undeserved grace which restores the Christian into a right relationship with God once again. This is the only foundation for Christian spirituality and creates the freedom to live in response to God. Christian spirituality means *to be in Christ* and *to live in Christ*. It embraces both *being* and *doing*, who Christians are and how that determines how they live.

Centred on the word of God

God has revealed himself and his gift of salvation to us in his word (cf **CC1**). This means that God's word is central for Christian spirituality. It is God's word which reveals Christ to us and implants Christ in us. God's word is the power (Rom 1:16–17) which makes Christian spirituality possible. For this reason, remaining in contact with that word is crucial for a life of Christian spirituality.

The link between reading the word, meditation and prayer is important here (for prayer cf **CC3**). A very helpful treatment of this is Luther's 'A simple way to pray' (cf Schubert's paraphrase). An understanding of the particular nature of Christian meditation in contrast to other forms of meditation will also require consideration here (cf article by Kleinig). Christian meditation has its focus on God and his word rather than on any potential within the individual. The person stands under the word of God and listens to the voice of the Holy Spirit speaking through that word with the outcome of a joyful response to God in confession, prayer and praise rather than finding one's 'true self' or solving one's personal problems. Martin Luther spoke of a three-fold approach to meditation. First comes prayer for the Holy Spirit to speak through the word of God and inspire our thoughts. Secondly comes meditation, which Luther practised by reading and repeating the word aloud so that the word moves from the tongue to the ear and to the heart (not from the eye to the brain!). Thirdly, Luther identified the process of testing as the word has its impact on one's life and the difficulties and suffering (also from the temptation of the devil) which lead the Christian back to Christ and the gospel.

Crucial for the Christian disciple is worship (cf **CC3**). In worship God speaks his word of law and gospel; the gospel is enacted in the sacraments, the Holy Spirit is at work through the word, and the community of the faithful is created and renewed. Christian spirituality is always focussed on God and his word.

Being shaped by the Holy Spirit

Christian spirituality in the life of the individual leads to God shaping or forming the person. St Paul (Rom 12:2) speaks about Christians being 'transformed' by God (the passive voice in the Bible indicates God's activity). Spiritual formation means that Christ is formed in Christians (Gal 4:19) as they come to fullness of life in Christ (Col 2:10), grow 'to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ' (Eph 4:13), and gain 'the mind' of Christ (Phil 2:5).

Christian spirituality leads to a life of faith and obedience in which all of life is lived in dependence on the grace of God and is empowered by the Holy Spirit. It relates to the inner life of the Christian (growth in Bible reading, Christian meditation, prayer, etc), but it must not become simply introspective. It is intensely personal, but must not become focussed on self.

A healthy Christian spirituality is concerned with life in the faith community and in the world in general. It is relational and communal and expresses itself in service to others and not in retreat from the world. Christian spirituality is theology of the cross in action (cf **CL2** and **CL3**). It operates through the gifts of the Holy Spirit which are given to each Christian individual through which they carry out God's work in the world as faithful stewards (Luke 17:7–10).

Some traditions of Christian spirituality

Through the centuries, a number of different traditions have developed in the practice of Christian spirituality. Different approaches appeal to different individuals, but it is important that no one tradition is emphasised to the detriment of the others. Individuals need to be helped to develop expressions of spirituality which are relevant for themselves and their circumstances.

- **contemplative tradition** – stresses the importance of silence, of discipline, of resting in God rather than performing (eg the monastic movement)
- **holiness tradition** – emphasises the importance of living a holy life, often also withdrawing from 'the world' and taking vows of poverty, chastity and obedience (eg monastic communities, Lutheran pietism)
- **charismatic tradition** – focuses on the gifts of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Christian and on living an active, healthy Christian life (eg Pentecostal movement)
- **social justice tradition** – stresses the importance of being involved in the world of human society and creation, bringing God's justice to bear on the evils of a world suffering the results of human sin (eg the Salvation Army)
- **evangelical tradition** – stresses saving faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and saviour and the centrality of the Bible as the source of knowledge about God and salvation; it responds to the call to witness to the gospel in the whole world (eg the great missionary movements)

A Lutheran approach to spirituality may identify with elements from any of these traditions, but particularly with the evangelical tradition. A Lutheran approach to spirituality is grounded in the gospel and in the freedom which comes in Jesus Christ. It is focussed on hearing the word of God as both law and gospel and living constantly in dependence on the grace of God. While a Lutheran approach to spirituality emphasises the importance of personal practices of Bible reading, meditation and prayer, it also recognises the centrality of communal worship and the blessings of word and sacrament in that worship. While it appreciates the value of stillness and silence, it does not retreat from the world, but seeks to express itself in service of others, using the gifts God gives through the working of the Holy Spirit. All this is God's work in and through the individual.

Some issues and questions for discussion and reflection:

- What do people imply when they claim they are 'spiritual' but not 'religious'?
- What are some of the expressions of spirituality which are evident in the school community?
- How does the school help students and staff to explore their own spirituality?
- How are members of the school community encouraged to reflect on and share their experiences of spirituality?
- How can Christians in the school community be helped in their spiritual formation without causing division and discrimination in the school?
- What use can be made of stillness and silence in the school?
- Is meditation practised in the school? If so, on what basis and in what form?
- What understanding is there of Indigenous spirituality in the school community? What resources are there in the school to help to explore this area?

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TITLE: Aboriginal Sky Figures
AUTHOR: ABC Books

TITLE: Djugurba: Tales from the Spirit Time
AUTHOR: Bunug, N et al

TITLE: Flinders Ranges Dreaming
AUTHOR: TUNBRIDGE, D.

TITLE: The Dreaming — Teachers guide
SERIES: The Dreaming Series One

TITLE: The Dreaming, Teachers resource book
SERIES: The Dreaming Series One
AUTHOR: Aboriginal Nations Pty Ltd

KEY IDEA 3: PEOPLE MAKE DECISIONS USING A RANGE OF RELIGIOUS PERSPECTIVES AND ETHICAL FRAMEWORKS

Jesus said: 'If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples; and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.'

(John 8:31–32)

MAKING DECISIONS

Throughout their lives, human beings make many decisions. They make these decisions for many different reasons. Sometimes the choices they make are carefully thought out and based on specific well-developed values, at other times the decisions may be made much more spontaneously and without much concern for the consequences. As people interact with others, they begin to define themselves by their choices. They take more and more responsibility for their life and the decisions they make.

It is important that people in the school community are helped to develop a coherent view of life with supporting values so that they can work from this base in their decision-making. Within the school community there will be a wide range of religious perspectives and ethical frameworks which individuals will use for their decision-making. Through their interaction within the school community people will be challenged in their decision-making and in evaluating the basis on which they make those decisions.

WHAT IS MEANT BY 'ETHICS'?

Ethics is a process of reflecting on and distinguishing between good and evil, right and wrong, with regard to what we do, think, say, feel, believe, how we act, etc. It is also applying these guidelines to concrete life situations and circumstances. It involves thinking about and evaluating the consequences of particular actions and behaviours. Ethics is more than knowing what is right and wrong (ethical knowledge); it is also doing what is right (ethical behaviour). Knowing what is right is not a sufficient condition for doing what is right.

Ethics needs to be distinguished from 'morality'. Morality is a code of behaviour for a group or society which defines how that group is to act — a list of right and wrong conduct for that group. It guides members of the group in what is considered appropriate and inappropriate behaviour.

Ethics has also been developed as an area of philosophy. Various ethical frameworks have been proposed. For example Aristotle developed ethical theory based on happiness as the highest good. Happiness was to be sought by the path of virtue, through the practice of courage, temperance, wisdom and justice.

Values and truth

Values and truth need to be distinguished. Values designate what we regard as having value for us. Values will vary greatly from person to person. Truth, on the other hand, relates to absolutes which do not depend on whether or not we accept them. In the current postmodern climate, there is a reluctance to speak in terms of truth and absolutes. However, some ethical frameworks, including Christian ethics, presuppose absolutes.

A related issue is to distinguish between what is legal and what is ethical. Certain activities and practices may be legal, but some people would not regard them as ethical. Vigorous debate can occur when matters such as euthanasia and same-sex marriage are viewed in terms of their legal and ethical perspectives.

Some ethical frameworks for making decisions

Throughout human history, various ethical frameworks have been developed. Some of these include:

- **hedonism** — the highest good is what gives the greatest pleasure for the individual; this may be intellectual pleasure, or sensual pleasure, and its impact on others is not a prime concern;
- **utilitarianism** — this works with the principle of 'the greatest good for the greatest number of people', what will bring the greatest pleasure for the greatest number of people or the most good for the most people;
- **naturalistic ethical systems** — what is natural and is consistent with nature is right and good; we should follow our natural instincts (which are always good), and what is not natural to society or to individuals is not good;
- **systems based on duty** — these are based on an accepted authority figure or a set of laws, as seen for example in Old Testament legalism (based on the law of Moses) and Islam and also in approaches such as the 'categorical imperatives' of the philosopher Immanuel Kant. There are also systems based on total obedience developed by fundamentalist religious groups and authoritarian governments;

- **situation ethics** — based on what is seen to be the most loving response in a situation. This will vary from situation to situation, depending on who judges what is most loving in a particular situation (Joseph Fletcher: 'love will lead us to do the right thing');
- **Confucianism** — right actions flow from a right character. Emphasis is not so much on what the person does but rather on the nature of the person as being gentle, cultured, and benevolent;
- **Buddhism** — five precepts for all adherents: do not kill (any living thing), steal, indulge in forbidden sexual relations, lie, drink intoxicating liquors. Buddhist priests have additional regulations to follow;
- **Taoism** — all things have their balancing opposites (yin or yang). Life is the greatest of all possessions, it is to be lived in simplicity, and glory and fame are to be despised.

All of these different systems have some positive aspects which may be incorporated into an individual's personal ethical framework. Some are also consistent with a Christian ethical approach.

CHRISTIAN ETHICS

Foundations

Christian ethics begins with the acknowledgement of God as creator and the recognition of the will of God in creation. Despite the advent of sin, the will of God is still seen in creation (Rom 1:18–32). God still protects creation and provides his law ('political use of the law') to help people know how to live.

Christian ethics also presupposes the sinful nature of human beings (cf **CB3**). Since the fall, a realistic view of individuals and society operates with the recognition of the reality of sin and the impact of sin on all relationships. This is in strong contrast to idealistic views of human beings which are current in society.

Christians ethics exist in and grow out of the community of faith. They are communal rather than individual, although they impact on the life of the individual. Ethical decisions are made within the communal context and affect the community in which they are made. The resources of the community contribute to the decision-making as responses to situations are formulated through prayer, searching the Scriptures, discussion and striving for consensus. They attempt to develop a distinctively Christian way of life as an influence and model for the whole of society of how God intends people to live in relationship. For the Christian, this is the life of discipleship.

A problem which can occur in dealing with Christian ethics is to try to define the Christian life by developing a set of acceptable behaviours for Christians, to define Christians by what *they do*, rather than by what *they are*. In John 6:28–29, Jesus speaks about 'doing the work of God' as 'believing in him [Jesus] whom God has sent'. Disciples of Jesus Christ (those who believe in him) do by the power of the Holy Spirit what Jesus Christ wants them to do.

The use of the Bible

The Bible is the single indispensable resource for Christian ethical reflection. However, it is important to recognise that the Bible provides biblical principles for ethical decision-making rather than specific answers for particular ethical situations. It is important to remain open to possible misinterpretation of the scriptural sources and also to new insights gained and additional relevant biblical texts. In all this it is important not to develop a legalistic or fundamentalistic approach to scripture which seeks to determine all matters by the quotation of particular verses of Scripture. In ethical considerations, the gift of reason (the reflection of the believing community) and the common experience of all humanity needs to be considered (cf the example of Old Testament wisdom literature, which draws insights from many different societies and cultures).

The law of love

The law of love ('third use of the law') is fundamental for disciples. Jesus taught that the 'greatest commandment' is: 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind' and: 'Love your neighbour as yourself' (Matt 22:37–38). The ten commandments spell out what it means to love God and other people. For example, it means valuing God above anything or anyone else (cf Matt 6:19–33), using God's name with respect, honouring and obeying parents and other representatives of God, regarding human life as sacred, being faithful in marriage, not being jealous.

The law of love and the ten commandments are 'moral absolutes', that is, they can never be put aside (Matt 5:17–20); they apply in every situation. However, the application of these moral absolutes may vary from situation to situation. Jesus' disciples are called to listen carefully to the word of God, so that, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, they have 'the mind of Christ' (1 Cor 2:16). St Paul appeals to Christians 'in view of God's mercy': 'Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is — his good, pleasing and perfect will' (Rom 12:1–2).

A LUTHERAN APPROACH TO ETHICS

A Lutheran approach to ethics is based on the relationship between law and gospel.

The gospel provides the motivation for the new life in Christ as a response to what God has done in and through Jesus Christ (Rom 1:16–17). The Christian life is built on justification by grace through faith by which we receive new life and a new status as God's children. It is the life of sanctification by the power of the Holy Spirit.

While the gospel provides the motivation for the new life in Christ, it is the law which gives shape and form to that new life. A Lutheran approach recognises the 'political use of the law', which is part of God's work of creation. It is the gift of God for creation and provides protection and direction for creation — the way God intended it to function. This use of the law applies to all people whether Christian or not and can be seen, for example, in the ten commandments.

God's law also has the 'theological function', which exposes sin and shows the need for salvation in Jesus Christ (cf **CB3**).

However, Lutheran theology recognises that Christians are not only holy ('saints' through faith in Jesus Christ) but also remain sinners (cf **CB3**). They will always be struggling against their 'old nature', Satan and the powers of evil, and therefore are always in need of forgiveness (Rom 7:15-–25). They are not on a steady progress towards perfection, but a daily return to repentance and forgiveness — a daily return to baptism — to be reclaimed and renewed by God's mercy.

However, since Christ has fulfilled the law and defeated the powers of evil, Christians can live without fear and in good conscience, even though they still struggle against the 'old nature'. They know the outcome of the struggle, because in Christ they have forgiveness of sin, eternal life and salvation. The new life in Christ (Gal 2:20) is no longer lived under the slavery to the law, but in the freedom of the children of God (Gal 5:1); it is lived within the freedom of the gospel, not the fear of the law.

It is in this context that the so-called 'third use of the law' has its function for Christians. This approach recognises that God's commandments are not limits on the life of Christians, but guides for the 'good life'. They are in keeping with the desire of the 'new nature' and are the logical consequences of how people are created. Christian freedom is not simply *freedom from* the law (because Christ has fulfilled the law) but is also *freedom for* the law. It is freedom to obey God's commands, because through them Christians are moulded by Christ and the Holy Spirit through the means of grace to become more Christ-like in mind and heart, living according to the guidelines of Scripture. The Holy Spirit gives the power to live the life of sanctification according to God's commands in relationship with God, themselves, other people, and all of creation.

It is in this discussion of 'The freedom of the Christian' that Martin Luther makes these two seemingly contradictory statements (Schubert, 5):

- Christians have complete freedom and power over everything, and are under no obligation to anyone.
- Christians are servants of all, and under complete obligation to everyone..

On this basis Luther develops his understanding of service (cf **CL2** and **CL3**) and also the responsibility of Christians to be aware of causing offence to others by their actions (cf 1 Cor 8).

In living the ethical life, the focus for Christians must always remain on the gospel and not on human performance. Because God has made them holy, Christians live the holy life (the life of baptism), doing 'good works' which spring from faith active in love (Gal 5:6) and which are the fruit of the Holy Spirit.

CHRISTIAN ETHICS IN THE WORLD

Although the Christian lives in the world, and may draw insights from sociological studies, opinion polls, pressure groups, etc, only the Bible understood in the light of Jesus Christ provides the foundation for a Christian system of ethics. This Christian framework may include moral imperatives which can claim to be universal (eg sanctity of life) or insights in common with other ethical systems (eg respect for the individual).

However, a Christian system applies only to Christians. It is inappropriate for Christians to try to impose specifically Christian ethical standards on society as a whole. To do so is, according to Lutheran theology, to misunderstand the implications of the teaching of the 'two kingdoms' (cf **CL2**). However, Christians need to exert a positive influence on the moral standards of society through example and through individual Christians acting as responsible citizens in their society, being salt and light in the world (Matt 5:13–16).

ETHICAL DECISION-MAKING

As well as developing an ethical framework for themselves, students need to experience the process of ethical decision-making. They need to be helped to learn how to make choices and be responsible for their decisions, whether they operate from a Christian ethical framework or not. While it is crucial to protect the vulnerability of children, they cannot be protected from human interaction and the consequent need to make choices on their own behalf.

As they learn to make choices, students will recognise that issues are often grey rather than black and white. They also need experience in ethical decision-making where the choice is between two 'goods', between short-term and long-term gains, and between individual and group benefits. Teachers also become vulnerable as they make choices and reveal reasons for their choices and also because there is no guarantee what choices students will make.

Students will also need experience in constructing arguments and evaluating different views which may be presented in discussion and in learning to accept critical evaluation of their own positions. They also need experience in analysing the reasons for their particular decisions.

Christian students need to learn how to deal with the saint/sinner tension in their lives as they struggle to conform their will to the will of God because that is their choice and not because they see their response in some legalistic sense. Christian students can also be encouraged to engage confidently in ethical decision-making knowing that, by faith, they think and act under the guidance of the Holy Spirit and within the context of God's grace and forgiveness. They can, therefore, dare to make decisions also in difficult ethical issues.

Christian students need to be assisted in seeing their role in witnessing to society (being 'salt and light') on the basis of their ethical values, especially where there is a conflict of values.

The following outline of a process for ethical decision-making may be helpful:

- identify the problem — what is the real concern?
- analyse the situation — what is the context of the problem?
- identify the options — what are the possible solutions?
- evaluate the options — what should we do based on our ethical framework?
- make a decision — what must be done?
- implementing the decision — how and when do we carry out the decision?
- evaluate the decision — what effects did the decision bring? What could have been done better?

Some issues and questions for discussion and reflection:

- What values are held in common in current Australian society? Would any of these be regarded as absolutes?
- Examine some issues of current concern in terms of what is 'legal' and what is 'ethical' (eg stem-cell research, mandatory detention of 'refugees', abortion, etc).
- Consider the different responses to an ethical dilemma on the basis of various ethical frameworks.
- 'Christian freedom is practising the commandments of God as a way of life.' How can we understand this statement?
- Do Lutheran schools **reflect** the values of society or do they **shape** them?
- How can the ten commandments be seen positively in the life of the Christian?
- 'God accepts you just as you are.' What is true and not true about that statement?
- How can students be helped to see the importance of ethics across all areas of study in the curriculum — integrating ethics into all key learning areas?
- Are there any differences between what is taught and what is lived in the school? (Dealing with cynicism where there is lack of congruence.)
- What modelling of ethical decision-making is there in the school?
- How can the school show sensitivity in dealing with differences between the ethics in the student's home, the peer group, society and the ethics in the school?
- How can students be helped to see the importance of ethics in areas such as business ethics, the use of science and technology, health and welfare, etc?

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APPENDICIES

APPENDIX 1

Christian Studies in the Lutheran school

Context

Christian Studies is a learning area that belongs to the formal curricular program of the Lutheran school and as such should operate within the same parameters as other learning areas, with appropriate assessment and reporting, timetabling, budget, staffing and resourcing. Teachers who have responsibility for the teaching of Christian Studies are supported professionally by meeting the accreditation requirements of the LCA *Staffing Policy for Lutheran Schools* which provides them with the opportunity to reflect on their spirituality and to articulate a personal vision for teaching Christian Studies.

Christian Studies is an essential and distinctive part of the Christian education program, which is the total life of the school and which is expressed through the culture of the school, all teaching and learning activities, the worship program, pastoral care for students and staff, behaviour management policies and practices, voluntary Christian groups and activities that address the personal spirituality of staff and students.

The students who participate in Christian Studies bring a wide range of faith, life and spiritual understandings and experiences embodied in differing worldviews. This diversity has implications for the planning and teaching of school-based Christian Studies programs and the need to accommodate varying levels of biblical literacy and engagement. While faith responses or commitment to Christ are not a general expectation in the formal curriculum, there are areas of the broader framework of Christian education where these can be actively nurtured and expressed.

Rationale

Christian Studies provides a safe and supportive context in which students can reflect on their experiences of the world and on their own beliefs and spirituality as they attempt to make sense of their rapidly changing and complex global environment, and as they develop their identity as individuals. They do this on the basis of their study of Christianity and their increasing awareness of how the Christian faith relates to all aspects of lived reality.

Christian Studies orients students into biblical literacy and the teachings, culture and history of the Christian church in general, and the Lutheran Church in particular. It provides the opportunity to examine Christian insights, teachings, practices, challenges and responses to issues of justice and ethics in light of other major world religions and philosophical thinking. Christian Studies is a forum for reflecting on, engaging with and responding to the extent of human need, the servant role of the Christian church in society, stewardship for the world, and to the biblical call and challenge to be in relationship with God.

For many students, Christian Studies also provides the opportunity for them to grow in their Christian faith and in the expression of that faith in their lives.

The Christian Studies Context

Teaching and learning in Christian Studies occurs in a supportive, inclusive and safe environment. Strategies used reflect a respect for the diversity of students' knowledge, faith backgrounds and worldviews and are inclusive of different learning styles and contexts.

Learners are engaged in intellectually challenging experiences that actively involve them in journeys of inquiry and constructing their own meanings. Students pose their own questions, gather, analyse, critique, apply and reflect on content and concepts. It is a hoped for outcome of the journey of learning that students broaden and deepen their understanding of the content and concepts, however, there is no assumption that all students will arrive at the same level of understanding at the same time. Responses to learning in Christian Studies open opportunities for a growing spirituality, the nurture of Christian faith and its expression in a variety of ways and contexts.

Adopted as BLEA Policy 2012

APPENDIX 2

A. Role Responsibilities

Role of the principal

Principals have a primary role in the support and development of Christian Studies in Lutheran schools. As such, they:

- **passionately advocate for Christian Studies**: work with the Christian Studies Leader to develop a vision and plan for the ongoing support and development of Christian Studies ; share vision with staff, school chaplain/pastor, students, parents, caregivers, governing bodies and local congregations; foster professionalism, excellence, innovation and theological integrity in Christian Studies
- **comply with BLEA policy** : fulfill requirements as stated in the policy statements and CSCF; ensure time and budgetary allocation is consistent with other learning areas; allocate time for the Christian Studies Leader to lead and coordinate Christian Studies in the school
- **invest resources into developing strong Christian Studies educators**: allocate time and resources for professional development specific to theological and pedagogical needs of Christian Studies; ensure that staff are accredited to teach Christian Studies according to LCA Staffing Policy for Lutheran Schools; provided resources to support professional development opportunities
- **mentor and train Christian Studies leaders** : provide the Christian Studies Leader with a job description: meet regularly with the Christian Studies Leader to review the implementation of the vision and school plan for Christian Studies; ensure that the Christian Studies Leader has opportunities for developing leadership skills and curriculum knowledge
- **commit to the continued growth of Christian Studies**: develop a five-year plan for continued development, succession and thrival of Christian Studies; consult with regional office

Role of the Christian Studies leader

The Christian Studies Leader is the key contact person for Christian Studies. The Christian Studies Leader is responsible to and reports to the principal on all matters relating to Christian Studies. A role description may include the following:

- **Commit to whole school responsibilities**: work with the principal to develop a vision and plan for the ongoing development and support of Christian Studies across the school; develop common understandings of the nature and purpose of Christian Studies; develop and facilitate the school's overall Christian Studies program and school plan; get to know staff so that support can be more personal and relevant; model new ideas
- **Support Christian Studies teachers**: identify the needs of Christian Studies teachers in the school, plan and coordinate a professional development program, run small workshops to develop specific skills, organise guest presenters; share information related to all Christian Studies professional development courses or events; skill teachers with strategies to plan and write Christian Studies units of work, to teach Christian Studies; challenge experienced staff to be creative, to adopt new skills; provide induction and mentoring for new Christian Studies teachers and create links for all teachers to work with each other and share ideas; consult with regional education officer to support needs of teachers
- **Manage, administer and liaise**: coordinate the selection, purchase and distribution of materials and resources to support the Christian Studies curriculum; manage the budget and keep proper records; liaise with Christian Studies Leaders in other schools and with regional and national support personnel.

Role of the Christian Studies teacher

The Christian Studies teacher:

- **commits to professional requirements**: has a sound understanding of the learning area and has completed relevant requirements of the accreditation program, as specified by Lutheran Church of Australia (LCA) Staffing Policy for Lutheran Schools; grows and develops professionally and spiritually through collaboration with peers, professional reading, ongoing study, attendance at seminars, workshops, retreats
- **enacts a personal faith journey**: has a personal commitment to Christ and a mature faith; prays for the spiritual growth and development of each student ; witnesses to the Christian faith in appropriate ways that do not pressure or manipulate students' own beliefs or faith
- **develops an inclusive learning environment**: creates and fosters an atmosphere of respect, care and openness where students have freedom to explore Christianity, their own questions, faith and personal response; accepts that students and teachers in Christian Studies are critical inquirers; uses a range of stimulating resources such as print, multi-media, guest speakers, the arts; provides learning experiences that cater for a range of learning styles and for students to work both collaboratively and individually
- **embraces teaching and learning that**: makes explicit the relevance and purpose of what students are learning; builds on students' prior knowledge and understanding; actively engages students in sharing, discussing, researching, collating, analysing, critically reflecting and using their learning in meaningful ways; provides opportunities for students to think and reflect on important contemporary spiritual, moral and ethical issues

B. Administration of Christian Studies

Policy

Each school is required to have a Christian Studies policy that is grounded in the LEA statement *Christian Studies in the Lutheran School.* The policy describes the purpose and practice of Christian Studies in the school and should be reviewed regularly. It includes statements on the following:

- school's vision for Christian Studies
- statement about the purpose of Christian Studies
- leadership and staffing
- teaching and learning
- timetabling
- resourcing
- assessing and reporting
- parents/caregivers
- role of pastors and supporting congregations
- audit and review

School-developed programs

It is an expectation of LEA that schools using school-developed programs for Christian Studies can demonstrate equivalence of learning with the Christian Studies Curriculum Framework (CSCF). A school-developed program will need to show what students will know and be able to do to achieve the learning statements of the framework.

Whole-school plan

Each school is required to develop a whole-school plan that maps the strands, key ideas and learning statements covered within each Band. Schools are encouraged to involve teachers in the development of the whole-school plan. Each plan needs to be flexible and dynamic, responsive to the changing needs of the school, its students and its context. Regular review of the whole-school plan is critical.

Time allocation

The Christ-centred nature of Lutheran schools and early childhood services encompasses devotions, worship and Christian Studies. Christian Studies is a learning area and belongs to 'the formal curricular program of the school and as such should operate within the same parameters as other learning areas with appropriate timetabling, budget, staffing and resourcing' [BLEA, 2004].

Early childhood services

The key ideas and principles of the CSCF underpin the programs and daily life provided for and by those involved in Lutheran early childhood services. The CSCF is integrated across the Foundation/Early Learning areas of early childhood education and care. Teaching the key ideas of the CSCF provides focused learning opportunities for the whole class or small groups, planned and facilitated by the teacher/leader. There may be a set time each day, the length of which will depend on the developmental stages of children in general and the specific group of children in particular. Devotion time is seen as worship time and is not included in the time allocation of Christian Studies.

Primary and secondary schools

The Board for Lutheran Education Australia (BLEA) policy is that all schools have a minimum of 90 minutes of formal Christian Studies per week. This does not include the time allocated to class or school worship. Christian Studies is considered a learning area and should receive the same timetabling considerations as other curriculum areas. The manner in which the allocated time for Christian Studies (decided on by each school and allowing for BLEA policy requirements) is organised on the weekly timetable, is to reflect the high status of the subject implicit in the CSCF document, as well as the nature of the subject as a legitimate discipline of academic study.

The allocated time in primary schools is to be divided into significant blocks of teaching time. It is imperative that secondary schools allocate sufficient time for teachers and students to complete the course as outlined in the CSCF with academic, theological and pedagogical integrity.

APPENDIX 3

ETHOS → EDUCATIONAL FRAMEWORK ← PARADIGMS

We believe

- the Bible is the supreme authority for Christian faith and life
- the Holy Spirit works through the teaching of God's word in our schools to lead people to know and trust in God as Creator, Redeemer, Sanctifier
- all people are sinful and saved by grace through faith in Christ
- because Christians live in grace, all they do is for God's glory not theirs
- each person is a unique creation of God and a person loved by God
- all useful knowledge and learning is God's gift to people for their wellbeing
- service to others through actions and relationships is a reflection of & response to God's love for all

And because of this we value as core

- the Bible as the authority informing what we do and teach
- the work of the Holy Spirit in the life of each person
- forgiveness, being forgiven and reconciliation
- that God, by grace shown through Jesus loves, accepts and values each person
- the uniqueness and worth of each person
- God's gifts of knowledge and learning
- a spirit of service reflecting God's action in our lives
- Value-based learning is further developed by contextual values particular to individual school communities

Therefore, Lutheran schools

- see everything we are and do in relation to God
- see each member of our school community as someone in relation to God

This understanding of the identity of each person before God motivates us to:

- develop the whole person
- strive for the best
- care for each person
- help each student grow in the assurance of their God-given worth and purpose
- accept the need of discipline for the well-being of the individual living in community
- reflect characteristics of God
- create learning contexts incorporating values that reflect God's relationship with his world

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(Insert school mission statement here)

Lutheran schools aim to encourage and support students, informed and sustained by the word of God, to develop their God-given talents so that they may shape and enrich their world

Meet educational authorities' requirements and state/territory, federal requirements

LIFELONG QUALITIES FOR LEARNERS

As central to their mission and ministry, Lutheran schools seek to nurture **individuals**, aware of their humanity and open to the influence of the Holy Spirit, who are growing in and living according to a cohesive worldview

while

Living in community and reflecting characteristics of God through core values, especially love, justice, compassion, forgiveness, service, humility, courage, hope, quality and appreciation

and

Contributing to communities by being:

- self-directed, insightful investigators and learners
- discerning, resourceful problem solvers and implementers
- adept, creative producers and contributors
- open, responsive communicators and facilitators
- principled, resilient leaders and collaborators
- caring, steadfast supporters and advocates

Beliefs about learners

- All learners are valued for who they are and whose they are
- All learners need encouragement and deserve respect
- Learners learn in different ways and at different rates
- All learners have the ability to learn and learn best when
- they experience success
- they take responsibility for their own learning
- they can work both independently and collaboratively
- subject matter is meaningful
- high, explicit learning expectations are present
- they are authentically assessed and appropriately challenged
- Learners need to learn how to learn and think
- Collaborative partnerships between parents / caregivers and schools support learners and learning

Beliefs about learning

- Learning goes beyond the academic: it includes the spiritual, physical, emotional and social and has a transforming role
- Learning has affective and volitional dimensions as well as cognitive
- Learning is lifelong
- Learning involves learners progressing through developmental cycles
- Learning is facilitated when individual needs of the student are met
- Learning occurs in a context and is driven by curiosity, need and inquiry
- Learning builds on previous knowledge, experiences and understanding

Beliefs about learning communities

- All people are learners
- Safe and supportive learning environments facilitate active learning
- Effective learning communities respect diversity and encourage reflective practice and productive feedback
- Learning communities are strengthened by having a shared vision and common core beliefs
- Learning communities reflect upon and respond to the world of today in ways that enable their members to face the future with confidence
- Learning cultures need to be intentionally developed

Lutheran EDUCATION Australia

APPENDIX 4

THE PEDAGOGY DESIGN PROCESS

is the process which transmits the content and intent of the CSCF, developing high quality listening, teaching and learning – dynamic and unfolding, developing religious literacy – a place where old and new work together to create meaningful education

Goals of the Pedagogy...	Supported by Essential Elements...		Put Into Practice...	With Specific Strategies...
FACILITATION AUTHENTICITY IMAGINATION FLEXIBILITY many ways of expressing and engaging with spirituality of young people, different learning journeys SUPPORT to become faith-filled and hope-filled people EMPOWERMENT to make choices about direction of learning ENGAGEMENT student focused/centred, serving the interests and needs of students – does course resonate with life questions, concerns, hopes of students? PARTICIPATION RISK TAKING students are taken to new and unfamiliar places CONNECTIONS make links between learner's story and biblical story, real life – search for personal meaning TRANSFORMATION assist in transformation of self and world – change student world view FUTURE FOCUSED the kind of persons we want students to become GROWTH more than acquisition of knowledge, skills, understanding – acquiring values, spiritual maturity, relational life with self, others, the environment, God INVITATION	SUPPORTIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT Growing individuals and learning communities Teachers as trusting planners, listeners, facilitators and innovators; analytical, reflective and intuitive practitioners and researchers	• inclusive of all students • respects and celebrates difference • values student perspectives and choices • listens to many voices • creates opportunities for negotiation, participation • draws on collective wisdom; collaboration of strengths • creates active learners • expert knowledge of students + context + theology + subject matter + pedagogical practice • learners on a journey • imagine, plan, lead, facilitate, negotiate, support, provoke, give feedback, celebrate	APPROACHES & METHODOLOGIES • inquiry approaches • integration of CS with other learning areas • integrating stories of faith tradition with contemporary life stories • approaches that integrate relational, cognitive, affective and spiritual dimensions to promote connectedness, meaning and empathy (dispositions) • using experience as a way towards deeper understanding • teaching through the arts • creating a religiously literate/rich environment • hermeneutics and exegesis of biblical texts • dialogical discourse DEVELOPING UNITS OF WORK • built around rich topics and contexts • address student questions • accommodate range of learning styles • meet diverse needs • offer multiple challenges • encourage learner to take control of their learning • enable student to go on journey of understanding • personal relevance • stimulate critical, lateral thinking ASSESSMENT clear descriptions of standards of performance • allow learners to demonstrate breadth and depth of learning • assist learners to be successful • analysis of student work to establish what students need to know and give a rich data on development of student learning • listening to student discussions, recording responses to key ideas • assessment for learning, as learning, of learning	• cooperative, small-group work • problem-solving • Bloom's Taxonomy • de Bono's 6 Thinking Hats • Thinker's Keys • action-research process • Multiple Intelligences • De Bono's CoRT • rich use of wide range of multi-modal resources (visually and aurally stimulating) • silence and stillness exercises • paired discussion • practical service activities • allowing students to experience different group compositions • setting up classroom furniture to foster discussion or encourage quiet talk or individual reflection • provide a multiplicity of assessment tasks to demonstrate learning statements • reflective journaling • mind mapping • components of complex thinking – critical, creative, caring, analytical
	HIGH INTELLECTUAL QUALITY	• fosters open, critical dialogue, encourages creativity, imagination, curiosity • opportunities for reflection and action • higher order thinking – mind stretching • independent thinking • evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of a range of concepts and positions • valuing the unexpected		
	MEANING MAKING	• theology grounded in biblical text, Lutheran Confessions, human spirituality • search for truth, meaning, value • spiritual intelligence • learns from wider community, including religious community • connects with other learning • acquiring language of ritual, symbol, beliefs, practices		
	A course that contributes to the SHAPING AND DEVELOPING OF THE WHOLE PERSON '... individuals, aware of their humanity and open to the influence of the Holy Spirit who are growing in and living according to a cohesive worldview' (LQL core statement) The kind of people we want our students to be	LIFELONG QUALITIES FOR LEARNERS • emotional stability • spiritual maturity • affective sensitivity • intellectual quality • relational empathy Set in context of wider community • cultural awareness • contributes to community – attitude of service • integration of faith and life • focus on inner and outer lives of the student		

APPENDIX 5

This statement applies the Lifelong Qualities for Learners statement of attributes and abilities to Christian Studies

Christian Studies End Statements for Lifelong Qualities for Learners

Lifelong Qualities for Learners provides a framework through which all learning experiences, including those planned for in Christian Studies can be considered in the Lutheran school. The knowledge, processes and skills identified and developed in the Christian Studies Curriculum Framework (CSCF) will contribute in significant ways to the growing and nurturing of students. Therefore, in Christian Studies, the Lifelong Qualities for Learners will find expression in students who, as...

Self-directed, insightful investigators and learners

- frame and ask questions that guide exploration of issues and help form deeper understandings of Christianity and its significance
- access different types of resources as a way of gathering information, eg, use the web, Bible concordances, newspaper and magazine articles
- plan, organise and manage their own learning and work habits
- identify and examine Christian beliefs and their implications for life, Christian contexts and practices, and the way Christianity relates to other religions and an increasingly secular society
- critically examine and reflect on contemporary religious and social issues from different perspectives
- identify patterns of belief and practice that have shaped and influenced their lives
- reflect on the significance of Christian beliefs for themselves and others
- develop awareness of the valuable contribution Christian beliefs can give to life and humanity/society

Discerning, resourceful problem solvers and implementers

- locate and use a wide range of information, tools and resources to thoroughly analyse the factors and interrelatedness of issues that affect the quality of individual and communal life in local/global communities
- provide reasoned justification for choices and solutions to problems considering Christian perspectives
- consider fresh ways of applying the principles of the gospel to life and issues
- identify and employ strategies that promote peace and justice to solve problems impacting on life in local/global communities
- engage in practical projects that promote peace and justice in society
- evaluate consequences and implications – ethical, social, economic, political and environmental – of alternative solutions to issues and problems

Adept, creative producers and contributors

- generate innovative ideas, products and services which meet or exceed agreed-upon standards of excellence and have value for others
- locate and use available resources to create constructive courses of action, reflecting ethical principles
- construct and apply knowledge and generalisations to create meaning and communicate ideas about Christianity, religion, spirituality and faith
- give of their time and talents to undertake activities and projects which benefit others and improve the quality of life in their communities

Open, responsive communicators and facilitators

- foster a respectful, inclusive atmosphere in which people can communicate confidently and with trust
- solicit and listen to information and opinions from others to form deeper understandings of issues and possibilities
- communicate effectively and confidently using appropriate religious terminology in a range of settings
- confidently articulate their own point of view based on reasoning, interaction and inclusion while being sensitive to different opinions
- use a variety of communication skills and forms individually or in groups to process and share information, ideas, feelings and understandings
- encourage and support others in seeking and achieving agreement on a course of action

Principled, resilient leaders and collaborators

- develop leadership skills that reflect Christian values, ethics and servanthood
- identify and examine key issues or conditions that affect the quality of life in their local and global communities
- relate to others with compassion, sensitivity and empathy
- treat the environment with respect and care
- demonstrate responsibility for their action and reflect on their moral judgments
- practice discernment and commitment to truth
- develop and practise effective interpersonal skills in order to relate to others in peaceful and non-discriminatory ways in their own contexts and beyond
- show respect and tolerance of all people and other belief structures

Caring, steadfast supporters and advocates

- value all people as precious creations of God
- actively promote peace, justice and reconciliation in relationships with others in local and global communities
- apply a well-thought-out moral/Christian framework to ethical issues confronting their local and global communities
- treat themselves and others with consideration, respecting differences in viewpoints, values and beliefs
- cultivate a respect and understanding for different religious views and the communities in which they are expressed
- work in partnership with others to formulate common goals and ways of working together interdependently
- recognise the importance of stewardship
- defend and promote what is worthy, even in the face of criticism and adversity

APPENDIX 6

Summary of Key Ideas and Learning Statements for Each Band Level

KEY IDEAS :: ALL BANDS			
CHRISTIAN BELIEFS (CB)	**Key Idea 1** Christians believe God is one God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit	**Key Idea 2** The person and work of Jesus the Christ is central to Christianity	**Key Idea 3** A Christian worldview is shaped by the biblical teaching of sin and grace
CHRISTIAN CHURCH (CC)	**Key Idea 1** Christians believe the Bible is God's word	**Key Idea 2** The Christian community is shaped by and shapes its cultural and historical contexts	**Key Idea 3** Christians pray, worship and celebrate the sacraments
CHRISTIAN LIVING (CL)	**Key Idea 1** Christians believe that God creates people to live in relationship with him and with each other	**Key Idea 2** Christians are called to love and serve all people	**Key Idea 3** Christians have a responsibility in and for the world
CHRISTIANITY IN THE WORLD (CW)	**Key Idea 1** Religious beliefs and ideas shape people's thinking and actions	**Key Idea 2** People express their spirituality in various contexts within and beyond Christianity	**Key Idea 3** People make decisions using a range of religious perspectives and ethical frameworks

BEGINNING :: LEARNING STATEMENTS

CHRISTIAN BELIEFS (CB)	**CB 1.1** Children explain their ideas about God and who God is	**CB 1.2** Children identify stories about Jesus and discuss what Jesus said and did	**CB 1.3** Children demonstrate an awareness of the Christian belief that God creates people and loves them unconditionally
CHRISTIAN CHURCH (CC)	**CC 1.1** Children tell what they learn about God and his story in the Bible	**CC 1.2** Children identify different Christian churches in their community	**CC 1.3** Children share their experiences of Christian prayer, worship and celebrations
CHRISTIAN LIVING (CL)	**CL 1.1** Children describe ways God cares for individual people	**CL 1.2** Children hear stories about God's helpers and discuss ways they are helped and can help others	**CL 1.3** Children discuss their experiences of God's world and demonstrate how they can care for it
CHRISTIANITY IN THE WORLD (CW)	**CW 1.1** Children identify and acknowledge that people think and live differently	**CW 1.2** Children begin to explore spirituality by describing experiences of awe and wonder	**CW 1.3** Children make connections between their actions and consequences for themselves and others

BAND A :: LEARNING STATEMENTS

CHRISTIAN BELIEFS (CB)	**CB 2.1** Students discuss and describe Christian beliefs about God and the blessings God gives people	**CB 2.2** Students gather and present information about the life and teachings of Jesus	**CB 2.3** Students analyse rescue stories from the Bible
CHRISTIAN CHURCH (CC)	**CC 2.1** Students investigate and explain significant features of the Bible and its importance for Christians	**CC 2.2** Students draw conclusions about the purposes of the Christian church in the local community	**CC 2.3** Students research and describe key Christian practices and celebrations
CHRISTIAN LIVING (CL)	**CL 2.1** Students investigate and represent people's relationships with God and with each other	**CL 2.2** Students gather information about how God helps all people and describe how God equips people to help others	**CL 2.3** Students explore and describe what it means to live and care for the world
CHRISTIANITY IN THE WORLD (CW)	**CW 2.1** Students identify and find out about religious groups in their local community	**CW 2.2** Students investigate spirituality by describing how Christians experience the presence of God in the world	**CW 2.3** Students explore and outline ways Christians make decisions about how to live

BAND B :: LEARNING STATEMENTS

CHRISTIAN BELIEFS (CB)	**CB 3.1** Students explore and report on Christian beliefs about the nature of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit	**CB 3.2** Students research the social and cultural context in which Jesus lived and draw conclusions about how he chose to respond to people and events	**CB 3.3** Students investigate and summarise what the Bible says about sin and grace
CHRISTIAN CHURCH (CC)	**CC 3.1** Students recognise and analyse biblical textual features and investigate the purpose of the Bible	**CC 3.2** Students research key events in the history of Christianity and reflect on their significance over time and place	**CC 3.3** Students investigate and describe the purposes and significance of worship and sacramental practices of the Lutheran church
CHRISTIAN LIVING (CL)	**CL 3.1** Students examine and reflect on the belief that God creates people to live in community	**CL 3.2** Students investigate and analyse how God motivates, equips and uses Christians to serve others	**CL 3.3** Students explore and respond to the Christian belief that God has given people responsibility for the world
CHRISTIANITY IN THE WORLD (CW)	**CW 3.1** Students research and describe the relationship between Christianity and Judaism	**CW 3.2** Students explore and reflect on expressions of Christian spirituality as described in the New Testament and experienced in the school community	**CW 3.3** Students describe connections between what Christians believe and the decisions they make

BAND C :: LEARNING STATEMENTS

CHRISTIAN BELIEFS (CB)	**CB 4.1** Students analyse Christian beliefs about the ways God reveals himself as one God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit	**CB 4.2** Students investigate and evaluate the significance of Jesus the Christ, his life, death and resurrection for Christians	**CB 4.3** Students examine and reflect on the impact of sin, evil and grace in the world
CHRISTIAN CHURCH (CC)	**CC 4.1** Students develop skills to examine scripture and analyse its cultural and historical contexts	**CC 4.2** Students examine the development of Christian communities to compare how beliefs and practices of these communities reflect their social and historical contexts	**CC 4.3** Students compare and contrast the origins, intention and diversity of Christian worship practices
CHRISTIAN LIVING (CL)	**CL 4.1** Students draw conclusions about the influence of the other on self-identity in light of Christian beliefs about the worth of the individual	**CL 4.2** Students analyse the concept of Christian love and service as a response to faith	**CL 4.3** Students explore ways Christians interpret and act on their calling as stewards in God's world
CHRISTIANITY IN THE WORLD (CW)	**CW 4.**1 Students compare ideas and beliefs about God and the nature of human beings in monotheistic religions	**CW 4.2** Students examine people's need for spirituality and identify how Australians seek to fulfil it	**CW 4.3** Students apply decision-making processes to ethical issues and explain how and why people hold different ethical positions

BAND D :: LEARNING STATEMENTS

CHRISTIAN BELIEFS (CB)	**CB 5.1** Students explore and reflect on the nature of God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit – as creator and sustainer of each individual and all things	**CB 5.2** Students analyse and interpret the message and the identity of Jesus the Christ for all people	**CB 5.3** Students apply Christian beliefs about the intrinsic value of human life within the context of sin and evil
CHRISTIAN CHURCH (CC)	**CC 5.1** Students examine the nature and purpose of the Bible as God's inspired word and critically discuss its relevance to contemporary contexts	**CC 5.2** Students critique the interaction of the Christian church with society, past and present	**CC 5.3** Students analyse worship, the sacraments and prayer as vital to the Christian experience
CHRISTIAN LIVING (CL)	**CL 5.1** Students analyse Christian beliefs about the responsibilities of living in relationship with God, self and others	**CL 5.2** Students reflect on the concept of Christian vocation and its significance for self and others	**CL 5.3** Students apply principles of Christian stewardship to social, political, environmental and economic issues
CHRISTIANITY IN THE WORLD (CW)	**CW 5.1** Students identify philosophical approaches and religious beliefs and explain how they influence individuals and societies	**CW 5.2** Students research secular and religious spirituality and evaluate their impact on societies past and present	**CW 5.3** Students analyse and compare perspectives of different ethical and religious frameworks on contemporary ethical issues

BAND E :: LEARNING STATEMENTS

CHRISTIAN BELIEFS (CB)	**CB 6.1** Students examine Christian beliefs about the nature and actions of God and evaluate their relevance to daily life	**CB 6.2** Students research, analyse and discuss claims that Christians make about Jesus the Christ	**CB 6.3** Students propose a response to crises and conflicts in the world, applying a Christian understanding of sin and grace
CHRISTIAN CHURCH (CC)	**CC 6.1** Students justify their responses to challenges presented by different ways in which biblical text is read and interpreted	**CC 6.2** Students assess various contexts and challenges facing the Christian church today and propose possible future paths for the church	**CC 6.3** Students explore and discuss Christian beliefs about the meaning and mystery of sacrament for Christians
CHRISTIAN LIVING (CL)	**CL 6.1** Students evaluate ways God-given structures foster the proper functioning of individual and communal life	**CL 6.2** Students analyse and respond to ways in which Christians and others are challenged to serve, respect and value all people	**CL 6.3** Students critique Christian, individual and community responses to needs of the world and develop and defend a personal position
CHRISTIANITY IN THE WORLD (CW)	**CW 6.1** Students review and respond to the dialogue between Christianity and a range of religious and philosophical worldviews	**CW 6.2** Students analyse and reflect on the relevance of spirituality in people's quest for meaning	**CW 6.3** Students evaluate and apply theoretical ethical frameworks to complex, competing claims of real-life situations

APPENDIX 7

Sample Unit Planner

UNIT TITLE/TOPIC				BAND	DURATION OF UNIT
				YEAR GROUP	TIME ALLOCATION
CB	CC	CL	CW	KEY IDEA(S)	LEARNING STATEMENT
					Written in full with strand(s) clearly identified

UNIT OVERVIEW (PERSONAL SCOPE STATEMENT) DESCRIBE JOURNEY OF UNIT	LINKS TO OTHER CURRICULUM AREAS
1. Write one sentence that clearly outlines the unit. 2. In one sentence state the purpose and direction of the unit, providing a sense of where the unit fits in the overall CS program, its relevance to students' whole journey of learning. 3. In one sentence state the possibilities the unit opens up for future learning experiences 4. Key understandings **POSSIBLE SENTENCE STARTERS** The purpose of the unit of study is to assist students to... The central focus of the unit will be... The unit will build on... The unit will extend the students' understandings, skills and attitudes of... The unit will prepare students to... The unit will challenge students to...	

DEEP UNDERSTANDING/S	ESSENTIAL QUESTION	ASSESSMENT (AS, OF, FOR)
In the presentation and exploration of facts, concepts, biblical material what significant understanding/s will students gain in this unit of what is at the heart of the Christian faith? →	Will the question lead students on a single path of investigation or provide a range of pathways? Which aspects of the learning statement(s) will students be led to investigate? Does the question/statement generate other significant questions? Will the question lead students to think deeply and creatively about the content and ideas in the learning statement? Will the question forward the students' learning from their existing knowledge? Will the investigation spurred by the question help students make connections with other aspects of life and learning? What kinds of actions and responses could the investigation of the question lead to? →	Summary of assessment opportunities List formative and summative assessment

LEARNER PROFILE(S)	STUDENT QUESTIONS	RESOURCES /LINKS TO LIFE
Prior learning/interests/needs of students What aspects of your students' development, background, attitudes, learning styles and understanding do you need to take into account? How are you going to find out what your students already know and believe about the unit? → What activity are you going to use to find this out?	What questions are students asking in relation to chosen learning statements? How will you find out what questions students have? Note the questions that emerge at various points in the unit ↑	List the people, texts, local resources, biblical material (e.g. biblical references from LIFE), audio-visual, use of the web and other related technology which will enable students to engage in their journey of inquiry and build their skills, understandings and attitudes. Skim Introductory Activities in LIFE Menus for ideas to engage students in the first steps of inquiry.

CONTRIBUTION TO LIFELONG QUALITIES for LEARNERS		
❑ Investigators and learners ❑ problem solvers and implementers ❑ producers and contributors	❑ communicators and facilitators ❑ leaders and collaborators ❑ supporters and advocates	These will be evidenced by /skills to be developed (e.g. we will be advocating when ....)

IDENTIFY SPECIFIC KNOWLEDGE AND ELABORATIONS NEEDED TO SCOPE CONTENT OF UNIT ("students know...knowledge and elaborations")	SEQUENCE OF LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES	IDENTIFY THE LEARNING THAT STUDENTS WILL HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO DEMONSTRATE ("students can...ways of knowing")
Which key concepts/knowledge are the focus of the unit?	Skim Introductory Activities in LIFE Menus for ideas to engage students in the first steps of inquiry.	Assessment as, for, of
Will this be the students' first or subsequent encounter with the key idea at this band level?	Differentiation/links to Lifelong Qualities for Learners (LQL)	What evidence will you gather and analyse to arrive at an informed decision about level of achievement of learning statement? (assessment of learning)
How will the unit build on prior learning?	Identify learning strategies, thinking skills, learning activities that will be embedded in the unit of work.	Is evidence taken from a variety of sources? – observation of students at work, individually and in groups? Process of consultation with range of people? Analysis of student work samples both written and spoken? Self and peer assessment?
	How will the learning opportunities incorporate students' context and questions, interests?	Do assessment opportunities flow meaningfully from learning opportunities and foster student learning?
	Are lessons sequenced to maximise development of concepts and knowledge?	At what key points in the unit will assessment information be collected?
	Are there opportunities for students to demonstrate and apply their growing understanding?	Are assessment opportunities varied, enabling students to demonstrate what they know and can do?
	Which of the learning opportunities and resultant work samples will you be able to use as indicators of achievement?	Are there multiple assessment opportunities for each learning statement?
	Do the learning experiences relate to the learning statements being assessed and allow for demonstration of what the student knows and can do?	By what criteria will achievement of learning statement be judged?
		What tasks will give an indication of student's progress in achieving the learning statement(s)? Are students aware of this? To which part of the learning statement is assessment related?
	Identify how the selected values, attributes and abilities of the LQLs are being addressed	What aspects of students' work indicate increasing achievement of learning statement? (assessment as learning)
	Identify activities and strategies used to meet specific needs of individual/ groups of students	What techniques will be used to record the evidence of student achievement?
	Which components of LQL in particular are being addressed in the unit?	What distinguishes the work sample of a student achieving the learning statement from a student not yet achieving the learning statement?
	Which values, attributes and abilities will be developed through the chosen LQL components?	If students are given a culminating, summative piece of assessment, will there be opportunities in the unit for students to demonstrate their developing mastery of the learning statement(s)?
	Identify learning opportunities that focus on and develop the selected components of LQL.	Where and how in work samples used to indicate achievement of learning statement have students demonstrated these key concepts/knowledge?
	How will they be introduced to students?	Which assessment opportunities can be used to inform and shape teaching practice? (assessment for learning)
	How will they be embedded in unit?	
	Which learning experiences will develop them?	

EVALUATION OF UNIT

Was the purpose of the unit fulfilled?

Was the unit relevant, engaging, challenging and developmentally appropriate??

Were the resources adequate?

Were knowledge and processes covered?

Did the assessment opportunities produce work samples that demonstrate achievement or part thereof of outcome(s)?

What further questions do students have as a result of their learning in this unit?

What did you learn from students' evaluation of the unit?

Sample Unit Planner – Blank

UNIT TITLE/TOPIC				BAND	DURATION OF UNIT
				YEAR GROUP	TIME ALLOCATION
CB	CC	CL	CW	KEY IDEA(S)	LEARNING STATEMENT

UNIT OVERVIEW (PERSONAL SCOPE STATEMENT) DESCRIBE JOURNEY OF UNIT	LINKS TO OTHER CURRICULUM AREAS

DEEP UNDERSTANDING/S		ASSESSMENT (AS, OF, FOR)
→	ESSENTIAL QUESTION	→

LEARNER PROFILE(S)	STUDENT QUESTIONS	RESOURCES /LINKS TO LIFE
→	↑	

CONTRIBUTION TO LIFELONG QUALITIES for LEARNERS

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EVALUATION OF UNIT

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