



*They are like trees that grow beside a stream, that bear fruit at the right time* [Psalm 1:3]

Lutheran education is like a tree standing in rich **soil**, nourished by strong **roots**, supported by a sturdy **trunk** and producing a rich array of **flowers, fruit and foliage**.

## The soil

The tree is nourished by the rich soil of God's word, and watered by the living water of the Holy Spirit. This divine word declares that God created all things and made people in his image and it was good, very good. However people fell into sin and marred their relationship with God, each other and creation. Yet God so loved the world he sent his Son, Jesus, to be its saviour through his life, death and resurrection. God invites each person into a relationship through love and forgiveness. The Holy Spirit brings people to faith. The love of God, as shown in Jesus, inspires us to love and serve each other, speaking God's love to all and caring for our world. It is by God's grace alone that we are saved through faith grown in us by the Holy Spirit. The Father is our creator and preserver, Jesus is our saviour and redeemer and the Spirit is our nurturer and teacher.

## The roots

The tree has strong roots in the theology of the Lutheran church which is grounded in God's word, which reveals God at work in the universe. Scripture alone, grace alone and faith alone are the enduring Reformation messages. God gathers his people into community, the church, where they are nourished by word and sacraments called the means of grace. Worship, the theology of the cross and a call to service are central. The brokenness of humanity and the fractured state of creation are recognised and yet God's grace and forgiveness abounds. Each individual is intentionally created by God, in God's image and uniquely gifted to respond to the needs of the world. God's continuing creative activity is seen as he cares for the world in two ways, through society and through the church. Lutheran education flourishes in this dual context, equipping students for citizenship and inviting and nurturing spiritual growth.

## The trunk

The tree is supported by a sturdy trunk of Lutheran educational principles which grow out of the roots of the Church's theology and the strong Lutheran tradition of teaching and learning. The Christian faith provides a lens for viewing life and living with God and one another. Theology is relevant to and informs all educational practice, and that revelation and reason are both valued. All members of the community are uniquely gifted and called and encouraged to develop their gifts and abilities. Parents are acknowledged and supported in their role as primary faith nurturers and educators of their children. Learning is a divine gift and is seen as getting to know and understand God's creation which is held in awe and wonder. Teachers are both educators and ministers. Excellence in education integrates the intellectual, spiritual, social, emotional and physical. Learning is seen as transformational and creativity and excellence is encouraged. Preparation for the future is a focus and hope empowers students to face the future with confidence. Vocation is regarded as service to God and people. Social justice and care for the environment are important and hope and restoration are key themes.

## The flowers, fruit and foliage

The tree produces a rich array of flowers, foliage and fruit in its educational practice. Lutheran emphases are clearly articulated. Throughout Lutheran education communities there is an observable Christian culture permeated by the nourishing sap of grace. Leaders experience an understanding of Lutheran theology in dialogue with education in their formation. Staff members are provided spiritual nourishment and theological knowledge. Christian values are experienced, taught and nurtured. Names, rituals, symbols and artwork witness to a Christian orientation and ethos. Schools and early childhood services are regarded as communities of inquiry and learning is promoted as lifelong practice. Collaboration and a search for truth are distinguishing features of learning. Effective and innovative educational practice is known and utilised. Christian Studies is essential in the curriculum. Service learning provides learning for justice, sustainability and action. The ethical life is encouraged. Cross-cultural understanding in Indigenous and global contexts is pursued. Schools and early childhood services are open to all as communities of connection, welcoming places where pastoral care is provided as a high priority. Lutheran education fosters interaction with the church and its work and mission are promoted. Lutheran education provides a safe place, and provides justice and good order. Respect for differing opinions is practised. Service and love is a way of life.