An appeal has been launched to help Lutheran Community Care restore its Kwatja Etatha playgroup in Alice Springs, which was recently stripped of its funding by the Federal Government.

The funding cut has forced LCC to stop running the successful playgroup, which gave hundreds of disadvantaged children in Alice Springs a positive start in life. Local families and the Lutheran community in Alice Springs have been devastated by the closure of this ministry, so it is hoped a one-off appeal can raise $200,000 to get it running again.

For 10 years, the playgroup was held at Alice Springs Lutheran Church and targeted Indigenous children aged zero to four, but people of all backgrounds were welcome. About 30 children would attend each session at the church. A mobile van also provided sessions to four town camps (Little Sisters, Hidden Valley, Karnte and Larapinta Valley) and the community of Amoonguna, 21km from Alice Springs.

All staff in this ministry were Indigenous and had a deep knowledge of culture and understanding of language. Sadly, eight staff members, all local Aboriginal women, lost their jobs when the funding was cut.

Local knowledge and language were vital factors in providing a comfortable and welcoming environment. Many families also viewed the church as a safe, neutral place to meet, and this connection resulted in a number of playgroup children being baptised at the church.

Congregations are being encouraged to support this appeal during the SA-NT Convention of Synod in May. The offering at Sunday worship will be donated to the appeal and delegates/pastors can bring their church/parish donations with them.

Lutheran Community Care asks that you join your hearts with theirs and donate to this ministry, so it can continue to reflect God’s love in the Alice Springs community.

LCC Op Shop opens in Valley View

LUTHERAN Community Care held an official opening in April for its new op shop in Valley View, which attracted a crowd of more than 100 people.

Visitors enjoyed browsing through a large selection of quality items, lunch and good coffee, while Life FM Roadies supported the event.

All proceeds from the op shop help support disadvantaged people in South Australia and the Northern Territory.

Lutheran Community Care has been blessed with some fantastic volunteers at the new shop, many of them from neighbouring Lutheran congregations.

Valley View joins the list of LCC op shops, with others located at Blair Athol, Smithfield, Payneham, Swan Reach and Alice Springs.

Individual donations can be made to this appeal. If you would like to help give children in Alice Springs a positive start in life, contact Lutheran Community Care on (08) 8269 9333 or visit www.lccare.org.au/donate-now.
WELCOME to Lutheran Community Care's Synod Newsletter

Hearts Burning for those in need in our community

Like the disciples on the Emmaus Road, the work of Lutheran Community Care is inspired by the great love that God has for us, which we want to pass on to others through acts of love.

This work of building strength and resilience with individuals, families and communities happens in many ways at Lutheran Community Care. Our 140 staff and 550 volunteers represent your church as they go about their work every day.

In this newsletter, you can share in our excitement at opening a new Op Shop in Valley View and our disappointment in losing funding for the Kwatja Etatha playgroup in Alice Springs. However, we are determined to overcome this setback and have the playgroup up and running again for the sake of families and children in the Centre, but we need your help.

In our excitement at opening a new Op Shop in Valley View and our disappointment in losing funding for the Kwatja Etatha playgroup in Alice Springs. However, we are determined to overcome this setback and have the playgroup up and running again for the sake of families and children in the Centre, but we need your help.

Hearts Burning for Children in the Centre

Two of our Central Australian staff will be with us at Synod, please visit them at our stall and talk about what the playgroup means to the community. You can help by making a donation and spreading the word by wearing our pin with the image painted by artist Ruth Cook, a participant and supporter of Playgroup.

Just as Jesus was made known to the disciples in the context of hospitality, we see much of our work as an invitation to come to a safe place, to be able to share the pain and the difficulties that life brings, and to have someone walk alongside you while you learn to walk confidently again. We see this every day in the families from so many backgrounds, those who come to Ingle Farm Family Zone and find community in a new land, the Foster Carers who welcome children who have been traumatised into their homes, and those experiencing homelessness who receive support and a roof over their heads.

Hearts Burning to serve in the future

This will be my last District Synod as Director of Lutheran Community Care. When LCC formed in 1969, the foundation volunteers said they worked hard and served God because they had the ‘same coloured’ hearts. Ever since that time, thousands of people have experienced the love of God through volunteer and professional support. During my time in the organisation, I have witnessed the selfless service of staff, volunteers and supporters and the way in which that service changes lives and enables people to have a new start. My prayer for the future is, the people of God will keep those coloured hearts burning in service to the many neighbours in need within our community in SA and NT.

Thank you for your prayers and support.

Helen Lockwood
Executive Director, LCC

“They worked hard and served God because they had the ‘same coloured’ hearts”