



Bishop's Post *February March 2021*

NELCSA **The NELCSA Logo explained.**

The Logo is an abstract representation of the Luther rose. This places emphasis on the Lutheran roots of NELCSA. The cross dominates and highlights that Christ is not only at the centre, but that he impacts on all aspects of our church.

The irregular semicircles represent the different people and congregations that come together opening up towards the centre point.

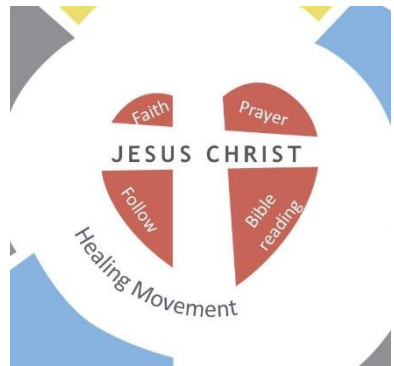
The cross breaks the barriers of the enclosure, allowing movement in and out of the circle.

The shapes are uneven, acknowledging our differences and also our flaws - and yet we are Church of Christ!

During the next few Bishop's Posts I will use this logo to show what NELCSA is about, where we see our purpose and where we hope to be heading as church.

Today I will start at the centre, the heart of NELCSA and the Church at large.

Jesus Christ is the centre and foundation of Church. In him the kind heart of God is visible, and through him we receive salvation. This is represented by the heart, a heart transformed by Christ, who died to set us free. Christ can "break a heart of stone" (Ezekiel 36, 26) and turn it into a heart of compassion. We are invited to personally receive him in faith, repent, and learn to live a life with him. The four parts highlight four important areas of our personal life as Christian:



Faith is our response to Christ's offer of salvation. I learn to trust him more and more and rely on his promises.

Prayer: Prayer is a crucial "life link" to the Lord of the Church. I can talk to him - anywhere, any time! No lockdown, no laws can stop me from talking to the Lord on a daily basis.

Bible study: NELCSA promotes a firm knowledge of the Bible. Young and old are encouraged to daily read in the Bible and study it. Daily exposure to the Scriptures influences my thinking and my actions.

Following Christ: I learn to live out what he teaches me. Christ is constantly at work not only in me, but through me.

As we are transformed by Christ, we become a blessing to non-Christians through the way that we live and act. Our integrity and sincerity radiate the passion that Christ has for this world. “Just as the Father sent me, so do I send you” Jesus said (John 20, 21). The way that we live becomes the strongest testimony and invitation to the love of Christ. This is not limited to our Lutheran Church. Together with all our Christian neighbours, friends and colleagues, no matter from which church, we form a healing movement. Our lives and actions proclaim that Christ is Lord (Philippians 2,11).

In the next Bishop’s Post I will focus on the fellowship that grows out of our Faith in Christ.

Horst Müller

News from NELCSA

Pastor Dr Reiner Focke has commenced his task as pastor in Augsburg congregation. We wish the Focke Family as well as the congregation God’s blessing for this time of change and adaptation. Thank you to Pastor em. Werner Harms who helped out in Augsburg during the vacancy.

The pastor’s post in **Trinity Zululand** is now vacant. The congregation cannot afford a full pastor’s post, which complicates the process. We pray that God will guide the way forward.

The **Election of the next Bishop** will happen at the NELCSA Synod on 8 October 2021. As part of the preparation a webinar is planned for 30 January at 9h00, during which church council will give an overview of the way forward for NELCSA and the expectations from the next bishop. Thank you to the 707 people who took the time to complete the questionnaire on the post of bishop.

The purpose of the webinar is to assist congregations in deciding whom to nominate for this post at their Annual General Meetings. The details on the webinar can be found on our NELCSA web page.

The process may not be confused with an election campaign where candidates and supporters try to win votes and belittle others. Rather it is a time for prayer and reflection: Lord Jesus Christ, where are you leading us? Whom do you want to call into this position?

May the Lord bless this time!