
CELEBRATING 60 YEARS OF ST. JOHN'S GERMAN LUTHERAN CHURCH IN SPRINGVALE

St. John's German Lutheran Church had cause to celebrate on Sunday 27th March, for two very special reasons. COVID-lockdowns prevented celebrations from taking place on the actual birthday, but the delay allowed 60-year anniversary to coincide with the opening of a new extension to the existing church facilities.

On 3rd May 1959, the inaugural worship service took place in the hired facilities of the Presbyterian Church in Springvale (now known as the Uniting Church in Balmoral Ave). As soon as the manse (Pastor's residence) had been constructed in 1961, monthly Sunday services were relocated to Kallista Road. Only once construction of existing church building had been completed in April 1962 were weekly German services possible at the current site in Albert Avenue.



The purchase of adjoining land allowed for the expansion of facilities that included an on-site manse and a Multi-Purpose Hall in 1970.

December 2021 marked the completion of an extensive refurbishment of the current Multi-Purpose Hall and relocation of its kitchen facility. Construction of the new professional kitchen was made possible by funding from the Victorian state government's Multicultural Infrastructure grant program. Combined with a new foyer, this new facility comfortably offers contemporary, communal fellowship for up to 100 parishioners or patrons. With improved acoustic features and an integrated state of the art Audio-Visual installation, worship services are now delivered with greater flexibility, variety and overall enjoyment. Whilst St. John's owes its roots to traditional Lutheran German worship, it currently



offers bi-lingual services as well as contemporary evangelical English worship.



The **Vietnamese Christian Alliance Church** has been associated with St. John's for over 20 years and uses these facilities to conduct weekly services on Sunday afternoons, after its Lutheran friends have departed. This partnership has grown from strength to strength in recent years. Collaborative ecumenical services are held two or three times a year where both congregations come together in fellowship.

Sunday 27th March marked the culmination of several years of planning, preparations, meetings, drawings, design drafts, and deliberation, to say nothing of unpredictable disruptions and frustrations due to construction delays during the pandemic. This made the celebration all the more rewarding. Funding support received through the Multicultural Affairs Program is acknowledged and highly valued. The warm weather played its part to allow for outdoor dining and entertainment for children and adults alike added to the convivial atmosphere.



Distinguished guests in attendance included Mr. Michael Pearce, Honorary Consul-General of Germany, and Councillors Richard Lim, Tim Dark and Sean O'Reilly representing Greater Dandenong. It was a pleasure to have them join our celebrations. The cutting of the ribbon marking the official opening was preceded by a group photo of all visitors present on the day. St. John's looks forward to representing the Springvale community for at least another 60 years into the future.