

Community

Spring 2025 | Issue 81



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Design, Technology and Engineering Coordinator, Mr Shane Beitz, assists a St Peters Campus Reception student to drill a hole while creating a wooden birdhouse.

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SUBMISSIONS

To make a submission in the next edition please forward details to community@concordia.sa.edu.au

Community is published biannually in Autumn and Spring.

The reverse side of the mailing sheet can be used for changes of address and opportunities to be involved in the College.



A Concordia Campus student helps a Reception student from St Peters Campus to construct his wooden birdhouse.

COVER PICTURE

St Peters Campus Reception student Charlie sanding part of his wooden birdhouse during a visit to the Design, Technology and Engineering workshop at Concordia Campus.

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From the Head of College

Living Our Values – A Community Shaped by Grace

At Concordia College, we are more than just a collection of individuals. We are a community—a vibrant, connected and aspirational community that thrives on shared experiences, values and faith. This is what makes us unique. From the youngest learners in our Early Learning Centre to our Year 12 graduates preparing for their next chapter, every student, staff member and family is part of something greater than themselves.

At Concordia, our values are not simply words on a poster. They are a reflection of who we are when we are at our best—as educators, as a community and as people shaped by God’s grace. Earlier this year, we invited all staff into a conversation about our culture and the language that best describes the way we live and work together. Through these workshops, feedback and prayerful reflection, the College Leadership Team distilled six core values that we believe capture both our character and our calling: Courage, Integrity, Grace, Aspiration, Care, and Connection.

These values are anchored in our long-standing motto, *Fortiter in Re, Suaviter in Modo* — ‘Firm in Principle, Gentle in Manner’. This phrase, which has guided Concordia for over a century, reminds us to hold fast to conviction while engaging one another with kindness, humility and respect. Three of our values—Courage, Integrity and Aspiration—speak to the ‘firm’ side: grounded conviction, clarity and resolve. The other three—Grace, Care and Connection—express the ‘gentle’ side: listening, compassion and welcome. Together, they form a balanced compass for how we lead, teach and learn.

Grace sits at the heart of this compass. In 2 Corinthians 12, Paul reminds us of the sufficiency of God’s grace despite our weaknesses.



But he said to me,

“My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.”

— 2 Corinthians 12:9

This is a liberating truth: our worth is not based on performance or perfection but on the love and mercy of Christ. Grace enables us to be honest about our shortcomings, to forgive one another and to step forward in hope—even when the road ahead is uncertain. It gives us the courage to take healthy risks in our learning, the humility to admit when we are wrong and the resolve to serve others before ourselves.

As a community, we begin from a place of strength. Across our three campuses—St John’s, St Peters and Concordia—we see daily examples of students thriving in learning, forming genuine friendships and engaging in opportunities that shape both their minds and hearts. Parents and families contribute richly to our shared life, and our staff model the values we uphold. Yet education is always a journey of change. Students grow, the world shifts and our practice evolves. Holding our values at the centre allows us to navigate that change without losing our identity.

Looking ahead, our new Strategic Vision will place learning and wellbeing at the core of our life together. These are not separate from our values; they flow directly from them. Courage and Aspiration drive us to pursue excellence in learning; Care, Connection and Grace ensure that wellbeing—for students and staff alike—remains central to all we do. Integrity keeps us aligned to our mission and the Christian story that shapes it.

As we step into this next chapter, our prayer is that every member of our community—students, staff, families and Old Concordians—will find in these values both a mirror of who we are and a map for where we are going. *Firm in Principle*, *Gentle in Manner*, and always shaped by grace.

Paul Weinert

Head of College

Principals' Report

The Australian Government Department of Education and Training notes that *“high quality career education builds resilient individuals who can adapt to the evolving nature of work and manage multiple careers in their lifetime...”* (Department of Education and Training 2019). At Concordia, our Futures Program—guided by our dedicated Futures Coordinator, Mr Oppelaar—is central to this vision, helping students explore and prepare for their future with both purpose and confidence.

At our Concordia Campus, Term 3 is dedicated to looking ahead. This is when pathway planning conversations formally begin—an important step in ensuring we are not simply offering a list of subjects but creating meaningful opportunities that align with each student’s unique strengths, aspirations and passions. Our students benefit from a rich program of experiences, including individual subject counselling, tailored course recommendations, scaffolded information sessions, a subject expo and ongoing guidance from Home Class teachers.

A highlight of the term was our Futures Expo, where more than 30 professionals—from Law, Allied Health, Technology, Trades, Design and Architecture, to Science, Defence, Engineering, Business and beyond—shared their expertise and experiences through dynamic 15-minute presentations. Events like this, alongside Australian Business Week (Year 10), work experience placements and direct industry engagement opportunities—such as our involvement with the Adelaide Fringe—are designed to inspire, inform and empower our senior students as they shape their pathways through and beyond school.

We believe that the learning and real-life application of these future-work skills need to commence as early as possible. At our St John’s Campus, Year 5 students engaged in an entrepreneurial learning program in Term 2, focused on creating a profitable market stall. They began by exploring the essentials of running a business and hearing from local business owners. Students then developed a product, service or experience to appeal to their peers and pitched their ideas ‘Shark Tank’ style to a panel of experts to secure start-up funds for their business.



Over several weeks, they refined their ideas and operation of their market stalls. The culminating 'Market Day' was a huge success, with every stall making a profit and several thousand dollars being raised for charity. This engaging project sparked entrepreneurial spirit and built vital skills in collaboration, communication, problem-solving and innovation—skills our students will need and use now and in the future.

At our St Peters Campus, our EdVenture curriculum framework provides learners with the same future-focused foundations. By connecting children's natural curiosity with real-world challenges and opportunities, EdVenture nurtures creativity, problem-solving and a love of learning from the very beginning of school. This year, students have immersed themselves in hands-on projects—testing water quality and exploring pond life at the local conservation park, caring for the environment through the ELC Eco Warriors initiative, creating floral posies in our Petal and Produce group for Grandparents and Special Friends' Morning, replanting and nurturing our campus garden beds, and tending to our much-loved school chickens. These experiences not only bring joy and excitement to learning but also cultivate teamwork, responsibility and confidence—the very qualities that will support our students as they grow into adaptable, capable and future-ready young people.

Bronwyn Wilson

Principal - St Peters Campus

Paul Bannister

Principal - St John's Campus

Penny McKenzie

Principal - Concordia Campus



Reference:

The Department of Education and Training (2019) *Future Ready a student focused National Career Education Strategy*, Career Industry Council of Australia, accessed 24 September 2025. <https://cica.org.au/wp-content/uploads/Future-Ready-a-student-focused-National-Career-Education-Strategy.pdf>

Ministry

A Faith That Is Bigger Than Us

When we come into the world at birth, we immediately join something that is bigger than us. Our close family, then our extended family and friends, give us our name and our identity and help us to find our place in the world. Concordia plays a special role in this as well, shaping the lives of the students and staff in our community, and providing them with the opportunity to grow through life-changing experiences and relationships. We are certainly part of something bigger than ourselves.

In the Christian faith, this becomes even more apparent as we realise our spiritual connections run even deeper. We have seen this on a number of occasions this year, with particular highlights being the Parent Prayer Breakfast, the Bible Society Masterclass Conference, and the Youth Social and Youth Retreat events. By gathering his people together, God has helped us to make significant connections with other people we

might have otherwise never met. For these people to be part of God’s family, and for their passion to be like ours—and even an inspiration to us—has been an enormous blessing.

Seeing parents pray together, seeing our students worship together with people from other schools, and seeing Christian young people supporting one another and reading Scripture together has been a real privilege for me. That we can consider these people brothers and sisters in Christ shows that God loves making us part of something far bigger than ourselves.

Thanks to everyone who has participated in these events this year. We hope to build on these in the future and discover even more of the blessings God has in store for us.

Dale Gosden
College Pastor



Reconciliation

Continuing to Walk the Journey of Reconciliation

Concordia College continues to grow in its understanding of the importance of reconciliation, weaving it meaningfully into the life of our school across all three campuses. From classroom learning to whole-school events, our community has been actively engaged in building a culture of openness, awareness and respect.

One highlight has been the collaboration between students and Kaurna artist Sam Gollan, who worked together to design and paint a stunning mural now proudly displayed in our community garden. The mural is not only a beautiful artwork but also a lasting symbol of connection to Kaurna Country and the deep respect we hold for First Nations culture and knowledge.



During National Reconciliation Week, each campus hosted a range of activities that encouraged reflection and conversation. A College-wide Assembly brought students and staff together for a powerful event featuring a student-led Acknowledgement of Country dance, a performance from our student rock band, and a lively presentation by guest speaker and performer Scott Rathman Jnr. His storytelling and music resonated deeply, reminding us of the strength, history, and ongoing journey of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

We are proud to share that our Reconciliation Action Plan has been updated with a renewed vision for the year ahead—focused on truth-telling, cultural learning and meaningful action. Together, we walk forward in the spirit of reconciliation.

Nancy Wells

Reconciliation Action Plan Coordinator

Student Learning and Wellbeing

Rethinking Digital Technologies in the Middle School

It would be very difficult to deny that digital technologies have significantly changed our world. The proliferation of new devices and applications on those devices has the power to change the way in which we interact with the world, and learning to navigate this digital world has become a critical part of the work that schools are now undertaking.

Access to digital technologies has now become a significant 'milestone' in the life of a young person, not too dissimilar to driving a car. The big question we must ask, however, is whether we are treating these milestones with equal seriousness and significance. We do not just hand a 16-year-old the keys to their own car and let them have a go. We sit in the passenger seat alongside of them as they learn. When they have demonstrated an appropriate level of skill, we increase the level of independence that we provide them.



Just like the reverse parallel park, there are some challenges that come with using digital technologies. One set of challenges centres on distraction and addiction, and we are becoming increasingly more aware of the effects of instant gratification on the developing brain. Last year, we identified that perhaps our Middle School students were in need of some 'passenger seat moments' as well as the introduction of some 'road rules' that might better support their entry into the digital world.

At the start of this year, we launched the 'Year 7 Digital Device Ls to Ps Agreement', a structured approach to building both the technical skills and the digital citizenship habits students need. Much like a learner driver earns the right to drive unsupervised, students worked through competencies covering laptop care, safe online behaviour, cyberbullying awareness, research skills and time management. These skills were taught, practised and verified by Home Class teachers, with parents reinforcing expectations at home. Only when students demonstrated mastery did they progress from provisional to full device privileges, including taking their College laptop home.

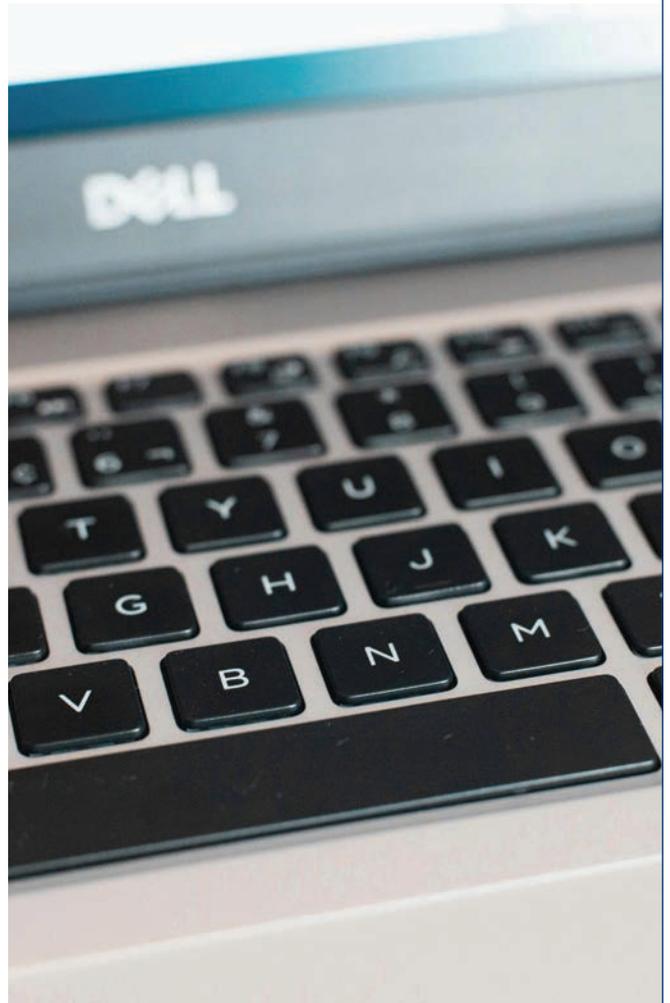
Our aim is to build responsible agency in our students as they navigate the digital world by strengthening the partnership between home and school. By setting clear expectations, providing support and gradually increasing independence, we help young people become not just 'users' of technology, but capable, ethical and discerning digital citizens. In 2026, we will host a parent information evening exploring the challenges of personal mobile devices, the risks they pose, and how families can work together to navigate this complex space.

Clay Watkins

Middle School Leader

Mathew Disher

Director of Learning & Wellbeing ELC-12



Board Update

After five years of outstanding service, Dr Loyd Fyffe recently concluded his time as Chair of the Concordia College Board. Loyd led with distinction, wisdom, steadiness, integrity, and a deep commitment to Lutheran education and Concordia's mission. We thank Loyd for his generous service, thoughtful guidance, and the clarity and calm he brought to decision-making processes.

Following Loyd's retirement, Mrs Dianne Eckermann was appointed as Chair of the Board. Dianne has served across a variety of roles in Lutheran Schools, including teacher, Head of Senior School, Principal, and Director of Leadership at Lutheran Education Australia. Dianne also taught at Concordia for 15 years. She has a long-standing connection to the College, with her three children—and three generations of her family—attending Concordia.

Mr Bruno Bellon has been elected Vice Chair. Bruno has over 30 years of experience in banking and finance. He is a dedicated member of the Concordia community—his daughter Ava graduated in 2023 and his wife Bridget is also a former student of the College.

We have also been delighted to welcome two new members:

- **Peter Pollnitz** brings strong experience in governance and community engagement.
- **Jodi Brook**, appointed through the Lutheran Church of Australia SA-NT District, brings a passion for Lutheran mission and formation.

We are truly blessed to have such a committed and capable Board overseeing the College's governance and contributing their time and expertise through service on a number of key subcommittees:

- **Dianne Eckermann** – Board Chair; *Governance Committee, Chair; Property Committee, Chair; Finance Committee; Education Liaison* (Former Director of Leadership, Lutheran Education Australia)

- **Bruno Bellon** – Board Vice Chair; *Finance Committee, Chair* (Group Treasurer, SA Power Networks)
- **Richard Fox** – *Mission and Ministry Committee, Chair* (Pastor, Glynde Lutheran Church)
- **Kerrie Swain** – *Old Concordians' Association* (General Practitioner)
- **Rina van Schalkwyk** – *Gender Equity and Inclusion Committee; Board Professional Development* (Redress Support Worker – Survivors & Mates Support Network (SAMSN))
- **Aden Miegel** – *Policy, Risk and Compliance Committee, Chair* (Principal – Planning and Development Law Specialist, Norman Waterhouse)
- **Peter Pollnitz** – *Policy, Risk and Compliance Committee* (Manager Work Health Safety & Injury Management, Workforce | Central Adelaide Local Health Network)
- **Jodi Brook** – *Mission and Ministry Committee* (Local Mission Coordinator | Lutheran Church of Australia)

In addition, there are three consultants to the Board:

- **Paul Weinert** (Head of College)
- **Olivia Hocking** (Chief Financial Officer)
- **John Strelan** (Pastor, St John's Lutheran Church Unley)

We are deeply grateful for the strong, stable and faith-aligned governance that has been a hallmark of Concordia College over many years. This dedicated team of Board members continues to provide vital guidance and support as we shape the future of the College together.

Paul Weinert
Head of College

EdVenture in Action

Education is an adventure at St Peters Campus! In Semester 2, students at our St Peters Campus have been immersed in our new curriculum framework, EdVenture. With a focus on meaningful learning experiences that are not only engaging but shaping the kind of people our young learners are becoming, EdVenture connects students to hands-on, real-world, purpose-driven experiences in a unique way. It combines service and sustainability, connecting learners to themselves, their community and the wider world.



Big Questions Lead to Small-but-Powerful Actions

Inquiry-based learning, centred around searching out answers to key questions around a central topic or idea, has long been central to our pedagogical approach. EdVenture aims to take this to an exciting new level, where students' questions provoke exploration of what it means to be active citizens whose growing knowledge makes a difference not just in their own lives, but in the world around them.

Examples so far have included:

- ELC students designing ways to reduce waste and help the natural environment at school
- Year 2/3 students learning about water, including how to care for and protect our waterways

In addition to learning aligned to the curriculum, students across all year levels are engaging in Special Interest EdVentures each fortnight. These allow children to exercise their own agency in selecting hands-on learning, problem-solving and play-based experiences that are aligned to their strengths and interests, and which are designed to foster creativity, independence and a love of learning.

Through EdVenture, we are striving to cultivate a sense of wonder, responsibility and agency, helping every learner to feel challenged, connected and empowered to make a difference.



Science Week

'Decoding the Universe' was the theme for National Science Week in 2025. Across the week, students at our Concordia Campus had several opportunities to decipher various codes through lunchtime activities, earning themselves a place in the final competition on Friday. From teams using torches to transfer messages in morse code and deciphering a quote from Steve Jobs written in binary through to parsing pigpen code, students rose to the challenges.

Scientific demonstrations were also a highlight. Interested students witnessed a high-voltage demonstration with the Van De Graff generator as well as chemistry wizardry with the whoosh bottle, oobleck and methane bubbles.

The finale on Friday saw students putting their paper plane folding skills to the test. The challenge set by our Science Coordinator, Mr Schoff, was to not only reach the sliding doors on the opposite side of the Quad, launching from the Nautilus Centre's rooftop deck, but to have the plane pass through the doors and into the Hamann building.

Despite designing some well-planned planes, sadly the crosswind meant that no planes were able to travel quite that far, although several made admirable attempts.

Well done to Maggie (Year 8), who was named the winner of the competition when her plane travelled the greatest distance, and to all who took part in Science Week 2025.

Later in Term 3, St John's Campus students celebrated Science Week with activities that saw spaces transformed into alien landscapes, an escape room, puzzle labs and galactic obstacle zones. To end the week's activities, students created colourful binary bracelets, converting a chosen message into wearable art. Thanks to all who participated in these activities, which were designed to spark wonder and exploration.

Shane Schoff
Science Coordinator



Book Week

Book Week 2025 saw students and staff embark on an exciting journey to celebrate the joy of reading through a range of activities, including our highly anticipated Reception to Year 12 Dress-up Day and Parade.

The theme for this year was ‘Book an Adventure’—a fitting reminder of the powerful way in which books can transport us to worlds and settings beyond the confines of our own personal experience.

Across the week, activities included a Living Library, an illustrator visit from Marc McBride, a Book Fair, competitions, short-listed book voting, scavenger hunts, ‘book tastings’ and craft.

The Living Library was a highlight this year, which saw students ‘borrowing’ a staff member from the library to take back to their class. These staff members then shared the story of an adventure they had been on at some stage in their life.

Illustrator Marc McBride’s visit to St John’s Campus was also a memorable occasion. Marc has illustrated more than 50 books, including the Deltora Quest series by Emily Rodda, and is a highly engaging speaker. He wowed students with his live airbrush painting of a dragon and sparked their creativity by inviting them to draw their own creatures with his expert guidance.

The culminating Dress-up Day and Parade was an extraordinary time of celebration with countless creative character costumes filling the Fortiter Gymnasium with colour. Not to be left out of the fun, a group of around 80 staff members dressed up as crayons from the book ‘The Day the Crayons Quit’.

It was wonderful to witness our community coming together to celebrate reading and the many adventurous places it can take us. Thanks to all those who helped make this such a fun and inspiring week for our students.

Hajnalka Molloy
Learning Resources Manager

Nolene Thiele
Resource Manager – St John’s Campus

Nicolle Dupree
Primary School Learning Leader – St Peters Campus

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Book Week Q&A:

If you could book an adventure to the setting/world of any book, which would it be and why?

"I would want to go to the setting of Lightfall because it is a magical place that has lots of nature and cool creatures."

- Eva (Year 5, St John's Campus)

"I would book an adventure to visit Shiz University from Wicked because it's magical and Elphaba is there."

- Jasper (Year 3, St John's Campus)

"I would choose to go to France like in Beauty and the Beast because the setting is really descriptive, and I'd love to see the palace."

- Andie (Year 6, St Peters Campus)

"I'd like to visit the setting of 'Mecha-ude'—a Japanese Manga story. I'd love to explore Japan and the fictional world of the robots in the story."

- Keyaan (Year 6, St Peters Campus)

"I'd like to go into space with one of the inspiring female astronauts from the book 'High Flyers: 15 Inspiring Women Aviators and Astronauts'."

- Mia (Year 8, Concordia Campus)

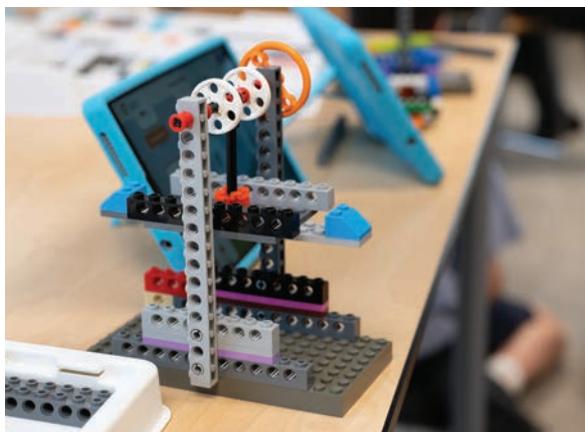
"I'd like to go to Middle Earth because of how vividly it is described by Tolkein."

- Lewis (Year 8, Concordia Campus)

ELC and Primary School Highlights

Young Engineers Australia LEGO Clubs

Through our partnership with Young Engineers Australia, St John's Campus students have had the opportunity to enhance their engineering skills through practical, real-world inspired challenges. Students who attended these after-school clubs across Terms 2 and 3 learned physics, mathematics and engineering principles as well as developing their problem solving, critical thinking and collaboration skills. Of course, working with LEGO also made it great fun and it was wonderful to see students' passion for Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) ignited through this program.



Year 4 and Year 11 Australian Lutheran World Service Experience

A group of Year 11 students took on the role of teachers in Term 2 when they visited St John's Campus to give Year 4 students a tangible insight into the incredibly important work of Australian Lutheran World Service (ALWS). Laura, Airlie, Claire and Genevieve, our Year 11 ALWS Ambassadors, focused on helping students understand how ALWS assists communities that face challenges accessing clean water and adequate shelter.

Through hearing true stories of people facing hardship, and through hands-on activities like building makeshift shelters and a water relay, students had a glimpse into the daily realities of many around the world who are in need. Finally, students reflected on the blessings they experience, which are often taken for granted, and decorated paper hands that were displayed on the Oval fence as a visual reminder of the importance of being grateful for the provisions and privileges they enjoy.

Storytelling in ELC and Reception

ELC and Reception students explored different aspects of storytelling in Term 2, beginning with an incursion called 'Glow and Tell' by Patch Theatre. The ELC children were captivated by the UV light, shadows and the way these were used to tell stories, sparking creativity and imagination to help them express their own ideas. St Peters Campus Reception students also witnessed 'Glow and Tell' when they visited the DreamBig Festival—a celebration of creativity and storytelling that stirred students' curiosity and imagination. They also watched a play called *Imagine*, focusing on how imagination can powerfully shape experiences and stories.

Later, the ELC children at St John's Campus continued their exploration of storytelling. With help from our ELC Director, Sarah Davis, and her trusty sewing machine, students made their own creative puppets—a wonderful way to develop self-expression and fine motor skills.



Canberra Trip

The 2025 Concordia Canberra Trip saw our St Peters Campus Year 5/6s join together with our St John's Campus Year 6s for a memorable, action-packed trip to our nation's capital. Over four days, students explored the way the structure of our government and the decisions it makes impact the fairness of society. They toured Parliament House, Government House, the Royal Australian Mint, the National Electoral Education Centre and the Australian War Memorial—providing rich insights into Australia's history and systems of democracy. In addition, they visited Questacon to explore interactive science exhibits. Beyond an extraordinary educational experience the trip provided a perfect opportunity to strengthen cross-campus connections, while also helping shape students into more confident, capable and compassionate learners and citizens.

Year 5 Living Library and Entrepreneurial Enterprises

St John's Campus Year 5 students took part in a Living Library in Term 2, where small business owners from the local community became sensational sources of information. To help them learn what it takes to run a business, adapt to customer needs and solve problems creatively, students were able to listen to and ask questions of these guests. Later, they developed their own business ideas and pitched them to a panel to secure initial funds to bring their idea to life. Later in the term, after much preparation and collaborative work, our Year 5s put their newfound business knowledge to the test, running their own market stalls and raising a considerable amount of money for charity.



Year 5s Bring Biodiversity Back at Woodlake Reserve

Working with the local Woodlake Reserve Action Group, our St Peter's Campus Year 5 students helped make a lasting impact on the local environment by planting native sedges, grasses and shrubs at Woodlake Reserve in Craighburn Farm. With expert guidance from the members of the Action Group, students helped establish a nature trail designed to support biodiversity and environmental regeneration. They were also guided by representatives from Trees for Life, who taught students about native species and revegetation techniques—a wonderful opportunity to learn, serve the community and safeguard the natural beauty of Woodlake Reserve.



Introducing St Peter's Campus Chickens

Late in Term 2, our St Peter's Campus students welcomed some feathered friends to their learning community—Winnie, Bailey, Coco and Clover, the school chickens. Students quickly took to caring for the chooks, including ensuring food and water were topped up, checking nesting boxes and collecting eggs. With strong links to Science (animal needs and life cycles), Humanities and Social Sciences (sustainability and care) and Health (nutrition and wellbeing), the chickens are sure to provide many rich opportunities for learning, as well as plenty of fresh eggs for cooking!



Reception Cross-Campus Mud Day

The hands (and often faces) of the children may have got messy, but that was all part of the fun as our St John's and St Peters Campus Reception students combined to celebrate Mud Day—an opportunity to explore, create and play in nature. The day encourages sensory exploration, teamwork and joy in the outdoors. That joy was certainly evident as students dug rivers, made mud pies, engineered miniature dams and collaborated to learn from one another and solve problems together. Cross-campus activities such as this not only foster social skills but also deepen students' sense of belonging within our wider Concordia community.



Year 3 St Martin's Day Lantern Festival

Although traditionally held in November, our St John's Campus Year 3 students and families, together with those from other year levels who have a German background, celebrated Martinstag (St Martin's Day) in winter, just like they do in Germany. Inspired by the German tradition of 'Laterne laufen', families gathered and walked together with lanterns made by the students in their Art and German lessons, celebrating St Martin's message of kindness and sharing. Guests also enjoyed a 'Brezel' (pretzel) and warm fruit punch ('Kinderpunsch') as well as a performance of the German song "Laterne, Laterne". It was a lovely evening filled with warmth and light on a winter night.



St Peters ELC Go Wild

Our ELC children from St Peters Campus headed to Wittunga Botanic Garden in Term 3 for an 'Early Learners Go Wild @ Wittunga' workshop with Nature Play SA. Using natural resources in play, children were encouraged to think flexibly and develop resilience. Their connection to nature was strengthened, their curiosity was fostered and their respect for the environment grew. It was an wonderful way to celebrate our Eco Warriors initiative as part of our EdVenture learning framework, and the ELC children can't wait to visit again!



St John's Campus Sustainability Club

Our Junior Primary Sustainability Captains at St John's Campus have been busy growing vegetables in one of our garden spaces this year. In Week 5, they harvested some ingredients to cook with before making spinach, cheese and parsley pinwheels—delicious! We look forward to seeing what will be ready to harvest next.

Middle School Highlights

Tania Ingram Author-in-Residence

Our Author-in-Residence this year was award-winning children’s author Tania Ingram, who worked with students in Years 6, 7 and 8 across a two-week residency. During her time with us, Tania shared her expertise and empowered students to be creative, confident and imaginative writers. Learning about the foundations of storytelling, our Year 6s focused on the importance of a compelling story arc and what drives authentic characters. The Year 7 students explored the structural and literary elements of picture books before crafting their own with Tania’s guidance. Our Year 8s examined traditional fairy tales and twisted tales before creating their own modern takes on classic stories, drawing on Tania’s professional insights. Finally, while studying Tania’s heartfelt novel *The Other Shadow*, Year 9 students participated in a Q&A with the author, helping them better understand the writing process and the themes within the text—an extraordinary opportunity!



Year 9 Dance Acro Workshop and Restless Dance Theatre Excursion

Our Year 9 Dance elective students recently learned the art of Acro, experimenting with new skills such as shoulder stands, thigh stands and counterbalances through a workshop with Abbie Madden, a circus performer, dancer and freelance artist. With a wealth of experience, including working with Access2Arts and Restless Dance Theatre, Abbie helped students develop new skills as well as greater independence and confidence, along with safe dance practices. Later in Term 2, the students visited Restless Dance Theatre, Australia’s leading disability-led dance company. They viewed an evocative performance and participated in a dynamic workshop with Artistic Director Michelle Ryan and Artistic Associate Larissa McGowan. Concordia’s Dance teacher, Carla Bigioli, shared the following reflection on the excursion.

“It was a deeply inspiring experience that challenged perceptions, encouraged empathy and highlighted the power of inclusive practice in the Arts.”





Kurna Elder Artwork Unveiling

Recent visitors to our Concordia Campus may have noticed a striking new artwork, which has kindly been gifted to the College, displayed in the main corridor of our Winchester Street 'hub' building—a portrait of Kurna Elder Michael O'Brien. The painting is by artist Damien Shen, a South Australian man of Ngarrindjeri (Aboriginal) and Chinese descent, and his daughter Kalani (Year 8). It was an honour to welcome Michael and Damien to the College for the official unveiling and to formally acknowledge the incredible work Damien and Kalani have done in producing a striking likeness of such a respected cultural leader.



Year 9 Flinders Ranges Camp

"The rock climbing and abseiling activity was my highlight!"

"I really enjoyed camp because I got to connect with a lot of new people."

"Camp was one of the best weeks of school; I loved talking to new people and new friends."

These were some of the reflections of our Year 9 students after returning from their action-packed camp to the Flinders Ranges. As the pinnacle activity within the Concordia – The Rite Journey pastoral care program, The Adventure camp was a challenging yet rewarding experience for our students, providing many opportunities for personal growth and the development of friendships. In a supportive environment, students were encouraged and empowered to try new activities. An overarching theme of the students' time away was 'challenges' and how working through them helps form our identity, develop resilience and—when experienced together—build community. Students also explored what makes them who they are and how they contribute to the broader group.

Staff were impressed with the students' endurance, resilience and willingness to give their best to all aspects of the camp. When reflecting on the trip, Mr Ben Crook (Year 9 Leader) said, *"I am sure the students will have come away from this camp with a sense of personal achievement and an understanding that trying new things outside of their comfort zone will stretch them and lead to personal growth. This is a life lesson that we can all hold on to and of which we need to be constantly reminded."*

da Vinci Decathlon Success

The da Vinci Decathlon is a rigorous academic competition comprising 10 diverse disciplines. In 2025, our Year 7 and Year 9 teams achieved some outstanding results, competing against 23 schools. Together, our students earned five top three finishes across Science, Cartography, Art and Poetry, and Legacy, including first place in Legacy—an incredible achievement. Legacy tests students' knowledge of Leonardo da Vinci and the Renaissance period as well as general knowledge. Furthermore, our teams achieved top five placings across seven of the 10 disciplines, demonstrating the high standard of our students' talent and teamwork.



Students Select Seeds for Space

In Term 1, our Year 8 Science students participated in a new 'Plants – Lunar Edition' unit developed by Stile Education in partnership with Lunaria One, a scientific project aiming to grow plants on the moon. Working on practical experiments to test the resilience of different seeds following exposure to extreme physical conditions, including temperature and vibration, students became part of an authentic science project that is truly out of this world. The results from these experiments will help Lunaria One determine the species of plants most likely to grow successfully in the lunar environment. Two students and their teacher, Mr Carpenter, were featured in an article in The Advertiser and interviewed on ABC Radio. In July, a journalist conducted a follow-up interview with Year 8 student India for an article by Australian Associated Press, in which India reflected on her involvement in the unit and the ways it has expanded her thinking about possible future careers in STEM. We are proud of our students' involvement in this project and look forward to seeing the results of Lunaria One's work in 2026.





Rollercoaster Physics in Year 9 Science

Tasked with building an exciting rollercoaster out of simple materials, our Year 9 students put their physics knowledge to the test in a challenge set by a visiting Flinders University STEM Team. The rollercoaster designs included bumps and jumps as well as considering how many loops could be included while maintaining the 'safety' of the ride. It was great to see students' problem-solving skills in action during the prototyping and refining phase, and the final testing was a fun finish to an engaging activity.



Year 9 Drama Presents *The Brothers Grimm Spectaculathon*

Our Year 9 Drama students performed *The Brothers Grimm Spectaculathon* late in Term 2, attempting to tell all of the Brothers Grimm fairy tales in one production, which brought many laughs from the audience. It was a fast-paced and zany performance in which the students did an excellent job of overcoming several challenges and putting on a highly entertaining show. Well done to all involved, and thanks to our new Student Tech Crew for their assistance!



Year 9 South Australian Sports Institute Visit

A group of 50 Year 9 students visited the South Australian Sports Institute (SASI) for physiological and fitness testing, seeking to identify talent for future Olympic pathways. As well as undertaking the testing, students toured the impressive facility and observed professionals working in sport science, exercise physiology, sports psychology, physiotherapy, data analytics and coaching. Several boys achieved impressive fitness results on the bikes and in the beep test, while a number of our girls were identified for diving pathways, through the physiology testing and their previous experience with dance and calisthenics. Students are commended for their effort, work ethic and the way they applied themselves during this fascinating visit.



Senior School Highlights

Raising Funds for Worthy Causes

More than 20 Year 12 students and four staff members took part in the World's Greatest Shave, having their hair cut or shaved by a group of their peers to raise funds to help the Leukaemia Foundation support those with blood cancer. Following on from last year's fundraising efforts for this important cause, it was pleasing to see even more people involved in this student-led initiative this year, raising over \$9,400 as a team.

A little later in the term, the Year 12 Student Leaders coordinated a non-uniform day fundraiser and sausage sizzle that coincided with the annual Champions Cup lunchtime soccer grand final. Proceeds were donated to Old Concordian Kelsey Bright's (2016) End to End for Endometriosis fundraising walk. To raise funds for Endometriosis Australia, Kelsey walked from the northern end of Scotland to the southern end of England—an extraordinary effort.

It is heartwarming to see students, staff and alumni making a difference in the lives of others. Thanks to all involved in these fundraisers for your generous support of two very worthy causes.



Child Studies Class Cooks for St Peters Campus Students

As a hands-on way of learning about child nutrition and meal planning, our Stage 1 Child Studies students hosted a special lunch for Year 2/3 students from St Peters Campus in one of our Food Design kitchens. Having prepared personalised lunchboxes thoughtfully designed to meet each student's dietary requirements, the Stage 1 students had the opportunity to chat to the younger students and get some feedback on the delicious, nutritious meals. This task not only aligned with the Stage 1 students' study of 'The Nature of Childhood' and the 'Socialisation and Development of Children', but it was also a tangible example of learning through action and of the benefits of connecting learners across our College community.

China Immersion Tour

A group of Concordia students travelled to China on an immersion tour that showcased the country's history, metropolitan energy, architecture, landscapes, food and culture. During an engaging visit to Hailiang International School, students experienced a professional-level basketball match, immersive day trips and interactive workshops. They also visited West Lake University, which was an unforgettable and unique opportunity, with Concordia being the first high school student group to stay on their campus. Learning firsthand through real-world experiences such as this makes knowledge meaningful and brings learning to life. It was a fantastic reminder for students that they are global citizens and lifelong learners, and that travelling abroad can challenge perspectives while also inspiring them to think beyond borders.



Stage 2 Drama 'The Thing About Love'

The audiences at our Stage 2 Drama performances this year were transported to five weddings and a birthday party, following a group of 11 characters on their path to finding true love, moving back and forth through time as they attended each other's celebrations. This ambitious original play, incorporating students' ideas about love and relationships, was written by our Drama Coordinator, Aldo Longobardi, and performed to a high standard by our students, with excellent comic timing and energy that brought the audience into the action. Cast members even had guests on their feet for popular wedding dances like the Nutbush and the Macarena! In quieter scenes, the students handled the more emotionally poignant moments with sensitivity and sincerity. Well done to all of the students involved in bringing this story to life.



Ski Trip 2025

Queenstown on New Zealand's South Island was the destination for 32 Senior School students and four staff attending our 2025 Ski Trip, with amazing mountaintop views and perfect conditions for skiing on the slopes. Three days of skiing at the Remarkables and Coronet Peak, with lessons each morning, saw students learning new skills, developing existing skills and even trying jumps or tricks. Although experience levels ranged from beginners to experts, there was great camaraderie and team spirit among the group. Following three days of skiing, the thrilling Shotover Jet boat ride provided a change of scenery as the craft sped through canyons at 85 kilometres per hour. After exploring Queenstown, students had a relaxing night of card games before heading home with many incredible memories.

"We are so grateful for the amazing opportunity to experience another country and create some lifelong memories with the support of the wonderful staff members who gave their time to afford us this opportunity." – Kelsey, Year 12



Industry Connections in Senior Drama

During the winter break, a number of senior Drama students were hard at work, building their skills and helping to shape new theatre performances through two industry connection opportunities. Two students from Year 10 were selected to be part of Windmill Theatre’s Project Westall, a week-long development program that informed the writing of a new theatre work. The chance to explore staging, multimedia and performance pathways helped solidify their interest in a career in the arts. As part of State Theatre Company’s Winter School, four of our students followed a page-to-stage process under the guidance of two local artists. They also viewed live theatre, created filmed auditions and devised a physical theatre piece that culminated in a gripping public performance. In addition to enhancing their contribution to the College’s Drama program, this experience also served to forge connections to future industry pathways.



Identifying Fossils in Stage 1 Earth and Environmental Science

Stage 1 Earth and Environmental Science is a new course, introduced at Concordia in 2025. The course offers Year 10 and 11 students the opportunity to expand their understanding of STEM by incorporating geographical and scientific concepts through an integrative approach. As part of their unit of work on ‘Life’, students explored the beginning of life and the scientific theories and processes related to fossils and fossil identification. Through a visit from Dr Felicity Coutts, an Ediacaran Paleontologist, students explored fossils from the Ediacaran Period, including opalised shells from Coober Pedy, understanding that most of South Australia was underwater during the Ediacaran Period. Following this, students studied ‘Water’, learning more about the importance of this finite resource to the world around them.





Tumbling and Acrobatics in Stage 1 Dance

A workshop with South Australian circus artist Alex Charman provided Stage 1 Dance students with a chance to develop their power tumbling skills. They learned and refined movements including handstands, handsprings, tuckaults, walkovers, aerials and more, extending their strength, coordination and body control with Alex's expert input—an exciting learning opportunity.



Brain Bee Challenge Second Place

Nine of our Year 10 students competed in the State Final of the 2025 Brain Bee Challenge, a prestigious neuroscience competition that tests students' knowledge of topics such as brain anatomy, neural communication, neurological disorders and advances in brain research. In the lead up to the competition, students answered 22,500 questions about the brain. Performing exceptionally well in the final, our team placed second in the state—the third time we have placed in the top three since 2022. Well done to all of the students involved!

Stage 1 Drama 'The Mermaid'

Our Stage 1 Dance and Drama classes presented Cassandra Fumi's work, *The Mermaid*—an abstract and expressionistic play—across two nights, transporting audiences to a world under the ocean with the aid of handheld lighting, transformative staging and flowing costumes. This aesthetically striking show saw students successfully tackling a non-linear, emotive narrative with highly physical performances. In addition to the efforts of the actors and designers bringing the story to life on stage, the production was also well supported by students who collaborated as Tech Crew members, costume makers and volunteer videographers. Working together, these students staged a high-quality production in a relatively short time and should be proud of the work they presented.

Sports Highlights

Our students have represented the College with pride in a wide range of sporting events across Terms 2 and 3. Here are some highlights from the winter 2025 sports season.

Primary School

- Our St John’s Campus Year 5/6 girls’ knockout basketball team competed in the opening round of the Statewide Basketball Championships. They displayed tremendous skill, teamwork and determination, finishing in dominant fashion by winning all six of their matches. These strong performances earned them a well-deserved place in the State Finals. Congratulations to the team!
- All of our Primary School soccer and football teams had a winter season filled with development, commitment and plenty of exciting moments. A special acknowledgement goes to our U10s soccer team, who have now completed back-to-back undefeated seasons—a remarkable accomplishment and a testament to their consistency and teamwork.
- Our Year 3/4 football team made a brilliant comeback after four years without a team competing in this age level. They finished the season undefeated, showcasing outstanding talent and enthusiasm throughout their matches.



Middle and Senior School

- Our Premier League Reserves netball team had an outstanding season, progressing to the semifinals and only narrowly missing out on advancing.
- The Year 9/10 netball team won through to the top four of the statewide knockout netball competition—a great effort.
- A team of our Senior netball players competed at the 2025 Waverley International Netball Championships. They had a great week of competition, playing off in the finals and finishing in the top eight out of 31 Australian and international teams.
- Our Year 9/10 girls’ knockout basketball team won all their games in Round 1 and advanced to Round 2.
- Concordia students once again represented the College at the SA Volleyball Schools Cup.
- Our Year 7/8 netball team won through to Round 2 of their knockout competition. They faced tough opposition teams in the second round and did not progress to Round 3.
- Concordia’s Open boys’ knockout basketball team made it through to the qualifying finals. The result unfortunately didn’t go our way in a competitive game against one of the strongest teams in Australia; however, the boys are commended for their efforts.





- During the Sports Association for Adelaide Schools (SAAS) Pink Round, supporting Breast Cancer Network Australia, medals were given out to the best player of the game. Lewis (Year 10) won the medal for the Open boys' basketball and Lachlan (Year 12) won the medal for the Open boys' soccer.
- Our Year 7/8 boys' knockout soccer team had a strong first round, defeating two opposition schools. They unfortunately missed out on advancing past Round 2 but showed some really positive signs for the soccer program.
- Concordia's cross country team competed at the Mercedes Relay Race event to finish off their season. One of our Middle boys' teams—consisting of Erik (Year 9), Benjamin (Year 8), Jacob (Year 8) and Brody (Year 9)—finished third overall, which is an excellent result. In the previous week, the cross country runners all competed in the Individual SAAS event, where Brody came second in the Middle boys' group.
- Our Year 9/10 boys' knockout volleyball team made it through to the finals after defeating three other schools in the first round. They competed strongly in the finals with close games all day, finishing fifth overall.
- Winning through Round 2 of their knockout competition, our Year 9/10 boys' basketball team advanced to Round 3.
- Following some strong results leading up to the 24-hour season finale, our Pedal Prix participants recorded several notable achievements in a wonderful weekend of competition. Teams Costa and Concorde finished in the top five in their respective divisions, with Costa placing fifth for the race and third overall for the season—an amazing result. On an individual level, Lucas (Year 12) and Brodie (Year 9) achieved top three lap times in their categories, with Brodie going on to place first in the Middle School division of the top 12 schools' shootout. Additionally, our Pedal Prix Coordinator, Mr Matthew Smart, received the Andrew McLachlan Award for *“outstanding commitment, dedication, teamwork and consistent display of the values, vision and mission of the HPV Super Series and the Australian International Pedal Prix Incorporated”*—a well-deserved recognition.
- Two Concordia students received accolades at the SAAS Winter Sports Awards Night. Lachlan (Year 12) won Player of the Year for the Division 2 Soccer competition. Meanwhile, Luke (Year 11) won Player of the Year and made it into the team of the year as a shooting guard in the Division 1 basketball competition.
- In the final week of Term 3, a team of girls competed in the Independent Girls Schools Sports Association (IGSSA) athletics carnival and a team of boys competed in the Achilles Cup athletics carnival, achieving many outstanding results. Both teams finished sixth overall in their competitions, with our boys' team securing their place in Division 1 for 2026.

Well done to all our teams, coaches and families for their effort and support during what has been another fantastic winter season of sport.

Music Highlights

Our Music Department has been extremely busy across the last two terms, with students involved in a number of performances and music competitions. Below are some of the key highlights from Terms 2 and 3.

Generations in Jazz Farewell and Festival Success

- Term 2 began with a bang as we hosted a Generations in Jazz Farewell Concert featuring our Big Bands and Jazz Vocal Ensemble—a fantastic way to send our students off to the Festival in Mount Gambier.
- Concordia musicians once again shone at Generations in Jazz, enjoying inspiring workshops, world-class concerts, and achieving outstanding results:
 - » 1st place – Division 2.2 Stage Band Section (*Big Band 1*)
 - » 1st place – Jazz Combo Section 3 (*School Jazz Ensemble*)
 - » 4th place – Division 1 Large Vocal Ensemble (*Mattson Jazz*)
 - » Best Saxophone Section – Division 2 (*Big Band 1*)
- We were also thrilled to have three students selected for Superband 2:
 - » Moses (Year 9) – Drums
 - » Marco (Year 11) – Lead Trumpet
 - » Peter (Year 12) – Lead Alto Saxophone

Harmony in the Chapel

- On Friday 16 May we welcomed Old Concordians, who commenced at Concordia 70 or more years ago, to our annual *Harmony in the Chapel* concert. Guests, including St John's Campus Year 2 students, enjoyed performances by our Concert Band, String Ensemble, Clarinet Ensemble, the Heilig String Quartet, Saxophone Ensemble, and violin soloist Jude (Year 12).



Year 2 Strings and Year 4 Band Programs

- A milestone this year was the launch of our Year 2 Strings Program, where every Year 2 student learned a string instrument during Music class. Meanwhile, the Year 4 Band Program continued for its third year. Both programs culminated in community concerts, with many students choosing to continue their music studies privately or in small groups.

String Soirée

- After a day camp at Nunyara Conference Centre, our string students presented the String Soirée concert in the Chapel. Students from Years 1-12 performed beautifully across ensembles and quartets, with highlights including the Cello Ensemble and a stunning violin solo by Jude (Year 12).

Winter Winds

- Our *Winter Winds* concert in May showcased students from Years 4-12 across Concert Band, Wind Ensemble, St John's Campus Band, Big Bands 1 and 2, Rock Bands 1 and 2, and Funk Band. The evening also served as a farewell to Big Band director Tom Voss, who is furthering his jazz studies in Europe.



Voices of Concordia

- A much-loved favourite, *Voices of Concordia* brought together choirs from Years 4-12, alongside soloists and groups including the Jazz Choirs, St John's Campus Vocal Ensemble, and the Testosterphones. The polished and entertaining performances were a celebration of our strong choral tradition.

Australian Band and Orchestra Directors' Association (ABODA) Festival

- In August, seven ensembles competed at the ABODA Festival. Concert Band, Wind Ensemble, String Ensemble, Chamber Strings and Orchestra all performed to an exceptional standard, achieving four Gold and three Silver Awards. Our Orchestra once again emerged as overall winners in their section.



Concordia in Concert

- Term 3 concluded on a high with over 250 musicians from Reception to Year 12 performing in the annual Concordia in Concert music showcase in our Fortiter gymnasium. This year's theme, *Past, Present and Future*, celebrated Concordia's rich musical history and welcomed back Old Concordians to perform alongside current students. We also farewelled our Year 12 musicians and presented the following awards:
 - » Mike Stewart Memorial Award - Peter (Year 12)
 - » Living Choice Community Award - Madeleine and Maddi (Year 12)
 - » Peter Schmidt Music Award - Leilani and Joshua (Year 12)
 - » Concert Band Award - Evelyn and Archer (Year 12)
 - » The Martin Butler String Award - Jude and Rafael (Year 12)



Concordia in Concert photos by Sienna (Year 12)

Parents & Friends Update

Behind the Scenes: How the P&F is Powering Possibilities at the College

Behind many of the enriching experiences for students is a powerhouse of parent support, the Parents & Friends Association (P&F). Each year, the P&F thoughtfully allocates funds to projects that aim to benefit students and families. A dedicated working group reviews project submissions, guided by specific criteria to ensure every dollar makes a meaningful impact—and this year has been no exception.

Take a look at some of the projects the P&F have brought to life in 2025...

Equipping the St Peters Campus Kitchen

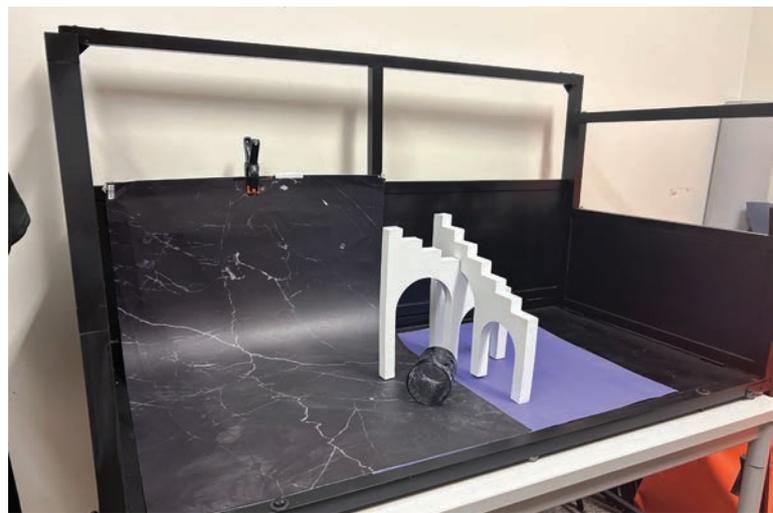
- At St Peters Campus, the kitchen is more than a cooking space. It is a hub for learning and connection. Thanks to P&F funding, the kitchen is now stocked with new equipment, a new coffee machine and consumables, ready for both teaching and community engagement.

Lights, Camera, Stop Motion!

- An unused storage room at our Concordia Campus is undergoing a creative transformation. The Media Department is constructing a dedicated Stop Motion Animation Room, expanding curriculum offerings and giving students a space to bring their stories to life—frame by frame.

Outdoor Chess

- Strategic thinking meets outdoor play with the arrival of a giant chess set at St Peters Campus. Already a hit among students, it is a fun and inclusive way to exercise, both brain and body, during breaks.





Trailer Hits All the Right Notes

- The Performing Arts and Music transport trailer made a grand debut at the Nunyara rehearsal day and hasn't stopped since. Whether it is for musicals, concerts, camps or even transporting Pedal Prix vehicles, this trailer has proven invaluable.

Tech on the Move – CleverTouch Board

- At St John's Campus, a portable CleverTouch Board is now in high demand. Used by Year 4 and 5 classes, as well as music groups like the Junior Primary choir, this board is making collaborative learning more engaging than ever. It is so popular that discussions are underway to purchase another!

Securing the Fortiter Kitchen

- A new roller shutter has been installed in the Fortiter kitchen. This enhances safety and protects the space that fuels Saturday sport and school events as well as being used as a teaching area during the week. This project reflects the P&F's commitment to safety, stewardship and student wellbeing.





Community Events

Celebrating Community – Events That Bring Us Together

The P&F isn't just about funding, it is also about fostering connection. This year's event calendar has been packed with meaningful moments that have brought families, students and staff together:

- Mother's Day and Father's Day breakfasts at Highgate and Blackwood
- Grandparents and Special Friends' days at St John's Campus and St Peters Campus
- City-Bay Fun Run
- Community Coffee catch ups
- Annual Quiz Night, raising over \$20,000

Whether it's sharing a coffee or supporting the Quiz Night, these events are a testament to the heart of our school community.

Get Involved!

The P&F thrives thanks to the incredible energy, ideas and support from our parent community. Whether you are keen to volunteer, share a suggestion or simply attend an event, there is a place for everyone—when parents and friends come together, great things happen.

Angela Warrick

Engagement and Events Manager



Staff Profiles



Megan Fyffe

Junior Primary Leader
— St John's Campus

+ Describe yourself in three words.

Creative, passionate, curious.

+ What motivates/inspires you in your role?

I am passionate about child-centred inquiry and play-based learning for young children. I am always inspired by their play and questions. I love supporting people to embrace and teach every child in a holistic way by addressing their academic, spiritual, social and emotional growth.

+ If you could choose to visit the International Space Station or the Australian Antarctic Division's base stations in Antarctica, which would you choose and why?

I would love to visit Antarctica because it would be amazing to see the wildlife and experience living in an extreme climate.



Stephen Calio

Head of OSHC Services
— St John's Campus
— St Peters Campus

+ Describe yourself in three words.

Honest, committed, driven.

+ What motivates/inspires you in your role?

What inspires me in this role is seeing aspiring professionals develop themselves in the OSHC environment. We have many university students come through that are working towards different careers, even outside of education, such as psychology, occupational therapy and business management. It motivates me to help them discover their own capabilities. Working in OSHC cultivates a unique skillset where educators not only learn to work with children but can also strive for higher-level duties, grow their people skills and develop relationships with stakeholders throughout the College community.

+ If you could have two items with you while shipwrecked on a desert island, in addition to food and water, what would they be?

I would choose to have a picture of my wife and kids—they are my greatest treasure and seeing them every day would drive me to outlast any challenge and come out the other side. I'd also have a shaver because it's important to stay well groomed and well presented wherever you are.

- Getting to know you...



Nicolle Dupree

Primary School Learning Leader
— St Peters Campus

+ Describe yourself in three words.

Creative, nurturing, innovative.

+ What motivates/inspires you in your role?

I am inspired by the joy of learning. I love seeing children's faces light up when they discover something new or when they're brave enough to take a risk and realise they can do it. Those little moments fill me with so much joy and remind me why I love teaching. I am also constantly inspired by the chance to keep learning. Through my work with staff and students, I am always growing alongside others. There's such a spirit of creativity and innovation here, and being able to share that journey with colleagues across our campus or the whole College is something that keeps me motivated and excited for what's ahead.

+ What, from 2025, do you think people are likely to be most nostalgic for 50 years from now (and why)?

It may not be nostalgic, but I think the current algal bloom will be memorable. Growing up on the West Coast of South Australia, the sea has always been part of who I am and it is woven into my family's story. That's why this algal bloom feels so devastating. To see our coastline covered in foam, marine life washing up in the thousands, and communities struggling as fishing and tourism collapse—it breaks my heart. For me, and for so many others, this isn't just an environmental crisis, it's also significant on a personal level too.

+ Describe yourself in three words.

Committed, innovative, compassionate.

+ What motivates/inspires you in your role?

What inspires me most is seeing people—students, colleagues or anyone in the room—discover their own potential. Working at Concordia is a joy and a privilege, and no day is ever the same. Learning is a two-way street, and I am often taught by my students just as much as I guide them. Those moments when someone realises, "I can do this", or sees the world a little differently are incredibly rewarding. It's like being a cheerleader, a guide and occasionally a referee in life's little adventures—with plenty of laughter along the way.

+ What do you think you would say to the world if you were able to have everyone's attention for 30 seconds?

Every single one of us is here for such a short time, and yet every choice we make ripples further than we realise. Choose kindness. Choose curiosity. Listen before you speak, and act with compassion even when it costs you something. Care for the Earth—it's the only home we share. If each of us gives a little more than we take, the world will be a better place for all of us.



Kathryn Watkins

Year 2 Teacher and
Inclusive Learning Coordinator
— St Peters Campus

Staff Profiles



Chelsea Skene

Director of Enrolments (ELC-12)

+ Describe yourself in three words.

Thoughtful, approachable, dedicated.

+ What motivates/inspires you in your role?

Connecting families with opportunities for their children to thrive and supporting families through these early years of 'lifelong learning' is what motivates and inspires me most.

+ If you were a Disney character, which one would you be and why?

I would be Princess Jasmine—she's unafraid to voice her own opinions, stands up for equality and is friends with Genie (who wouldn't want him and his entertaining ways by your side?!)



Ric van Wachem

Director of Extra- and Co-Curricular Sport (ELC-12)

+ Describe yourself in three words.

Courageous, mentor, innovative.

+ What motivates/inspires you in your role?

Students have always inspired me, whether that is in sport, academics or performing arts. I am amazed at what they can achieve and do. There are those students who are not the best, and few are, but they still strive to be the best they can be. That is exciting! I have been impressed by the students I have met. They are courteous, engaging, interested and passionate about their school. It is easy to desire to be better when those around you, particularly students, desire the same. Finally, I am excited to carry on the great work that has preceded me and to continue to develop sport and lift its profile both within Concordia and the wider community.

+ If you were asked to compare your personality to a kitchen utensil, which one would you choose and why?

I think I would choose a stand mixer. There are always lots of different thoughts and ideas running around in my head, but generally speaking the finished product is usually pretty good, though sometimes I don't get it right!

Facilities Update

At Concordia, we are blessed with outstanding facilities. Maintaining and upgrading these facilities to continue to ensure a high standard of excellence is an ongoing focus. Here are some updates regarding our facilities in 2025.

Learning Environments Australasia Design Award

In May, we were delighted to share with our community the exciting news that our St John's Campus ELC redevelopment, opened in 2023, had won a Learning Environments Australasia Design Award (Category 6: Modernisation — Small). The award acknowledged the highly successful way in which existing spaces had been repurposed and modernised to create the best possible experience for children, their families and staff. We are very proud of this excellent facility, which will continue to be an amazing space for our youngest learners for many years to come.

St Peters Campus ELC Outdoor Learning Area

Upgrades to the outdoor learning area in our St Peters Campus ELC are underway, with our youngest students already enjoying more room to play and a secured new fence. Plans for the new nature play area will soon be brought to life and we look forward to seeing the space take shape in the months ahead.



Multipurpose Hub Redevelopment

Old Gymnasium Transforms into Multipurpose Hub

With our new double-court Gymnasium, Fortiter, now serving as the 'home base' for Physical Education and extra-curricular sport at Concordia Campus, the College transformed our former gymnasium into a flexible multipurpose space. The interior and exterior of the facility have been repainted and new vinyl flooring has been laid. The upgraded facility now has a fresh and vibrant appeal. It is now a perfect venue for the Physical Education Department to use as an overflow from Fortiter, but also for Drama and other faculties requiring a large open space. It will also be available for community hire.

Coming Soon

The College continues to provide ways to strengthen student voice. Our Student Forum this year had significant input into future planning of facilities, with their voice and vision key in the redesign of our Murtoa student bathrooms. We look forward to seeing their vision emerge in 2026.



Concept plan for the St Peters Campus ELC outdoor area upgrade, designed by Climbing Tree Creations Pty Ltd

Heritage Centre —

The Concordia College Quadrangle — 120 Years

For 120 years, the Concordia College Quadrangle—a beautiful hidden gem—has been central to life at the College, providing a meeting place for students and our wider community. From the opening of Concordia College at its current site on 22 February 1905 through to the present day, the Quad has been through many transformations. We hope you enjoy tracking the changes with us.



1905

Concordia College opened at its current location, having moved from Murtoa in rural Victoria to Adelaide, South Australia. This photograph was taken, from the area now known as the Quad, on the day of the official opening.



1910

A new 'East Wing' was opened at the eastern end of the original building now known as the Hamann building.

1918

Quad gardens were planted and tended, transforming the dusty grounds into beautiful green spaces.

1932

In this aerial photograph, the gymnasium built in 1926 (now the Drama Centre) and the 'Lecture Hall' (now The Suaviter) can be seen at the eastern end of the campus, with the Lecture Hall providing a structural border to the Quad on that side.



1943

During wartime, vegetable gardens were cultivated in the Quad to provide fresh food for the boarders.

1966

By 1966, the College had purchased its first bus, pictured here parked in the Quad.





1971

The 1971 Open Day featured gymnastics in the Quad. By now this space was bordered on the western end by the Georg Memorial Library (built in 1970 and more recently serving as the staffroom since 2006) and on the northern side by the Science Block (opened in 1967).

1984

Concordia College hosted Tournament of Minds, an interschool competition that aims to extend students' higher order thinking skills.



1991

A huge hailstorm blanketed much of the Quad in ice—a source of great amusement for some of the students.



1990

Flag poles were installed facing the Quad.

2014

This photograph became a key promotional image for the College and remained in use for several years, evoking a sense of calm, of grandeur and of Concordia's rich history.



2016

In March, an ELC-12 Chapel service was held in the Quad to celebrate the amalgamation of St John's Lutheran School and Concordia College.



2018

By 2018, the look of the Quad had evolved again following the demolition of the old Science Block and the opening of the new Nautilus Centre in 2017. This photograph shows the Quad appearing very similar to the way it does today.



Old Concordians' Association

From the President

The core purpose of the Old Concordians' Association is to facilitate lifetime connections between Old Concordians and the Concordia community. It has been rewarding to reflect on how much progress our association and community has made towards this goal.

We value the role that Old Concordians play in the life of the College and the many benefits that flow from these important relationships. In this update, we invite you to enjoy reading about the diverse events Old Concordians have recently taken part in as well as some special projects that the Association has been proud to support in partnership with the College.

Matt Bruening (2016)
President - Old Concordians' Association

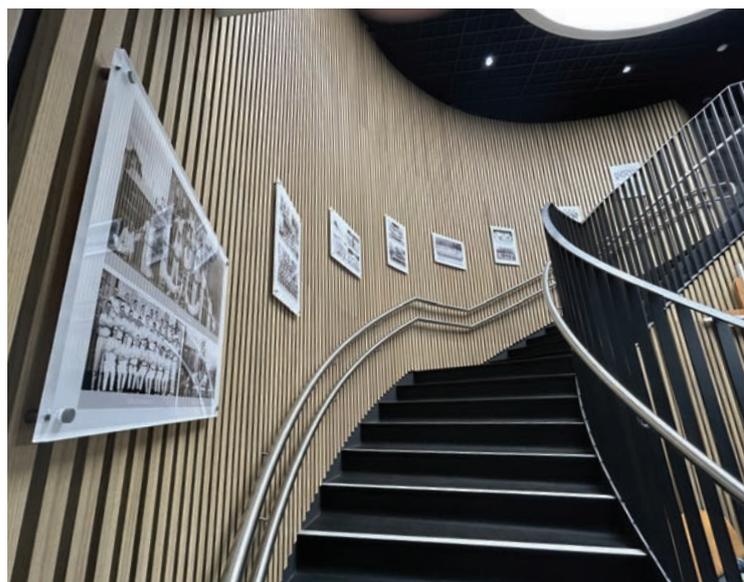


Happy Christmas from the Old Concordians' Committee

Outdoor Electronic Scoreboard & Fortiter Gallery

The Old Concordians' Association has financed a new outdoor electronic scoreboard with a 6m x 4m screen on the wall of the St John's Campus Wirrkuta Trruku (Activity Hall) building, which is highly visible on the Oval. The new scoreboard is a great asset for the College, not just for sport, but also for any outdoor activity or event.

In addition, thanks to the Old Concordians, a historical sporting gallery has been installed alongside the stairway in the Fortiter Gymnasium. It traces Concordia's long sporting history, dating back to our first official sports teams in 1905.





Q&A With a New Committee Member

Jacob Huizink — Class of 2024

The Old Concordians' Association (OCA) Committee has recently welcomed Jacob Huizink (2024) as a new member. Jacob has already made a positive impact on the committee, and we look forward to his continued contribution. We recently caught up with him for a Q&A.

What motivated you to join the OCA Committee?

I've absolutely loved playing football for the Adelaide Lutheran Sports Club and have been blown away by the acceptance and support from everyone there. When I heard that I could have the opportunity to represent the Club on the OCA Committee, it was a no brainer. I feel like this is a way of giving back to the Club that has helped me enjoy my football after leaving school.

What is great about being an Old Concordian?

What I find great about being an Old Concordian is the connections that I have kept since leaving school and the close friends I've kept, who I still see very often.

Can you tell us about your association with Adelaide Lutheran Sporting Club?

I found myself at the Adelaide Lutheran Sports Club at the start of 2025 because a close friend asked me to come out to preseason and have a kick. I was instantly accepted by all the boys out there and it didn't take long for me to fall in love with the Club. This year, representing the Club on the OCA Committee, I am hoping to further strengthen the already strong tie Concordia has with the Club.

Where has life taken you since leaving Concordia and what are your plans for the future?

Since leaving Concordia, I have completed a Diploma of Health Science and have now started studying a Bachelor of Chiropractic degree at the Australian Chiropractic College. In the future, I plan to own my own clinic or two and be able to help people live their life without any pain. Away from uni, my life usually revolves around family and friends, work, footy and golf.

What advice would you give graduating students?

Some advice I would give graduating students is to surround yourself with the right people because they are the ones that will help you and want you to succeed. Hold onto as many connections as you can because you never know what connection might be able to help you in the future. Finally, I hope that they can look back at their time at Concordia and realise how fortunate they were to have been able to go to a school as great as Concordia.

Q&A With Old Concordian

Sean Kikkert — Class of 1995

Can you tell us a bit about your journey to becoming a barrister since leaving Concordia?

My first job after finishing law school at the University of Adelaide took me and my family to Canberra in 2006, where I spent 11 years working as a lawyer for the Department of Immigration. I then opened my own immigration law practice, which I ran for five years, while also working as a part-time Deputy Registrar at the ACT Magistrates Court, where I conducted family and personal violence conferences.

I decided to become a barrister in 2022. After completing my barrister training with the South Australian Bar Association, I moved to Melbourne, where I now run an Australia-wide immigration law practice, drawing on my 19 years of experience in immigration.

You have commenced a postgraduate degree in Autism Studies, what led you there?

Last year, I was diagnosed as being both autistic and having ADHD. Discovering this after 46 years of life was a shock to me, and yet, in an instant, my life made sense in a way that it hadn't for a long time (perhaps ever). This diagnosis explained so much about what I had been experiencing my whole life. My neurodivergence had been hidden all those years because I was so good at masking my autism, but with this diagnosis, I was ready to embrace my true self.

I decided that postgraduate education in Autism Studies would give me the opportunity not only to better understand my own experiences, but also to be open about my own neurodivergence. I was struck when a junior lawyer thanked me for being so open and told me that she wondered whether she would have to hide her own neurodivergence and be made to feel that it was a weakness for her entire career.

I hope that we can create a world where all people are treated with respect and kindness, and where we do not ask others to suppress a part of themselves, but rather allow and encourage all to be their best selves. As part of that goal, I am striving for autism, ADHD and other differences in brain functions to be better understood, supported and valued.

Apart from work and study, how do you fill your time?

I try to spend as much time as I can with my family and I carry all of my children close in my heart.

My classmates from 1995 know how passionate I was about Taekwondo when I was at Concordia, and while I still practised Taekwondo for decades, I eventually had to give it up as it was too hard on my body. I have taken up Salsa instead. The "flowy" nature of Salsa, the focus on technique and the partner work has a similar feel to Taekwondo for me. This feels more like a natural transition rather than an entirely new hobby, albeit one that is easier on my body.





How has Concordia shaped your life?

I always loved Concordia's motto: "Fortiter in Re, Suaviter in Modo" (Firm in Principle, Gentle in Manner). This is a great motto for life, and we can be firm and unshakable in the principles we stand for but also be gentle, loving and kind to others.

When I was struggling academically, I had a teacher, Mrs Bianca Brooks, who encouraged me, invested in me and believed in me. This was a turning point in my studies. Mr Jeff Sawade fuelled my creativity in his Media Studies class, and my creativity and divergent thinking has enhanced my practice of the law. Mrs Gail Roediger had such a creative way of teaching Biology that it drew my attention, and I can still remember, word for word, things that she taught me more than thirty years ago.

What would you say to current students considering law as a career?

Law is an immensely rewarding career. One thing that I love about my work as an immigration barrister is that I get to strive to reunite families.

As someone who initially struggled academically, what I would say to students is that you can overcome obstacles and make significant contributions to the law and to the lives of people affected by the law. If you feel strongly about justice, this might be a career for you. If you think a bit differently than most people, take comfort in knowing that you might see things that other people miss and think of legal arguments that others might not. If you are a creative person, your unique perspectives will allow you to test and shape the law. As lawyers, we can strive to build a more just society, brick by brick.

Extraordinary Achievements

Congratulations to two of our Old Concordians who recently received King's Birthday Awards:

- **Christopher Pfeiffer** (1962) was named a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) for significant service to the Lutheran Church of Australia, to the printing and tourism industries and to the community.
- **Paul Otto** (1974) received a Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) for service to the community through a range of charitable organisations.

These are extraordinary achievements and we are very proud of the significant contributions that Christopher and Paul have made in these areas over many years.



Christopher Pfeiffer AM



Paul Otto OAM



Old Concordians Blazing a Trail

We recently spoke with Sam Paior (1981) about a nationally awarded groundbreaking app project she, her brother Jon Paior (1992) and her son Ben Paior-Smith (2018) have created.

Driving Change Through Technology and Inclusion

It has been a big year for siblings Sam and Jon Paior as well as Sam's son Ben Paior-Smith. Together, they are the team behind *Make It Easy*—an innovative accessibility app that is rapidly gaining national and international recognition, featured at the Global Disability Summit in Berlin earlier this year.

At the 2025 National Tech Diversity Awards, held in Melbourne in August with 600 guests, *Make It Easy* was honoured with two awards, including the Tech for Good Award and the top award of the night, the Overall Champion Award (best of all category winners).

The *Make it Easy* app simplifies complex information into Plain English, Easy Read or Easy English, making communication accessible for people with disability or low literacy, and English learners. It can translate text from documents, websites or even photos and read it aloud, helping individuals participate more independently in daily life. The app is also supporting government and businesses to write more clearly.

Sam Paior is the driving force behind *Make It Easy*. With more than 15 years of experience as a disability advocate, and a member of the NDIS Independent Advisory Council appointed by the Prime Minister, she has been a national voice for inclusion and accessibility. Sam is also the founder of *The Growing Space*, an independent support coordination service, and has served on boards as well as national working and advisory groups shaping disability policy.

Jon Paior brings deep expertise in IT and cybersecurity to the project. He is the technical lead, ensuring the app works, protects privacy and builds user trust.

Ben Paior-Smith is a proud self-advocate, entrepreneur and community leader. With down syndrome and autism, and as a recipient of a James and Diana Ramsay Scholarship during his time at Concordia, Ben brings lived experience and energy to the team, testing the app and advising on accessibility features. Ben also contributes to youth advisory groups, government consultations and is a community researcher at Flinders University.

Together, this Concordia family is showing how innovation and inclusion can work hand in hand. Their recognition at the Tech Diversity Awards is not only a win for their app but also a celebration of the values of leadership, equity and service that Concordia instils in its students.

“Our dream is a world where everyone can understand, be included and hold the power of information in their pockets. Winning these awards is a huge encouragement and it reinforces that accessibility matters, and that technology can and should be used for good,” Sam says.



Generations of Old Concordians — Hoff / Paior Timeline

The Paior family have a long history at Concordia, and Ben was our first fifth generation student. August Hoff, Ben’s great-great grandfather, was from the Class of 1905 and was one of the cohort known as the ‘12 disciples’—the first 12 that graduated into the ministry on 12 December 1912 (12.12.1912).

Family Members of Ben Paior-Smith (2018) at Concordia College

- Brother – Bailey Paior-Smith (Class of 2020)
- Uncle – Jon Paior (Class of 1992)
- Mother – Sam Paior (Class of 1981)
- Grandmother – Lois Rathjen (Williams) (Class of 1961)
- Great-Aunt – Naomi Hoff (Class of 1936)
- Great-Grandmother – Olga Williams (Hoff) (Class of 1935)
- Great-Great-Grandfather – August Carl Hoff (Class of 1905)



Sporting Clubs

| Join the fun!

Our Old Concordian sporting clubs are a fun and easy way to connect with other Old Concordians, be active and meet new friends. Clubs cater for all ages and abilities, with teams in various grades.

Our clubs are financially supported by the Old Concordians' Association.

Please contact the Alumni Manager, Sue Kleinig (alumni@concordia.sa.edu.au), for information about any of the following teams:

- Basketball Club - Men's and Women's Teams
- Cricket Club - Men's Team
- Netball Club - Women's Team
- Pedal Prix Club - Mixed Team
- Soccer Club - Men's Teams
- Football Club - Men's Teams (in association with the Adelaide Lutheran Sports Club)



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Weddings



Anastacia Voortman (Amar) and Caleb Voortman (2013)

on 8 March 2025

L-R: Marianna Voortman, Joel Voortman (2001), Bec Gilmour, Mathew Allen, Sharon Hage, Anastacia Voortman (Amar), Caleb Voortman (2013), Christan Gilmour, Bec Hawkins, Sam Tolhurst, Hayley Allen, Ethan Fleming

Births



Patrick Rydon (2005) and Gemma Rydon

welcomed a son, Archer Rydon on 8 May 2025

- Congratulations

In Memoriam

Concordia has learnt of the following deaths in our community. We extend our sympathy to the families and friends of these Old Concordians.

Mibus, Alister (1991)
on 11 December 2023

Marafioti, Eleanor (Hanckel 1955)
on 20 January 2025

Wilhelm, Robert (1959)
on 25 January 2025

Zweck, Colin (1953)
on 10 February 2025

Schuster, Jillian (1956)
on 20 February 2025

Pridgeon, Lucy (Hancock 1995)
on 2 March 2025

Lange, Howard (1942)
on 30 March 2025

Nitschke, Ronald (1950)
on 30 April 2025

Richards, Janet (Budarick 1953)
on 5 May 2025

Hoopmann, Martin (1944)
on 13 July 2025

Eckermann, Milton (1959)
on 18 July 2025

Hoopmann, Ben (2007)
on 1 September 2025

Latest Reunions



Reunion for Old Concordians with children currently at Concordia



Class of 1975 - 50 Year Reunion



70+ Harmony in the Chapel



Class of 1985 - 40 Year Reunion



Class of 1995 - 30 Year Reunion



St Peters Campus (formerly St Peters Lutheran School) Reunion



60+ Lunch for the Class of 1965 and prior

2026 Diary Dates

Please save the dates for the following events planned for 2026.
More details will follow in the February edition of Old Concordians' Connect.

If you have any questions about our program of events, please contact our
Alumni Manager, Sue Kleinig (email alumni@concordia.sa.edu.au or phone 08 8291 9339).

**CLASS OF 2025 (FIRST REUNION)
WELCOME TO THE OLD CONCORDIANS**
Thursday 19 February 2026, 5.30-7pm
Art Courtyard, Concordia College

**CURRENT PARENTS WHO ARE
OLD CONCORDIANS REUNION**
Friday 1 May 2026, 5-6pm
Peace Wing, Concordia College

70+ HARMONY IN THE CHAPEL
Friday 15 May 2026, 2-3.30pm
Chapel & Chapel Narthex, Concordia College

**ST PETERS CAMPUS REUNION
(FORMERLY ST PETERS LUTHERAN SCHOOL)**
Friday 5 June 2026, 5-6pm
St Peters Lutheran Church Hall, St Peters Campus

40 YEAR REUNION, CLASS OF 1986
Friday 7 August 2026, 6-9pm
The Suaviter, Concordia College

30 YEAR REUNION, CLASS OF 1996
Friday 28 August 2026, 6-9pm
The Suaviter, Concordia College

60+ LUNCH. CLASS OF 1966 AND PRIOR
Thursday 17 September 2026, 12noon-3pm
The Suaviter, Concordia College

50 YEAR REUNION, CLASS OF 1976
Friday 16 October 2026, 6-9pm
The Suaviter, Concordia College

20 YEAR REUNION, CLASS OF 2006
Friday 30 October 2026, 6-8pm
Art Courtyard, Concordia College

10 YEAR REUNION, CLASS OF 2016
Friday 13 November 2026, 6pm
The Garden Courtyard, Cremorne Hotel

5 YEAR REUNION, CLASS OF 2021
Friday 20 November 2026, 6pm
The Garden Courtyard, Cremorne Hotel

Partners are welcome to join our events.

If you are interested in holding a reunion that is not listed,
please get in touch with us, as we would love to assist in any way.



If it's important to you, it's important to us!

We love hearing from Old Concordians of all ages, both near
and far, so please do get in touch to share stories, milestones
and any news, or simply to update your contact details.

Visit our website
concordia.sa.edu.au/community/old-concordians/stay-in-touch/
or phone Sue Kleinig, Alumni Manager, on 08 8291 9339.

Interested in joining the Old Concordians' Association Committee?

We would love to hear from you!
Please contact the Alumni Manager, Sue Kleinig, for more
information - alumni@concordia.sa.edu.au

Have your contact details changed?

If the details we have for you are incorrect,
please contact us on 08 8272 0444 or
mail@concordia.sa.edu.au

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