

Chancellor, University staff, guests, and fellow graduates,

Ten years ago, I walked on stage at the Old Museum in Brisbane to receive my Bachelor of Interactive Entertainment, majoring in Games Programming. Today, in this virtual space, I receive my Master of Theological Studies, the culmination of five years of study at Australian Lutheran College (ALC) and other campuses of the University of Divinity.

Quite a contrast. But the biggest contrast was how my education was focussed in each course.

Computer games programming, particularly in Australia, was one of the most competitive industries at the time, so naturally, classmates were competition. I was taught to stand out of the crowd, to build myself, my skills, and my portfolio, to prove my worth over my classmates.

Then I came to ALC.

It didn't take long to realise that the focus was completely different. It wasn't a competition. My classmates were fellow workers in Christ Jesus. If someone was struggling, we helped to pick them up. If someone was excelling, we celebrated them. We were growing together as servants of our Lord, learning to serve one another and build each other up.

In December last year I got to watch as my classmates were ordained as pastors in the Lutheran Church of Australia and New Zealand, then they watched as I was ordained myself. It was an overwhelming experience for me to celebrate my classmates and to witness all that the Lord was doing for them and through them. This is the joy that has been shaped through my time at ALC.

So as I look forward to a future of ministry in the Lord's service, I want to celebrate all of you who are graduating today, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus. Whatever courses you have been through, and wherever you may be called to serve, may God give you joy in your service that you would be as Christ to those around you, picking them up when they fall, celebrating them when they excel, and loving them as Christ loves you.

Thank you.

---

**Jeremy David Smith, Master of Theological Studies and Graduate Certificate in Research Methodology**

