

This sovereignty is a spiritual notion: *the ancestral tie between the land, or 'mother nature', and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who were born therefrom, remain attached thereto, and must one day return thither to be united with our ancestors. This link is the basis of the ownership of the soil, or better, of sovereignty.* It has never been ceded or extinguished, and co-exists with the sovereignty of the Crown.

How could it be otherwise? That peoples possessed a land for sixty millennia and this sacred link disappears from world history in merely the last two hundred years?

With substantive constitutional change and structural reform, we believe this ancient sovereignty can shine through as a fuller expression of Australia's nationhood.

Proportionally, we are the most incarcerated people on the planet. We are not an innately criminal people. Our children are alienated from their families at unprecedented rates. This cannot be because we have no love for them. And our youth languish in detention in obscene numbers. They should be our hope for the future.

These dimensions of our crisis tell plainly the structural nature of our problem. This is *the torment of our powerlessness.*

We seek constitutional reforms to empower our people and take a rightful place in our own country. When we have power over our destiny our children will flourish. They will walk in two worlds and their culture will be a gift to their country.

We call for the establishment of a First Nations Voice enshrined in the Constitution.

Makarrata is the culmination of our agenda: *the coming together after a struggle.* It captures our aspirations for a fair and truthful relationship with the people of Australia and a better future for our children based on justice and self-determination.

We seek a Makarrata Commission to supervise a process of agreement-making between governments and First Nations and truth-telling about our history.

In 1967 we were counted, in 2017 we seek to be heard. We leave base camp and start our trek across this vast country. We invite you to walk with us in a movement of the Australian people for a better future.



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Pilgrim
Uniting Church

9.30am
Community Worship

Sunday, 20th January 2019

Day of Mourning

The church is fitted with a hearing loop which covers the body of the church. To receive most benefit, hearing aid wearers are advised to switch their hearing aid to T-setting.



CALL TO WORSHIP

Our land is alive with the glory of God;
desert sands hum and gum trees dance.
Brown grasses sing
and mountains breathe their stillness.
All created things add their rhythms of delight
and even stones rap out their praise.
Let our voices mingle with those of the earth;
may our hearts join the beat of her joy,
For our triune God is with us:
the source of all being surrounds and upholds us.
Christ Jesus walks beside and before us.
The Spirit moves within and between us.
Blessed be God, our wonder and delight.

SONG: SPG 17 See the desert rain (*sing twice*)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF FIRST PEOPLES

Today we gather to worship, we acknowledge the Kurna people, the first inhabitants of this place from time beyond remembering.

We acknowledge that through this land, God nurtured and sustained the First Peoples of this country, the Aboriginal and Islander peoples.

We honour them for their custodianship of the land on which we gather today.

We acknowledge that the First Peoples had already encountered the Creator God before the arrival of the colonisers;

the Spirit was already in the land, revealing God to the people through law, custom and ceremony.

We acknowledge that the same love and grace that was finally and fully revealed in Jesus Christ sustained the First Peoples and gave them particular insights into God's ways;

And so we rejoice in the reconciling purposes of God found in the good news about Jesus Christ.

(From the Preamble to the UCA Basis of Union)

VIDEO: Listen to the Whisper

WELCOME

GREETING

Today, friends, we are remembering the tragic history of our nation and the violent dispossession of her First Peoples. Today is a Day of Mourning. Today we mark in lament the truth about our shared history and we lift up to God our prayers for First Peoples and our nation.

We say sorry and we pray for forgiveness, healing and hope. But today is also a day of worship. So we come together and give thanks to God for the abundant grace and liberating hope which we know through Jesus Christ and which is for all people.

The God of all justice,
the God of all peace,
be with you all.

And also with you.

Prayer of Invocation

Bäpa God, source of all life,
answer our call,
as a parent responds
to the cry of a child in the night.
Jesus Christ, brother and friend, Liberator,
stand beside us as bearer of our humanity,
and sharer of God's grace.
Creator Spirit, giver of new life, purposeful guest,
prod us to praise,
calling us to be a people of hope and faith in Christ Jesus.
Amen.

Bäpa means father in the Yolŋu languages of NE Arnhemland and in Bahasa languages.

BLESSING

Bless us therefore, as we depart this place: give us a generous spirit, a kind heart, and the grace to walk alongside our First Peoples, as brothers and sisters in Christ. **Amen.**

DISMISSAL

Go in the power of God's good Spirit: with the gentle fire of God's zeal, with the breath of life, ready to work for justice and peace.

**We go in Christ's name.
Amen.**

Peace be with you.

And also with you.

A sign of peace is exchanged

This service was prepared by Rev Sandy Boyce, Marelle Harisun, and Peter and Di Russell using the resources provided by the Uniting Church Assembly and the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress especially for the Day of Mourning.

Thanks to Norm Inglis on piano, Ruth Farrent as song leader, all our musicians who faithfully lead us in worship and others who participated.

**This morning, our morning tea will be in the Lounge.
All are welcome!**

Cover photograph: R to L.

Adnyamathahna woman Rev Denise Champion, Pitjantjatjara woman Auntie Mona Olsson, and Canadian First Nations elder Lorna Standingready mourning together at Colebrook Reconciliation Park near Blackwood in the Adelaide Hills, a former home for Aboriginal Stolen Generations children (March 2018).

ULURU STATEMENT FROM THE HEART

We, gathered at the 2017 National Constitutional Convention, coming from all points of the southern sky, make this statement from the heart:

Our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander tribes were the first sovereign Nations of the Australian continent and its adjacent islands, and possessed it under our own laws and customs. This our ancestors did, according to the reckoning of our culture, from the Creation, according to the common law from 'time immemorial', and according to science more than 60,000 years ago.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Creator of all things, both seen and unseen.
Make us strong as we seek; speak to us in your wisdom.
Teach us to love all people regardless of race or colour or belief.
May we listen with great care to the heartbeat of this land
And to its people who cared for it so well, and for so long.
May the peace these people and their land have always enjoyed
Continue to be strengthened and preserved by all who wish to come and
be part of this country and its Ancient Dreaming.

(Elizabeth Pike, 1998)

SENDING FORTH OF THE PEOPLE OF GOD

SONG: SfP 10 Follow the song lines

Chorus:

*Follow the song lines, follow the Spirit
singing the world into being anew,
follow the theme of the ancient one's dreaming
footprints in faith that the track will run true.*

Time beyond time, dreaming before dreaming,
one Holy Spirit has sung the design;
pathways of peace, widening circles,
music and dance that declare the divine.

Chorus:

Bushfire may flare, searing our courage,
earthquake of doubt shake the words that we pray;
look for the shoots, green growing saplings,
look for the hopeful amid the decay.

Chorus:

New songs be born, sensed by God's longing,
new lines be drawn, in the rock in the dust,
calling out love, calling out justice,
calling a people to grow and to trust.

Chorus:

WORDS OF MISSION

People of God, go from here to live out the covenant into which we, the
First and Second Peoples of this land, have entered with one another.
Confront and challenge injustice wherever you see it.
Act justly yourselves and insist that others do the same.
Rejoice in the richness of our diverse cultures and learn from them.
Celebrate and demonstrate the unity we share in Jesus our Lord.
Commit to worship, witness and serve as one people under God,
Until God's promised reconciliation of all creation is complete.

PRAYER OF WHO WE ARE

Leader: Merciful God:

All: **we, the Second Peoples of this land, acknowledge and
lament the injustice and abuse that has so often marked the
treatment of the First Peoples of this land.**

Left: We acknowledge and lament the way in which their land
was taken from them and their language, culture, law and
spirituality despised and suppressed.
We acknowledge and lament the way in which the Christian
church was so often not only complicit in this process
but actively involved in it.

Right: We acknowledge and lament that in our own time the
injustice and abuse has continued. We have been indifferent
when we should have been outraged, we have been
apathetic when we should have been active, we have been
silent when we should have spoken out.

All: **Liberating Jesus, hear our lament and by your Spirit bring
healing, hope and transformation to the lives of our First
Nations sisters and brothers and their communities, we pray.**

Leader: Gracious God, hear our acknowledgements:

We have not loved you with our whole heart, nor have we
loved First Peoples and other neighbours as ourselves.
God of mercy, forgive us for our failures, past and present
and give us the grace today to make a fresh start.

A time of silence

Leader: By your Spirit:

All: **transform our minds and hearts so that we may love as you
have loved us, that we may boldly speak your truth and
courageously do your will.
Through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.**

DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS

This is the best of all: when we are empty, God fills us; when we are
disheartened, God is compassionate; when we are wounded, God brings
healing; when we confess our sin, God forgives.

In Christ, through Christ and because of Christ, our sins are forgiven.

Thanks be to God. You refill the cup of life, O God.

In Christ, we find refuge, strength and hope.

Amen.

SONG: SPG 101 You were in this place

READING: Genesis 23: 1-20

WITNESS

A time of quiet reflection or reflective conversation with those nearby.

A reading for further reflection: 'Uluru Statement from the Heart'
(There is a copy of this at the end of the Order of Service.)

SONG: SfP 12 For you, deep stillness (*sing through twice*)
(the offering will be collected during the singing)

For you, deep stillness of the silent inland;
For you, deep blue of the desert skies,
for you, flame red of the rocks and stones;
for you, sweet water from hidden springs.

From the edges seek the heartlands,
and when you're burnt by the journey
may the cool winds of the hovering Spirit
soothe and replenish you.

In the name of Christ. (*repeat*)
(repeat three times the last time)

DEDICATION OF THE OFFERING

We make our offerings, small and large,
with the hope and confidence that
all we do,
all we offer,
all we say,
all we think, and
all we hope
will take root in this world
and be the source of new expressions
of God's love,
of God's justice,
of God's character,
of God's mission, and
of God's reign.
May God's will be done on earth as it is in heaven
through us,
alongside us,
despite us, and
for us.

Amen.

(Adapted from a prayer on [Mustard Seed](#))

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Give us the courage to accept the realities of our history so that we may build a better future for our nation. Teach us to respect all cultures. Teach us to care for our land and waters. Help us to share justly the resources of this land.

Help us to bring about spiritual and social change to improve the quality of life for all peoples in our communities, especially the disadvantaged. Help all young people to find true dignity and self-esteem by your Spirit. May your power and love be the foundations on which we: walk together as First and Second Peoples; and build our families, our communities and our nation. Through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

*(Prepared by the Wontulp Bi-Buya Indigenous Theology Working Group,
Amended September 2018 Assembly Resourcing Unit)*

COMMUNION

The Invitation

Great Prayer of Thanksgiving

God be with you. **And also with you.**
Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to God.**
Let us give thanks to God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

God of holy dreaming, Great Creator Spirit, from the dawn of creation you have given your children the good things of Mother Earth. You spoke and the gum tree grew. In the vast desert and dense forest, and in cities at the water's edge, creation sings your praise. Your presence endures as the rock at the heart of our Land. When Jesus hung on the tree you heard the cries of all your people and became one with the wounded ones: the convicts, the hunted, and the dispossessed.

The sunrise of your Son coloured the earth anew, and bathed it in glorious hope. In Jesus we have been reconciled to you, to each other and to your whole creation.

Lead us on, Great Spirit, as we gather from the four corners of the earth; enable us to walk together in trust from the hurt and shame of the past into the full day which has dawned in Jesus Christ. With all your people of every time and place we shout out songs of praise:

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of compassion and light.

Heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

The Narrative

Prayer of consecration

Faithful God, pour out your Spirit on those who gather in this place, and on this bread and juice, that they may be for us the life of Christ.

Amen.

We break this bread to share in the body of Christ.

We who are many are one body, for we all share in the one bread.

Communion is received.