

# Worship Resources for Reconciliation Sunday

May 30, 2010

Dear colleagues in Ministry,

**It was agreed that the Presbytery establish Reconciliation Sunday in Reconciliation Week (27 May to 3 June) annually, to be celebrated across the Church, and request Church Councils to include this day in their worship calendars.**

This year Reconciliation Sunday falls on 30 May which is Trinity Sunday. We have prepared the resources with this theme of the Trinity in mind to encourage congregations not to neglect this event. If it becomes all too hard we suggest that churches might consider moving the celebration of Reconciliation Sunday to the following week, or using the resources during NAIDOC Week.

This is the fourth year that we have prepared worship resources for use on Reconciliation Sunday. Some of the resources we produced in previous years have been used to produce this resource. Please refer to these resources for additional information. They may be downloaded from the Mission Resourcing Network Website. Go to Covenanting and click on Reconciliation Sunday. <http://mrn.sa.uca.org.au/covenanting/reconciliation-sunday.html>

Please feel free to use all or part of these resources in planning worship for this day or they may be used later during NAIDOC week celebrations if this fits in better with your worship planning.

The resources include:

1. A complete order of service
2. Suggested hymns and a children's address (separate downloads)
3. Some material for consideration when sermon writing
4. General information on the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress and Covenanting (separate download)
5. Other Resources for Parents and Playgroups

Rev Ken Sumner	Covenanting Coordinator & Co-chair Covenanting Committee
Dr Marelle Harisun,	Co-chair, Covenanting Committee
Peter Russell,	Secretary, Covenanting Committee
Andrew Clarke,	Member, Covenanting Committee
Dr Di Russell	Member, Covenanting Committee

# Order of Service for 30 May, 2010

## Trinity Sunday

### **Preliminaries:**

If weather and architecture permit, the congregation might gather outside the church and use the first hymn as a processional hymn.

As the people gather, the sound of the didgeridoo\* is heard, calling the people to worship.

The Christ candle (red) is lit on the communion table. It should be surrounded by half a dozen smaller candles, either black and white, or black, red, gold, blue, green and white, representing Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous people. (These smaller candles to be lit later)

If available a coolamon or piti (an Aboriginal wooden bowl) may be placed on the communion table and used for the collection. Members of the congregation may be asked the Sunday before to bring any appropriate Aboriginal artefacts such as bowls, carved animals and clap sticks to be placed on the table.

*\* If a local didgeridoo player is available, he might be invited to play. A fee would no doubt be payable. Otherwise there are good didgeridoo recordings available. Narana Creations stocks them (410 Torquay Road, Grovedale, Vic 3216. Fax: 03 5241 5711. Tel: 03 5241 5700). Narana recommends the following CD Didgeridoo – Norm Stanley \$29.95 + \$5 postage & packing. Narana is run by the Congress in Victoria so purchasing from this organisation supports Aboriginal employment. If it is too late to get it this year, order it anyway for use next year or for other special occasions.*

### **Introduction to Worship:**

*The worship leader will indicate the special theme of the worship for the day, picking up the theme of reconciliation. Reconciliation begins in the immense love of God, who has continually reached out to reconcile the whole creation to God. That love invites a response from all of us towards God and towards all people, including those from whom we are alienated.*

Today is Trinity Sunday.

Today we also recognise Reconciliation Sunday.

The Uniting Church and the Synod of South Australia is on a journey of reconciliation with Aboriginal Australians.

We believe that restoring human relationships is part of God's reconciling mission in our world.

Through forgiveness, God's grace works to provide all with hope and a new way of living.

This journey of reconciliation is a response to the Bible's call to care for all people including the marginalised and vulnerable.

### **Greeting:**

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all;

**And also with you.**

### **Call to worship:**

God of Love, we come to worship you. You are the Creator of this land and of all good things. Our hope is in you because you gave your Son Jesus to reconcile the world to you. We pray for your strength and grace to forgive, accept and love one another, as you love us and forgive and accept us in the sacrifice of your Son.

(adapted from material by Wontulp Bi-Buya Indigenous Theology Working Group)

### **Welcome to Country:**

*If a local Aboriginal elder is available, he/she might welcome people to country.*

*In any case, the worship leader welcomes people to the service, indicating the special nature of the service, and either thanks the Aboriginal elder for the welcome to country,*

*or*

*simply draws the attention of the congregation to the fact that we are meeting on land which has been cared for from time immemorial by the (name of the local Aboriginal people) people, as stewards of the Creation. One of the following may be used.*

I/we acknowledge that we are on the land of the \_\_\_\_\_ people. I/we pay respect to their tribal Elders, honour their continuing culture, and pray that we might all work together for reconciliation in this nation.

*or*

I/we acknowledge the traditional owners that God placed as the original custodians of the country on which we meet. I/we pay respect to their tribal Elders, honour their continuing culture, and pray that in the power of your Spirit we might all work together for reconciliation and justice in this nation.

*(use the second example unless you can identify the traditional owners of the area)*

### **Hymn:**

*A selection of hymns and songs that have been recommended in previous years is available as a separate download. They have been brought together to assist in selection. Two of these are particularly suited to Trinity Sunday. All suit the theme of reconciliation. The choice is up to those planning this service.*

### **Prayers of Thanksgiving and Confession:**

The work of the creator is visible.  
The example of Jesus is apparent.  
The wind of the spirit is blowing.  
The word of god is calling.

Let us respond with praise.  
Let us respond with obedience.  
Let us respond with joy.  
Let us worship in spirit and in truth.

O Trinity of love, One God, community for which we yearn,  
look now on us – who look on you .....  
And hear our prayer for our community:

Where there is falseness,  
*reveal it by your truth.*

Where there is any coldness,  
*kindle the flame of your love.*

Where there is sorrow,  
*let there be grief that is good.*

Where there is joy and hope,  
*free us to share it together.*

And make us one,  
*as you are one.*

Before God and you who are near me,  
I release anything I hold against you;  
I regret all I have done to harm you;  
I stand beside the wrong in my life  
and ask for God's forgiveness.

*Before God and you who are near,  
We release anything we hold against one another;  
We regret all the harm we have done;  
We stand beside the wrong in our lives  
and ask for your forgiveness.*

(silence)

Jesus says to us, each one:  
"Go and sin no more,  
come and follow me".  
Now bind our hands with honesty  
as we offer them to each other  
and our prayer to you.

Iona Community - from Terry C Falla (ed) *Be Our freedom Lord: Responsive prayers for contemporary worship*  
(2<sup>nd</sup> edition) Open Book1994, pages 29, 144/5

## **The Lord's Prayer**

### **Children's Address : The Diver and the Duck**

*The Diver and the Duck (see separate download) or one of the narrated stories from previous years may be downloaded and used.*

### **Hymn:**

**Scripture readings:**

Proverbs 8:1-4, 22-31

Psalm 8

Romans 5:1-5

John 16:12-15

**Witness: see notes**

**Hymn:**

**Intercessory Prayers:**

Eternal and ever loving God  
we believe that our worship draws us near to you,  
and towards our neighbours on earth.

*We pray for the whole creation:*

May we all learn before it is too late  
to respect the uniqueness, fragility, and beauty  
of our earth and all its creatures.

*We pray for every nation and race, especially for the Aboriginal/first peoples of this land:*

May our actions and our lifestyle bear out our belief  
that all people everywhere are our sisters and brothers,  
whatever their country, their city, or their tribe,  
whatever their education or their culture,  
whatever their circumstances, religion, or colour.

*We pray for peace in our torn and troubled world and for a country that discriminates and marginalises Aboriginal people:*

We pray that weapons and prejudice may be discarded instead of people,  
guns silenced instead of the voices of the poor,  
and that in a world half expecting terrorist attack,  
we might learn that love is not a luxury.

We pray for the church of Jesus Christ:

May it be true and joyful, wholesome and active,  
always rediscovering that you called it into being  
for the service and salvation of others.

*We pray for the witness of our church community:*

As we grow in faith, love and hope, help us to understand that no planning for the future, however necessary, no program, no matter how carefully conceived, can relieve us of the necessity of going forward into a future that cannot be planned -- of risk, of danger, of hope in your incalculable grace.

*We pray for ourselves:*

Not one of us has ever found or given enough tenderness or love in his or her life, enough truth, freedom, beauty, goodness, and joy.  
We are always travelling to a new tomorrow.

*Lord we pray for our world, we pray for others, we pray for ourselves.*

We pray because you have put within us an unquenchable hope.

*We pray because we live for the ultimate.*

We pray because Jesus is our Lord and your kingdom is in our midst.

*Amen*

adapted with minor changes from Terry C Falla (ed) Be Our freedom Lord: Responsive prayers for contemporary worship (2<sup>nd</sup> edition) Open Book1994, page 187

## **The Offering**

*Please consider using the offering or a special retiring offering today for the work of the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress in its ministry to Aboriginal people. – proceeds may be forwarded to the Rev Ken Sumner, Covenanting Coordinator, UCA(SA) Synod Office, 212 Pirie Street, Adelaide, 5000*

## **Prayer of Dedication:**

### **Let us pray:**

We confess that what has happened in the past in this nation has not always been done in accordance with the hopes and possibilities that God had for us.

We confess our hardness of heart and lack of compassion. Cleanse us from the racism that lurks in the dark corners of our souls.

We pray for healing, forgiveness and restoration for all peoples who call Australia home.

We resolve that by the grace of God we shall strive to make good as much as we are able and to live differently so that our Aboriginal brothers and sisters may share equally with us in the bounty of this land.

We pray that we will support in any way we can the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress, its ministers, elders and congregations as they minister to the spiritual, social, mental and emotional well being of Aboriginal Australians.

Bless and use these gifts and through the power of your Spirit move us to acts of true reconciliation and change us so that we might make a difference.

**Amen.**

(adapted from the liturgy provided to the churches in 2008 following the Prime Minister's apology to the stolen generations,)

**Hymn:**

**Words of Mission:**

May the God who dances in creation,  
who embraces us with human love,  
who shakes our lives like thunder,  
bless us and drive us out with power  
to fill the world with justice  
and with peace.

Janet Morley - from Terry C Falla (ed) Be Our freedom Lord: Responsive prayers for contemporary worship (2<sup>nd</sup> edition) Open Book 1994, page 236

## **For Children, Parents & Playgroups for Reconciliation Week**

At Home or Church

Reconciliation Week is a time to build mutually respectful relationships between Indigenous and other Australians. Achieving reconciliation involves raising awareness and knowledge of Indigenous history and culture, changing attitudes that are often based on myths and misunderstandings, and encouraging action. 1yr+ Help children to trace around other children's hands with crayon or texta onto a large sheet of paper or multiple sheets stuck together. The children colour the pairs of hands different colours: brown, black, pink and yellow. Talk about God's love for all people no matter what their appearance or colour.

Out and About

3yr+ Visit a local site of Aboriginal significance or a cultural centre. Explore the local Council library for some picture books with Aboriginal themes for reading to young children. Ask the librarian for suggestions.

# Other resources

## Some sermon ideas

### **From Trinity Sunday Sermon by Rowland Croucher and others.....**

Today is a "crazy, mixed-up" day. We have at the same time, by the vagaries of the church calendar, the celebration of the Feast of the Holy Trinity - one of the most abstract of Christian mysteries - which is always celebrated the week after Pentecost, and at the other extreme we have the observance of the secular world's Sorry Day, which brings us in touch with the more sordid and less happy realities of our political and social history.

Trying to bridge the gap between such disparate concepts gave me not a little trouble, and I want to acknowledge the link made in a hint from the American Jesuit theologian Larry Gillick.

.....

26 May 1998 was the first National Sorry Day. You may remember the "sea of hands", the "journey of healing", or the "sorry books" at street stalls, town halls, and other places, where a million individual Australians signed their name and put messages of sympathy and sorrow for the damage suffered by indigenous people.

That damage started with the arrival of white men, who took over tracts of the land for their own exclusive use. Then the white men who occupied the land defended their new territory by killing many of the black men who had been there before. And the white men brought diseases unknown before, against which there was little defence. And alcohol.

The white men's governments eventually noticed the black men sitting around on the edges of the white men's towns and cities, and started to devise policies so that the "native problem" could be better managed.

Now, one of the damages done by the white men was the taking of black women: sometimes in marriage, but most often without. It followed, nature being what it is, that there were many children who had mixed blood.

The policy makers thought that the white men collectively should take some responsibility for these children. There began a policy of taking these children away from their mothers, and putting them in homes or institutions where they would be fed, clothed, and educated in the white men's way, and given the social advantages that would follow. And the white man saw, that it was good.

This policy, begun at the end of the 1800s, continued until the 1970s.

At the start of the 1990s, a Royal Commission, into Black Deaths in Custody, found that of 100 young black men who had committed suicide in gaol, 43 had been removed from their mothers during that policy. And so the inquiry began that resulted in the "Stolen Generations" report: called "Bringing them home".

What the policy makers had failed to see, good as their intentions may have been, was that children need to know their roots - all adopted children feel the same way. Where am I from? Who is my mother? Who are my people? What values really belong to me? Who am I?

And so Sorry Day was born. A day on which we, the children of the policymakers, can turn to our brothers and sisters and say, "our parents did these things to your parents; though we did it not ourselves, we say sorry on behalf of our parents, and we want to share your pain."

This is why Sorry Day is observed in churches throughout Australia. Partly because church-run orphanages were involved, but also because sharing the pain of the outcast and dispossessed is truly

something done in the spirit of Christ. It is one of the paradoxes of life, that when you truly love, you open yourself to the full experience of the other's pain.

.....

*Now, the Trinity*

<snip>

Larry Gillick, in a meditation on the meaning of today's feast in our lives, puts it this way:

"[From Pentecost and] the descent of the Holy Spirit, we move to the celebration of the central mystery of a Three-Person but one God. ... The One God does one thing and the closest experience we have to what this God does is our word, "love".

"You and I can love and not love at the same time: but that is the one thing God cannot do. Love is part of our makeup, but God's being is simple, having no parts and thus God is and can only be, infinite love. The wonderful reality of love is that it wants to move out of itself, reveal and be known as loving. Somehow the Trinity is a love relationship in which we are involved by being created and loved."

<snip>

Larry Gillick says, "we will not be changed much by what we learn from the readings and homily this weekend. We will grow in faith by our experiencing human love, forgiveness, faithfulness, and communication in our own lives." Or, to quote the concluding line from that musical parable about redemptive love, "Les Miserables", "To love another person is to see the face of God."

Let me develop that thought in the context of Sorry Day: it is as we - the people of God - reach out to our brothers and sisters who suffer the pain of our shared history, that we bring God - that love relationship which is the Trinity - into the heart of our troubled land.

In doing so, we become a part of another triad manifesting love, which inter-connects with the triad of the Trinity: God Himself, we the people of God, and the dispossessed and suffering. For we are the medium through which God has chosen to reach out and show His love to the dispossessed.

Love has no discretion. It just is. As God's love works in us, we are incapable of doing other than reaching out and sharing the pain of the bruised and outcast.

In the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

**Reference:** <http://jmm.aaa.net.au/articles/2679.htm>

**GOD AS COMMUNITY by Bruce Prewer** - used with permission

Now, at the high risk of making a fool of myself, I want to offer you the alternative of a Trinitarian God. Today I put it to you that the doctrine of the Trinity should save us from rampant individualism.

(" Fool?" Yes, whenever preachers try to speak about the Trinity, they will either make a fool of themselves or commit a grave heresy-- usually both. If you want to play it safe, you just recite the formula "God in three persons, blessed Trinity" and say not another word.)

All our language about God is appallingly inadequate, but Christians have clung on tenaciously to the Trinity as a way of preserving the tiny truths that God has revealed to us. Maybe our formula of the Trinity is only 1% of the truth about God, but it is a critical 1% that makes all the difference.

<snip>

There we have it: We have been shown the Abbaness of God the Father, the Intimacy of God the Spirit, and the costly grace of God the Son. One God yet a community of persons. It may be only 1% of the truth about God but it is the 1% that makes all the difference.

#### COMMUNAL; THE HIGHEST FORM OF EXISTENCE

The Trinitarian formula insists that the nature of God is closer to a loving community than to a lofty individuality. The highest form of existence, of personal being, is communal. God is communal. A choir singing at perfect pitch and in perfect harmony is closer to a definition of God than a lone soloist singing his heart out.

If this is the God we worship, then true greatness lies in the direction of community rather than in self-sufficient individuality. We will find the true meaning of being a person in fellowship. The church community reflects God (or should!) far better than a lone minister or priest, no matter how gifted that pastor may happen to be. Individualism is the way of limitation, diminishment, and death. Growth takes place when we give to others and receive from others; when we know we need them and they need us.

I quote the eminent theologian Jurgen Moltmann;

“The Trinity is a unity of a special kind. It is a unity that is sought by humans in their community with each other. It is anticipated and foreshadowed in their love towards one another. It is experienced in the ecstasy of joy and gratitude and in moments of mystical unity.”

“God wills to recognise and reflect the Divine Self in human community”

A final question: What kind of wonderful creatures might we become if, in the fellowship of the church, we begin to model ourselves not on individualism but on God’s com-unity?

And a final quote: “The ritual of domination is subjugation; the ritual of community is hugging.”  
(Moltmann)

**Reference:** <http://www.bruceprewer.com/DocC/C37trin.htm>

#### **Notes for Trinity Sunday from Rev Ken Sumner**

David Unaipon said, “We, as Aboriginal people, need you and you, as non-Aboriginal people, need us.”

You, as non-Aboriginal people who have come to Australia, have played a large part in making this society what it is, so you can’t just leave us Aboriginal people and expect us to fend for ourselves. You can’t leave us now because it’s like us taking you out in the bush and leaving you there. Most of you wouldn’t survive in the wilderness on your own. For many Aboriginal people, white society is like a wilderness. We need to be shown the way through what is, for many of us, very much uncharted waters; an unknown territory.

However, it is inappropriate for you to insist that we become like you in order to succeed in society. This is what has happened so often in the past and Aboriginal people have been disempowered by this approach. Our society can encompass people who are quite different, and so can the Church. We can work together to fulfil God’s purpose for us all if we think of the Church in terms of what I call ‘Stir-fry Theology’.

#### *Stir-fry Theology*

A stir-fry consists of a variety of different but unique ingredients that are cooked together. However, each ingredient needs to be cooked so that it retains its own unique texture and flavour. This means it may need to be treated differently from other ingredients. Together, all the ingredients make up the stir-fry

A stir-fry is not a melting pot or soup when everything ends up tasting the same.

People are like the ingredients in a stir-fry. We need to be who we are in this great big wok, retaining our own identity. We are all different, and it is OK to be different.

The sauce binds the stir-fry into a dish with unique textures and flavours. The secret is to know the kind of sauce to use with the types of ingredients chosen and how much sauce to add. When you add the sauce, the different ingredients take up the flavour of the sauce in different ways. All are flavoured by the sauce but they still retain their own unique flavours.

For Christians, the love of God, expressed through the Trinity, is the sauce that binds us together. Despite our differences we are each an important ingredient in the stir-fry of the Church community, bound together by love. It is the love of God that brings out the best in each of us and enhances our unique flavours.

### *What this means in terms of Covenanting (Reconciliation)*

As a Church we have agreed on an official covenant between the Uniting Church in Australia and the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress. This is our legal position but what does it mean in practice for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal members of the Church at the grass-roots?

I am trying to develop a relationship type of covenant. I am trying to challenge people to be friends with Aboriginal people. This is a lot more challenging than just talking about the Covenant.

So what does friendship mean? When we are friends with someone we love and respect each other even if we are quite different and we don't understand each other. We are still friends even though we don't agree with what each other says or believes. We need to journey into friendship – accepting people for who they are.

Jesus commanded us to be friends, to love one another as God loves us. We need to imitate Christ in this respect.

However, this is something we often struggle with. We find it difficult to step out of our comfort zone to become friends with people who are different. So where do we start?

We need to get inside ourselves and change our attitudes to people who are different, whether they are Aboriginal or refugees even if there are no such people in your local area.

Your relationship with God as expressed through the Trinity is the key to building loving relationships with those who are different. The love we are able to share comes from God's love for us and we have Christ's example to follow, but we need the Spirit to guide us on our way.

Loving one another means forgiving..., trusting..., sacrificing...; it means opening our hearts to others; it means transforming your attitudes toward others. This can happen even if you never have the privilege of meeting an Aboriginal person. Not having Aboriginal people living near you is no excuse for not building loving relationships with Aboriginal people. You can inform yourself of the truth rather than media spin, and what you read in the papers is mostly that, spin. It's what inside your heart that counts.

Often, as Christians, we choose who we want to love and be part of our lives. The challenge is to love everybody unconditionally. On this Reconciliation Sunday we think of how we might express our love for our Aboriginal brothers and sisters in Christ, especially members of the Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress.

**Rev Ken Sumner** is the National Chairperson of the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress, State Resource Minister for the Congress in South Australia and Covenanting Coordinator for the Presbytery and Synod of South Australia. He is a Ngarrindjeri man from the lower Murray and Coorong in SA.

## Some additional prayers and readings -

### PSALM 8

Holy Friend, God our True God,  
how awesome is your name in all the world!

Your glory is greater than a billion stars  
yet you enjoy the songs of infants and children.  
Their praise is a stronghold against foes  
and their joy silences the vengeful enemy.

When I look at the skies, the work of your little finger,  
the moon and the stars which you have destined,  
what are human beings that you think of us,  
mere earthlings that you care for us?

Yet you have made us little less than gods  
and have covered us with glory and beauty.  
You have put us in charge of your handiwork,  
placing the all under our stewardship;

The sheep, cattle and creatures of the bush,  
the birds of the air, plains and billabong,  
the fish and dolphins that live in our seas,  
and whales that make paths through the ocean.

Holy Friend, God our True God,  
how awesome is your name in all the world!

© Bruce Prewer 2000 (Another version is in "Australian Psalms":) used with permission

### PRAYER OF THE ABORIGINAL PEOPLE

Creator of all, you gave us The Dreaming.  
You spoke to us through our beliefs.  
You then made your love clear to us  
in the person of Jesus.  
You own us. You are our hope.  
Make us strong as we face the problems of change.  
We ask you to help the people of Australia  
to listen to us and respect our culture.  
Make the knowledge of you grow strong in all people,  
so that you can be at home in us  
and we can make a home for everyone  
in our land.  
Amen.

Terry C Falla, *Be Our Freedom Lord: Responsive Prayers and Readings for Contemporary Worship* 2<sup>nd</sup>  
edition, Open Book 1994 p. 2.

## Holiness

I saw the Lord  
weeping  
with Aboriginal mothers  
around shanties  
and reservations  
where children learn little  
except early death  
or from their fathers  
the way of despair  
and toxic bitterness –  
weeping.

*Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts;  
the whole earth is full of God's glory.*

I saw the Lord  
gasping  
for breath in those churches  
wherever shallow worshippers  
mouth blessings on the hungry  
then drive home  
to overfills of protein  
and sport on the TV –  
gasping.

*Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts;  
the whole earth is full of God's glory.*

I saw the Lord  
hoping  
in students scanning open books  
roughly asking  
why  
why  
searching deep into friendly eyes  
for seeds of truth  
worth living for  
and dying –  
hoping.

*Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts;  
the whole earth is full of God's glory.*

I saw the Lord  
agonising  
through corridors and chambers  
of Canberra  
where hollow people  
salute expediency  
consult the opinion polls  
so that our future  
will be the past repeated  
spreading stench like the last –  
agonising.

*Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts;  
the whole earth is full of God's glory.*

I saw the Lord  
angry  
whenever church councils and committees  
tardily  
face agenda lifelessly  
with no fire in the gut  
no hope in the eye  
no readiness to lose all  
in the Kingdom which  
comes first –  
angry.

*Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts;  
the whole earth is full of God's glory.*

*O Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world,  
have mercy upon us.*

*O Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world,  
have mercy on us.*

*O Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world,  
have mercy on us.*

© Bruce Prewer - used with permission

### **Aboriginal child**

Walk tall, my child, you walk real tall,  
and hold your head up high,  
look around you at your people,  
and see with untainted eyes.  
Look in the mirror and look at yourself,  
not the picture the world holds before you;  
see the spirit of your fathers,  
and sisters and brothers,  
and the strength of the mothers who bore you.  
Who will deny that we are strong;  
have we not suffered, yet still survive,  
the worst crimes that could be committed  
by human beings against their own kind?  
Haven't we lived and reared our young  
long as any race on earth?  
Look at your history, your people,  
and never deny their worth.  
The value and life of living things  
has been maintained since time began,  
ministered as part of a sacred trust,  
by your people of this land,  
'Aboriginaland' yes, your birthright,

no matter what some name it;  
So dig your fingers deep in the soil  
And feel it, and hold it, and claim it.  
Your people fought and died for this;  
the history books distort it all,  
but in your veins runs that same  
Aboriginal blood;  
so walk tall, my child,  
walk tall...

*Maureen Watson*  
*Aboriginal poet and activist*

I'm hurting inside'  
hurting because we are treated like migrants  
in our own country;  
hurting because some white people don't  
understand how we feel;  
hurting because we aren't treated  
as human beings.

It hurts  
when you call me an Abo;  
when we are looked down upon;  
when we watch our children being  
treated like dirt.  
It hurts when you don't understand.

Won't you help us bridge the gap between  
your people and ours?  
We have so much to give each other  
if only given the chance.  
Won't you accept us as we are –  
people with feelings the same as you?  
Won't you try to understand how we  
feel about our culture, our land –  
try to understand our needs?  
Won't you try to understand  
the hurt,  
the heart-ache,  
the discouragement,  
the disappointment?

*Prayer by Daphne Lowe, Victoria, 1981*

If you have come to help me  
you are wasting your time.

But

If you have come because  
your liberation is bound up with mine  
then let us work together.

*Lilla Watson, Aboriginal Australian*

## Some quotes -

Despite the suffering and trauma expressed within the stories of the Stolen Children, the responses of Aboriginal people have been extraordinarily generous.

This is a time when we need that spirit of generosity.

It is a time to feel the connections of a shared past.

It is a time to guard against things that fragment us.

And it is a time to cherish

- those things which bring us together
- those things which have helped us to survive,
- those things that will create a better future for us all.

Lowitja O'Donoghue

quoted in *Why Prayerline* compiled by Jon Inkpin on behalf of the *Decade to Overcome Violence initiative* in Australia with the support of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Ecumenical Commission.

Reconciliation requires mutual respect between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians. In my view, this is best developed in practice through cooperation on projects of joint benefit at local and regional level.

Ray Martin, Presenter ,

A current affair Channel Nine; Member of the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation in *The Weekend Australian* August 1994.

## References

Terry C Falla, *Be Our Freedom Lord: Responsive Prayers and Readings for Contemporary Worship*, Open Book, 1994

*Songs for Pilgrims*, Pilgrim Uniting Church, 2006

Music accompaniment in pdf format may be downloaded for the following songs. The download file is [http://mrn.sa.uca.org.au/component/docman/doc\\_download/280-songs.html](http://mrn.sa.uca.org.au/component/docman/doc_download/280-songs.html)

## Some other Sources:

### Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress – South Australia

Address all correspondence to:

PO Box 1044

Salisbury SA 5108

P: (08) 8281 1614 F: (08) 8281 1577

Resource Officer: Ian Dempster P: (08) 8281 1614 E: [idempster@sa.uca.org.au](mailto:idempster@sa.uca.org.au)

### UAICC Websites

Port Augusta - <http://www.congress.org.au>

National: <http://www.uaicc.org.au>

### Reconciliation Australia

<http://www.reconciliation.org.au/>

## Acknowledgements

### Material has been sourced from:

#### The Covenanting Website of the Uniting Church SA

<http://mrn.sa.uca.org.au/covenanting/reconciliation-sunday.html>

#### NATSIEC Website – Worship Liturgy

<http://www.ncca.org.au/natsiec/resources/>

Week of Prayer for Reconciliation 2010

<http://www.ncca.org.au/departments/natsiec/resources/prayer/509-week-of-prayer-for-reconciliation>

#### Denise Champion

For permission to use the Adnyamathanha story of “*The Diver and the Duck*” (Flinders Ranges, South Australia) notes and pronunciation guide.

#### Robin Mann

For permission to use words from the **All Together** Books published by Open Book and obtainable from Robin Mann directly through his web site at: <http://www.robinmann.com/>

#### Bruce Prewer

For permission to use material from his web resources and *Australian Psalms*, Open Book

[http://www.bruceprewer.com/b\\_rcl.htm](http://www.bruceprewer.com/b_rcl.htm)

#### Pilgrim Publishing

Thanks to Norm Inglis, Jenny Ward & Graeme McIntosh for permission to use the songs from “*Songs for Pilgrims*”, Pilgrim Uniting Church, 12 Flinders Street, Adelaide SA 5000.

<http://www.pilgrim.org.au/publishing/index.htm>