

Training Aboriginal Christian Leaders [TACL]

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Training Aboriginal Christian Leaders (TACL) continues its work of managing four (4) separate historical investments, including the “Smith of Dunesk” fund and any current funds raised or donated. Our purpose remains,

to provide education and training for persons ministering to Aboriginal People in such churches, fellowships and bodies as may be approved from time to time.
[TACL Constitution, 4.2, ‘Objects’]

TACL is a body of the combined churches, in which the United Church continues to be (healthily) ‘over-represented’; with Pastor Nelson Varcoe as its (part-time) Project Officer, Covenanting Officer Tarlee Leondaris, United Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress [UAICC or ‘Congress’] Development and Outreach Officer Rev Mark Kickett (when available) and Resource Officer Ian Dempster all active attendees and contributors. Rev Phil Hoffmann serves as TACL Secretary and TACL is blessed with the remarkable Rev Gowan Armstrong, whose commitment and dedication to our cause, remains an inspiration to all.

2. Challenges

In recent years TACL has faced two (2) separate and on-going challenges, severely impacting our meeting and activity.

- (a) COVID-19: We have been very careful and cautious, recognizing the threat the pandemic has posed to communities.
 - This has made our ‘normal’ bi-monthly meetings over a shared lunch and exchange of community news unworkable.
- (b) Co-ordinating people with ministry with First Nations people in various directions for a meeting.

On several occasions we have failed to garner a quorum. In 2020 and 2021 combined we have only managed a two (2) in-person meeting and two (2) meetings by Zoom. In fact, at time of preparation of this report we are yet to hold our 2019 Annual General Meeting.

Disappointingly, we are without representation from some fellow major denominations.

3. Activity in 2020 and 2021

With our support of a paid Project Officer for 5 hours/week and being dependent upon interest income on accounts held and historically low interest rates TACL has been able to fund limited activity in the past two years. After discussion and review the Executive made the decision to keep our investments with UC Invest, rather than the potentially higher-yield option of share investments.

TACL was grateful to receive a sizeable donation from the Bible Society of South Australia who are represented on our Management Team and have shared in significant projects in the past.

At April 2022, Nelson Varcoe has completed several years as TACL Project Officer. We are grateful to Nelson, himself a TACL beneficiary when training, for his commitment and service in a variety of TACL projects over the years and wish him well in a quieter time of life.

At the time of preparation of this report, our current Treasurer [Lutheran volunteer] has indicated that he will not be continuing in this position.

4. Future

The immediate challenge for “Training Aboriginal Christian Leaders” is to identify and recruit new members to our Management Team. From there, it is dreamed that we may be able to develop the momentum to gather people and continue this worthwhile task.