



CHRIST IN THE CENTRE

WARNING: This publication may contain photographs of Indigenous people who are deceased.

NEWS FROM FINKE RIVER MISSION OF THE LUTHERAN CHURCH OF AUSTRALIA

SUMMER 2018



Areyonga celebrates CASLAU CONFIRMATIONS

For a week in October, staff and students from Unity College in Murray Bridge, South Australia, visited the Utju (Areyonga) community in the Northern Territory. The service trip was eye-opening, humbling, challenging and rewarding for the students and staff involved.

The students served in community agencies, including aged care, child care, the primary school and the local shop, as well as doing a variety of maintenance tasks around the community.

Since 2014 the communities of Hermannsburg and Utju have engaged in a partnership of service with Unity College to give the Aboriginal students a chance to study at the college and to engage in school and community opportunities to spend time with each other.

Wayne Gehling, Unity College's Director of Development, explains why the college is involved in the CASLAU (Central Australian

Students Learning at Unity) program with Areyonga: 'As a Lutheran school we could not walk away from the need of the community and our responsibility for our Aboriginal brothers and sisters. We also believe that every child, no matter what, deserves an education that prepares them for success in school, career and community. We bear the responsibility for ensuring these students acquire that education.'

For the Unity College students from the Murraylands and Murray Bridge, the program offers the opportunity to develop an appreciation for the cultural and environmental conditions experienced by the Areyonga community. Through the experience, the Unity students develop their interpersonal and leadership skills.

'It has been fascinating to witness the growth and development of our students who live and learn in Areyonga for a short period of time, as the CASLAU students show them their community, life and challenges', Wayne says.

A highlight of this year's visit was the

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confirmation service, in which 15 current and former Unity CASLAU secondary students were confirmed. Staff and students from Unity College, friends and families of the confirmees and the Utju community came together at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church to celebrate as the young people affirmed their faith in Jesus Christ. The service was conducted by pastoral assistant Daphne Puntjina from Utju and Pastor Marcus Wheeler from Hermannsburg. The Areyonga women's choir sang while the students took their first communion.

Each confirnee was presented with a handmade nail cross necklace made by the Unity College students. They were encouraged to wear the crosses to remind them of the sacrifice Jesus made for them and to continue to follow him in their life's journey. They also each received a Bible

donated by Maitland Lutheran Women's Guild, Coonalpyn Redeemer Lutheran Church and Mackay Community Lutheran Church. On the same day the community celebrated the baptism of Dorothy Shuantea Watson. The Unity students then helped serve a community lunch for over 200 people from the Areyonga community.

Reflections from YEAR 9 UNITY COLLEGE STUDENTS

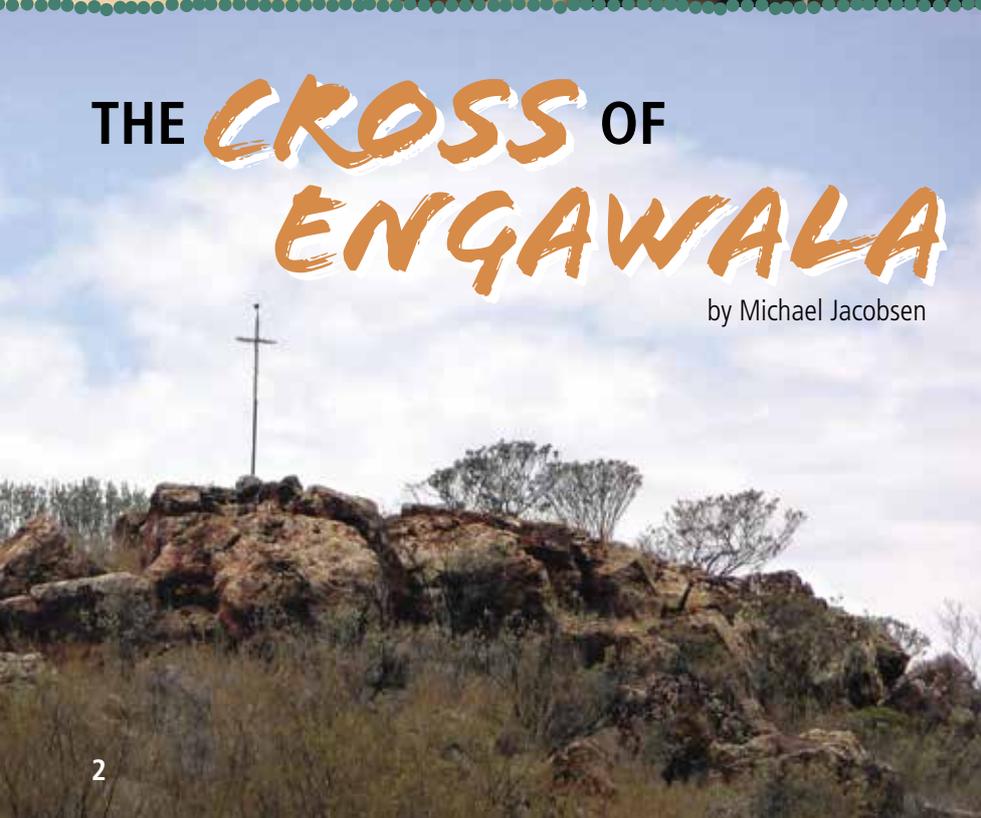
'What were the things you most enjoyed about the Areyonga service trip?'

- I gained a better understanding of the culture and challenges faced by people in Aboriginal communities
- I enjoyed interacting with the school children
- I felt proud about making a contribution to the Areyonga community
- The opportunity to learn about a different culture
- Having the chance to talk to elders and kids
- It's a special region to visit
- I would like to thank all the staff that went on the trip and made it possible for me to go. I hope I could go on it again.



THE CROSS OF ENGAWALA

by Michael Jacobsen



In Aboriginal language, Engawala is also known as Intiarntwa. It is a small community of about 150 people located 200 kilometres north-east of Alice Springs.

Every time I approach Engawala I drive through a conspicuous hill formation. The locals call these two equally high hills The Twins. On the right you can see a simple steel cross, although you have to look closely to see it. It's a different story if you are travelling past this place in the evening. The cross is illuminated by solar energy. Under a clear night sky it flashes with small and large stars. It is set up in such a way that from a distance one has the impression that the cross is



FRM WELCOMES *German Pastor*

In an echo of its beginnings 140 years ago, Finke River Mission has again welcomed a German pastor to serve in Central Australia. On 12 August, Pastor Michael Jacobsen of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Bavaria was installed as FRM Aboriginal Support Worker at Irrultja by LCA Bishop John Henderson.

Pastor Jacobsen will work with Alyawarr-speaking Lutherans in the southern

Northern Territory communities of Ampilawatja, Engwala, Alparra, Irrultja and Rocket Range for up to six years. His call to serve with FRM has been the result of a three-year process of talks and prayer, resulting in an arrangement between the German church's partnership and development mission arm Mission EineWelt, the Lutheran Church of Australia and FRM.

'I want to build relationships with Indigenous pastors and other church leaders through regular visits to remote



areas, and also by learning the local language', Pastor Michael said.

FRM Board Chair Tim Stollznaw said it was FRM's 'prayer and strong belief that Michael's skills, passion and strong calling, together with his wife Hanne, will be a blessing to this area for many years to come'.

hovering over the hill or lowered from the sky. It's a special sight that invites silence, reflection and prayer.

Together with their leader, workers with the employment support organisation My Pathways created and installed the cross. It stands whether the sun burns down or a sandstorm blows through the steppe country. At night the cross of Engawala shines far into the country and reminds everyone that One watches over us and is light for us when it gets dark in our lives. When we look up to him, Jesus Christ, light will be switched on in our hearts, no matter how dark it has become around us.

An Aboriginal man who came to believe in Jesus Christ relatively late in his life says: 'In the inside I was searching for love. I was bleeding on the inside like nothing else. I wanted that, I wanted to hear it from my dad. I never heard it. Somebody invited me to church one day, so I went along. That day was meant for me. It was "divine appointment". The man was preaching that somebody loved me – my heart was popping – and that he died on the cross. I had never heard that before. I gave my heart to Jesus that day, and a light switched on in my life.'

Michael Jacobsen is the FRM Support Pastor for the Alyawarr and Eastern Arrernte language region.





ROB BORGAS BACK TO PARISH LIFE

by Tim Stollznov

After working with Aboriginal people for most of his nearly 30 years in the ministry, Pastor Rob Borgas has accepted the call to the Angaston parish in the Barossa Valley. He has ministered in Ceduna and Yalata on South Australia's Eyre Peninsula and in Alice Springs and the Pitjantjatjara area in the Northern Territory.

Rob's passion, commitment and willingness to take on most projects has meant that each area has benefitted immensely from his service.

For the last 11 years Rob has worked for Finke River Mission as a support worker covering the Pitjantjatjara language area, including Docker River, Mutitjulu, Imanpa, Titjikala and Areyonga, as well as serving the Pitjantjatjara-speaking people in Alice Springs.

Long-distance road travel is a massive undertaking for all FRM support workers. Docker River is around 700 kilometres from home base in Alice. Rob spent his first five years with FRM making this trip in a 15-year-old troopie with 400,000 kilometres on the clock!

Some of the many highlights of Rob's FRM ministry include:

- training, mentoring and supporting 12 Indigenous church leaders, leading to the ordination of four pastors and the installation of five parish workers
- working with Nungalinga College, Darwin, to provide Christian-based literacy and numeracy training for more than 40 Indigenous Lutherans
- editing, producing and publishing the 350-page bilingual Pitjantjatjara Lutheran Hymnal
- working with the ABC, including Compass, to develop material to promote FRM activities, the choir and other relevant stories
- together with wife Kriss, editing and producing the biannual Christ in the Centre magazine to promote the work of the LCA in the Centre.

But, at least on the world stage, Rob's work with Morris Stuart (and strongly supported by Kriss) to develop, support and promote Aboriginal Lutheran hymn-singing through local choirs and ultimately the Central Australian Aboriginal Women's Choir is the standout.

Rob was instrumental in organising and supporting the choir activities on the ground as well as multiple Australian tours, culminating in the now famous Boomerang Tour of Germany in 2015 and a tour of the USA in 2018.

A powerful and nationally significant full-length documentary about the choir and the history of Lutheran choral influence in central Australia was released in August 2017 at the Melbourne International Film Festival and later shown in cinemas all over the country.

The LCA will continue to be blessed through the ministry of Rob and Kriss at Angaston. We thank and praise God for their service.

Tim Stollznov is chairperson of the Finke River Mission Board.

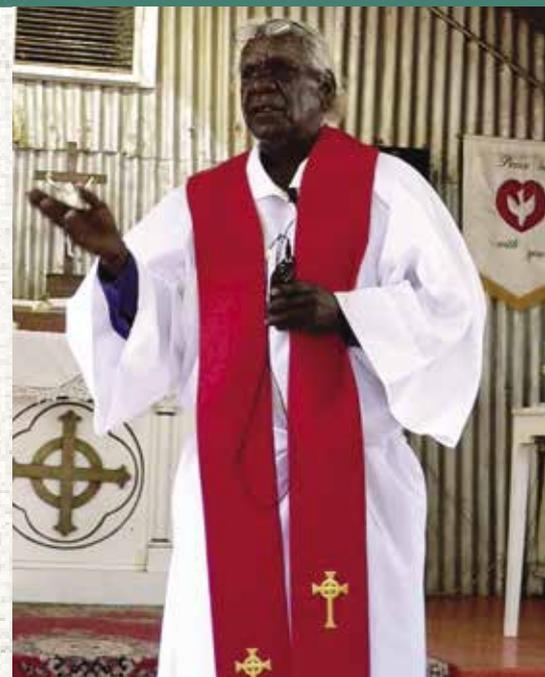
In memoriam PASTOR CHARLIE CHIRRUP

Pastor Charlie Cornelius Chirrup was born in 1948 at Pitarulu, south of Docker River. His father was Munbungar (Joseph Kunia, born 1916) and his mother was Mitjina (Lucy Punkala, born 1931).

Charlie's Aboriginal name was Tjalyitjarra. When government workers gave him a census name in the 1960s, they must have thought his name sounded like 'Charlie Chirrup'. The name 'Cornelius' was given to him when he was baptised and confirmed in the early 1980s at Docker River. Charlie served his community of Docker River as a board member of Nyangatjatjara Secondary

College and community councillor for many years until his first wife died in the 1990s. He then moved to Areyonga.

Charlie began attending FRM pastors courses from 1999, and immediately began work as an evangelist at Areyonga and also in Alice Springs. He was trained by Pastor Norman Wurst when he came in to Alice Springs and later by Pastors Djala Andrews, Paul Eckert (and later Robert Borgas) out at Areyonga. Charlie was ordained on 20 April 2008 at Areyonga, where he faithfully served God's people (along with Daphne Puntjina) until his death on 28 August 2018.



Charlie is survived by his second wife Valerie Morris (whom he married in 2003) and his children to his first wife: Joy, Noeline, Selina and adopted son, Ricardi.

a sacred gift

by Basil Schild

After six years away from Central Australia working with the Uniting Church in Darwin, I have recently begun working as the chaplain at Yirara College. Beginning again in Central Australia brings new questions and new ways of seeing things.

Significantly, Yirara College is a truly ecumenical community, with students from many different backgrounds. Students at Yirara are predominantly of Lutheran background, and others are connected to the Anglican, Baptist, Catholic and AIM churches, through their home communities.

This reality reminds us of St Paul's beautiful insight in Galatians: 'In Christ there is no

longer slave or free, male or female, Jew or Greek'. And at Yirara we can also say: 'In Christ there is no longer Lutheran or Catholic, Baptist or Anglican, but we are all one through Jesus who loves us!'

In October I was given the opportunity to travel out to Roper River Valley. It was beautiful to see this big river country. So many of our students are from country crossed by great rivers: Robinson River, Roper River, McArthur River, Katherine River, Daly River – rivers full of water all through the year, so different from the rivers of the desert!

The different rivers remind us that our students come from many different cultures and language groups, from way up



Pastor Basil Schild returns to Finke River Mission after six years away, with his installation as the chaplain at Yirara College on 10 August.

north at Daly River just south of Darwin, across to the Roper Valley communities of Minyerri, Jilkminggan, Urapunga and Ngukurr, then right down through Elliot and Tennant Creek to Alice Springs and deep into the Western Desert.

The diversity of Yirara College is a precious and sacred gift. I look forward to finding out about the many amazing and beautiful places our students are from.

Kwatja Etatha... LIVING WATERS IN ALICE SPRINGS

Since Alice Springs Lutheran Church founded Living Waters School over 30 years ago, the school has seen a steady increase in Aboriginal student numbers, now at 16 per cent of the school's total enrolment.

Aboriginal families have continued to send their children to Living Waters (Kwatja Etatha) because they want their children to know Jesus' love, know God's word and experience a Lutheran education. Some Aboriginal students have written their thoughts on coming to Living Waters:

- I've been here for two years; I'm learning more and it's a better environment. I have more friends here.
- I came to school on a Wednesday and

I was a bit shy, but I got used to it. I've made five or six friends and I don't feel lonely.

Students agree that being a in a Christian school is what makes it a place of love and kindness.

- We read the Bible; we pray because God can hear what we are doing, and we have a cross that shows us Jesus is there with us. The cross is a symbol where Jesus died for us; it's a free ticket into heaven.
- Lutheran is like when you worship God and learn about God. I believe God gives us things and keeps us safe.

Principal Eunice Stoll agrees: 'It's wonderful



to hear our Aboriginal students freely talking about the ways Kwatja Etatha, their school, has nurtured their faith in growing and knowing grace, love and kindness.

Thanks to all the families and students for supporting Living Waters Lutheran School, and may the love of our Saviour Jesus fill your hearts with peace, love and joy this Christmas.



In memoriam PASTOR HEZEKIEL JINGOONA

Pastor Hezekiel Jingoona was born in 1938 at Pitarulu, south-east of Docker River. His father was Maanma (born 1916) and his mother was Yuminiya (born 1927). His sisters were Ruby Wheeler and Maureen Bob.

Like many nomadic Aboriginal people who were given a government name for identity reasons around the time of 1960s census, Hezekiel's Aboriginal name Tjingunya was anglicised to become his new surname Jingoona. The name Hezekiel was given to him when he was baptised by Pastor Leo Kalleski on 1 June 1962 at Areyonga, where he was later confirmed on 5 December 1965.

After his parents brought him in from the Petermann Ranges as a boy, Hezekiel grew up at Areyonga under the influence of the missionaries and various Aboriginal

evangelists, who later became pastors Peter Bulla, Leo Tjukintja, Sam Protty, Theo Windy and others.

Hezekiel was tribally married to Gillian Namatjira in the late 1950s. They both adopted Frankie Wheeler when he was a baby. Gillian and Hezekiel separated in the early 1970s when he started drinking. He stopped drinking when he started training to be an evangelist in the late 1970s at Haasts Bluff. He started working as an evangelist at Areyonga in the 1980s, along with Djala Andrews and Daphne Puntjina. When the resident pastor at Mutitjulu (Samuel Protty) died, Hezekiel became the local evangelist and later pastor at Mutitjulu after he was ordained on 14 November 1999 until his death on 12 September 2018. He had also served the outlying communities of Imanpa, Ukaka and Lila for many years.

As a long-term cultural heritage advisor to Parks Australia until he retired a few years ago, Hezekiel taught staff and visitors about Aboriginal culture and its importance within the Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park. He also mentored junior rangers, helping them build skills and gain employment within the park. This important work was recognised nationally when he was named Male Elder of the Year as part of 2012 NAIDOC Week celebrations.

But being pastor to the people of Mutitjulu was equally important for Hezekiel as his cultural work. He once said, 'Although I am a park manager I take the time to go to all the bush courses for pastors'.

Hezekiel is survived by his wife Millie and his adopted son, Frankie Wheeler.



Farewell, Max

The Board for the LCA's Finke River Mission (FRM) has paid tribute to the ministry of the late Pastor Max Stollznaw.

Pastor Stollznaw, who served FRM at Papunya in the Northern Territory from 1975 to 1985, having been pastor at Alice Springs from 1972 to 1975, died in September, aged 77.

Board member Pastor John Heffernan said Pastor Stollznaw's contribution to mission work in Central of Australia was 'extensive and varied'.

'His work on the mission's "Cattle Station run", his Alice Springs town ministry, and

Together, UNDER THIS SKY

by Suanne Tikoft

'Here we are, under this sky', Robin Mann wrote as the first line of a song for the 150th anniversary of the Lutheran Church of Australia in 1988.

Here we are, in our mosaic community of Alice Springs Lutheran Church – personalities, organisations, cultures, backgrounds, languages – all Lutheran, all wanting to serve our Lord.

It's very plain that we are strong when we work together. And this happens: volunteers

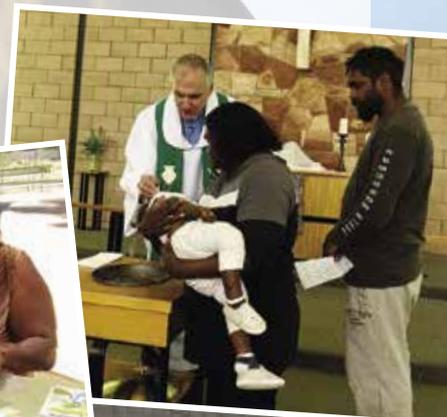
and paid staff, town people and bush people, our schools, Lutheran Community Care and its playgroup and FRM support each other regularly in many ways, big and small. These photos will give you some idea – and there are many other times of cooperation too, like hospital visiting, organising funerals, visiting aged-care facilities and holding prison services.

God has placed us in a wonderful place and a unique Lutheran context. How do we show

we care? We try to share.

Please pray for us, so that we continue to work together, singing God's song even when it's complex and tiring.

Suanne Tikoft is the Aboriginal Women's Support Worker at the Alice Springs Lutheran Church.



his time serving at Papunya has left a legacy that remains to this day', Pastor Heffernan said in a letter to Pastor Stollznow's family, including son Tim, who is the FRM Board chairperson.

'It was during Max's time at Papunya that a very significant Christian revival took place, a movement of the Spirit which Max encouraged. Out of this special time emerged many future pastors and worship leaders of the Pintupi-Luritja region.'

The board also acknowledged Pastor Stollznow's initiative in training Indigenous pastors for ordination, which allowed all parts of the widespread Pintupi-Luritja

region to have access to word and sacrament ministry in a language local people could understand. Also, through working with Wycliffe Bible Translators' linguists, Pastor Stollznow pushed for the adoption of the Pintupi New Testament throughout the region and collaborated on the publication of the first Pintupi volume of liturgy, catechism and songs.

He also was a church builder, Pastor Heffernan said, having sponsored the building of a new, bigger church building and Sunday school rooms at Papunya, and also having initiated the building of Kintore community's first church.





MUD-PUNCHER

GOOD AS NEW AGAIN

Restoration means to restore, renew, make good again or give 'new life' to something. That is exactly what has happened to one of Hermannsburg's historical treasures.

Between 1957 and 1964 Mr W F Wurst's drilling rig dug 73 bore holes in and around Hermannsburg. Of those, 25 produced good water.

Thanks to the enthusiastic efforts of retirees Graeme Werner and Gordon Mills from Horsham, Victoria, and a band of helpers over the past two years, Mr Wurst's 'mud-puncher' drilling rig at the Hermannsburg Historical Precinct looks as good as new.

On Sunday 22 July, after some stories of the drilling rig's history from granddaughter Joy Wundersitz were shared, a commemorative plaque was unveiled. A crowd of more than 100 people witnessed the rig temporarily back in action.

A big thanks to all who helped restore it and to the many donors who made its restoration possible.

FOR YOUR PRAYERS

For the communities of Areyonga and Mutitjulu; that God will comfort them and keep them strong as they carry on after the deaths of their pastors

For new Ingkaartas in all our language areas and for those who have shown interest in pastoral training

Thank God for the stong, faithful women church workers: Daphne in Areyonga, Kunptry in Mutitjulu and Marlene in Docker River

For Pastor Phillip Wilyuka of Titjikala, as his diabetes takes a toll on his health

That drugs would be kept out of remote communities

For Aboriginal teenagers as they try to understand Aboriginal law, 'whitefella' culture and the ways of God

WE NEED YOUR HELP

NEWS FROM FINKE RIVER MISSION OF THE LUTHERAN CHURCH OF AUSTRALIA

SUMMER 2018

Our Indigenous leaders in Central Australia desire the skills, resources, support and opportunities to serve their growing congregations.

They are asking for more Christian teaching and training, resources in their own language, equipment to run singalongs, and personal support than we have the capacity to give. We need your help!

Tax-deductible donations of \$2 or above can be made as follows:

Online: finkerivermission.lca.org.au

Mail Cheque Credit Card details: Visa Mastercard

Card Number _____ Expiry ____ / ____ CCV _____

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Signed _____ Amount \$ _____

PLEASE NOTE:
Your donation cannot be processed without these numbers



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