



Ordination joy despite lockdown

by Lisa McIntosh, with reporting by Paul Traeger

Despite a COVID-19 lockdown forcing a last-minute change of plans, Stanley Roberts, 45, was ordained in unique circumstances as a Specific Ministry Pastor (SMP) at Papunya in the Northern Territory in November.

LCANZ Bishop John Henderson had planned to conduct the ordination on 22 November at the Indigenous community 240 kilometres west of Alice Springs, but a snap lockdown announced in South Australia a few days earlier prevented him leaving Adelaide.

However, local leaders decided to proceed and Finke River Mission (FRM) fieldworker Pastor Paul Traeger ordained and installed Stanley to his new role. Pastor Stanley will serve as SMP for Papunya and the Pintupi-Luritja language area. It is believed to be the first time in the LCA that an SMP has ordained another SMP.

Despite temperatures above 40 degrees, more than 200 people attended the service, which Pastor Paul said reflected 'heartfelt community approval'. There was a procession of pastors

Photo: In what is likely to be an LCA first, Special Ministry Pastor Paul Traeger ordains another Special Ministry Pastor, Stanley Roberts.

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and evangelists at the beginning of the service, which was held at the school basketball court due to the church having been damaged by fire about a month earlier. Papunya Pastor Graham Poulson opened the service, conducted a baptism and preached, while Pastor Stanley led the communion liturgy after his ordination.

Pastor Paul said community participation in the joyful occasion including singing, liturgical dance and greetings.

Pastor Stanley is the son of the late Pastor Murphy Roberts, who, 38 years

ago, became one of the first Pintupi–Luritja pastors ordained. While his father did not live to see Stanley ordained, one relative who did was a local pastor, who sadly died suddenly just four days later (see story p6). Pastor Stanley said later: ‘He must have been waiting for me’.

Pastor Stanley was also presented with the late Pastor Max Stollznow’s robe. Pastor Max was serving as FRM Support Worker and pastor at Papunya when Murphy Roberts was ordained.

A former student at Yirara College in Alice Springs who later completed

the FRM pastors’ curriculum, Pastor Stanley had been a community night patrol worker until 2019. He finished that role to concentrate on his ministry duties. He was prominent in leading evening singalongs at Papunya during most of 2020.

Pastor Stanley is married to Sheila and has four children, ranging in age from 9 to 24.

Lisa McIntosh is the editor of The Lutheran. Pastor Paul Traeger is the FRM Support Worker for the Pintupi–Luritja language area.



Six baptisms and a surprise visitor

by Robin Zadow

During a Holy Communion service in early February, six baptisms took place. These were the first baptisms for a long time at Nturiya (Ti-Tree Outstation), a small community 200 kilometres north of Alice Springs.

Nturiya is located in the Anmatyerr language area, which has not had a Finke River Mission (FRM) support worker for a number of years. Yet the local communities are still faithful;

they want to worship in the Lutheran church whenever a pastor visits.

It is not unusual for dogs to visit the fringes of the worship space in Aboriginal communities, but it is not often that you see a pig come visiting. On the occasion of the six baptisms, Jodie the pig came along to watch, but it wasn’t too long before she was sent home for being too disruptive!

Another four baptisms took place in April.

On top of all these baptisms, the people of the Anmatyerr communities have another reason to be excited. They recently saw the launch of a Mini-Bible in their own language (see story on page 4). Now they can hear the gospel in their heart language!

Robin Zadow is the pastor of the Alice Springs Lutheran Church and an FRM Board member.



Teaching course at Papunya

Photo: At the Papunya teaching course (left to right): Justin Allen, Bryce Clark, Steve Radke, Trevor Braun, Paul Traeger, Noel Due

by Paul Traeger

The first FRM teaching course for the year was held on the outskirts of Papunya from 11 to 15 April. The venue was the new basketball court, which provided welcome relief from the sun.

Pastor Noel Due, formerly of the LCA New & Renewing Churches Department, led studies clearly and well about the person and work of the Holy Spirit.

People came from as far afield as Kiwirrkura (450 kms), Irweltye (550 kms) and Docker River (600 kms). Numbers fluctuated between 17 and 42, averaging around 35. Many women attended the course.

Pastor Noel stressed the fact that the Spirit is uncontrollable, like fire, wind or fast-flowing water. The Spirit is a member of the Trinity, and always works together with Father and Son. He also described the Father's creation of a new worldwide family by

the Spirit, and he emphasised the Father's heartfelt affirmation of his children. The Spirit brings unity where there was formerly division and has the important task of applying the gospel in our lives.

To explain further he had us read Luther's explanation of the Third Article together in the local languages. Most moving was his lengthy explanation of Romans 8, in particular, verse 26: 'the Spirit intercedes with groans too deep for words'.

On the Wednesday morning Pastor Noel's impromptu question answering was outstanding. He was flexible, yet to the point, and his wide and varied experience of churchmanship was evident.

FRM fieldworkers also provided some teaching. They gave devotions on the Psalms, and on how they are linked with various well-known hymns.

As well as receiving fine teaching we also enjoyed some very competent catering. Special thanks are due to 'cookies' Trevor Braun – cheerful, practical and alert – and Stephen Radke, a former Papunya pastor, who appreciated reconnecting with people he had known decades earlier.

Judging by the attendees' responses, the teaching seems to have led to something of a sea change or paradigm shift in people's understanding of church life. I would expect many of them to show more Spirit-led initiative from here on. So I think it is fair to say that the course was a blessing to all, including to those who organised the event and led the sessions.

Pastor Paul Traeger is the FRM Support Worker for the Pintupi-Luritja language area.



Jesu mer alker-warn apek

(Luke 24.50-53; Acts 1.9-11)

¹⁹ Kel Jesu-el ilekarl-penh, Altjerrel Jesu renh mer kwereh-warn alker-warn angkep anginek. Jesu rang Altjerrel-ayeng arrenelhek ratherr pwert kwet anem. ²⁰ Nakenh-nakenh inang irrarnp-irremel mer map-warn alherrek, angketj mwerr renh ilerl-apeh. Inang twer anthwerrel mpwarerl-apek, Ngkart-henh Kwerrern rang inehel-ayeng anekarleng wart, inenh twer-ilekarleng. Arrperh mapel inenh arek-penh kaltj anek, angketj inehenh arratj anthwerren anek. ^a



Luke

Angketj Jesu Christ-akert Luke-
pip-warn arrenekarl, peltj kwereh
Theophilus-warn lanthetjeh-angng

¹ Yeng Luke anem. Peltj tjengenh Theophilus-
nhenh ngkweng pip-warn arrenem. Arr
mapel angketj inehenh pip-warn arrenek, ang
el mpwarekarl, rang nakenh-nakenh mapel-ayeng
² Arrwekeleny mapel-amparr ilek, inarl artwang Je
penh, rarl iteth anekarl ahel nhenhel. Inang n
alhek, angketj Jesu-akert renh ilerl-apek, nwerr
antherl-apek. ³ Inang angketj tjeng Jesu-akert ilek
mantj kaltj-irrek, inenh angerr pawenhemel. Yeng
angketj Jesu-akert pip-warn arrenetjeh. Kel thang
pip-warn arrenek, ngkweng-warn lanthetjeh-angng
nhenh arratj anthwerren anem. ⁴ Ntwang apek kwek v
Thang angketj nhenh ngkweng-warn lanthem, kwe
kaltj anthwerren anetjenh, angketj nheng inarl ngwen
arlek thang angketj arratj anthwerren anem.

⁵ Arry angel arreny Gabriel-el Zech
renh ilek, rang ler anyenetjenharl

⁵ King Herod rang twernk anetjam-rlwer mer Jude
priest nyent Judea kwereh anek, arreny kwereh Zec
Abijah-kenh peltj anek. Zechariah-kenh anew arre
anek. Elizabeth rang Aaron-kenh peltj anek. ⁶ Zechar
ratherr Altjerrenng ularr arratj kwet mernelhetjeh

Anmatyerr Mini-Bible is dedicated

by David Strickland

We have been celebrating the publication of the Anmatyerr Mini-Bible in style!

This new attractive volume is the fruit of 18 years of labour by David and Ming Fang Strickland (SIL and Wycliffe Bible translators), who have been working with Finke River Mission pastors and locals at Ti Tree over that time. They have been cooperating with the FRM over many years, assisting the church as well as doing translation. In 2002 the FRM bought a house at Ti Tree for them to rent.

Four celebratory events were planned across three Sundays in a little over a month in four different locations.

The first one held was at Nturiya Lutheran Church at Ti Tree Station on 28 March. The people showed deep appreciation for having a substantial volume of Scripture in their own language for the first time. They expressed their thanks to the Stricklands, for the first time on a public occasion. They were feeling both happy and sad at the same

time, as they had recently buried their beloved Pastor Haines, and remembered other pastors who had gone to be with the Lord, who were not there to see this special day.

Those who had been involved in the translation were presented with bibles by FRM Support Worker Malcolm Willcocks, who also officiated. A suitably decorated cake was brought from Alice Springs, and everyone had a small meal, furnished by visitors who came from town. The church was decorated with a banner of photos illustrating the story of the translation project.

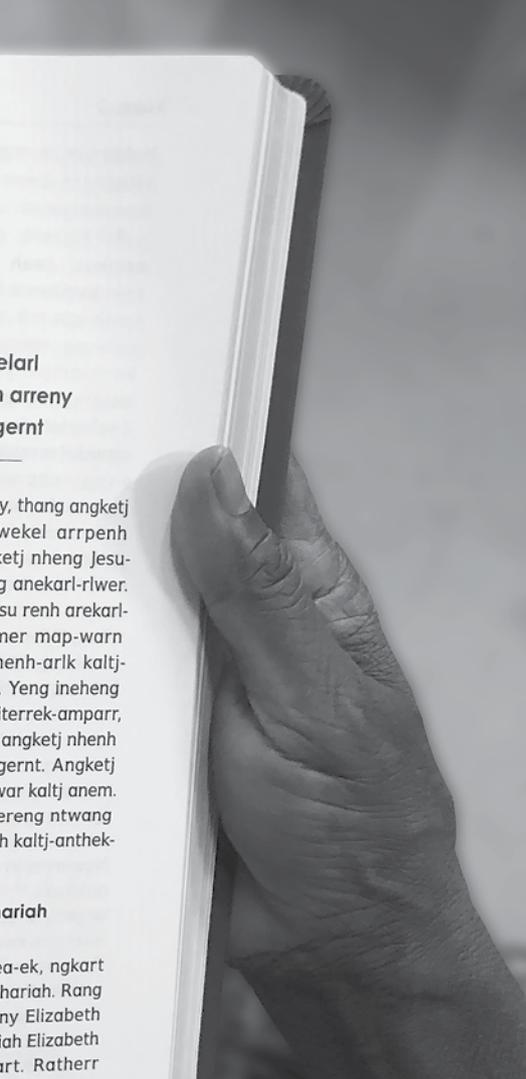
The next instalment was at the Alice Springs Lutheran Church service on 18 April, which coincided with the 500th anniversary of Luther's famous speech at the Diet of Worms in 1521. This was certainly an apt occasion to hold the Mini-Bible launch, as an affirmation of the *Sola Scriptura* principle of the Reformation.

Pastor Paul Traeger took the service, and school teacher and translator

Seraphina did a Bible reading in Anmatyerr for the congregation. Dr Philip Townsend, the new director of SIL Australia – Timor Group, gave a blessing. Also present was Paul Kube, representing the Bible Society. A carload of folk came down from Ti Tree that morning to attend, returning again in the afternoon for a baptismal service there!

The next launch event was held on 2 May at Laramba Lutheran Church. Again it was a happy occasion, with the church filled with about 50 locals and the numbers swelled by a big contingent of visitors from Alice Springs. The sad note was that an important elder, Mr J Cook, from Mt Allan had passed away that week.

Pastor Ronnie McNamara was present to see the Anmatyerr Mini-Bible, the outcome of his original request at a Pastors Course meeting way back in 2000. Pastor Paul Traeger again officiated, as Ronnie's eyesight was not good enough to read for the occasion. David told the story of Ronnie's



Thank you, David and Ming Fang!

David Strickland originally began working for the Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL) in the Alyawarre language. Two other people were already working on the language, but it was a large people group so this was not seen as a problem. However, Pastor Ron MacNamara from Laramba pointed out that no-one was doing any work on the nearby related language called Anmatyerre. So David moved west to live in an FRM-supplied house at Ti Tree and to work on the Anmatyerre translation of the Bible.

Although he was single when called to the job, he was married soon after – to Ming Fang, an SIL-trained literacy worker from Taiwan. He has worked hard on the translation of the Bible alongside local native-speaking language helpers. He has done consistently careful, high-quality work and established a great rapport with the Anmatyerre people. Besides this, he has translated Lutheran liturgies, as well as being a big (usually indispensable) help with interpreting at FRM bush courses.

Under what can sometimes be trying conditions, David has been uncomplaining, exhibited a servant-like attitude, and always pursued excellence in translation and interpreting.

Having a Bible in your own language means that God can communicate with you without the mediation of another dialect, like Arrarnta. So the Holy Spirit can more readily access your 'inner being'

(Ephesians 3:16). It also means that the last vestiges of slave-like inferiority for your language group are completely gone. You can now walk together 'with heads held high' (Leviticus 26:13).

The locals' esteem for the new translation already began to be apparent on the very day of the Laramba Bible dedication. Immediately following the service, mothers began openly using Anmatyerre Bible material to teach their young children, and the children seemed happily responsive.

We hope and pray that the new Anmatyerre translation will continue to be widely used and highly valued among native speakers for many years to come. And we thank and praise God for the loving, faithful, assiduous work of both David and Ming Fang Strickland among the Anmatyerre people over the past 18 years.

Pastor Paul Traeger is the FRM Support Worker for the Pintupi-Luritja language area.

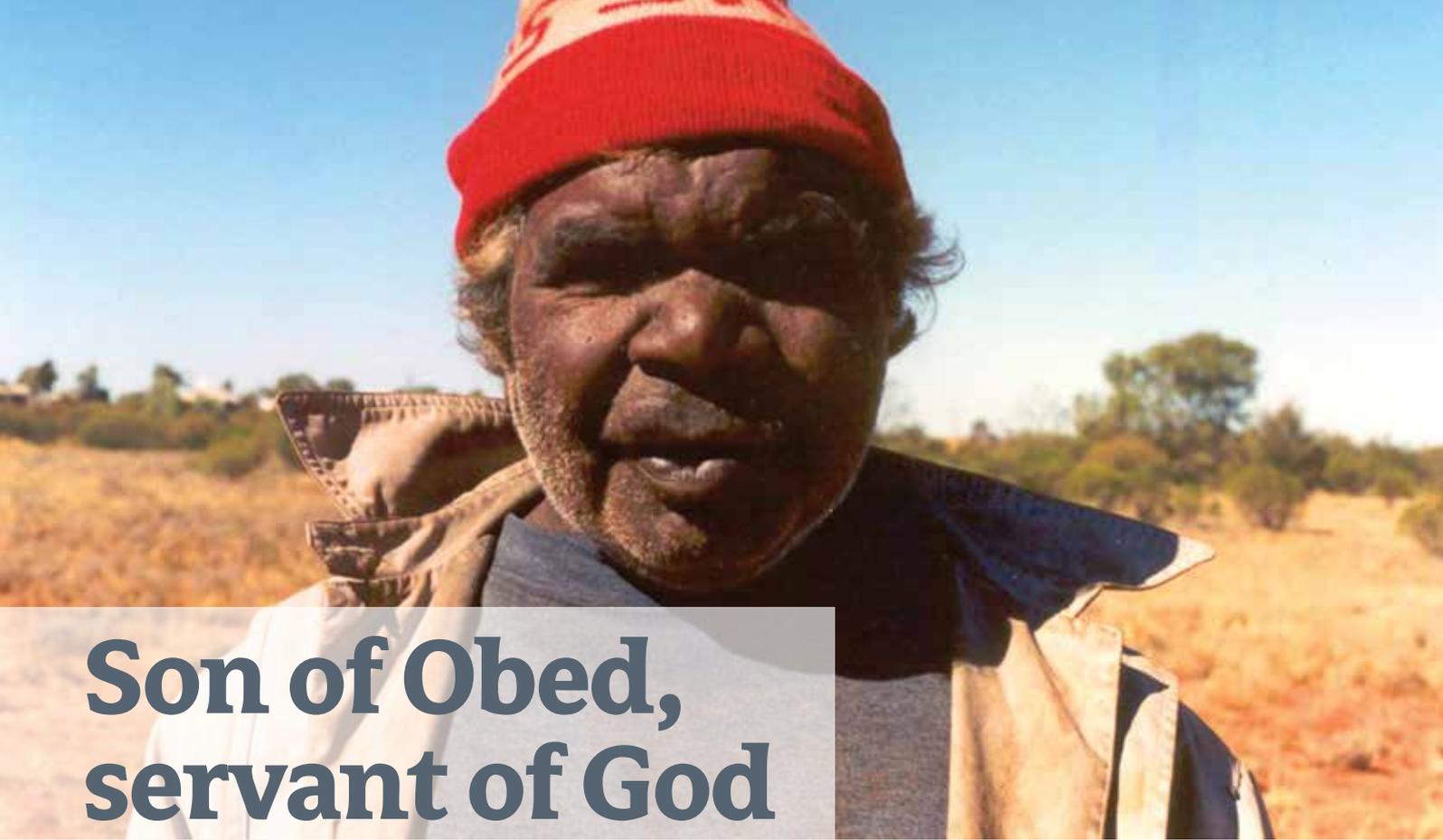
involvement and how he used to visit Laramba whenever a new draft was ready. Ronnie did his checking of the translation drafts, sometimes down at the nearby creek, or at another suitably quiet and shady spot.

The fourth and final launch was scheduled for the same afternoon at Mt Allan, but it was cancelled due to Sorry Business, the traditional mourning period. So let us pray that another suitable day can be found to hold this last launch, and that it would be a fitting occasion and lead to blessing for that community as well.

We especially ask for prayer that the translated Scriptures will be accepted by all the people there, that the launch and service will be an encouragement to them and that the new Scriptures will inspire them to follow the message contained and that new leaders will emerge.

David Strickland is a SIL Bible translator.





Son of Obed, servant of God

by Paul Traeger

Pastor Trevor Tjampitjinpa Raggett passed away at his outstation near Haasts Bluff (227 kms west of Alice Springs) on 26 November 2020, a few weeks shy of his 66th birthday. He was the son of Pastor Obed Raggett, a much-loved and respected former pastor at Papunya.

He was ordained on 14 November 2004 at Haasts Bluff Lutheran Church and served at Haasts Bluff/Ikuntji – the community where he was born and raised. He had fond memories of growing up in the late 1950s and 60s. He later looked back on those years as an idyllic time in his life.

In fact, his cheerful, engaging personality in those years captured the attention of a white storyteller. In the 1960s a publisher produced a children's book which featured photographs of young Trevor as the central character in the story. It was titled *Ngari the Hunter*. It seems to have been a book widely read by children throughout Australia.

As he grew older he had problems in his life. But God convicted him

of the sins of drunkenness and of ignoring the gospel. Miraculously, he was completely turned off drinking alcohol at that time.

After this, he worked as an evangelist alongside Pastor Gregory Tjupurrula. He was then trained by Finke River Mission fieldworkers pastors Norm Wurst and Paul Traeger.

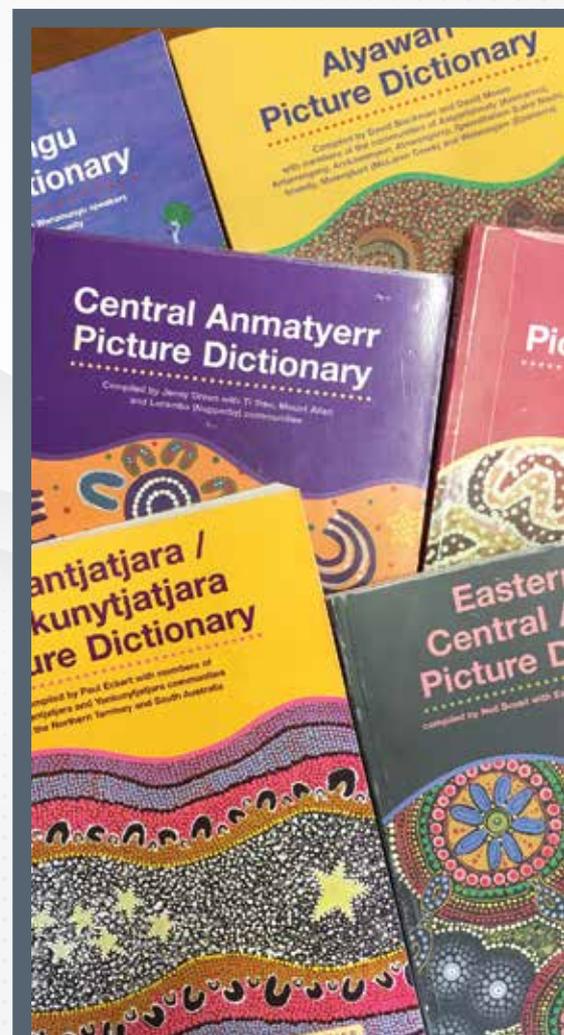
In his pastoral style he followed in the footsteps of his father Obed, whose name means 'servant'. So Trevor, too, was servant-like. He had an unusual capacity to anticipate people's needs and concerns. His love for God's people was probably even evidenced in the timing of his death. Although he must have sensed that his time was near, he waited four days after seeing Stanley Roberts ordained to depart this life.

In his later years he succumbed to weakness, and then sickness, but not self-pity. He was ably helped by the timely arrival of Pastor Simon Dixon at Haasts Bluff.

Pastor Trevor did not have a wife or children. But his siblings were very

close to him. They supported him in his final months, and arranged a well-attended funeral for him at Haasts Bluff on 17 December 2020.

Pastor Paul Traeger is the FRM Support Worker for the Pintupi-Luritja language area.



Painter, Leader, Pastor

by Paul Traeger

Pastor Philippus ('Longjack') Tjakamarra died on 25 August 2020. He was one of the oldest Australian indigenous pastors ever to work for the Lutheran Church.

Philippus was born around 1932 in his parents' country northwest of Papunya. He described himself as one of the Ngalea people, from the eastern shore of Lake Mackay. As a boy he wandered from waterhole to waterhole in the Kalipinyapa/Nyirripi/Mount Doreen area. Then, as a young man, he moved to Haasts Bluff.

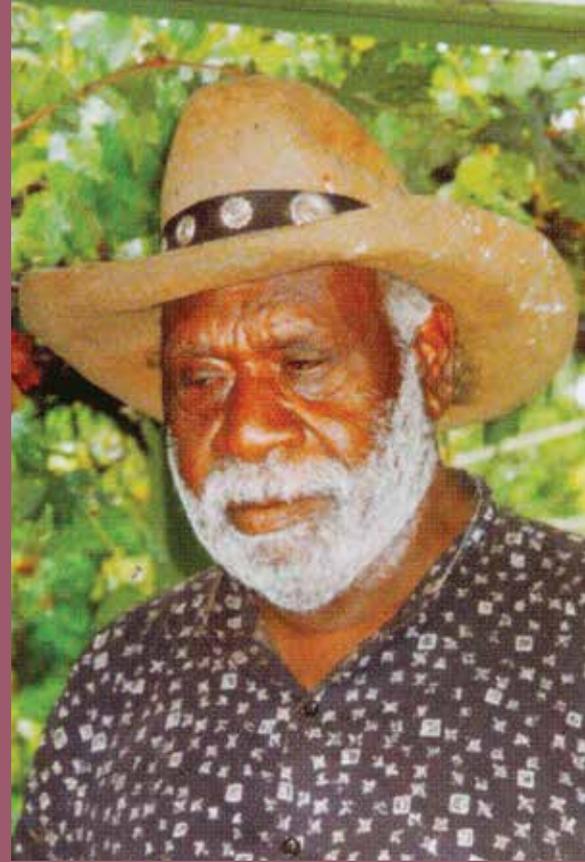
It was during his time travelling between waterholes that his faith really became strong. He had to learn to trust in God as his provider. He grew to realise how God gives all things freely, apart from law, in a way entirely unlike human beings.

When Papunya opened in 1960 he moved there. His five children were born there. (One daughter died while

young.) He worked for some time doing various jobs in the schoolyard. He also looked after pigs and chickens on the community farm. He later went on to lead Papunya as a traditional owner, retiring only in 2005.

After the Papunya dot painting movement started, he became a painter. He was among the youngest of the original dot painters who came to prominence in the 1970s.

In 1998 Philippus became a Lutheran pastor. He was assiduous in serving God. He continued to learn even in his old age, being a regular at Finke River Mission bush courses. He participated and spoke up in church meetings, where his opinions had considerable weight. He came across as a great-hearted man who was open about his faith, and who responded to God's word with both solemnity and warmth.



A large number of people from many different backgrounds attended his funeral, which was held at the Papunya basketball court. All would agree that he had lived a long and remarkable life.

Pastor Paul Traeger is the FRM Support Worker for the Pintupi-Luritja language area.

Yirara College Sharing Languages project

by Basil Schild

In term 3 we began the Sharing Languages Project at Yirara College.

Students from every community have been invited to share their languages with their teachers. Teachers are learning from the students and many classes have been full of laughter. For some teachers it is the first time they have had an opportunity to learn some words in the languages of the students.

Sharing Language classes so far have included Arramta, Anmatjerr, Garrwa, Jawoyn, Kriol, Luritja, Mudburra, Ngarinman, Pitjantjatjara,

Yankuntjatjara, Warlpiri, Wardaman, Warumungu and Yanyuwa.

Some of the students have been sharing their languages using the wonderful picture dictionaries created by IAD Press (Institute for Aboriginal Development) based in Alice Springs. Others have been sharing and watching documentaries in their community languages and available on ICTV (Indigenous Community TV). In other classes they have been making family and community maps in first languages.

Yirara staff are in awe of the great diversity of languages and language histories our

students bring and represent. The Sharing Language classes are helping all our staff and students to take pride in this diversity.

Many students are sharing words from languages that are thought to hardly even exist anymore. Yirara College is amazingly privileged and positioned to support and encourage our young students to celebrate and hold on to their first languages, the oldest living languages in the world!

Pastor Basil Schild is the Chaplain at Yirara College.

Coober Pedy Lutherans remembered

On 4 May the historical Lutheran presence in Coober Pedy was commemorated with the unveiling of a plaque on the site of the former Lutheran church hall, which is now part of the TAFE campus.

In April 1959 Pastor Fred Traeger arrived in Coober Pedy with his wife Gertrude to serve the spiritual and physical welfare needs of the Aboriginal community. In 1964 a site was purchased by the Lutheran Church for £500. The materials for the first church hall were brought from Adelaide and a volunteer party from Freeling built the galvanised iron-clad hall. It was officially opened in October 1964 by Pastor Clem Eckermann from Koonibba Mission.

After Pastor Traeger's retirement in 1965, Audley Grieger served as a lay missionary from 1965 to 1972, followed by Kevin Schrapel from 1972 to 1978. The church was very

active in those years, with services every Sunday, a drop-in centre, activities for the youth and a family club. Since 1978 however there has been no official Lutheran presence in Coober Pedy, but the building has continued to serve the community.

Gordon and Rhonda Traeger unveiled the commemorative plaque. Representatives of the Finke River Mission community also attended, as well as Kevin and Ruth Schrapel.

This commemoration was initiated by the Lutheran Church in Alice Springs and supported by the Coober Pedy Historical Society.



FOR YOUR PRAYERS

Pray that God will call people to fill the vacant ministry positions at FRM and Alice Springs Lutheran Church:

- Pastoral support worker for the Anmatyerr Language group, north of Alice Springs
- Aboriginal Town Camps ministry worker
- Aboriginal women's ministry worker

Pray for Aboriginal men currently training towards ordination:

- Justin Allen (Pintupi-Luritja)
- Ryan Nelson (Anmatyerr)
- Abraham Poulson (Pitjantjatjara)
- Bernard Bell (Pitjantjatjara)
- Lloyd Wilyuka (Pitjantjatjara)

Pray for God's guidance and protection of the active Aboriginal pastors and women church workers and their families.

WE NEED YOUR HELP

NEWS FROM FINKE RIVER MISSION OF THE LUTHERAN CHURCH OF AUSTRALIA

WINTER 2021

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!

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Send your donations to: FRM, PO Box 2129 Alice Springs NT 0871. For regular donations please phone FRM on 08 8952 4666 (Alice Springs) or send an email to admin@finkerivermission.org.au

All information is kept strictly confidential in accordance with the LCA Privacy Policy and is used only to inform you of the work of Finke River Mission.

PLEASE NOTE:
Your donation cannot be processed without these numbers



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