



# CHRIST IN THE CENTRE

## KWATJA, KWATJA! KUPRILYA DAY 2020

by Neville Doecke



**Water is important and powerful, but why would 16 families gather to have their young babies and children washed clean?**

Well, that is exactly what happened on 4 October this year. Over 200 people gathered out in the dust and dry ground beside a spring (gone

dry!) to watch this event. They came to celebrate that 85 years ago a massive water event happened at this location. Have you guessed?

Yes, on 1 October 1935, water gravitated over 8 kilometres downhill through 15-centimetre pipes from the Kuprilya Spring northeast

to Hermannsburg and started pouring out onto the ground. 'Kwatja ... Kwatja!' yelled the early-morning milking ladies.

Everyone raced to see the life-saving water. It was true! The water to save the mission was flowing! At last there was good water to use for cooking and tea, and for growing a garden with vegies that stopped various sicknesses, such as scurvy. (Between 1926 and 1929, out of 51 children born, 41 had died.)

Pastor F W Albrecht led the people in prayers of thanksgiving when the water flowed. Now, every year on the first Sunday in October, the people of Hermannsburg gather at Kuprilya Spring for a thanksgiving day.

There are many stories in the Bible about God using the power of water to save his people. Jesus himself told the Samaritan woman at the well that, 'I am the water of life'. In Matthew 28:19 Jesus commands his disciples to 'baptise in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit'. That is why 16 families gathered with their little ones at Kuprilya Spring to have them baptised with water in God's name and to receive all the blessings that God promises.

Oh yes ... the spring had been dry for quite some time, but thanks to the NT Government's Power & Water and a large tanker, many litres of water had filled the spring and brought it to life for the kids to enjoy for the day. Praise God for life-saving water!

*Neville Doecke is the Ministry Support Worker for the Western Arrarnta Language Area.*

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# KIDS LEARN TO KNOW JESUS

by Suanne Tikoft

**Alice Springs Lutheran Church welcomes lots of children to services, but we don't run a Sunday school. Don't we care about our young people?**

We certainly do! Each Sunday just before the sermon we engage the children with 'Kids Come'. By singing a catchy song set to a popular local tune, we invite the kids and their carers to gather at the front of the church. (During COVID times, children stay in their seats rather than coming forward.)

Our congregation ladies wrote the English, Pitjantjatjara and Arrarnta words for the Kids Come song:

Kids come to learn, learn to know Jesus (x2)

Come on, come on, he's your friend (x2)

Kids come to learn, learn to know Jesus

Tjitji tjuta pitjaya, nintiringkunyjtikitja (x2)

Pitjaya, pitjaya, kulila (x2)

Tjitji tjuta pitjaya, nintiringkunyjtikitja

Katjia mapa pitjai, kaltjerritjika (x2)

Pitjai, pitjai, wurlerrai (x2)

Katjia mapa pitjai, kaltjerritjika.

Then comes a teaching time, often based on the day's gospel reading, followed by a prayer. We sing a simple song and lastly hand out multilingual activity sheets with pencils for children to take back to their seats. We encourage families to use these sheets for conversation, teaching and devotions at home during the week. We now have these multilingual resources prepared for each week of the three-year lectionary, available for weekly church services out bush, too.

How else can young people 'do church' in our congregation? They can operate the PowerPoint slides, read the lessons, help count the offerings, decorate the church for special occasions, sharpen the pencils (under current protocols we're using prepacked pencils), help lead special services (such as Christmas Eve), help with stewarding – and gladden the hearts of the congregation with their friendly smiles and abundant energy.

We're so glad to let the children come to Jesus, and learn to know him.

*Suanne Tikoft is the Aboriginal women's support worker at Alice Springs Lutheran Church.*



# CHRISTMAS CREATIVITY AT LCC

by Barbara Goodwin

Lutheran Community Care (LCC) NT kicked off Children's Week with a fabulous stall at the Alice Springs markets on 25 October. More than 80 children and their carers made photo frames to treasure and Christmas cards for our community Christmas drive later this year.

The creativity was endless (as was the bejewelling) and LCC loved engaging with the local community around the services we offer in family and financial wellbeing services. It was amazing to see the joy experienced by the staff and volunteers who worked together to make this happen.

*Barbara Goodwin is the children and family services manager for Lutheran Community Care.*





LCA RAP project officer Marilyn Wall discusses the RAP with Pastor Rodney Malbunka  
The LCA RAP document and RAP poster

# HEARING BETTER THE INDIGENOUS VOICE

by Marilyn Wall

With the Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) document in hand and copies of the RAP poster, I returned to Central Australia in October. The purpose of my visit was to discuss how best to share this information with the Aboriginal members in the Lutheran communities.

Endorsed by the General Church Board and Reconciliation Australia in August 2020, the LCA RAP has its genesis in the church's 'Hearing the Indigenous Voice' initiative (2016).

The RAP proposal, ratified by a near-unanimous vote at the 2018 General Convention of Synod (in Sydney), identified four key strategies by which the church would seek to hear better the Indigenous voice to:

- assist ongoing relationship-building through listening to Aboriginal people in the LCA

- support non-Aboriginal people in the LCA to gain insight into what is important to Aboriginal people
- provide a culturally appropriate mechanism by which our church together with (inclusive of) Aboriginal people and communities within the LCA can address questions of recognition and representation, and
- develop appropriate ways to encourage and enable Aboriginal people to serve and lead in all aspects of church life in the LCA.

The complexity of such a task is recognised. It means that some deep listening needs to happen. Deep listening is a process of listening to learn. It requires the temporary suspension of judgement, and a willingness to receive new information – whether that be pleasant or unpleasant.

I shared the intention of the RAP, using the story of the RAP hero artwork 'Many Eyes', with both Aboriginal ministry support workers as well as Aboriginal church members in Alice Springs and Hermannsburg. The invitation to share this with family and community was issued, as well as requests for additional posters. The Aboriginal ladies in Alice Springs decided they would like to tell their story of 'reconciliation' and produce their own artwork 'to share with others'.

The story of the 'Many Eyes' RAP artwork is explained on page 2 of the RAP document, which can be found on the LCA RAP website [www.rap.lca.org.au](http://www.rap.lca.org.au)

*Marilyn Wall is the LCA's RAP project officer.*



# GOD'S WORK WITH THE ALYAWARR PEOPLE

by Michael Jacobsen

**Pre-1950 the Lutheran missionary Pastor F W Albrecht began visiting the remote Alyawarr area (the Sandover region), 300 kilometres north-east of Alice Springs. After 1958 his son Pastor Paul Albrecht and FRM Board member Gary Stoll, both fluent Arrernte speakers and long-time employees of the FRM, began regular visits at the Sandover.**

During that time Aboriginal pastor (then evangelist) Colin Malbunka was ministering to the Alyawarr. Pastor Davey Ingkamala also played a significant role in the ministry. Conrad Raberaba, senior pastor from Hermannsburg, performed baptisms at both Utopia and Amaroo (Ampilatwatja) before Davey Inkamala's ordination. For reinforcement, Pastor Immanuel Rutjinama from Yuelamu/Napperby worked in this area, too. He accompanied Pastor Paul Albrecht when he visited the communities.

In the early 1980s/1990s Pastor Paul Albrecht translated the liturgy and parts of Scripture into Alyawarr. Bible translators Andrew and Molly Jantke worked at Ampilatwatja and transcribed the liturgy into IAD orthography.

In the late 1990s, after church worker Tim Klein finished working

at Ampilatwatja, David Strickland of SIL International (formerly known as Summer Institute of Linguistics) moved from Epenarra to Utopia and assisted David Moore working with Aboriginal pastor Frank Turner on translation. David and Susan Moore worked at Ampilatwatja. Gary Stoll still visited the area to work with David and train pastors to read the Arrarnta Bible.

During that time Indigenous pastors Ronnie Price and Stewart Peterson served at Iylenty (Mosquito Bore) and Atneltyey/Atniltji (Boundary Bore) respectively for a short time. Simon Ross and Frank Turner ministered at Irrultja.

Before the first Alyawarr mini-Bible was published in a cooperative effort between FRM and SIL in 2003, various Bible portions were printed and an Alyawarr songbook with liturgy was compiled. A few years later the Alyawarr mini-Bible was revised and expanded.

Between 2009 and 2018 FRM support pastors Ray Morris, David Kuss and Darryl Mattner served there successively with great dedication. Former pastor Casey Nelson from Ti Tree was sometimes active in the Utopia area during these years. He is still performing as a church worker and helps the full-time staff with their assignments.

So far, three major bush courses have been held for all Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal pastors in this language region: Irrultja, 2013; Engawala Alcoota, 2017; and Arlparra, 2019.

German pastor Michael Jacobsen joined the FRM team in the Centre in 2017, and was installed by Bishop John Henderson in 2018 at Irrultja and commissioned as an FRM support pastor to serve among the Alyawarr together with local pastor Frank Turner.

The new bush church at Engawala/Alcoota was dedicated in June 2019. It is still being built on, but is being used diligently by the community there.

The Aboriginal Lutheran Church in the Alyawarr and Eastern Arrernte region is developing more and more in concentric circles around three major communities: Ampilatwatja, Arlparra (Utopia) and Engawala. In each area, local mission and church history are different from each other. Identification with the Christian faith and affiliation with the Lutheran Church are not uniform. And that makes working here in the Alyawarr and Eastern Arrernte region so exciting and challenging. It is desirable that these three areas will grow closer together in the future.

*Michael Jacobsen is the Ministry Support Worker for the Alyawarr Language Area.*



# ALYAWARR LUTHERANS MARK 70TH ANNIVERSARY

by Michael Jacobsen

Since 2017, representatives of the Lutheran congregations of the Sandover have been meeting at the main community Ampilatwatja for their annual regional conference. This year they met on the weekend of 12–13 September – later than usual, due to COVID-19.

Sandover is located northeast of Alice Springs. It can be reached on an unsealed track in three to four hours by 4WD. North and south of the remote Sandover Road are the small Lutheran congregations and family groups from which representatives gather for this annual church meeting. They cultivate fellowship, have singalongs and worship together. At this year's worship service a child was baptised.

On the Saturday evening, the commemoration of 70 years of Lutheran mission and church among the Alyawarr people was held as part of a traditional singalong. With some people wrapped up in their warm blankets, everyone listened attentively when local pastor Frank Turner and I told 'their story'. Especially among the elders, there were murmurs

of recognition when the names of former missionaries and linguists were mentioned. The greeting from LCA Bishop John Henderson, which he concluded by saying 'I praise God because of you', was also appreciated.

Stories were retold until late at night and anecdotes from 'back then' were shared in the circle of family groups around their small campfires.

Freddy Dixon, the community and church worker from Tomahawk Swamp, whispered in my ear the next morning: 'That was a good story, really good. It must not be forgotten. We have to keep telling it to the younger generation.'

*Michael Jacobsen is the Ministry Support Worker for the Alyawarr Language Area.*





# R.I.P. PASTOR PAUL HAINES

by Malcolm Willcocks



**Pastor Paul Haines died on 24 October 2020 from complications of advanced diabetes. He was in the palliative care unit of Alice Springs Hospital, surrounded by family.**

Paul was ordained on 2 July 1995 (along with Simon Gorey and Don Presley) at Ti Tree (200 kilometres north of Alice Springs). He mostly ministered at Nturiya (Ti Tree Station community). For a time his name was removed from the list of pastors but he was reinstated and continued to serve his community (as health permitted) to the end.

He was very musical. He loved playing the keyboard and leading singalongs. Paul and his wife Seraphina Presley

assisted Wycliffe linguist David Strickland in his translation work in the Anmatjerr language. Seraphina helped to proofread David's translations of various books in the New Testament. Paul narrated the Gospel of Mark so that those who cannot read the Anmatjerr language could hear it. Seraphina and Paul also translated language primer books to help their people learn how to read.

The culmination of their work, The Anmatjerr mini-Bible (containing Mark, John and a selection of epistles) is due to be published any week now. It is sad that Paul could not witness that happy day, but we rejoice that he has gone home to Father God where he no longer suffers pain and incapacity.

We thank God for his wonderful grace shown to and through Paul and we ask that his comfort and peace will be with Seraphina and all the family.

Mark 8:35: 'Tjerrtj rarl athek-irrem kwer-areny iteth anetjeh, rang kel ilwetjenh. Tjerrtj rarl yengenh awem, angkety tjengenh kangkwerrem, iterrentj kwerenheh angwerremel, rant kwenh iteth anetjenh.' ('For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me and for the gospel will save it.')

*Malcolm Willcocks is the Ministry Support Worker for the Pitjantjatjara Language Area.*

## IMANPA HOSTS FIRST 2020 TEACHING COURSE

by Paul Traeger



**In late September the people of Imanpa, a Pitjantjatjara community 270 kilometres southwest of Alice Springs, welcomed Indigenous church leaders from all over Central Australia to a teaching course. Due to the impact of COVID, this was the first such course Finke River Mission (FRM) has held this year.**

Pastor Tom Pietsch from Australian Lutheran College spoke on 'Christ in the Old Testament'. His message was delivered with sincerity, with slow and clear speech, and with rich content supplemented by a well-produced booklet.

The average teaching session had around 35 people. There were about as many women attending as men. This was because the June women's course had been cancelled due to COVID restrictions. Having women present was definitely a plus. They especially shone with their insightful comments at Wednesday's meeting, where issues of concern for Indigenous Central Australian Lutherans were discussed. The meeting was constructive, clarifying and almost entirely positive.

Other positives at the course were 'Cookie' George Krzoska's

# HERMANNSBURG THANKS GOD FOR ITS HOSPITAL

by Neville Doecke

31 July 1960. Where were you? What were you doing?

Up in the Centre of Australia, they had just finished building a brand new, very modern hospital and had gathered to dedicate it 'to the glory of God'. The gifted builder and brickmaker, Roy Burton, together with a work team of Aboriginal men, were proud of what stood before them in the middle of Hermannsburg.

It was the most up-to-date facility of its kind in the Northern Territory and would provide excellent health support for the community for many years to come. The men were quite weary from many months of labouring. They had made all of the 41,000 cement bricks, dried

them in the sun and then carefully built up the walls of the hospital, nurses' quarters, maternity block and ablutions block. Athol trees were planted along the fence lines. There was the smell of new paint ... Everything was new!

Exactly 60 years later, people from Hermannsburg and Alice Springs gathered at the hospital to hear stories and give thanks and praise to God for those builders and for the many Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal nurses, cleaners and cooks who kept people healthy. We also remembered all those who were born there, or were treated and nursed back to good health again.

The highlight of the event was hearing the recorded 48-second greeting from none other than Roy Burton himself, now 94 years old and living in Box Hill in

Melbourne. Some Aboriginal ladies who were nurses in the hospital joined hands to cut a large 60th anniversary cake, which was enjoyed by all present. While chatting after this, it was decided to ring Mr Burton. Amazingly he answered the phone and a number of people listened via speaker-phone as he talked for 20 minutes about his memories.

This was a historic event to remember, with thanks to God.

Five years ago a new modern clinic was built. The Carl Strehlow Memorial Hospital is slowly taking on a new life and being transformed into a cultural centre for the community and tourists.

*Neville Doecke is the Ministry Support Worker for the Western Arrarnta Language Area.*

electro-mechanical insights and entertaining antics, Wayne Beven's managerial wisdom, field worker Malcolm Willcocks's hosting (especially his choice of venue), the nightly community singalongs, and the many informal conversations course leaders had with attendees between teaching sessions. For weeks afterward, people were still talking about the things they had learnt.

*Paul Traeger is the Ministry Support Worker for the Pintupi-Luritja Language Area.*



*The opening of the Hermannsburg clinic in 1960*



## FOR YOUR PRAYERS

Thank God that there are faithful believers who regularly attend services.

Ask God for his light to shine in Central Australia to transform communities and raise up Indigenous Christian leaders, and

... that more young leaders are raised up while the old leaders are still able to encourage them

... for effective cross-cultural communication

... that in all the FRM Board and management discussions, planning and decisions, God will have the pre-eminence and glory.

# PRESERVING OUR HISTORY, RE-TELLING OUR STORIES

by Rodney Matuschka

**Thanks to Northern Territory government funding totalling \$3.5m, major restoration work has been carried out at the Hermannsburg Historic Precinct.**

Included in this project was the re-roofing of the Korprilya water tank and pointing work. The old tin sheeting and roof supports were removed and replaced with a new framework and covered with new tin sheeting. The original tin was then fastened over the top, preserving the historic look and feel. The stonework of the tank was in quite good condition so, with some minor

repairs and then the application of several coats of whitewash, the tank has been restored to close to its original condition.

The successful piping of fresh water to the mission in 1935 is one of many wonderful stories being told here. The preservation of the site means that these stories can continue to be told for many years to come. The Hermannsburg Historic Precinct reopens to the public in March 2021.

*Rodney Matuschka is the manager of the Hermannsburg Historic Precinct.*

## WE NEED YOUR HELP

NEWS FROM FINKE RIVER MISSION OF THE LUTHERAN CHURCH OF AUSTRALIA

SUMMER 2020

### 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](http://finkerivermission.lca.org.au)

Mail Cheque    Credit Card details:     Visa     Mastercard

Card number \_\_\_\_\_ Expiry \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ CCV \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Name on card \_\_\_\_\_

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Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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](mailto: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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