



GLOBAL INTERACTION

National Reconciliation Week Update

We acknowledge all First Peoples of this land and celebrate their enduring connections to country, knowledge and stories. We pay our respects to Elders, past and present, and acknowledge the continuing cultures and contributions of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

More Than a Word - Scott Pilgrim

Reconciliation in Australia is unfinished business and the Scriptures highlight that healing broken relationships and bringing justice and renewal is very much God's business.

As we mark National Reconciliation Week 2021 [NRW2021], we affirm at Global Interaction, that all followers of Jesus have a part to play in the pursuit of reconciliation and justice for the First Peoples of this land. We all have a role in collectively building relationships and communities that value Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, histories, cultures, and futures.

The theme of NRW 2021 is 'More than a word. Reconciliation takes action.'

It's encouraging, as research shows, that more and more Australians are growing in their awareness of issues facing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, but this needs to be a springboard to more substantive, courageous action.

For reconciliation to be effective, it must involve truth-telling, and actively addressing issues of inequality, systemic racism and instances where the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are ignored, denied or reduced.

National Reconciliation Week is book-ended by two significant dates that all Australians can be proud of – the anniversaries of the successful 1967 Referendum [May 27] and the High Court Mabo land rights decision [3 June]. **These historic dates still matter today; they show us that Australians have come together in the past to stand up for what's right and can build a brighter future, together.**

But we have to face the fact that reconciliation has stalled in our country.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander make up less than 3% of our population. That's why the voice of non-Aboriginal people must be heard on matters of reconciliation.

We all have the opportunity to stand alongside First Australians, who for too long have called for treaty, truth-telling and the closing of the disadvantage gap. The Federal Government needs to hear from us, strongly and persistently, if we're to see the courageous change that is needed in our country.



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And as our voices are heard, we need the presence and voices of First Peoples in our lives, at our tables and in our churches. As we address the sorrowful legacy of our history and the huge imbalances that still exist, may we be willing to embrace our own prejudices, pray, continue to listen and learn, be generous, work towards meaningful change and engage in loving mission.

Prayers for a New Season

As we stand with First Peoples, Global Interaction is discerning the Spirit's leading for a fresh, new season of ministry in Central Australia and other parts of the country.

We don't know what this will look like in the years ahead – but as we continue to partner with our Indigenous brothers and sisters in Outback Australia and other places, we look to the Spirit to lead us into new things.

We're intentionally seeking to listen to the voices of Aboriginal Christian leaders, visit local communities, learn from our past, engage with our workers [past and present] and talk with partners [like the Baptist Union of the Northern Territory].

We're excited to be building our team in Outback Australia and exploring the possibilities of ministry alongside Aboriginal Christians in other settings.

In this season of rediscovery, we will welcome your prayers, ideas and partnership support. You may like to also consider a seeding gift towards a new season of ministry.

As we share in National Reconciliation Week, let's join with Brooke Prentis, an Aboriginal Christian Leader from the Wakka Wakka peoples and CEO of Common Grace, in this prayer she has written:

*“Creator Spirit, Lord God, Papa Jesus.
We come to you in the knowledge our nation has not achieved reconciliation with Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander peoples,
We come to you in the spirit and hope of Reconciliation.
You are the Creator of this ancient and sacred land.
You are the Creator of all good things.
You are the Creator who calls us to repentance and reconciliation.
In this time of acknowledgement, remembering, and reconciliation,
May we join hands in friendship,
May we join minds in learning,
May we join hearts in loving,
Just as you love us.”*

Grace and peace
Scott

VIDEO: Their Own Distinctive Ways



As you watch this video of Aboriginal believers expressing their faith in their own distinctive ways, pray for God's healing hand of reconciliation, dialogue and hope across Australia.

Watch here: <https://vimeo.com/545737963>



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PRAYER PROMPTS

1. Give thanks for the 65,000+ years of rich culture and history of First Peoples. Pray that non-Aboriginal Australians will adopt a posture of listening and learning.
2. Pray for opportunities for truth-telling and the voices of First Peoples to be heard, respected and amplified.
3. Pray for our eyes to be opened to the ways in which our hearts are clouded by prejudice. Pray for God to shape our hearts, breaking them for what breaks His and loving people with His love.
4. Pray for the Australian Church to lead the way in acknowledging the past and supporting reconciliation.
5. Pray for non-Aboriginal people to humbly and meaningfully use their voice and influence to support reconciliation.
6. Pray for Global Interaction as we enter a new season of partnership with believers and churches in Outback Australia. Pray for the Spirit's leading as we listen to Aboriginal Christians and seek new possibilities.

WHAT ELSE CAN WE DO?

- We can **listen and learn** – we've listed some practical resources below
- We can **be better informed** by reading or watching a documentary
- We can **acknowledge** – make acknowledgement of country something you do meaningfully on a regular basis
- We can **call out** racism
- We can **engage** – invite a local Aboriginal leader to your church or small group
- We can **explore** and learn more about Indigenous people, history and culture in your local community
- We can **advocate** – let your voice be heard with your local MPs and the Prime Minister
- We can **attend** events – find what's on in your local area
- We can **support** Indigenous business initiatives
- We can **share ideas** and support a new season of Indigenous ministry with Global Interaction
- We can **pray**

RESOURCES

Common Grace: www.commongrace.org.au/

Treaty and Truth Telling: www.commongrace.org.au/treaty_and_truth_telling_for_healing_country

Reconciliation Australia: www.reconciliation.org.au/

Australians Together: www.australianstogether.org.au/



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