

**ABM** Anglican Board of Mission - Australia  
*Working for Love, Hope & Justice*

# National Reconciliation Week

27 May – 3 June 2015



*Graduates of the Cert III Alcohol and Community Development and Cert IV Alcohol and Other Addictions Counselling, Wontulp-Bi-Buya, 2014. © Wontulp-Bi-Buya, 2014. Used with permission.*

# Prayer Challenge

## Day One

### Genesis 1. 26-31

Then God said, 'Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.' So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. God blessed them, and God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.' God said, 'See, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food. And to every beast of the earth, and to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food.' And it was so. God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

### Reflect:

God said, "Let us make humankind in our image... So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them."

Reflect on being created in the image of God. What does it mean to you? What does it mean for how we live with our neighbours?

The earth and all that is in it is imbued with God-given dignity. The creation narratives are a celebration of unity-in-diversity. God sends human beings to be creative in their living, caring for every living thing that moves upon the earth.

How will you honour the God-given dignity of a neighbour today?

### Pray:

As National Reconciliation Week begins we acknowledge the need for reconciliation in all areas of life. Spend 15 minutes in silence bringing to mind:

- those relationships in your life that are feeling disconnected.
- the treatment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Australia's history.
- communities for whom reconciliation is a hopeful dream, but a distant reality.

Hold all of this before God as you pray for reconciliation and wholeness.

Today, pray for:

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Clergy in the Anglican Church of Australia

### Act:

Learn more about Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and history by tuning into NITV (National Indigenous Television) on your TV or online through SBS on demand.

## Day Two

### John 17. 20-23

'I ask not only on behalf of these, but also on behalf of those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one. As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. The glory that you have given me I have given them, so that they may be one, as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may become completely one, so that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.

### Reflect:

The Reverend Gloria Shipp was the first Aboriginal woman to be ordained a priest in the Anglican Church in Australia. In this video, she talks about her life and her spiritual journey and ministry, centred around the Dubbo area in New South Wales.

Watch this video to hear her story:



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nJVzifTk88c#t=118>

Reverend Gloria lives reconciliation. Living reconciliation and unity is a reflection of the image and life of God. In this reading from the gospel of John Jesus prays for his disciples, that they may be one as he and the father are one, so that the world may believe.

Reflect on what Reverend Gloria says about her community and the link between identity and knowing Jesus.

### Pray:

*"Dear loving lord, creator of all,  
You created us all in your own image'  
One image -- many colours  
One image -- many cultures."*

In you we live and move and have our being. Help us to embrace our diversity as a gift. We pray that we may be one as you are one. In the name of Christ, Amen.

Today, pray for:

The Rev'd Gloria Shipp & NATSIAC, Diocese of Bathurst

### Act:

Find out about the local Indigenous history of your suburb or town.

## Day Three

### Acts 4. 32-35

Now the whole group of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one claimed private ownership of any possessions, but everything they owned was held in common. With great power the apostles gave their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all. There was not a needy person among them, for as many as owned lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold. They laid it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to each as any had need.

### Reflect:

*"There was not a needy person among them..."*

The early church communities, as portrayed in the book of Acts, lived in mutuality. The community that is spoken of in this reading were of one heart and soul, no one claimed private ownership of possessions, everything was owned in common. This is a radical vision for living in 21st Century Australia. In our society privatization, individualism, and an attitude of "you work for what you get", works against a communal spirit and as a result some of the neediest people in our society are forgotten or overlooked.

What might it mean for us as a church to live in the type of Christian community portrayed in Acts?

### Pray:

*"God,  
You made us come together like a rainbow,  
separate parts but coming together in one creation.  
Help us to see the beauty you have created  
in each and every one of us."*

Forgive us when we let differences in age, culture, gender, and values divide us. Inspire us to live in mutuality as the early church communities did, that the neediest among us will be daily remembered. Amen.

Today, pray for:

Hope for Life - Teenage Pregnancy Support Pilot Project

### Act:

Sign up to support the Recognise campaign at [www.recognise.org.au](http://www.recognise.org.au)

And find out what else you can do.



## Day Four

### Galatians 3. 25-29

But now that faith has come, we are no longer subject to a disciplinarian, for in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith. As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus. And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to the promise.

### Reflect:

There is a vast gap in health, education, and life expectancy between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-indigenous people in Australia. The question that must constantly be addressed is why this gap exists.

In the reading from Galatians is the radical statement that in God there is no longer a distinction because of race, wealth, and gender because we are made one in Jesus Christ. This unity is not an inactive unity but a unity that seeks one another's welfare, and bears one another's burdens. What does this mean for the church's role in advocacy in Australia?

Read more here:

<https://www.humanrights.gov.au/our-work/aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-social-justice/projects/close-gap-indigenous-health>

### Pray:

*"Dear loving Lord, we are your creation,  
Hear the cries of your people.  
You gave us ears to hear and eyes to see,  
Open our eyes to what you want us to see,  
Help us to always look to you to see the wisdom  
of your ways."*

Open our eyes to the injustices suffered by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in this country Australia. Help us always to look for your wisdom, where there is no distinction among people. Amen.

Today, pray for:

Nungalinga Theological College, Darwin

Watch Revd Yulki's story here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oaENr7Or-BE>

### Act:

Familiarise yourself with an Aboriginal dreamtime story and retell it to a family member or friend.

## Day Five

### 1 John 4. 7-16

Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us.

By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. And we have seen and do testify that the Father has sent his Son as the Saviour of the world. God abides in those who confess that Jesus is the Son of God, and they abide in God. So we have known and believe the love that God has for us.

God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them.

### Reflect:

*"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind."* - Matthew 22. 37

How often do we hear this verse quoted in church? It is easy for these words to lose their radical edge as they become so familiar.

In the reading from 1 John loving God is active. Loving our neighbour is loving God, and participating in the great love that God has for us. To live in love is to live in God. Loving is more than saying "I love you". It is a way of living.

In light of National Reconciliation Week, what shape does participating in God's love give to our living?

### Pray:

*"Dear loving Lord, creator of all  
You gave us hearts to love and minds to reason  
Help us to understand our differences  
and grow in love for each other."*

You have known us and loved us since before we were born. Constantly draw us into the love you have for us that we may live our lives from this love. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Today, pray for:

St Andrew's Cathedral Gawura School, Diocese of Sydney

Hear about this great school here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x1BLpUNt-IQ>

### Act:

Consult your parish priest and offer to read a prayer of reconciliation during the reconciliation service in your church. And find out what else you can do.

## Day Six

### 1 Corinthians 12. 12-27

For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.

Indeed, the body does not consist of one member but of many. If the foot were to say, 'Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body', that would not make it any less a part of the body. And if the ear were to say, 'Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body', that would not make it any less a part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole body were hearing, where would the sense of smell be? But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. If all were a single member, where would the body be? As it is, there are many members, yet one body. The eye cannot say to the hand, 'I have no need of you', nor again the head to the feet, 'I have no need of you.' On the contrary, the members of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, and those members of the body that we think less honourable we clothe with greater honour, and our less respectable members are treated with greater respect; whereas our more respectable members do not need this. But God has so arranged the body, giving the greater honour to the inferior member, that there may be no dissension within the body, but the members may have the same care for one another. If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honoured, all rejoice together with it. Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.

### Reflect:

*"Constitutional recognition goes to the heart of the story we tell about our nation. It would help to instill a sense of pride in every Australian child – black or white – by telling them they stand on the shoulders of this history."*

- JASON GLANVILLE, CEO National Centre of Indigenous Excellence

The Australian Constitution still does not recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Constitutional recognition is one important step on the path toward reconciliation. Learn more here:

[www.recognise.org.au](http://www.recognise.org.au)

[www.recognisethis.org.au](http://www.recognisethis.org.au)

*"For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and we were all made to drink of one Spirit."*

This reading from 1 Corinthians speaks of the unity that God desires. Each member of the body has a different function, but one cannot function without the other. We need diversity to function as human beings. Our identity cannot be thought of without the other (to echo the philosopher Paul Riccoeur).

In what ways does society value diversity? In what ways is diversity undervalued in Australian society?

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## **Pray:**

*“Help us to come together as the rainbow comes together,  
many colours, shining as one creation over all the earth’  
As you intended us to be.”*

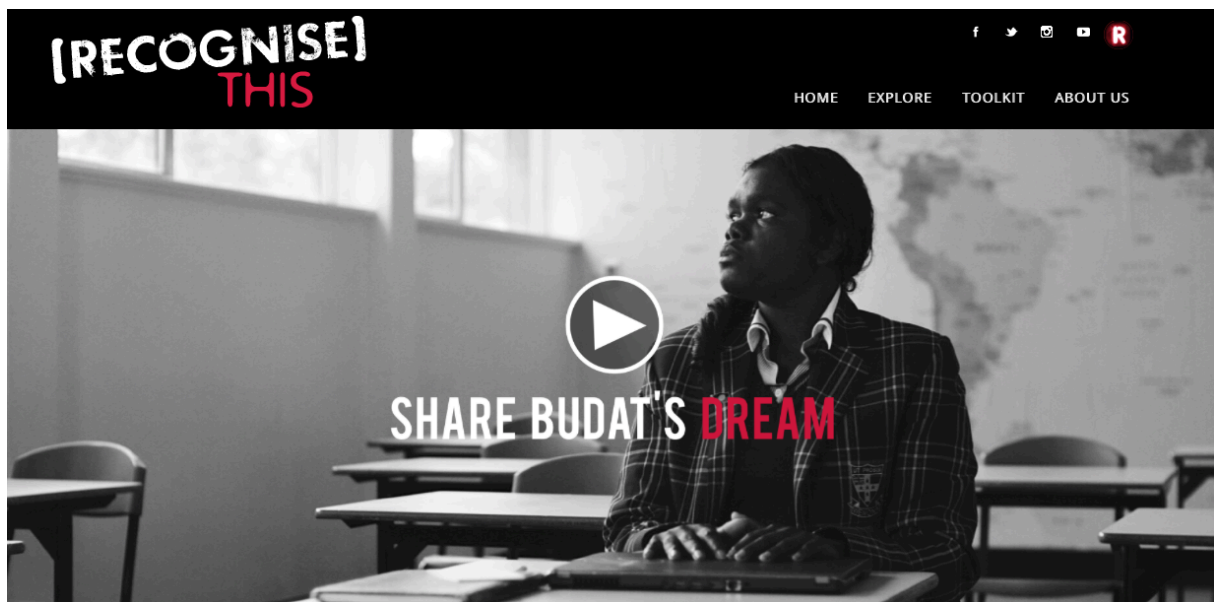
Help us to recognise the great need we have for each other, in all of our diversity. Through Jesus Christ we pray. Amen.

Today, pray for:

Wontulp-Bi-Buya Theological College, Cairns

## **Act:**

Watch the video, “Share Budat’s Dream” on the Recognise This website:  
<http://recognisethis.org.au>





## Day Seven

### Acts 2. 1-13

When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability.

Now there were devout Jews from every nation under heaven living in Jerusalem. And at this sound the crowd gathered and was bewildered, because each one heard them speaking in the native language of each. Amazed and astonished, they asked, 'Are not all these who are speaking Galileans? And how is it that we hear, each of us, in our own native language? Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabs—in our own languages we hear them speaking about God's deeds of power.' All were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, 'What does this mean?' But others sneered and said, 'They are filled with new wine.'

### Reflect:

*"There's a new report put together by 41 elders in top end of Australia and it's about the alarming youth suicide and harm rates that have come into play in the last decade. The statistics say the youth suicide rate is the highest in the world – that's in our own country and that's a frightening thing and something we are oblivious to in many respects, in our own sheltered communities and in our Christian communities too."*

*- Mal MacCallum, ABM Reconciliation Coordinator*

*At Pentecost, the Spirit moved amid diversity and people of many races and cultures understood each other – and yet at the same time spoke their own languages – unity in diversity.*

*In the quote above ABM's Reconciliation Coordinator, Mal MacCallum, speaks of the alarming suicide statistics of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people. He also acknowledges that many of us are oblivious to these facts as we live in our sheltered communities. A lack of knowledge, or a refusal to know, fuels the problem.*

*The story of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost reminds us of the unity among believers. This unity requires that we open our eyes to the needs of our neighbours, because our neighbours are our brothers and sisters in Christ.*

*God has blessed us with diversity!*

## **Pray:**

*God of holy dreaming, Great Creator Spirit, from the dawn of creation you have given your children the good things of Mother Earth. You spoke and the gum tree grew. In the vast desert and dense forest, and in cities at the water's edge, creation sings your praise. Your presence endures as the rock at the heart of our Land. When Jesus hung on the tree you heard the cries of all your people and became one with the wounded ones: the convicts, the hunted, and the dispossessed. The sunrise of your Son coloured the earth anew, and bathed it in glorious hope. In Jesus we have been reconciled to you, to each other and to your whole creation. Lead us on, Great Spirit, as we gather from the four corners of the earth; enable us to walk together in trust from the hurt and shame of the past into the full day which has dawned in Jesus Christ. Amen.*

God, help us to hear the cry of your people. Come Holy Spirit Come. Amen.

Today, pray for:

Youth Engagement in Northern Territory Remote Communities

## **Act:**

What is the language of the Aboriginal nation in which you live? Learn a phrase in that language.



*Dorothy, a community member from Cape York in North Queensland is focussed on youth engagement © ABM/Michael Begaud 2014.*

*The italicised prayer from day 2 – 6 is a prayer written by The Revd Robyn Davis, Diocese of Bendigo. The italicised prayer on day 7 is sourced from A Prayer Book for Australia (Broughton Books, 1995), written by The Revd Lenore Parker.*