



SCHOOL
OF INDIGENOUS
STUDIES



UNIVERSITY
OF DIVINITY

Raising Our Tribal Voice for Justice: An Indigenous Theological Revolution

Location: University of Divinity
90 Albion Road, Box Hill

Monday 5th to Thursday 8th February 2024
9:00am – 4:45pm Daily (AEDT)

CONFERENCE PROGRAM

Conference Logo Story



As a First Nations people the one common thread we have is land as the source of life, the spiritual nexus to the Creator Spirit, and the basis of our cultural identity and language. It is the one factor all Indigenous people can relate to 'land' as it is all-encompassing both nationally and internationally.

"Mother Earth is the core, She is the source of life for her children - her people, (the red ochre dots represent- people), She is the basis of our spiritual and cultural identity through which She gave birth to our voice and through Her we can maintain the power of our voice - to Raise Our Tribal Voice."

David Pearce, Artist

Bio: David Pearce is a proud Ngarrindjeri man from Raukkan, South Australia. David has a Bachelor of Arts degree with a Anthropology Major/Politic and Advanced Diploma in Visual Arts and Applied Design Art from Tauondi College 2006. David has a long history of mentoring youth and inspiring them to reach for the stars and to not allow other people's inability to see their potential to stop them achieving their goals.

David has collaborated and contributed to many high-profile exhibitions which include:

- 1996 – Tauondi College – student art exhibition
"Tauondi Speaks From The Heart"
- 1997 – Feast Festival – Two Spirit People
- 1998 – Feast Festival – 2 Too Two Spirit People
- 1999 – Feast Festival – Blak'n Out
- 2000 – Feast Festival – Going That Way
- 2000 – 2003 (national touring exhibition) – Adelaide Festival –
21st Century Indigenous Explorers
- 2000 – Countervoices in Milk – collaboration with Japanese artist
Tatsuo Miyajima
- 2005 – Tandanya National Cultural Institute – Petroglyphs –
Signs of Life – collaboration with Leigh Warren Dance Company

In more recent years David has also worked with various organisations including government (Youth Justice), Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander NGOs, mainstream NGOs which provided Indigenous youth and family support programs.

Welcome!

Acknowledgement of Country

Our Conference is being held on the lands of the Wurundjeri and Bunurong people of the Kulin Nation and we wish to acknowledge them as the Traditional Owners who have never ceded sovereignty of their lands. We would also like to pay my respects to their Elders, past and present, and Aboriginal Elders of other communities who are here today.

Conference Overview

This is a historical event bringing Indigenous Church leaders and theologians together on a national platform. Over 4 days we will explore the Indigenous theological perspective of spirituality, colonisation, justice and repatriation, Country, and ecology. The Conference will be an opportunity for Christians to respond to the outcome of the 'Voice to Parliament' referendum. It will be a cultural experience for delegates with highlights celebrating First Nations history, culture, and spirituality founded in daily spiritual reflections.

The "Raising Our Tribal Voice for Justice: An Indigenous Theological Revolution" Conference will focus on a First Nations theological perspective on Australia's racist colonial oppression of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the role of the Australian Churches. You will hear voices from First Nations theologians from across Australia, Aotearoa, and the Pacific. The Indigenous theological voices will review the concept of truth, reparations, treaty, justice, and reconciliation and all delegates will have an opportunity to contribute their voices to this through the daily discussion groups. This is an important time for Australian Churches and the Christian community to take a stand and support Indigenous people to secure justice and transform the Australian nation.

Our Thanks

We express our deep gratitude to our Red, Yellow and White Ochre Conference Sponsors, without whom this conference would not be possible. Please take a moment to review our Sponsors Page.

Thank you to every delegate, donor, speaker and panelist for your support and contribution to this ground-breaking inaugural Conference.

Professor Dr Anne Pattel-Gray

Conference Housekeeping

Registration:

For in-person attendance, please go to the registration desk from 7:30am to 8:30am to register and obtain your lanyard.

For livestream registration, please log on to the livestream platform between 8:15am – 8:45am Monday, 5 February 2024 and follow the instructions received via email to you. Please reach out to our Conference team if you have any questions.

Attendance:

All sessions in the daily program will be available for in person delegates in the St Paschal Chapel venue unless otherwise stated. Livestream coverage will include all daily program sessions except for the daily discussion groups.

Truth telling is always confronting and we ask each delegate to be mindful of maintaining respectful discussion at all times as we wish to ensure this is a culturally safe space to explore truth, justice and pathways forward.

We encourage you to take notes as there will be an opportunity for questions and answers after each Keynote and panelist group presentations.

Social Media:

Show your support through the Conference by engaging with us on social media @unidivinity, Facebook, X (Twitter) using #RaisingOurTribalVoice2024.

Feel free to follow us for all updates and post-conference updates @unidivinity

Media Disclaimer:

Please note that video and photography is being captured at this event and livestreamed to the online delegates who will have access to recordings for 1 month post Conference.

By taking part in this event, you grant the University of Divinity full rights to use images and audio resulting from photography/video filming and any reproductions or adaptations of the images for fundraising, publicity, or other purposes to help achieve the University's aims. This might include (but is not limited to), the right to use them in their printed and online publicity and social media.

Conference Support:

There is a quiet room (Seminar Room) open to delegates throughout the Conference if you require a safe space to reflect identified on the venue map provided.

Any delegate requiring accessible parking, please reach out to our Conference team prior to the event to discuss your car parking and other requirements.

We want your Conference experience to be positive and we encourage you to reach out for any or queries, questions or concerns about the Conference, please contact our conference team via phone 03 9853 3177 (Option "0" for reception) or via email enquiries@divinity.edu.au

Contents

Conference Logo Story	2
Conference Daily Program	6
Monday, 5th February 2024	6
Tuesday, 6th February 2024	8
Wednesday, 7th February 2024	10
Thursday, 8th February 2024	12
Our Conference Speakers	14
Keynote Speakers	14
Panel Speakers	25
Sponsor page	36

Conference Daily Program



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MONDAY, 5TH FEBRUARY 2024

TIME:	SESSIONS:
9:00-10:00AM	<p>Procession of Indigenous Theologians into St Paschal Chapel</p> <p>MC Introduction to Welcome to Country Des Rogers</p> <p>Welcome to Country Julie Coombes – Wurundjeri Nation</p> <p>Welcome by the University of Divinity Professor Gabrielle McMullen AM – Deputy Chancellor Professor Peter Sherlock – Vice-Chancellor</p>
10:00-10:35AM	<p>MC Introduction of Opening Keynote Sandra King OAM</p> <p>Opening Plenary Address Professor Anne Pattel-Gray Australia's Redemption: Is Founded on a First Nations Theology of Restorative Justice</p>
10:40-11:15AM	MORNING TEA
11:20-11:55AM	<p>MC Introduction of Keynote Des Rogers</p> <p>Plenary Address Dr Josephine Bourne Insights into Torres Strait Islander Theological Perspectives</p> <p>Q&A</p>
12:00-12:35PM	<p>MC Introduction of Keynote Des Rogers</p> <p>Plenary Address Professor Stan Grant Yindymarra: The Love of the Afflicted</p> <p>Q&A</p>
12:40-1:40PM	LUNCH

Conference Daily Program



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UNIVERSITY
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MONDAY, 5TH FEBRUARY 2024

TIME:	SESSIONS:
1:45-2:55PM	<p>MC Introduction of Panel Session Des Rogers</p> <p>Panel Session Moderator: Dr Josephine Bourne</p> <p>Panel Speakers</p> <p>Brooke Prentis Dreaming at Australia's Tipping Point: Truth, Justice, Love and Hope</p> <p>.....</p> <p>Nathan Tyson Thou Shalt Not Steal: Addressing past injustice through the theological principles of Reparation and Reconciliation</p> <p>.....</p> <p>Elverina Johnson Aboriginal Christianity in Yarrabah</p> <p>Q&A</p> <p>Outline of Discusson Groups Professor Anne Pattel-Gray</p>
3:00-3:35PM	AFTERNOON TEA
3:35-4:45PM	<p>Discussion Groups (Break out groups)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Truth 2. Reparations 3. Treaty 4. Justice 5. Reconciliation
3:35-4:45PM	<p>Inner Deep Listening Workshop (Seminar Room – opposite UD reception desk) Sherry Balcombe</p>

Conference Daily Program



SCHOOL
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TUESDAY, 6TH FEBRUARY 2024

TIME:	SESSIONS:
9:00-9:20AM	<p>MC Introduction to Spiritual Reflection Des Rogers</p> <p>Spiritual Reflection Sherry Balcombe Inner Deep Listening and Quiet Still Awareness</p>
9:25-10:00AM	<p>MC Introduction of Keynote Rev Canon Dr Garry Deverell</p> <p>Plenary Session Rev Aunty Janet Turpie-Johnstone The Ongoing Colonial Invasions</p> <p>Q&A</p>
10:05-10:35AM	MORNING TEA
10:40-11:15AM	<p>MC Introduction of Keynote Naomi Wolfe</p> <p>Plenary Session Rev Dr Katalina Tahaafe-Williams Conspiracies of Hope</p> <p>Q&A</p>
11:20-12:25PM	<p>MC Introduction of Panel Session Des Rogers</p> <p>Panel Session Moderator: Ravina Waldren</p> <p>Panel Speakers</p> <p>Mikenzie Ling Is Land My Mother? An Australian Aboriginal Christian Theology of Custodianship and Connection to Country</p> <p>.....</p> <p>Sean Weetra Kungan Winamaldi yanun Ruwungai (Listen to the Creator speaking in the Land)</p> <p>.....</p> <p>Lilliani Tahaafe-Williams Indigenous Spirituality as a Revolutionary Liberatory Tool</p> <p>Q&A</p>
12:30-1:30PM	<p>LUNCH</p> <p>(Optional) Video Presentation in the UD Hall Rev Dr Denise Champion Creator, Mother Earth, and Our Place in Her Family</p>

Conference Daily Program



TUESDAY, 6TH FEBRUARY 2024

TIME:	SESSIONS:
1:35-2:30PM	<p>MC Introduction of Recognition Ceremony Professor Dr Anne Pattel-Gray</p> <p>Award of Doctor of Divinity (honoris causa) to Aunty Jean Phillips</p> <p>Presenters: Head of School of Indigenous Studies Professor Dr Anne Pattel-Gray Deputy Chancellor Professor Gabrielle McMullen AM</p> <p>Response Aunty Jean Phillips</p> <p>.....</p> <p>Recognition of Service</p> <p>Recognition of Rev Aunty Janet Turpie-Johnstone's Service Rev Canon Dr Garry Deverell</p> <p>Response Rev Aunty Janet Turpie-Johnstone</p> <p>Recognition of Professor Peter Sherlock's Service Professor Dr Anne Pattel-Gray</p> <p>Response Professor Peter Sherlock</p>
2:35-3:10PM	<p>MC Introduction of Keynote Des Rogers</p> <p>Plenary Session Rev Professor Dr Upolu Luma Vaai</p> <p>Pasifika Theologies & Indigenous Philosophies: Changing the Story for a 'Whole of Life' Theological Revolution</p> <p>Q&A</p>
3:15-3:40PM	AFTERNOON TEA
3:45-4:45PM	<p>Discussion Groups (Break out groups)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Truth 2. Reparations 3. Treaty 4. Justice 5. Reconciliation

Conference Daily Program



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WEDNESDAY, 7TH FEBRUARY 2024

TIME:	SESSIONS:
9:00-9:20AM	<p>MC Introduction to Spiritual Reflection Des Rogers</p> <p>Spiritual Reflection Sherry Balcombe Inner Deep Listening and Quiet Still Awareness</p>
9:25-10:00AM	<p>MC Introduction of Keynote Rev Aunty Janet Turpie-Johnstone</p> <p>Plenary Session Rev Canon Dr Garry Deverell Christ as Country: Changing the Frame for Christology in Gondwana Q&A</p>
10:05-10:40AM	<p>MC Introduction of Keynote Rev Canon Dr Garry Deverell</p> <p>Plenary Session Rev Canon Associate Professor Glenn Loughrey James, Rhetta & Jimmy – An Unholy Trinity Q&A</p>
10:45-11:15AM	MORNING TEA
11:20-11:55AM	<p>MC Introduction of Keynote Rev Canon Dr Garry Deverell</p> <p>Plenary Session John Lochowiak Evolving Role of the Australian Catholic Churches in the Inculturation of the Liturgy Q&A</p>
12:00-1:00PM	LUNCH

Conference Daily Program



WEDNESDAY, 7TH FEBRUARY 2024

TIME:	SESSIONS:
1:05-2:10PM	<p>MC Introduction of Panel Session Des Rogers</p> <p>Panel Session Moderator: Bianca Manning</p> <p>Panel Speakers</p> <p>Neil Pattel</p> <p>The Overrepresentation of Indigenous Youth in the Criminal Justice Systems</p> <p>Rev Hohaia Matthews</p> <p>A Tribal Voice through Pakiwaitara (Story)</p> <p>Pastor Geoffrey Stokes</p> <p>Mamma God and Tjukurpa – God and the Dreamtime</p> <p>Q&A</p>
2:15-2:50PM	<p>MC Introduction of Keynote Rev Canon Dr Garry Deverell</p> <p>Plenary Address Naomi Wolfe -</p> <p>Rebuilding theological houses for better hospitality</p> <p>Q&A</p>
2:55-3:30PM	AFTERNOON TEA
3:35-4:45PM	<p>Discussion Groups (Break out groups)</p> <p>1. Truth</p> <p>2. Reparations</p> <p>3. Treaty</p> <p>4. Justice</p> <p>5. Reconciliation</p>

Conference Daily Program



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THURSDAY, 8TH FEBRUARY 2024

TIME:	SESSIONS:
9:00-9:15AM	Spiritual Reflection Sherry Balcombe Inner Deep Listening and Quiet Still Awareness
9:20-9:55AM	MC Introduction of Keynote Rev Canon Associate Professor Glenn Loughrey Plenary Session The Venerable Dr Lyndon Drake Theological Facets of He Poi, an Indigenous Chant Q&A
10:00-10:30AM	MC Introduction of Church Leaders Professor Peter Sherlock – Vice-Chancellor Church Leaders Respond to the Voice of Indigenous Theologians Lt Colonel Greg Morgan – Secretary for Mission of The Salvation Army Rev John Gilmore – President of National Council of Churches in Australia Rev Sharon Hollis – President of the Uniting Church in Australia
10:35-11:05AM	MORNING TEA
11:10-12:10PM	Church Leaders Respond to the Voice of Indigenous Theologians (continued) The Right Reverend Dr. Keith Joseph – Bishop of Far North Queensland in the Anglican Church of Australia The Most Reverend Charles Gauci – Bishop of Darwin of the Roman Catholic Church Executive Member - Churches of Christ Jane Hope - The Religious Society of Friends Professor Gabrielle McMullen AM – Deputy Chancellor of University of Divinity Rev Dr Peter Cruchley – Director of Council of World Mission and Evangelism of the World Council of Churches Reflection of Responses Professor Stan Grant Professor Dr Anne Pattel-Gray
12:15-1:25PM	LUNCH

Conference Daily Program



THURSDAY, 8TH FEBRUARY 2024

TIME:	SESSIONS:
1:30-2:10PM	<p>MC Introduction and Moderator of Discussion Groups Reports Professor Peter Sherlock</p> <p>Discussion Groups Reports</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Truth 2. Reparations 3. Treaty 4. Justice 5. Reconciliation
2:15-3:15PM	<p>Inner Deep Delegate Reflection Professor Stan Grant</p> <p>Invitation to the Pledge to Support Australian First Nations Peoples Professor Dr Anne Pattel-Gray</p>
3:20-3:50PM	AFTERNOON TEA
3:55-4:30PM	<p>Closing Worship Rev Dr Canon Garry Deverell</p>
4:35PM	CONFERENCE CLOSE



Our Conference Speakers

The University of Divinity's Professor Dr Anne Pattel-Gray, Head of School of Indigenous Studies, is leading this Conference alongside Indigenous Church leaders and theologians who will call their Churches to action.

Keynote Speakers



Professor Dr Anne Pattel-Gray

Professor Dr Anne Pattel-Gray is the Head of the School of Indigenous Studies at the University of Divinity, Australia. Professor Pattel-Gray earned a PhD from the University of Sydney awarded in 1995 in the Studies of Religion with the major focus on Aboriginal Religion and Spirituality and a Doctor of Divinity from India awarded in 1997. She is a recognised scholar, theologian, activist and a celebrated published author with many books, edited books, chapters, and journal articles. Professor Pattel-Gray is a member of the Uniting Church of Australia and has achieved many firsts in her prestigious life. Known as a fearless trail blazer, she has opened many doors for her people. Career achievements include current member of the Commission for World Mission and Evangelism, Founding Executive Secretary of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission of the National Council of Churches, Professor and Chair of Department at United Theological College in Bangalore, Executive Director of Tauondi College, and Deputy Chairperson of Connecting Foster Carers in South Australia. Professor Pattel-Gray is a descendant of the Bidjara Nations in Queensland and a renowned Aboriginal leader, nationally and internationally. She has dedicated her life to the struggle of Australia's First Nations as a strong campaigner, lobbyist towards seeking justice, equity, and equal representation for First Nations people.

Australia's Redemption: Is Founded on a First Nations Theology of Restorative Justice

Australia's First Nations theology involves an ancient spirituality and tradition that enables a lived experience of the Creator Spirit, with people, land and creation, nurtured by a deep longing for justice, wholeness and a resistance that gives priority to the cultural lens of First Nations perspectives of trauma and survivors, and to the restoration of justice, its sides with the powerless against the powerful and seeks to speak truth to power drawing its inspiration from the prophetic path in the biblical narratives and the Ancestral Narratives formed from our cosmology, worldview, and epistemology (knowledges). Reconciliation can only be found in a process based on the principles of restorative justice.

Keynote Speakers



Dr Josephine Bourne

Dr Josephine Bourne is an academic at the School of Political Science and International Studies at the University of Queensland. She is a Torres Strait Islander; a Gumulgaw/ Goemulgaw woman of Mabuig Island through her father's Ancestral line with links to Moa/Mua Island. Her mother's Ancestral lines include Badu, Mer and Dawar Islands. Josephine was involved in setting up the National Congress of Australia's First Peoples (2009–2011) and was a member of the Expert Panel on Recognising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples in the Constitution (2010–2012). She was involved in processes leading up to the Uluru Convention (2016–2017). More recently she was a member of the Queensland Government's Eminent Panel and Treaty Advancement Committee (2019–2021). Josephine is co-author of the second edition of *Australian Politics in the Twenty-First Century: Old Institutions, New Challenges* (Cambridge University Press, 2022). Her current and future research is focused on Indigenous nation building and capturing the experiences of cultural resilience and resurgence in the lifeworld's of Torres Strait Islanders.

Insights into Torres Strait Islander theological perspectives

Torres Strait Islanders embrace and celebrate the Coming of Light annually commemorating the arrival of Christianity in the Torres Strait on 1 July 1871. Torres Strait Islander nation groups identified synergies between their own traditional theologies, traditional knowledges, and Biblical literature. Individual characters and stories of the rise and fall of nations and the concept of an almighty higher power provide insights and wisdom that Islanders draw on daily. To this day various Torres Strait Islander theological perspectives acknowledge shared insights from other religious doctrine. Contemporary Torres Strait Islander theology is a combination of traditional Indigenous theology and points of synergy with biblical literature. This provides understanding of good leadership and sustains their commitment to uphold their social and political order. When interfacing with the systems, political culture and political actors of the State, Torres Strait Islanders have experienced some points of convergence and faced many experiences of divergence in relation to understandings of integrity and morality in governing. I will discuss what this looks like in relation to governance and policy making while pursuing their long-held political goal of greater autonomy. Ultimately aiming to develop a relationship where they are able to co-govern in their lands and waters with the relatively young nation-state of Australia. I will discuss critical points for consideration in the current Voice, Treaty, Truth policy era and reflect on the role Indigenous and non-Indigenous theologians may have in strengthening the foundation for this work.

Keynote Speakers



Professor Stan Grant

Professor Stan Grant is a proud Wiradjuri and Kamilaroi man. He holds a Doctor of Letters from the University of New South Wales and will soon complete his Doctor of Theology with Charles Sturt University. Stan began his career as a journalist in 1987; he has worked for the ABC and SBS, the Seven Network and Sky News Australia. From 2001 to 2012, he worked for CNN as an anchor and senior correspondent in Asia and the Middle East. As a journalist, he has received prestigious international and Australian awards. In 2015, he published his bestselling book *Talking to My Country*, which won the Walkley Book Award and a Walkley Award for his coverage of Indigenous affairs. In 2016, he was appointed to the Referendum Council on Indigenous recognition. Stan is now Chair of Indigenous/ Australian Belonging at Charles Sturt University and International Affairs Analyst at the ABC. In 2023, he published *The Queen is Dead* and launched it at the Melbourne Writers Festival. Also in 2023, Professor Stan was appointed the Inaugural Director of the Constructive Institute Asia Pacific in the faculty of Arts at Monash University.

Yindyamarra: The Love of the Afflicted

A thought-provoking exploration into the intersection of Indigenous spirituality and theology, offering unique insights into a Wiradjuri way of being and its transformative impact on our understanding of peace in Jesus Christ.

Keynote Speakers



Rev Aunty Janet Turpie-Johnstone

Rev Aunty Janet was born in Portland, western district of Victoria. A town by the vast Southern Ocean, cold waters and amazing wildlife. She has spent most of her adult life in Melbourne with many transformations, but the most recent has been as an Anglican priest and academic. Having earned a Bachelor of Theology at the United Faculty of Theology in the early 1990's, Aunty Janet now teaches the Indigenous Unit and Bioethics in Health Sciences School at the Australian Catholic University, and she is currently a PhD candidate at the Australian National University and her research is focused on Aboriginal relationality with Country.

Aunty Janet currently holds various positions such as: a board member of Mulum Mulum Indigenous Gathering Place, Chairperson of the Boorndawan William Aboriginal Healing Service, Burrinja Cultural Centre, Chairperson School of Indigenous Studies and on the Council of the University of Divinity and a board member of Wellspring.

The Ongoing Colonial Invasions

I consider this urban world I live in as ongoing colonial invasions. The constantly increasing human populations have made such demands on this Country to suit this one species, putting the uniqueness of this country at risk. Edward Wilson, in his work on the socialisation of the Nature, makes the statement that our species has destroyed the Biosphere. The very nature of the planet has been limited by us for us only. Can we come back from this? Can we leave a natural legacy for the generations not yet born? I do not know; I just know the grief I live with daily.

Keynote Speakers



Rev Dr Katalina Tahaafe-Williams

Rev Dr Katalina Tahaafe-Williams (PhD, University of Birmingham, UK) is a Pacific-Oceanian Womanist Theologian, a committed ally of First Peoples walking alongside them in their fight for justice, formerly an Executive for Mission and Evangelism with the World Council of Churches, co-editor of the recently published *Edinburgh Companion to Global Christianity: Christianity in Oceania and of Contextual Theology for the Twenty-First Century*. She has published several essays in *International Review of Mission*, is currently writing the chapter on Contextual Theology for the University of St Andrew's 2023 *Encyclopedia of Theology* and is an Adjunct Lecturer at University of Divinity. She is a globally respected ecumenical missiologist and public contextual theologian with extensive global mission, evangelism, and social justice experience. She is the Minister for Trinity Uniting Church in the City of Perth, Western Australia.

Conspiracies of Hope

Rev Dr Tahaafe-Williams is interested in deconstructing systems of empire that have successfully maintained and perpetuated the racist exclusion, othering, and silencing of the First Peoples of this Land now called Australia. She seeks to do that by conscientizing Second Peoples to their settler privileges, and by seeking to identify radical, subversive (i.e. revolutionary?) conspiracies of hope for divestment of such privileges.

Keynote Speakers



Reverend Dr Denise Champion

Rev Dr Aunty Denise Champion is from the Adnyamathanha Nation; her traditional homelands are the Flinders Ranges in South Australia (SA). Rev Dr Aunty Denise describes herself as a storyteller. She is also an elder and a significant leader of her community. She was ordained as a Deacon in the Uniting Church in SA in 2015, after serving as a Pastor from 2009, then Synod Covenanting Coordinator and Development Officer for the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress (2011–2015). She is the first Indigenous woman to be ordained in SA in any Christian denomination. She serves as the Theologian in Residence at the Uniting College for Leadership and Theology. A sought-after speaker, Rev Dr Aunty Denise's two books: *Yarta Wandatha (The Land is Speaking, the People are Speaking)* and *Anaditj (Always Was, Always Will Be)*, have received acclaim nationally and internationally. In 2020, Rev Dr Aunty Denise was awarded an honorary doctorate by the Adelaide College of Divinity for her services to Indigenous theological education.

Creator, Mother Earth, and Our Place in Her Family

God created people to be stewards of the land and Aboriginal people lived at peace with the land. The past 200 years of colonisation has seen violence performed on Mother Earth. However, the land is still speaking, and First Nations people are still speaking, calling us into right relationship with the Creator and creation.

Keynote Speakers



Reverend Professor Dr Upolu Lumā Vaai

Upolu Lumā Vaai has his childhood in the island of Savaii, Samoa, counting time by the shadows of the sun, creating fire from rubbing sticks, living on what is available each day. He learned land-based protocols on how to appreciate the eleele (land) and its diversity, practiced regenerative economy, learned to navigate complexity through wisdom, and walked the relational footpaths guided by the spirits of his Ancestors. Principal and Professor of Theology & Ethics at the Pacific Theological College, he is a practiced Indigenous philosopher and decolonial theologian. He is a regional and internationally leading voice in reclaiming and promoting Pasifika philosophies and theologies to underpin the development of a new development story grounded on the 'whole of life' philosophies of Pasifika communities. He is regularly invited by many international forums to speak on Pasifika relationality, relational philosophy, relational hermeneutics, relational theology, and relational ways of knowing and being, which are ideas scattered throughout his many publications and research projects. He currently leads the establishment of a new regional Pasifika Communities University of the Pacific churches premised on the 'whole of life' philosophies, spiritualities and communities-based learning approach.

Pasifika Theologies & Indigenous Philosophies: Changing the Story for a 'Whole of Life' Theological Revolution

Theology should be biblically grounded, contextually challenged, publicly stirred, and Indigenously shaken! Right? Well, we want the theological story to sound like this, but it's not. Theology in Oceania has matured, but its roots are still confined within what Bishop Leslie Boseto from the Solomon Islands called a colonial "theological pod," struggling to find the touch of the Pasifika soil. Our theologies that have informed the faith and mission of the church have been guided by a colonial bible of Western philosophers, informed by the colonizers' perception of colonized contexts and uncivilized worlds, and driven by an exegetical hermeneutics that often demonizes Indigenous cultural approaches of learning in favour of methods and criticisms developed by Eurocentric schools of thought. Today, we are in the midst of a crisis of theologies ill-equipped to critically respond to a flawed development narrative with its extractive economic system pushed through our national government policies, affecting many Oceanic Indigenous lands and peoples. Central to this crisis is that most of our theologies that guide our faith and inform church doctrines such as sin, salvation, grace, to name a few, are still very much cloned and controlled by Western philosophies that only works through binaries, linearity, and compartmentalization. This presentation tells the "Changing of the Story" theological revolution led by the Pacific Theological College in Fiji, the regional theological educational institution of the Pasifika churches. The making of such revolution begins with acknowledging that the current story is oppressive and top-down. We need a story driven by the 'whole of life' vision that is grounded on the Indigenous philosophies of the Pacific Household of God, radically biblical and justice oriented, and communities-based, to equip the churches in their mission and to transform theologies to accurately respond to the political and economic crises of our time.

Keynote Speakers



Reverend Canon Dr Garry Deverell

Rev Canon Dr Garry Deverell is a trawloolway man from lutruwita/Tasmania, an Anglican priest of the diocese of Melbourne, and the co-founder of the School of Indigenous Studies at the University of Divinity. He holds undergraduate degrees from the University of Tasmania and the University of Divinity as well as a doctorate in theology from Monash University. He is a member of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Anglican Council, the Doctrine Commission of the Anglican Church of Australia, and the Australian Academy of Liturgy. Garry has authored three books: *Gondwana Theology: a trawloolway man reflects on Christian faith* (Morningstar 2018), *The Bonds of Freedom: vows, sacraments and the formation of the Christian self* (Paternoster/Wipf & Stock 2008), and *Contemplating Country: more Gondwana theology* (Wipf & Stock 2023) as well as multiple articles for both the popular press and learned journals.

‘Christ as Country: Changing the Frame for Christology in Gondwana’

The Christology we received (forcibly, in most instances) from the colonial missionaries in this land understood the incarnation of the divine in exclusively human terms. For the missionaries, Christ was primarily Jesus of Nazareth, now incarnate in the corporate body of the church and its sacraments. If Christianity is to fully arrive in these lands, however, it needs to be reframed according to a Christology of country. If Christ is to be present in ways that are meaningful for the Indigenous people of these lands, s/he needs to be present as ‘country’, cosmic realm of kin, Ancestral Creators and teachers. This paper will describe that Christology and begin to explore its implications for a new body politic that embraces settlers as well.

Keynote Speakers



Reverend Canon Associate Professor Glenn Loughrey

Rev Canon Associate Professor Glenn Loughrey, is a proud Wiradjuri man and parish priest at St Oswald's Anglican Church, Glen Iris in Melbourne. He is a Wiradjuri artist and a St Paul's Cathedral Canon and artist in residence with two works installed in St Paul's Cathedral. Associate Professor Loughrey's artworks are held in the Murnong Gallery for Aboriginal Art, and he teaches at the Crawford School of Public Policy, Australian National University in Canberra and holds the position of Chair of NATSIAC. His blog posts at Red Shoes Walking open doors for people who want to explore the spiritual journey.

James, Rhetta & Jimmy – An Unholy Trinity

I will explore the topic through the eyes of three significant but largely invisible Australians, whose faith and experience influenced the future of this country, either as a personal lived experience or belief or as representatives of the interaction between cultures at the beginning of the 20th century. Bishop James Moorhouse was a distinguished churchman and Bishop of Melbourne (1876 – 1886). Margaret Jane (Retta) Dixon Long was the powerhouse evangelist and mission builder who steered the Australian Inland Mission into the lives of Aboriginal People and into the history books in the early 1900s. Jimmy Governor was an Aboriginal man whose massacre of 9 people stalled Federation and outraged white Australia in 1900. This reflection is entwined with my own story. As a Canon of St Paul's Cathedral Melbourne, my stall is named after Bishop Moorhouse. Jimmy Governor is, as best as we can make out, my great-grandfather. While I have no direct connection with Retta Dixon, the process leading to my conversion as a young man is reminiscent of that of Governor as recounted by her in her 'Jimmy Governor Speech'.

Keynote Speakers



John Lochowiak

John Lochowiak is a Wadi (initiated Man) who has strong ties to many language groups throughout Australia including but not limited to Pitjantjatjara, Kurna, Ramindjeri and Arrernte. His strong cultural grounding is complemented by his deep Catholic faith. His career positions include Chairperson of NATSICC and his current roles Manager of Aboriginal Services and Head of the Aboriginal Catholic Ministry in Adelaide.

Evolving role of the Australian Catholic Churches in the Inculturation of the Liturgy

On the 50th Anniversary of the first National Aboriginal Liturgy at Melbourne's Eucharistic Congress, we explore the achievements and challenges of enriching the Liturgy with the gifts Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture.



Naomi Wolfe

Naomi Wolfe is a trawloolway woman, Director of Academic Programs, NAIITS College in Australia, and she is a Lecturer at the Australian Catholic University. Naomi encourages collaborative learning between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal staff and students to break down barriers, dissolve stereotypes and to cultivate new relationships based on respect. She has a professional and personal interest in Indigenous cross-cultural training and awareness as well as Indigenous pedagogies and theology. A leader in her own right, she is always looking to listen and learn from Elders and community.

Rebuilding theological houses for better hospitality

Raising our Tribal Voices in future years will require theological colleges, seminaries, and universities to be prepared for monumental changes in how wider society makes space for, accepts, and listens to Indigenous peoples here in Australia, and the world over. It will require our colleges to dismantle and rebuild for better engagement with community, and stronger responses to calls for education and training. How can such things take place? It requires active participation within the decolonization process – not focused only on the training and equipping of students and graduates but on preparing and equipping faculty and staff for the times ahead. What does this require of colleges, etc? Importantly what does it require of Indigenous communities? And what work might be achieved together? This paper seeks to explore some of the foundational matters with some suggestions for action.

Keynote Speakers



The Venerable Dr Lyndon Drake

The Archdeacon of Tamaki Makaurau & the Priest in Charge of Te Takiwa O Manukau.

The Ven Dr Lyndon Drake (Ngāti Kuri, Ngāi Tahu) serves as Archdeacon of Tāmaki Makaurau in the Māori Anglican bishopric of Te Tai Tokerau. Lyndon has recently completed a DPhil in Theology at Oxford on economic capital in the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament and has degrees in science and commerce (Auckland), a PhD in computer science (York), two other degrees in theology (Oxford), and a number of peer-reviewed academic publications in both science and theology. Lyndon has written *Capital Markets for the Common Good: A Christian Perspective*, (Oxford: 2017, Oxford Centre for Enterprise, Markets, and Ethics). Until 2010, Lyndon was a Vice President at Barclays Capital, trading government bonds and interest-rate derivatives. Since then, he has served in church ministry, as well as teaching theology and serving in a range of Christian leadership roles. He sits on a number of boards, including as Chair of Te Whare Ruruhau o Meri Trust Board.

Theological Facets of He Poi, an Indigenous Chant

Indigenous Christian communities often find ways to express their theology in forms that differ from traditional engagement in the scholarly guild. An example of this is the Māori chant, *He Poi*. It was composed by Sir Kingi Ihaka, a notable Māori priest, and highlights Māori agency in engagement with Christianity in the 19th Century. In this paper, I will identify key theological points embedded in this traditional form.

Our Panel Speakers



Brooke Prentis

Brooke Prentis is an Aboriginal Christian Leader and Wakka Wakka woman. Brooke is a theologian, writer, speaker, educator, poet, and pastor. Brooke has a Bachelor of Commerce and Bachelor of Arts from the University of Queensland, and she was awarded a Graduate Certificate in Theology from the University of Divinity in 2022. Brooke has published several theological articles, papers and book chapters including two co-authored chapters in the book *Enacting a Public Theology*, journal article *Learning to be guests of ancient hosts on ancient lands*, chapter *Dangerous Memories* in the book *Not in Kansas Anymore*, and chapter *What Can the Birds of the Land Tell Us?* in the book *Grounded in the Body, in Time and Place, in Scripture* amongst others. Brooke was the first Aboriginal person to be a CEO or Leader of a national Christian organisation (Salvation Army) in Australia that was not Indigenous specific. Brooke has appeared on national and international TV and radio broadcasts, podcasts, and print including on ABC's the Drum, NITV's The Point, and ABC Radio National programs Soul Search, God Forbid, and the Religion & Ethics report, Christianity Today, The Bible for Normal People, and Sojourners, as well as a guest host of Soul Search. Brooke is the coordinator of the Grasstree Gathering, a network of over 200 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Christian Leaders and producer of *#ChangeTheHeart*. Brooke is currently working as a consultant in schools and organisations and publishing a book, *Listen, Learn, Love: Walking with Your Aboriginal Neighbour*; a practical guide for Australian Christians and the Australian Church. Brooke works ecumenically sharing a message of Reconciliation as Friendship and dreams of building "an Australia built on truth, justice, love, and hope."

Dreaming at Australia's Tipping Point: Truth, Justice, Love, and Hope

I dream of an Australia built on truth, justice, love, and hope. It's an Australia I hear echoed through Aboriginal Christian Leaders across the generations – from William Cooper to Sir Pastor Doug Nicholls, to Aunty Jean Phillips, to myself and many others. It's an Australia I hear screamed through injustices of Stolen Land, Racism, Aboriginal Deaths in Custody. It's an Australia I hear actions provided for through the Day of Mourning, the Yirrkala Bark Petitions, the Barunga Statement, the Statement from the Heart. This presentation will call non-Indigenous peoples to wake up and stay awake as they hear, listen, and respond to the cries for justice from Aboriginal peoples in these lands now called Australia. This presentation will explore how Aboriginal Christian Leaders of the past and present have called the Australian Church to account and show that we have reached tipping point and that we must act now with the call from Uncle Rev Graham Paulson to "read the Bible with Aboriginal eyes".

Panel Speakers



Nathan Tyson

Nathan Tyson is an Aboriginal man of Anaiwon and Gomeroi heritage, born on Gadigal country in Sydney, and raised in Sydney and on the North Coast of NSW. Nathan is currently the Director of First Peoples Strategy and Engagement with the Uniting Church Synod of NSW and the ACT.

A lawyer, Christian, and long-time advocate for justice for First Peoples, Nathan has previously worked for organisations including the NSW Ombudsman, the NSW Anti-Discrimination Board, the Independent Commission Against Corruption, the Australian Securities and Investments Commission, Muru Mittigar Ltd, Western Sydney University, and Uniting NSW/ACT. Nathan has also held elected roles on a number of Aboriginal community organisations, including Deputy Chairperson and Treasurer of Kurranulla Aboriginal Corporation, and President of Ngalaya Aboriginal Lawyers and Law Students Association (NSW). Nathan lives in Western Sydney, on Dharug Country at the foot of the Blue Mountains, and is currently completing a Graduate Diploma in Theology at United Theological College.

Thou shalt not steal: Addressing past injustice through the theological principles of reparation and reconciliation

Nathan will consider the impact of colonial/western Theology on Aboriginal peoples, and briefly reflect on this history of racism, discrimination, and oppression. He will consider the theological principles of reparation and reconciliation, and what this might look like if Churches use the Gospels as a benchmark for addressing past injustice. Nathan will also reflect on how Christian Churches might be reminded of Mathew 31:25-46, and that we will not be judged on how big or wealthy our church is, but rather on how we treat the least in our society.

Panel Speakers



Elverina Johnson

Elverina Johnson is a highly respected Gungganji and Yidinji woman from the Yarrabah Community, southeast of Cairns. With 60 kilometers of coastline to the east and the Murray Prior Range to the west, Indigenous people have made this rainforest Country home for millennia. The Community of a fluctuating population of about 2,600 people achieved a level of 'self-governance' as an 'Aboriginal Shire' in 2005 after decades of European administration following Anglican Church settlement in 1892. For 35 years, Elverina has taken an inter-generational approach within Indigenous community at local, regional, and state levels to build strength and pride, address critical social issues, and to celebrate culture through song, dance, theatre, photography, and fashion. Elverina's portfolio of diverse professional experience demonstrates an innovator who has produced new knowledge drawing on traditional knowledge, state and church archives, oral histories, and community relationships to deliver technical reports, creative and public outcomes, and strategic advocacy at multiple levels including the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Peoples in New York (2010). Elverina's traditional name Bunya Badjil means "Good Woman". She is currently pursuing a Master of Philosophy at the University of Queensland and her research focus is on Aboriginal Spirituality and Christianity from an Artist Perspective.

Aboriginal Christianity in Yarrabah

When the Stolen Generations era happened, the missionaries and protectors had more control and therefore our people were forced to accept the practice of Christianity, but it was more so to keep the peace and not necessarily as a conversion as we know that many of our Ancestors still kept up cultural practices but in secret. As the years passed it became a practice of submission otherwise face punishment. I remember quite clearly a story that my grandmother told me about when she was placed in the dormitory as a young girl and how she was punished by getting her head shaved and wearing hessian bags if they didn't do what the missionaries considered to be good and well behaviour according to their Christian standards. This is where many of our Ancestors learned to sing as part of a choir and sung church hymns. Nowadays it is an individual choice but there are still elements and remnants of mission time mentality. Many still follow the old traditions of the Anglican Church practices. However, over the years artists, in particular visual artists and singer / songwriters have been bringing back the Gungganji language and writing Christian based songs in the Gungganji language. There is more of an appreciation for culture. More and more cultural dancing and music are now being used to share the Christian faith. The expression of the Christian faith through Aboriginal culture in Yarrabah is now becoming more Indigenized and leaders of the church have a responsibility to change the narrative and inform our people that it is okay to be still and to be First Nations and practice our faith with First Nations cultural expressions.

Panel Speakers



Mikenzie Ling

Mikenzie Ling is a proud Wiradjuri woman, living on Dharug Country in Western Sydney. She is passionate about seeing Aboriginal Christians live out their culture and their Christian faith in deeply authentic and holistic ways. Mikenzie recently completed a Master of Theology, with her research dissertation titled: *Is Land My Mother? An Australian Aboriginal Christian Theology of Custodianship and Connection to Country*. Her areas of interest include Indigenous theology, eco-theology, global theology and ecumenical unity. She is currently developing a project centered on understanding and resourcing Aboriginal Discipleship praxis.

Is Land My Mother? An Australian Aboriginal Christian Theology of Custodianship and Connection to Country

Working from the findings of my recent research thesis, and my learning experience under Christian Elders, I will consider Australia's racist colonial oppression of Aboriginal people and the role of Australian churches in light of Indigenous sovereignty, custodianship, and relational connection to Country. Aboriginal people have communed with Creator God in and through these Lands from time immemorial, as such our justice is interconnected with justice for our Lands. I believe Indigenous theological revolution highlights the distinct and diverse cultural sources, processes, and practices Indigenous people bring to the task of theology. The amplification of Elder's voices and recognition of Indigenous people's God-given sovereignty is an essential component to conversations of justice.



Panel Speakers



Sean Weetra

Sean Weetra is a proud Ngarrindjeri, Kurna and Narungga man from a small Aboriginal community called Raukkan on Ngarrindjeri Country, which is situated on the banks of Lake Alexandrina in South Australia. With a childhood foundation at Raukkan surrounded by lots of family and many cousins, over the years, he has followed his passion to study and work in the community services sector. Career achievements include starting with The Uniting Church in South Australia working with Aboriginal families, The Living Kurna Cultural Centre, Raukkan Community Council, Coorong District Council and The Aboriginal Lands Trusts. These various roles have been an experience for him, and created ardent attitude towards issues including youth homelessness, youth incarceration, social justice, global warming, conservation and land management, community development, Aboriginal rights, reconciliation, Aboriginal tourism, etc. With a strong interest in Ngarrindjeri Theology, Sean shares his people's worldview and an understanding of our Creator in the beginning, now and future.

Kungan Winamaldi yanun Ruwungai (Listen to the Creator speaking in the Land)

I'll be sharing the worldview of the Ngarrindjeri people of the Coorong. It will suggest that the biblical/church Jesus becomes important because of the disruption of colonialism. It will offer some reflections on how Jesus both affirms and strengthens our cultural identity and offers a counter narrative that helps Ngarrindjeri critically engage with ongoing colonial occupation of land, lives, and minds.



Panel Speakers



Lilliani Tahaafe-Williams

Lilliani Tahaafe-Williams is an Indigenous Polynesian woman of Christian faith. She is deeply embedded in her Polynesian worldview and understands the rich complexities of Indigenous spirituality and wisdom that teaches, social cohesion, sustainable living, and mutual respect. She is currently engaged in her PhD studies to explore and articulate what she knows intuitively in empirical terms.

Indigenous Spirituality as a Revolutionary Liberatory Tool

Lilliani will lead and engage in conversations about how Indigenous spirituality is foundational and integral to resolving 21st-century woes.



Neil Pattel

Neil Pattel possesses significant experience and expertise working in the prison system – as a Prison Officer at the Stuart Prison and Youth Worker at Cleveland Youth Detention Centre in Townsville. Neil's educational background includes – a Certificate III in Youth Justice from Sunshine Coast TAFE in 2011; a Bachelor of Journalism with a major in Modern History from James Cook University 2002; a Masters in Social Science, with Social Work (Minor) and Criminology (Major) from James Cook University in 2020.

The Overrepresentation of Indigenous Youth in the Criminal Justice Systems

My research and presentation investigates the high incarceration rate of Indigenous youth in Juvenile Youth Detention and why these numbers will never decrease. This research provides an insight into the significant disadvantage and systemic nature of racism in the Australian justice system and beyond which negatively impacts Indigenous spirituality and identity.

Panel Speakers



Reverend Hohaia Matthews

Ko Matahourua te waka, Ko Whiria te Maunga Ko Hokianga te awa, Ko Kupe te tangata, Ko Pakanae te Marae, Ko Ngati Whaarara, Ko Ngati Korokoro me Te Pouka e oku hapu, Ko Ngāpuhi te Iwi, Ko Rev. Hohaia Haami Matthews taku ingoa.

Matahourua is the canoe, Whiria is the mountain, Hokianga is the river, Kupe is the man, Pakanae is the Marae, Ngati Korokoro, Ngati Whaarara and Te Pouka are my sub-tribes, Ngāpuhi is the Tribe, My name is Rev. Hohaia Haami Matthews.

Originally a boilermaker-welder by trade, a schoolteacher by profession and a Minister by Call. Rev Matthews moved from Aotearoa New Zealand to South Australia in 1985. He was a Minister of Logan Central Multicultural Uniting Church, working with Grasstree Gathering but retired from ministry in August 2016. Rev Matthews returned to whānau in Murray Bridge, South Australia and came out of retirement in October 2016 to start a Māori Christian Church in South Australia: Te Hahi Māori Kauwhau i te Rongopai i te Ahitereria i te Tonga/The Māori Evangelical Church of South Australia.

A Tribal Voice through Pakiwaitara (story)

Rev Matthews will take delegates through the story. The Hapu whakapapa is a chain of some forty links back to the first Ancestor Kupe, the first footprints in the sand at Te Pouahi, those generations ago. Much later Kupe left for his home island. In preparation for his journey, he climbed the sand hills above Te Pouahi to say his farewell to the land. First, he sacrificed his child Tuputupuwhenua in the spring of water as a fountain head for his descendants, then spoke these words of farewell: 'Hei konei ra e te puna o te ao marama, ka hoki nei ahau e kore ano e hokianga-nui-mai' He summoned two taniwha Arai-te-uru and Niua, and placed them on each side of the harbour as guardians, then summoned three great waves, Ngaru-nui, Ngaru-roa and Ngaru-pae-whenua to assist them, then departed. Kupe had put in place, the spiritual, heritage and traditional value base for the land. Then came Nukutāwhiti and Ruanui to build on the substance of their tupuna Kupe. The latter, generations of their descendants, either occupied or located close to the places established by the earlier people, Ngati Korokoro, Ngati Wharara and Te Pouka hapu by virtue of uninterrupted occupation and unbroken whakapapa are the ahi ka (roa) and caretakers of this very special place. The unbroken whakapapa link back to Kupe, who established the first and to this day, unbroken Ancestral occupation rights confer special customary rights and responsibilities on the hapu, that must be recognized and provided for. Without question the hapu have kaitiakitanga, the guardianship and the responsibility role over all those taonga, on behalf of the whanau, and all Rāhiri descendants wherever they reside. The hapū rohe is the heartbeat of Ngāpuhi, the rohe is important to other iwi and so too, to the nation. It is one of the founding places of Aotearoa. Though society has changed over the last six generations, the Ancestral mantle woven into the land by past customary practices, and worn by all previous generations, is now worn by the hapu.

Panel Speakers



Pastor Geoffrey Stokes

Geoffrey Stokes is an Aboriginal man of the Wongutha, Mulba-Ngadju and Mirning Tribes of the Eastern Goldfields. He has spent most of his life in the Goldfields. Fortunately, his family was able to stay together throughout his childhood and none were “stolen”. His parents educated him about his culture, the land, and the history of his people. He spent most of his early life moving throughout the Goldfields with his family, living out bush for long periods and often living in the Aboriginal camps on the edge of the missions or towns. Geoffrey is the pastor of a nondenominational church in Kalgoorlie based Ninga Mia Aboriginal Community. The Ninga Mia Fellowship caters especially to Aboriginal people from remote areas and those living in town but keeping strong their cultural traditions and beliefs as well as their deep Christian faith. Geoffrey is both Wati and Christian Pastor. He is a vocal advocate for the rights of Indigenous People everywhere and a fearless fighter for the people of the Goldfields region.

Mamma God and Tjukurpa – God and the Dreamtime

The Wongutha people of the Eastern Goldfields first encountered non-Aboriginal people about 125 years ago when prospectors flooded their lands. This was a terrible and dangerous time for Aboriginal people and Mt Margaret Mission was set up to offer safety to the Wongutha people of the northern Goldfields. It was there that Geoffrey’s grandparents and then his father, mother and extended family came into contact with Christian Missionaries and became powerful Christians themselves. They also had a deep understanding of Tjukurpa, their traditional lore, stories, and culture and, even though the missionaries frowned on this, they passed much of this knowledge and respect for their culture and history on to their children. Geoffrey has a deep understanding of the intersection between traditional culture and belief and his Christian faith. He has participated in traditional ceremony and is Wati (senior man) – he has also studied the bible extensively, initially under Pastor Ron Williams. He has travelled to the Holy Land and seen how much traditional Jewish culture parallels his own traditional culture. He will talk about how Christianity was seen by his people not as a new thing, but as a recognition and extension of Tjukurpa and illustrate this using the dreamtime stories, including the story of the Southern Cross.

Workshop Facilitator



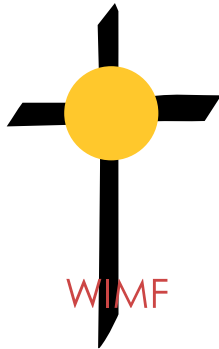
Sherry Balcombe

Sherry Balcombe is an Olkola / Djabaguy (Ol-Kola / Jab A Guy) woman. Her traditional lands are far north Queensland, born on Wurundjeri land and growing up on Bunurong Land where she still resides. She is dedicated to working towards ensuring a positive, present and a vibrant future for all our community members. Sherry currently holds the position of the Coordinator of the Aboriginal Catholic Ministry Victoria. She has a vast array of roles held over the years including working at the Victorian Aboriginal Childcare Agency in Foster Care and family group homes for 6 years and employed at the Aboriginal Catholic Ministry since 2003.

Sherry is the Victorian representative for NATSICC (National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders Catholic Council) for the last 7 years and volunteered with the Commission for Aboriginal Children and Young People as an Independent Visitor Program (VIP) to Aboriginal children at Parkville Detention Centre for 6 years. In 2022, Sherry started visiting clients at Thomas Embling Hospital in Fairfield. She is on the Board of Mackillop Family Services Ethos Committee, the Board of Catholic Social Service Victoria, Committee Member of the School of Indigenous Studies, selection committee for the Victorian Aboriginal Honour Role, as well as many other smaller committees where needed, not only in Victoria but nationally. Her Ministry support is to the local Aboriginal Community wherever possible including but not restricted to Christmas gifts and hampers for local Aboriginal families in need. She supports the Journey of the Archdiocese and related organisations and parishes wherever the need arises, particularly in giving advice and guidance on issues relating to Aboriginal People. In conjunction with her community, Sherry supports a weekly liturgy service at ACES and they have been doing this as an Aboriginal Catholic community for 6 years. Sherry has particularly enjoyed her contact with the Elders in her community.

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Donation from the family of Dr Bruce Malcolm Schramm (1937-2022)

Bruce was committed to lifelong theological learning. He was an accredited Lay Preacher in the Methodist-Uniting Churches from his early 20s. Bruce was curious to explore Aboriginality through a Christian lens, but like so many colonialists he struggled for clean language to ask questions, without also deepening wounds. Our prayer is that the School for Indigenous Studies will create safe spaces to ask and tell, and to explore the way of Jesus through an Indigenous lens. Through shared language, insights, practices and understanding, we hope that wounds won't be whitewashed but, rather, held, heard, and eventually healed.

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