



## More Than a Word

This Reconciliation Sunday can we as Christians bring our questions to the Lord? Where, might the Trinity, Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer, be calling us into commitment to covenanting? How can our Christian community continue or start to make our contributions to covenanting be more than words and into action? <sup>1</sup>

### Some ideas for how we can turn Words into Action

Can you find one that you could try this year?

1. **Pray!** Never underestimate the power of prayer – connect with God to change hearts and lives
2. **History:** what do you know about the history of Australia? When I went to school, Australian history was a colonial history. The only mention of first peoples was told in a negative light.
3. **Challenge racism:** have the courage to check your own attitude and to speak up if others say something racist.
4. **Ancient stories:** do you know the ancient stories of the land on which we are worshipping today? For us, it is Kurna land. Consider how these stories connect with your faith.
5. **Use Traditional Place Names:** The next time you send a letter or parcel in Australia, consider including the Traditional Place name in the mailing address. This is part of Gomeroi woman, Rachael McPhail's campaign, supported by Australia Post, to celebrate our First Nations people. Go online for tools on how to do this:  
<https://auspost.com.au/about-us/supporting-communities/rachael-mcphail-making-traditional-place-names-part-of-mailing-addresses>
6. **Look locally:** Connect with your local community and find out what your local council is offering when it comes to education and events for reconciliation. This afternoon Campbelltown Council is holding a Reconciliation Walk and next week, an Aboriginal Night Sky Talk. These are free events – you just need to register.
7. **Read:** there are so many excellent stories for adults and children:  
Aunty Denise has written 2 books (*Yarta Wandatha* and *Anaditj*.)  
Christabel Mattingley wrote an excellent book for older children, called *Maralinga's Long Shadow*  
There are many beautiful art books out, including *Our Mob, God's Story*, produced by the Bible Society  
Ask Joy and Bruce Stewart to recommend books to read to your children and grandchildren
8. **Study:** there is a Christian study resource based on the Uluru Statement from the heart. Use this for personal study or in your connect group. Find out more here: <https://uniting.church/statement-from-the-heart-study-guide/>

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<sup>1</sup> Quoted from Reconciliation Sunday resource, prepared by Tarlee Leondaris, available here: <https://uniting.church/nrw2021/>

9. **Give financially:** you can give to support young Aboriginal leaders. Congress ministry in SA has helped develop a number of remarkable young leaders. Congress employs a Training & Formation Coordinator to help youth and young adults grow in their faith and discipleship. Likewise, to provide mentoring and pastoral guidance so that participants can explore their sense of call and gain skills and knowledge. Your support will assist Congress youth and young adults to come together and learn in culturally appropriate ways about leadership and discipleship. Please use the banking details below and enter the transaction reference as 'Rec Sunday'.

**Account name:** UAICC Youth Ministry    **BSB:** 704095    **Account number:** 213824

### **And here are some ways our covenanting is already more than words:**

10. Have you noticed that every week, we have an **Acknowledgement of Country** on screen at the start of the service? I encourage you to read the words we project.
11. Our **Spirited Sundays** are currently in a recess while we wait for the Rezz's renovations to be complete. However, our first speaker each year has always been Uncle Ivan-Tiwu Copley. At our last event, he welcomed us to country with a smoking ceremony. It was very moving for us and for the staff of the Rezz who were there that evening.
12. Our **Wirra – Wakwakurnuku Wirra** – is an act of covenanting in itself – connecting with the land. Wonderfully tended by Bruce and Joy Stewart, the Wirra – or Children's Forest – has been planted with endemic plants from this area. We have special permission to use the Kurna name.



It is the home of our Wirra play days and is a home to koalas and many birds. Whenever I go down there is something different in flower or popping up out of the ground. You just have to slow down and have a look. Our Wirra is a place of peace for many in the community who come and sit and enjoy, or go hunting for hidden rocks and mysterious blue birds! There is currently a Reconciliation Week activity set up in the Wirra for the community to interact with.

When is the last time you went down to explore our Wirra?

And a bonus...

13. A bonus action to explore: Did you know that the **Adelaide Symphony Orchestra** has recently commissioned a Kurna Acknowledgement of Country? Titled Pudnanthi Padninthi ('The Coming and the Going'), the piece was composed by Kurna Narungga musicians and composers Jack Buckskin and Jamie Goldsmith, and orchestrated/arranged by Mark Simeon Ferguson.

Read more about the project and watch a video including the music here:

<https://www.aso.com.au/about/acknowledgement-of-country/>

Thirteen actions for Reconciliation!

I encourage you to pick at least one as your own act of covenanting this year.

Blessings and peace,

*Rev Linda Driver*

Athelstone Uniting Church

*We have a heart for connecting: with God, our community, our world and each other.*