



Uniting Aboriginal & Islander Christian Congress National Executive

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CONGRESS NATIONAL EXECUTIVE

Congress executive met by Zoom in December for a Pre – Christmas catch up. This was a good opportunity for information sharing and fellowship.

The main challenge we face at the moment is the date for our National Conference, which is normally held before Assembly. This year, with the Federal Government saying the Covid vaccines should be rolled out by October, the earliest we could hold the conference would be in September or October.

Work in the REGIONS

Despite the restrictions of Covid, members of our regions have continued their ministries.

The WA Regional Council was able to meet late last year, and set five priorities for their strategic plan. They are looking forward to an Easter camp this year.

In February the Congress National NSW Task group were able to meet in person for the first time in nearly 12 months. Although Tom Sloane was unable to attend, we had some good meetings with Bronwyn Murphy, Albert Olley and Nathan Tyson from the NSW Synod, as well as with Colleen Geyer. In addition Mark Kickett, Alison Overeem and Cheryl Lawson were able to participate together in Zoom meetings with AFARC and the Sovereignty working group.

Following the meeting with members of the NSW Synod, the NSW Task group are planning a review of the Congress ministry in Broken Hill and planning a meeting with the NSW ministry centres.

We are pleased that members of the Calvary Zone of the new Carpentaria Presbytery were able to meet together in November. And naturally we were delighted that at last Roberta Stanley was able to be ordained on November 21st. Unfortunately no one from interstate was able to attend, although Mark Kickett and Stuart McMillan were able to join the meeting on-line and make a presentation on the history and story of Congress to the meeting.

In the Northern Synod, we are pleased that some members of NRCC were able to participate at recent meetings in person, with some others joining in by Zoom. Naturally in remote communities it is difficult for some members to join in by Zoom. In the middle of March, Mark Kickett is hoping to visit Darwin to meet with some of the NRCC leaders.

Congress in SA is very grateful that Frontier Services has increased its support for the Oodnadatta Bush chaplaincy, which will enable the ministry to be maintained as a full time ministry by our only First Nations Bush Chaplain, Julia Lennon.

In November, we rejoiced in the honorary doctorate that was awarded to the Rev. Denise Champion. In February at the SA Synod meeting we were blessed that Rev. Vicky Balabanski was able to launch Denise's second book, "Anaditj." (Copies are available from Bev Freeman at the Uniting College, email bfreeman@sa.aca.org.au or phone 08 8236 4243).

At the recent VicTas Synod Congress leaders Alison Overeem and Rev. Willie Pickett contributed significantly. Highlights included the launch of "the Statement from the Heart" study guide, and the Covenanting Action Plan.

NATIONAL MEETINGS

In addition to regular national Zoom meetings, I was blessed to be able to share with the President, the live streamed national Day of Mourning service at Nunyara in Adelaide. It was a privilege to also share this service with our SA Covenanting officer, Tarlee Leondaris as well as some of our younger Congress leaders in Rhane Tsetsakos, Jordan Sumner and Sean Weetra.

CONCLUSION

We continue to value your prayers for Congress ministry across the nation, and the support from and relationships with the Synods and Presbytery's at the local levels.

Mark Kickett

Congress National interim Chair

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