



Uniting Aboriginal & Islander Christian Congress

Report to ASC

CONGRESS NATIONAL CONFERENCE

Planning is well underway for the Congress National Conference which will be held in Darwin from April 13th – 19th at Nungalingya College. Normally this would have been held before the last Assembly in 2021, but it has been long delayed because of Covid.

A logo for the conference has been developed with the theme of “Weaving and Awakening: A Renewal of Faith, Community and the UAICC”.

Each region of the Congress is being invited to send seven delegates to the conference, so that we would have around 50 delegates at the meeting, along with a few invited guests.

One of the things we want to do at the conference is to hear the stories of our Congress people. We are wanting to hear their stories of faith and why they love Jesus, and why they love Congress. We are aiming to have these stories recorded.

We look forward to a wonderful National Conference.

MEETINGS in ALICE SPRINGS

Last week some members of the Congress National Executive have been meeting in Alice Springs with some of our Uniting Church & NRCC team. This has included the Moderator of the NT Synod, Tony Goodluck, the Alice Springs minister Emily Hayes, the Centralian Bush Chaplain, Benj Quilliam, the NRCC APY Support Workers, Ben & Emily Howland along with David Forsyth, the NRCC Support Worker from Darwin and the NRCC Chairperson, Jamie Nyangu from Ernabella (Pukatja) in the APY lands.

During this time we also met with Pastor Basil Schild, the Lutheran chaplain from Yirara College, and a team from the Catholic Church in Alice Springs including Bishop Gauci, the Catholic Bishop for the NT.

One of the purposes of the meeting was for National Congress Executive members to meet with local NRCC and Uniting Church ministry agents to listen and to offer support to see if there was any way forward that Congress and the wider church could help fund ministry opportunities in Alice Springs or the surrounding communities.

The Anangu Area Ministry Council of the NRCC includes the whole of the APY Lands in the north west of SA, as well as extending over the WA border to Wingellina and over the NT border to Finke (Apatula). Although the NRCC commissioned pastors last year into two communities on the Pentecost weekend, there are no paid ministers or pastors living in and working for the Uniting Church or NRCC in this vast area.

On one of our days in Alice Springs we spent time exploring what it would mean if we had First Nations bush chaplains in the Anangu ministry area, funded with the support of Frontier Services. It was agreed that NRCC should apply for funding for two bush chaplains in this large area. We look forward to supporting the growth of ministry and training in this important area of our country.

Mark Kickett
Congress National Interim Chair
27th February 2023

