

TOP CENTRE

issue 21.2

THE ANGLICAN DIOCESE OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY



KRIOL PREYA BUK

PLUS

FAREWELL TO A
PASSIONATE EDUCATOR



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TOP CENTRE

Published by the Diocese of the Northern Territory

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FRONT COVER: Tavis Beer hold a Kriol Preya Buk alongside Marjorie and William Hall

BACK COVER: Mandy Manggurra, Numbulwar

Our thanks to all photographers featured in this edition.



Father Mike Nixon is “the epitome of the hospitality of heart,” said Canon Pat Williams at the farewell in late September for the much-loved doctor and retired Dean of Christ Church Anglican Cathedral, who has left the Territory to work in Hervey Bay in Queensland.

“Hospitality of the heart as he worked with people in remote areas and as he pastorally cared for us, particularly in the beginning when we were a fairly sad little congregation at the time,” said Pat, remembering when Mike arrived from Sydney to be the fifth Dean of the cathedral in 2003.

Joining in the tribute at the cathedral, former missionary Vivienne Hayward recalled how the cathedral had been without a dean since 2000 when “Mike swept in like a whirlwind and revitalised us, as he had done in his previous parish at St Luke’s Enmore in Sydney.”

Because the parish was so financially stretched, Mike worked for a partial stipend for two years, she said.

“Then because we still couldn’t afford a full-time stipend, he took up again his former profession as a medical practitioner in remote and regional areas.

“He remained Dean until Jeremy Greaves (now bishop of the Northern Region of the diocese of Brisbane) became our sixth Dean in 2008.

“As the retired dean and still a full-time medical practitioner, Mike is obviously one of our honorary clergy, a faithful priest and preacher, a great

carer for and adviser to those in need or distress.”

Vivienne said when she read all that Mike had done and continued to do, she felt quite tired. In June this year, he was awarded an Order of Australia Medal for his medical work in rural and remote NT. He had also been a long serving member and chair of the Human Research AIDS committee, the NT Dept of Health and Menzies School of Research.

“He gives thousands of dollars every year to refugees and more in in-kind support,” said Vivienne.

“And now, as he heads off to be a doctor in Hervey Bay, we wish him Godspeed and we thank God for sending us – and the needy of the Northern territory – this faithful, this generous and this caring and most committed man.”

The current Dean, Rob Llewellyn, said in the short time he had worked with Mike he had been struck by his pastoral heart for the parish.

“I have been challenged by that, and it’s been wonderful to draw on your rich experience of ministry here in Darwin,” said Rob.

Thanking the congregation for what he said was his third farewell from the NT, Mike said that while people were all different and had different ideas, God still loved everybody.

“God is still our Father and he wants everyone here to worship him in love, and to love and serve anyone who comes, whatever their status in life may be – everyone is welcome.”



BISHOP GREG WRITES ...

On October 1, I turned 60. I have decided that this is old, and the NT government seems to agree because I am now eligible for a Seniors Card. Of course, I don't feel old – I think most old people feel they are younger than their age. I am still flattered when people think I am younger than I am. But even the Bible says I'm old. The last chapter of Leviticus decrees the cost of buying back someone who has been consecrated to God in a vow. In September, I would have been worth 50 shekels; now I am discounted at fifteen. If I were a woman, I would now be entitled, according to 1 Timothy 5, to be added to the widow roll for financial support. Isaac was 60 years young when his twins Esau and Jacob were born, but I am glad that my family is producing grandchildren rather than children at this stage of my life.

I am grateful for the positive things the Bible says about being a senior. Job 12:12 – “Wisdom belongs to the aged, and understanding to the old.” This is not automatic though – the wisdom literature of the Bible, such as Job, Proverbs and Ecclesiastes, sets out general observations and principles rather than making promises and guarantees. Wisdom and understanding come from reflection and contemplation about life in all its variety and complexity, but the older you are, the more raw material of experience there is to draw on. Proverbs 20:29 teaches that while “The glory of young men is their strength, grey hair is the splendour of the old.” In other words, I do not have to wish that I were younger. Youth has its advantages, even its glory, but so does age and I can embrace that rather than pretending otherwise. My hair has started greying, but there's so little of it that it's hard to tell. Isaiah 46:4 reminds Israel that God's commitment is not reduced by the passing of years: “Even to your old age and grey hairs; I am he who will sustain you. I have made you and I will carry you; I will

sustain you and I will rescue you.” It's good to know that we are in God's good hands regardless of how old we are.

Paul gives particular instructions to different age groups. In Titus 2, he tells older men to be “sober-minded, dignified, self-controlled, sound in faith, in love, and in steadfastness”. It is an encouragement and a challenge to me that turning 60 doesn't reduce my need to develop my character and pursue the Christian life. Each of the six things that Paul instructs me to be and do in that verse takes effort and perseverance. I quipped on Facebook that 60 “is the new 40”, which means that I am certainly now “over the hill”. Being over the hill means, I suppose, that it's downhill from here on – which could mean that it is easier, like riding a bike. But the challenge is not to coast, rather to continue building on the foundation, and also seeking to pass on to the next generations the truth that accepting God's rescue through the work of Jesus, and living as a disciple of Jesus in the power of the Holy Spirit is the only reliable path of blessing. Paul's testimony that his friend Timothy was continuing in the Christian path of his mother Eunice and his grandmother Lois is a beautiful reminder that family is a great hearth for furthering faith.

We can encourage one another to value all ages in our churches, because each age has its own contribution to make, and the potential wisdom of age is not to be dismissed. We can encourage those who are older in our churches to continue to grow in faith, love and steadfastness. We can continue to pray that those who have been Christians for a long time will have the blessing of seeing their spiritual heritage develop and grow in younger generations.

I am grateful for the intergenerational nature of my own Christian experience, and also grateful to the many who wished me a happy 60th birthday.

1911: Born in Hitchin, Hertfordshire, England

1934: Completed degree in English and Latin at the University of Melbourne

1922: Migrated to Australia

1942: Darwin
Ken Leslie
Darwin

THE BISHOP WHO WALKED

JOHN SMITH



Walking was always a big part of the life of Ken Leslie, from his earliest days of a young priest in the Northern Territory, to wartime Papua New Guinea and as a bishop fundraising for a cathedral in rural New South Wales.

His most heroic walk was along the length of the Kokoda Trail during World War II, delivering packages and conducting services Diggers as he went.

As Army Chaplain, he walked 152km from Gona, the site of a Church of England mission on the north coast of Papua, to the capital Port Moresby to bring cheer and comfort to isolated army signalmen.

After the bombing of Darwin in 1942, Ken Leslie returned to Darwin to minister to distressed people as well as helping to lay out the bodies on Kahlin Beach.

During his time in the Northern Territory, the young Anglican priest twice walked 40km in blistering heat to seek aid for a broken-down vehicle.

But the walk that earned him his nickname happened later, in 1971, when at age 60 he hiked 210km from Dubbo to Bathurst in rural New South Wales to raise funds to build All Saints' Cathedral in Bathurst. After that he became man known as the bishop who walked.

Born in 1911 in Hitchin, in Hertfordshire, England, to an English mother and Australian father, Ken migrated with his family to Australia in 1922.

On their arrival in Australia, Ken's father was appointed parish priest in Maryborough, about 190km from Melbourne. Ken attended Maryborough High School and then won a scholarship to Trinity Grammar School in Kew, Melbourne. From a young age, Ken had always loved the outdoors and during his time as a boarder he developed a strong interest in rowing and hiking.

After completing a BA degree in English and Latin at the University of Melbourne, he gained a Licentiate of Theology

at the same university and in May 1934, he was made a deacon at St Paul's Cathedral in Melbourne.

His connection with the Northern Territory began in 1937, when he became priest of the Parish of Tennant Creek. This was where he met someone whom he came to admire greatly, Father Percy Smith, who happens to be my father.

Ken spent 10 years battling the rigours of life in the harsh climate of the Northern Territory. He came to love outback people especially the Aboriginal people. He ministered to the stolen children at The Bungalow, an institution for Aboriginal children established in 1914.

In Alice Springs. He also established St Mary's hostel in 1946, an institution for Indigenous people.

There was no church or rectory at Tennant Creek when Ken arrived, only a tin shed with no water supply. Ken thought nothing of travelling 11km to collect water. He came to depend on his car which often broke down in remote spots. He became adept at devising original approaches to car repairs – one of the early bush mechanics.

"Tennant Creek is the only place where I have been in my whole life, where my congregation exceeded that of the Roman Catholic priest," he said, omitting to mention that he would generally get only three!

He weathered an episode of being very despondent about being a priest thanks to the encouragement of Father Smith, who said, "Now, Father, come on just stick with your faith and let the Holy Spirit guide you."

In 1941, with World War II raging in Europe, Ken Leslie married Isabel (Bel) Wilson in Alice Springs. The Leslies spent their honeymoon at Temple Bar Gap. After this Father Smith called the place Honeymoon Gap and the name stuck. By this time, he had moved to Darwin and, among other duties, was an army chaplain.

There was a company of signalmen posted along the

1946: Established St Mary's hostel

1958: Elected sixth Bishop of Bathurst

1972: Officer of the Order of the British Empire (OBE)

Bombing Of
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Leslie returns to
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1947: Vice Warden of St John College in Morpeth, NSW

1971: Hiked 210km from Dubbo to Bathurst in six days

Kokoda Trail in Papua New Guinea who had not seen a chaplain for over a year. It fell to Ken Leslie to walk the length of the Kokoda Trail, visit these isolated servicemen as he went.

In 1947 he accepted an appointment as Vice Warden of St. John's College at Morpeth in the Hunter region of New South Wales. His second son Simon, who later wrote his father's biography "The Bishop who walked," was born here.

He then spent six years as the first chaplain at the recently established Timbertop, part of Geelong Grammar School. And in 1958, he was elected sixth Bishop of Bathurst.

He would often cycle around Bathurst and the surrounding countryside, prompting one of his flock to reflect: If Jesus could ride into Jerusalem on a donkey, why can't the bishop ride in on a bicycle?

With his characteristic energy and enthusiasm, he also reached out to his parishioners through a radio program entitled "The Bishop Speaks." He was a man of God who liked mixing with ordinary people, disliking pomp and circumstance.

In 1971, with efforts to build a cathedral in bogged down by a debt in the diocese of \$200,000, Ken came up with an innovative solution – The Bishop's Walk. His idea to walk from Dubbo to Bathurst caught the imagination of the people and of the press both nationally and internationally. News even reached Buckingham and Lambeth Palaces. The Queen sent her greetings and letters of encouragement were received from the Archbishop of Canterbury.

At age 60, Ken dismissed concerns that he wouldn't be up to the task, saying he was confident he would be able to walk 20 miles (32km) a day "without much difficulty." He was right: the Bishop's Walk started on Sunday, July 18, and finished six days later. It was widely covered by the press. All along the route, crowds turned out to see "The Bishop who Walked."

By the time he reached Bathurst, pledges had been made of \$64,000 and the rewards were not only financial. The walk created greater unity in the diocese and made people more aware of their obligations to their church. The cathedral was consecrated on 16 October, 1971.

In 1972, Bishop Leslie was made an Officer of the Order of the British Empire (OBE) in recognition of his leadership both within the Anglican Church and within the community. He retired in February, 1981.

His full list of titles and achievements are impressive. A bush priest who became The Rt Rev Dr E K Leslie, OBE, BA, Th Schol, Bishop of Bathurst. In 1996 Charles Sturt University awarded him an honorary Doctor of Letters.

When Bishop Leslie passed away aged 98 in January 2010, he was the oldest surviving Anglican bishop in Australia. He had served the people with humility and devotion for more than 50 years. Few clergy have ministered in such remote areas or under such hardships.

John P McD Smith is chair of the St Francis' House Project in Adelaide.



1939 at The Bungalow, Father Ken Leslie in the back row

KRIOL PREYA BUK PASSES BIG STORY DOWN THROUGH THE GENERATIONS

ANNE LIM



Translators at the launch of the Kriol Preya Buk at Christ Church Cathedral, with facilitator Kate Beer, fourth from right

The Book of Common Prayer, published in 1662, was the standard of English-speaking church worship for 300 years. Now, its precious principles are being passed on to the many thousands of Kriol speakers in the Northern Territory.

The new Kriol Preya Book is the result of almost ten years of work by a team of more than 23 Kriol-speaking translators from different communities in the Top End.

Officially launched at a special celebration on Friday, September 17, at Darwin's Christ Church Anglican Cathedral, the Kriol Preya Book brings together in one handsome volume a comprehensive suite of liturgy, prayers and responses for all Kriol Christians. It passes a big story down through the generations, with ordinary Sunday services, special occasions like baptisms, confirmation and funerals, a range of prayers for healing, and statements of Christian doctrine including the Nicene Creed and the 39 Articles.

The book has been crafted to make it easy for the congregation to participate, regardless of how strong their Kriol literacy is.

Greg Anderson, the NT Anglican Bishop, says that an important principle for Anglicans for hundreds of years has been Christians worshipping God in their own language. "We want people in their home communities to be able to worship God in a way that's meaningful for them," he said. "And so, honouring God's gift of language, rather than imposing a language from outside, is very important."

Among the more than 100 people from around the Territory who gathered to celebrate the launch of the Preya Buk was Darryn Farrell, the Deacon in charge at Minyerri community, 240 km southeast of Katherine. He has been involved in the translation work from its inception in 2012, and his artwork of a cross adorns the front cover.

He says the Kriol Preya Buk will allow his people to connect and participate at a heart level in any form of prayer, whether it be in church, at home, or in hospitals.

"I've been reading English and learning it for a long time, and I pretty much know its rhythm, how it goes, but reading in Kriol, in my language, it's like me saying these things and it's just there, already written, with its own rhythm," he says.

Carol Robertson, a retired Anglican priest from Ngukurr, in southern Arnhem Land, says she and the other translators just wanted to make the prayer book easier for the young leaders, who struggle with English but also struggle with literacy in their heart language of Kriol.

"This one I was thinking of mainly for the next generation. This simple version will be easy for them and will support them," she says.

Because many Kriol speakers struggle to read their spoken heart language, the context of the Kriol Preya Buk in the Territory is similar to the society in which the original English prayer book was created hundreds of years ago in England, explains NT Anglican church facilitator, the Reverend Kate Beer.

"When the liturgy of the original prayer book moved from Latin to English, a lot of the people who were attending a church service wouldn't necessarily have been able to read," she says.

"So we've worked very hard as a team, as with the original prayer book, to craft very memorable responses so that people can quite easily participate in what's going on because the word liturgy is the work of the people."

"The care has been not only in just translation but in trying to come up with something that's got a metre and rhythm, poetry to it, and rich images as well."



Bishop Greg Anderson does the honours

“It helps me to open up my book if somebody is in the hospital and we can have prayer. Maybe somebody is sick, or somebody passes away, and somebody is mourning, chaplains can go into hospital and they have this prayer book to help the family talk to God about that person.”

While the project took ten years, the past six months were a time of deep thinking and processing as a group of Kriol translators pulled out all the stops to include a translation of the Nicene Creed in the new Kriol Preya Buk.

Kate Beer reports that the translators were so excited when they managed to get the Nicene Creed down in a way they were happy with that they wanted to take it back to use in their communities straightaway, without waiting for the full Preya Buk to be printed.

“When I started reading it, my heart started pounding right inside, I could feel that as I was going through,” says Darryn Farrell.

“And it was not just me, but there were other leaders also going through the same thing and they felt the same thing. We felt an unexplained happiness inside. I couldn’t explain it except that God had given you eyes to see the real words.”

Greg Anderson believed it was important to include the Nicene Creed because it was “developed at a point in church history where there were controversies about who exactly Jesus was.”

“The Nicene Creed sets out that Christians, orthodox Christians, believe that Jesus was one with God. God is Trinity – Father, Son and Holy Spirit, there from all eternity. So to have those doctrinal truths set out in the Nicene Creed is I believe really significant for the doctrinal foundations of our faith, particularly with regard to who Jesus is.”

“The care has been not only in just translation but in trying to come up with something that’s got a metre and rhythm, poetry to it, and rich images as well.” - Kate Beer

She believes the Preya Buk will be a springboard for translators to hand on “all they’ve learned and come to know about how their faith is working in their own culture and their own place. It’s a uniting thing and it enables people.”

Translator Marjorie Hall, who is Deacon in charge at Ngukurr with her husband William, believes some of the most useful prayers in the book are those for the sick.



Marjorie and William Hall with Kate Beer, left



NICENE CREED:

Wi bilib langa wanbala God,
im na det Dedi, weya garram ola pawa.
Imbin meigim hebin, en dijan graun.
Imbin meigim ebrijing weya wi gin luk
en ebrijing weya wi kaan luk du.

Wi bilib langa wanbala Bos, Jisas Krai.
Im na det oni San blanga God.

Bifo enijing bin jidan,
imbin jidan garram Dedi God,
en im kipgon jidan olagijawan. God brom
God, Lait brom Lait

trubala God brom trubala God. Imbin
deya garram Dedi God, olataim. Imbin oldei
det San blanga God;

God nomo bin meigim im.
Dumaji im God, seim laik im Dedi.
En thru det San na, Dedi God bin meigim
ebrijing.

Imbin kamdan brom hebin
blanga jidan garram wi, en blanga seibum
wi.

Blanga tharran na det Holi Spirit bin
kaman en jidan langa Meri
en bambai Jisas bin bon.

Blanga wi na,
Jisas bin gibit miselp blanga go thru
langa det trabul:
wen Panshas Pailat bin det lida, deibim
neilimap Jisas langa det kros.

Deya na imbin dai
en afta, deibin pudum im langa det greib.
Thrideistaim Jisas bin gidap laibala
laik ola speshalwan mesinja blanga God
bin tok longtaim;
en imbin gowap langa hebin
weya im jidan raitensaid langa Dedi God.

Im garra kambek igin
garram im shainiwan lait en detmatj pawa,
blanga kotim ebribodi;
detlot pipul hu jidan laibala, en detlot
pipul hubin dai du.

En afta, Jisas garra jidan Bos, olagijawan!
Wi bilib langa det Holi Spirit,
det Bos, weya gibit wi laif,
hubin kaman brom det Dedi en det San.
Garram det Dedi en det San,

wi garra weship
en libdimap im neim brabli haibala.
Det Holi Spirit bin tok thru langa detlot
speshalwan mesinja brom God.

Wi bilib God bin meigim Kristjan pipul
jidan wanbala nyukurrwan tjetj
olagijawan,

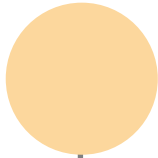
hubin kaman brom detlot aposul. Wi
bulurum oni wanbala beptisim
weya God larramgo fri detlot pipul brom
olabat nogudbalawei.

Wi weidabat blanga det taim wen God
garra meigim pipul gidap laibala brom
dedbala

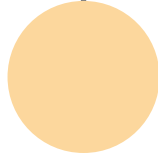
en wen wi garra jidan olagijawan
langa det nyubala hom weya kaan neba
binij.

Trubala.

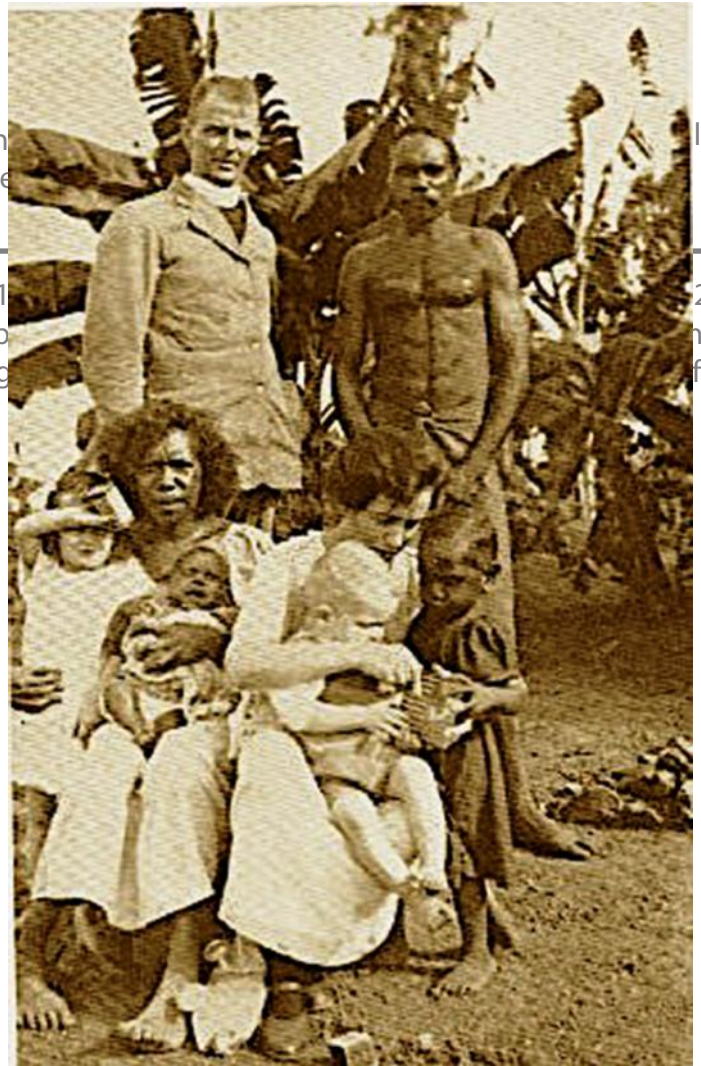
The Anglican Diocese of the Northern Territory



1913: Huery Warren became Superintendent, Roper River Mission, NT



1916: Exploratory trip to Groote Eylandt



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22: Hu
General
fe Ellie

HOW THE 'LONG LIZARD' ESTABLISHED A MISSION ON GROOTE EYLANDT

JOHN HARRIS

As the Groote Eylandt mission celebrates its centenary, John Harris, Bible Society historian – who spent his infancy there – recounts how it started.

The Groote Eylandt mission had its origins in an exploratory mission led by a tall, adventurous but practical missionary called Hubert Warren.

Warren, who earned his nickname as “longfella kobalili, or long lizard, from the Roper River Aboriginal people, had taken over as Superintendent of the Roper River Mission in the Western Gulf country of the Northern Territory in 1913.

The Church Missionary Society (CMS) had set up the mission at Roper River in 1909 to protect the Aboriginal people of the region, who were being massacred by white stockmen.

When that mission rapidly became a community of missionaries and Aboriginal people – Alawa people, Mara, Wandarang and other groups – with houses, gardens, stockyards, a church and a school, CMS asked Warren to look for a way to extend the mission in the Gulf.

After exploring most of the Gulf in the mission’s 5m wooden boat, *Evangel* – in which he had installed his own engine – Warren decided that Groote Eylandt was the best candidate for a new mission. He made three exploratory expeditions to the Gulf’s largest island in 1916 and 1917. On each trip, he took a fellow missionary and three Aboriginal men, chosen for their multilingual competence in the coastal languages, particularly Wubuy,

spoken to their north around Rose River.

On each trip, he took a fellow missionary and three Aboriginal men, chosen for their multilingual competence in the coastal languages.

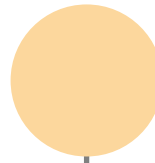
On the first trip in April 1916, they called in at Numbulwar. Roper River missionaries had been there before and the Nunggubuyu people were glad to see them. Helped by his Aboriginal interpreters, Warren conducted a church service at which the local people attended reverently. Afterwards, the people entreated him to establish a mission there. However, despite Warren’s encouragement, the Numbulwar Mission did not eventuate until 1952.

Warren recruited a young man, Rupert Nunggumadjbarr, to accompany them on the remainder of the trip. A Wubuy speaker, he had lived on Groote Eylandt and spoke the island’s language, Anindilyakwa. When they reached Groote, they camped beside what is now called the Angurugu River. There they met some local Aboriginal people and, as the next day was Sunday, they conducted a church service interpreted into Anindilyakwa by Nunggumadjbarr.

The second expedition was in November and December of the same year. They sailed north to Rose River, where they met the people before continuing north, surveying the islands between the mainland and Groote. On Bickerton Island, 40 Aboriginal people met them. They slept on the island and held a service the next day before sailing on to Groote. They then spent more than two weeks circumnavigating the island and

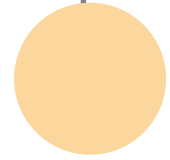


became
Roper River



1921: Alf Dyer and Leslie Perriman moved permanently to the newly established Emerald River Mission

1916 - 1917: Exploratory Expeditions of the Gulf's largest island



1922: HU
Emerald
wife Ellie

exploring the interior. Almost every day they encountered Groote Eylandters with whom they were able to establish amicable relationships – despite the Groote Eylandters' reputation for resolute resistance to foreigners.

Rounding the southwestern point of the island, they came across the stream they named the Emerald River, a small river about 6km long and about 100m wide at the mouth. About 4km upstream, the south bank of the river presented what they judged to be a perfect site for a mission. Warren wrote in his diary:

“ ... miles of the best grass we have seen, freshwater creek ... waterfalls with a drop of six feet. Flats easy of cultivation and irrigation by natural cause ... very best timber for building ... all within two miles of the sea.”

Almost every day they encountered Groote Eylandters with whom they were able to establish amicable relationships.

The third trip in 1917 was to make a small start on the layout and construction of the new mission. Despite all of them suffering dysentery, they managed to clear land near the waterfall, plant crops and construct a small log cabin of local cypress pine, so remarkably resistant to white ants. By the end of their three weeks of illness and hard labour, 36 curious Groote Eylandters were coming to observe the goings-on, some occasionally lending a hand. The missionaries learned that the place was called Yadigba. On their final day, Sunday 16 September, Warren held a church service which the local people attended with interest, after which they urged the missionaries to begin their mission as soon as possible.

It took more than three years for CMS to make plans for the new mission and for the Australian government to lease land on Groote Eylandt to CMS.

In 1920, Warren received the welcome news that the government had gazetted the whole of Groote Eylandt as an Aboriginal Reserve, leasing 500sqkm to CMS for the Emerald River Mission. CMS was then able to commit the necessary funds, appoint the mission staff and buy a lugger, the Holly. Finally, in June 1921, the Holly left for Groote Eylandt carrying the construction staff and materials.

Now that the mission was finally happening, the local people were very willing to help where they could, unloading the heavy construction items and hauling

them to the mission site. In four weeks of strenuous work, they built a weir in the river and constructed a house, jetty, goat yard and vegetable garden – as well as felling and dressing timber for taking back to Roper as building material.

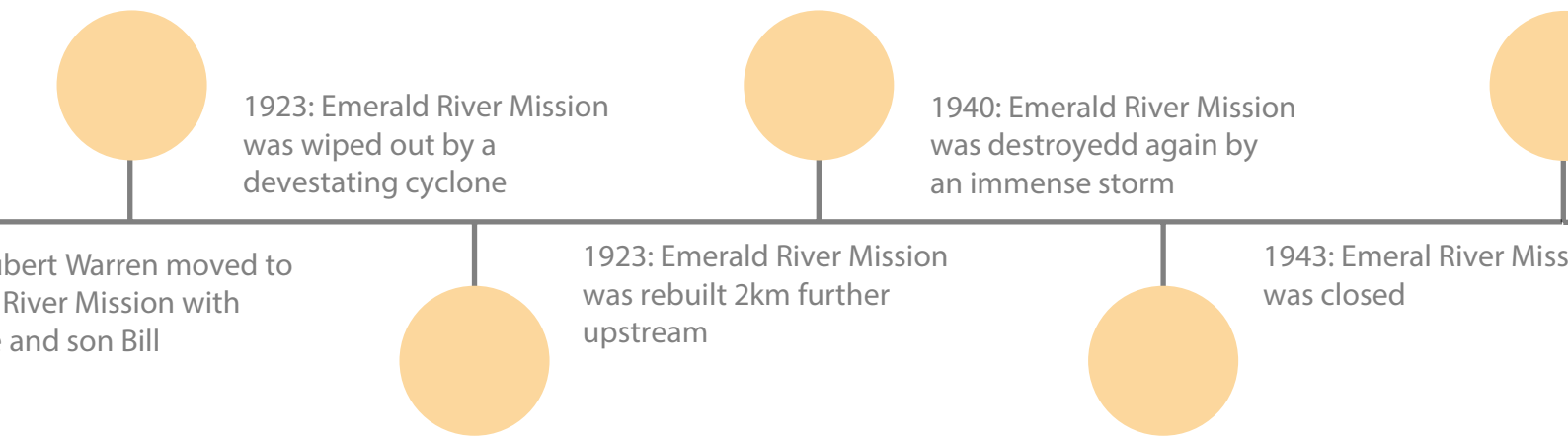
The construction party left for Roper at the end of August, asking two senior Aboriginal men to take charge as caretakers of the property, Dakalarra Wurraramara (b.~1870) and Damirndu Amagula (b.~1877). The party returned on 8 October to find that the two men had taken their responsibilities seriously and everything was as they had left it. These two men would associate themselves with the mission for the rest of their lives.

Missionaries Alf Dyer and Leslie Perriman, and Aboriginal workers from the Roper River Mission, moved permanently to the new mission on 8 October 1921, marking the official start of the Emerald River Mission.

These two men would associate themselves with the mission for the rest of their lives.

In a few months, they completed extensions to the mission building, built a bridge over the river with a tramway to bring in logs from the cypress forest, constructed a saw bench, mounted the boiler to run the engine for the saw and dressed 300m of timber. The local people willingly felled the timber and dragged the logs along the tramway, paid in tobacco, metal, cloth and





other goods. Money was simply of no interest to them. In January 1922, Warren also moved permanently to the Emerald River Mission with his wife Ellie and son Bill.

At Easter the next year, 31 March 1923, the mission was wiped out by a devastating cyclone, flood and tidal wave. The missionaries, the Roper River Aboriginal workers, the missionaries and 11 local Aboriginal people tried to shelter in the mission building, but it was totally destroyed - remarkably without loss of life. Initially shocked, the missionaries realised they had built the mission in a flood-prone area. Overcoming their discouragement, they chose a safer site 2km further upstream and spent the remainder of 1923 rebuilding the mission.

Initially shocked, the missionaries realised they had built the mission in a flood-prone area.

From the beginning of the Emerald River Mission, there were Groote Eylandt families who chose to live nearby and to associate with the missionaries. Within a very short time, a permanent camp developed on the river bank opposite the mission, a few kilometres upstream from the mouth of the Emerald River.

Dakalarra Wurramara and Damirndu Amagula and their immediate families never really left after they were given the task of protecting the mission as it was being constructed. Another early resident was Old Charlie Galiawa Wurramarrba (b.~1891, later Old Charlie). These early comers had a sense of ownership, quickly building firm and trusting relationships with the missionaries.[1]



The Anglican Diocese of the Northern Territory

Groote Eyandters, who represented the families who would become the three largest and most powerful clans on the island, had a sense of ownership of it. Far from objecting to the mission, they had been present at its genesis, had encouraged the missionaries and chosen to relocate from clan lands to the edges of the mission. The Emerald River Mission became accepted by Groote Eylandters as a permanent and meaningful institution on their land. As these first men to settle near the mission grew old, the missionaries accepted them as patriarchs of the mission.

At the Emerald River Mission, the relationship between the missionaries and the local Aboriginal people was one of mutual respect, acceptance and even, in some cases, true friendship.

On Sundays, as well as the regular morning and evening church services for the mission residents, a Christian service was conducted at the camp by the river for the local people, sometimes as many as a hundred. The whole service, including a missionary's 'sermon', was translated into Anindilyakwa. No doubt some things were 'lost in translation', but the Christian message was nevertheless transmitted and there were those who made the conscious choice to accept it.

Dakalarra Wurramara was always regarded as the first Christian. Other early Christians were Damirndu Amagula and Galiawa Wurramarrba (Old Charlie) and their wives. At the Emerald River Mission, the relationship between the missionaries and the local Aboriginal people was one of mutual respect, acceptance and even, in some cases, true friendship.

In 1940, the mission was destroyed yet again by an immense storm after which some buildings were never rebuilt and the other buildings deteriorated during the difficult years of World War II. CMS decided not to continue the Emerald River Mission and the mission was closed in 1943. A new mission was constructed further north on the north bank of the Angurugu river.

[1] When I was an infant, Galiawa and his wife, Didjidi Wuragwagwa, looked after me every day at their camp near the river while my mother, Margarita Harris, was busy teaching in the school. They gave me my Wurramarrba name and adopted me into the Wurramarrba clan.

CELEBRATING THE COMING OF THE LIGHT

KALEY PAYNE



Marked annually on July 1 as “The Coming of the Light”, Torres Strait Islanders this year celebrated the 150th anniversary of the arrival of Christianity to island communities.

While Covid-19 restrictions delayed major celebrations in Brisbane, festivities went ahead in Cairns and on Thursday Island. The anniversary was marked with traditional re-enactments of the landing of the first missionaries to the Torres Strait, and church services.

“For the people of the Torres Strait Islands, the Coming of the Light is celebrated as a time of joy,” says the Anglican Board of Mission on its site marking the occasion.

“It must be stated that the London Missionary Society’s missionaries did not bring God to the Torres Strait, rather the message of Jesus, through the Bible,” wrote Rev Canon Victor Joseph, in an online message to mark the occasion. Joseph is Principal of Wontulp-Bi-Buya College, Cairns, and a speaker at the Cairns celebration.

“God was on both sides of the beach that day, and since time immemorial.”

In the 19th century, the London Missionary Society set out to convert people of the Southwest Pacific to Christianity. In July 1871, the Reverend Samuel MacFarlane, a member

of the society, anchored at Erub Island in the Torres Strait accompanied by South Sea Islander evangelists and teachers.

Their ship, “The Surprise”, anchored off Kemus Beach, and lowered its boat for MacFarlane and the others to go ashore.

A Warrior Clan elder named Dabad on Erub Island was watching from a nearby hill and made his way down the beach with his men.

MacFarlane waded ashore and dropped to his knees before the Erubians. “Never did men feel more than we did then their absolute dependence on Divine Help,” he wrote later. MacFarlane had a Bible in his hands, and he thrust it towards Dabad.

Dabad stayed his spear, defying tribal law, and accepted the book.

“God gave us the gospel,” said Joseph. “Not through violence, but peacefully. [He worked through] one man who stood on the shore and reached out his hand to receive it.”

“As we celebrate, we must acknowledge what our Aboriginal brothers and sisters faced. When the gospel came to us in the Torres Strait, our Aboriginal brothers and sisters were facing the brunt of colonisation.”

As part of the Anglican Board of Mission's materials for the 150th anniversary, Joseph also wrote: "I was born a Torres Strait Islander person – that makes up who I am, my identity. Becoming a Christian enhanced who I am. I have the best of my Christian faith and my culture! ... We are not going to leave our culture and languages at the door of the church."

"Our economic status is below the national average, but we don't let that stop us. There will come a time when Light which came through the Torres Strait will filter out to the national church. Light came, Light continues to come, and the Light will continue to shine ... I am a Coming of the Light person!"

Also writing for the celebration, Aunty Rose Elu, the 2021 Queensland Senior Australian of the Year, said: "The chiefs used a word which meant 'no more bloodshed'. We will not kill these people; they are bringing something – something we need to learn. What is it? We will get them to tell us ... one of the things that happened then was that the warfare stopped. Our people already knew the gospel in a different way, with the environment, the ocean, the seas, the current, the waters, the sky, the moon ... They were bringing the light to us, and we were bringing the light to them."

"If you want to understand what we can contribute to the whole understanding of the church, why don't you get on a plane, come up to my home and walk in the sea – take your shoes off – get the feel of the saltwater, go swimming, dive – have a look under the ocean, look up at the skies. Come up in the monsoon season where you can see the wild wind, the wild seas, the roaring – is not God speaking? Then you will know God's presence in the Torres Strait!"

During the Cairns "Coming of the Light" celebration, there was a reminder to Torres Strait Islander brothers and sisters that they carry the light that came to the Islands 150 years ago.

"The light is Jesus. He says, 'I am the light of the world' [John 8]. But he also said, 'You are the light of the world. You are a city on a hill.' [Matthew 5] That's important for us to remember. We grew up in a beautiful place. The Torres Strait. And we carry the light."

"We're not here by chance. God has brought us here to celebrate," said one singer during the celebration.

During the annual festival, hymns, singing, feasting and ailan dans (Island dance) strengthen community and family ties.

You can also pray this for the Torres Strait Islander people:

*Almighty God, you have given to the people of the
Islands of the Torres Strait
the glorious light of the Gospel of Christ:
mercifully grant that we may always walk in the
light of his love,
and give us the strength and unifying power
of your Holy Spirit to spread that light
and enlarge your kingdom in the hearts of all
people.
We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your
Son,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever. Amen*

(Prayer provided by the Anglican Board of Mission's 2021 Coming of the Light Celebration Liturgy)

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The Anglican Diocese of the Northern Territory
issue 21.2



The memorial at Kemus Beach on Erub Island

FAREWELL TO A PASSIONATE EDUCATOR AND MENTOR

BEN STAUNTON

Christ Church Cathedral was standing room only as people from all over the Territory gathered on September 1 to celebrate the life and mourn the loss of Didamain Uiibo. Many people were wearing red in honour of the Nundhirribala clan to which she belonged. The eulogies painted a wonderful picture of a strong and influential woman who was involved in many parts of diocesan life, serving on a number of boards and councils such as Diocesan Council, Diocesan Synod, Nungalinya College and Kormilda College, as well as being a wife, mother, grandmother and great-grandmother, and having a significant career in education.

Bishop Greg shared in the sermon from Psalm 23 and the Beatitudes in Matthew 5:1-12.

The farewell continued a number of weeks later out at Didamain's home community of Numbulwar, where another service was held and a traditional farewell took place. This time the Anglican service was held in the school to accommodate the large number of visitors and locals. The service was led by local church member Edwin Rami, who went on to be ordained deacon in mid-October, with the local minister, Rev Yulki Nunggumajbarr praying and reading the Bible. After the service, the body was escorted to the edge of town and met by the Red Flag dancers. After a number of farewell dances, the body was taken out to be buried in the local cemetery. Didamain is survived by her husband Mick, daughters Jocelyn and Selena and their families.



POETRY LEADS TO MOTION

ANNE LIM

Beverley Baker, a member of Christ Church Cathedral in Darwin, wrote a poem published in our last issue calling for a "Fair Go" for refugees.

Top Centre can report that while there is relief that the last family has been released from detention in Darwin, there is still uncertainty about their long-term future.

The Maghames family remain in community detention in Brisbane, where they are subject to a curfew with no news of their permanent resettlement.

Earlier, the other Iranian detained family – Afsaneh, Mojtaba and Benham – were transferred to Melbourne. They were given medical checks in preparation for resettlement in the US, but they are still in community detention with no certainty as to their eventual destination.

A spokesperson for Dassan – Darwin Asylum Seeker Support and Advocacy – said the fight continued for freedom for these families and all those on Nauru.

"They should be allowed to live in community while they await finalisation of their resettlement," he said.

"Some of them don't want to say in Australia, given what's happened to them. If they want to be given visas to go to America, we want to see it happen as soon as possible. We would also like to see fast tracking of family reunification and an end to indefinite detention."

Dassan is still fighting for more than 100 refugees who are still in Nauru including Parmika and Kiru, who returned to the central Pacific island in March because they found the conditions of detention in Darwin unbearable.

Meantime, Dassan has joined with church leaders in Darwin to call on the federal government to increase its intake of Afghan refugees to 20,000.

"In 2015, then prime minister Tony Abbott increased the intake of Syrian refugees to 12,000, so we would like to see an increase in the number from Afghanistan as has happened before," the spokesperson said.



A RED HOT GO AT MINISTRY IN THE RED CENTRE

ANNE LIM

The Red Centre of Australia has a fresh ministry training initiative in the shape of Topher Hallyburton, a former MK (missionary kid) from Chile who is bilingual in Spanish and English.

Christopher and Maria Loreto, or Topher and Chica, have moved from Darwin to Alice Springs with their children Daniel and Laura to take up a new BCA post as trainee minister alongside former BCA Field Staff Kristan Slack.

Both grew up in Chile where they were actively involved in youth ministry in their local churches. Topher is a teacher, who in Chile taught Christian Studies and music to upper primary and middle school students, before coming to Australia.

The new position is a long-term commitment by the Anglican Diocese and the Bush Church Aid Society to train ministers in a city church in the Northern Territory.

An advantage of being a relative newcomer to Australia was the freedom Topher felt to accept a job offer in the Northern Territory after graduating with a Bachelor of Divinity at Sydney's Moore College. From January 2017 until December 2020 Topher served as the BCA-supported Schools Ministry Coordinator with Scripture Union in Darwin.

"I don't think it was a hard move. I guess we're different to a lot of people in Australia in that we don't have a home in Australia," he explains

"My extended family are in Victoria and Chica's are in Chile. But, if anything, I think the Territory's home now."

Topher and Chica are finding their multicultural background an asset in Alice Springs, where the church attracts people who have come to Australia from other places.

"A lot of the people in the church have all their family overseas and have come here for their profession or training

and then stayed on. That helps us bond with people because we're not from here," says Topher.

He adds that being part of the BCA family is also very encouraging because they receive support and prayers from people all across Australia.

"A new church in Sydney has just decided to partner with us and they added us to their internal Facebook group. After I said hello there, everyone overwhelmed me with messages of support, just people saying they're praying for us every week in Bible study and that kind of a thing, so that's a big, big blessing.

Topher says he feels the Territory can use his generalist skills to take the gospel to less resourced areas around the country.

"God can use us in this space. There is a range of opportunities as a generalist – I think the Territory needs people that can do a bit of everything," he says.

As well as developing the children's ministry, he is planning to work a diversity of other Anglican ministries in the Alice such chaplains to the hospitals and prisons.

While the Anglican church hasn't had a major presence with the indigenous people in Alice Springs, Topher is interested in finding ways to support teenagers from the Roper River area who come to boarding school at Yirara College.

In addition, he would like to continue with a lunchtime group that he started while teaching Spanish at the local Christian school.

One area that he would like to develop is in preaching. Up to now, he has only preached one-off while visiting churches which he says is very different from preaching to the same group of people week by week.



SINGING THANKS FOR THE END OF THE WAR IN THE PACIFIC

HEATHER FERGUSON

We flew, we walked, we cycled and we drove to the tiny chapel in Coomalie Creek, 72km southeast of Darwin, to commemorate the end of war in the Pacific on 15 August 1945.

Between 1942 and 1946, Royal Australian Airforce Squadrons 31 Beaufighter and 87 Photo Reconnaissance were based at a bush camp in this scenic locality, where they built the major Coomalie Creek Airstrip.

Richard Luxton, the current owner, relates how the airmen were saving to build a bar, but in 1943 they approached their padre, Canon Bill Dunbar, with money raised and said, “we want to build a chapel”.

Richard was speaking 76 years to the day after the declaration of peace in the Pacific, in the tiny corrugated iron, wall-less chapel they built, a sacred place surrounded by the peace of this remote bush.

Consecrated in September 1943, this unique chapel was restored at Richard’s instigation in 1992. Amusingly, it is the only National Architecture Award winner ever built for \$2000!

Organised by members of the church at Batchelor with help from members of the congregation at Fred’s Pass, the first Anglican service in the restored chapel was conducted by the Reverend Ian McDonald in 2002. This year marked 19 years of services except for last year.

Richard opens his property to planes, 4-wheel drives, campers, campervanners – and cyclists – who enjoy the aeronautical antics of the pilots in the variety of flying machines that attend. On the Sunday we visited, we were treated to an airborne acrobatic show as we enjoyed our breakfast before church.

A dedicated group of parishioners and visitors, led by the Reverend Ruth Walton, celebrated the moving service together, accompanied by a breeze (and the muffled sound of a distant generator) and birdsong. Hymns were sung with gusto to tunes provided by the Darwin City Brass Band.

We were enthralled to hear the parable of the sower and its contemporary message of perseverance dramatically delivered by Ian McDonald, who has presided over this service many times in the past.

1942: Royal Australian Airforce based a bush camp at Coomalie Creek

1945: E

1943: Chapel consecrated at Coomlaie Creek



A variety of flying machines can be seen

Following the service, we enjoyed fellowship and a sausage barbecue lunch in the old hospital building adjacent to the chapel. Chris Nathanael from Tropiculture Australia provided a variety of sumptuous tropical fruits including star apples, which I had not previously tasted. I saw many friends from our church in Darwin and met new friends from Fred's Pass and Batchelor. And there were some not affiliated with church who attend regularly out of respect for the war servicemen who gave their lives so we can live in peace.

Thanks to all for a wonderful service and fellowship in a unique environment, but in particular, Richard Luxton, Ruth and Lee Walton, Ian and Miriam McDonald, the Darwin City Brass Band and parishioners from Fred's Pass.

Please enjoy the closing prayer shared in the service:

Almighty God our Heavenly Father, we remember with thanksgiving those who made the supreme sacrifice for us in time of war. We pray that the offering of their lives may not have been in vain. May your grace enable us this day to dedicate ourselves to the cause of justice, freedom and peace; and give us the wisdom and strength to build a better world. For the honour and glory of your name,

Through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen



The chapel without walls at Coomalie

nd of World War II

2002: First Anglican
led by Rev Ian Mc

1992: Restoration of Chapel



PUPPET, PRAYERS AND PIZZA AT CHURCH DAY OUT

JOSHUA KUSWADI



What do you get when you mix adults and kids, camp chairs and conversations, one puppet and 90 pizzas, a waterslide/jumping castle, a slushie machine, and a glorious dry season day in Darwin? We called it Church Day Out.

On Sunday 15 August, 190 people from the church's three services came together to worship, share food and build friendships at Marrara Christian College's outdoor basketball court. A band of musicians from across the church helped us sing Colin Buchanan's Isaiah 53:6 and The Other Side of Grace. We celebrated the baptism of three-month-old Ruth Vallentine, the second daughter of Lucy and Sam Vallentine, and we prayed in small groups.

Mildred, the Irish puppet, returned after a year-long absence, to give her thoughts on the story of the lost son(s) in Luke 15. This famous story shows us how unfair God's grace is, that he loves his children regardless of what we do or don't do. We were challenged to welcome others who have joined our church family, as the father challenged his older son to welcome home his prodigal brother.

After concluding the service singing Amazing Grace, many conversations broke out across the large group. Some enjoyed the jumping castle, some sat and chatted, some played games, and we all ate pizza.

What was the best thing about Church Day Out?

- Baptism of Ruth Vallentine (Amanda)
- Being able to catch up with old friends (Tim)
- It was great to have the time and space to properly engage in conversation and fellowship. (Mel)

My favourite response was, "The kids say they want church day out every week..."



Three services come together on Church Day Out

BEN BRINGS JESUS INTO THE HERE AND NOW OF DARWIN

ANNE LIM



Ben Staunton has a wonderful gift of talking about the Jesus you meet in the Bible in a blokey vernacular style that reflects his roots growing up on acreage in Armidale, northern NSW.

When retelling the story of the woman at the well, he plays up the backchat between Jesus and the Samaritan woman in a way that brings the story right into the present day.

This gift is a legacy of his time with Young Life, which is a ministry to unchurched high school kids, as well as his years as a youth minister in Armidale in northern NSW.

Now having heeded a call to move to Darwin as work as a roving evangelist, Ben is using this laid-back, easy-going conversation style to introduce the people he meets to the real Jesus.

“I like it simple so I try and communicate it like that,” he explains.

“The stories of Jesus actually are engaging. They’re actually funny and they’re actually moving and we just get so used to reading them in the Bible ... but if you just put yourself in that space and imagine what it would be like to be there, it’s crazy. Like Jesus was strong on the banter – he was no pushover and he would have had a wry smile half the time and a frown the other half.”

Discovering what Jesus really said and did was the key to Ben submitting to Christ’s Lordship back in university days after having given up on church in Year 9.

Even then, Ben had the makings of an apologist, spending his religious education classes arguing with the teacher.

His heart was softened when he met some young guys who were both intelligent and consistently Christian, who were willing to discuss his objections to Christianity.

“I think there were a few points where I thought ‘Maybe there is a God.’ And one where I prayed ‘God if you’re there, I do want to know,’ and that culminated, I guess, one night at church where I just remember looking around during a song and being like ‘I wish I could believe like these people believe.’

“And then either God called me an idiot, or my own thinking was like ‘Oh Ben, you idiot, you actually know it’s true, you’ve worked out it’s true.’ So, I thought okay. I’ll become a Christian ... that was May of 1998.

In the intervening years, Ben has seen his priorities shift from aiming to become a rich judge to wanting to serve God.

But he the challenges of ministry led him to take a step

away for a while and learn how to set boundaries and care for his physical and mental health.

After a pruning time, when he realised that his identity was tied up in his ministry and what he did for God, Ben was left leaning wholly on Jesus.

“God was very kind and I came through that still wanting to serve God. And so I stepped back into ministry.”

After a time working as a youth minister at St Mark’s in Armidale, Ben moved to Sydney to study at Moore College, after which he came back on board with Young Life until disagreements with leadership over vision led to a parting of the ways.

Three years ago, while hanging out with some Moore College friends in Darwin, Ben felt challenged by the gospel needs in Darwin.

After praying about it he realised that he wanted to be working with people outside the church more than those inside the church.

“I want to be loving people and sharing Jesus, the real Jesus in word and deed with people outside the church.”

It’s quite a long way from wanting to be a rich judge to being a roving evangelist with no visible means of support. But Ben has set up a mission organisation called Connect NT through which he aims to raising support from individuals and a few churches to sustain his ministry.

“At the moment, I’m just looking for personal opportunities to meet people, but I’ve narrowed it down initially to youth, backpackers and business people in the city. That’s sort of the three things to kick off.

“My strategy will be to have one or two structured things running that serves and engages with the group. And then make sure I still have enough time and energy to relationally follow up some of them.

“My goal is ultimately to be able to have contact with and serve a lot of people and pray that out of that God allows me to follow-up with things like having two or three of them over for dinner or going out for a day trip or something like that to continue to build on the initial time. It’s a long game ...”

“But I can sit there and look around and see so much potential for good stuff to happen here for God’s glory and God’s kingdom. I’m excited!”

You can contact Ben on ben@connectnt.org.au



UPCOMING EVENTS AROUND THE DIOCESE

November 5, 5pm: Nungalinya College Art and Faith graduation and exhibition

November 12: Diocesan Council

November 13, 2-4pm: Celebration of AuSIL's 60th anniversary, St Peter's Nightcliff;

4.30-6pm: Scripture Union NT Thanksgiving Service, Casuarina Baptist;

7-8.30pm: Diocesan farewell for the Beer family, St Peter's Nightcliff

November 19, 5pm: Nungalinya College Dip Translation and Cert IV Theology graduation and farewell for Jenny and Peter Johnson and Dan and Carolyn Dority

November 20-21: Safe Ministry Training, Gunbalanya

November 28: Advent Sunday

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