



Dear Covenanters,

Apologies but your correspondent has been unwell. Here is some news that could not wait. Please keep up your interest and support for the covenanting process in your place. Your prayers are invaluable and are needed as never before by our Aboriginal brothers and sisters.

### News from Salisbury Congress

*Pastor Denise Champion has been appointed as the acting Congress minister at Salisbury for the six months to the end of this year while Rev Dean Whittaker is on leave in the Northern Territory. Excerpts gleaned from an email from Dean which has been updated by me follows...*

Denise is an Adnyamathanha woman from the Flinders Ranges who is training to be a minister. Denise is one of the foundation members of Congress in South Australia, and in many ways Congress in South Australia emerged out of the dreams that Denise and others shared with the Uniting Church back in the 1980s and 1990s.

Last year Denise served for eleven months as the supply minister for Port Augusta and Quorn Uniting Church Congregations.

Denise is currently studying for the ministry and this placement will assist her in this process. The congregation has also kindly supporting her continuing study.

Denise has a great deal of wisdom and love for people. She has had to move down from Port Augusta and is living in the Parafield Gardens area. Thanks to those who have supported Denise with donations of furniture and other goods to help her settle in.

### Where is Dean Whittaker?

Penny, Amber Hannah and I will be living in Mapuru, a homeland community in Arnhem Land on the mainland a little south west of Elcho Island.

Penny will be working in a Christian School there. I will be trying to keep a low profile and get some rest and refreshment. Mapuru is a really interesting place. If you want to know more about it see the links below.

See you in about 6 months.

<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/no-education-gap-just-bad-schools/story-e6frqcpf-1225697021336>

<http://www.arnhemweavers.com.au/mapuru2.htm>

### Social Worker appointed to Salisbury Congress

Uniting Care Wesley Adelaide has provided a social worker position for the next twelve months to work with the Congress congregation in Adelaide. Claire Watkinson started in the role a few weeks ago. She is already building relationships with members of the congregation and their families. Uniting Care Wesley Adelaide have been extremely generous in making this position available.

## The Paper Tracker

Some of the latest items on the Paper Tracker website are worth chasing up. Please consider these issues in your prayers. . .

### Mimili: bush foods garden

*posted 22 July 2010*

The Federal Government recently provided a small grant to assist in the rejuvenation of the bush foods garden at Mimili. In the longer term, the Government has agreed to support community efforts to maintain the garden as an “alternative source of fresh fruit and vegetables.”

### APY Lands: youth workers and youth sheds

*posted 21 July 2010*

Last week, the South Australian Government provided the Paper Tracker with an update on the delivery of youth programs on the APY Lands. The Government noted that youth sheds have been established in six communities and while the operating hours of these facilities are not fixed, the intention is “to have them open during Friday and Saturday evenings, and on weekends.” According to the Government, local Anangu are employed as youth shed workers “on a part time basis” but “recruiting and retaining” these staff is “an ongoing challenge.”

<http://www.papertracker.com.au/>

## The Racial Discrimination Act and Aboriginal Justice in the NT

*Covenanters will be interested to know that a revered and elderly statesman of the Uniting Church and the UAICC, **Rev Dr Djiniyini Gondarra OAM** is on his way to CERD.*

*If you wish to support this worthy initiative you will need to email immediately to one or more of the addresses below. Read on. . .*

In a matter of weeks the international body, the Committee for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD), will be meeting at the UN to review issues of discrimination around the world. The Australian government will present a report that will be a response to the UN's criticisms related to the Intervention. The CERD also take note of non-government organisation's (shadow) reports in an effort to reach an overview of the true nature of the situations from all sides.

'concerned Australians' are sending two Aboriginal representatives (**Rosalie Kunoth-Monks OAM & Rev. Dr. Djiniyini Gondarra OAM**), highly respected NT elders. Some of you may have heard Rosalie and Djiniyini in May when they took part in “A Conversation With Elders” at the Melbourne Law School. They will carry with them to Geneva a comprehensive (shadow) report, **Loss of Rights – the Despair of Aboriginal Communities in the NT**, which basically provides a framework for Aboriginal voices who tell it from their point of view – a very different voice from that presented by the Australian government. Former Chief Justice, Alastair Nicholson, provides the legal background in the report.

Rosalie and Djiniyini will present the report to the 18 CERD Committee members. This is a most important opportunity for both to talk about what is happening to communities in the Northern Territory and they are both eager to have your help. To support them we are asking you to write to one or more selected members of the Committee whose details are provided below.

Points are provided for you to make into a letter, hopefully using some of your own words. If using the email option, please follow the instructions below.

(An internet link to the report will be provided after the 10<sup>th</sup> August, the date of its presentation at the United Nations)

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Dear.....,

- Australian legislation pertaining to the Aboriginal people of the Northern Territory (NT) is unjust and discriminatory
- The 'concerned Australians' report, **Loss of Rights – the Despair of Aboriginal Communities in the NT**, will give the views of Aboriginal people themselves who suffer first hand from the effects of such legislation.
- The report will be presented in Geneva by two eminent Aboriginal elders, Rosalie Kunoth- Monks and Rev.Dr. Djiniyini Gondarra
- This will be a very great journey for two elderly and dedicated people, and we are asking you to please, not only read the report, but to find time to meet with and listen to them.

Yours sincerely,  
(Name) and any other personal details you may wish to give.

**Letters to members should be sent to Members as below:**

**C/o Gabriella Habtom**

Human Rights Officer and Secretary of the Committee  
on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination  
Human Rights Treaties Division  
Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights  
Tel. +41.22.917.9193 - Fax +41.22.917.90.08

**e-mail: [ghabtom@ohchr.org](mailto:ghabtom@ohchr.org)**

Palais Wilson - 52, rue des Pâquis, CH-1201, Geneva, Switzerland  
Mailing address: UNOG-OHCHR, CH-1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland

**MEMBERS:**

**Mr Chris Maina PETER** (Tanzania)

Professor of Law in the area of Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law, travelling extensively to lecture. An advocate of the High Court of Tanzania – handling *pro bono* cases for the poor, and advocates for and defends Indigenous minorities.

Letters or emails sent C/o Gabriella Habtom (as above)

**Mr Jose Francisco CALI TZAY** (Guatemala) (Vice-Chairperson CERD)

Heavily involved in Indigenous Rights programs, liaising between Guatemalan peasants and the international community, advocating extensively in Latin regions for Indigenous populations and their rights.

C/o Gabriella Habtom (as above)

**Ms Anastasia CRICKLEY** (Ireland)

Has, and continues to work extensively, within various bodies, in the area of racism, xenophobia and discrimination, especially within the EU.

If you are emailing to Anastasia please send to both her email addresses:

[anastasia.crickley@nuim.ie](mailto:anastasia.crickley@nuim.ie) and [ghabtom@ohchr.org](mailto:ghabtom@ohchr.org)

**Mr Patrick THORBERRY** (UK)

Professor of International Law (Human Rights Law), a member of various international bodies that deal with minority rights and race discrimination. Lectures and writes extensively in this area.

If you are emailing Patrick please send to both his email addresses:

[p.thornberry@keele.ac.uk](mailto:p.thornberry@keele.ac.uk) and [ghabtom@ohchr.org](mailto:ghabtom@ohchr.org)

**Details of all members can be found at: <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cerd/members.htm>**

## Re-opening of the Ernabella Church

Monday 6 April 2010 Over the weekend of Palm Sunday, celebrations were held to mark the restoration and re-opening of a church building in South Australia which, despite a long history of strong relationships with the Presbyterian and Uniting churches of this state, is a member of another Synod.

The full story by Rev Bill Edwards can be found on the Covenanter's News part of our web site.  
<http://mrn.sa.uca.org.au/covenanting/covenanting-whats-new.html>

### Prayer Points

- Pray for Denise Champion as she takes on the role of acting minister for the Salisbury Congress Congregation. Pray also for Nelson Varcoe, Council chair, other members of the church council and all those who worship with the Congress.
- Pray for Aboriginal youth in Port Augusta, and those on the streets. Pray that a way forward might be found after the cessation of the educational part of the Tjinatjunanyi program. Pray for the Congress as it continues to work with these young people even without the funded part of the program.
- Pray for Claire Watkinson as she works with Aboriginal families in need.
- Give thanks for the work of the Paper Tracker and the folk at UnitingCare Wesley Adelaide who are supporting this valuable website.
- Pray for youth workers and young people on the APY Lands and pray also for the connections between Anangu communities and churches in Adelaide.

Palya, Go with God,

*Peter*

30 July 2010  
Covenanting Volunteer

'Til we meet again,  
Hold the warmth of the camp fire in your heart  
And may the Creator Spirit, the God of peace,  
At this Christmas time and into the New Year,  
Always walk with you.

### Rev. Ken Sumner

Covenanting Coordinator  
Mission Resourcing Network  
Uniting Church in Australia –  
Presbytery and Synod of SA

Level 2, 212 Pirie Street ADELAIDE  
GPO Box 2145, Adelaide SA 5001  
P: 8236 4235 M: 0407 717 367  
E: [ksumnerl@sa.uca.org.au](mailto:ksumnerl@sa.uca.org.au)

Note: The Covenanting Coordinator position is only half time. Uncle Ken's office hours are usually in the first half of the week, Monday to Wednesday when not out and about. The Covenanting Coordinator is able to preach at Services, and talk to Church Councils, Bible Study and Fellowship Groups. For further details contact Uncle Ken directly – see contact details in the box above. Past copies of this newsletter may be downloaded from the website:

<http://www.sa.uca.org.au/goto/covenanting> and click on **What's New**

The resources, events and conferences listed in this newsletter are not necessarily officially supported by the Uniting Church. Information is provided as presented by the relevant organisations. The views expressed in this newsletter may not necessarily reflect the policy of the Uniting Church.