

Dear

**Your participation will help reconcile our history and reshape the future for all Australians.**

Each year National Reconciliation Week is held from 27 May to 3 June. It celebrates two significant dates in the national reconciliation journey: the 1967 referendum and the High Court Mabo decision. National Reconciliation Week is also learning more “about our shared histories, cultures, and achievements”.<sup>1</sup> Reconciliation means a change in hearts, minds and actions as Australians to build a “nation strengthened by respectful relationships between the wider Australian community, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples”.<sup>2</sup>

At GMP, through our Indigenous Ministries Australia program (IMA), **we’re committed to walking this journey of reconciliation with our Indigenous brothers and sisters.** We’re also passionate about helping us all make this journey as we believe it’s an intrinsic part of our identity as Australian Christians who call this wonderful land our home.

As a part of supporting that journey **we’ve included with this letter a Church Service Resource Kit that we’ve developed especially for Churches of Christ congregations to use this 2020 Reconciliation Week.** We’d really encourage you to use this resource on a Sunday within Reconciliation Week (ideally May 31<sup>st</sup>) in any way that will help your church engage and learn. We’ve also included some information about IMA and future steps your church can take to walk alongside our Indigenous ministries and communities.

Here are some ideas to make your service a great way to build and maintain strong and respectful relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous Australians in your church community:

1. Incorporate songs, prayers, readings and liturgy that focus on reconciliation, creation and justice. You’ll find sermon notes and a prayer guide that we’ve developed specifically for Churches included in this kit.

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1. <https://www.reconciliation.org.au/national-reconciliation-week/>

2. Ibid.

2. Include a Welcome to Country or Acknowledgment of Country. Australians Together has information on how to make Welcome or Acknowledgement of Country meaningful for your church event. Learn more at <https://australiantogether.org.au/resources/welcome-to-and-acknowledgement-of-country/>
3. Invite an Indigenous Australian to be involved in your service
4. Register your event on Reconciliation Australia's NRW website to join a community of Australians across the country who are celebrating National Reconciliation Week: <https://www.reconciliation.org.au/national-reconciliation-week/> and print off some posters for your church to promote the week.

A reconciled Australia could become a picture of what God's kingdom looks like: people united across ethnic boundaries, people brought together by forgiveness and love, people who are brave enough to face the truth of our history to forge a new future.

You and your church can help make a difference to our future together. Please join us on this journey of reconciliation with our Indigenous brothers and sisters and help contribute to that greater picture of what it means to be Australian.

To find out more information about our Indigenous ministries, please visit [www.gmp.org.au/about-us/more-about-ima](http://www.gmp.org.au/about-us/more-about-ima), or engage with us on <https://www.facebook.com/imaaustralia/>

Blessings,

Nick Wight, Remy Sese, Colin Battersby,  
The IMA Team.

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