



Dear Friends,

This Sunday (1 June) is Reconciliation Sunday, part of National Reconciliation Week from the 27 May to 3 June, and your challenge is to bring some food for morning tea made with native ingredients! (If this is too hard, please feel free to bring whatever you can!)

The dates for National Reconciliation Week are the same every year. It runs from 27 May, the date of the successful [1967 referendum](#), and 3 June, the [High Court Mabo decision](#). The day before National Reconciliation Week, 26 May, is National Sorry Day, which was first held in Sydney in 1998 and is now commemorated nationally to remember and honour the Stolen Generations.

National Reconciliation Week began as a Week of Prayer for Reconciliation in 1993, supported by Australia's major religious groups, and three years later it evolved into National Reconciliation Week under the guidance of the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation (now Reconciliation Australia). The intention behind National Reconciliation Week is strengthening relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous peoples, for the benefit of all Australians.

Can I encourage you to come and be part of this Sunday's service with that in mind – praying for justice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and for more equal and more respectful relationships with non-Indigenous people? Can I encourage you to think about sourcing some native ingredients and learning how to use them! (Being prepared to learn something new is a good first step towards reconciliation.) Can I also encourage you to continue to learn by looking at www.reconciliation.org.au? Finally, Megan Williams has asked me to mention that the church *Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group* has just had

its first meeting, and would love to have more interested and enthusiastic members! Talk to Megan if you're interested.

Let me leave you with this prayer for National Reconciliation Week written by Rev'd Canon Aunty Di Langham:

*Creator God of Holy Dreaming,
bring us together as one,
reconciled with you and one another.
Bless Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples of this land.
The first peoples to receive your blessings in this land.
The first peoples to see your beauty in the land, water, sky and nature.
The first peoples to hear your voice in ancient stories.
The first to give you praises in ancient places.
The first to know your love and love you in return.
God bless the Elders keeping culture and languages alive.
Bless all who work in Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities,
making friends, growing partnerships to a deeper understanding of
culture and languages, learning to love and grow together.
Give us grace to travel together towards reconciliation for the sake of Jesus Christ.
Amen*

Amen!

Belinda