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Issue 114

The Next Step

&

Canberra Aboriginal Church

Canberra Christian Fellowship
(in the Methodist Tradition)



Canberra Christian Fellowship (in the Methodist Tradition) and Canberra Aboriginal Church
Worship Services SUSPENDED due to COVID-19 coronavirus threat

Prayer

Times of upheaval and disruption seem to promote both the best and worst in people. While many are doing all they can to encourage and help others in our current unusual times, we also see a number fighting over toilet paper in an apparent 'only I matter' frenzy.

The coming together and supporting each other is seen too in the way many churches have cooperated, shared resources and encouraged each other in a spirit of true oneness and fellowship.

Thinking about Canberra Christian Fellowship and Canberra Aboriginal Church both having suspended services but maintaining fellowship, in part, through this newsletter, my mind turned to the emphasis and reliance on prayer I have seen in the Aboriginal Church people. A Number 1, top of the charts, pop song from 1963 sung by Jimmy Little with it's subject being prayer came into my mind - Royal Telephone.



Telephone to glory, oh, what joy divine!
I can feel the current moving on the line.
Made by God the Father for His very own,
You may talk to Jesus on this royal telephone.

Central's never busy, always on the line,
You can hear from heaven almost any time.
'Tis a royal service, built for one and all,
When you get in trouble, give this royal line a call.

Telephone to glory, oh, what joy divine!
I can feel the current moving on the line.
Made by God the Father for His very own,
You may talk to Jesus on this royal telephone.

There will be no charges, telephone is free,
It is built for service, just for you and me.
There will be no waiting on this royal line,
Telephone to glory always answers just in time.

Telephone to glory, oh, what joy divine!
I can feel the current moving on the line.
Made by God the Father for His very own,
You may talk to Jesus on this royal telephone.

Not at all churchy but catchy with a good message that reached a very large slab of the population when it was released and would still be remembered by many now nearly 60 years later.

The singer, Jimmy Little, was an Aboriginal man of the Yorta Yorta people.

He declared that deep Christian beliefs guided his life. In 1959 he appeared in evangelist Billy Graham's movie 'Shadow Of The Boomerang.'

In 2004 he was made an Officer of the Order of Australia with the citation, "For service to the entertainment industry as a singer, recording artist and songwriter and to the community through reconciliation and as an ambassador for Indigenous culture" and also named as a Living National Treasure.

'Uncle Jimmy' touched the lives of many people - through his honeyed voice and his music, his gentle, big-hearted personality (he once said that the fist was no match for the open hand of friendship) and the work of his charitable Jimmy Little Foundation set up to promote a healthier future for Indigenous Australians by doing something positive to curb the rate of chronic disease.

Chaplains

Please pray that the chaplains we particularly support can adapt their ministries to the conditions we all currently face. - Mr. Owen Chadwick - Universities chaplaincy, Rev. Bob Prior - Racecourse chaplaincy, Rev. Paul Tabulutu - N.S.W. / A.C.T. Fijian churches



Devotional material



Prayer



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Bible Reading



Fellowship by Phone

Ian and Adele Purdey and family write from Madagascar - Mission Aviation Fellowship



Hi all,

We pray that this finds you all well, not in a group that is too large, and having access to an adequate (although not excessive!) supply of toilet paper.

We've had a few people contact us and ask about the situation here so thought we'd send a quick update through to enable you to pray for the Malagasy and let you know how we are going.

With the first confirmed cases of Covid-19 in Madagascar a week or so ago the government acted to close schools, churches, public meeting areas, cafes etc and has also restricted trading hours on supermarkets, petrol stations and other essential suppliers. Curfews are in place and daytime travel is restricted to essential food shopping trips. There is also an increased police and military presence on the streets to try to enforce the restrictions. International and domestic flights have ceased but MAF is able to operate under some exemptions when the need is urgent and when our partner agencies can get government approvals to do so. Medical evacuation flights are still happening.

There is a unfortunately a substantial amount of misinformation and rumours spread easily here. Consequently there is a lot of fear among the local people, however so far we have not heard of any widespread panic. The price of rice, the Malagasy staple, rose swiftly last week, however we have heard that the government is capping the prices of essentials.

As for our situation, we are doing well so far and are feeling grateful for our years of experience of living in remote conditions in Arnhem Land- stocking up, homeschooling, being at home a lot and making our own fun have become second nature! Our house is situated on a guarded compound and there is a well-stocked supermarket nearby. Our boys are enjoying being at home and sleeping in a bit longer than usual (normally out the door at 0630 for the school bus!) and they are getting used to the new homeschooling regime. Church is happening online, and we are thankful for those who have included us in their services from Australia.

Unfortunately our language study has had to be postponed with only 2 weeks left, but we are hopeful to pick that up when 'normal' life resumes. Ian is able to study the MAF operations manuals and some online courses from home, which will help when flying resumes. ...

We thank you for your thoughts and prayers at this time, and wish you to know that ours are for you all too. It's a true comfort to know that our Lord is our strength and hope in times of trouble, that nothing takes Him by surprise. This means we don't need to panic but can prepare rationally and rely on Him for the rest. ...

God bless,

Ian, Adele, Jimmy, Edward, Josiah and Theo

Prayer Points

Please pray

- for Aboriginal communities all over Australia
- for Aboriginal pastors across the nation
- for the Aboriginal community in the A.C.T. and Queanbeyan
- for the homeless
- John M. who has has a hospital visit and others who are sick or receiving treatment.



Somehow the credit for the last item in the last Next Step got lost, so here it is

The importance of not practising social distancing

from David McDonald's macarisms <https://macarisms.com/2020/03/20/the-importance-of-not-practising-social-distancing/>