

The Next Step



Canberra Aboriginal Church

Canberra Christian Fellowship
(in the Methodist Tradition)



Tree Chapel, Wagga Wagga Botanic Gardens



As part of the Australian Bicentennial Celebrations in 1988 the Wagga Wagga Interchurch Council agreed to provide a Tree Chapel for the City of Wagga Wagga. It was decided that this chapel would be provided within Council's existing Botanic Gardens Complex and a site was chosen on the side of a hill within the Gardens.

The concept of the Tree Chapel was first developed by the Reverend Campbell Egan who was, at the time, an alderman of the Wagga Wagga City Council and the design of the chapel was carried out by Council staff. The Tree Chapel is a bowl-shaped amphitheatre cut into the side of the hill and, during excavation work for the project, a layer of solid



rock was uncovered which enabled the alter to be formed by existing rock strata.

This, together with a decision to use rough sawn timber, created a naturalistic atmosphere which blends in superbly with the surrounding bush land. To enter the Chapel one has to cross a water course through a lych-gate and, on entering the Chapel, the dominant feature is seen to be a large wooden cross and altar which are made from River Red Gums.

The Chapel has seating for approximately 100 people on rustic benches, again made of River Red Gums. A further 300 people can be seated on the lawn area in the centre of the Chapel. From the entrance to the Tree Chapel paths have been laid in a circular manner on either side. These pass through groves of trees then to the upper level of the Chapel where, from behind the altar, a superb view of the western part of the City of Wagga Wagga is gained.

The aim of the Tree Chapel was to provide an outdoor worship area and to surround this with trees relevant to the Bible. From the outset the trees were to be a feature of the Chapel and it was agreed that only those plants that had obvious Biblical significance would be used within the Chapel. The Chapel was to be very simplistic and uncluttered and to provide a place where people could worship and meditate within a garden setting. Each tree or grove of trees planted within the Chapel is provided with an explanatory plaque detailing the significance of the tree providing a Biblical reference.

Some examples of plants used were: Palm Trees, to symbolise the entry of Christ into Jerusalem; Olive Trees, to symbolise the story of the agony of Christ; Willow Trees, reminiscent of the lament in exile (Psalm 137). These along with many other plants were provided to the surrounds of the Tree Chapel and are now reaching a stage where the concept of the Chapel is coming to reality and people can walk through groves of trees to view the Chapel.

Work on the Tree Chapel commenced in 1986 with the first plantings being carried out on the 27th July of that year. The Chapel was officially opened with a dedication service on the 21st October 1988. Since its completion the Chapel has seen many uses ranging from weddings and christenings to Scout and Guide services, and church services carried out by a number of religious denominations.

The Chapel provides a haven within the gardens and it is very rare that one walks past it without finding someone using the



area as a place of peace and quiet as was intended. The Chapel is floodlit and is provided with power. This enables evening as well as daytime usage and by the provision of power enables music to be available for many of the services. As the Tree Chapel is considered a place of worship one of the considerations of usage is that any wedding ceremonies conducted within it are carried out by a Minister of Religion.

The Tree Chapel is a very public symbol of the cooperation of all the Churches within the City of Wagga Wagga and the community of Wagga Wagga, and is a very lasting reminder of Australia's Bicentennial with its significance increasing as it matures. It is a very interesting example of the different landscaping concepts and principles that can be applied to displaying plants in a different light and there is always considerable comment on the choice of plants and their relationship to the Bible.

above text from <https://www.waggawaggaaustralia.com.au/visitor-information/history/botanic-gardens/>

RETIREMENT, A WIFE'S VIEW

A frustrated wife told me the other day her definition of retirement:
 "Twice as much husband on half as much pay."

Compassion



Before the world knew much about coronavirus and the havoc it would cause, we had arranged for someone from Compassion to visit us, preach and update us on Compassion and its work. Of course as restrictions were imposed plans changed.

Daniel Pennington contacted me anyway and in place of a visit in person, provided us with a video presentation (filmed on his home porch) via youtube for those with internet and a text version for those without.

Hopefully everyone on our e-mail or snail mail lists will have had access to it by now.

Thank you Daniel, and we hope that we will be able to welcome you in person to a service before too long.

Roy

Each week of the isolation / distancing period, we have been blessed by a printed or video sermon from Roy Dallos. He began by preparing the sermons for the South Coast Presbyterian Church he attends but offered them to us as well.

I know that his ministry by means of those sermons has been much appreciated.

It has been encouraging to see Christian people watching out for each other and churches cooperating in maintaining worship and proclaiming the Gospel.

Thank you Roy!



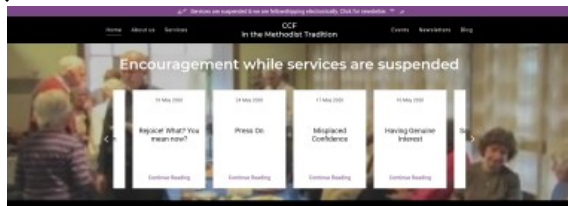
Mark and our Website

Mark, too, has been busy providing material to assist us in our thinking, devotions and worship.

He has added a number of short, thought provoking, encouraging messages to a blog that is available on our website.

If you haven't already, check the CCF website at <https://canberracf.org.au> and be encouraged by the blog messages there.

Thanks Mark.



Greetings to all from the Canberra Aboriginal Church

Prayer Points

Please pray

- for Aboriginal communities all over Australia.
- for Aboriginal pastors across the country.
- for Bible translators working to make the Bible available to Aboriginal people in their own language.
- for each other.



and give thanks for the Canberra Aboriginal Church virtual gatherings using ZOOM for around 40 minutes each Sunday from 5pm. - A time of fellowship, worship and delving into God's Word.

The Canberra Aboriginal Church currently intend resuming normal physical gatherings for worship services at Lyons on the 1st Sunday of September.

Chaplains

Please pray that as coronavirus restrictions are gradually lifted, the chaplains we particularly support will be able to follow the new paths You have set before them. - Mr. Owen Chadwick - Universities chaplaincy, Rev. Bob Prior - Racecourse chaplaincy, Rev. Paul Tabulutu - N.S.W. / A.C.T. Fijian churches



Devotional material



Prayer



Contacts

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Bible Reading



Fellowship by Phone

Canberra Christian Fellowship and Canberra Aboriginal Church - Worship Services are currently SUSPENDED.