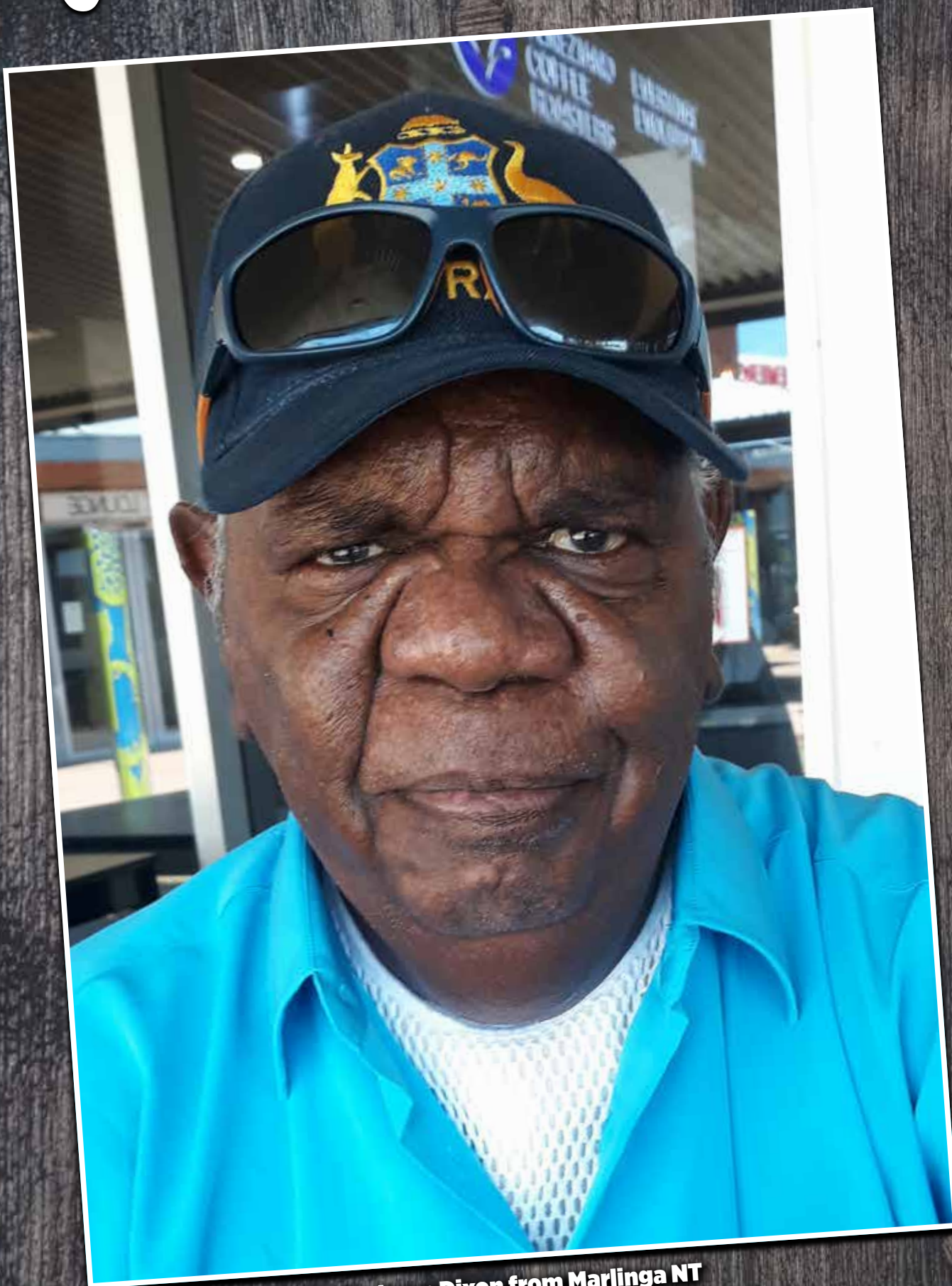




December 2021 – February 2022

AUSTRALIAN INDIGENOUS MINISTRIES

Strong Aboriginal Churches



Tadman Dixon from Marlinga NT
see page 7

God Looked After Him

In the care of his son and on his home country, *Sunny Curtis* went to be with our Lord 31 October.

A very gentle man, he was by any standard a real gentleman. Sunny had been wonderfully changed by God's grace when he came to faith in Jesus in the late 1960's. This was under the ministry of *Charlie Main* and indigenous missionary *Nero Timothy* (from Borroloola). As he had not attended school before moving into Tennant for work, he attended night classes after his conversion and sought help from his family so he could learn to read God's Word.

Sunny always saw God at work and looking after him in his life and circumstances. One example was when he had to give up his good job at The Battery where they crush gold. Cyanide was being used and was making him very sick. Sunny was worried about how he would care for his family but when his boss got him a job with the town council he knew God was looking after him.

This new job gave him more time to work with the then missionaries *Elizabeth Ham* and *Jenny Benson*. Sunny was always there to take part in meetings at town camps and would willingly use his vehicle on the long rough roads out to places like Rockhampton Downs station and Epenarra to share God's message. He commented,

'It was so wonderful to work for the Lord and see our people turning to follow God's way.'

After much prayer, he and his wife *Gladys* (dec) and five children packed their belongings onto the back of their vehicle and headed to Elliott as missionaries. He was so happy and looking forward to doing God's work. But it was the rainy season and a new bridge was being built with water banked up on one side of the detour. They watched one car go through but when they tried they nearly got drowned — and ALL of their belongings were washed away. But through

it all, he again saw God looking after them as the car later started up again and allowed them to continue their journey. As they saw their needs provided in Elliott, Sunny testified *'Through all that time, God kept showing us that He is so real. He is so true. Our God is so wonderful. We only need to trust and leave everything in His hands.'*

There were many strong ceremony men there who tried hard to trick Sunny and told people not to listen to him. They said they would do something to him. When a big storm knocked down a special tree Sunny had to cut it down before it damaged the church building. He had been getting sick before this time, and his health was deteriorating.

A local friend *Bonnie* saw how sick he was and got him to medical help. He was flown to Adelaide and underwent heart surgery. The people of Elliott expected he would die through this and said it was because he had cut that tree down. Sunny often laughed as he told of returning to Elliott after his surgery and how the people thought he was a ghost! His words to them were, *'I come back to tell you that God is powerful and He loves you.'* Not long after he returned, many of those who held strongly to the old ways passed away.

Sunny returned to Tennant Creek and again was involved in ministry there. Later he obtained land on his own country south of Tennant where he lived out his final years. He often faced health issues, trials, testing, family tragedy and grief, but as *Richard Davies* shared, *'He was such a great example of persevering through great trials...he finished well.'*



One Lie...

One lie — that was all it took. And now what had been deeply feared has become a reality — community transmission of Covid19 in the Northern Territory. All the efforts of Government, frontline health and emergency workers and the majority of the general public to keep it out came undone with one lie on an entry form. One person, one lie and Covid began spreading and shutting down businesses and putting some of our most vulnerable at risk.

As this goes to print, the epicentre of the outbreak has been Katherine and Robinson River — 2 hours east of Borroloola. One lady, unknowingly infectious after being exposed to the virus in Katherine travelled back to that small community then tested positive. New cases have emerged in Binjari Community just outside of Katherine.

There have also been fears that contacts travelled from Katherine to Tennant Creek and the community

of Yuendumu — and hundreds of people went through Katherine and into the Darwin area. The compromised health of so many indigenous people in all of these areas makes them especially vulnerable. Some have only just lined up for the vaccine since the outbreak so it might have limited effect on those with serious underlying health issues at this time.

Please pray that Christians will be strong in their faith and will be good witnesses when and however possible. Pray for strength, accuracy, and safety among all who are helping with the pandemic.

Pray that the situation will cause many indigenous people across the land to address their need of spiritual healing.



Expressed In Art

For centuries Christians around the world have expressed their faith and truth of scripture through various forms of art. Many indigenous people are among them.

Recently, *Miriam Charlie* from Borroloola (now in Darwin for dialysis) was able to attend an Art in Faith course at Nungalinga College in Darwin. She had often attended Bible courses at the AIM Darwin Bible College when it was functioning. Though she had worked with Barkly Arts for many years, it was always in an administrative role, never as an artist.

She found the course challenging but very good in helping her to put truth from God's Word onto canvas. She was especially focussed on expressing the teaching from Psalm 1: 3 'They are strong like a tree planted by a river'. **Pray that she will continue to be strengthened by God's Word and will enjoy expressing truth through her life, art, and words.**

Harold Dalywater was also at the college at that time doing the introductory course. His wife *Kaye* and children in their care were able to join him part way through his block of studies. **Pray that he will continue to learn and grow at home and be a faithful witness to others in Elliott.**





David Blackman



Daisy



Richard Driver



“Encouraging Each Other With These Words” Birthday Weekend # 37

by **Peter Dixon**

In 2020 the Tennant Creek Church leaders decided it would be best to postpone what would have been the 36th Birthday Weekend (Anniversary of the church building). *David Blackman*, Alyawarr Bible Translator, agreed to put off his speaking until this year.

In 2021 there was some trepidation whether the celebrations might have to be put off again, but we keep giving thanks to Kampaju, Akngey, Wapirra, — our Heavenly Father, for His sparing of the Territory thus far, and enabling us to celebrate 37 years of the church building on the last weekend in September.

The program was designed in the usual way for three sharing meetings in the evenings. On the

Friday evening at Village Camp *Mr Michael Jones* and *Mr Richard Driver* testified to God’s goodness and faithfulness over those 37 years. They had both given their lives to Jesus at the building dedication in 1984. Many others shared testimonies and songs, challenging their families to join Jesus. I was so encouraged.

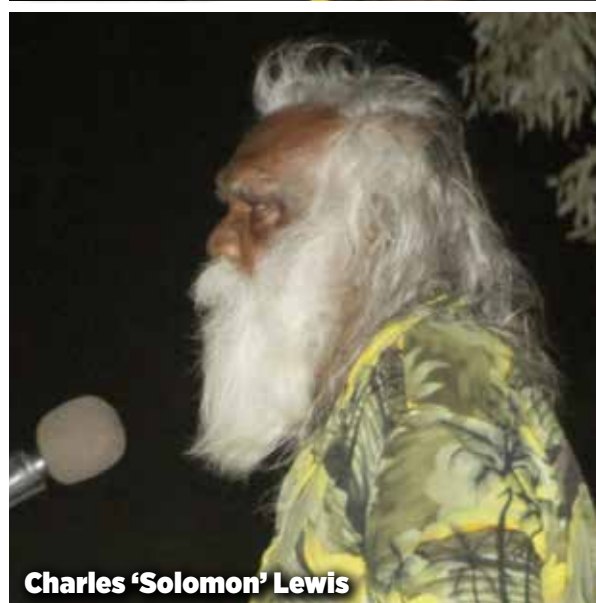
At the two morning meetings held in the church building David Blackman gave excellent presentations on Barnabas as well as some of the people who encouraged the apostle Paul as seen in the greetings at the end of several of his letters. David also talked of people who had encouraged him in his own ministry, including *David Duggie*. People are still talking of all the encouragement this teaching was.



Kelvin Ladd



Michael Jones



Charles 'Solomon' Lewis

I had also been greatly encouraged by all the church members stepping out of the trepidation caused by COVID-19 uncertainties and getting everything happening in very appropriate ways despite many obstacles like family sicknesses and the breaking of the old barbecue.

When the program was planned nobody had any idea that the AFL Grand Final was to happen on the Saturday evening. And who would have thought that the Melbourne Football Club would have been in it?! *Jimmy Brodie*, our sound guru and leading musician is a lifelong supporter of that team. He set up and directed the Camp meeting at Wuppa Camp that night. At the end he beautifully summarised the wonderful sharing from individuals and singing groups. As we began the pack-up he saw the score into the final quarter, we turned the car radio on, he took someone home and got back to his house in time for the very end. That was another very great encouragement for me.

The encouragement and Good News sharing continued at the church building on the Sunday evening. **We give thanks that the theme of encouragement bore great fruit. We all ask you to pray for the seeds that were sown in the community.**

The church bus is up and running again and we give thanks that it took a small group down to Ali Curung (173 kms) to encourage the Baptist Church there.

The AIM Church band has been asked to provide the accompaniment for the community singing at Carols by Candlelight December 5. The church choir will sing 'Silent Night' in Warumungu and 'Have no Fear' (to tune of Jingle Bells). Karen has been asked to help with the lead singing group, and I have been appointed as the MC and Richard Driver will give the closing benediction. We pray it will be an encouraging evening for all who attend.

We are very encouraged by your prayers for God's work here in Tennant Creek. Thank You!

Changing Chairs

Jono Wright has been serving on the AIM Council for many years. Even when he and the family had relocated from Camooweal to southern NSW and was suffering from Ross River fever, he would make the long train journey to Sydney to attend the monthly meeting. He was reluctantly put in as Chairman of the Council in August 2019.

There have been a number of intense and burdensome issues on the Council agenda in recent years, and navigating the Covid restrictions and lockdowns in two states (living in one and working in another) has been draining, and family time was being limited by Council responsibilities. Jono therefore resigned as Chairman in August and also took leave of absence from the Council until the end of this year.

Having served for many years on the board and as Chairman of European Christian Mission, the AIM Council invited *Peter Dixon*

to join them and fill the role of Chairman. After much prayer and consultation, Peter reluctantly accepted. His direction and contributions since joining in September have been greatly appreciated by the Council which includes *Paul Badman* (Treasurer), *David Chambers*, *Rhonda Coats*, *Yane Damanik* (acting Field Director), *Cliff Letcher* and *Henry Louie*.



Receiving The Aim

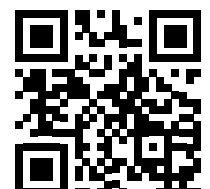
AIM is a 'Faith Mission' and therefore reliant on God supplying our needs through the faithful generosity of His people. The Council then has the responsibility to be good stewards of what is given. In recent times, demands on the income such as building repairs, insurance premiums, and legal fees has caused the Council to seek out any cost cutting measures.

One area of concern is the high cost of printing and posting this quarterly magazine. We certainly appreciate those who keep up their yearly gift towards receiving it. Thank you so much.

While we will continue to print and post it, however you can now choose to receive it digitally via your computer or other electronic device. For those of you who would like to receive it in digital form,

please scan the QR code below — and then please contact Peter Smith at Head Office about removing you from the hard copy mailing list. (Ph: 02 6553 1572 or email: aim@aimpa.com).

Thank You!





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New Series Volume 57 No. 4

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AIM has partnered with Safe Ministry Resources P/L and our safe framework is an adaptation of the Safe Ministry Resources P/L – Safe Ministry Framework @Peter Barnett and CMI Vocational Training.

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The requested amount of \$15 per year helps fund the printing and posting of this quarterly magazine.

It was through the faithful life of *Cyril Anderson* that they obtained the truck used for the church float in the parade. Though the owner is not a believer, he is so impressed with the life and witness of Cyril he entrusted the rig to him for the occasion. Thank God for the good Christian witness so many indigenous people are to the wider community. Pray that others will come to faith in Jesus through them.

Unlocked

Thank God that the lockdowns in NSW have been lifted and churches and ministries re-opened. It has allowed *Henry and Maria Louie* to get back on the road for ministry. They are very happy to be travelling to Pilliga from Gilgandra again each weekend to share God's Word with the interested group there. Thank God for some family members who have turned to Christ. Pray that they will keep growing in the grace of our Lord.



Rockhampton News

The faithful group of believers in Rocky were encouraged by visitors from Cherbourg in October. *Max Conlon* and a few others spent the weekend and held a sing-along on Saturday with a number of locals joining in. Max then brought the message on Sunday morning.



A good guitarist has been attending church in recent weeks after being transferred for his work. Pray that he and others will find their spiritual home in the AIM Church and help it to be a strong witness in this town.

Bill Power recently had time in hospital. Please pray for renewal of strength now that he is back home. Pray that he and wife Lesley will be encouraged in the Lord.

Health

Martin Ebel continues his monthly treatments in Brisbane. Please pray for his physical strength to be renewed – not only from the treatments but also the travel required.

This year has brought stresses and strain upon many in the AIM family. Pray that each one will have a time of rest and refreshing enabling them to return to the work strengthened in 2022.