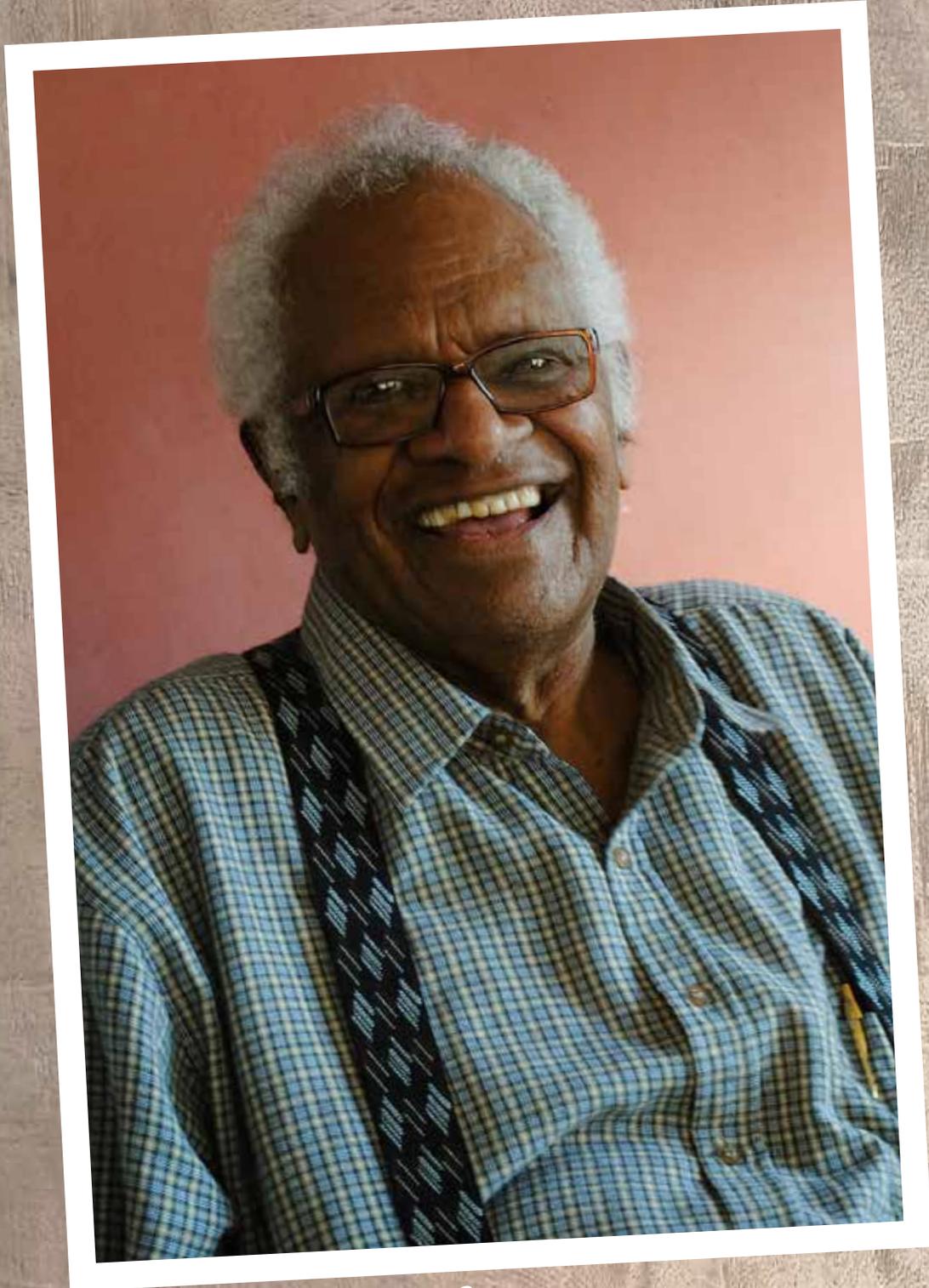


March - May 2026

Australian Indigenous Ministries

Strong Aboriginal Churches



Passing of a Leader - page 2

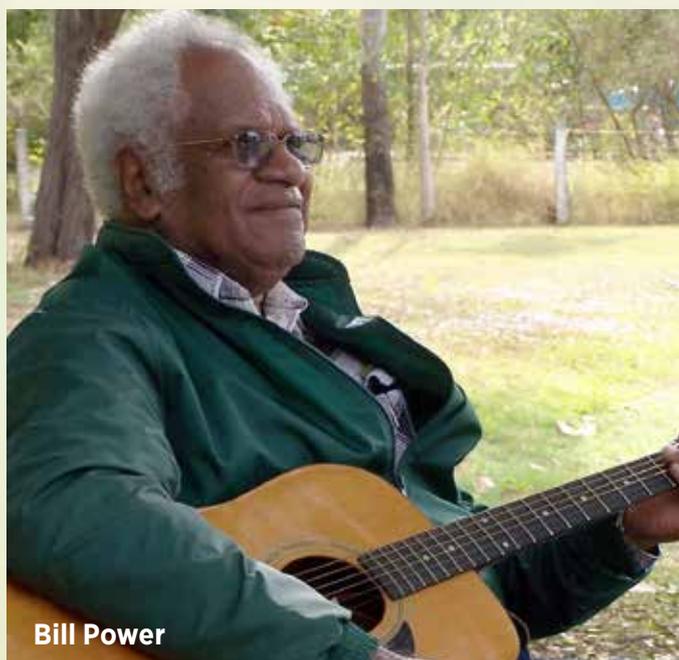
Passing of a Leader

By stature and character, *Pastor Bill Power* stood tall among people. Now our brother who had been so strong in spirit and faith for decades, offering wise counsel and challenge to those struggling under the burdens of life and ministry, is gone. Brother Bill went home to his Lord and Saviour on 12 December 2025.

He had known hard work since childhood, growing up during the Great Depression on his grandfather's 98 acres. He helped with farming, cutting timber and recalled humping seven-foot sleepers after school. Bill would laugh about those days saying it didn't harm him – especially on the rugby field where he became a force to be reckoned with!

Among the hard times was the fear of visits from the government men. His grandmother would tell the young ones to run and hide in the sandbank scrub fearing they would be taken away to an orphanage. That family love and resilience helped shape him into his adult years – and brings understanding to his hesitancy to answer a knock at the door even later in life.

Bill was determined to get an education regardless of obstacles. He travelled 45 kms each day to Rockhampton from Emu Park for high school. Non-white people were only allowed to sit at the back of the trains and at times he had to hide under the skirts of white ladies to avoid being noticed if sitting too near the front. Sometimes he would jump on the



Bill Power

back of sugar cane trains to hitch a ride. Despite the challenges, he excelled in school and usually came first or second in his year.

He spent nine years in the Army and often spoke of the loyalty and trust he found there. He shared the story at an AIM conference of his first parachute jump saying, *'I left that plane a black man, but I looked like a white man when I hit the ground!'* His sense of humour saw him through many difficult and trying times.

In 1966 he took a leap of faith and became a pastor. It wasn't easy being a big, dark-skinned man leading a white congregation, but his courage, faith, and determination broke down barriers. He was a strong advocate for reconciliation and loved sharing that true reconciliation only comes through Jesus Christ.

It was in 1990 that Bill became associated with AIM by filling in at various centres. He then brought strong leadership to the Queensland Church Council, giving good guidance as chairman, and sound counsel on his regular visits to the churches. He was a driving force in establishing the former training program that was so effective in fulfilling his passion to 'strengthen the brethren'.

Heartache was no stranger to Bill. His first wife *Mavis* with whom he had four daughters, passed away in 1991. His second wife *Heather* passed away in 1998, and he then suffered the heartbreaking loss of his eldest daughter in 2003.

Bill married *Lesley* in late 1998 and together they have shared in giving godly guidance, counsel, leadership and encouragement through the Church Council and the Rockhampton AIM Church. It is interesting that both Bill and Lesley have ancestral lines from Vanuatu tribes of cannibals. But the Gospel made the difference as these tribes were changed by God's love. And God's love changed both of their lives and brought them together to have a faithful and fruitful ministry, centred on Christ and the Word of God.

Bill leaves a legacy of resilience, hard work, strong leadership, faith and faithfulness. He fought the good fight and has now finished the race having kept the faith. Well done, good and faithful servant.

Looking Forward, Looking Back

What did a mayor, a doctor, and a family connection have to do with the beginnings of the AIM church in Rockhampton? The church had a special service in February themed: 'Looking Forward, Looking Back' and former AIM workers *Barry and Lois Downes* sent the following for the occasion:



The AIM work in Rockhampton commenced in July 1972, following conversations with the mayor, the late Rex Pilbeam and the late Dr Ray Wilson, a medical practitioner who also served as the Council Medical Officer. The mayor shared his concern of the growing number of Aboriginal people gathering on the Council lawns and park. Dr Wilson mentioned that his wife was a distant relative of the founder of a Mission that worked among Aboriginal people (AIM). Out of this conversation the door was opened for AIM to begin a ministry in Rockhampton. The Director and Council of AIM believed this was a God-given opportunity.

After due consultation and much prayer, the Mission asked us to consider an appointment to Rockhampton to begin a work. God had raised up a team of godly people led by Dr Ray Wilson that included Laurie and May Fraser, Bob and Min Minniecon and Rev Wheat from the Northside Baptist Church. We arrived in July with two little boys and another son was born during our five-year ministry there. AIM was able to rent a house for us opposite Pastor Col and Ev Love who had also been a help in the beginnings.

Thus began a wide ministry led by us and the team we formed. Special mention must be made of local Indigenous women Irene Fisher and Winnie Munns who journeyed and laboured for the Lord from the beginnings of Rocky AIM till their promotion to glory.

The work originally centred around a Drop-in Centre, at 63 William St and cottage meetings at various Indigenous homes. Later services and Sunday School were commenced at Wood St Church in connection with Laurie and May Fraser. The Bungu family were very involved in this little church. Dr Wilson had a practice up in Mt Morgan so we started tagging along and having cottage meetings up there as well.

This is a very brief outline of the beginnings of this vital ministry and many stories could be shared of the blessing of the Lord and the workers involved over the years.

Local members *Vanessa Conlon* and *Selwyn* 'looked back' and shared some of their memories:

- *Getting picked up for Sunday School in the bus full of kids singing old SS songs, and Christmas breaks-ups at Emu Park. Families would bring a plate to share, kids played games and had fun*
- *Sunday School in the afternoon at Mt Morgan with lamingtons and cordial. Selwyn used to go visiting here with Brian Morgan and taking Today magazines to people, and did hospital visiting with Stan Werner*
- *Cottage meetings with Bible study and fellowship every Wednesday night in a different home each week.*

A leader from another congregation made important observations of the church and its people, and sent the following message:



The Rockhampton AIM Church was noted as a prayer supporting church and a giving church to others on the mission field. The local believers who were the leaders were noted as people who had a humble and teachable spirit. As a team of men and women, they worked together. This was noted in the community, among other churches, and other leaders. The church was known for its ministry to Aboriginal people.

Many people have left footprints behind in lives, in the community, and the life of this church. As the members walk into the future, they were challenged to always keep focused on God's Word and were reminded that unity brings blessing (Ps 133), it is God's work and His church (Matt 16:18).

Sent with What We Have

by Roni Parlindungan

In the Gospel of Luke 9:1–6, we read that Jesus calls the Twelve together, gives them power and authority, and then sends them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal the sick. But what is striking is not only that He sends them—it is *how* He sends them.

“Take nothing for the journey,” He says. No staff. No bag. No bread. No money. No extra tunic.

Jesus deliberately sends His disciples into real towns, among real needs, without the visible securities they might naturally rely upon. Yet He does not send them empty-handed. He gives them His authority. He entrusts them with His message. And He sends them under His sovereign care.

Shortly after this, Luke records the feeding of the five thousand. Once again, the disciples are confronted with overwhelming need. A vast crowd. A long day. Very limited food. “We have only five loaves and two fish,” they say. In other words: *this is not enough!*

These two scenes belong together. In both, the disciples face the same tension: God’s calling feels larger than their capacity. The task appears to exceed their resources. And in both cases, Jesus teaches them the same lesson—not self-sufficiency, but dependence upon Him.



In Luke 9:1–6, the disciples discover that mission is not sustained by what they pack, but by whom they trust. In the feeding of the five thousand, they learn that faithfulness begins not with abundance, but with offering what they have into Jesus’ hands.

This is a timely reminder for the work of Australian Indigenous Ministries. The needs before us are significant. The history we carry is complex. The responsibility to walk alongside Indigenous churches and leaders with humility, patience, and faith is weighty. There are moments when the task feels large and our resources—whether financial, relational, or personal—feel small.

Yet Luke’s account gently reorients us. Jesus does not first ask for impressive strategies or abundant supply. He asks for trust. He asks for faithfulness. He asks us to bring what we have and place it before Him.

The disciples were not sent to be impressive; they were sent to be obedient. They were not sent to control outcomes; they were sent to bear witness to the kingdom of God. And when they placed five loaves and two fish into Jesus’ hands, He multiplied them beyond expectation.

So too for us. The call of AIM is not to manufacture growth by human effort, but to participate in what God is already doing. We labour faithfully in the present—supporting churches, encouraging leaders, building connections—while trusting that Christ Himself builds His church. Our task is to steward what we have, to act with integrity and prayerfulness, and to entrust the results to Him.

There is deep encouragement here. The effectiveness of Gospel work has never rested on visible abundance. It rests on the authority of the One who sends and the power of the One who provides.

As we look ahead, may we continue to bring our loaves and fish—our time, wisdom, relationships, prayers—into the hands of Christ. And may we trust that the Lord who sent His disciples out with little, and who fed thousands from scarcity, will continue to sustain and multiply the work entrusted to us.

Resignation

It was with real regret but understanding that the resignation of *Roni Parlindungan* from the AIM Council was accepted at the February meeting. He has made numerous and valued contributions as a Council member and added much to AIM as he exercised his pastoral gift among us.

The important role of overseeing the portfolio of Safe Ministry was among his contributions. He also gave time using his skills and connections with others to coordinate updating the website and finding the new printing company and person to do layout for The Aim magazine. All of this was done with the cheerful and gracious attitude of a servant of Jesus.

He will soon be taking up full-time ministry with City Bible Forum for which he is well suited and gifted. We thank God for his contributions to AIM and pray for God's blessing as he serves our Lord in this new area.



Roni with Council Chairman Henry Louie

Roni shared the following:

Stepping down from the AIM Council has not been an easy decision. After prayer and honest reflection, however, it feels like the right step for this season—particularly as I transition into full-time ministry with City Bible Forum this year.

I remain deeply grateful for the privilege of serving on Council and for the generosity, wisdom, and fellowship shared around the table. My connection with AIM began in 2020, when Cliff Letcher encouraged me to apply for the General Director role. After interviewing, I quickly realised it was not the right fit and withdrew. Conversations with Cliff continued and the opportunity to serve on AIM Council emerged in early 2021.

One of the themes that has shaped my own sense of calling is connection—helping Christians, churches, and ministries find one another and labour together with a long-view perspective. AIM reflects this beautifully - working faithfully now, while looking ahead to that great gathering of God's people described at the end of Revelation.

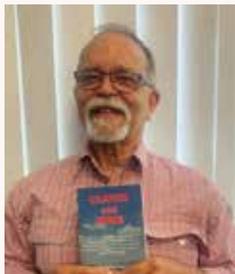
Though I have resigned from the Council, I would value remaining connected to AIM as a volunteer—whether through IT and website support or in other ways as the AIM Council sees fit.

Thank you for your partnership and prayers. Be assured of mine for AIM and its ongoing Gospel work.

NEWSPOTS

GIVING THANKS

As a young boy, *Keith* spent eight of his growing years in the Retta Dixon Children's Home. He showed potential, and with his mother's permission, was sent south to a foster home. The first placement did not work out, but in his second foster home things were different. He was eventually adopted and was given the family name of Truscott.



There were years of straying from the Biblical teaching he had received at RDH, but in time, his search brought him back to Jesus. He went on to do studies and became a Baptist pastor serving in Western Australia. Keith continues to lead a church particularly for Indigenous people in the Perth area.

One of the ways he expresses his faith and has sought to encourage others has been through a poetic devotional book. His plan was to write a book each year for eight years as an expression of thanks to God for his time at Retta Dixon Home. That plan was fulfilled this year. He is ever grateful and gives thanks to God for the Christian foundation he received at RDH and for the missionaries who helped and encouraged him there.

BRISBANE UPDATE

More delays for further consultation saw *Fay Chambers* still waiting to undergo her necessary surgery at the time of writing. Pray she and *David* will continue to have God's peace in the situation. They are grateful the fellowship they help lead is currently able to meet at the Community Hall in Lawnton. They appreciate having a place of shelter, and somewhere they can leave their ministry items. Please keep praying for a permanent solution for a meeting place.

NEWS FROM TENNANT CREEK

Peter and Karen Dixon had time away from Tennant Creek in January. They enjoyed catching up with family and friends as they travelled to Sydney, Canberra, Corowa,

Melbourne and back again. It was an unexpected pleasure to find former AIM personnel *Cliff and Carolyn Letcher* sharing a train journey from Sydney to the Blue Mts.

Annie Morrison, the oldest daughter of church leader *Michael Jones*, has taken on the role of Language Assistant in Karen's Indigenous Language and Culture program. She has been steadfast in her faith for many years and was involved in setting up the first program in the days before Covid 19.

DAVIES DOINGS

The Christmas period and into the new year was busy with most of their family members spending time with *Richard and Sue Davies* at their home in Cootamundra. It was a special surprise when their son *Joshua* arrived from Darwin. At the time of writing, they were looking forward to a two-week break visiting their son *Simon* and his family in New Zealand.

In February they were pleased the typeset of the books of Ruth and Esther was almost complete and ready for printing. They are hopeful they will be available during their time in Canteen Creek this year. They plan to head north by mid-April. They have several translated Bible books they hope to get recorded in Darwin during their time in the Territory.

EASTER CONVENTIONS

NW NSW Rivers Convention - April

3rd - 5th ... (Easter) Brewarrina

6th - 7th ... Enngonia

8th - 9th ... Weilmoringle

10th - 12th ... Goodooga

13th - 14th ... Lightning Ridge

15th - 16th ... Walgett

17th - 19th ... Collarenebri

Easter weekend will see former AIM worker *Jono Wright* speaking at the convention held in Alyawarr country each year. Pray that the weather and road conditions will allow many to attend. It has been a very heavy wet season throughout the desert areas this year.

A New Outreach

Kid's Club programs have been an annual outreach ministry in Gulargambone and Pilliga for quite a while. Last year *Henry and Maria Louie* worked with *Isaac (Ike)* and *Eileen Gordon* (Brewarrina) and *Paul and Erin Strahan* (Moree) to have an outreach to the adults in Gulargambone, a small town 50 kms northwest of Gilgandra.

Ike and Paul shared most of the preaching, along with bringing the music. They were happy with the good turnout and continue trusting the Lord to work in the hearts of those who heard God's truth.

A group from a Sydney Korean Church worked with a group from a Sydney Chinese Church to provide meals as well as have meetings with the children. Everyone enjoyed the food and sharing together around the mealtimes.

After a rest day Henry and Maria traveled to Pilliga to have a Kid's Club with folk from Grace Presbyterian in Newcastle. The local adults listened in on the Bible teaching too. This small township was being hit by sickness which kept some of the regular attenders away. But all who were there - students and workers alike - had a good time learning and sharing together.

On another weekend Henry organised a visit from *Mark* in the Blue Mountains. He went to Gulargambone and put on a music workshop for young people. They didn't advertise it, but word quickly got around in this small town! Soon ten kids rocked up - most were regular attenders of the annual Kid's Club. They were taught some basic things on guitar, and it is hoped they can learn a bit on drums and the keyboard next time he runs a workshop.



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The requested amount of \$20 per year helps fund the printing and posting of this quarterly magazine.

Turning Back

Sitting in a diesel-powered loader while working at the Port provides plenty of time to let your mind wander. Music helps drown out the engine noise and pass the time. Sometimes it is played without really taking much notice of the words. But this time it was different... This day a year ago, as *Warren Timothy* from Borroloola drove that loader, a song came on which captured his thoughts and challenged his heart – that heart which years ago had followed Jesus faithfully, but had turned away...



'Your mercy never failed me, all my days, I've been held in Your hands.all my life You have been faithful, all my life You have been so, so good...You have led me through the fire...In darkest night You are close like no other... Your goodness is running after, it's running after me.' (from 'The Goodness of God' by CeCe Winans)

As Warren heard the song, something wonderful happened. He shared: *I just pulled up and cried tears saying, 'Lord please forgive me. I'm turning back to you now'.*

I really heard the words of that song – heard how God watched over me all the time. I saw where He had been watching over me all those years, through so many things – even when I had turned my back on Him. He is so patient.

That Sunday I surprised them all when I walked straight into the church service. When it finished, I stood before them and told Vincent (Charlie) that I wanted to get right with the Lord. We sat and prayed together and read some verses.

I am so thankful for the Lord's forgiveness and so thankful He didn't ever give up on me. It is so good to be right with Him again. I am back helping Vincent, especially with all the funerals. We had a lot before Christmas, and we have eight more to do after the wet season. Pray for us as we work together for the Lord in Borroloola.