

Acknowledgement and Apology to the Aboriginal Peoples

*Excerpt from the Service Order Lutheran Church of Australia
RITE OF RECONCILIATION, GENERAL SYNOD 2000 (23 July 2000)
Source: Lutheran Archives*

Statement by President Steicke

Since our church began its life here with the European settlement, we have been involved in the political, economic and social history of our country. This history also connects us to the difficult, sad and often tragic situations that have occurred.

Therefore today, we, the non-Aboriginal Lutheran people of this country, as church and as citizens, wish clearly to state the following things to our indigenous brothers and sisters:

- 1 You were here on this land before any European people arrived.
- 2 When European people came, much misunderstanding took place which caused great suffering to your people. Many of your people were killed, many died from new diseases, and many others were driven off their land. This has caused a grave breakdown in the culture and lifestyle of your people which continues even today.
- 3 On behalf of the rest of the people of our church, I am sorry for the suffering and hurt that your people have had to endure. We ask God to forgive us for the evil we have done, and the help we have failed to give you.
- 4 We resolve to work together with you, to share and learn together, to accept and respect each other. Help us to listen to you and learn from you.
- 5 We promise to work with you and others for justice and harmony in relationships. We recognise the contribution which indigenous people are making.
- 6 We are sorry for the bad things that have happened in the past. Please forgive us.