



'WE ARE SORRY . . . PLEASE FORGIVE US'
the rite of reconciliation

Left: Pastor George Rosendale and Dr Lance Steicke
Below: Pastor Jimmy Haines

DR LANCE STEICKE
LCA president

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.

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.

We promise to work with you and others for justice and harmony in relationships. We recognise the contribution which Indigenous people are making. We are sorry for the bad things that have happened in the past. Please forgive us.

PASTOR GEORGE ROSENDALE

senior Indigenous pastor, north Queensland

I stand here on behalf of my people, the Aboriginal people. (Tonight) I thought of my mother and grandmother. They would be thrilled. I am standing on air. I can't feel the floor, I feel so uplifted. For years I have worked to bring about reconciliation. Tonight is the night that this has been fulfilled.

PASTOR JIMMY HAINES

representative of the Aboriginal people of central Australia

Many of us Aboriginal people living in central Australia and also us pastors have been discussing this word 'reconciliation' for a long time. More recently, people asked me to speak on their behalf at this synod. That's why I'm speaking to you as their representative. We do not hold a grudge against white people for what happened. There are people who always want to only talk about the bad things the white people did. We however would rather remember that many white people helped us and many are our friends to this day. More than anything, however, we thank God that he sent his messengers to us with his word. The missionaries taught us about God and stayed with us for a long time. Today there are many Aboriginal Christians and pastors in central Australia. We are really happy about that. We are also happy that the Lutheran Church continues to help us.

DR ISHMAEL NOKO
general secretary, LWF

I speak to you on behalf of my people, sixty million Lutherans. I don't believe I have previously witnessed what you and I have seen tonight. This is not your occasion only: it is our (the LWF's) occasion as well. I hope that from now on, the LCA will be able to export this to other Lutheran churches. I will go out and tell this story.

