

Dear Friends,

At the Aboriginal Christian Leaders' Workshop which overlapped with our Partners' Gathering, they requested that formal prayers of thanksgiving be prepared for use in church and on special occasions to remember the first missionaries in Arnhem Land and the first Aboriginal Christians. While I drafted them, it was they who came up with the ideas. They discussed the words and I now have the wording they finally approved. I am forwarding them to you as I think you will find them significant and worth publishing in your magazines or prayer letters or whatever. Indeed we may seek their inclusion in any future edition of the Australian Prayer Book. I request that the Aboriginal Christians of Arnhem Land be acknowledged as the source of these prayers and not me.

Sincerely,

John Harris

A prayer of thanksgiving for the missionaries

God of all people of the world,
you sent your Son to show us the path to yourself.
We thank you for the missionaries
who came to our land and lived here
to bring us the Good News of Jesus (especially ...).
We thank you for the missionaries
who taught our people
and who healed them and
worked beside them.
Help us to honour their memory
by living our lives as people who bring the Good News of Jesus to others.
We ask this in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

A prayer of thanksgiving for the first Aboriginal Christians

God of our ancestors,
especially those who welcomed the missionaries
and heard the Good News of Jesus Christ,
we thank you for the first Aboriginal men and women
who listened and believed.
We thank you for the strength of their faith
and the beauty of their lives (especially ...).
We thank you for their lifelong hard work
to carry the Good News to all our people.
May we walk in their footsteps.
May we be like them,
giving our lives to sharing the Good News of Jesus with others. We ask this in the name
of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.
Amen.