

NAIDOC Week 2019
Community Staff Prayer
Voice, Treaty, Truth



Image by Cathy O'Keeffe

Preparation

The Leader sets up a Prayer focus with a candle and the Bible open at the Reading. S/he provides words for the Refrain of the Song and arranges the CD. Quiet didgeridu music (or music from the Torres Strait Islands) may be playing as people gather.

WE GATHER

Introduction

Leader: The reforms set out in the *Uluru Statement from the Heart* can be expressed in three key goals: **Voice – Treaty - Truth**. Naidoc Week 2019 takes inspiration from these three aims which represent the hopes and dreams of First Nations Australians. In solidarity, let us remember the Indigenous peoples of this place ... *(a slight pause)*

Call to Prayer:

Leader: Cry out with joy to God all the earth!
All: O sing aloud the glory of God's name!

Opening Prayer:

Leader: Let us pray ...
All: Creator God,
You call us to listen deeply to your Word made flesh, Jesus the Christ.
Teach us to listen for his voice - the voice that speaks of peace.
May we always walk in the ways of your truth
and learn to ponder the mysteries of your love.
We ask this prayer through Christ our Lord
and in the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

WE LISTEN

Voice 1: The Uluru Statement built on generations of consultation and discussions among Indigenous people on a range of issues and grievances. It recommended that:
1. a First Nations Voice to Parliament be established in the Constitution

2. a Makarrata Commission be set up to supervise treaty processes and truth-telling.

Voice 2: [Makarrata](#) is a word from the language of the Yolngu people in Arnhem Land. The Yolngu concept of Makarrata captures the idea of two parties coming together after a struggle, healing the divisions of the past. It is about acknowledging that something has been done wrong, and it seeks to make things right.

Voice 3: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people want their voice to be heard. First Nations were excluded from the Constitutional convention debates of the 1800's when the Australian Constitution came into force. Indigenous people were excluded from the bargaining table. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have always wanted an enhanced role in decision-making in Australia's democracy.

Voice 4: In the European settlement of Australia, there were no treaties or formal settlements. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people did not cede sovereignty to their land. It was taken from them. This remains a continuing source of dispute. Their ownership of the land coexists with the sovereignty of the Crown and should never be extinguished.

Voice 5: Australia is one of the few liberal democracies around the world which still does not have a treaty or some kind of formal arrangement with its Indigenous minorities. Critically, treaties are inseparable from Truth. The true story of colonisation must be told, must be heard, must be acknowledged before genuine healing is achieved on both sides.

Voice 6: This is not just the history of our First Peoples – it is the history of all of us, of all of Australia, and only when we own it can we move forward together.

All: Let us work together for a shared future.

Leader: We ponder on these things now in the light of Paul's letter to the Galatians ...

Scripture Focus: Gal 6:14-16 (See the Lectionary or Sunday Missal 14th Sunday in Ordinary Time – Cycle C)

Points to ponder:

Paul is really saying that there is no difference between the value of one person and another. The only thing that matters is that we are all made new in Christ. What are the signs of this newness? We become a 'voice' for the powerless. We become peacemakers. And we live by truth. This is how we grow strong enough in Christ to bring all together in unity. It takes a generous willingness to be so open and a courageous strength of heart to live like this – especially in the face of prejudice and the narrow-minded (far right) attitudes which we often meet in society today.

How can we reflect this *new way of being* in relation to the issues of our Indigenous Peoples? How can we speak the truth and work for peace? ... (pause) ...

If time allows, the Leader invites some sharing ...

WE RESPOND

Leader: In solidarity, let us state our willingness to make a commitment to our Indigenous brothers and sisters.

Let us hear their voice. Let us own the truth. Let us work for peace.

All: We commit ourselves to walk with our Indigenous Peoples
– to finish the unfinished business of this country.
We promise to listen more attentively to their voice.
We agree to explore the real truth of our shared history.
We open our hearts to genuine reconciliation and healing.
We pledge to work for a shared future with the Indigenous Peoples of Australia.

Leader: The hopes and dreams of our Indigenous Peoples
are the hopes and dreams of the Spirit of God.
As we listen to/sing this song, let us hold all these dreams in our hearts ...

All: **Spirit Dream** (Monica Brown – One People, One Land)

WE GO

Blessing:

Leader: May the God of the Dreamtime be the voice that guides us.

All: Amen.

Leader: May Jesus Christ be our treaty of Peace.

All: Amen.

Leader: May the Spirit of Truth fill our hearts with God's grace.

All: Amen.

Leader: May almighty God bless us,
Father, Son, + and Holy Spirit.

All: Amen.

Dismissal

Leader: Go and live the Good News of the Gospel.

All: Thanks be to God!

NOTE:

This Resource borrows from material accessed at <https://www.naidoc.org.au/get-involved/2019-theme>
For more music relevant to this theme, please visit the music of Mark and Louise Raue at
Common Good Music at <http://www.commongoodmusic.com.au/>