

Praying for Australia

- ahead of Australia Day on 26th January

The sovereignty of God over where people live

When the Most High gave the nations their inheritance, when he divided all mankind, he set up boundaries for the peoples .... (Deuteronomy 32:8).

From one man he made every nation of men, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he determined the times set for them and the exact places where they should live … so that men would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us (Acts 17:26-27).

Recognising the Christian message on Australia Day

Father, we pray that your people would better harness national days such as Australia Day each year, to share the Christian message and its implications for society.

Lord, we give thanks for all who excel in service and are honoured on Australia Day with awards in the Order of Australia, and for the various Australians of the Year.

Lord, be with citizenship candidates pledging allegiance at civic ceremonies across the nation on Australia Day.

May all who attend such occasions notice the Christian crosses displayed on the Australian National Flag, and on the Commonwealth Coat of Arms featured on each certificate given when candidates make their pledges.

Giving thanks on Australia Day

Heavenly Father, anticipating Australia Day, we render to you thanks for your sovereignty over all of mankind, including opening and closing doors in regard to where people live, at what time, and for how long.

Lord, we give thanks for Australia's indigenous peoples - who exercised the Adamic mission to name and tend creation. We give thanks for the Gospel that arrived in 1788, and earnestly pray for a conciliation of affection between everyone, on Australia Day, and every day.

Remembering Australia's first church service

Father, we offer thanks for the witness given through Chaplain **Richard Johnson** in the first service conducted on this great continent, on Sunday 3rd February 1788. When we celebrate Australia's Christian heritage upon the first Sunday of February, renew our thankfulness.



As we ponder Psalm 116:12 used by Johnson - *What shall I render unto the LORD for all his benefits towards me* - we give you sincere thanks!

And while the Gospel was not well-received at first, we do rejoice that today people from diverse cultural backgrounds profess Christ as Lord.

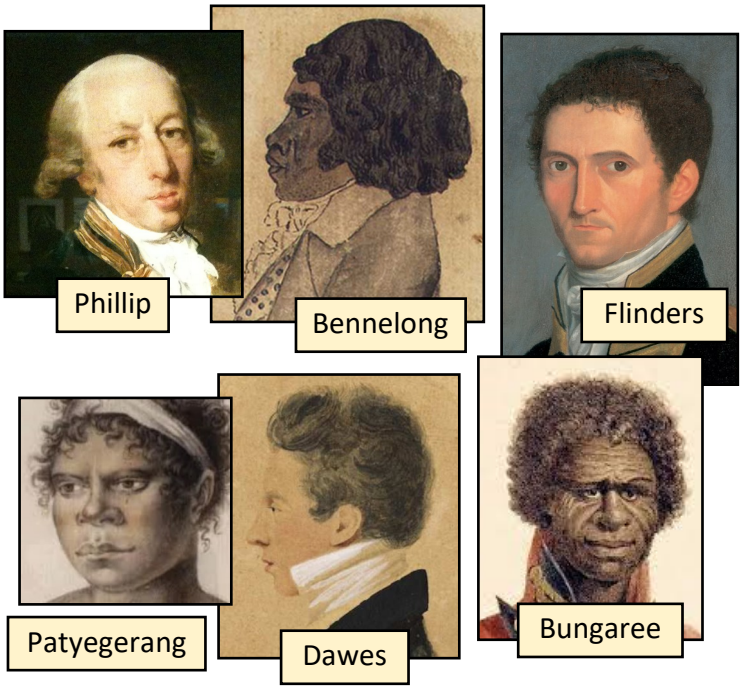
Giving thanks for historic examples of cooperation

Without overlooking past wrongdoings, we give thanks for indigenous and non-indigenous cooperative action:

Bennelong served as a key interpreter and ambassador who called **Governor Phillip** "my father" and (in 1790) led a mob to reconcile with Phillip who gave Bennelong a hut where the opera house is today. The teenage girl **Patyegerang** and **William Dawes** exchanged languages.

Bungaree served under the Union Flag when assisting **Captain Matthew Flinders** as a translator and advocate in their 1801 - 1803 circumnavigation of the continent.

Indigenous trackers in the employ of the constabulary applied their phenomenal bush skills to locate missing children and to help apprehend offenders 'on the run'.

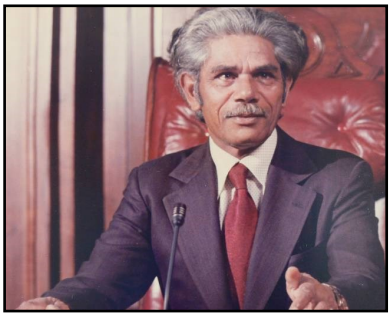


Heavenly Father, we also give you thanks for positive interactions between Australians in more recent times:

We give thanks for the service of **Uncle David Unaipon** (1872-1967) whose missionary training and education enabled superb preaching, teaching and leadership and he is honoured on Australia's fifty dollar note, showing his church at the Aboriginal community of Raukkan.



Shown presiding in the Federal Parliament's Upper House, **Senator Neville Bonner** (1922-1999) was pleased to enter what he called 'the Council of Australian elders'. We give thanks for his magnanimity, as he remarked as follows: "For the first time in the history of this country there was an Aboriginal voice in the parliament and that gave me an enormous feeling of overwhelming responsibility …." Although he received only one year of school education, he served as a senator for Queensland for twelve years, sometimes voting against his party concerning indigenous issues.



Australia as a vessel responding to the Master's hand

Heavenly Father, please help our nation of Australia to respond to the leading of your Holy Spirit, through our Lord Jesus Christ. May all of the Australian people give you a right place of honour - in our hearts, families and governments. Responding to your goodness and grace, may we turn from sin and walk in the righteous path.

We pray for a resolution of ethnic and related tensions, asking that you will continue to bless this great south land, so all of the people may enjoy your favour, giving thanks for every benefit you have bestowed.

May Australia respond as a vessel useful in your hands!

Hear our prayers we ask, in the name of Jesus. Amen.

