



# THE STOLEN GENERATIONS

EIGHTH ASSEMBLY, UNITING CHURCH IN AUSTRALIA

RESOLUTION 97.33.02

- 97.33.02 *The Assembly resolved:*
- to express its appreciation to the President of the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, Sir Ronald Wilson, and Commissioner Michael Dodson for the Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children, the Report - "Bringing them Home" - and its recommendations. The report exposes aspects of Australian history in which large numbers of Aboriginal children and their parents suffered appalling deprivation and despair, facts which have not been understood or known about the majority of Australians. This disclosure of truth provides an essential basis for the achievement of reconciliation and healing between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians;
- 97.33.03 to commit itself and encourage the whole Church to support the recommendations of the Inquiry wherever possible;
- 97.33.04 to affirm the apology made by the Standing Committee in September 1996; convey the apology to the associations of people who passed through Croker Island, Mogumber and Sister Kate's; make copies of the apology available to the Aboriginal press; and encourage synods and individuals to make apologies where appropriate in local situations;
- 97.33.05 (a) to note that the report of the inquiry interprets "reparations" as consisting of -
- acknowledgment and apology
  - guarantees against repetition
  - measures of restitution
  - measures of rehabilitation, and
  - monetary compensation;
- (b) to request the Covenant Steering Committee in collaboration with other churches to press the Federal Government to issue an unconditional apology, to establish a national compensation fund as recommended in the report and to invite individuals and churches to contribute to the fund;
- (c) to offer to contribute to the fund through special offerings made on a national "Sorry Day";
- 97.33.06 (a) to warmly support the proposal to introduce a national "Sorry Day";
- (b) to request the Covenant Steering Committee in co-operation with the Congress to initiate plans for the national "Sorry Day" to be observed throughout the Uniting Church;
- (c) if ATSIC initiates such a commemoration throughout the community, request the Covenant Steering Committee to develop plans for the Church to participate in the national observance;
- 97.33.07 to enter into/continue discussions with the associations of people who passed through Croker Island, Mogumber and Sister Kate's, listening to their stories of what happened to them through their being placed in the institutions, and negotiating with them ways by which the Church may help to repair the damage that has occurred and its continuing consequences for individuals and their families, and to assist the process of healing in the community;
- 97.33.08 to request the synods in collaboration with the Congress to enter into discussions with relevant Aboriginal organisations about what further action the Church should take in each State to assist reparation and healing;
- 97.33.09 in order to provide easier access for Indigenous people seeking to trace their own records, to request the Covenant Steering Committee:



- (a) to consult with relevant Aboriginal organisations and index all of its personal records of Aboriginal people who passed through its Aboriginal homes, and deposit copies of this index in Indigenous-controlled repositories insofar as privacy laws make feasible;
  - (b) to develop principles concerning access to records by individuals who are seeking to trace their personal and family identity;
- 97.33.10
  - (a) to recommend to all theological colleges that they purchase copies of the report for their libraries;
  - (b) to commend the report for study by members of the Church, and particularly by all senior Assembly and Synod staff;
- 97.33.11
  - (c) to recommend to Synod papers that they run a series of articles on the “stolen generations”;

to encourage all Uniting Church schools:

  - (a) to respond to the concept of developing “substantial compulsory modules on the history and continuing effects of removal”;
  - (b) to employ suitable Aboriginal teaching and support staff so that there is a visible Aboriginal presence in the schools;