



A true companion to the people of the Outback

The John Flynn Foundation
ORDER OF SERVICE 2023



Acknowledgement of First Peoples

From before recorded time, the First Peoples of this Nation have cared for this Land.

We praise the Creator for the beauty of this Land and honour those who have cared for it. We acknowledge the Elders and community members who have told the sacred stories and nurtured faithfulness to the Creator.

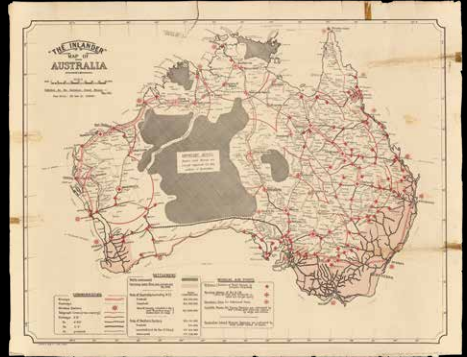
We ask God's blessing on those who continue to work for the healing and restoration of this Land and Her Communities.

Artwork by Bush Chaplain Julia Lennon

Flynn of the Inland

Excerpt taken from "The Man on the Twenty Dollar Notes – Flynn of the Inland" by Everaldo Compton

Flynn happily recalled one pleasant Sunday when he attended a morning service here as one of the congregation. As he walked outside at the conclusion of worship, not wearing his clerical collar, an elderly woman approached him. She was totally unaware of who he was.



"My friends tell me that you are a clergyman, sir," the woman said. "Yes, I am," Flynn replied politely. "And where is your congregation located," she asked.

Flynn waved his arm towards the horizon. *"Out there where the sun goes down," he said.*

"So, it is a country parish. Is it a large one?"

"Actually, it is the largest in Australia. It covers about 80% of the continent."

Her eyes widened in amazement, so he gave her the brief version of the Australian Inland Mission's work.

"Oh, my goodness me, you are Flynn of the Inland," she stammered.

"Actually, I am just John Flynn, a bush parson."

"I really don't know what to say, Mr Flynn. I find it hard to comprehend that one man could have dreamed this vision, let alone achieved it."

"It has not been too difficult. I have had many wonderful helpers."

Call to Worship

Creator God,
God of this wide-brown land, this land of sweeping
plains,
God of distant grey-blue mountains,
God of ragged mountain ranges,
God of droughts and flooding rains,
God of oceans, reefs and beaches,
God of bustling city streets.
We gather this day to worship you.
May we see you in the people we meet, may we
hear your voice in the words that are shared.
We commit this time, this space and our lives to
you this day.
We pray this in the name of Jesus, who knows and
loves us all.
Amen.



Reverends Skipper Partridge, Chris Goy, and Fred McKay

Hymn

Hymn 96: Together in Song Sing praise to the Lord!

- 1 Sing praise to the Lord! praise Him in the height;
rejoice in His word, you angels of light;
all heaven adore Him by whom you were made,
and worship before Him in brightness arrayed.
- 2 Sing praise to the Lord! praise Him upon earth,
in tuneful accord, sing praise for new birth;
praise Him who has brought you His grace from above,
praise Him who has taught you to sing of His love.
- 3 Sing praise to the Lord, all things that give sound;
each jubilant chord re-echo around;
loud organs, His glory forth tell in deep tone,
and sweet harp, the story of what He has done.
- 4 Sing praise to the Lord! Thanksgiving and song
to Him be outpoured all ages along:
for love in creation, for heaven restored,
for grace of salvation, sing praise to the Lord!

Prayer of Confession

Great Creator God, we tend to think that we are far superior to the animal kingdom, yet at times we are much like it and sometimes far below it.

Sometimes we are like wombats hiding in dark burrows rather than like people living in the light.

Sometimes we are like a flock of galahs, squabbling, chattering and screeching so much that we don't ever hear the cries of the wounded or lost.

Sometimes we are like inquisitive emus, curious about the ways of Christ but quick to take fright and run.

Sometimes we are like bowerbirds, so busy collecting pretty possessions that we miss the greater wonders around us.

Loving Creator, generous Saviour, forgive both our inflated egos and our deflating behaviour. By the fierce love of Christ, rebuke, forgive, liberate and rearrange our lives.

Help us to walk in Christ's clear light, to recognise the needs of those around us, to put you first, and to treasure that costly love-light which is the very environment of heaven. In Jesus' name, we pray.

Amen

(From Bruce D Prewer, 'Australian Prayers' p83)



Word of Forgiveness

Those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength.
They shall mount up with wings like eagles. They shall run
and not be weary. They shall walk and not faint. In Christ
you are forgiven and renewed.

Thanks be to God.



Rev John Flynn at Manly Manse

Bible Readings

Matthew 5: 1-9

The Beatitudes

When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain, and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. And he began to speak and taught them, saying:

"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

"Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

"Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

"Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.

"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God."

Romans 12: 9-15

Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honour.

Do not lag in zeal, be ardent in spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints; extend hospitality to strangers. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep.

Key verse: Romans 12:12

Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer.



Sermon

Alternatively, the following Reflection could be read or shared.

Reflection

This reflection comes from Rev Erica Payne, who alongside Rev David Jackson, is a Bush Chaplain serving in the Midwest region of Western Australia in Disaster Recovery following the devastating impacts of Cyclone Seroja.

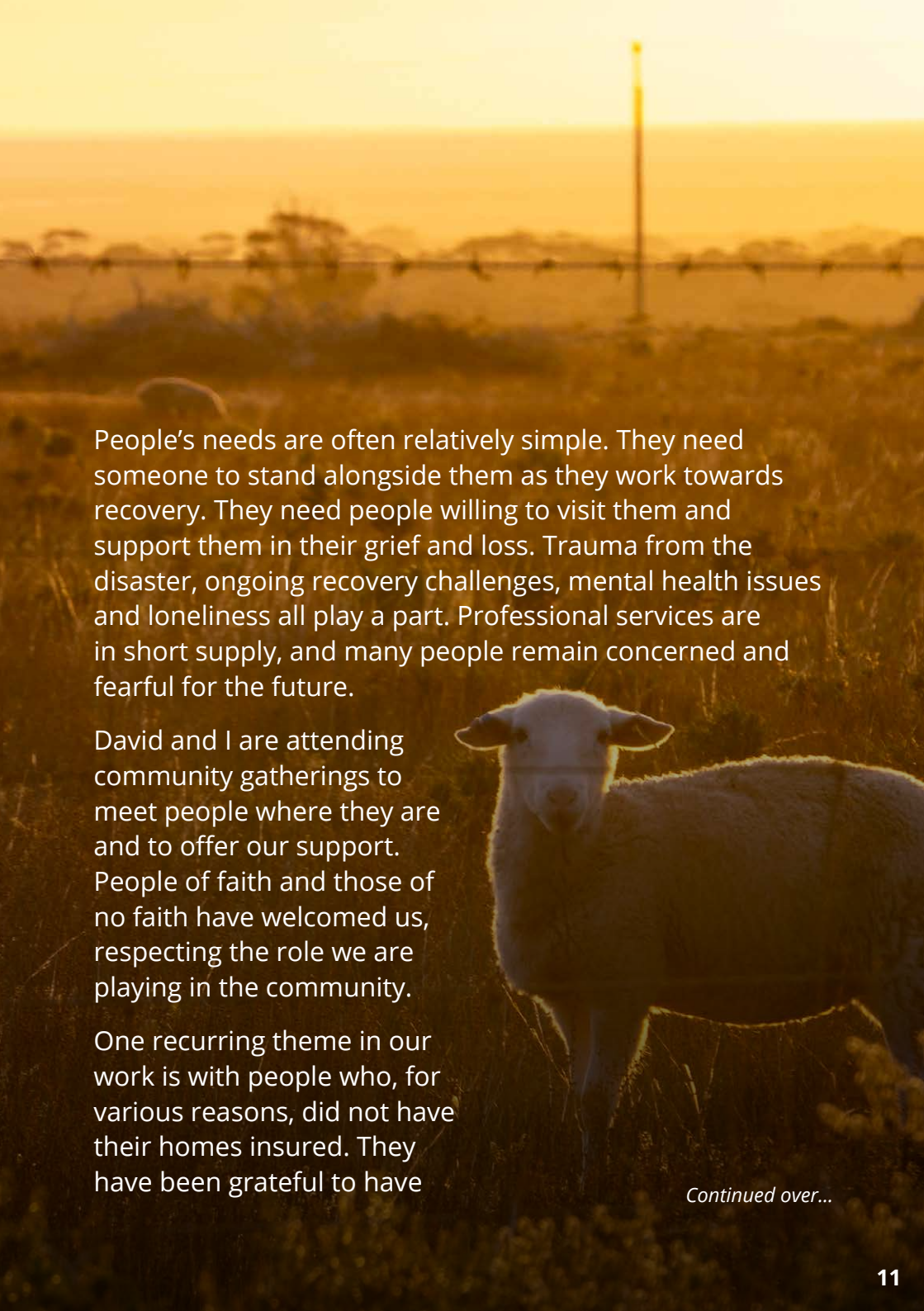
Rev Erica writes:

At around 8:00PM local time on 11 April 2021, Cyclone Seroja made landfall on the western coastline of Western Australia. It was a Category 4 severe tropical cyclone, bringing heavy rain and wind gusts of up to 170 km/h. Many buildings had their roofs torn off, some homes and farm equipment and machinery were completely destroyed, and livestock and vegetation were lost.

As a result of Seroja, a large number of families have left their properties. This has disrupted the wider fabric of whole communities, as shops and schools face life with fewer people to support them.

Many buildings remain damaged and unliveable. Pastoral and spiritual care of the impacted communities is another area of unmet need.

Including Frontier Services Bush Chaplains, Rev David Jackson and I, there are currently only three Clergy visiting the Midwest communities to which we travel.

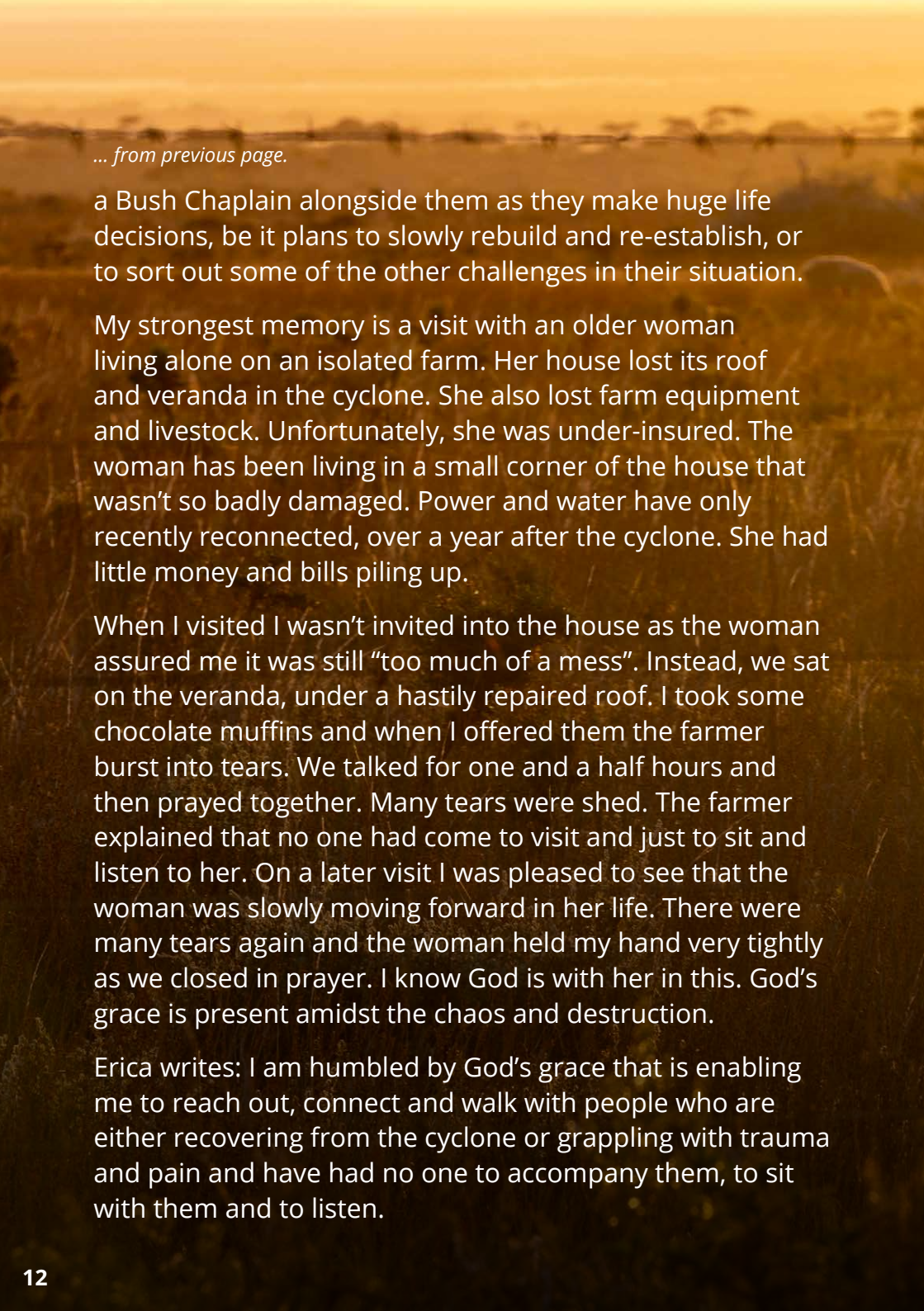
A white sheep stands in the foreground, looking towards the camera. The background is a field of tall grass and bushes, with a fence line visible. A tall, thin pole stands in the distance. The sky is a warm, golden color, suggesting sunset or sunrise.

People's needs are often relatively simple. They need someone to stand alongside them as they work towards recovery. They need people willing to visit them and support them in their grief and loss. Trauma from the disaster, ongoing recovery challenges, mental health issues and loneliness all play a part. Professional services are in short supply, and many people remain concerned and fearful for the future.

David and I are attending community gatherings to meet people where they are and to offer our support. People of faith and those of no faith have welcomed us, respecting the role we are playing in the community.

One recurring theme in our work is with people who, for various reasons, did not have their homes insured. They have been grateful to have

Continued over...



... from previous page.

a Bush Chaplain alongside them as they make huge life decisions, be it plans to slowly rebuild and re-establish, or to sort out some of the other challenges in their situation.

My strongest memory is a visit with an older woman living alone on an isolated farm. Her house lost its roof and veranda in the cyclone. She also lost farm equipment and livestock. Unfortunately, she was under-insured. The woman has been living in a small corner of the house that wasn't so badly damaged. Power and water have only recently reconnected, over a year after the cyclone. She had little money and bills piling up.

When I visited I wasn't invited into the house as the woman assured me it was still "too much of a mess". Instead, we sat on the veranda, under a hastily repaired roof. I took some chocolate muffins and when I offered them the farmer burst into tears. We talked for one and a half hours and then prayed together. Many tears were shed. The farmer explained that no one had come to visit and just to sit and listen to her. On a later visit I was pleased to see that the woman was slowly moving forward in her life. There were many tears again and the woman held my hand very tightly as we closed in prayer. I know God is with her in this. God's grace is present amidst the chaos and destruction.

Erica writes: I am humbled by God's grace that is enabling me to reach out, connect and walk with people who are either recovering from the cyclone or grappling with trauma and pain and have had no one to accompany them, to sit with them and to listen.



Hymn

Hymn 590: Together in Song What a Friend we Have in Jesus

- 1 What a friend we have in Jesus,
all our sins and griefs to bear,
what a privilege to carry
everything to God in prayer:
O what peace we often forfeit,
O what needless pain we bear,
all because we do not carry
everything to God in prayer.
- 2 Have we trials and temptations?
Is there trouble anywhere?
We should never be discouraged:
take it to the Lord in prayer.
Can we find a friend so faithful
who will all our sorrows share?
Jesus knows our every weakness;
take it to the Lord in prayer.
- 3 Are we weak and heavy-laden,
cumbered with a load of care?
Jesus is our only refuge:
take it to the Lord in prayer;
Do your friends despise, forsake you?
Take it to the Lord in prayer;
in his arms He'll take and shield you,
you will find a solace there.

A photograph showing the silhouettes of four people standing in a row, facing away from the camera with their arms raised in prayer. They are positioned in front of a bright sunset or sunrise, with the sun low on the horizon, creating a strong backlight effect and lens flare. The background shows a landscape with some distant structures and trees under a hazy sky.

Prayers for Others

Rev John Flynn's Prayer for others from
"The Bushman's Companion" (1910)

O God, we pray to Thee for the poor, the toiling, and the friendless; asking Thee, O loving Father, to succour them through Thy Son: who, being rich, became poor that He might be the Saviour of the poor, and needy, and lost.

We pray for our friends everywhere, keep their feet from falling, their eyes from tears; and preserve them and us, in the land of the living.

Make us able to forgive and help others: even as we would that they should forgive and help us. Hear this, our prayer, through the love of Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Amen

Our God, Creator and Sustainer of all life, we bring to you our prayers this day. We pray for people facing the threat of natural disaster.

For those who have faced flooding rains, whose properties have been inundated or lives threatened,

For those who have faced drought, watching and waiting as rivers and dams run dry, as earth shrinks and cracks and stock stagger for lack of feed

For those who have faced the threat of fires, in smoke-filled valleys, where blackened trees smoulder and broken people sift through charred possessions and consider whether to stay or leave.

For those who daily face the struggles of isolation, who work long hours, who long for companionship, who lay sleeplessly at night concerned for their future.

We pray for the Bush Chaplains and Outback Links volunteers, people like you and I, who turn up, offer a listening ear and a helping hand. Strengthen and encourage them in their service.

Prayers of the People

God of grace, God of love, in all these situations we have named, and for those we name in our hearts, we pray that you bring wisdom and peace, bring life and hope, your protection and mercy.

We pray this in Jesus' name.

Amen

*Based on 'Prayer for those facing flooding', written by Rev Garry Hardingham, Presbytery Minister and Chair, Presbytery of North Queensland 2/2/2019
'Prayers for those currently facing flooding, drought and fire' written by Rev Dr Stephen Robinson, Uniting Church National Disaster Recovery Officer*

A photograph of a dirt road in a rural setting. The road is reddish-brown and has tire tracks. It curves to the right. On the left side of the road, there is a grassy embankment with some low-lying shrubs. In the background, there are rolling hills under a clear sky. A fence and some trees are visible on the left side of the road.

Offering

With the support of the John Flynn Foundation, Frontier Services continues to reach out and connect with people in the bush who are facing continued adversities. We deeply appreciate and acknowledge the ongoing support of congregations and individuals across Australia.

With your support, our Bush Chaplains continue to provide practical, pastoral, and spiritual care to rural and remote communities going through hardships. Your generosity enables us to send Outback Links volunteers to remote corners of Australia to offer practical assistance to those who need it.

Thank you for playing such an important part as we work together to support people in rural and remote Australia.



Offering Prayer & Benediction

Rev John Flynn

"Good and faithful servant, you laid your hand magnificently on the challenge of building a great future for Australia.

"May God bless you and hold you in the palm of his hand.

"And may these our gifts be set aside as a living sacrifice, lived and worked to Your praise and glory."

Benediction *(could be read in addition)*

The Lord bless you and keep you;

the Lord make His face shine on you, and be gracious to you;

the Lord turn His face towards you and give you peace;

and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always.

Amen

Reflecting on the work of Rev John Flynn

- 1907** First nurse, Sister E.A. Main, based at Oodnadatta
- 1911** John Flynn ordained as a minister of the Presbyterian Church
- 1913** First active Bush Chaplain based in Pine Creek and Oodnadatta
- 1926** First successful wireless communication between Alice Springs and Hermannsburg
- 1929** First pedal wireless radio installed
- 1930** First Frontier News published
- 1939** Royal Flying Doctor Service established as a separate organisation
- 1951** School of the Air is born, Alice Springs
- 1951** All AIM nursing homes registered as hospitals
- 1951** John Flynn's death and Fred McKay appointed as Superintendent of the AIM
- 1956** John Flynn Memorial Church opens, Alice Springs
- 1977** Church union, forming the Uniting Church in Australia
- 1980** Name change from Australian Inland Mission to Frontier Services
- 1994** John Flynn first featured on the twenty dollar note
- 2002** John Flynn Foundation established

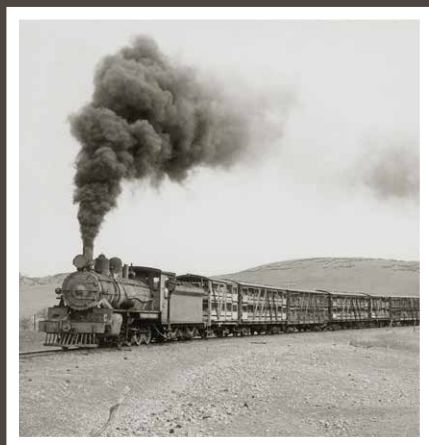


The John Flynn Foundation is the endowment fund for Uniting Church in Australia Frontier Services.

It provides for the long-term needs of isolated communities and individuals by building capital where the investment income is used to fund the work of Bush Chaplains while the capital continues to grow over time and provides a sustainable income stream into the future.

We honour the memory of Reverend John Flynn in the name of our Foundation, recognising that it is not just about a gift today but an investment in the future of rural and remote Australia, continuing his vision of a “mantle of safety” over the inland.

Our work is made possible with your kind donations. We thank you for your prayers and generosity; we couldn't do the work we do without your help.



Railway to Oodnadatta



AIM Nursing Home in Oodnadatta

THE *JOHN FLYNN* FOUNDATION



A PO Box 3424, Parramatta NSW 2124 Australia
E fsfundraising@frontierservices.org
T 1300 787 247
W www.frontierservices.org
F www.facebook.com/FrontierServices