



**Frontier Services**  
Standing with people in the bush



Frontier Services is an agency  
of Uniting Church in Australia

## ORDER OF SERVICE 2024

*Serve one another  
humbly in love*



## *Acknowledgement of Country*

In this place and this time, we are in the presence of God. All is holy. All is sacred. We acknowledge those who have cared for this place and its sacredness since time can be remembered, our First Peoples.

We acknowledge that we are in Country and pay our respect to elders who carry the songs and stories of this place and who can teach us the wisdom of their ways. We extend that respect to all First Nations people present, just as we welcome and offer our respect to people from all backgrounds. Together we are God's people.

*Artwork by Bush Chaplain Pastor Julia Lennon*

# *Call to Worship*

One looks up to the sky at night,  
Out from city and town lights and sees the wonder of the heavens.  
They tell of the glory of God.  
When we look around us,  
Wherever we are, we can see the hand of God in nature:  
The dry arid red dust plains which still teem with life;  
The dunes of sand which stretch on beyond our sight in waves;  
The lushness of bushland, be it scrubland, rainforest, or just valleys,  
plains, hills and mountains covered in greens of many hues;  
The features of this land which hold sacredness for our First Peoples and  
leave us in awe at their grandeur and beauty.  
Much that we behold leads us into thinking about you, God.  
Yet, you are always with us,  
At work in us and all people.  
We meet you, the Christ, when we are loved and when we love.  
Too often you are far from our thinking,  
But in this time and this space we turn ourselves to you,  
Heart, mind, strength and soul.  
We reach out in praise and prayer,  
Coming as your people,  
To hear your Word,  
And learn your way.  
Be with us now as Spirit,  
As we seek to connect with you anew.

**Amen**

# Hymn

## *Prayer of Praise and Thanksgiving*

You are like the flatness of our plains,  
Stretching beyond our horizon,  
Extending beyond what we can see,  
Leaving us in awe and wonder.  
You are like the red earth of the country,  
All and everywhere,  
Sustaining life,  
Ground of being.  
You are like the rock of our country,  
Ever diverse,  
Taking many forms,  
Wearing many shapes,  
Underpinning all,  
Stunning and inspiring beautiful.  
You are like the oceans,  
Thrilling and spectacular.  
Unpredictable,  
Ever moving,  
Source of life.  
You are like the bush,  
Chaotically splendid,  
Forests of abundance,

Bushes of shade and sanctuary,  
Breathing life and sustaining living things.

You are like the rivers and waterways,  
Doing as you will,  
Taking the path you choose,  
Changing the landscape with your patience and persistent moving,  
Bringing life-giving to all.

You are like all this, but more.

Our words are not enough.

You are the God of this place.

You are the God of all places.

You are the God of this time.

You are the God of all times.

We give you thanks.

We offer you praise.

We worship you,

Or seek to do so in this time and place.

**Amen**

# Prayer of Confession

You are our God.

We are your people:

People from farm and town,  
People from mob and group,  
People you have called to this land.

Like the difference from coast to inland,

From rainforest to desert,

From mountain to plain,

We are diverse people, but one in you, as your Church.

We know your love.

We seek your way.

We follow you, the Christ, and try to bear the fruit you call us to.

Yet, often our faith is as flat as a dry lake bed after a long time in the sun.

Our spirituality is as dry as a creek bed in drought.

Sometimes, even though we know you are the wellspring of life, we don't come to you in prayer or listen for your help in our times of trouble.

Sometimes we are too busy to practise our discipleship.

Sometimes we are too caught up in ourselves to notice the needs of others.

Sometimes we fail to love you in our failure to love our neighbour as ourselves.

Sometimes, like Peter denied you the need for you to wash his feet,

In our pride we fail to let others serve and love us, care for us in our need.

In all our falling short, we miss the goodness of your kingdom

Or the peace and joy that you hold out to us.

Forgive us our shortcomings.

Call us once again to your blessings of grace.

Help us let go of what is past,

What is unhelpful,

What is harmful,

And more fully be your people once more.

Show us again who we can be and how the world can be

When we walk together with you.

**Amen**

## Hymn

# Bible Readings

## Luke 15: 1-10

### The Parable of the Lost Sheep

Now all the tax collectors and sinners were coming near to listen to him. And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling and saying,

“This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them.”

So he told them this parable: “Which one of you, having a hundred sheep and losing one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the one that is lost until he finds it? And when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders and rejoices. And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and neighbours, saying to them,

‘Rejoice with me, for I have found my lost sheep.’ Just so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.

### The Parable of the Lost Coin

“Or what woman having ten silver coins, if she loses one of them, does not light a lamp, sweep the house, and search carefully until she finds it? And when she has found it, she calls together her friends and neighbours, saying, ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found the coin that I had lost.’ Just so, I tell you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.”

*You may also choose to read*

**Luke 15: 11-32**

**The Parable of the Prodigal and His Brother**



# Reflection

***This reflection comes from Pastor Michael Chapman who is a Bush Chaplain serving in the Carpentaria / McKay Remote Area (QLD).***

In Luke 15 Jesus tells three parables in a row, all with a similar message. The three parables in this chapter are often referred to as the parable of the lost sheep, the parable of the lost coin, and the parable of the lost son (also known as The Parable of the Prodigal and His Brother).

Each of them tells of God's heart for all those whom God has created and dearly loves wherever they may be. In particular, the first parable reveals Jesus' heart to be with that one sheep who is far away from the others. Jesus will leave the 99 sheep who had remained with him so he can go searching for the one who is separated. And when he finds that sheep, he joyfully puts it on his shoulders and returns to gather his friends and neighbours. He calls them to celebrate with him because of that one sheep.

Jesus was prepared to leave the 99 to be with the one, because he so dearly loves that one and really doesn't want them to miss out on being with him.

It seems to me that if Jesus was prepared to leave the 99 to be with the one, then we cannot just focus on the 99% of the population that live in cities and towns, mostly near the coast. We must also share God's love and care and the message of salvation with the 1% who live remotely.

The Australian Government estimates that 86% of the Australian landmass is home to about 2% of the population. This 86% of the country is described as being remote or very remote.

The role that our Bush Chaplains have, as they minister across vast regions that often have only very small populations, is to share God's love and care to all people, following the lead that Jesus gave in the parables we have read.

# Hymn

## Prayers of Intercession

Oh Lord, we live in the world of pain and suffering. We are distressed by the news of wars in our world. We cannot determine who is right or who is wrong because no matter where we look we see human suffering.

And many ask where is God in all this?

From your Word in Matthew 25, dear Jesus, we learn where you are: whenever a child is hungry and crying – you are there; whenever a mother weeps – you are there; whenever a young man dies – you are there.

Lord God we pray for people who live across remote and isolated parts of our country, for people who live on the land, working hard to provide the food and resources we need to sustain our lives. Lord be with them in their loneliness, their isolation and their daily challenges.

We pray for people who have been impacted by floods, cyclones, droughts and fires across this vast nation. As people make difficult decisions to stay or to leave, to rebuild or to move on, as they replant crops, rebuild herds, start again, we pray they would know your love, your comfort and your strength.

Uphold our Bush Chaplains and the volunteers who travel to support people in their times of need. May we too be people always willing to turn up, have a chat, offer a helping hand and walk alongside those in need.

We pray for people and concerns in our own community .....

Lord Jesus Christ – help us to be where you are and help the helpless in our community and beyond.

**Amen**





# *Offering*

Lord God, we bring our offerings to you this day out of gratitude for your blessings to us and for all we have received. We pray that they might be used so that all people, especially those in remote corners of this country, may know your love, your comfort and your peace.

**Amen**



# *Hymn*

## *Words of Mission and Sending Out*

Like the sun rises on coastland, mountain areas or inland,  
May the warmth of your love fire up our hearts  
That we may be and bear your blessing to all.

# *Blessing*

Bless us with all that we need  
With good people to share the journey  
With those who encourage us towards love and good works.  
May your peace rest in our spirits like the deep stillness of the desert  
May your purpose move in us like fresh winds across the plains  
May your faith move us to do great things like the power of tides or  
rushing waters  
May your way be planted firmly and strongly in our hearts like the  
powerful shapes of rock and stone across the country  
May your blessing fill our hearts,  
That we might share it with all.

**Amen**



# Suggested Hymns

Depending on your congregation's relevant CCLI license, you may like to:

- Choose one of the Frontier Services hymns on page 12-13.
- Choose hymns or songs with which your community is familiar.
- Choose one of a number of hymns found in Together in Song, which reflect some of the beauty and uniqueness of Australia.

Suggested Australian hymns include:

- TiS 166 – Cosmic Praise (Sing a new song) – Richard Connolly
- TiS 188 – Where wide sky rolls down and touched red sand – Elizabeth J. Smith
- TiS 253 – O Lord Jesus Marrkapmirr – Aboriginal People of Arnhem Land and D'Arcy Wood
- TiS 672 – Lord of earth and all creation – Michael Rayner Thwaites and Honor Mary Thwaites
- The well-known song Deep Stillness may also be used.

## **Deep Stillness, the story of the song**

'Deep Stillness' was first written by Julie Perrin as a blessing for a gathering of the Uniting Church Synod of Victoria. The words drew on images from the Australian landscape. Ian Ferguson created a gestural prayer to align with the words as they were spoken. The following year, Lutheran songwriter Robin Mann contacted Julie to ask permission to set the words to music – and so a three-way creation came into being.

Frontier Services later requested Julie to write an additional verse for the cold places. Because the gestural prayer does not align with the second verse, Julie has requested the additional verse not be further shared. Julie, Robin and Ian are keen to preserve the integrity of the original 3-way creation.

'Deep Stillness' has become an anthem used in the Uniting Church and beyond; published multiple times and sung by thousands of people. The original song is licenced by CCLI which is now a part of Song Select.

# Frontier Services Centenary Song of Praise

*Words and Music created especially for Frontier Services by  
Rev David MacGregor © 2012 Willow Publishing*

Here's a story  
birthed by pioneers  
By Flynn, McKay and more  
The sharing of Christ's love  
with inland's heart  
By air, by road, at station home  
across this great south land  
Frontier's, touched one hundred  
years so far

## **CHORUS:**

*Right across this sunburnt country  
Marked by droughts and flooding  
rains  
with faces, places off the beaten  
track:  
in mercy's name  
God's outback mission keeps on  
bringing hope and health and light  
God's "mantle of safety"  
'cross this land tonight*

It's the story of special people  
resilient; of rugged hope  
Yet times come  
when resilience struggles too.  
When remoteness seems to  
overwhelm;  
community comes hard  
"Flynn of the Inland's"  
legacy shines through

## **Repeat Chorus**

And the story journeys onwards  
Join hundreds serving now  
We offer hand and heart and voice;  
God's grace  
With the outback people we will  
stand  
With their spirit, we rejoice  
We celebrate the nation's Frontier  
voice

## **Repeat Chorus**

# Mantle of Safety

*Words and Music created especially for Frontier Services by  
Bush Chaplain Pastor Lindsay Ginn*

Desert wind  
Scorching heat  
On a mission of hope  
Journey slow  
Loneliness  
Hardship on every side

Reverend Flynn  
Chose to begin making a mantle of  
safety  
Changing life for those in the bush  
Obeying God's call for his life

The dream carries on  
Where others have gone  
Bush Chaplains keep it alive  
Day after day  
Out on the road  
Standing with those in the bush

It's no easy task  
Why? You might ask...

Why bring a mantle of safety?  
Because life's still hard  
For those in the bush  
And we are committed to help

A family in need  
The hungry to feed  
Helping out after disaster  
A listening ear  
Sharing a tear  
Hearing the stories they tell

Reverend Flynn  
Chose to begin  
Making a mantle of safety  
The mantle's still there  
Because we all care  
Standing with those in the bush

# *Our History*

Frontier Services is an Australian charity and not-for-profit organisation founded in 1912 through the work of Reverend John Flynn. Our primary purpose is to support people in rural and remote Australia through our two core programs: Bush Chaplaincy and Outback Links.

As an agency of the Uniting Church we work in partnership with the Uniting Church across Australia, which enables us to provide chaplaincy, advocate for communities and mobilise volunteers and resources where they are needed most. These include Indigenous communities, isolated properties and farms, mining communities, and other remotely located areas. We are the friendly face who shows up and offers support when no one else does.

The only reason that we are able to go beyond the furthest fence to help people in rural Australia is because of people like you. Thank you for joining us to stand with people in the bush.

Special thanks to Rev Jon Humphries - Advocate of the UCA Transforming Worship Circle of Interest ([facebook.com/groups/transformingworship](https://facebook.com/groups/transformingworship)) and other members of the Transforming Worship Circle, Rev David MacGregor, Pastor Julia Lennon, Pastor Lindsay Ginn, and Pastor Michael Chapman.

## You can help bush communities today and into the future.

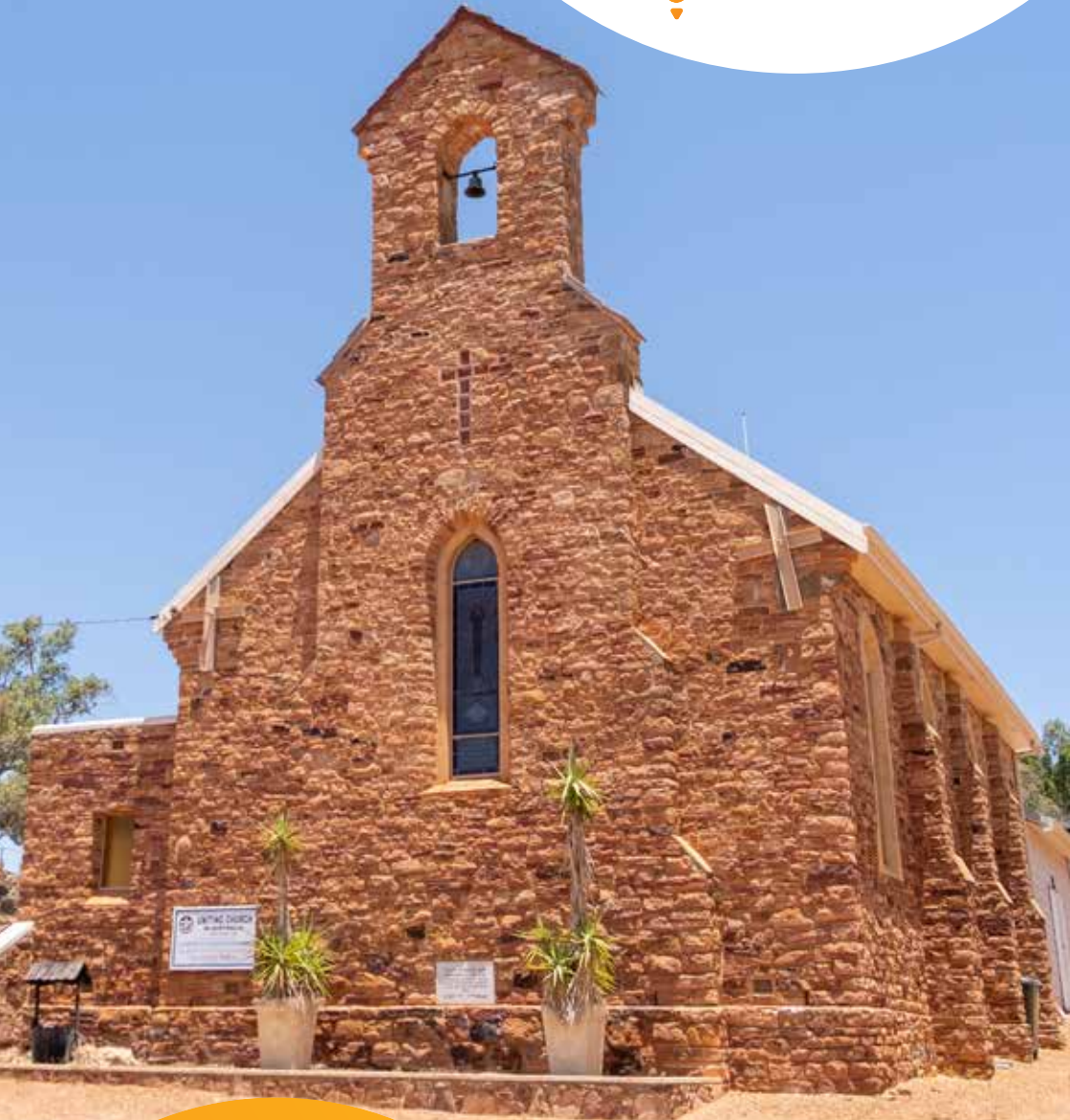
- ✓ Make a tax-deductible gift by calling us at **1300 787 247** or donating online at **[frontierservices.org/donate](https://frontierservices.org/donate)**
- ✓ Register to volunteer at **[frontierservices.org/outback-links](https://frontierservices.org/outback-links)** and to check out our current volunteering opportunities in areas of most need
- ✓ Leave a lasting legacy by including a Gift in your Will to Frontier Services, visit **[frontierservices.org/bequest](https://frontierservices.org/bequest)**

Scan the QR code to find out more





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