

## **HISTORY OF THE A.E.F.**

As the Gospel of Jesus Christ spread across Australia, outreach to Aboriginal people was also a part of the Great Commission.

As Aboriginal Christians became involved in the spread of the Gospel to their own people, they had a desire to know God better and to follow the Lord Jesus Christ.

At the time, few Aboriginal Christians held leadership positions in the white Christian missions, that had outreach to Aboriginal people. Aboriginal Christian leaders were struggling to find their own identity and where they fitted within the plan of Christian Missions. The lack of leadership opportunities became a concern. God was placing a new vision on the hearts of the Aboriginal Christian leaders across Australia.

As early as 1962, Aboriginal Christian leaders began discussing leadership issues. Over the next eight years they worked hard to bring recognition to their leaders.

In January, 1970, at a conference in Port Augusta, South Australia, seventy delegates, mainly Aboriginal Christian leaders, who represented Christian Missions and Denominations, decided it was time to unite their efforts into one national body. It was here that the Aboriginal Evangelical Fellowship of Australia (AEF) was formed.

### **THE FIRST NATIONAL COUNCIL**

There were twelve National Council Members elected five from the Eastern Area and seven from the Western Area.

President - David Kirk, NSW

Vice President - Ben Mason, WA

Vice President - Bill Bird, NSW

Secretary - Jack Braeside, WA

Treasurer - Cedric Jacobs, WA

Ron Williams, WA. Denzil Humphries, WA. Sonny Graham, WA. Cecil Grant, NSW. Ossie Cruse, NSW. Wali Fejo, NT. Lyle Browning, Qld.

### **OBJECTIVES**

1. To seek to be available to God, so that by His Holy Spirit, He will call out from among Aboriginal and Islander people, a people for Himself; Acts 15.14.
2. To encourage Aboriginal and Islander Christians to take their God given role within the church.
3. To turn Aboriginal and Islander people from being a mission field to becoming effective in Christian ministry.
4. 4. To foster and maintain links with similar International Bodies.

## **STRATEGY**

The Fellowship implements its ministry with six main strategies:

1. EVANGELISM
2. LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT
3. WHOLISTIC MINISTRY
4. CULTURAL INTERCHANGE
5. CHURCH PLANTING
6. ENTERPRISE

## **EVANGELISM**

### **OBJECTIVES**

To take the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ to all Australians is central to the ministry of AEF particularly emphasising evangelistic outreach to Aboriginal and Islander people.

### **STRATEGY**

1. To encourage the Evangelistic programs carried out by our local churches in our communities.
2. To have an evangelistic team that will operate Nationally and Internationally.
3. Evangelism is also carried out at AEF conventions and rallies locally and nationally.
4. Through personal, evangelism in Aboriginal communities, on the streets, in the prisons across Australia.
5. Through radio, audio tapes, videos, literature, music and song.
6. By teaching evangelism in our colleges and churches.
7. Evangelism, at state and national level.
8. Through outreach conducted by women's evangelistic ministries reaching out to other women in various communities.

## **LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT**

### **OBJECTIVES**

Developing Aboriginal Christian leaders and discipling them is implemented in the local church and through AEF's two training colleges:

### **STRATEGY**

1. Christian Leadership Training: This is implemented through our Churches, Bible Colleges and Theological Colleges. Many of our leaders are accessing international advanced leadership training.

## **WHOLISTIC MINISTRY**

### **STRATEGIES**

Conducted through the ministry of the Aboriginal Evangelical Fellowship Family and Youth Services.

1. Managing, operating residential premises for homeless youth.
2. Providing educational programs to unemployed youth, teaching employment skills and providing ongoing job support.
3. Providing counselling for families and youth.
4. To carry out such other programs and activities which contribute to the welfare, health and needs of those Aboriginal and Islander communities, family and youth in need of benevolent assistance.
5. Seminars are held where discussion is centred on the relevant issues that relate to youth.
6. State and National seminars and workshops organised to culturally address the issues that affect families and youth.

## **CULTURAL INTERCHANGE**

### **STRATEGIES**

Through interaction with local churches at all levels.

## **CHURCH PLANTING**

### **OBJECTIVES**

1. To promote the unity of churches with ministry to people of Aboriginal and Islander descent in faith, fellowship, worship and evangelism.
2. To encourage the establishment and development of local evangelical churches with emphasis with reaching people of Aboriginal and Islander descent.
3. To help fellowships and other groups where the Gospel is being preached to form local churches.
4. To advise and assist local churches affiliated with the Association (when requested) in the calling of suitable pastors and in such other ways as will assist them to become more affective in their Gospel witness and Bible teaching ministries.
5. To guide intending pastors so that they may be given the necessary Bible training and experience to be recognised as accredited pastors by the Association for appointment to a church.

6. To arrange means of cooperation between affiliated churches that have already been formed so that they can help and encourage one another.
7. To help any church affiliated with the Association (on the request of that church) to help settle any dispute that may arise in that church.
8. To discipline if necessary any member church which through wrong teaching or behaviour bring shame or harm to the Lord's Name or His Church.
9. To operate in accordance with the Doctrinal Statement as laid out in the Incorporation Document.

### **ENTERPRISE**

Our objective is to establish businesses in an attempt to raise our own funds to assist the ministry.

#### **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

#### **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

The A.E.F. National Council – 12<sup>th</sup> October, 1998