

Acknowledging Country and Indigenous Peoples

Notes:

- These have been put together for use at and by GOBC (curated from many sources).
- They are designed to be used as the beginning of our service as part of our Call to Worship. They acknowledge the people who God placed as custodians of the land on which our church stands, and where we gather together to worship.
- They are designed to be read out by a leader, or communally read off the screen.
- They can also be used word for word, or as inspiration for your own text.
- They can be used within an opening prayer, or read as a stand-alone statement.
- It is important that these are done, not as a token effort, but in genuine thanks to God and the custodians of His creation. As with all praise and thanks to God, this is done with a joy and hope that He has given us.

Verses that may work together well with Acknowledgements of Country:

Psalm 95:1-3

Come, let us sing for joy to the Lord;
let us shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation.
Let us come before him with thanksgiving
and extol him with music and song.
For the Lord is the great God,
the great King above all gods.

Psalm 100:4-5

Enter his gates with thanksgiving
and his courts with praise;
give thanks to him and praise his name.
For the Lord is good and his love endures forever;
his faithfulness continues through all generations.

Daniel 2:23

I thank and praise you, God of my ancestors:
You have given me wisdom and power,
you have made known to me what we asked of you,
you have made known to us the dream of the king.

Acknowledgements of Country

- (1) "This land is God's land and God's Spirit dwells here. We acknowledge the Kurna people, traditional custodians of this land under God. We commit ourselves again to working for reconciliation in this land."

- (2) From before recorded time, the Kurna people cared for this Land. We praise the Creator for the beauty of this Land and honour those who have offered themselves in tending it.
We acknowledge the Elders and communities 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.
- (3) The Ancient of Days breathed life into this Land and her Peoples. From time beyond our reckoning the Kurna people have blessed this place through their care and concern. We pay our respects to their Elders and Leaders, past and present, and pray for the future of their communities. May we walk gently and respectfully on this Land.
- (4) As we look upon the hills and valleys, we see the love poured out upon this Land by those who have cared for this Land since time beyond measure.
We honour those who have gone before and those who are yet to come.
May we be mindful of the calling God places on humanity to care for Creation.
May we take the lead from the Kurna people, whose stories are entwined with the stewarding of this place. May we learn from them and walk with them.
- (5) This is God's Land.
Many have gone before who have honoured God by caring for the Land, in the ways they have lived and in the stories they have shared.
We give thanks for the Kurna people, who have held as sacred the duty of protecting the Land and living in harmony with it.
May God honour and bless them – now and to eternity.
- (6) As we gather in this place, we give thanks for the Kurna People.
We acknowledge the commitment their ancestors made, across the generations, to nurturing this Land. Together, may we walk into the future, recognising the sacred footsteps that continue to lead us to the promise of Heaven.
- (7) *Where the church or venue is near to a known site of aboriginal celebration:*
We acknowledge that the site of this church is in walking distance of [sacred site] which is the site of ceremony and ritual of the Kurna people, the traditional custodians of this region. We are awed that they recognised and celebrated the religious significance of place, plant and all living creatures; and that care for the earth was implanted in their law. We honour them for this. And we look for and delight in the sacred in our midst. We pray that in the power of the Holy Spirit we might work together for reconciliation and justice in this land.
- (8) For this Land - We give thanks!
For the First Peoples [or Kurna People] - We give thanks!
We honour the custodians of sacred stories, of dreamings and the connections with the deep earth and oceans.
May we work together for the restoration of the Land and Sea and Her Peoples.

(9) From river to ocean, from campfire to hearth,
may the First People who have cared for this Land be blessed.
From breath to song, from step to dance,
may those who follow your Songlines *[or Ancient Stories]* guide us on the journey of
living honourably in this place.
From greeting to Amen, from silence to chorus,
may our worship join with the voices of the First Peoples of this Land.

(10) *[A rock is placed before the people].*
Over eons the earth has settled and formed. The colours merge and the stories
entwine.
May those who have kept the stories of God's earth be honoured.

[Water is placed before the people].
The flow of life ripples, finding cracks and crevices. It glistens and sparkles with
promise.
May those who quench a spiritual thirst be blessed.

[A candle or fire is lit].
Darkness is banished with the sharing of warmth.
Relationships enlighten and corruption dissipates.
May the Light of the World be carried in the hearts of the People of God.

[The people stretch out their hands, palms upward].
We reach out to God and to one another.
May God remake us as a Covenant People,
Bound together by the Spirit of this Land and guided by Her First Peoples.

(11)
In the Dreaming, the Spirit of God brought forth the blessing of Ancient Life through
Mother Earth.
Ground Beings were given breath and rhythm... the offspring of the heart of God!
This place was tended by the People – people of this Ground and this Land's
rhythms. We give thanks for their custodianship and honour their Elders – past,
present and future.

(12)
We listen to the breath of the earth.
May we hear the groaning of creation.

We listen to the sighing of the wind.
May we hear the songs from the skies.

We listen to the movement of the oceans and waters.
May we hear the shared waters of life in our being.

We open our ears to the wisdom
of the Land and her peoples.
May we listen, both to the silence and the speaking.

We honour and pay our respects
to those on whose Land we meet,
especially the Kurna people.
We pause and we listen.

[Silence]

Those who have ears – Hear!
May we hear the voice of the Spirit in Creation,
Now and to the end of time.

(13)

This is God's Land.

Many have gone before
who have honoured God
by caring for the Land,
in the ways they have lived
and in the stories they have shared.

We give thanks
for the Kurna people,
who have held as sacred
the duty of protecting the Land
and living in harmony with it.

May God honour and bless them
– now and to eternity.

(14)

We would like to acknowledge, the Traditional Custodians of the land on
which we gather, acknowledge, lament and pray today.

They are stewards on behalf of THE ALMIGHTY CREATOR. We would also like
to pay our respects to the Elders past, present and future.

(15)

As we gather in the presence of God, we acknowledge the traditional
custodians of the land upon which we meet. In his wisdom and love, our heavenly
Father gave this estate to the Kurna people. Upon this land they met for
generations until the coming of British settlers. As we continue to learn to live
together on these ancestral lands, we acknowledge and pay our respects to their
elders, past and present, and pray that God will unite us all in a knowledge of his
Son, in whom all things were created, in heaven and on earth, whether visible or
invisible – for all things have been created through him and for him.