



35th SYNOD

23–25
October 2020

Bible study guide

These Bible studies come to you from leaders of the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress from the Queensland Synod and the National Congress. In each of the eight reflections we hear these leaders' reflections on the theme of "Grow" and the reading from Ephesians 4:15-16.

The videos were recorded in August and September 2020 over Zoom and in person.

One way to engage with each reflection is to consider the following:

- What connected with you?
- What do you have more questions about?
- What surprised you?
- What actions are you being called to?

This approach is based on the Swedish Bible Study Method and is regularly used at Nungalinya College—the premier Combined Churches Training College for Indigenous Australians, formally supported by the Uniting, Anglican and Catholic churches of the Northern Territory.

For further questions for each reflection, please see below.

Rev Dennis Corowa starts his reflection by speaking of truth telling and hearing the stories of those who are victims within the context of God's love. He then shares stories of his ministry in Townsville, stories of joy as well as frustration and pain.

- Sometimes it is hard to hear stories of the pain of other people. How do you respond when you hear stories of First Peoples' struggles?
- How can you pay more attention to these stories from First Peoples? Where can you find these stories?
- Dennis then shares about the need for the body to pay attention to healing. What images of healing help you through hard times? What are some ways we could make room for healing for people who have been hurt by the church?



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Natalie Lewis shares an experience of being at a writers' retreat that brought together First Peoples and Second Peoples to work on their own theological reflections. Natalie's painting reflects this experience of feeling valued and of valuing others.

- Have you had an experience similar to Natalie's? What are some of the characteristics of your experience that made it such a reflection of the body of Christ?

Marrpalawuy Marika speaks about the importance of listening to each other under the shelter of Christ.

- What does this look like to you in your congregation?
- Who are the people in your community and your congregation who might not have their voices heard?

St Barnabas Uniting Church Australia youth group in Napranum show us what it looks like to value the contribution of each group and member of the church.

- Think of your congregation. Do you feel that your congregation values everyone's contribution? What are some ways that you could show that appreciation?

Alison Overeem and Grace and Ayla Williams from Leprena Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress in Tasmania share the importance of working together for a common end. The story of Leprena in recent years has given her hope in the reconciliation between First and Second Peoples made possible in Christ. Leprena and Tasmanian congregations are working together for justice for First Peoples in Tasmania.

- If your congregation was going to start having closer relationships with First Peoples in your area where would you start? What would help you start? What would stop you?

Yurranydjil Dhurrkay shares about speaking the truth in love so that we can grow strong together. Sometimes we can speak the truth but forget the love.

- How could Yurranydjil's focus on being in the love of Christ help you to both listen to truth as well as speak truth?



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Rhane Lester shares from Adnyamathanha eyes. She imagines the body as being the whole creation.

- How would including the whole creation into our idea of the body of Christ change our relationship to the rest of creation?

Mark Kickett shares a personal story of watching the growth of his niece who had just been born. His niece needs love and support to grow.

- How can you help grow the faith of others, as well as pay attention to how God is wanting you to grow?



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