

Farewell Minutes - Rev Peter Greenwood

It has been a joy and privilege to work alongside Peter Greenwood these past few years.

Peter is a man of deep faith and a pastoral heart. As he and I have travelled together through the APY Lands, I have been amazed to see Peter at work. In each community he manages to find people to whom he can offer a listening ear, a supportive word of encouragement, a prayer. I feel sure that many Anangu and Piranpa have appreciated his warm friendship and, in the process, have come a little nearer to the God who has come to us in Jesus.

Peter has an amazing capacity for networking. A conversation with one person leads to another person to contact and visit, and then another, and so on. In the process, Peter himself is greatly energised. His sense of joy is contagious!

Peter has done all he can to support Christian leadership among Anangu. He has developed great sensitivity and wisdom in knowing when to intervene and when to keep out of the way.

Tjilpi Greenwood has worked ecumenically as far as possible – it is the Lord's work, not the Uniting Church's work. His partnership with Majors Dennis and Kathleen White of the Salvation Army and his respect for and courtesy towards Christian Family members and others have borne fruit.

Peter always remains open to the Spirit. His morning quiet times are sacrosanct, and then, throughout the day, he listens for, and takes opportunities that present themselves. This means that general plans are always flexible. There may be an opportunity for yet another in-depth conversation or another person to meet. Even when in Alice Springs there are often long telephone conversations with Anangu. It never ceased to amaze me how "co-incidences" presented themselves, always resulting in an unexpected ministry opportunity.

He has also had a vision for leadership development. The ecumenical ITECA committee, under his wise guidance, has steadily moved toward a deeper partnership with Nungalinga College through a branch campus in Alice Springs. With steady patience, step by step, he has led the committee to do what was needed to make the vision a reality. At the same time, he has organised and facilitated the teaching of the NRCC Educator, not only in Alice Springs, but also more informally through the APY lands.

Peter thinks long-term. Once he discerns that an opportunity or goal is from God, he is doggedly determined in attaining that goal. The church at Mimili was built, entirely suitable for the local context. The house at Pukatja has been renovated, and the adjoining translation centre was designed and constructed - which now opens up the opportunity for the next phase of the Bible translation program. A comfortable cabin has been designed and built on the site as well, for visiting church staff. The house at Ngarutjara has been cared for and improved. In all this, Peter has not only put his training and experience as an architect to excellent use, he has facilitated involvement by extremely competent work parties from Melbourne and Adelaide.

Peter and Sue's hospitality, both in Alice Springs and in the APY Lands, is well known. I suspect Peter finds it much easier to give than to receive.

Rev. Greenwood does not find it easy to talk about his achievements or successes. In fact, it is doubtful if he sees them as *his* achievements at all. He is modest almost to a fault. And so his strengths and gifts sometimes go unrecognised. I am therefore delighted to have the opportunity to place on record something about the ministry of Peter Greenwood as I have observed it in recent years. He is truly a saint of God.

Our prayers and blessings go with you Peter and Sue. Wherever God may lead you, God will no doubt have many others to lead to you and be blessed by your quiet, prayerful, godly ministry.

Robert Bos

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