Coordinate Report to Synod October 2018

*John 6:35 Bala ŋayi Djesuny lakaranhaminan ŋanyapinya ŋayi bitjanminan, “Yo. Ŋarra muka dhuwal Ŋatha Walŋa-gurrupanamirrnydja. Ŋuli nhe dhu ŋula yol yolŋu marrtji räliny ŋarrakalnydja, ga märr-yuwalkmirriyirrnydja nhe dhu ŋarraku, nheny dhu yakan buluny djaṉŋarrthirr ga ŋar'ŋaryun ŋunhany ŋunhi birrimbirrnydja nhuŋu djinawany', bili manygarrayirrnydja nhe dhu ga ŋunhi ŋarrakiyinguŋun yan waŋganyguŋun.* Jesus replied, “I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry again. Whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.

The Mission of Coordinate is to Support Indigenous people in the Northern Synod to access the Scriptures in their heart languages through translation and Scripture in Use work. This work brings Jesus’ words in John 6:35 to fruition.

There have been changes in the Pitjatjantjarra Old Testament project with the retirement after 40 years of Paul Eckert and the arrival of Dave Barnett with family in Pukatja. A seemless succession plan has enabled the translation of the Old Testament to continue with determination and passion from the many translators across the APY lands and in Adelaide with the support of Louise Sherman from Bible Society in Adelaide.

The production of the Pitjantjatjarra New Testament audio book with 40 different voices and full sound effects was an epic project completed in April this year with distribution happening through the APY lands this September.

Sadly we have lost two significant translators this year with K. Armstrong (Pitjtjantjarra) and DB Garawirrtja (Warramiri).

A group of 5 from the top end travelled to Pukatja for the Easter celebrations – the “M Squad”: Maratja Dhamarraṉdji, Mally McLellan, Matjarra Garrawurra, Mary Ŋändama and Margaret Miller. This proved to be a significant time of sharing and reconnecting with old friends and translation colleagues. These opportunities for people from different language projects to meet and discuss each others work are inspirational.

In March this year theWangurri and Dhaŋu’mi Gospels of Mark were recorded with the help of Global Recording Networks (GRN) and can both now be found on the 5Fish site. The Wangurri Gospel of Mark had been dedicated the year before and the Dhuwa Dhaŋu’mi was dedicated at Yirrkala in April.

In July this year Nyäluŋ Ḏuṉḏiwuy and her team of checkers along with AuSIL workers completed the final check for the Gospel of Mark in Dhuwaya, so this Gospel just awaits publication, final recordings and dedication.

The “Our Yolŋu Story of Faith” Documentary about Bible Translation on Elcho Island has been shown at numerous festivals and has been winning many awards.

In West Arnhem, Maningrida welcomed the return of Lynn Heywood to her work as a linguist supporting the Njeppena translators. At Warruwi Goulburn Island the Maung speakers await the distribution of the audio Gospel of Mark.

The big news for 2018 is the expected commencement of a Diploma of Translating at Nungalinya College in 2019. Coordinate has chaired the Steering Group that has put support behind this wonderful project. Significant finances have been committed to from Bible Society Australia, Coordinate, CMS and Wycliffe Australia which will enable the employment of a full time teacher/coordinator and part time second teacher and enable the Diploma Units to be taught in communities as unaccredited units. To enable our financial commitment to this project Coordinate has launched a Scholarship Fund. Already Uniting Financial Services has made a considerable contribution to this fund.

Many changes in personnel and structure within our partnering organisation AuSIL will mean new possibilities for how decisions are made and what translation work will be completed in the near future and we look forward to the opportunities that these changes will lead to.

As Yurranydjil writes in our latest Newsletter:“We are waiting on the LORD to reveal which way to move forward. Please join us in praying that the Lord’s new way(s) will be made clear for all, and that those being called to this Scripture work in North East Arnhem land will be faithful in following and serving Him.”

Just this August, John 6:35 has been brought to my attention three or four times, reminding me that the only way to move forward is to go to the one who is the ‘Bread of Life’.

Uniting Church Northern Synod, and its NRCC partnership, both Yolŋu and Balanda; but also our Coordinate partnerships with AuSIL, Wycliffe, Bible Society, Nungalinya College, MAFLT, ARDS, GRN, Translators, Ministers, Pastors, Deans, and Educators, have to turn to the One who gives us the words of Eternal Life.

*Philippians 3:13 Mah, nawu karridangerrinj! Minj ngabangmemayinj nawu kayingkihyo ngardduk. Dja ngaleng ngaye ngadjalkurduyime kundjalkudji.*

No, dear brothers and sisters, I have not achieved it, but I focus on this one thing: Forgetting the past and looking forward to what lies ahead.

Louise Macdonald

Resource Worker for Coordinate