

THE ABORIGINAL EVANGELICAL FELLOWSHIP BIBLE COLLEGE OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA:



a report from Down Under

The Aboriginal Evangelical Fellowship Bible College (AEF/BC) commenced its teaching ministry on the 2nd February 1985 in a little Brethren Chapel in East Victoria Park, a suburb about six kilometres south of Western Australia's capital city, Perth. Previously the college teaching ministry was in the country town of Gnowangerup approximately 330 kilometres south of Perth, under what was then the United Aboriginal Mission, which started with a couple of students coming to study from time to time in 1959. We are now situated on our own property in Forrestdale, about fifteen kilometres south-west of Perth in a partly rural area. Our goal is to train pastors,

evangelists, teachers and Christian leaders for the church of God among aboriginal and non-aboriginal people. Most of our students are of aboriginal descent; however we do get the non-aboriginal student coming to study from time to time.

The college principal, Pastor Clive Hayden, is aboriginal and is responsible for the teaching ministry of the Bible college as well as to the college council for the everyday running of the college. The principal also oversees the teaching staff of the Bible college. Because we are training men and women in the Lord's work, he must ensure that lecturers are grounded in



the Word of God. The reason for this is because we believe that the whole of the Scriptures, both the Old and New Testaments as originally given, are the verbally inspired Word of God, supreme in authority and completely free from error. As the Apostle Paul said in 2 Timothy 3.16, 'All scripture is given by inspiration of God'. The second epistle of Peter 1.21 adds, 'For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost'. Thus, with Jesus we seek the Lord to 'sanctify [our students] through thy truth: thy word is truth' (John 17.17).

The King James Version is the only edition of the Bible used in the college and all college lecturers, whether on staff or visiting, must be men who use the King James Version. Many of our aboriginal people still hold dearly to the King James Version and find it to be the best translation to read and from which to memorise Scripture. We find it difficult to use any of the other modern translations because we can see holes in them. Revelation 22.18,19 tells us,

The Aboriginal Evangelical Fellowship has as its vision:

» 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)

» To encourage Aboriginal and Islander Christians to take their God-given role within the church

» To turn Aboriginal and Islander people from being a mission field to becoming effective in Christian ministry

» To foster and maintain links with similar International Bodies'

One way in which the AEF is seeking to fulfil this vision is through the Aboriginal Evangelical Fellowship Bible College of Western Australia.

For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the



plagues that are written in this book: and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.

Second Timothy 3.16,17 says of the inspired Scriptures that they are

profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.

Many modern translations are being used to get people into the ecumenical movement, which we seek to avoid.

At this point in time we are building a new lecture and administration block on the thirteen acres that we own, which will enable fifty to seventy students to study at the Bible college at one time. It will also allow us to have evening classes to encourage people from our local churches, both in the suburbs and cities, to attend. It is

going to cost approximately Aus\$600,000 (about £250,000) for the building to be completed, but the benefit of it to the church among our indigenous people will far outweigh the financial expenses. This Bible college needs prayer and financial assistance and we also need the support of like-minded Christian bodies like the Trinitarian Bible Society.

We are very grateful for the generosity extended to us by the Trinitarian Bible Society London, in sending us the gift of copies of the *Holy Scriptures in the Original Languages* for our students to use. We have also received from Mr. Malcolm Stuart, the President of the Society here in Australia, many Bibles for distribution among our people. When the students go out on field trips during college vacations to outlying aboriginal communities within this vast state of ours, TBS Bibles find their way into many homes.

Thank you for your prayers, encouragement and interest in this vital work among our people, for the Lord's greater glory.



An Update from TBS (Australia)

Greetings to you in the name of our Covenant God.

I will be passing on to the college twenty Bibles shortly, as they will be needed when they go up to the Kimberly region in the far north of this state in a few weeks time. Last Friday night I gave a box of thirty Bibles to one of our aboriginal pastors for use in his church.

On the front page of many newspapers in February was a report of the extensive bush fire we had. The fire, which was deliberately lit by an arsonist, burnt for three days. All the residents in the area had to evacuate, including those from the Aboriginal Evangelical Fellowship Bible College. At 2.00 a.m. the college staff and students stood at a safe distance praying that the Lord would spare the college. As the fire went straight through their entire property, their hearts failed them. 'Not our will but thy will be done,' they prayed, knowing that everything must have been burnt; nothing could possibly survive that raging fire.



The next morning they were allowed to return to see what was left. To their great joy, not a building, not a vehicle, not any of the college equipment was damaged. The lawns were still green, the flowers in the garden were still colourful and, although trees all round were burnt, one group of trees behind the swimming pool was untouched. Everything that did not matter was burnt-out, but everything of importance was spared. God controlled the spread of the fire around the property: an immediate answer to prayer!

Mr. M.F. Stuart
President & National Secretary

1. Aboriginal Evangelical Fellowship, *AEF's Vision Statement* (www.aef.org.au/Vision1998.html, 18 May 2007).

Images from the Aboriginal Evangelical Fellowship Bible College Newsletter.

