

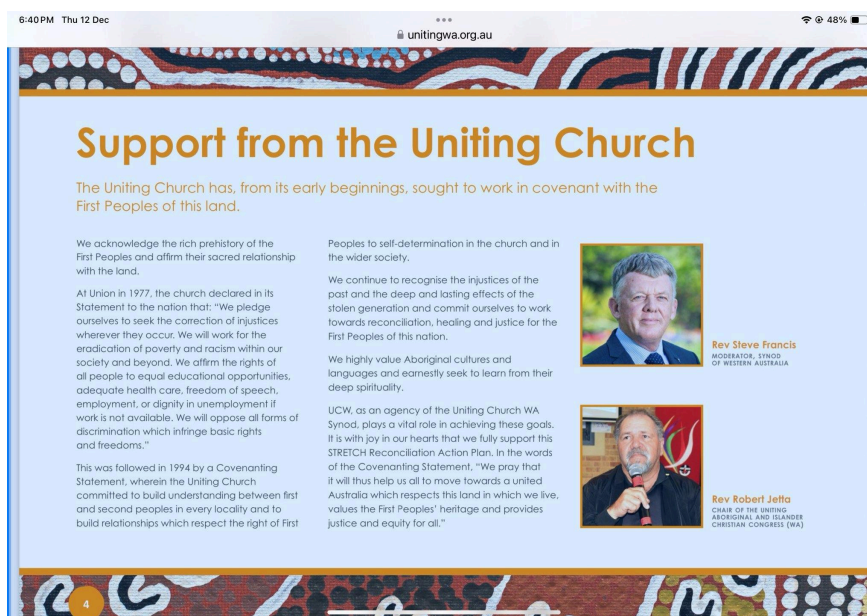
Black Peoples Union (BPU), the Renters And Housing Union (RAHU), and Senator Lidia Thorpe Condemn Eviction of Beanangng Kwuurt Institute

Boorloo (Perth), 11 December 2024

We the undersigned stand in staunch solidarity with the Beanangng Kwuurt Institute (BKI) and call for the immediate cessation of its eviction by the Uniting Church Australia. The eviction represents a continuation of the colonial injustices that this very site was once complicit in, denying Indigenous peoples a vital space for healing from the trauma caused by colonisation and the church's own actions.

The BKI property in Queens Park, formerly known as Sister Kate's Children's Home, holds a significant yet painful legacy as a site where atrocities occurred during the Stolen Generations era. Today, it stands as a beacon of resilience, providing indispensable services to Indigenous communities. Through initiatives such as counselling services and art lessons that foster connection to Country, BKI plays a critical role in cultural healing and addressing intergenerational trauma. Furthermore, BKI operates entirely self-sufficiently, without financial support from the Uniting Church.

Despite these vital contributions, the Uniting Church Australia has decided to proceed with BKI's eviction, with no clear plans for the property's future use. This decision disregards the cultural and social significance of the site and the pressing needs of the community it serves.



Uniting Church Australia's decision to evict the BKI is in direct contradiction to UCWA's public commitment to correcting past injustices and supporting self-determination.



IMMEDIATE RELEASE | JOINT STATEMENT FROM BPU, RAHU AND SENATOR LIDIA THORPE

Statement from BPU Founder, Keiran Stewart-Assheton:

“The eviction of the Beanangng Kwuurt Institute is a stark reminder of how colonial systems persist in dispossessing First Nations people of our sovereign lands and spaces for healing. The very institution that caused harm through the Stolen Generations is now evicting a self-sufficient Indigenous organisation dedicated to addressing that harm. This decision is a disgrace and an affront to justice. The Black Peoples Union demands the Uniting Church Australia reverse this decision immediately and urges all conscientious people to intervene.”

The BPU and RAHU echoes calls from the community and allied organisations for urgent action. The eviction, scheduled for 12 December 2024, threatens to dismantle a space that provides essential support for vulnerable individuals, including youth transitioning out of detention and material goods such as food for people experiencing homelessness.

Quote attributable to Sadie Ward, RAHU WA Delegate:

“Beanangng Kwuurt Institute is being kicked out by the Uniting Church, who owns the land and have no plans to continue the service. BKI runs several vital services, some supporting kids just coming out of Banksia Hill. They provide a lot of support to homeless folks and those doing it tough.”

Quotes attributable to Independent Senator Lidia Thorpe:

The Uniting Church has made public commitments to seek the correction of past injustices and support self-determination. It's hypocritical and shameful of them to evict an Aboriginal organisation from such a significant site, especially an organisation delivering essential frontline services to the community.

The Uniting Church has no right to take control of First Peoples land that is not theirs. This is stolen land that the church must give back to First Peoples.

Particularly because this is a site where the church played an active role in committing genocide against our people by removing our children.

Beanangng Kwuurt Institute provides vital services to the community, which Uniting Church should be supporting.

I am engaging the Uniting Church, the federal Minister for Indigenous Australians, Malarndirri McCarthy, and the WA Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Tony Buti. I'm calling on them to work with the community to make sure that no one is evicted and no services are cut. They must make sure that this land is ultimately returned to First Peoples.

Quote attributable to BKI supporter:

“This place is a key example of a third place. They offer help and community to any who ask regardless of race or religious affiliation, and with support could blossom into something incredible.”

We urge immediate intervention from local, state, and federal leaders, Uniting Churches National body, and the local community.

This is a call to action. The fight to protect BKI is part of the broader struggle against systemic oppression and ongoing dispossession of Indigenous peoples.

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