

Hi my name is Yvonne Gunning and there are three words for my story.

I am Kamilaroi, my mother was aboriginal. The first word for my story is **PAIN**. I was Aboriginal and it was a secret, my nana was part of the stolen generation, and taken to an aboriginal mission when she was young. There was much pain in the family, I felt it but didn't really understand why. My parents tried to protect me from the racism and the possibility of being taken like my nana as aboriginal kids were still being taken in the 70's when I was growing up.

One of my favourite childhood memories was going to Kids camp. I wanted to cheer during the Synergy presentation, as I loved camp. My mum worked fulltime and rather than leave me to my own devices and home alone I used to go to camp every school holidays. I loved camp. It was a special part of my life. It was a model for Christian community. It was where I met Jesus. When I was 12 years old I had a leader that was a Christian, and one evening she shared with me that Jesus was Gods son and that he came to earth to die on a cross for my sins so that I could have a relationship with God. I had never heard this story before as my parents didn't go to church. I am rather a passionate person and so I argued with my leader saying God did not have a right to be in charge of my life. BUT I didn't sleep that night and decided I needed to know more, after all I wasn't baptised and was worried that I couldn't go to heaven. The next morning I went to my leader and asked her more questions and decided that this was the path I really wanted to take. I prayed with her on the spot and I asked Jesus to take over my life. I went home and announced to my family that I had become a Christian..... and that I was taking myself to church. So I did. I caught the train each Sunday. Meeting Jesus was the best thing I had ever experienced as I felt His unconditional love. The second word is **LOVE**

I had a hunger to learn about God and read my bible I loved being with others who had a relationship with Jesus and I learned from them. My parents told me it was a phase and I would get over it..... Long phase! I never ever "got over" what Jesus did so I could have friendship with God....

The hunger to learn about God and share His love never left me and At 32 yrs of age I felt called by God to serve Him in a more formal role. This began a few days a week at first and grew into fulltime ministry roles as my daughters got older. I trained with Church Army served as an evangelist & worked as assistant minister for just over 20 years in Sydney diocese.

Five years ago I began to pray that God would move me, I was working in a very large church with 6 part time staff on my team and I longed to be able to preach and see God at work elsewhere. Each morning as I prayed I began to get the sense that I was to be ordained. I kept seeing a picture where I was kneeling with someone laying hands on my head. Whilst serving on mission in New Zealand after the earthquake I knelt for communion and I heard Gods voice clearly telling me that I would lead a church not long after the mission in New Zealand my husband Jeff came home and told me he was being made redundant. When he asked me how I felt I cheered, as we both new God was moving us to serve in another diocese..... and here I am leading... and serving God in the parish of Gundagai & Tumut. My final word is **HEALING** My journey has been one of healing since I met Jesus, he continues to heal me, a Kamilaroi woman, and I have that to share with those I meet! The good news of Jesus that has transformed my life!