My name is Kathy Guthadjaka. I live at Gäwa homeland. We have much knowledge about the ocean and the tides.



We belong to the Saltwater People.
We have always lived near the sea...



Today we want to talk to you about change in our community.
Many new things come in to our shore and into our lives.










There is much rubbish here. It is local and foreign. The tides bring many things which are rubbish into our lives.

These same tides have also taken our children from their homelands and carried them away.

Their minds, feelings and interests.





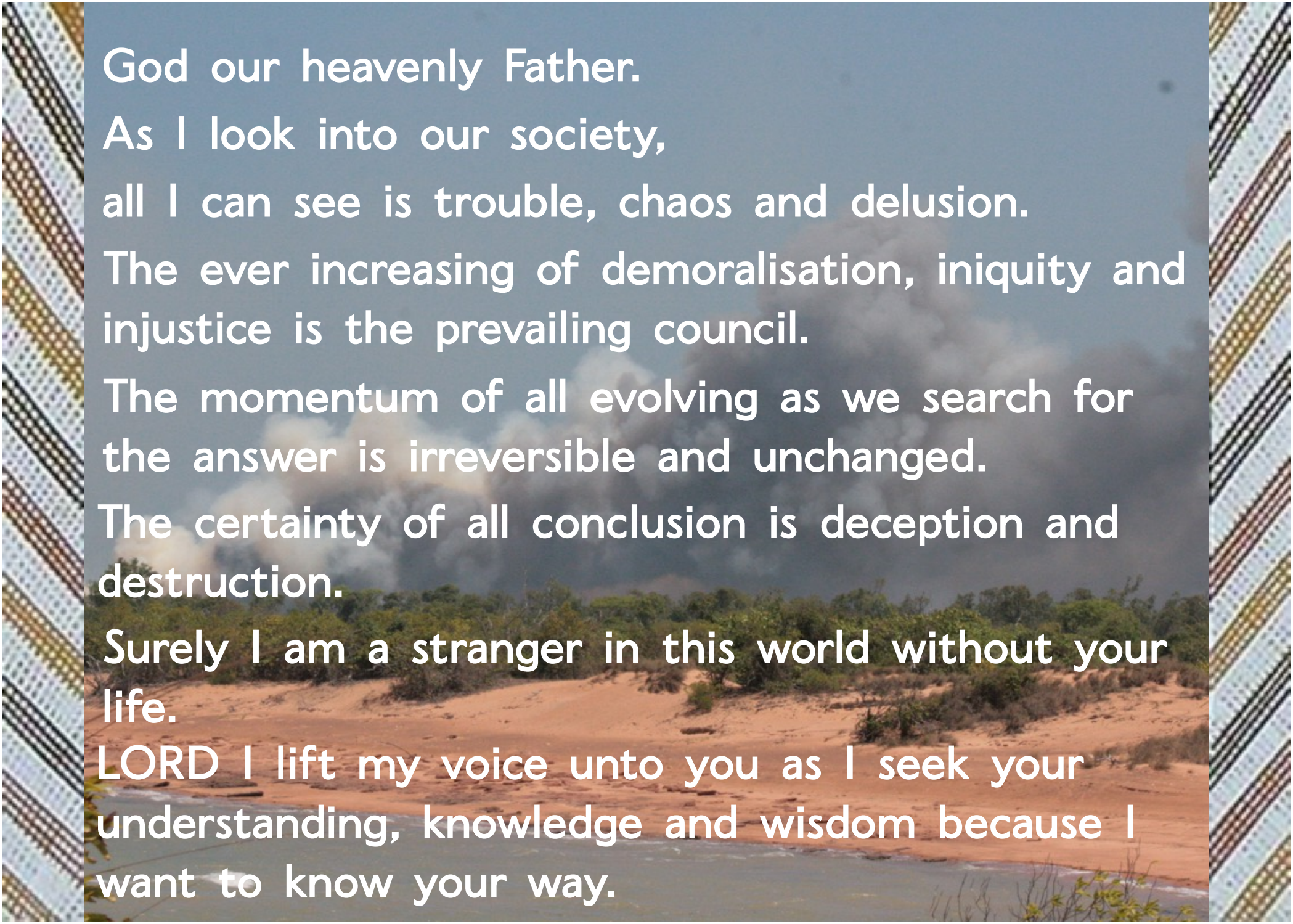
This singing you are listening to is milkarri, Yolngu women crying for their children taken away by the tides and lost. The timber (child) has been shaped and formed in preparation for building (family), but this timber is taken from island to island by the strong current and tides.

(Jeremiah 9:17-18)








God our heavenly Father.
As I look into our society,
all I can see is trouble, chaos and delusion.
The ever increasing of demoralisation, iniquity and injustice is the prevailing council.
The momentum of all evolving as we search for the answer is irreversible and unchanged.
The certainty of all conclusion is deception and destruction.
Surely I am a stranger in this world without your life.
LORD I lift my voice unto you as I seek your understanding, knowledge and wisdom because I want to know your way.





The thoughts that I will try to express to you now about the way forward with children, have been gathered from the people who live at Gäwa and Ban̲'thula on Elcho island.








We remember the the good things of the past. The way we lived before with good relationships. No distrust, no fear, no rubbish. We leave all these things behind when we come to homelands.
We come together and we are strong and one big family.. But some people still bring the rubbish along.



We need to talk straight to these people. (The ones bringing the rubbish)

I consulted community: “We want to have prayer and Christian fellowship...”





Meetings are needed so we can come to one heart. Not with people from town or visitors, just local residents to be involved in community decisions.



We need to look after our children very closely. We need to be teaching them our own skills in practical way and keep them busy with good things so they won't get bored and turn to bad things. They won't get taken away with the tide.



Learning should be not be two ways, it should be both ways, together, holistic.





Art is a good place for us to get involved in the school and for building self-esteem and encouragement. Warramiri knowledge and skills need to be valued, we want to move towards 50/50

We need to get back a balance so that children take up from their home environment and their school environment. Warramiri things are rare and precious; they belong to us. Art comes from the land, language comes from the land. Songs and history come from the land. Art gives us a good understanding of these things.







We also need to encourage parents to stay through school holidays for the sake of the kids and especially the girls. The boys are already staying anyway. They get bored in town. They like to be out hunting together here in their homeland. When children stay on their homelands, they keep learning. In town, there is much rubbish to fill their hearts.



"Homelands are the only place where we can see a future. I came to my homeland to get away from that whole scene and raise my kids in a clear place. We want to see our children grow up healthy and confident."





Support, recognise and encourage people's gifts, talents and skills.



"We all need to come together to Jesus for healing..."



Living in homelands, we can teach children of Yolngu ways.

We teach children on the beaches, in the jungle, in the bush.





We give children time and opportunity to contribute to the community.







During holidays the kids are happy staying on homelands

“We need to teach respect for elders and culture…”







Gurruṯu is our kinship or relationship system. We must teach it to Yolŋu children and Balanda teachers too. When we teach *Gurruṯu* we will get good communication and behaviour ”



We teach respect for elders and culture. We also teach gurruṯu rom, songs and dance. Our kids are doing well at school. This teaching is very important. Teachers also need an understanding of gurruṯu rom.



Raypirri is spoken often and on the spot. Raypirri is our system of discipline and good behaviour. Outside, community knows how to teach good behaviour. Inside the classroom, balanda teachers must learn the best Yolngu ways to do discipline.



Everyone can help each other to learn the boundaries (respect, rum'rum).



Defining the boundaries (respect, rum'rum') is very important in any cross-cultural relationship. This should happen not only in meetings but also every day. Understanding of the boundaries should be passed on; teacher to child; child to child; adult to child and finally the most difficult; adult to adult… whenever the opportunity comes."



In the mangroves there is a special bird that calls out as a warning sign when the tide comes in and out. We must listen, watch and take action, otherwise we might get caught by the tides.



Thank you for listening and thanks to Gäwa and Ban̲'thula community members who shared their thoughts...

WARRAYI & WUḺKURRṆU



BAN'THAY & BASMA



MARK & LARA



MAWALAN & WUNARRK



MANYDJAWUKI & DAYMAŊU



CILIKA & BILTHU



MIMIL & GARRURRU



SAL & HARRY



GOTHA & COLIN





Presentation available for purchase. Funds raised will go towards art materials for our community centre.

Thanks for editing to Sal, Colin, Trevor and Gotha