

# TALANOA TOKTOK

Official Publication of the Pacific Conference of Churches

## Pray for Tonga

Community needs water, food, shelter



Trouble in paradise ... the recent volcanic eruption has devastated the Tongan coast line and left the country blanketed in ash

TONGA is in desperate need of food, water and shelter after a devastating tsunami destroyed miles of coastline, homes and infrastructure.

An underwater volcano erupted on January 15, causing the tsunami and shrouding the islands in ash.

Australia and New Zealand have responded with flights and naval vessels carrying relief supplies.

But Tonga's churches have warned that people will need psychological support as they come to terms with the enormity of the damage and loss.

Tonga has a strong disaster chaplaincy network which has worked efficiently and successfully in the past.

Pacific Conference of Churches General Secretary, Reverend James Bhagwan, called on the ecumenical family to keep Tonga in their prayers and support the relief effort if possible.

Cash donations can be made to the Free Wesleyan Church in Tonga or the National Council of Churches. Communications with the kingdom remain patchy and efforts are being made to restore links as soon as possible.



### Reach out

**CHURCHES in Tonga are leading the relief effort by opening their schools and buildings as evacuation centres. Please reach out to our partners - the Free Wesleyan Church, the Anglican Diocese of Polynesia and the Tonga National Council of Churches.**



**Brot  
für die Welt**  
Regional Office Madang



# Tagio tumas, partners

The Pacific Conference of Churches' work would be impossible without the kind assistance of our donor partners. Brot fur die Welt (Bread for the World) out of Germany has been our longest funder and provides the core funding for major projects and programmes run in a number of areas including climate change, self-determination and capacity building.

The Methodist Church in the United Kingdom helps pay salaries around the area of Climate Change and has been supportive in a programme which brings together young people from around the world to address COP26 in Glasgow. UNICEF and UN Women joined the PCC in 2019 with projects which have led to breakthroughs in the protection of women and children - in particular, creating safe churches. And Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade supports the creation of a strong network of church leaders in the region to help with national and regional stability.

As the year comes to a close we acknowledge their financial support with gratitude. We also know that it's important that you know, in the interest of transparency, who allows the PCC to remain financially viable.

actalliance



GreenFaith



On the ocean wave ... We partnered with the Uto Ni Yalo Trust to promote conservation and sustainable sea transport

## You make our work possible

Our staff might research indigenous philosophy in the highlands of Fiji or experimenting with sustainable sea transport on the ocean. Whatever they do is possible because of financial support. In some cases we carry out projects funded by agencies. Essentially, the PCC becomes an implementing agency for a funder. Last year we were happy to partner with the Act Alliance, Green Faith, Global Ministries, Uniting World and the World Council of Churches in the area of climate change, mission work, conservation and the reduction in the use of fossil fuels.

We hope 2022 will see further, fruitful partnerships.



People power ... our staff supported the Pacific Theological College with human resources

# Talanoa Toktok





Be prepared ... the Asset Management Unit team after completing cyclone management preparations

## Cyclone ready

Cyclones are a part of life in the tropics and it pays to be prepared.

Towards the end of last year, the PCC Asset Management Unit carried out the initial phase of its Cyclone Preparedness work by cleaning gutters and repairing roofs on the five commercial and four rental properties.

This included the construction of new cyclone shutters for all properties with a special emphasis on ease of installation.. The second phase of maintenance begins in the last week of January.

# Let's make a date

A COMPREHENSIVE calendar is being drawn up to list important dates in the regional ecumenical calendar. Once completed, the dates will be shared with the Pacific Conference of Churches family. The calendar is designed to allow members to plan their events in the knowledge of national, regional and global activities.

PCC Secretariat staff have reached out to member churches for data and you can help us by sending significant dates to [media01.pcc@gmail.com](mailto:media01.pcc@gmail.com) or to our Development and Communications Manager, Netani Rika at [netanir@pcc.org.fj](mailto:netanir@pcc.org.fj) for inclusion in the calendar.

This is part of the PCC's plans for greater programmatic efficiency and inclusion in 2022 and was formulated at the Staff Review and Planning Retreat in December 2021.

## Obituary Fiji Methodist GS passes on

THE Methodist Church in Fiji's General Secretary, Reverend Iliesa Naivalu, was buried at the end of 2021.

He passed away after a short illness and was buried on his home island, Waya, in the Yasawa Group.

The PCC, Pacific Theological College and South Pacific Association of Theological Schools attended the funeral gathering on behalf of regional churches. Traditional gifts were presented on behalf of the Pacific ecumenical family and acknowledged with gratitude by the Methodist Church and Rev Naivalu's clan.



Ramping it up ... new access to Holy Trinity Anglican Cathedral in Suva

## Where there's a wheel there's a way

ONE of the oldest church buildings in Fiji's capital, Suva, now has access for wheelchairs. The launch of the wheelchair ramp comes as the PCC enters a partnership with the Pacific Disability Forum for increased collaboration in 2022.

One of the joint initiatives will be to achieve greater access to churches and worship for people living with disabilities.



Free hand ... Fiji youth paint in support of freedom in West Papua

# Letter for Papua

The Pacific Conference of Churches has written to the Indonesian President, Joko Widodo, calling for dialogue on West Papua. The PCC reiterated a call by Pacific churches for Indonesia to allow a visit by the UN Commissioner for Human Rights to see the situation first-hand.

Letters were also delivered to embassies in Suva and the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat.

# Diary of a traveler

## The reality of COVID-19 travel

For a moment it looked like Olivia Baro would not see her family until after Christmas.

A day after arriving in Geneva for a meeting with the World Council of Churches, the Omicron Variant of the Corona Virus was identified and countries started to close their borders. What usually is a routine Geneva-London-Hong Kong-Nadi flight was no longer a possibility. The Pacific Conference of Churches Administration Team scrambled to find options but it appeared like there would be no more airports through which Olivia could travel.

Our friends at the WCC were eager to put Olivia up and she could work on-line for the foreseeable future - but what of her husband, Keni, and daughter Eci? When it seemed all hope was lost, an opportunity arose. A flight from Geneva to Helsinki to Hong Kong - the one major hub through which flights were available direct to Fiji. The bookings were made, COVID-19 tests and quarantine facilities arranged and then Olivia began the long haul back to Fiji, arriving a few days later than expected.

After three days in quarantine, she was out just in time to attend the office end of the year bash.

Over the years we've had staff stranded all over the world for weeks on end due to flight disruptions, visa changes, political upheavals, but never before due to a global pandemic.

Of course, we're happy Olivia is home and safe with her family. Unfortunately, travel restrictions mean that intern, Petero Lalagavivi, is unable to fly to Geneva. But a staff member at home is worth two stuck on the other side of the world.



## Youth talks take shape

Youth leaders from around the world have gathered to discuss the World Council of Churches General Assembly in Karlsruhe, Germany, next year.

The meeting was an opportunity to plan, and confirm programs, logistics and communication strategies around the pre assemblies in 2022. They also discussed how to provide collaboration and engagement in addressing issues of concerns, providing practical implementation strategies and how it is reported to the 11th General Assembly.