



Pacific Conference of Churches

Serving the Pasifika Household of God

www.pcc.org.fj

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Saturday, 5th July, 2025

To PCC Member Churches,
To PCC Member National Councils of Churches
To Ecumenical Partners

CALL FOR SUNDAY 13 JULY 2025 TO BE OBSERVED AS FREEDOM SUNDAY FOR KANAKY AND MA'OHİ NUI

Dear sisters, brothers and friends of the Pasifika Household of God,

Warm Pacific Greetings from the PCC Secretariat!!

Thank you for your continued support and prayers for our sisters and brothers in Kanaky and Ma'ohi Nui.

Next Monday, the 14th of July, is the National Day of France. The date commemorates the storming of the Bastille, a medieval armoury, fortress and political prison, on 14 July 1789. The Bastille then represented royal authority in the centre of Paris and was seen by the revolutionaries as a symbol of the monarchy's abuse of power. Its fall was the flashpoint of the French Revolution.

At a time when our sisters and brothers in Kanaky continue to suffer from the colonial political and socio-economic colonisation by France, which has led to outbreaks of violence, particularly by youth who are deeply frustrated by the French government's duplicitous approach to Kanaky's decolonisation, and poverty, lack of equitable development and repression of the dignity of Kanaks; and at a time when our family in Ma'ohi Nui also continues to struggle for the decolonisation process in their islands, as well as justice for 50 years of nuclear devastation on their fenua and people – this national day is a mockery of the phrase **"Liberty, Equality and Fraternity"** proclaimed during the French Revolution, inscribed in the French 1958 constitution and today an integral part of French national heritage.

At a time when the cry of self-determination echoes from many communities within our Pasifika Household of God, and the commemoration of national days and other events by colonisers are being challenged. We are reminded by our commitments made at the 12th General Assembly that:

- We affirm that Kanaky has always been and must remain Pasifika.

- We stand ready to support Kanaky's pursuit of independence from France through a referendum promised by the French republic.
- We commit to supporting efforts to improve the wellbeing of the Kanak people.
- We will voyage together for the holistic Self-Determination of Kanaky, Maohi, West Papua, Bougainville, the Land now called Australia, Aotearoa and other territories who seek liberation and justice.

We are also reminded by commitments of the Pacific Conference of Churches Executive Committee (November 2024) and the 2025 Pacific Church Leaders for the ongoing advocacy for Indigenous Communities seeking sovereignty and self-determination in the Pacific.

With these commitments in mind, we humbly ask that all PCC members mark Sunday 13th July, 2024 as **Kanaky and Ma'ohi Nui Freedom Sunday** (noting West Papua has a special day on 1 December that we already commemorate).

The revised common lectionary texts for Sunday 13th July and a reflection can be found below:

First Reading Amos 7:7-17

⁷This is what he showed me: the Lord was standing beside a wall built with a plumb line, with a plumb line in his hand. ⁸And the LORD said to me, "Amos, what do you see?" And I said, "A plumb line." Then the Lord said, "See, I am setting a plumb line in the midst of my people Israel; I will never again pass them by; ⁹the high places of Isaac shall be made desolate, and the sanctuaries of Israel shall be laid waste, and I will rise against the house of Jeroboam with the sword."

¹⁰Then Amaziah, the priest of Bethel, sent to King Jeroboam of Israel, saying, "Amos has conspired against you in the very center of the house of Israel; the land is not able to bear all his words. ¹¹For thus Amos has said, 'Jeroboam shall die by the sword, and Israel must go into exile away from his land.'" ¹²And Amaziah said to Amos, "O seer, go, flee away to the land of Judah, earn your bread there, and prophesy there; ¹³but never again prophesy at Bethel, for it is the king's sanctuary, and it is a temple of the kingdom."

¹⁴Then Amos answered Amaziah, "I am no prophet, nor a prophet's son; but I am a herdsman, and a dresser of sycamore trees, ¹⁵and the LORD took me from following the flock, and the LORD said to me, 'Go, prophesy to my people Israel.' ¹⁶"Now therefore hear the word of the LORD. You say, 'Do not prophesy against Israel, and do not preach against the house of Isaac.'" ¹⁷Therefore thus says the LORD: 'Your wife shall become a prostitute in the city, and your sons and your daughters shall fall by the sword, and your land shall be parceled out by line; you yourself shall die in an unclean land, and Israel shall surely go into exile away from its land.'"

Psalm 82:1-8

¹God has taken his place in the divine council;
in the midst of the gods he holds judgment:

²"How long will you judge unjustly
and show partiality to the wicked?

Selah

³Give justice to the weak and the orphan;
maintain the right of the lowly and the destitute.

⁴Rescue the weak and the needy;
deliver them from the hand of the wicked."

⁵They have neither knowledge nor understanding,
they walk around in darkness;

all the foundations of the earth are shaken.

⁶I say, "You are gods,
children of the Most High, all of you;
⁷nevertheless, you shall die like mortals,
and fall like any prince."

⁸Rise up, O God, judge the earth;
for all the nations belong to you!

Second Reading Colossians 1:1-14

¹Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother,

²To the saints and faithful brothers and sisters in Christ in Colossae: Grace to you and peace from
God our Father.

³In our prayers for you we always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, ⁴for we have
heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love that you have for all the saints, ⁵because of
the hope laid up for you in heaven. You have heard of this hope before in the word of the truth,
the gospel ⁶that has come to you. Just as it is bearing fruit and growing in the whole world, so
it has been bearing fruit among yourselves from the day you heard it and truly comprehended
the grace of God. ⁷This you learned from Epaphras, our beloved fellow servant. He is a faithful
minister of Christ on your behalf, ⁸and he has made known to us your love in the Spirit.

⁹For this reason, since the day we heard it, we have not ceased praying for you and asking that
you may be filled with the knowledge of God's will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, ¹⁰so
that you may lead lives worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, as you bear fruit in every good
work and as you grow in the knowledge of God. ¹¹May you be made strong with all the strength
that comes from his glorious power, and may you be prepared to endure everything with
patience, while joyfully ¹²giving thanks to the Father, who has enabled you to share in the
inheritance of the saints in the light. ¹³He has rescued us from the power of darkness and
transferred us into the kingdom of his beloved Son, ¹⁴in whom we have redemption, the
forgiveness of sins.

Gospel Luke 10:25-37

²⁵Just then a lawyer stood up to test Jesus. "Teacher," he said, "what must I do to inherit eternal
life?" ²⁶He said to him, "What is written in the law? What do you read there?" ²⁷He answered,
"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your
strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself." ²⁸And he said to him, "You
have given the right answer; do this, and you will live."

²⁹But wanting to justify himself, he asked Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" ³⁰Jesus replied, "A
man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell into the hands of robbers, who stripped
him, beat him, and went away, leaving him half dead. ³¹Now by chance a priest was going
down that road; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. ³²So likewise a Levite,
when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. ³³But a Samaritan while
traveling came near him; and when he saw him, he was moved with pity. ³⁴He went to him and
bandaged his wounds, having poured oil and wine on them. Then he put him on his own animal,
brought him to an inn, and took care of him. ³⁵The next day he took out two denarii, gave them
to the innkeeper, and said, 'Take care of him; and when I come back, I will repay you whatever
more you spend.' ³⁶Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbor to the man who fell into
the hands of the robbers?" ³⁷He said, "The one who showed him mercy." Jesus said to him, "Go
and do likewise."

On this Freedom Sunday—marking resistance and hope for Kanaky and Ma’ohi Nui—we reflect on God’s justice through the lens of Scripture.

On this *Freedom Sunday*—the Sunday before France’s National Day—we, the Pacific Church, remember and stand in solidarity with the peoples of **Kanaky (New Caledonia)** and **Ma’ohi Nui (French Polynesia)** as they continue to resist colonial domination and seek dignity, justice, and freedom.

Amos 7:7–17 presents a striking image: the Lord standing beside a wall with a **plumb line**—a symbol of divine judgment, truth, and alignment. God declares that injustice and deceit will no longer be tolerated among His people. This prophetic word speaks directly into the ongoing reality in Kanaky and Ma’ohi Nui, where France’s promises of decolonisation remain unfulfilled, and Indigenous peoples continue to face economic disparity, political marginalisation, and cultural erasure.

Like Amos, many who raise their voices for justice today are not powerful or elite—they are young people, community elders, faith leaders, and cultural custodians. Yet, like Amos, they are called to proclaim uncomfortable truths. The attempt to silence prophets, as Amaziah tried to do, is echoed in how the French state continues to suppress Kanak resistance and avoid true self-determination. But God’s plumb line still stands, calling us to measure our complicity and courage.

In **Psalms 82**, God stands in the divine council and rebukes unjust rulers: “How long will you judge unjustly and show partiality to the wicked?” The psalm goes further, commanding: “Give justice to the weak and the orphan; rescue the weak and the needy.” This is a spiritual call and a political demand. The God of Israel is not neutral—He takes the side of the oppressed. This divine bias toward justice indicts systems that exploit Indigenous land, deny reparations for nuclear devastation, or delay referendums while entrenching economic inequality.

The Church, if it claims to walk in the way of God, must align its witness with this call. Freedom Sunday is not just an act of remembrance—it is a response to God’s question: *How long will injustice prevail?*

Finally, **Luke 10:25–37** confronts us with the parable of the Good Samaritan. When asked “Who is my neighbour?” Jesus refuses to define neighbourliness by ethnicity, religion, or status. Instead, he tells a story of radical compassion that crosses boundaries. The neighbour is the one who **sees, draws near, and acts**.

This Gospel calls us not to pass by the wounds of Kanaky and Ma’ohi Nui. Like the priest and Levite, we may be tempted by distance, silence, or comfort. But Jesus commands: *Go and do likewise*.

On this Freedom Sunday, we choose to walk the way of the neighbour. We reaffirm our solidarity with Kanaky and Ma’ohi Nui. We speak truth like Amos, cry out for justice like the psalmist, and act in love like the Samaritan.

The plumb line has been set. The Church must respond.

We ask that intercessory prayers please include Kanaky, Ma’ohi Nui and other communities struggling for decolonisation, self-determination and the flourishing of indigenous and vulnerable communities.

It is our deep hope that our prayers for Kanaky and Ma'ohi Nui this Sunday will be heard as a cry of the Pasifika Household of God on earth as in heaven.

My sincere appreciation for your kind consideration of this humble request.

I remain your servant for Christ and the Peace of the Pasifika Household of God,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'James Shri Bhagwan', is positioned above the printed name.

James Shri Bhagwan (Rev.)
General Secretary – Pacific Conference of Churches