



# Pacific Theological College Newsletter

Issue 61

March 2009

## Message from the Principal

*God is to be praised for bringing us safely to this New Year.* There is much to be thankful for as we reconstitute the life of the College. We have been blessed in many ways. Despite illness and at times hardship and anxiety, our lives have been spared. Hopes have been realized. Goals have been achieved. God's Spirit continues to lead and guide us in the different contexts of the ministry where we are called to serve. Therefore, as we commence another chapter in the academic life of the College, our hearts are overwhelmed by the forgiving and merciful spirit of our God.



Archbishop of Melanesia, in recognition of his long and outstanding service. For fourteen years he held the reins in the Council and Executive. His leadership was characterized by a deep commitment to ecumenism exercised with passion and humility. His retirement from the active ministry necessitated his resignation from the chair. As a further gesture of respect, Sir Ellison was given the honour to deliver the graduation address as his final act for the College.

Who are we that God should be mindful of our welfare and existence? We have not always loved the Lord our God with all our hearts, minds and souls. We have committed many sins along the way. And yet God has spared us to witness the beginning of another year at PTC. We have been led and brought safely thus far by the graciousness of God's loving and merciful spirit. The words and the spirit of the hymn 'Now thank we all our God' sums up the depth of gratitude I feel as our canoe begins to venture out again to the open sea.

Let me begin by acknowledging the generous and loyal support of the member churches who own PTC, our overseas partners and donors, former staff and students, other ecumenical bodies in the region and worldwide, as well as the many friends of the College. We, who are rowing the canoe of PTC at this point in time, are indebted to you all. Thank you for your prayers. Our faith is indeed strengthened by the knowledge that our work is a part of your intercessory concerns. May the content of this newsletter be a source of joy for each and every one of you.

## Graduation 2008

The graduation was a memorable experience, not only for the graduates but for the whole community. It was occasion, with the awarding, for the first time, of an Honorary Doctorate to the chairperson of the Council and Executive, the Most Reverend Sir Ellison Pogo,

Accolades are in order for some outstanding academic achievements by a number of students. Pastor Kiki Gwayaweng from the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Papua New Guinea successfully completed his doctoral studies. This is a wonderful achievement. He is the first to be solely trained and supervised at PTC to reach this milestone under the now lapsed PTC/CSU partnership. In the Master of Theology programme, two outstanding students emerged: Rev Olataga Elu (Samoa Methodist Church) and Mr Visiesio Saga (Congregational Christian Church of Samoa). They graduated with distinction in both course work and thesis writing in their respective disciplines: Theology/Ethics and Biblical Studies (NT). The Faculty acknowledged their efforts by awarding for the very first time the PTC Prize for Overall Academic Excellence in the Masters Programme.

## Staff Changes

The **Sawrey** family returned to New Zealand towards the end of November. Both Richard and Diana made valuable contributions to many aspects of College life during their two years here. Richard was a fulltime lecturer in the Ministry Department. He was a specialist Crisis Counsellor. Diana gave much assistance to the Women's Fellowship Development Programme.

We also farewelled the **Rev Lidia Rabenstein** and her daughter **Hanna**, wife and daughter of the Rev Dr Michael Press. They returned to Germany in November after seven years. Dr Press continues at PTC and will reunite with his family when his contract finishes at the end of 2009. Lidia made valuable contributions in the Women's Fellowship Development Programme,

*(Principal's Message continued...)*

especially in the spiritual formation of the women and in the worshipping life of the community. We will miss Michael when he leaves. He has been the mainstay of our Church History Department, being a specialist in the history of the universal church as well as holding the fort in our Library as we continue our search for a qualified librarian.

We have a new Director of Finance and Administration, **Mr Lei'ataua Viane Tagi'ilima**. He and his family are from the Catholic Diocese of Samoa. He comes to us highly recommended with appropriate skills and qualifications to meet the demands of his portfolio. He took up his appointment in October, replacing **Mr Nischal Narain**. My thanks to the EED (Germany) for contributing 50% of the Director's salary.

The **Rev Dr Cliff Bird**, our Faculty Development candidate, successfully completed an excellent PhD at Charles Sturt University (Australia) and arrived with his family in January to take up a lectureship in the Theology/Ethics Department. They come from the United Church in the Solomon Islands. This is an exciting development for the teaching faculty. The appointment of Dr Bird is evidence of the emergence of church scholars in the Melanesian part of our region. My thanks to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for sponsoring his studies.

**Mr Tagi'ilima** and **Dr Bird** were inducted as faculty members on 6 March in the College Chapel.

### ***Research Institute***

A notable development in 2008 was the establishment in April of the Institute for Research and Social Analysis. It is the first of three Institutes the Council has decided to set up as part of the new-look PTC. Dr Manfred Ernst is the Director. His vast experience and expertise in research and social analysis has seen the Institute achieving some wonderful results in its short period of existence.

### ***2009 Began Well***

The academic year opened on Monday 2 February with Orientation Week. This was an important and fruitful exercise. Information on various aspects of programmes and life at PTC were shared for the benefit of everyone, especially the new students and their families. An inter-faculty meeting with our PRS (Catholic Seminary) colleagues was also held during this week. A highlight of the week was the attendance of the new General Secretary of SPATS, our Acting Chairperson and his PCC Secretariat staff at the opening Communion service of the College.

O-Week ended with a welcome feast for the new faculty member, students and their families. This was an enjoyable occasion as the community re-constituted the social dimension of its life for the year.

Lectures commenced on Monday 9 February.

This year we have around 60 students in residence: 2 PhD, 28 MTh, 4 BD, 23 BTh, 2 Diploma. There are also about 60 Certificate students.

A number of factors are responsible for the increased student intake. First, generous grants from our partners, EMW in Germany and the WCC Office in Geneva have enabled us to continue the exciting concession scheme for churches who send two or more students for the MTh programme. Secondly, a Bachelor of Theology degree was introduced during the second half of 2008 and the Bachelor of Divinity was re-introduced this year. Thirdly, there has been a concerted effort in the past year to promote the College to the member churches. We are now beginning to reap the fruit of such undertakings. Finally, some member churches have sponsored and endorsed students. Without students, the college cannot survive.

### ***Lecturers Needed***

The increase in student numbers coupled with the departure of our lecturer in crisis counselling means we are looking for a fulltime lecturer in the Ministry department as well as some assistance in the Biblical Department, especially in the New Testament area. I welcome any enquiries from those qualified to assist us in these areas.

### ***Student News***

The **Rev Senitimita 'Uhila** (Free Wesleyan Church of Tonga), a second year MTh student, will represent PTC at the Evangelical Lutheran Church Summer School in Neuendettelsau (Bavaria) in June this year. He will be away for 7–8 weeks. It is a wonderful opportunity to be in the company of over 30 students from all over the world. From the same church is one of our new students, **Ms Stefanie Kornder**, who is taking courses in the MTh programme. She is here for six months before returning to Germany.

One of the highlights so far this year, is the willingness of the Student Body Association to appoint a representative to each of the committees of the College. This development is to be applauded. The participation of the SBA in decision-making guarantees that as a body, it is being consulted on issues that affect the lives



As part of the review of PTC, team member Mrs Suliana Siwatibau recently met with the Women's Fellowship to obtain their feedback on living conditions and community life.

Mrs Siwatibau (second from left) is pictured with the Registrar (Selai Tuidrokadroka) and three of the Women's Executive: Rose Mary Ure (Secretary), Anaseini Fungalei (Treasurer) and Rachel 'Uhila (Acting President).

This is the first time the women have been asked to contribute to an evaluation, so they were pleased to be included.



of the college; and at the same time, its concerns for the welfare of its members are heard and discussed.

*Principal's message, continued...*

### ***Council to Make Important Decisions***

2009 is a crucial year for the College Council. This esteemed body will have the unenviable task of deliberating and making landmark decisions on the future of the College based on two significant and ground-breaking documents: the final draft of the new Constitution and the Report on the Review of PTC. The Council meeting is scheduled for November 9–11. Both documents will be sent out to all the member churches in September.

The Review of the College mandated by the Council during its meeting in 2007 is long overdue. A team of experts is carrying out this important task, thanks to a generous grant from EMW. All aspects of the College will be reviewed. The findings and recommendations will be discussed by the owners during its November meeting. It is therefore imperative that all Council representatives of the member churches attend this meeting.

The future direction of the College will be determined by this Council. I have no doubt that issues that have plagued the College for years will be highlighted by the review report, together with possible solutions that will entail changes in how the College is governed, funded

and administered. There is also the important task of electing a new chairperson.

### ***Ecumenical Cooperation***

To conclude, let me reiterate PTC's commitment to the reconfiguration of ecumenism for the churches in our region. The College is determined to engage itself in any dialogue that promotes and develops the ecumenical spirit and life of its member churches. It applauds the beginning of programmatic cooperation amongst the three ecumenical bodies of our churches (PCC, PTC, SPATS). The successful Personnel Exchange Programme, a programme of PCC delivered by PTC through the God's Pacific People programme and the effective participation of PTC personnel in the work of SPATS, are evidence that cooperation is happening. The challenge is to discern whether these involvements are leading us to something new and exciting in terms of an all-encompassing structure like an ecumenical council.

May the Grace of our Triune God continue to bless each and every one of you. May the newsletter strengthen our connection and trust of each other as we strive to promote and further God's kingdom in our world today.

With the utmost respect



## Long-Serving Staff of PTC

*Noaia!* My name is Lily. I hail from Motusa Island in Rotuma. I'm married with three children.

I started as a Clerical Officer with PTC back in March 1984. As years went by, through experience and some tertiary education, my responsibility in the Finance Office increased, and today I am a Finance Officer. I enjoy working at PTC because of its ecumenical and multicultural atmosphere. *Faiaksea!*



*Lily Sorby*

Selai has been our Registrar for a long time. She sees PTC as her spiritual home.



*Selai Tuidrokadroka*

PTC thanks these long-serving members for their faithful service and their commitment to the College.

We also welcome some new members to our community. We hope they have similar good experiences of life and work at PTC.



*Lynne Lalanabaravi*

*Bula Vinaka!*

My name is Lynne.

I started work here at PTC on February, 1987. I started as an assistant typist and now work part-time as Bookshop Manager and part-time as Project Assistant with God's Pacific People

Programme. PTC is a unique College, well-known in the Pacific region. Through the years I have enjoyed working with different people and I have met a lot of lecturers and students who are now church leaders in their own region.

I enjoy serving in a Christian environment and that's the reason I'm still here after sixteen years of service.

*Bula!* My name is Sereki Naitasi, married to Seru, and we have two beautiful kids—Josefa and Lolohea.



*Sereki Naitasiri*

I started working for PTC back in 1993 as groundsman. Since 1997 I have worked in the office as a messenger and driver. My years at PTC are enjoyable as I meet and interact with different people around the Pacific.

## New Faces

My name is Lorin Pai and I am a Rotuman. I am married, with three beautiful children.

I attend the AOG Shalom Worship Center in Veisari. I am studying at the University of the South Pacific, enrolled in the Diploma in Librarianship.

My intentions in joining the College Library are to enhance my technical library skills. Given the opportunity to work within a theological environment, I believe I will also increase my knowledge of God's principles.



*Lorin Pai, Library*



*Rev Dr Cliff Bird  
Theology Lecturer  
(more on page 12)*



*Viane Tagi'ilima and family*

Viane is our new Director of Finance and Administration.



## 2009 PTC Community



*Faculty*



*PhD Students*



*Second Yr MTh*



*First Yr MTh*



*Bachelor of Divinity*



*Bachelor of Theology*



*Biblical Studies Dept*



*Theology Dept*



*Ministry Dept*



*History Dept*



*PTCEE*



*GPP Staff*



*Finance Staff*



*IRSA Staff*



*Etina Havea*



*Maintenance Staff*



*IT Staff*



*Library Staff*



## Student Activities

### Student Body Association

“Ecumenism in practice; the respect for denomination and culture.”

The Student Body Association consists of five committee members (President; Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary and a rep to the PTC Council) plus the students and their spouses. The SBA deals with student affairs. It aims to continue and improve the good relationship among students, their families and PTC as a whole. It is compulsory for PTC students to join this Association with a \$20 sub per year. Apart from our programme of study, the SBA committee and its members take time off to participate in vibrant activities such as working bees, sports and talanoa sessions. The SBA has representative to various committees at PTC.

We hope that SBA keeps the spirit of ecumenism alive and continues to engage its members in leadership roles, as this will provide a good quality foundation for their leadership in the church.

*Edward Kolohai*

for SBA 2009

### Studying



### Working Bee



### Feasting



## ***Institute for Research and Social Analysis***

The Institute for Research and Social Analysis (IRSA) was established in April 2008. It is an integral part of the Pacific Theological College. Its goal is to contribute to a well-informed, dynamic Christian presence in the Pacific Islands. The Institute will:

- ♦ Be driven by the context in which the churches are embedded;
- ♦ Investigate and address issues of concern for Pacific churches and communities;
- ♦ Explore the biblical, theological, ethical and social foundations of pertinent issues and concerns.

### ***People***

The Institute is directed by Dr Manfred Ernst, with the support of Programme Assistant Raijieli Uluinaceva and a Strategic Think Tank of five Fiji-based co-opted members. The latter represent a variety of denominations, institutions and relevant professional backgrounds: Aisake Casimira (Pacific Conference of Churches/Chairperson), Tilisi Bryce (University of the South Pacific), Tessa McKenzie (Interfaith Fiji), Cliff Bird (United Church Solomon Islands, Lecturer in Theology and Ethics at PTC) and Claude Fong Toy (Anglican Church).

### ***Capacity Building Workshops***

In co-operation with the faculty of PTC, the Institute will organize and facilitate workshops and seminars on a regular basis or on request. These workshops will target church volunteers, church workers and administrators at different levels, theological students and personnel of faith-based organizations and non-government organizations.

So far three five-day workshops have been conducted. The first was held in Fiji and attracted 18 participants. It focussed on developing skills in social analysis for more effective ministry.



The second workshop was conducted in close cooperation with the Samoan Ecumenical Fellowship of Women. It took place in September 2008 at the Ecumenical Centre in Mulinuu. The topic was *Leadership and Management*. Thirty-two women from seven different denominations attended.

The third workshop was held in Fiji in March 2009 on leadership and management. The 35 participants were from different churches (Methodist, Anglican, Congregational, Roman Catholic, Brethren, Pentecostal, Seventh Day Adventist and Lutheran), faith-based organisations and civil society organisations. They were different ages, from different ethnic groups, and different Pacific Islands, including Tuvalu and PNG.



The participants' evaluations indicate that the workshop was successful in every aspect. The responses reveal that there is a great interest and need for teaching about the different aspects of leadership and management. Despite the fact that others (e.g. USP) offer such courses, we have the advantages that what we offer is biblically based, it is enriched by sharing experiences, it is practical with case studies taken from the real contexts the participants are coming from, and it is facilitated and explained in a language people understand. The mixture of input, working groups and presentations with discussions works very well.



These workshops have been general, but there is great potential to offer a variety of special workshops to expand on particular topics.

Depending on the availability of funds and interest from the churches, two or three more workshops can be held in 2009 in the Solomon Islands, Vanuatu or Tonga.

### ***Research Projects***

The Institute is committed to carry out research projects in cooperation with others or on its own as requested by the PTC/PCC member churches. This includes training in research methodologies, supervision, planning and publishing of research results.

### ***Consultancy***

On request the Institute may carry out evaluations or reviews of programmes, projects and organisations and assist in planning and facilitating organisational reviews.





### ***Publications***

The Institute is committed to promote and support the publication of researched materials from students and scholars of PTC as well as from member churches.

### ***Planning 2009 and Beyond***

- ♦ The IRSA has been invited to facilitate a two-day workshop at the beginning of the General Assembly of the Cook Islands Christian Church (20–21 April 2009).
- ♦ In cooperation with the Association of Christian Churches and Missions in Germany (EMW) the IRSA will publish a Pacific Islands Handbook by the middle of 2009. The publication consists of 32 articles written by Pacific Islanders and others. They address a variety of issues that are of interest and concern to churches and society at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.
- ♦ In cooperation with the Institute of Development Studies of the University of the South Pacific, the Institute plans to launch a research project to carry out audits of democracy in different Pacific Island nations. Depending on the availability of funds, the project will begin in 2009 with a pilot study on Fiji.
- ♦ It is planned to introduce a series of Occasional Research Papers or Discussion Papers on issues of interest and concern for the churches and civil society in the Pacific Islands.
- ♦ We have been invited by the Eglise Evangelique en Nouvelle Calédonie and the Etaretia Porotetani Maohi (Maohi Protestant Church) in French Polynesia to facilitate capacity building workshops in 2010.

#### ***For more info-***

*The Pacific Theological College, IRSA—The Director  
Private Mail Bag, Suva, Fiji Islands  
Email: mernst@ptc.ac.fj or irsa@ptc.ac.fj*



### ***PTC Bookshop***

We provide text books and reference material for Biblical Studies, Church History, Theology/Ethics and Ministry. We can order textbooks for other theological schools in the region.

We can supply Pacific materials that are not readily accessible outside the region, e.g.

The PTC choir CD

Manfred Ernst's

'Globalization and the Shaping of Christianity in the Pacific Islands'

ECREA's new publication:

'Culture & Conflict—Implications for Young People in Fiji'

We accept Master card, AMEX, Visa.

Contact: [bookshop@ptc.ac.fj](mailto:bookshop@ptc.ac.fj)

Ph +679 331 1100;

Fx +679 330 1728

### ***Conference Centre***

#### ***JoviliMeo Mission Centre***

The Jovili Meo Mission Centre at PTC provides a quiet and pleasant environment overlooking the sea. It is well-equipped for conferences, having meeting facilities and accommodation for 30 people, including a VIP suite.

- Two air-conditioned conference rooms which can be made into one
- Multimedia equipment
- A big dining room and lounge area
- Catering provided
- Internet services
- Laundry services

The JMMC provides a service to the churches and the community. The income it generates helps to finance the educational programmes of PTC. We thank those who support us by using JMMC as their conference venue!

Further information: Ph +679 331 1100;  
fx +679 330 1728; [jmmc@ptc.ac.fj](mailto:jmmc@ptc.ac.fj)



## ***PTCEE (Education by Extension)***



### ***Graduation 2008***

At the end of last year we were proud of some of our extension students who completed their programmes and graduated:

Angela Prasad (Fiji)—Diploma;  
Tupu Elu (Samoa)—Certificate;  
Sanele Qalotaki (Fiji)—Certificate;  
Paiata Faga (Fiji)—Certificate.

### ***Continuing Students***

Many students kept working and sent in their assignments over the holiday break. We congratulate them! They are progressing well.

Several continuing students are bringing or sending assignments very regularly. It is clear that they are working steadily towards their goals of:

- (1) Developing their understanding of God, the Bible, discipleship and mission;
- (2) Equipping themselves better for service in the church



### ***Bachelor of Theology***

In August last year we launched a new programme, the Bachelor of Theology (BTh). It has attracted many lay people who preach and have leadership positions in their church, but have never received any theology training.

They cannot stop work to attend residential schools. Their churches focus on training clergy, so lay people have to finance their own studies. Studying is not easy for them. But extension courses give them the opportunity to do some training.

We now have 20 students in the BTh programme, including two ordained ministers who want to further their theological education.

### ***Scholarships***

We sometimes get direct requests from students or we learn about students who cannot afford their course fees. This year we are grateful for partners who have provided some scholarship funds for such students.

Contributing to the education and formation of church leaders in the Pacific is a sound investment!



### ***2009***

This year 13 new students have started the Certificate programme and one has moved on to the Diploma. More will enrol and begin studying throughout the year.

Two Certificate students, one Diploma and two BTh live on campus this year. Some others who live in Suva are able to study more or less full-time and take part in PTC community life. They range in age from young men to grandmothers, and come from Fiji/Rotuma, PNG and Tuvalu. They have started the year with enthusiasm.

### ***Director to Visit Solomons***

We provide various tutorials at PTC for students who can attend, but our other extension students also need support. The Director plans to go to the Solomon Islands for three weeks in May. She will visit our students there and offer tutorials and individual assistance in Honiara and in regional centres.

*Deidre Madden, Director*



## Women's Fellowship Development Programme

The first year of the Women's programme in 2008 ended with four leaving students receiving a certificate of participation.

***We congratulate the following women for their achievement: Diana Grenfell (New Zealand), Geac Kiki (Papua New Guinea), Rose Kamoto (Solomon Islands), Julika Meinert (Germany).***

Unfortunately, at the end of 2008 we lost four of our staff. We would like to extend our gratitude to all of them for their commitment and the time they put into the programme.

This year the number of students participating in the programme has decreased in comparison to 2008. Nevertheless, students are enjoying their classes in small groups.

In some courses, such as computing and cooking, it is of benefit to the students to work in smaller groups.



*Geac receives her Certificate*



*Julika, Diana & Rose*

At the completion of this academic year, 18 students will graduate with certificates in the various courses they participated in, having successfully completed them over the two years required.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who have supported the programme morally, practically and financially.

*Elena Valieli, for the WFDP Committee*



## Etina Havea Children's Centre

***Our mission: To educate children to become self-directed, life-long learners who can create a positive future for themselves and the community.***

Our kindergarten is located within the PTC compound at Nasese. It has state-of-the-art facilities. The staff are friendly and well-qualified. The safe, healthy learning environment provides top quality first education for children of PTC and from around the Suva area.

The children range in age from three to five years old. The current enrolment is 39. The increase in numbers is a testimony to the performance of children who now attend primary school.



The Centre is available for children of all ethnic groups. We provide various activities and excursions for the children's development.

The Parents and Teachers Association plays an active role in facilitating the needs and vigorously supports the centre.

*Niru Raj, Head Teacher*





## ***GPP—Personnel Exchange Programme***

GPP's Personnel Exchange Programme continues to offer the opportunity to our churches to strengthen the development capacity of their communities. Last year we had a request from the United Church of Solomon Islands to follow up on an earlier project regarding Vanilla Farming and intercropping techniques. Its aim was to aid in the recovery of areas hit by the tsunami in 2007. The Free Wesleyan Church of Tonga responded by releasing Rev Maloni 'Otukolo from the church farm in Leke, Vavau.

Rev 'Otukolo, an ordained minister of the Free Wesleyan Church of Tonga, holds responsibility for the operation of the church farm at Leke in Vavau in the north of Tonga. The strong performance of the farm under the management of Rev 'Otukolo indicated that he was the right person to aid in the development of UCSI communities.



*Rev 'Otukolo with Moderator of the UCSI Rev Barakana Havea*



### ***Vanilla Farming and Intercropping***

Rev Maloni undertook training sessions with local personnel in vanilla farming and inter-cropping. Beginning with the Tabaka Training Centre and then the teacher training college in Munda, he moved throughout the Western Province, undertaking 16 workshops in total, as word spread of the training he was offering.

Rev Maloni's work has been valuable in providing a strong foundation on which to build sustainable agricultural projects in the long term. A recent visit by the GPP Coordinator to the Tabaka Rural Training Centre where Rev Maloni was based saw the results of this placement in both the work of the centre and in the surrounding community.



*Rev Wilson Agiri, Principal of Tabaka Training Centre, with vanilla support plants in the Centre's demonstration garden.*

For further information on the Personnel Exchange Programme please contact the programme at:

[gpp@ptc.ac.fj](mailto:gpp@ptc.ac.fj)

ph (679) 331 1100 fax (679) 330 1728

Further information and application forms are available on the PTC web site, [www.ptc.ac.fj](http://www.ptc.ac.fj), under 'Special Programmes'.

## George Knight Library

Organisations are demanding innovative new ways of accessing timely, accurate information. Libraries need to respond and adapt quickly to changing needs and requirements. But they are required to provide these enhanced services under the constraints of fewer resources and less time to spend on traditional library processes.

The George Knight Library at PTC has met this challenge by upgrading the Library system to the Softlink Liberty 3.5 software. It was installed at the end of 2008, under the supervision of Helen Hampton, a volunteer Librarian from Australia, who was here for a month at the right time!



Liberty 3.5 is a fully web-based system which uses the latest technology. It provides 24/7 access to Library resources over the Internet. Anyone can access the PTC library catalogue via a link on the PTC library homepage, whether they are on campus or on the other side of the world. This will be of great help to researchers throughout the Pacific. Registered users can monitor the status of their requests, renew loans, manage reserved items, receive personalised notices about books they are interested in, view electronic documents and media, etc.

The library staff are looking forward to putting their training into practice as they develop the webpage further and facilitate links and services to the PTC community.

In the meantime, make sure you explore the link to the OPAC on the home page (or the Library page) of the PTC website!

[www.ptc.ac.fj](http://www.ptc.ac.fj)



## Maintenance

Rev Dr Tevita Havea and his maintenance team deal with regular repairs and maintenance to College property and grounds. In addition, over the past year they have completed a number of special projects and saved the College a lot of money. We say a big *Vinaka vakalevu* and *Malo 'aupito* to them all! Examples:

- Renovation of student flats over Christmas.
- Converting three small offices into space for the Director of the Institute for Research and Social Analysis and his Assistant.
- Making and fitting 10 extra cubicles into the Library, for our huge 2<sup>nd</sup> year MTh group.
- Replacing the faulty steel-framed hopper windows of the main building with louvres (estimated cost is \$4–5,000 instead of \$18,000 as quoted by an outside company).
- Installing overhead fans in the single student quarters.



*Special thanks to the Tongan ethnic group! They raised finance for the materials and then worked together to install concrete V-drains on a gradient from the main gate to the sea front. The area had previously flooded and become more eroded every time we had heavy rain. It is now well-drained, thanks to their cooperative efforts.*



## Alumni: Rev Dr Mosese Mailo-Fuaivaa

I graduated from PTC in 2003 with loads of musings on its cultural diversity, academic flexibility, the sports fields, the Bulu club and vibrant worship services. I didn't realize how much PTC reshaped my life until I went to a hostile academic surrounding in England. PTC broadened the horizons of our faith journey as a family, and my journey as an academic and minister of a Pacific Church.

*Let me tell my personal story...*

My home church appointed us to work at Piula Theological College after we returned from PTC. My partner Terina and I committed ourselves to training students and their wives for the ministry. The opportunity to supervise BD theses was a bonus for me. I also had many opportunities to speak in local parishes, youth group gatherings, ministers' fellowships and church conferences.

In September 2005 the opportunity came to do a PhD in England. However, the sponsorship provision was mainly for the candidate. It was tough, but my wife and daughter were so supportive. I left them for 15 months to commence my studies. The Methodist Church of Britain supported my programme throughout; although it was expensive, they managed to support my wife and daughter when they joined me in England from March 2007 until the end of the programme in September 2008. I graduated with a PhD in biblical linguistics in Dec 2008.

At the University of Birmingham I planned to study under Professor David Parker, leading British scholar in NT textual criticism. My initial area of special interest was textual criticism and its contribution to a revision of the Samoan Bible translation. But within a few months my experiences changed my mind.

In the Department of Theology, there were several academic congregations. They were supposed to be based on theological interests, but were mostly racially or religiously represented, for example, a group of mostly Islamic students was interested in the study of Islam and interfaith dialogue. Visiting each group a few times, I learned a lot. Nevertheless, recurring deep within me was the feeling that I didn't actually *belong* to any of the groups. They were lovely people, but after some of the academic discussions I knew I was



different. I had different hermeneutical questions and biblical concerns. I was a Pacific Islander. I was, to them, 'the other'. People were more interested in continents, poverty in Africa, Middle Eastern politics, Chinese and Russian human rights records, ancient manuscripts in dead languages—big things.

This experience was weird and challenging. I remembered PTC and recalled getting along with the Tahitians, Tongans, Fijians, Nauruans and Solomon Island students, as well as lecturers from Europe, America, the Pacific and so on. Although we had

minor differences, we had the same hermeneutical questions; we had similar biblical concerns; we had an identical academic language *for the service of the Pacific Church* and Christian faith.

My experiences at Birmingham opened my eyes to the reality of how *the other* is represented by the conceptual framework of the dominant and powerful. As a result, I decided to write something that is related to this type of representational power, in the production of Polynesian Bible languages in the early nineteenth century. In my thesis, I utilised some postmodern and postcolonial theories to discuss how the colonial mission attitudes of the British missionaries are reflected in the translation of the Tahitian, Rarotongan, Tongan, and Samoan Bibles. Fortunately, Professor R.S. Sugirtharajah—leading scholar in postcolonial biblical hermeneutics—offered his expertise to supervise my thesis. In doing such challenging research, I felt that as a Pacific student I could represent myself, and that I belonged to somewhere: Oceania, *home* to me and to the PTC.

All I'm saying is that PTC is a necessary academic institution for future Pacific theologians and church leaders. Though the *right methodology* is vital to higher academic research, PTC moulds us with the *right attitude* towards life and academic learning. It makes the PTC a unique theological institution.

God bless PTC.

*Faafetai.*

Rev Dr Mosese Mailo-Fuaivaa  
(Piula Theological College, Samoa Methodist Church)

## ***Faculty Development: Rev Dr Cliff Bird***



### ***Call of the 'PTC Spirit'***

I keep coming back to PTC! In fact my family keeps coming back to PTC, and each time we are back the family has grown, and in more than just numbers—we have grown in every way.

I first came to PTC with my family of four, wife Siera and two sons Jeromy and Leeroy. That was in January 1992, to do the Bachelor of Divinity (BD) degree. This was to be my very first formal theological training and I went into it with interest and passion. Siera enrolled in the Women's Programme in 1992 and the Diploma Programme in 1993–94, and our two sons attended Etina Havea Centre Kindy. At the end of 1994 I graduated with the Bachelor of Divinity Degree with Honors, Siera with Certificate in Women's Programme and our two sons with Etina Havea Centre Certificate. I must have done well, because the PTC management wrote to my church to ask if the church could release me to PTC as a candidate for the purpose of staff development training. My church resolutely said no.

The year 2000 saw the family back at PTC, with one addition in the form of a third son, Timasi Aleve Bird. I came to do the Master of Theology (MTh) degree. Having enrolled in the education by extension programme earlier, Siera continued with her Diploma in Theological Studies. Jeromy and Leeroy attended Veitu Primary School and Timasi attended Etina Havea Centre Kindy. Recent history in Fiji recorded the coup in 2000, which temporarily disrupted the Master's journey. By the end of 2001 academic year I graduated with Master of Theology in Theology and Ethics (with Distinction); Siera with a Diploma in Theological Studies a year earlier in 2000, and Timasi with Certificate at the Etina Havea Centre. Recalling PTC's request in 1994, my home church now made the offer to PTC to take me for its staff development training. PTC management decided to risk taking me on and in April 2004 we signed a contract of agreement, locking me into a 3-year bond to serve at the College after the completion of doctoral studies.

It is 2009 and here we are—back again at PTC. The family has grown by two: a fourth son, Mamutu Bweresi Bird who attends Etina Havea Centre Kindy, and the only daughter, Cliera Jelitima Bird who stays home but who, in 2010, will also attend Kindy at the Centre. After Cliera, all of our five children will have gone through the Etina Havea Centre, and numerically we do not expect to grow any further!

I teach in the Theology and Ethics department while Siera has enrolled to do the Bachelor of Theology degree through PTCEE. Jeromy is doing his first year at the University of the South Pacific (USP) undertaking a double degree—Bachelor of Arts in Education Management and Bachelor of Law (BAEd/LLB), Leeroy attends Form 5 at Dudley Senior High School and Timasi is now at Veitu Primary School in Year 6.

We will see where the 'wings of the Spirit' lead us after PTC, but for the next three years we are here. By the end of the current 3-year term, my family will have been at PTC for a total of 8 years. Adding my four years at USP, I will have been in Suva, Fiji, for a total of 12 years. It is an understatement to say that in all these our horizons have expanded beyond our broadest expectations. There must be something good about PTC. It must be the 'PTC Spirit'. Yes, it is the ecumenical spirit but it transcends this also. It is the 'spirit' that was breathed into form in 1961. It is the 'spirit' that has equipped women and men ever since as God's agents of transformation in the world. It is the 'spirit' that has moulded and shaped and transformed lives, churches and communities in the region and beyond. It is the 'spirit' that dares to make a stand in the face of life-negating forces and dares to make a difference in the lives of the disparate peoples in our region and beyond. It is the 'spirit' that keeps empowering us onward into God's possibilities for the region and for the world. This is the 'PTC spirit' that continues to beckon, to which I continue to respond affirmatively, and with which I will serve the College these three years, in the hope that I might just, if only just, participate in the Spirit who blows where it wills.



## 2008 Graduation



The highlight of the 2008 graduation was the conferring of an Honorary Doctor of Philosophy on the Most Rev Sir Ellison L. Pogo, who has served PTC faithfully over a very long period as Chairperson of our Council and Executive. We wish the Most Rev Dr Sir Ellison and Lady Pogo a well-earned rest after resigning as Archbishop of the Church of Melanesia.

### Prizes

(Left) Geac Kiki was awarded The Jean Bell Prize for Leadership and Example. (Below) Akanisi Tarabe received The Fiona McAdam Prize for Outstanding Contribution to the PTC Community



(Right) Olataga Elu— PTC Prize for Overall Academic Excellence for Master of Theology; Visesio Saga—PTC Prize for Overall Academic Excellence for Master of Theology



### Women's Fellowship Development Programme Certificate of Participation

Diana Grenfell (Anglican Church of Aoteroa)

Rose Kamoto (Church of Melanesia)

Geac Kiki (Evangelical Lutheran Church in PNG)

Julika Meinert (Evangelical Lutheran Church, Germany)

### Certificate in Theological Studies

Talaitupu Elu (Samoa Methodist Church)

Sanele Qalotaki (Methodist Church in Fiji & Rotuma)

Paiaata Savukiono (Methodist Church in Fiji & Rotuma)

### Diploma in Theological Studies

Angela Suruj Prasad (Anglican Diocese of Polynesia)

### Master of Theology

Fouvale Asiata (Congregational Christian Church in American Samoa)—Theology & Ethics

Tomasi Tarabe (Methodist Church in Fiji and Rotuma)—Biblical Studies

Apote Toko (Methodist Church in Fiji and Rotuma)—Church Ministry

Josefa Turagacati (Methodist Church in Fiji and Rotuma)—Theology & Ethics

### Master of Theology with Distinction

Olataga Elu (Samoa Methodist Church)—Theology & Ethics

Visesio Saga (Congregational Christian Church in Samoa)—Biblical Studies



### Theses

Fouvale Asiata:

A Theological Reconstruction of Calvin's Concept of Election by Way of the Samoan Understanding of *Tofiga*. *Sustained*.

Olataga Elu: A Critical Analysis of the Colonial-Mission Oriented Theology in the Hymnody of the Methodist Church of Samoa. *Sustained with distinction*.

Visesio Saga: Jesus' 'Triumphal' Entry: An Ill-Fated Challenge to Authority: A Social Historical Analysis of Mark 11:1–11. *Sustained with distinction*.

Ilimeleki Susu: The History of Methodist Theological Education in Fiji Until 1973. *Sustained*.

Tomasi Tarabe: Matthew 6:19–24. A New Order of Property Ownership: A Paradigm Shift. *Sustained with merit*.

Apote Toko: The Role of the Methodist Church in Fiji and Rotuma in Discovering Pathways to Reconciliation in Fiji's Context of Coups. *Sustained*.

Josefa Turagacati: Fijian Traditional *Bete* (Priest) and the Understanding of Theology of Ministry. *Sustained with merit*.

### Doctor of Philosophy

(Left) Gwayaweng Kiki (ELC-PNG), our first PhD student, will graduate next month. He was given special recognition at the PTC graduation ceremony. His thesis was of extremely high standard.

## ***PTC Health Project***

This year we are trying to raise funds to improve the sanitary drainage system. Benefits will include:

- Lower health risks through leaking septic tanks;
- No more foul smell due to grey water from kitchens and showers in storm water drains;
- No more regular pumping out of septic tanks.



The project will include the construction of new septic tanks for each house or block of flats. Only toilet waste will go into the new septic tanks. The tanks will be built partly above ground to avoid overflow in times of heavy rain. All waste from kitchens and showers will go into the old septic tanks.

### ***Contributions Welcome!***

The project will cost about FJ \$50–60,000.

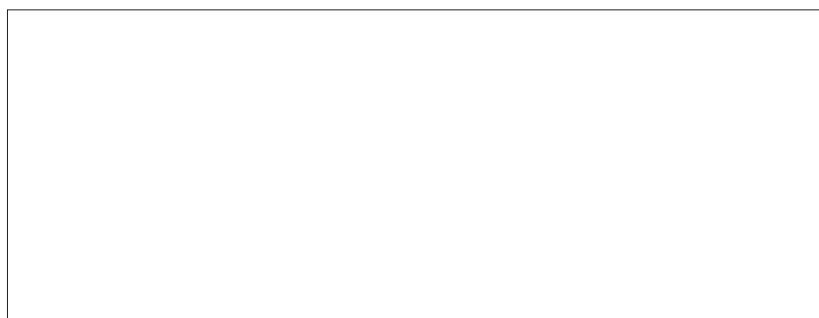
The main focus of our fundraising will be a **bazaar** to be held Saturday 2nd May on campus, during the first term break. But students and staff of PTC have already started various fundraising activities. We would welcome any contributions you would like to make to this important project!

Money can be sent by cheque, Western Union, credit card or bank transfer to our account (Westpac, Thomson St Branch, Account name: PTC General Operating Account, No. 711273-00; Swiftcode: WPACFJFX).

**Please indicate clearly that your donation is for the *Health Project*.**

If sending by Western Union, please inform us so we can collect it.

[<http://www.sendmoneypacific.org/> compares the cost of different ways from Australia or NZ.]



Thank you to all those who contributed to this issue!

*Newsletter Team: Fele Nokise, Deidre Madden and Sofa Niulevu*

**Postal Address:** PTC, Private Mail Bag, Suva, Fiji Islands **Phone:** +(679) 330 1100

**Fax:** + (679) 330 1728 **Email:** [ptc@ptc.ac.fj](mailto:ptc@ptc.ac.fj) **Website:** [www.ptc.ac.fj](http://www.ptc.ac.fj)

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