

TALANOA TOKTOK

Official Publication of the Pacific Conference of Churches

The background image shows two young children in traditional Pacific attire. They are wearing headbands made of dried grass and have white paint or clay applied to their faces in traditional patterns. The child on the left is looking to the side, while the child on the right is looking forward. They are wearing patterned purple and white clothing. The text 'The real Krist' is overlaid on the image in large white letters.

The real Krist

PACIFIC church
leaders gathered in
Noumea for the PCC
General Assembly in
November.

It was a time for
transformation,
renewal and discovery

Assembly returns to Kanaky



Regional solidarity Kanaky senators at the PCC General Assembly

To the roots

THE Pacific Conference of Churches returned to the site of its first assembly, three years shy of the 60th anniversary of the event.

At Xepenehe Village in Wetr Province, leaders discussed a review of the Pacific Theological College along with pressing issues such as the discrimination against locals by the French government in the areas of education and health services.

Young people gathered at Doneva to focus on the plight of regional youth and their place in the creation of church programmes and policies.

Women delegates met at Canala where safe churches was a major focus of discussions.

After two days of intense meetings in the districts, delegates returned to Noumea for the main general assembly thematic sessions and elections.

On the first day, Kanaky senators - representing the people - were presented with gifts by the outgoing Moderator, Reverend DrTevita Havea, on behalf of all delegates.

An official welcome was made by the chiefs to the PCC and this was followed by an ecumenical service held at nightfall in the grounds of the Universite de Nouvelle Caledonie.

Most delegates lived on campus and the local church provided al fresco breakfast each morning along with musical entertainment and dance.

More than 300 Pacific delegates attended the assembly and were flown in on an aircraft chartered from Air Calin.

Four days of intense discussions were held to chart the way forward for the PCC in the next four years.



Guard changes

Samoan elder leads PCC

AMERICAN Samoan church leader, Elder Dr. Leatulagi Faalevao is the new Moderator of the Pacific Conference of Churches.

He replaces Reverend Dr Tevita Havea of the Free Wesleyan Church of Tonga who was elected moderator at Honiara, the Solomon Islands in 2013.

Faalevao is the chair of the Congregational Christian Church of American Samoa and ministers at the Amouli parish with his wife, Vagai.

He is the first American Samoan to hold the position of moderator of the PCC. Speaking after his election, Faalevao thanked Havea for his tireless work and dedication. "I look forward to the difficult challenges of climate change, self determination, and other issues that Pacific churches continue to deal

with," the moderator said.

"With the Spirit of God, and the Spirit of ecumenism that is alive and well in the Pacific, there is nothing that the Pacific Conference of Churches (PCC) cannot do together."

Delegates elected Reverend Sepiuta Hala'api'api of the Anglican Diocese of Polynesia as Deputy Moderator.

The PCC Constitution stipulates that if a male is elected moderator, the deputy must be a woman.

Reverend James Bhagwan of the Methodist Church in Fiji was returned unopposed as General Secretary to lead the PCC for a second term.

A number of new members were elected to the Executive Committee which will meet in Suva, Fiji in Quarter 1 of 2024.



Time's up ... PCC staff member Olivia Baro helps speakers keep track of the time during the General Assembly

A journey to liberty

POLITICAL self-determination will continue to be a focus area for the Pacific Conference of Churches for the next five years.

After discussions with local communities in Kanaky in November, the PCC is determined to press for independence in Kanaky, Maohi Nui (French Polynesia) and West Papua.

"Given the challenges our sisters and brothers have faced, especially around the third referendum in 2021," Rev Bhagwan said, "it's an important opportunity for us to come here as a faith community, gathering to listen to the community and churches in Kanaky-New Caledonia, and learn from them. We're very much looking for the program, and we want to celebrate that Kanaky is a Pacific Island community."



The PCC

THE Pacific Conference of Churches has more than 40 members throughout the region.

It has around nine million congregants from West Papua to Tuvalu and the Marshall Islands to New Zealand.

Its members are individual churches and national councils as well as partner organisations from the UK to the US.

Talanoa Toktok