

MERRY

CHRISTMAS



Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.

Romans 15:13 KJV

HMPPYNEW







COOK ISLANDS CHRISTIAN CHURCH

NEWSLETTER 2023







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December 2023

92nd Issue

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92nd Issue

Introduction

Kia Orana tatou katoatoa I te Aroa Maata o to tatou Atu ko Iesu Mesia. Kia Orana again and a warm Christmas greetings to whom ever receives this newsletter, whether it may be, here in the Cook Islands, in New Zealand, in Australia, in Tahiti or where ever this newsletter travels to, may the Love and Grace of God be with you all. Let us give thanks to God for giving us this opportunity to meet again through this newsletter, this is the 92nd Issue of our newsletter and the 4th and final released of this year.

in this newsletter outlines some of the important event that took places in the last quarter of this year, between the months of October, November and December 2023. Such as the **Gospel Day Celebration**, **Ordination of Two New Orometua**, **RAC Thanksgiving Service** and a few more.

Please help share the news to all who finds interest, in keeping up to date with some of the important events that has taken place in our organization, but at the moment please enjoy reading on through this short newsletter and we will meet again in the 93rd Issue Next Year 2024.

On Behalf of the team at Takamoa, God Bless, Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Mark Ahiao. Director of Publications.



What's on Sale at Takamoa?

- Bibilia Tapu (Bible) Soft leatherCover- \$45.00
- Bibilia Tapu (Bible) Hard Cover-\$20.00
- * Puka Imene (Hymn Book)-\$20.00 N/A
- * Tia- \$5.00
- * Karere- \$10.00
- * Pure Epetoma- \$7.00

- Puka Pure- \$12.00
- Baptism Book- \$45.00
- Marriage Book- \$45.00
- Burial Book- \$45.00
- CICC Flags- \$50.00
- Bicentennial Neck Ties- \$10.00

www.cicc.net.ck 92nd Issue **C.I.C.C Newsletter December 2023**

"Gospel Day in Rarotonga.



Ekalesias Celebrated their National annual Gospel Day, NUKU celebration. It was hosted on the Teimurimotia Park (Rugby Field) by the Titikaveka Ekalesia. Unlike Aitutaki, Rarotonga intends to continue celebrating this public holiday for the years to come. The event started at 9AM in the morning and finished at about 12pm midday. Many were welcomed by M.C Sonny Williams, welcoming distinguished invited guest, visitors, families and friends whom all have come to partake in or watch as the celebration goes on. Right afterward, a devotion was held by the All these six Ekalesia portrayed their themes through a Reverend Tereapii Matakere, Orometua for the Titikaveka Ekalesia. His message to everyone was to

"Honour God in our everyday life because he has raised us, from generation after generation to where we are now!"

That is why we celebrate Gospel Day, to Honour our God and recognize the arrival of his Gospel to our nation. From thereafter, it was the official declaration of the opening of the 2023 NUKU event, conducted by the Orometua from Matavera Reverend Panu Rouru on behalf of the Orometua Ngateitei of the CICC.

On the 26th of October 2023 of this year, the Rarotonga The theme of the 2023 NUKU event is - "Jesus is Coming Soon" "Te oki mai nei a Iesu".

> The main celebration then kicked off with a presentation performed by the six Ekalesia of Rarotonga based on their each given themes, starting in order with Ngatangiia-Parable of the ten Virgins, Matavera-Judgements of the Nations, Avarua—Thief of the Night, Nikao— Cloud rider, Arorangi-Second coming of Christ, and lastly Titikaveka—New Heaven and New Earth.

> mixture of music, singing, drama, traditional hymns and many more ways that they found possible, to be able to express their message, and that message is to "Be **Ready**" because, as the theme of the day says, "Jesus is coming Soon".

> Matthew 24:36 ... But on that day and hour no one know, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only.

> Matthew 24: 44 ... Therefore, you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.



From Left to Right, top to bottom: are the Six Ekalesias from Ngatangiia, Matavera, Avarua, Nikao, Arorangi, And Titikaveka, marching on to the stage area to present their Nuku presentation which was exciting and fun for those who joined in and those who watched as the dance go on.

"Jesus is Coming Soon.

Ordination of our New Orometua's

Below from Left to Right: are the many friends and families whom all have come to witness this special occasion, and Reverend Saungaki and James along with their wives awaiting eagerly for the ordination to get underway. Eventually they Knelt down and received the blessings of the Orometua's to become one themselves.



On Sunday the 5th of November 2023, a special Church service was held at Ziona Tapu in Avarua for the ordination of two new Orometua's. Many people from the six Ekalesia as well as all the Apiianga and families have come to witness this special occasion. The new Orometua's are Mr and Mrs Saungaki Rasmussen and Mr and Mrs James Jessie. They started off as an Apiianga in 2021 up until November 2023. They were selected from the top of their classes to be ordained as an Orometua to fill in two vacant posts. The two new Orometua were ordained by the Rev. Panu Rouru on behalf of the Orometua Ngateitei/President of the CICC and Executive Council. They were then blessed by all the attending Orometua who were present during the ceremony. The service was conducted in a normal church service order which was led by The Rev. Vaka Ngaro, which was then followed by the ordination, and a strong message by the Principal Tere Marsters, which is to "descend into greatness". Right after the special service, everyone had the chance to congratulate the New Orometua whilst they exited the church. The procession then made their way up to Ruatoka hall for the refreshment/Kaikai which was prepared by the Rarotonga Konitara Ekalesias. This was a very special and rare occasion to happen, as Apiianga students are ordinated after their Graduation from Takamoa. Nevertheless, this was a special and proud moment for us all, from all the Ekalesias to close families and friends. So "Well done Saungaki, Good and faithful servant, Well done James, Good and Faithful Servant" and, of course, your beautiful wives and children who have all stood by your sides and will continue to do so throughout your journey as an Orometua.

Matthew 25:23 KJV: His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.



Above from Left to Right: Straight after the service, everyone had the chance to greet and congratulate the new Orometua's, as well as gracing them with flower eis and taking pictures to keep for memories. In the middle and right Photo is the Principal along with his former two student and newly Orometua's taking a group photo and making their way up to Ruatoka hall,

Takamoa for lunch.

"Well done Good and Faithful Servant!"

R.A.C Thanksgiving Service.

Below, left to Right: are the congregations from the Apostolic Church and their respective Bishop Tutai Pere, the Latter day Saints (Mormons) and their President Tamatoa Jonassen and also the Assembly of God (AOG) and their Pastor Paul Kauri.

They shared an awesome message, prayer and a musical worship, giving Honour and Glory to God.



On Sunday the 12th of November 2023, at about 6pm in the evening, the Religious Advisory Council on Rarotonga along with all their congregation, took their time to host a Thanksgiving service in Honouring God and praying for his blessings and protection as the Cook Islands enters the Cyclone season. The host of the event is the CICC. This special service takes place before and after the Cyclone season, and it is an opportunity for every Christian family to come together and praise God's holy name, and that is what everyone who has attended the service witnessed. The service started with praise and worship lead by the CICC praise and worship team, and an opening prayer and message was shared by Rev. Panu Rouru, acting on behalf of the chairperson of the RAC, Rev. Tuaine Ngametua, President of the CICC.

THEME: Come to me and I will give you rest. Matt 11.28

This was then followed by presentation, messages and prayers from the six members of the RAC and their congregations, starting with **Apostolic** - Bishop Tutai Pere, **LDS** — President Tamatoa Jonassen, **AOG** — Pastor Paul Kauri, **CICC** youth Performance, **SDA** — Pastor Eric Toleafoa and **Catholic** — Bishop Paul Donoghue represented by Father Fred Kaina.

Their presentation, messages and prayer were all directed at the country as a whole and to those outside of our country who are serving in different aspects of our society, from the public, to public servant, the private sector, the church and traditional leaders, and many of whom are a part of our society. It is to remind us that no matter the situation and things that we all go through, that we must always give a prayer of thanksgiving to our lord, who has provided us with the necessities to live out what he has installed for us all and that in times of trouble and uncertainty, God will be our strength, refuge, comforter and our Protector during this cyclone season.



Above Left to Right: is the CICC youth presenting a musical dance presentation, and then you have the Seventh Day Adventist Church and their respective Pastor Eric Toleafoa, who presented a wonderful choir, and to end the night off is the Catholic and their Father Fred Kaina who ended with a Musical Drama, which was based on Family.

Come and I will give you rest.

Youth Rally Closing.

Below is the Avarua youth who started of the presentation, and there theme was Creation, afterwards was the Titikaveka youth with their theme Faithfulness and then Ngatangiia Youth, Deliverance.



On Sunday the 26th of November 2023, the Rarotonga Youth Council held its closing youth rally at the National Auditorium and was hosted by the Avarua Ekalesia Youth. The theme of the day was

SEEKING WISDOM AND GUIDANCE FROM GOD, Psalms 119: 73 - 96.

The rally started with praise and worship at 3:30pm and then the opening prayer and gospel message at 4:00pm by Rev. Vaka Ngaro. Afterward, there was an address by the Rarotonga Youth Council Chairlady Moana Matenga-Tauu and the Youth Director of the CICC, Tuaine Unuia. The six youth groups from Avarua, Matavera, Ngatangiia Titikaveka, Arorangi and Nikao each had the opportunity to showcase a presentation through musical drama and musical dance to express each of their given themes. The themes were **Creation**, **Comfort and Hope**, **Deliverance**, **Faithfulness**, **Everlasting Word**, **and Devotion**. It was a joyous evening for the performers and those who watched on, and the message was clear about their themes. And it is important events such as these are one of many ways that we can empower our youth all over Rarotonga to walk in the light of our God.

And the evening ended with closing remarks from M.C Maria Ioane as well as Rev. Vaka Ngaro, encouraging our youth of today and tomorrow to hold steadfast on to our faith and that throughout the journeys we endeavor we must always seek Wisdom and guidance from God.

From the Executives of the RAROTONGA YOUTH COUNCIL—Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.



Above is the Matavera youth and their theme Comfort and Hope, followed by Arorangi youth, Everlasting Word and lastly Nikao youth, with their theme based on Devotion.

Seeking Wisdom and Guidance from God.

PCC 12th General Assembly



DO KAMO KHRIST TRANSFORM US INTO YOUR NEW HUMANITY Pacific Conference of Churches

12th General Assembly

G. P. O. Box 208, Suva 4 Thurston Street, Suva, Fiji Tel: (679) 3311 277 / 3302332 E-mail: pacific@pcc.org.fj



Our journey started at individual locations from Rarotonga, Melbourne & Gold Coast. Delegate Representatives of CICC: Principal Tere Marsters, Papa Nga Mataio, Ngatokorua Ngatokorua, Mama Orometua Ngari Ongoua and Mrs Maeva Manavaikai.







Our first destination was Nadi Fiji where more than 200 delegates presented themselves and pre-registered for the assembly before catching a chartered flight as "The Pacific Household of God", to New Caledonia.

Both flights and services were amazing. There was a delay with our Fiji flight due to the tropical cyclone that was upon us at that time but praise the Lord, he got us all there safely.

We arrived to La Tontouta New Caledonia very early in the morning welcomed by the leadership Eglise Protestante de Kanaky NC, the President Pastor Var Kemo and a chief from the south of the mainland with church members, customary senate and chiefs as well as the people of Kanaky. The traditional welcome protocol was emotional & heartwarming.





All delegates were transported via bus to our main accommodation at the University of New Caledonia early hours in the morning & with only 4 hours of sleep we were up & off again to our pre-assemblies Fri to Sunday afternoon.

The PTC council & Pacific church leaders (Papa Tere & Papa Nga) flew to Lifou, Mama Orometua Ngari bused to Canala for the Women's pre-assembly, Youth rep Maeva bused to Do Neva Agriculture school & Nga Ngatokorua remained in Noumea with the SPATs council meeting. We all had separate agendas at our Pre-assemblies which you can read more about in the individual reports below.

Khrist Transforms Us Into Your New Humanity

PCC 12th General Assembly— Church Leaders.

I te popongi Varaire 17 Noema kua rere atu te au arataki o te au akonoanga Evangelia i roto nei i te Pasifika (church leaders in the Pacific) ki Lifou, e enua mei tetai 40 meneti rereanga i vao mai i te enua maata ia New Caledonia. Ko te enua teia tei akanoo te au akateretereanga o te uipaanga maata kia aere e kia noo te au arataki e 2 ra e 2 po. I nga po e rua ia matou i Lifou, kua tu'aia/billet matou ki te au kopu tangata, na ratou i utuutu ia matou no te ngai nooanga e pera te kai ti i te popongi i mua ake ka taokotai akaou ei matou ki te aua o te Ekalesia maata i Lifou.



The Mama and Papa with grandchild who hosted the PTC Princpal (Dr. Upolu Vaai) and I in their home from Friday 17–Sundaty 19 November.



Popongi Maanakai 18 Noema Kua raveia te akamaaraanga i te 57 mataiti o te akatupuia'anga o te PCC ki Lifou, ki roto i te oire Xepenehe mei tei taiku iatu i runga nei. Kia oti te au tuatua akaaravei e te akamaramaanga a te aronga mou taoanga o te oire tei nooia e matou, kua orongaia mai te tikaanga kia tuatua e kia pau au no matou te tere mei Noumea mai. Kua oti teia i te akanooia no te mea na te Orometua Paoo mei Aitutaki mai i apai i te Evangelia ora a to tatou Atu ko Iesua Mesia ki teia enua Lifou i te mataiti 1842, e 181 mataiti i topa ake nei. E ngateitei teia tei rauka iaku i raro ake i te tamaruanga a te CICC, kia akameitakiia te Atua.





1966 re-enactment of the arrival of the Gospel into Lifou, New Caledonia, over 180 years ago, actor for Missionary Paoo from Aitutaki, Cook Islands, in suit on right (source: Papa John Doom, EPM).

Avatea Maanakai—E atianga teia tei akanooia kia rave te konitara o te apii Pacific Theological College (PTC) i tana uipaanga ki te are pure tena tei taiku iatu i runga nei. E maata te au manako tei uriia e tei akaotiia no te apai anga ki te uipaanga maata i Noumea me oki matou i te aiai Sabati 19 Noema.

Aiai Maanakai—Ko te atianga teia tei akanoo to matou au metua utuutu (hosting community) i te angai e pera te veevee aroa anga ia matou i te mea e ka oki atu matou ki Noumea i te ra i muri mai, koia te Sabati 19/12. Kua raveia teia tuanga akamata i muri ake i te uipaanga a te PTC Council na roto i te kaikai e taopenga ki te tamataora tei raveia mai e te mapu, tena ia te tutu i runga nei. Mei te ora e te apa (1.5 hrs), kare aite te tu maoraora e te mataora no teia tuanga tei raveia mai e te mapu turuia atu e te au metua o te Evangelia tei noo ki Lifou. Ko tetai teia o te akairo i te au ravenga takake ta te Atua i akono no tona iti tangata tei aravei ki teia tuanga enua i roto nei i te pa moana Pasifika.

Sabati—I te popongi kua tuaia matou na roto i te au oire no te aereanga ki te pure. Kia tere te pure kua taoko-

tai akaou matou ki te ngai okotai no te katikati/lunch openga i mua ake ka akaruke ei matou i te ora 1.00pm no Lifou Airport no te okianga ki Noumea i te ora 3.00pm.

Manako openga no to matou tere ki Lifou

Kia akameitakiia te Atua no teia tikaanga manea tei rauka kia atoro atu i te iti tangata no te Atua tei noo ki runga i teia enua ko Lifou, e atianga i toku irinakianga kare e tapae akaou mai. I roto i te reo porena, a once-in-alifetime eye-opener experience that will most likely never come by again. Ko te au tuanga katoatoa ta te iti tangata no te Atua i akanoo no matou: kai, ngai nooanga, pereo, akonoanga pure, tamataora, e te vai atura, sumaringa tika'i te au mea katoatoa, kare rava e ngai e o atu ei tetai akaapaanga matutu. Meitaki maata ki te iti tangata Kanaky i Lifou no tei utuutu mai ia matou mei te mea atura e, e pirianga toto tika'i to tatou. Ki te Papa e te Mama e pera ta korua mokopuna tei utuutu mai ia maua ko Upolu, merci beaucoup no to korua tu aroa e te takingameitaki ia maua. Kia riro ua rai te Mana Katoatoa i te akakiki mai i te vairanga a te iti tangata no te Atua tei noo ki runga ia Lifou no te au ra ki mua.

PCC 12th General Assembly— Women's Gathering

For two days prior to the opening of the Assembly, delegates were able to attend a number of different Pre-Assembly gatherings.

One gathering was for the womens, which I was involved in. This meeting involved women representatives from around 30 member churches as well as 4 prospective members and several visitor churches or organisations. This gathering was hosted by the Indigenous Kanaky people of Canala. It conveys the sense of transformation into our authentic selves as the 12th General Assembly logo put it,

"Christ Transformed Us Into Your New Humanity."



PCC 12th General Assembly— Youth Assembly

My reflection of the Youth assembly: As individuals we traveled near, far & wide from across our pacific oceans day & night passing nearby atolls & our beautiful brother & sister islands, leaving behind what was and what we have become today as newly identified Do-Kamo individuals.

PCC has brought 15+ of our colorful languages together as one, & the only language that did not require any translation was that of Love.

It is an honor to have been selected to rep our CICC mapu e te iti tangata Kuki Airani and I am grateful to have met the most amazing pure & great youthful Leaders of the Pacific who are working collectively to make good changes.

It has been a very humbling experience being with the people of Do-Neva, eating, breathing & living the Kanaky way. I felt very much at home. It took me back to where I grew up in Vaipae, Aitutaki as I currently reside on the Gold Coast in Australia and this trip has brought me back to my roots so as to never forget where we come from.

One thing that I am committed to was to get the message back to our youth and to share awareness of what is happening in and around our islands and that together we can make a difference.

We had a youth night of performances and reflections after an intense day going through the plenary at hand, an extra day would have been perfect so not to rush through the plenaries and we would have more time for our meeting and plannings.

We left as strangers and returned strengthened and unified.

All in all, this definitely would be one journey I will never forget, it was a pleasure to get to know our CICC delegates in person as it has only been that of communication online. I want to take this time to thank Papa Nga Mataio for your well communication and organization of our travel plans. You are too good.

I thank our Heavenly Father for he took us there and back safely.

To God be the Glory.





PCC 12th General Assembly—SPATS

II: SPATS PRE-ASSEMBLY – NOUMEA Principals and Councils of Theological Colleges across the region and were gathering in New Caledonia, for the SPATS Council meeting from 17th to 24th November 2023. With the outreach of faith communities to every town and village across the Pacific, the SPATS meeting with the theme: "Transforming Theological Education in the Changing Context" highlighted issues that are being taught and implemented in the Asia and European world in contrast to the applications in the South Pacific. Speakers from Theological Colleges in Canada, U.S.A, Australia and Asia presented ideologies relates to the transformation in the changing world and makes recommendations for the countries in the Pacific Conference of Churches (PCC).

One of the interesting topic, and it is a tentative issue in our church today was introduced by Rev. Dr. J. Dorcas Gordon. A discussion on the marginalization of the gay, lesbian, and transgendered community in church and society how their marginalization paralleled in specific ways, that of women who were also struggling to be recognized as leaders in church and society. The question was, whether the different regions in Asia and the Pacific would agree? The good news is that so far in spite of some reservations, Myanmar, the Philippines, Indonesia, Nepal, the women's resource centre in Korea, Japan, and Taiwan, Serampore College and this region have agreed to participate

In 1996, Kwok Pui Lan, a Chinese feminist theologian, said: "decolonizing minds" this she means, the cultural practices that need to change for the complex process of decolonization to be realized, or simply "Decolonization of a colony involves not simply a political turn-over but also complicated, controversial and contested changes in cultural practices". Hyun Sook Kim of Yonsei University in South Korea insists that, theological education must move away from its enlightenment framework to embrace the pluralism of the contemporary situation. This means a focusing away from religious questions that address personal, subjective spirituality to embracing the public sphere with its human need and suffering. Kim called this a "conversation" model. Observations, churches in Canada, Asia and other even in Ekalesia Porotatani of French Polynesia, (I Believed) where the first Missionary to teach the bible to our shore "Papehia" came from, have now excepted woman as ordained Minister. What are our views on these, these remains a question?

PCC 12th General Assembly—PCC Assembly

The PCC General Assemblies are held every five years, and the previous gathering was in Auckland, Aotearoa-New Zealand, looking at the role of Pacific diaspora communities. Reverend Bhagwan said the 2018 decision to host this week's Assembly in New Caledonia came at a prophetic time: "It was on the eve of the first referendum on self-determination in New Caledonia in 2018, and the 11th Assembly put out a statement and a regional call to prayer for the people of Kanaky." "Given the challenges our sisters and brothers have faced, especially around the third referendum in 2021.

On Tuesday, President of New Caledonia Louis Mapou addressed the General Assembly. "Transformation as Self Determination," is a major theme, and Tuesday's plenary includes reflections from the Church and People of Kanaky; the Etaretia Porotetani Maohi (EPM) of Mā'ohi Nui / French Polynesia; the Churches of Tanah Papua (West Papua); and the United Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress from Australia.

On Wednesday, the plenary "Transformation as Ecological Stewardship" has a major focus on climate change, nuclear legacies and "the stewardship of God's creation." Maureen Penjueli, the Coordinator of the Pacific Network on Globalisation (PANG) gave the keynote address, with responses from Fiji Archbishop Peter Loy Chong and a presentation by Rev. Dr. Cliff Bird on "Reweaving the Ecological Mat: An Ecological Framework for Development." Reflecting on the challenges facing children and young people, a further plenary will discuss "Children as God's Precious Gifts: Transformation as Child Protection and Empowerment.".

On Thursday, I (Junior Ngatokorua) had the honor to participate as a member in the Nomination Committee to run and overseer the election of the PCC Office Bearers such as the Moderator, Deputy and the General Secretary.







Images from the 12th PCC Assembly





Delegates arrive Noumea, Thursday evening 16/11, welcomed by Kanaky traditional leaders.





Church leaders being welcomed by one of the local villages on Lifou, snacks time.







Opening of assembly outside lecture hall, University of New Caledonia, Noumea.

PCC Article Submitted by the Following People:

Nga Mataio—Team Leader (Church Leaders)

Junior Ngatokorua—Legal Adviser (SPATS)

Mama Orometua Ngari Ongoua—Vainetini Rep (Women's Gathering)

Maeva Manavaikai—Youth Rep (Youth Assembly)

Picture Gallery



L-R. Principal Rev. Tere Marsters and Yvonne Marsters pictured alongside the two new Orometuá's and their wives. Rev. James Jessie, Veronica Jessie and Rev. Saungaki Rasmussen, Francis Rasmussen, Pictured at the steps of the Mission House at Takamoa. And Rev. Saungaki Rasmussen delivering his first Sermon as a Orometua.



Pictured above is an Uapou that the General Secretary Ken Ben and New Zealand Representative Tekura Potoru attended down in Poneke during their Reconciliation session with the New Zealand CICC Council.



Pictured Above is the arrival and welcoming of Papa Orometua Metu Une and his family into the Avarua Ekalesia, and the blessing of a new Van for the incoming Orometua. Blessed by Rev Vaka Ngaro.



Pictured above is the CICC delegate representative at the PCC 12th General Assembly.

MERRY CHRISTMAS!

You Made It!

You have made it to the conclusion of this short newsletter, which concludes the 92nd Newsletter of December 2023. it has been quite a busy year for the CICC Organization with major events and celebrations held in regards to the General Assembly and 200th Gospel celebration that many have come afar to witness. I can say, that it has been a wonderful year, where friends families and communities come together to celebrate and help one another despite the challenges we have encountered throughout this year, which is a testament of Gods Love, Grace and Mercy that we made it this far. I hope that through this newsletter we all have enjoyed again in keeping up to date with news both known and unknown to us all. We shall meet again in the 93rd Newsletter of next Year. Until then.........Kia Orana, e te au Taeake e Kia Manuia I to kotou au aerenga.



Responsible for this Issue.

Authors (Articles/Photo): - Nga Mataio, Junior Ngatokorua, Maeva

Manavaikai, Mark Ahiao, Saungaki Rasmussen,

Naomi Manavaikai, Ken Ben.

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This newsletter is generated by Takamoa in an effort to keep members of the CICC informed of current activities, past events, interesting issues, views and opinions of members and in some cases non-members of the Church. The views and opinions, unless otherwise stated, are not necessarily those of the CICC.

Enquiries

Editor (Mark Ahiao) Ph: 26546 (wk), 76157 (mob) publiction@cicchq.com (work) or mkvincent2023@gmail.com (personal)

Administration Officer (Nga Mitiau-Manavaikai) Ph: 26546 admin@cicchq.com

<u>Comments</u> for improving the format and presentation are welcome, email the Editor. Church-related articles/photos for inclusion in future issues are most welcome, email the Editor. Those already on the

!!!Next Issue due: March 2024!!!

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