

Multiculturalism Matters

UNITING CHURCH IN AUSTRALIA | PRESBYTERY OF SOUTH MORETON | 29 OCTOBER 2014



With the Moderator (centre) are (from left) Paula Hukehuke, Rev. Maile Molitika, Sione Fifita, Rev. Lu Senituli and Rev. Hedley Fihaki

Moderator's attire 'a significant gesture'

By **PAULA HUKHEKUE**
Park Tongan UC

A DECISION by the new Moderator, Rev. Dave Baker, to wear traditional Tongan attire on the Monday of Synod was a significant gesture of solidarity and acceptance.

He came to me at the launch of the new Trinity College Qld in July and said, "I'd like this, and this, and this," pointing to my own *kafa*, *ta'ovala*, and *tupenu*.

Later, my wife happily put together the outfit which comprised the *tupenu* (white coloured skirt with two side pockets), the *ta'ovala* (yellowish coloured mat, made from the leaves of the pandanus tree, and wrapped outside the *tupenu*) and

kafa (a rope made from coconut husk).

I took them to David and helped him try them out at the Synod office a few weeks before Synod, and then I helped him put them on at the Synod.

This attire is the formal outfit, the cultural dressing norm, for all Tongans, normally worn on formal occasions, sometimes with a tie and jacket.

The *tupenu* has other names and is worn in other Pacific Island communities such as Fiji, Samoa, and Papua New Guinea, but the *ta'ovala* and *kafa* are uniquely Tongan. This attire is commonly worn by Tongans around the globe as well as the descendants of Tongans, especially in the Lau group of islands in Fiji.

This historic occasion where the Moderator, by his own initiative, wears the formal Tongan attire is symbolic of him extending the open arms of friendship and acceptance to us as people.

As we are an ethnic minority in UCA, this is a significant statement of solidarity by the Moderator, not only to Tongans but to all ethnic groups and peoples.

In this photo, people from other ethnic groups can imagine the Moderator wearing *their* traditional dress and standing side by side with them. This is a true multicultural and biblical gesture and grace by the Moderator. It is a significant example to all leaders and people in the UCA and Australia.

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Multiculturalism Matters is published fortnightly and emailed with the Presbytery Newsletter. You are welcome to email, or copy and distribute. Each issue can also be downloaded from the Presbytery web site: <http://www.southmoreton.org.au>. Please email David if you would like to receive the newsletter directly by email. Submitted photos and stories reflecting the cultural diversity of the South Moreton Presbytery are welcome.

Men's health is seminar focus

MEN'S health, including prostate cancer, is the focus of a seminar **this Saturday, November 1, at Logan UC, 129 Dennis Rd, Springwood.**

Organised by the Synod's Multi Cross Cultural Commission in conjunction with the Ethnic Communities Council of Qld, the seminar is aimed especially at men from culturally diverse backgrounds.

Two multicultural health education experts, Anna Voloschenko and Paul Tomane, are the keynote presenters, and Fijian-Chinese Australian Devlin Chung will share his story of diagnosis and treatment of prostate cancer and diabetes.

The seminar runs from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm with morning tea provided. Entry by gold coin donation. Enquiries to Rev. Viliami Mila, 0431 671 131.

Niue hold first language service

ACACIA Ridge UC's Niue people held their first language service at the church last Sunday afternoon.

Led by Rev. Steve Havilitama, the service coincided with Peniamina Gospel Day, a national holiday in Niue marking the date in 1846 when local missionary Peniamina Nukai returned from Samoa and introduced Christianity to the island.

About 40 Niue people formally joined the Acacia Ridge UC in July. They hope to hold regular Niue-language services in 2015.

Sth Sudanese plan for G20

SOUTH Sudanese people from across Brisbane and interstate will gather for a meeting and march on Saturday, November 15, during the G20 weekend, to draw attention to the political and humanitarian crisis in their home country.

The event will run from 1:00-5:00 pm, starting and ending at St Andrew's Anglican Church, South Brisbane, with an approved march to South Bank, near the G20 venue.

Members of the Nuer UC Faith Community at St David's UC, Coopers Plains, are among those planning and leading the event.



CALVARY Korean and Broadwater Road congregations held their first combined service for this year on October 26. Leaders from both churches took part, with music and singing led by a combined group. Rev. David Won Kim shared with the children some photos of his recent mission trip to North Korea, and Pastor David Busch was the guest preacher. The offering went to Frontier Services. Photos show (top) the combined group of song leaders and (above) Korean and Australian food at the shared lunch afterwards.



THE Gold Coast Korean UC has been running a series of seminars on child-parent relationship training this month. The four Sunday afternoon sessions were led by church member Oy Suk (Oz) Jung (pictured above), who has tertiary qualifications in social work and community welfare and has worked with Paradise Kids, part of the Hopewell Hospice. The congregation has a particular focus on ministry with Korean families.