



ACBM eNews

Preaching the Word - Caring for the Brotherhood

Fiji

13 October 2022

REUNITING WITH BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN FIJI.

Fiji has been in hard COVID-19 lockdown through much of 2020-2021. Through this period, the national economy contracted by some 30%, driven down by the closure of international borders. Tourism alone accounts for 40% of the small Pacific island's Gross Domestic Production, and many other industries are in some way financially dependent on the tourism industry. The International Monetary Fund has found that 58% of the Fijian population live in urban environments so have little access to subsistence vegetable and fruit gardens or village resources.

Approximately 90% of the brothers and sisters live in urban settings and, because of their cultural subsistence view of life, have been severely impacted by the COVID exclusion zones and lockdowns. The Fijian ecclesias own welfare funds were depleted some months into the severe lockdowns. They had been managing to support their own members so well, however the severity and duration of military enforced exclusion zones took its toll on local ecclesial resources.

The ACBM, when requested and acting in conjunction with and through the Fijian brethren, responded with significant COVID welfare funds raised by the generous support of their brothers and sisters in Australia, New Zealand and around the world. This was very much appreciated by the brothers and sisters throughout the islands. The local brethren and the ACBM are monitoring ongoing welfare needs in the short term as the economy recovers, now that international borders are open. The brothers and sisters have been overjoyed to reconnect with overseas brothers and sisters during recent visits. The young people in particular have requested that we don't hold back with reinstating our youth activities and study week together.

A Fijian youth group end of year study is planned for December 2022, God willing. This will include around 20 young people, and some hosts, from the Burnside Ecclesia. It is planned that these studies and activities will be Zoomed to other Pacific island young people. Easter studies will be given by Brothers Vit Jurevicius, Kier Risley, supported by Marcus Seidel. There will also be many Fijian brothers and sisters in Australia and New Zealand returning to catch up with family back home over the next 6 months.

Bro Nathan Shaw fiji@acbm.org.au



Bro Isoa, a true elder of the Fijian ecclesias, passed away in September

"Bro Isoa's rock like faith in Christ was inspirational and an exhortation to us all. He, together with his late wife, Sis Filo, opened their home to numerous ACBM fieldworkers visiting Fiji. These were memorable occasions where love and hospitality were shown. Bro Isoa was a "fatherlike" figure to many, with wise counsel and a faithful example of discipleship in a challenging world. May our God remember him for good!"

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