

## **MESSAGE FROM ASSISTANT PASTOR**

I would like to give thanks to the Heavenly Father up above for blessing our lives through our life journey this year. It is because of God's Love that we are all alive. It has been twenty one years since First Tongan United Methodist Church started and it was not easy at the beginning. Of course, this church has grown in many ways and it is right to praise and give thanks for God's love is the only reason why First Tonga UMC is where it is today. God has blessed the families of the church with financial opportunities and many other opportunities to help build the church physically, mentally and spiritually, so it is right to give Him thanks and glory.

Unity, harmony and the fellowship bonding of many families in our church contributed to all the accomplishments in our church. With many things to do in God's service, we are blessed with more tasks to be taken care of in our church. I pray that God showers His mercy and grace upon the families of the church so that their cups may be filled to motivate and encourage them to continue serving Christ.

It is now a year and a half since Cal-Pac Conference has appointed me and my family to serve at the First Tonga UMC of Waimanalo. It is indeed an honor and joy for me and my family to continue serving His Church despite many times our journey encountered difficulties and trials which may lead to discouraging. However, God is a loving God and His abundant grace is enough for everyone and I am thankful that he has helped me. I pray and hope that will forever use me and my family as servants to share His Good News in this world.

In this year's journey a goal has been set for us to work for, so whatever we did should have been focused and aimed towards that goal. Our accomplishment of that goal would depend how much we value and pursue that goal. It is right to set a goal for our journey, which motivates us to strive forward to achieve that goal. For example, men and women who were born and raised in Tonga, it is the normal routine since they were children that attending church services on Sundays is a must. Going to church would be meaningful if they know attending church services is a channel of learning about

God's words through messages delivered at church services. God is the main reason of church going, He is your salvation and who ever believe in his Son Jesus Christ will have eternal life.

It is our call and duty to serve Christ in His Church and we do that by first having commitment to serve Christ in His Ministry using our talents. We must set God as our source and ruler in our lives and from there, we follow Him and obey His orders. I hope that we do not lose control and we do not give up serving God's people because of the hardships and trials we encountered in life. I hope that we live the life as Christ lived and keep harmony between our fellow Christians with the help of God to guide and protect us. Trusting in God brings blessings and happiness, for He is filled with Love. It is my hope that we will finish this year with God's grace which we started of with, and also begin the coming year with that grace. I would like to thank Rev. Dr. Langi Fine and his family for their prayers and support towards me and my family. My gratitude to the District Superintendent, Rev. Dr. K.im and all the office staff for the encouragements and patience with all the pastors. May the Lord bless you and your families during this Holiday Season. I would also like to thank all the families in this congregation for the hard working in serving God and for supporting each other. I would also like to thank my wife and children for your support, and to all my friends for your love and encouragements.

With Many Blessings,

*-Assistant Pastor, Rev. Petueli Tafo'ou-*