

## People in Praise and Protest in the Pacific

### *Introducing people taking action in the Pacific*

References to slides relate to the PowerPoint available at [methodist.org.uk/GlobalRelationshipsResources](http://methodist.org.uk/GlobalRelationshipsResources), with slide 1 opening your service

*If there are children present, begin by asking them if they have read about the Pacific Islands in the summer edition of Rainbow magazine and if there are any facts about the Pacific that they remember.*



*Slide 2: Pastor Peniasi Rawaidranu*

This is Pastor Peniasi Rawaidranu (Penny) [slide 2] a leader in the Pacific Disability Forum. He speaks powerfully about the context of disabled people in the Pacific and the way in which issues of access, but also climate mitigation, all need a disability focus.

This is Rev James Bhagwan [slide 3]. A Fijian Methodist minister who is the General Secretary of the Pacific Conference of Churches. He is a great advocate for young people and action on climate justice. Under his leadership, and with others, the Pacific Conference of Churches is growing and gaining in strength as a network for Pasifika people. The call for justice is very strong for self-determination in those islands still colonies of France or Indonesia, for the history of nuclear testing and for new challenges of deep-sea mineral mining.



*Slide 3: Rev James Bhagwan*

This is Rev Siera Bird and Rev Dr Cliff Bird, wonderful people from the United Church in the Solomon Islands [slide 4]. Siera leads on the work on gender equality issues as part of the Pacific Conference of Churches and has been instrumental in developing the 'Gender Status Card for Churches in the Pacific' as a way of self-assessment for churches in how they are addressing gender-based violence, which is a major issue in many islands.

Rev Dr Cliff Bird is a theologian and has been involved with the development of the 'Reweaving of the Ecological Mat', a unique Pasifika approach to addressing climate change from theological, economic and environment perspectives. A holistic approach to the problems building on Pacific, not Western, models.



*Slide 4: Rev Siera Bird and Rev Dr Cliff Bird*

These young adults [slide 5] are from different islands in the Pacific: Sladen (left, Marshall Islands), Mevea (middle, Cook Islands) and Toa (right, Kiribati). The young people across the Pacific are able to gather together to encourage each other by worshipping and praying together, but also sharing their concerns and raising their voices together for the issues young people across the Pacific face.



Slide 5: Sladen (left), Mevea (middle) and Toa (right)

### **Questions for discussion**

- How are different people in your community affected by climate change or air pollution?
- What can your church do to hear the concerns of those often marginalised, and raise those concerns with others?
- How can this church, together or as individuals, be in solidarity with the church in the Pacific when it comes to climate change and climate justice?

### **Prayer**

Almighty Ocean God – God of the liquid continent of the Pacific,  
 from ocean depths to crashing waves,  
 from sandy beaches to mountain peaks and volcanos;  
 whale, fish and birds all cry out in praise to you at your creative power;  
 all cry out in protest at our destructive sin as humanity.

Almighty God of many peoples – God of us all,  
 we thank you for the people of the Pacific,  
 praising God together – many islands and many peoples.  
 Demonstrating strength in unity and diversity.  
 We thank you for their leadership,  
 in climate justice  
 in seeking justice for first nation peoples  
 in repair of past wrongs.  
 May we be inspired by their discipleship following Jesus.  
 May we be changed in solidarity with them, by your Holy Spirit.  
 And may we too hear the cry of the earth and join in the cry of the people,  
 in praise and protest to seek your kingdom God.  
 Amen.

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