Leaders of the Methodist Church show a striking ambivalence in their attitude to the Pentecostal churches. Because Pentecostal worship is strongly influenced by Afro-American culture, it is not always in harmony with Fijian traditions. Pentecostal followers may wear hats in unsuitable circumstances, since hat-wearing is a sign of disrespect in traditional Fijian culture. Further, although some Methodist women have shown the gift of healing, and many of the younger generation engage in prayer and fasting, speaking in tongues is not encouraged and is viewed with suspicion in the Methodist Church. However, Methodists do share to a certain extent the Pentecostal emphasis on the Book of Revelations. According to Waqairatu, there are signs of End-Times in the world today, such as earthquakes, wars, the refusal of the younger generation to listen to their parents, globalisation, the advent of the Euro, and ideas about one economic and political system for the world (Waqairatu 2005, interview by author).

The Roman Catholic Church

The Catholic Church was first introduced to Fiji by French Marist Fathers in 1844. They established highly centralized and intensive schools headed by white missionaries (see section on education). There are now 35 Catholic parishes operating in Fiji (personal communication with the Archbishop’s Office) for 80,000 Catholics (Zenit n.d.) — although this figure is inconsistent with that in the last Fiji census (1996), which identifies 69,320 people as Catholic (Fiji Bureau of Statistics). The languages used in Catholic services are Fijian, English, Hindi, Rotuman and Banaban (Mataca 2005, interview by author).

The Roman Catholic Church is a member of the Fiji Council of Churches, Interfaith Search, and the Pacific Conference of Churches. The Archdiocese of Suva, headed by a Fijian archbishop, is subdivided into three regions: West, Central Eastern and North. Each region is further subdivided into parishes. Priests meet at the regional level every month, as do catechists and church organizations. Parishes also meet every month. In parishes, a council of men, women, youth, and different organizations representing the community advises the priest. The archbishop calls parish representatives every six weeks, so that information constantly moves upward or downward. As most of the priests are local, the Roman Catholic Church is no longer a mission-receiving church (Mataca 2005, interview by author).

Catechists are trained for two years at a training centre, St Thomas Aquinas in Navini. After training, husband and wife teams can become church leaders in their village. Every five years catechists are asked to return to the centre for a three-month course of renewal. Priests and nuns are educated at a formation centre at Suva Point, the Pacific Regional Seminary, which teaches theological subjects (Mataca 2005, interview by author).

The first synod or assembly was organized in 1982, and the church now follows a four year cycle of meetings. The first year after the synod is for fact-finding from the three parts of the church, 'the three-legged stool', which consists of the lay people, the religious (members of the orders) and the clergy. This fact-finding period explores what people’s roles are in the church and what baptism and ordination mean to them in their daily lives. The main objective is to explore the structure to make it simple and efficient, to eliminate confusion. Other issues include education and development, which should promote human dignity and be people-oriented (Mataca 2005, interview by author).

The mission statement of the Archdiocese of Suva is that the Roman Catholics are a family of God, united in faith, and on pilgrimage. Since Vatican II the notion of pilgrimage
signifies that followers are on a journey through their lives and into the next life, which is considered the real home. According to Archbishop Mataca, apart from the classical differences between Catholicism and Protestantism, the Roman Catholic Church in Fiji is distinctive in its focus on the New Testament, where God is viewed as a loving father rather than as the lawgiver of the Old Testament, the image prevalent in the Methodist Church in Fiji (Mataca 2005, interview by author).

For the Archbishop, the most important contemporary social issue in Fiji is equality and justice, and particularly the ability to acknowledge and include the poor. Of further concern is the perception that Fijians are losing their identity and culture when practising their faith. Changing food, houses and lifestyle has also meant an increasing number of deaths from overwork, among people in their 30s, 40s, and 50s. Being socially oriented, the Catholic Church in Fiji is involved in the running of the Home of Compassion and Father Law Home (old people’s homes) and a maternity hospital in Ra (Mataca 2005, interview by author).

The Catholic Church also runs 40 primary schools which accommodate nearly 12,000 children, 5 junior secondary schools, and 12 secondary schools which accommodate about 6,500 children. All of these cater for both Catholic and non-Catholic children, and the Catholic Church is thus a major provider of education in Fiji. However, co-operation with the government with regard to education is not going well, as it is said that there are difficulties in getting assistance from the government and that former students are not accepted into the civil service. It is perceived that there is a bias against Catholics, in that most of the members of the government are Methodist and appear to be narrowing the range of schools from which they are willing to take applicants (Mataca 2005, interview by author).

As in other parts of the world, the Catholic Church in Fiji is involved in family issues. Local churches run programmes to reinforce the idea that solid families create a solid society. When domestic violence occurs, the church tries to identify its cause — in urban areas it is often about money that has been misspent on alcohol. In the case of child-abuse, the church tries not to isolate the child but to keep him or her within the family and bring in the extended family so the child feels that he or she is wanted, loved and protected. With regard to sexual orientation, the Catholic Church in Fiji as elsewhere argues that marriage should be between a man and a woman to complement one another for procreation to perpetuate the human species. Homosexuals are treated with compassion but must be counselled (Mataca 2005, interview by author).

Women’s contribution to the church can be significant. One example is the new church building on the island of Tavewa in the Yasawas, for which the Archbishop suggested the name of *Marama Ni Baravi* ("Our Lady of the Beaches"). This satisfied the local people because, as the men had to work in the local backpacker resorts, most of the construction had been done by the women. More generally, across Fiji, women head primary and secondary schools. Female catechists may lead the services when their male counterparts are absent, and may also be active in the Catholic Women’s League (Mataca 2005, interview by author).

While there has been a growth in absolute numbers in the Catholic Church in Fiji, it is not growing proportionally to other Christian churches. In 1976, 16.6 per cent of the population identified themselves as Catholic, but this has slowly been declining, so that by 1996 only 15.4 per cent of people were recorded as Catholic (Fiji Bureau of Statistics, see table in earlier section). However, this loss is not likely to be due to competition from the
Pentecostal churches, because charismatic movements have been welcomed by the Catholic Church (Mataca 2005, interview by author). Rather, the loss is likely to be more reflective of continuing Indo-Fijian emigration, as the proportion of Indo-Fijian members in the church decreased by over 2 per cent from 1976 to 1996. By contrast, the proportion of Catholic Fijians increased by nearly 7 per cent in the same period (Bureau of Statistics, see table in earlier section).

With regard to media, the Catholic Church has a monthly newspaper and a weekly half-hour programme on Radio Fiji. The parishes are asked for monthly subsidies to pay for the newspaper and Head Office pays for the radio programme.

All income is generated locally. For specific projects, the church in Fiji may approach churches from its international network, but the local churches must raise one-quarter of the cost. The main revenue comes from offerings, and is used for the upkeep of the ministers. There are special collections in Lent, with some of the money collected being used for the Bishops’ Conference and some kept for use in projects for the poor and needy. Sometimes people also give donations. During the Archbishop’s time, the church has had to learn to be self-sufficient with money. Many of the parish leaders’ ways of living have become more localized, for instance the eating of local foods rather than carrying in bread, rice, potatoes and so on (Mataca 2005, interview by author).

Sometimes Fijian cultural traditions are perceived to conflict with Catholic Church values, especially when the traditions become shortened in contemporary life. For instance, in bulubulu, the process of reconciliation between families, a whale’s tooth is offered to the offended family after a boy has eloped with a girl. Archbishop Mataca asks if this practice encourages young people to elope rather than go through all the old Fijian practices. If bulubulu is conducted properly, it takes place over time in order that both parties can accept what has happened. The perpetrator must admit wrongdoing and that it has broken the relationship between the two families. This requires much dialogue. However, shortcuts are now commonly taken, and he feels this will also be the case with the Reconciliation, Tolerance and Unity Bill currently being proposed (Mataca 2005, interview by author).

With Vatican II, the notion of End Times was reintroduced as part of the pilgrimage to God, the best example occurring in the Old Testament with the exodus of the Jews and their journey towards the Promised Land. However, unlike interpretations current in the Pentecostal churches, the Catholic Church interprets the End Times not as a set of events that occur universally and simultaneously, but as “a fulfilment that each of us receives from God when we meet Him face-to-face” (Mataca 2005, interview by author).

The Anglican Church

The Anglican Church is one of the older churches in Fiji, having begun in 1870 with the work of an Irish clergyman who had been sent in response to the request of white settlers in the old capital of Levuka. Although Anglicanism later gained adherents in Fiji’s Melanesian, Indian and Fijian communities, the church consisted largely of white settlers until the 1960s when its bishop began to emphasize indigenization. This succeeded to the point that most of the clergy were Pacific Islanders or Indians by 1971 (Ernst 1994).

Along with the small Anglican churches in Samoa and American Samoa, Tonga, Nauru, Tuvalu, and French Polynesia, the Anglican Church in Fiji is part of the Diocese of Polynesia (headed by a bishop resident in Suva), which in turn is part of the Anglican Church in
Aotearoa (New Zealand) and Polynesia. This wider body allocates about $400,000 to ministry training, and $600,000 for the College of the Diocese of Polynesia at St John's the Evangelist in Auckland. Another $160,000 is set aside by the Anglican Church's Board of Mission for the Diocese of Polynesia's ecumenical and evangelism work (Bryce 2002, interview by Ernst).

In 1988, 75 per cent of the budget of the Anglican Church in Fiji was financed by overseas sources and 25 per cent was raised internally, but by 2002, 60 per cent of funds came from the outside and 40 per cent was self-generated through bazaars, Sunday collections, or 'the envelope system' (contributions), and also through investments. Rather than making tithing compulsory, the Anglican Church discusses its accounts with church members, making them active participants and decision makers in the raising of finance. Increasingly, the church has had to become self-supporting. It draws its greatest income from property such as a tourist resort in Savusavu, although that was badly affected by the coup in 2000. The church also runs six primary and secondary schools (Bryce 2002, interview by Ernst).

As shown in the section 'Religious Affiliation in Fiji', the Anglican Church is a comparatively small church, with its members representing 1.9 per cent of the Christian community in 1976 and 1.4 per cent of the Christian community in 1996. In other words, while it has increased its numerical membership slightly over the years, its proportional influence is decreasing. It therefore depends on its affiliation with the Fiji Council of Churches (FCC) for influence in social affairs. One example is a situation that emerged with the coup in the year 2000, when the Anglicans, Roman Catholics, and Salvation Army, who were all members of the FCC, wanted to take a united stance against the activities of those involved in the coup but were frustrated by the leaders of the Methodist Church who were, at that time, nationalistic in sentiment. At the same time, because many of the leaders of the Anglican Church are from other Pacific countries, they were vulnerable to having their work permits cancelled, and this limited the extent of their activities. In addition, because of its Indian congregations, the Anglican Church was sensitive to the instability caused by the coup in 2000 and to the subsequent non-renewal of leases to Indians in the sugar industry (Bryce 2002, interview by Ernst).

Over the past 10 years, the focus of the Anglican Church has changed, perhaps reflecting the impact of the newly emerging Pentecostal groups. Rather than simply accepting interested followers, the Anglican Church now more actively challenges young adults to make a career in the church and ensures that young adults who do train with the church have been educated to seventh form. Another big change has been the translation of the prayer book into Fijian, Samoan, Tongan, and Hindi, rather than continuing to print everything in English (Bryce 2002, interview by Ernst). A more recent change has been the ordination of women. By 2004, seven women (three deacons and four priests) had been ordained in the Diocese of Polynesia (The Diocese of Polynesia 2004).

Although the charismatic movement in the Anglican Church seemed to be growing in the 1990s (Ernst 1994), it appears not to have greatly affected the church in more recent years. While the Bishop is open to charismatic worship, he noted that it seemed to appeal more to the Indian than to the Fijian congregations. Moreover, there were cultural differences from East to West that made acceptance of such forms of worship difficult (Bryce 2002, interview by Ernst).
Assemblies of God (AOG)

The Assemblies of God is one of the older churches in Fiji, having entered in 1926 with the missionaries Adrian and Charlotte Heetebry. After facing much opposition, they and others who came later managed to establish a Bible School in 1950 and worked among both Fijian and Indian populations. In 1958 the AOG ordained its first Fijian ministers. Although the church had been administered from Springfield in the USA throughout the 1950s, it finally became independent in 1959. By the time of Fiji’s independence, AOG ministry was divided into Central, Northern and Western districts. Eight years later, three ethnic councils were formed: General, Indian, and Fijian. AOG sources count 290 churches in Fiji, of which 40 are Indian Ethnic, 236 are Fijian Ethnic, and 18 are General Ethnic. Nearly half of these are based in the Central/Eastern Division (Assemblies of God World Missions 2003).

In its vision the AOG is highly evangelistic, with the aim of being a “dynamic agency for God for evangelism.” While in its early days it enjoyed ‘revival’ conditions and covered most of Fiji, it later came to the stage of focusing on building churches and establishing itself administratively. As a result, in recent years, evangelism has had to take second place to administrative reorganization (Tanoa 2005, interview by author). From 1999 to 2003 the AOG in Fiji has been undergoing a restructuring, with a number of aims: balancing the growth of the ethnic ministries to match the ethnic population in the wider society on a proportional basis; revitalising fellowship and co-operation between ethnicities; propagating the Gospel and training ministers in the vernacular; effective and cost-efficient administration and management.

The new structure positions the general superintendent at the top. Directly below him are two deputy-generals and the executive secretary. At the next level come the three divisional superintendents (of the Central/Eastern, Western, and Northern divisions), three committee members (for Fijian Ethnic Ministries, Indian Ethnic Ministries, and General Ethnic Ministries), two executive directors (leadership training, and education and publications), the general secretary, and the general treasurer. All positions except the general superintendent and the executive secretary are elected at the Biennial General Conference every two years, and many of them are part-time positions. The general superintendent is elected for four years on a full-time or part-time basis (Assemblies of God of Fiji 2003).

Although the restructuring was badly needed, if only because of the expense of the existing administrative structure (consuming as it did 66 per cent of the total expenses), it created much uncertainty among staff, which the AOG’s booklet on the structural review attempts to address head-on. However staff responded to the changes, what is clear is that the new structure requires greater emphasis on tithing and mission pledges from its congregations to pay for itself. Where the old structure ensured that the average income for the AOG in Fiji was F$280,000, the assumed annual income under the new structure is F$344,000, so that tithing must bring in an added F$40,000 and mission pledges must draw an added F$24,000. Church tithes are estimated to be 50 per cent of the total annual income, with ministers’ tithes bringing an added 20 per cent and mission pledges 7 per cent of the estimated income. In this way, 77 per cent of the AOG’s income is planned to come from the local congregations. It is intended that the rest of the income will derive from credentialed workers’ fees (8 per cent), conference income (11 per cent) and other income (4 per cent) (Assemblies of God of Fiji 2003:34).
Money is distributed in the new structure so that only 34 per cent of funds are spent in Head Office, the Administration, and the Executive Committee (cutting expenditure in this area to almost half). The Divisional Office, Administration and Divisional Committee are to receive 42 per cent of funds (27 per cent in the old structure), and World and Home Missions are to receive 19 per cent (7 per cent in the old structure). The remaining 5 per cent are to be held as reserve funds (Assemblies of God of Fiji 2003:35). As part of the restructuring, all AOG leaders are being given computers (Tanoa 2005, interview by author).

Despite the restructuring at Head Office level, local churches have remained independent, although they are encouraged to enter into the AOG Fellowship and to assist the Head Office. Local churches decide what social programmes are appropriate and the national body supports them by providing materials and obtaining international assistance. The Head Office operates a printing press, makes radio programmes, sponsors a day school with primary and high school classes, and runs an orphanage, the Treasure House, for children up to four until adoption can be arranged (Tanoa 2005, interview by author).

As is typical in Pentecostal thought, the focus of the AOG is on the individual’s relationship with God. It is imperative that AOG followers speak in tongues as evidence of the entry of the Holy Spirit during baptism (Tanoa 2005, interview by author). As a result of the emphasis on the follower’s personal relationship with God, the AOG’s approach to emerging social issues is mainly to concentrate on the spiritual dimension of individuals and the community, which involves introducing them to the Lord and re-orienting them appropriately. Drawing on the analogy of the prodigal son’s return to his father’s house, the General Secretary (Rev Apete Tanoa) explained that “out of that relationship with Christ, it will trickle down to affecting their social life” (Tanoa 2005, interview by author).

In this way, it is uncommon for the AOG to promote anything other than civil obedience, although demonstrations might be encouraged if fundamental AOG principles were attacked. One issue that might provoke a reaction is if legislators allowed same sex marriage. Rather than being permitted to enter such a status, in Tanoa’s view, homosexuals need counselling in order to reach a personal relationship with Christ that will change their lifestyle (Tanoa 2005, interview by author).

As Fiji is very much “a man’s world” (Tanoa 2005, interview by author), domestic violence is a real concern. From the AOG perspective, women should be treated as equals, because they were created from Adam’s rib. However, according to Tanoa, men are the natural leaders and women should co-operate:

I’m not saying that he should be an Idi Amin in the home, no, but to be the leader, the priest of the home. Leading the family to the altar, to God, is the responsibility of the man and [there should be] co-operation from the woman who’s the wife. Empowering women — as far as my understanding of biblical history is concerned, wherever there’s a spiritual problem in the nation, usually a woman comes up to lead. But when the nation is in balance, when the nation is right with God and living according to the commandments of God, there’ll always be a man leading… So, empowering women — the question would be for us, to empower them for what? (Tanoa 2005, interview by author).

Tanoa noted that all the older churches, including the Methodists, Catholics, and AOG, were becoming static and lacked a Pacific vision, which had caused members to move. The zeal of the new religious groups and their different approach appealed to members of older churches because the newer groups more effectively accommodated their needs. He
feels that AOG has been slow in accommodating change and that it needed to speed up. Asked about the contemporary role of the church in society, Tanoa answered:

The role of the church in society is, one, it should be the salt of the earth. It gives flavour, it's there for healing purposes, and as the light of the world, it's there to represent Christ on earth: love, acceptance and at the same time, justice. Unfortunately we haven't done a good job. I see that the problem in Fiji is the problem of the church. Christianity has not been the kind of Christianity that I feel it should have been here. If Christians in Fiji really lived as Christians, I think Fiji wouldn't have been going through what it has gone through and is going through right now... My fingers are on the Christian Church. Unfortunately I'm one of them. And we apologise for that. I sincerely apologise to the rest of the communities who are non-Christians. We should be blamed. We haven't lived up to our expectations, the expectations of the Bible and I feel sad about that, and I pray... “Lord, help me to help out. Put Christianity back to where it should be — in the heart of our nation” (Tanoa 2005, interview by author).

Despite this, Tanoa sees that the AOG is in Fiji for a reason and that the church can be instrumental in helping Fiji towards a positive, optimistic future (Tanoa 2005, interview by author).

**Post-Independence Christian Churches**

After Independence in 1970, many new churches emerged, identifying themselves as having roots in the Pentecostal-charismatic-evangelical global revival movement. Below is a sample of these new churches, many of which are part of the umbrella organization, the Assembly of Christian Churches of Fiji (ACCF).

**Apostles Gospel Outreach Fellowship International (AGOFI)**

Apostles Gospel Outreach Fellowship International or AGOFI emerged from a group of singers and musicians called ‘The Apostles’, which began in 1972 under the leadership of a minister named Uluirewa. The musicians worshipped at the Assemblies of God in Lautoka until they were excommunicated from the local church in 1988 and formally excommunicated from the AOG/Fiji in 1990. As a result ‘The Apostles’ began to meet at the home of Rev Poate Mata, but he moved the services to the Girmit Centre in Lautoka after God spoke to him in the shower. According to its own records, the new church was attracting 300 people to its Sunday services by the end of the same year, and a total of 600 by the end of 1989 (AGOFI 2001).

One of the ministers moved to Suva and began holding prayer meetings there. In 1990, Mata and his family followed, and it was in the early months of that year that the new name ‘Apostles Gospel Outreach Fellowship International’ was conceived under Mata’s leadership. Many of the members came from the AOG, feeling that their old church had become routine. By contrast, AGOFI offers its members “a living alternative” (AGOFI 2001), which includes experiencing the entry of the Holy Spirit during the service and speaking in tongues.

AGOFI became so popular in the 1990s that it shifted its service several times: from the Civic Centre to the Civic Auditorium to the National Gymnasium. It was also expanding in the Western Division and in south and north east Viti Levu. The first General Conference, which prepared a Constitution, was held in 1991 in Suva. At the same time, Mata had a vision to “Win Fiji for Jesus,” which became the motivation for evangelistic crusades throughout Fiji. As part of its evangelism, AGOFI created the “Come Alive Ministry” aimed at
youth. It claims that this outreach so impressed the government's Ministry of Youth and Sports that the Ministry sponsored most of the "Come Alive" programmes. AGOFI has since begun evangelism overseas, in the Solomon Islands and in Seattle, Washington, USA. It has also hosted ministries from Australia and New Zealand (AGOFI 2001).

With regard to property, the growth of AFOFI was such that after buying its original headquarters, the church then bought a reclaimed area at Nokonoko to build a larger complex. At first the leaders were trained for two years through the 'Harvest Ministry Training', but in 1998 AGOFI opened a training institute of its own called the 'Fishers of Men Training Institute.' By 2001, 27 women and 95 men had attended its classes and helped set up four new established churches "and 12 new preaching points" (AGOFI 2001:17). Three years later, AGOFI also established an Information Ministry, where videotapes of sermons and teachings and chorus and hymn books are sold (AGOFI 2001).

Baptist Churches

The Fiji Baptist Convention consists of about 15 independent churches across Fiji (Baptist Women's Union 2005), of which four are in Suva. This umbrella organization is organized into a functioning head, an executive committee, and boards for pastors, and is a member of the Baptist World Alliance (May 2002, interview by Ernst; Lele 2005, interview by author). The Fiji Baptist Churches were also admitted into the New Zealand-based Baptist Women's Union, South West Pacific, in 1995 (Baptist Women's Union 2005).

The individual churches, which are governed by their elders, are independent and are under no obligation to contribute money to the central structure. Despite working autonomously, the churches share schools and also the Christian Leadership College in Valelevu/Nasinu, which operates entirely from its own funds and is maintained by the Fiji Baptist Convention. It offers a three year course for trainees, whether local or from Samoa, the Solomon Islands and Tonga (May 2002, interview by Ernst; Lele 2005, interview by author).

Most of the Baptist churches in Fiji have roots in the Independent Baptists in America and the American Southern Baptists, whose missionaries arrived in Suva in the 1970s and went from door to door to establish or 'plant' their church in Fiji. Grace Baptist Church was one of the off-shoots of this original congregation and is now headed by Pastor Eronitu Lele (Lele 2005, interview by author).

Grace Baptist Church

Located in Suva, this church is basically comprised of a group of families providing a stable membership of 70 to 80 people. Originally meeting at the old Grand Pacific Hotel, the group now meet at the School of Marine Studies at the University of the South Pacific. The church is charismatic in orientation, sharing much of the philosophy of the Pentecostal churches, including the idea of being born again by the entry of the Holy Spirit, the importance of glossolalia as an expression of the Holy Spirit, the gift of healing, and the belief that the world is currently in the End-Times. For the head of the church, Pastor Lele, the message of the End-Times is urgent. The members have moved away from singing hymns and towards singing more contemporary songs. However, cultural practices such as kava-drinking are not prohibited — rather, excessive drinking of kava is a concern (Lele 2005, interview by author).

Like many of the Pentecostal churches, the Grace Baptist Church focuses on issues concerning the family. Women are equal in God's sight, and their role is to help men lead
the family. With regard to preaching, women have got something to say and should be listened to. While there are no ordained women, women do lead the Sunday School and the women’s ministry. They are also involved in the church’s missions and the compassion ministry, which organizes visits to poor families and provides food for children living on the street (Lele 2005, interview by author).

Currently aiming at the problems of youth and particularly the young people living on the streets of Suva, the church is trying to open a facility in Vatuwaqa to help squatters, especially young children. However, youth in the Grace Baptist Church do not share in the decision-making of the church. Rather, their issues are represented by the elders. Pastor Lele is critical of the notion of children’s rights. In his view, children need to be loved and to be brought up to understand that “life is not about doing your own thing” but about helping each other and “doing what God says” (Lele 2005, interview by author).

As the emphasis is on heterosexual couples, homosexuality is viewed as an act of the ego that is due to a lack of a proper upbringing, usually caused by parents who are never home. Homosexuals need to be loved and understood but guided back to the Bible. Issues such as the legalization of homosexuality are cause for church members to attend marches and rallies (Lele 2005, interview by author).

The Grace Baptist Church has missionaries in Jordan, Nepal, Canada and Japan. A few also work locally, often through other missions such as YWAM, but maintain contact with their own church. Willing to co-operate with other Christian churches, the Grace Baptist Church is part of the Fiji Baptist Convention, which is a member of the FCC (Fiji Council of Churches) and the ACCF (Assemblies of Christian Churches of Fiji).

The church’s finances are raised wholly through local offerings, the equivalent of tithing (this church does not call money raised this way ‘tithing’, as the word originally referred to agricultural produce that was consumed in the church), although members who have migrated sometimes send money back to Fiji for the church. Offerings are a voluntary 10–20 per cent of income. Money is also raised by contributions (Lele 2005, interview by author).

**Namadi Heights Baptist Church**

This is a small but well established church with about 100 to 150 members, and has been operating for over a decade. There are 18 different ethnicities in the church, and there are Indo-Fijian, Fijian, and Chinese deacons. Established in a prosperous area of Suva, the church is regarded by its pastor, Emel May, as the most generous he has worked in. People give contributions every Sunday and women also fundraise on the World Day of Prayer (May 2002, interview by Ernst).

Pastor May focuses on the issue of the family, believing that the Fijian family “is literally falling apart and there’s not a day goes by that when you pick up a newspaper and find some father has raped his handicapped daughter or his daughter or step daughter.” As a result, Pastor May put together a seminar on the psychology of the relationships between men and women in view of how God intended the family to be. Prostitution is a growing concern and homosexuality is condemned as a sin to the point that adherents cannot be open about their homosexuality and worship at the church (May 2002, interview by Ernst).

Leaders are drawn from the Christian Leadership College in Valelevu and can be male or female, although far fewer women than men take the course (in one class mentioned, there were seven men and one woman). The congregation has begun building a church in
Rakiraki. It is also active in starting new congregations and working with an Indian church in Labasa (May 2002, interview by Ernst).

**The Christian Mission Fellowship (CMF)**

The Christian Mission Fellowship originally emerged out of the international evangelistic ministry, Every Home for Christ, which worked closely with the Methodist Church from 1984 to 1988 (Ernst 1994). Under the leadership of the regional director, Rev Suliasi Kurulo, Every Home for Christ aimed to reach every household, at which point they would complete their mission. At the time of this campaign, Every Home for Christ had about 150 volunteers from different churches working full-time, but they suffered much opposition (Kurulo 2005, interview by author). Criticism came especially from Methodist leaders, who accused the organization of splitting village communities (Ernst 1994). According to the Indian Superintendent of the Methodist Church, the conflict came when the Every Home field workers began home fellowships which then led to home worship. People no longer went to church but worshipped at home and went to Bible study classes (Reuben 2002, interview by Ernst). Consequently, the members and supporters of Every Home for Christ were expelled from the Methodist Church. This brought the ministry’s activities virtually to an end (Ernst 1994).

In the same period, Kurulo was suffering from the loss of his second son who died at birth in 1988. In his prayers, God told him that He also grieved for the loss of followers from lack of nurture. Kurulo was given a mission to fill the gap between evangelism and church planting. In 1990, when he was in New Zealand, he had the inspiration of calling the new church the Christian Mission Fellowship, a name that reflected the concerns of accepting Christ, an emphasis on mission “to seek and save the lost” as an analogy of Christ’s mission, and the quality of relationship as a fellowship that must be developed (Kurulo 2005, interview by author). Sharing its main doctrines with other Pentecostal churches, the CMF’s mission statement is: “The CMF exists to exalt the Lord Jesus Christ and to proclaim his gospel, to train and encourage believers to develop a caring and loving relationship among themselves, and to put world mission as a priority” (Kurulo 2005, interview by author). CMF general assemblies and meetings thus tend to focus on world mission, training, education, and national projects.

Birthed with the vision to preach the gospel in every nation with an emphasis on loving God with one's whole self and on loving one’s neighbour, CMF now has missions in countries as far afield as Papua New Guinea, Tanzania, the United States (Hawai‘i and California), Cambodia, China and the United Kingdom. In Africa, the focus on evangelism is an urgent task because people are “still living in the same primitive way of life in which our forefathers lived 150 years ago before they received the gospel” (Kurulo 2005, interview by author). With its emphasis on evangelism, the CMF has grown very fast and by 2002 it had 35,000 members in churches in Fiji, Vanuatu, Nauru, Pohnpei, Marshall Islands and Tonga. Kurulo estimates current CMF membership in Fiji at about 50,000. Because CMF is growing at a phenomenal rate in Tanzania, there are also 20,000 members in Africa. As CMF is in the process of moving into Zambia and the United States, Kurulo gives an approximate total membership figure of 100,000. While more particularly focused on mission-sending, the CMF also receives missionaries, from the United States and New Zealand. These people are usually invited for specific work, for instance to help build up
local expertise in television, to teach in the School of Missions, or to advise on curriculum issues during a restructuring of the Bible Schools (Kurulo 2005, interview by author).

The CMF has more than 100 local churches, each a self-supporting and self-governing congregation. Representatives from these churches make up the Board of the Executive, consisting of 16 pastors and elders. While the churches are autonomous, they share facilities, information, resources, training, education, the Bible School, and some social activities. Pastors are trained at the Bible School (the World Harvest Institute), which sits on a 62 acre piece of land by the sea at Labasa. This CMF school is affiliated with the Oral Roberts University in the USA, and also with the New Covenant Seminary, which is in the USA but has an international reach. Training takes three years. Local churches finance most of the students although some pay for themselves. At the Bible School it costs about $1,200 for a year (two semesters) and students must pay for their board. They can also plant gardens and fish for their subsistence needs (Kurulo 2005, interview by author).

The membership of the CMF, which began as a youth movement, is still 50 per cent young people. Moreover, as education is perceived as important, the church runs a primary school, an extension Bible Studies programme, the World Harvest Institute, and is in the process of establishing a secondary school. It also owns a radio station, operates the Trinity Broadcast Network television station, and publishes a magazine, The Harvest Times (Kurulo 2002, interview by Ernst, 2005, interview by author). It acts as a primary member of the ACCF for the purposes of evangelism.

The media are used to promote awareness programmes on such issues as the spread of HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases, teenage pregnancies, and the importance of abstinence as a preventive measure. An example of this is the CMF’s talk-back radio show and an interview programme that might include interviews with people from the Health Department. Ministries to the prisons, the hospitals, and to the homeless have also been created. Ministries are created where there is a perceived need and after a few years of working with that group in the community. The CMF has also run a medical clinic and brought in doctors to provide free services, which have proved to be highly popular. Sometimes medical teams are invited from overseas. Prominent among the complaints treated are skin diseases and high blood pressure caused by the fast pace of urban life (Kurulo 2005, interview by author).

Like other Christian churches in Fiji, the CMF holds that the basic social unit is the nuclear family. Because of this focus, homosexuality and trans-sexuality are viewed as unbiblical, unchristian and unethical, but capable also of being healed through counselling. Domestic violence is seen as a big issue in the community. Divorce is accepted as a last resort when the damage is too great. Women are highly valued and play a vital role in the church, including running the Sunday evening service at the Harvest Centre in Kinoya, Suva. However, no women have been ordained yet. Women playing prominent roles are married to ordained pastors. While women are given more importance in the CMF than in some of the other churches, children must learn their position in the family and cannot talk back to their parents, although discipline should be administered with love rather than anger (Kurulo 2005, interview by author).

Commenting on the changes brought by globalization, Kurulo quoted the saying that, “You cannot stop the bird from flying over your head but you can stop the bird from building a nest on top of your head” (Kurulo 2005, interview by author), meaning that one can choose what to accept and reject. In his view, ‘human rights’ are an imposition of
foreign values that do not belong to the Fijian upbringing in the family and community, which requires the young to respect the old and treat others with dignity, love, and honour. In his view, the human rights lobby tends to over-emphasize the woman’s perspective in marital disputes. Instead, people need to be treated in a culturally appropriate way (Kurulo 2005, interview by author).

A lot of CMF’s work in the United States, England, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, but not in some of the churches in Africa, is funded from Fiji. Because world mission is a priority, a percentage of funds are sent to the church’s world mission accounts. In Fiji, the world mission department monitors the churches’ development, especially in Africa, Papua New Guinea and Cambodia. However, people in those areas are encouraged to become responsible for their own churches, so this funding is used like seed finance (Kurulo 2005, interview by author).

The funding for the national church is raised by tithing in local churches, ‘the tithe of tithes’, then the national office also tithes 10 per cent of its income to the World Mission department. Pastors are paid from the tithes collected in the local churches. Members’ tithes are not compulsory but are based on faith and generosity. Special projects such as the building of the World Harvest Centre are kept entirely separate. Funds raised are spent only on the projects they were designated for originally. In order for the church’s financial accounts to be presented at the annual conference every year, CMF has a finance department which does its own internal audits to ensure transparency, honesty and accountability (Kurulo 2005, interview by author).

Kurulo’s motivation, which eventually drove him to create the CMF, came from the experiences of his childhood. Brought to Suva to live with his uncle when he was eight years old, he discovered that his uncle was an alcoholic who neglected to pay the rent and therefore had to move frequently. Because the money his father sent was often spent on alcohol, the young Kurulo could not go to school but worked catching and selling fish in the market and stealing small amounts of money and fruit from gardens. When his father discovered this, he was taken back to his village, where he had to walk barefoot to school. At this point, he made up his mind that he did not want to live in the village, but to get educated and get a job and to look after himself and his family (Kurulo 2005, interview by author).

Perhaps because of his early experiences, Kurulo’s vision is of a clean, healthy, and prosperous Fiji. ‘Cleanliness’ here means being clean in heart, mind, body, the place where one lives, the community, and on outwards. Although he is a leader who has built his church around his charisma, he believes that the CMF’s popularity is based not on one person or personality, but on its vision and its emphasis on a caring and loving relationship and its capacity to reach out to the lost (Kurulo 2005, interview by author).

Along with other churches, the CMF had an active role in denouncing the 2000 coup (see section on government and politics) and has since become the most visible member of the ACCF through its evangelism: most notably in its key role in the organizing of visits by international evangelists (see section on ACCF). Thus, while not overtly political, the CMF maintains a political presence in the religious landscape of Fiji.

Work with government authorities has been very successful. The government has provided infrastructure such as a road for the Bible School, and water facilities, and has provided advice and technical support for the CMF farm. The Social Welfare Department also directs some of its funding through church programmes such as those administered by CMF (Kurulo 2005, interview by author).
The Christian Outreach Centre (COC)

According to the website and pamphlet of the Christian Outreach Centre, the church began on 23 June 1974 in Brisbane, Australia, when 25 people met in the home of Clark Taylor, the founding president. It continued to grow until it counted over 1,000 people in its main congregation in 1977. In the same year, a new television show called “A New Way of Living” publicized the Brisbane meetings and brought many more converts. As a result, more centres were ‘planted’ in South-East Queensland and Northern New South Wales. Growth continued, and in 1978 COC launched its first Christian School. Four years later, it purchased 25 acres of land and proceeded to build an auditorium capable of seating 3,500 people, at a cost of $2.5 million. The auditorium was further extended in 1985 in order to seat a total of 5,500 people. By this time, COC had opened 48 centres and reached as far as Victoria and the Australian Capital Territory (COC 2003; COC n.d.).

In the same period, COC began to venture into the South Pacific, and it is recorded that one team visited Vanuatu with the result that 1,970 souls were saved during a period of 13 days. COC officially became an international movement in 1988, when its churches began in New Zealand and the Solomon Islands. The speed of its growth is evident from the fact that by the end of that year it had 136 churches across the Pacific Islands and Australia. By the following year, COC had expanded into Papua New Guinea, Fiji, Vanuatu, Malaysia and the United Kingdom. Forty-four centres were opened during the following year and, in the next five years, churches were established in Tonga, Samoa, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, South Africa, Germany, the United Kingdom, and Spain. In addition, churches in Bulgaria, Croatia, France, Slovenia, the Ukraine, and the USA also joined the movement (COC 2003; COC n.d.). In this way, COC experienced phenomenal growth in the course of the decade.

COC also opened Christian schools as an alternative to state schools, and a Christian teachers’ college in the building of the Brisbane COC. In 1987 it launched its magazine, *Australia for Christ*. The magazine has since had two name changes and has been known as *Outreach* since 1996. In that year, the church established its aid and development organization, Global Care, and in 1997 opened the Christian Outreach Centre Ministry Training Institute (COC 2003; COC n.d.).

In Fiji COC currently has 28 churches, a kindergarten, a school, and the Christian Outreach College, which runs from class one to form seven. Initially the college was aimed at evangelism, but currently it focuses on developing each child’s Christian identity. It also draws students from outside COC, including some from AOG and the Methodists. However, rather than using the curriculum produced by the Ministry of Education, the college uses Accelerated Christian Education (ACE) programmes from the United States. These programmes identify the stage of learning of each individual child through diagnostic tests. The values taught by the college are not always the same as those learned by the children at home, for example with regard to taste in music or to the expectations given by their inherited status (children from chiefly clans expect to get high grades even when they are not performing, and may resist learning the material in the curriculum, and this has posed a challenge from time to time). Some of the first graduates are now students at Fulton College, the Fiji Institute of Technology, the University of the South Pacific, and Central Queensland University, as well as one who is training to be a pilot (Waqairagatu 2005, interview by author). Pastors have been training at the Balazuna South Pacific Bible College in the Solomon
Islands but will be sent to a Bible College in Papua New Guinea from 2005 (Mateawai 2005, interview by author).

The head of the Christian Outreach College, Pastor Waqairagatu, feels that the main issue facing young people is peer pressure, which has been exacerbated through television and its instant delivery of events in places such as the USA. Fiji is in transition, and moving away from traditional values. Because “education is life,” children must try and catch up to the advances of modernity, but often suffer from lack of self esteem, which the college attempts to build (Waqairagatu 2005, interview by author).

One branch of COC, the Centralpoint Christian Outreach Centre, was first established in Fiji just after the 1987 coup by Pastor Isireli Volau. When the pastor died from a heart attack two years later, an Australian missionary replaced him temporarily. At the time, Pastor Mateawai was serving in the military, but he resigned in order to train as the new head of the church. He took over in 1995 when only five COC churches were in Fiji (Mateawai 2005, interview by author).

According to Pastor Mateawai, his current congregation comprises “11 different races”: 40 per cent Fijians, 20 per cent Indians, and 40 per cent others (people from New Zealand, Australia, Tonga, Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu, Solomon Islands and Africa). The language used is English. Children are taught to speak in English because it is considered to help them to live in “a multi-cultural, multi-racial society.” However, each ethnicity has very different needs. For example, Mateawai mentions that Indians will not come to services in the evening, and rely much more on their pastor than the Fijians do (Mateawai 2005, interview by author).

There is a continued drive for expansion, as is evident in Mateawai’s description of the three phases for growth:

One, we hit the cities. We’ve covered the cities, we go to our next phase — to cover all the towns, we’ve got only one town left around Fiji, so we’re going to the villages. So we are right there right now. We are aiming by 2007 to have 75 churches across the country… (Mateawai 2005, interview by author).

Highly evangelistic, the movement targets both young and old of all ethnicities. This is reflected in their mission statement which is devised around four ‘M’s: to bring people to Jesus for Membership in his family (i.e. COC), to develop them to Maturity, to equip them for Ministry and for their life Mission in the world. As part of this, COC is also starting two Hindi ministries in the highlands. At the international level, the head of the Fiji branch, Mateawai, notes that the Centre has trained 2,500 personnel in the Middle East. However, COC in Fiji is more mission-receiving than sending, with Youth With a Mission regularly sending young people from Hawaii to do disciple-training at the Centre (Mateawai 2005, interview by author).

The main principles of COC’s theology typify Pentecostal interpretations of Christianity. The church’s website adds to the core beliefs a belief in liberty or a freedom to be oneself and experience God in every aspect of one’s life, and a commitment to loving God and the people. Also typical of Pentecostal movements, COC bans the drinking of kava, which is a central ritual in the lives of most indigenous male Fijians (Mateawai 2005, interview by author). Mateawai describes COC as a movement rather than a denomination, because while many churches have become monuments of the past, COC has a freshness and relevance for the present. This is expressed in its style of worship, which involves hi-tech presentation
including contemporary songs and contemporary stories of how people live their lives. It is exemplified by a Christian rap dance team that regularly performs on the streets of Suva. Mateawai also emphasizes the strength of leadership in his movement, which is based on visionary leadership and managerial principles. Pastors are aged between 23 and 44 years, thus creating an energetic and youthful ministry (Mateawai 2005, interview by author).

The preaching style is also intended to attract a variety of people. Instead of preaching for hours, Pastor Mateawai limits his sermons to 20 minutes, which he says is long enough for a good speaker to get his message across. Therefore, the social aspect after the sermon, which is enhanced with the invitation to coffee, is seen as important for creating an environment for fellowship. In his preaching, Mateawai emphasizes the institutions of family, government, and church, which he sees as the basis for society. With this emphasis, he teaches youth at youth camps the values of parental and social authority. Thus, as in conventional Pentecostalism, maintaining the social order is highly valued, and therefore protest is not encouraged. More important is the strength of the relationship between the individual and God as evidenced through the presence of the Holy Spirit. If this relationship is good, then the revitalized individual will change the world simply by his or her presence in it (Mateawai 2005, interview by author).

COC emphasizes the nuclear family as the core of its theology. For Mateawai, therefore, the main issues facing Fiji are moral and sexual issues, as the integrity of virginity and the purity of marriage have been lost. Citing a report from a magistrate, which claims that there is a 70–80 per cent divorce rate in the church, Mateawai says that many of those getting divorced are elders and pastors. Because of such statistics, his Centre does not hold separate programmes for men and women but instead builds on the idea of a couple’s ministry and trains husband and wife teams. Single men and women can become pastors, but, because of the temptations they may be faced with, the church’s preference is to train couples. When the husband becomes the senior pastor, the wife is also acknowledged for her seniority. Thus, the husband-wife unit is seen as primary in the family. This may create some tension for Fijians, because they still depend on the extended family where the parents’ views are considered more important than the wife’s views (Mateawai 2005, interview by author).

A second related issue is the lack of time that parents spend with their children. Parents have too many commitments to church and work, and to cultural obligations, and tend to use the church to baby-sit their children. Church programmes have to be carefully worked out to avoid this problem. Lastly, because of the focus on the nuclear family, COC views homosexuality as an abnormal lifestyle based on sin. A homosexual therefore needs counselling, which will be done with love rather than rejection. This will guide the homosexual back to a moral heterosexuality (Mateawai 2005, interview by author).

As a result of the importance placed on the husband-wife unit, one of the major programmes run by the Fiji COC is ‘Marriage Ministry International’, which is a programme for married couples held over 14 weeks and covering topics such as covenant, the different roles of husband and wife, forgiveness, faith, vision, trust, sex and intimacy, praying together, the ‘one-flesh ministry’, sowing and reaping, and so on. Mateawai claims that through this programme 700–800 families have been restored. A second programme focuses on pre-marital relations, in which they persuade young people to seek parental permission for courting rather than simply dating. Tackling the common theme that Fijian parents need training to better equip children for school, COC also runs a monthly education programme.
in which themes such as “how parents can create a good environment for children to excel in education” are discussed by experts (Matewai 2005, interview by author).

Despite the emphasis on the need of families to spend time together, there are many church activities. In a local pamphlet put out by Pastors Josua and Sera Matewai, the local activities advertised include family night on Monday night, discipleship training on Tuesday night, prayer meeting on Wednesday night, music practice on Thursday night, zone meeting on Friday night, and a Young Adults’ Programme on Saturday. Then there is the Resurrection and Communion Sunday for Easter and the Miracle Week of Prayer and Fasting in April. Youthenet One is directed at high school children and a 10 week course called “A New Way of Living” is advertised as “a must for everyone who hasn’t done it,” followed by a 16 week Foundation course, and a 16 week Budding Leadership course. There is also a Marriage ministry, a ‘kids’ church, an ‘explorer’ kindergarten, and lastly a family picnic. The pamphlet also reports pledges made for a building project (Centralpoint COC 2005).

In Fiji, COC holds a national conference every two years in order to provide Pastor Matewai with a forum in which to discuss the next 10 year plan. He also talks about leadership at a “Pastors’ and Leaders’ boot camp” held for 150 to 200 people. Smaller cell-groups meet in homes to identify the needs of the church and its members (Matewai 2005, interview by author).

Finances are discussed with church members at the Annual General Meeting. The church accounts are audited and are held in the office for at least two weeks for church members to appraise. The COC churches generate 100 per cent of their finances locally, through tithes and offerings. As elsewhere, tithing is 10 per cent of a member’s income. Offerings are used for needs inside or outside the church, such as families who are homeless because their houses have been burnt down. Aware of the need for good accounting practices, Matewai draws from the skills of his congregation, which includes tertiary educated members, for his accounting and management. His own philosophy is to fundraise for direct objectives, such as building churches (Matewai 2005, interview by author). The College also raises 100 per cent of its own finance from school fees paid by parents (Waqairagatu 2005, interview by author).

Modernity is embraced in the form of technology, vibrant styles of worship and music. It is also seen, however, as responsible for the moral decline of society as evidenced by homosexual and lesbian leadership, same-sex marriage, and pornography. Society is perceived as going through moral decline, and as revealing the signs of the End-Times, which include rumours of war, earthquakes, and the tsunami. While no dates are forecast, it is clear to COC that prophesied events are unfolding now. The future is only bright if one has prepared correctly (Matewai 2005, interview by author).

**Evangelical Fellowship of Fiji**

This group aims to bring together and unify all Christians (although not adherents of other religions). Christians are welcome to follow their own denomination’s interpretation of Christianity, although the Fellowship’s underlying objective is to turn other denominations towards its own theology (Nakauyaca 2005, interview by author).

The Fellowship’s theology is largely Pentecostal in that it agrees that Christians are born again when entered by the Holy Spirit. However, its leader, Rev Vuniani Nakauyaca, does not agree with the concept of End Times; rather, he subscribes to an “eschatology of
victory” in which God will win over all. This means engaging in the issues of the day according to the gospel (Nakauyaca 2005, interview by author).

The second major difference between this group and the Pentecostal churches is the Fellowship’s emphasis on social justice issues, particularly concerning poverty and drugs. Nakauyaca views these as essentially a religious problem: people have lost sight of God. The Fellowship has established ‘Healing the Land Ministries’, a team that visits rural and urban areas with the purpose of uniting chiefs and all the Christian denominations in the area to pray together in the common cause of attempting to eradicate social ills such as marijuana abuse. Having played a role in the reconciliation meetings organized to repent for the death of Thomas Baker (a missionary who was killed and eaten in 1867), the Fellowship were instrumental in uprooting marijuana crops in the district where he died. They have since organized the uprooting of marijuana crops in Navosa. While focused on the Fijian community, the Fellowship has also visited some Indian Christian communities in Ba, Sigatoka and Savusavau. It has been most successful in attracting indigenous rural youth (Nakauyaca 2005, interview by author).

Because of its interest in social issues, which is quite unlike the attitude of most Pentecostal churches elsewhere, the Fellowship supports the idea of public protest if the foundation of Christianity is perceived to be under attack. Examples of this have included the Fellowship’s involvement in a protest against a submission to legalize prostitution and a protest in Sukuna Park against the acceptance of homosexuality in the Fiji Constitution (Nakauyaca 2005, interview by author).

According to Nakauyaca, the Fellowship’s position is that the church was given a mandate to disciple the nation. However, the coups in 2000 showed that the nation was divided and that the church was failing in its mission. This division revealed a gap between church and state, and that the state was operating without the direction of God. The Fellowship’s response was to begin regular consultation with the Ministry of Reconciliation in events such as the National Prayer Day, Fiji Week, and The Year of Forgiveness. In return, the government now awaits to hear the voice of the church before acting in matters such as the family law bill (Nakauyaca 2005, interview by author).

Like most of the Christian churches in Fiji, the Fellowship focuses on issues concerning the family. Nakauyaca sees the Fijian traditions of respect in the family, which include women kneeling down and crawling on the floor to show their respect to men, as continuing to be important. While this entails a strict family order, men and women should respect each other and men should love their wives. Children must also be disciplined to know their place. The values expounded in the United Nations charter of human rights, therefore, are felt to be a foreign imposition. Homosexuality and the idea of women’s empowerment are likewise foreign ideas that are breaking up the Fijian family (Nakauyaca 2005, interview by author). Nakauyaca’s emphasis on family hierarchy is thus conservative and typical of the views espoused by the Pentecostal churches at large.

The Fellowship’s antagonism to United Nations charters reflects wider anti-Western attitudes that have developed since the 1987 coups. Nakauyaca critiques modernization as a set of foreign ideas being taught at schools but creating problems between the generations. Parents feel their children no longer respect them because discipline cannot be administered by means of corporal punishment. People are also spending too much time sitting in front of computers and television rather than going to church. Some are replacing church with
televangelism, which has the negative effect of isolating them from the rest of the community (Nakauyaca 2005, interview by author).

Yet the outside world and modern technology are not simply to be rejected. Nakauyaca has himself travelled to Japan, Holland, Germany and Indonesia, and to Aboriginal communities in Australia. He also invited a team of youth from Queensland, Australia, to his village to do mission, which involved contributing to the building of the Methodist church and the giving of a fax machine. Modernity in the form of church-building, the use of instruments, and modern computer technology can be used positively as a means by which youth can be reached (Nakauyaca 2005, interview by author).

Nakauyaca formed the Fellowship after growing up as a disillusioned Methodist and serving as a police officer. A friend took him to an Assemblies of God service and he experienced the entry of the Holy Spirit as he left the church. Later, he was at work when he had a second experience of the Holy Spirit at work and started speaking in tongues. While others thought he was crazy, he experienced inexplicable joy and knew he had to begin the Fellowship (Nakauyaca 2005, interview by author). The new group was established in 1989 (Ernst 1994).

Like many Christian churches, the Fellowship is financed through voluntary tithing of 10 per cent of all income. Payment in kind such as the first fruits from the garden is also accepted. If, for example, 100 taro have been planted, the adherent should give 10 to the pastor so that he can live satisfactorily (Nakauyaca 2005, interview by author).

The New Life Centre

The New Life movement is part of the New Zealand New Life churches, which first started in 1942 in a family of missionaries in Indonesia. Evacuated because of the war, they moved to New Zealand and held their first meeting in Wellington. In 1959, they started a new Bible College in Sydney, out of which emerged the Fathers of New Life Movement. The movement first began in Fiji in 1985, but many of the initiators left with the coup of 1987. Quite independently, Pastor Frank Wilson had a call to return to Fiji in 1990. He and his wife arrived and joined forces with the existing New Life Movement for seven years until they decided to return to New Zealand. After two and a half years, they returned to Fiji and Wilson took over as senior pastor of the Movement.

As well as its centre in Raiwaqa, Suva, the movement now has five churches in Labasa, one in Nadi, and one in Lautoka. While the church is growing in rural areas, in Suva it is relatively small, about the same size as when it began. Wilson explained that people in the Suva congregation tend to emigrate with the intention of gaining further education (Wilson 2005, interview by author).

The New Life Centre differs from other Pentecostal churches in Fiji in that its services cater for a multicultural congregation: about 30 per cent Fijian, 30 per cent Indian and the rest a variety of backgrounds, including Samoan, Tongan, Rotuman, and ‘European’ (a category that tends to include British, Europeans, Australians, New Zealanders, and Americans). This means that the Centre cannot support affirmative action policies — Wilson feels he cannot explain them to the Indian community as anything other than racism (Wilson 2005, interview by author).

The New Life Centre is Pentecostal in theology, and its vision statement makes reference to worship, evangelism, shepherding, discipling, and serving, with a strong emphasis on