

Minute for Mission

Exposing the Upheaval of Climate Change

Farmers rely on tools to bring in a successful crop — tools like resources to control weeds, fight pests or build healthy soil. Kotema ([kō-tā-muh](#)), a farmer on Nui ([nū-ē](#)) Island, one of a group of low-lying Islands in the South Pacific Ocean that make up the small nation of Tuvalu ([tū-vah-loo](#)), found that he had nothing left in his toolkit to counteract the devastating impact of climate change on the family farm. Having been battered beyond hope, he had no choice but to uproot his family from their home, culminating in their forced migration.

Maina Talia ([mīn-uh tuh-lē-uh](#)), a former International Peacemaker for the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program, said, “For people who have no choice other than to leave their homes, there aren’t just financial, agricultural and practical implications, but moral implications as well because they’ve been living in a place for their entire lives. This is where they’re attached to; and, when they move on a small island, they are also intruding into other people’s space, creating internal conflicts.”

Because Tuvalu is especially vulnerable to tropical cyclones, rising sea levels and global pollution, some 45% of its residents — like Kotema’s family — have been displaced.

Maina works with various nongovernmental organizations, including the Pacific Conference of Churches and the Tuvalu Christian Church, and was instrumental in securing funding for an early warning system to communicate during cyclones. He sees the concept of neighbor in Luke 10, the “Good Samaritan,” as intimately related to his pursuit of peace. He said, “In the context of climate change and geopolitics, our neighbor is no longer someone living next door to us, but rather someone who is impacted by our actions.”

Maina’s call to peacemaking — including addressing the escalating economic, moral, food security and safety issues that result from the impact of climate change — is made possible, in part, by gifts to the Peace & Global Witness Offering, traditionally received on World Communion Sunday, which this year falls on Oct. 1.

This Offering is unique in that half of it is directed to peacemaking and global witness efforts at the national church level to address critical issues around the world. Twenty-five percent is retained by congregations like ours for local peace and reconciliation work, and 25% goes to mid councils for similar ministries on the regional level. With this year’s portion of our offering, we will ([TALK ABOUT YOUR PEACEMAKING MINISTRY](#)).

For Maina, peacemaking is grounded in the biblical question “Who is my neighbor?” He embodies Christ’s call to peace, love and justice as it is exemplified by Matthew 25.

As do we.

Please give generously to help our neighbors — those next door, down the street and across the globe. For when we all do a little, it adds up to a lot.

Let us pray~

*Holy God of wind and rain, of sunshine and drought, we come before you in humble awareness that climate change has no boundaries. Open our hearts, minds and lives to the needs of our neighbors. For it is in the name of Jesus Christ, we pray. **Amen.***