

# The LOOONG LETTERS

February 2018



Greetings in Jesus' name!

As many of you may have heard, my wife and I have returned home from Tonga much earlier than anticipated. Unfortunately, we endured another category-5 cyclone, and, due to the state of emergency announced by the Prime Minister of Tonga, were advised by our travel insurance agent to fly out as soon as they could book flight.

The cyclone destroyed nearly all the fruit trees on the island of Tongatapu as well as many of the houses and food stores. Around 1400 houses in the capital, a city of around 30,000 people, lost their roofs. Also we received word that food and bottled water would run out this week. Supplies were being flown in from New Zealand and Australia, but would take time to be distributed. As well, it was likely that diseases caused by the wide-spread flooding would soon begin.



After spending two nights in a more secure hotel, in which we ended up sitting in the lobby half the night of the cyclone, we went back to the headquarters building, even though it was without power and internet service. Cooking was done on a small propane stove for the people who were staying in the sanctuary.

I bought a chain saw to cut up the trees that had fallen in the church yard and as well as the neighbour's yard. This will be used to help many of the saints as they clean up their properties. I also purchased a Skilsaw to help with rebuilding.

### **Pastor Savieti's house**



## Nukunuku church

Most of the churches sustained some damage, but the sad fact is the tremendous damage of the saints' houses. Many lost their roofs; others were flooded out. I saw one person sitting on the floor of what had been his house but all you could see was a pile of wet clothing and a few broken boards. It is sooo sad to lose everything you own in a matter of hours. Please pray for these precious saints.



Because most of the food they depend on to survive was destroyed, we are asking you to send an offering of any amount to us, which we will immediately transfer to Bro. Vai, the secretary for the UPCI of Tonga. Any money we had raised for our missions trip has been donated to the churches there plus a fair amount from our own bank account. We love these people so much and it is so hard, having seen the desolation they have had to endure.

Bro Vai has already started distributing rice, tinned fish, flour, cooking oil, breakfast crackers, and rebuilding supplies to the 50 families who are associated with our churches there. Bro Vai is a tremendous administrator and a great man of God. We are blessed to have him there in this difficult time.

We want to thank the churches that have supported us in funds, prayers, and bible student fees, even though we were not able to complete our time there, we know we were right square in the will of God being there. If we had not gone, there would have been no way for the people to receive food enough to sustain them, since the banks could not dispense money. (Compassion Services will be sending funds a little later but that takes time to arrive. Also, we had purchased a car with funds donated by Missions Church in Saint John, N.B. to use while we were there and to be used by the UPC leaders and visiting ministers. This was a real blessing since it is being used to dispense food and water to all the saints and to continue to check up on them. God only knows what we would have done without it. Thank you so much, Bro. Carter and church!

On a positive side, we would like to report that the youth there are in a tremendous state of revival! Several young people who came to God in the last two years are on fire, holding prayer meetings, outdoor meetings, and doing outreach in a different area each month. It is amazing to see the changes in their lives. They held an outdoor gospel concert on Saturday night to raise money for renovating the church at Fua'amota. Together with the money raised here and the sixteen hundred Tongan dollars they raised, there was enough to restore the building given to Pastor Toke by the town.



Bro. Malachi and I built eight benches for his church. Please pray for Tonga and the precious saints there.

Yours in Him,

**Bonner and Laura Long**  
**Associate Missionaries**  
**Tonga**



