

# A HISTORY OF SATAPUALA CONGREGATIONAL CHRISTIAN CHURCH SAMOA FROM 1994 - 2020.

A Thesis Presented to the Faculty of the  
Malua Theological College Samoa

In Partial Fulfilment of the  
Requirements for the Degree  
Bachelor of Theology

By  
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July 2021

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## **ABSTRACT**

This thesis is a history of the CCCS in Satapuala. It begins with its origin where the Faleolo airport now and to its relocation to Satapuala in 1942 and also the time of my parents in 1994 until 2020. This history records the growth of a church from the beginning to becoming one of the most churches in Samoa. It's a story about the movement of the church from its real place and also a story about the challenges faced by a church in unique and changing circumstances.

## DEDICATION

To my parents

*Rev. Elder Ailepata Leuta & Nofoagaoalii Leuta*

This is to acknowledge God's blessing for your great service as a Church

Minister's, *o le soifua ofoina mo le Atua ma lona finagalo.*

To all the members of the CCCS in Satapuala and around the world. The church  
has always been our unity and strength from generation to generation.

To all my families and friends here in Samoa and around the world, who tirelessly  
prayed day and night for our journey to end successfully.

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To my families, villages and friends who supported us in every way, along with your prayers and encouragements while we continue our studies here in Malua; God knows our hearts and our constant prayer for His blessings upon you all.

Last but not the least, I would like to thank my wife Lautele Ailepata for your helping me day and night as well as providing sound advice for me to complete this paper. Thank you also to my two beautiful kids Ielenimo and Nofoaga Ailepata for they bring me joy when I am discouraged. This research paper is important as it is concrete evidence of our struggles and successes in the challenging life of Malua.

*Malo tatalo, faafetai tapuai!!! Faamanuia le Atua*



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## **List of Abbreviations**

CCCS	Congregational Christian Church Samoa
WSTEC	Western Samoa Trust Estate Corporation
NZRE	New Zealand Reparation Estates
EFKS	Ekalesia Faapotopotoga Kerisiano Samoa
STEC	Samoa Trust Estates Corporation
LMS	London Mission Society
US	United State
BP	Banana Plantation
MTC	Malua Theological College
Rev.	Reverend

## Introduction

Upon graduating from Malua Theological College in 1993, my parents were called to serve at the Satapuala Congregational Christian Church Samoa (henceforth Satapuala CCCS) the very next year in 1994. I was only 8 years old at the time of the calling, and it is fair to say that most of my life I have been brought up, and raised in the village and congregation of Satapuala, a place I know more of as my home. Since 1994, the parish has made significant changes and movements within the local area regarding the location of its place of worship, and the underlying factors behind the constant shifting of the church as well as the ever-changing numbers of church members throughout the period.

Now that I am in my final year of studies in Malua, the longing to research and write a paper on the history of my church was long overdue, and felt that it was time that the history of the Satapuala parish, as with many other Congregational histories before this paper, be known to all, for the local and the outsider.

## Sources and Methodology

There is no written or published history of the Satapuala CCCS. This is one of the many issues with this research. This thesis however will use both textual and oral sources. This includes, interviews, Rev. Elder Ailepata Leuta, (Current church minister of Satapuala CCCS 1994-) Rev. Nuuausala Siaosi (son of the late Rev. Sioasi and Silafai Siutaia worked at Satapuala from 1949-1954) as well as the church members of Satapuala CCCS; Vaili Patea Iosua, Lagilelei Taatia, Sooula Lauava, Tiumalu Pose<sup>1</sup> and Faafofola Iosefa Kilipati, *Api o le Galuega* as well as archival materials to collect

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<sup>1</sup> Tiumalu Pose is currently a Lay Preacher he was also a Secretary of Satapuala CCCS in 2006; Lagilelei Taatia is the wife of the late Taatia Filemoni she is a Deacon; Sooula Lauava is a female Deacon her husband Lauava Vaosia was a chairman of the CCCS Satapuala in 2011.

information needed for this work. There are gaps in the history of Satapuala that not recorded, so oral history is vital in such case to fill up the history in oral source. Questionnaires were given out using open questions to extract information on my topic. A Samoan way of interviewing was used, using respectful language (*gagana faaaloalo*). Talanoa approach which emphasizes the importance of properly addressing the cultural ground rules of respect when working communities and sharing of important information.<sup>2</sup> I interviewed church ministers, Lay Preachers, Deacons and the Elders, who are important members of the church in Satapuala.

The lack of information about the establishment of the CCCS of Satapuala accentuates the significance of consulting the view from the people of the village especially the elders. Consulting the views from these members of the CCCS Satapuala as well as the members of the village including the non-CCCS members was helpful in the collecting the materials for this work. The study is aware of the fact that there is hardly any of the current generations who were actually present during the origin of and the shift of the church. In that way a proper and careful scrutinising of the information is very much needed in the process of compiling the materials for this work.

Textual sources such as the *Api o le Galuega* or Church Record Book was the main source of information despite absence of the *Api o le Galuega* before 1994. The *Api o le Galuega* was used to explore the development of the church. Some entries of this book are brief and unclear which needs a thorough scrutiny in order to make sense of the historical information required for this study. Another important aspect of this thesis is the understanding of the state of the parish throughout time and how far it has come. Key events are a reflection on the parish's agenda and priorities with the community as well as its development and growth throughout the course of history.

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<sup>2</sup> Vaiotei Timoteo, "Talanoa Research Methodology: A Developing position on Pacific Research", in *Waikato Journal of Education*, 12, (Hamilton:University of Waikato, 2006), 23.

According to *Vaili Patea Iosua*, Satapuala, in its original location at Faleolo, had no titles, but it was not until the independence of Samoa in 1962 that it began to be consolidated in all these cases.<sup>3</sup> This is why the study needs confirmation about this claim. The archival materials from Western Samoa Trust Estate Corporation Archives (hereafter WSTEC), The New Zealand Reparation Estates (NZRE) information will be much helpful. These archives will be useful in my research as it has records of land registers and ownership especially for the village of Satapuala. It may also help that WSTEC may share some information that may have not had been common knowledge which may affect the established history of the village.

There are also information extracted from primary material such as related books, documents from the government and the Satapuala records held by the current minister of Satapuala.

### ***Faafailele as an approach to History***

The word “*Faafailele*,”<sup>4</sup> is a compound word made up of two words, *faa* defines as a causative word “to” and *failele* means suckling woman.<sup>5</sup> According to my grandmother the word *faafailele* comes from the word *faafa*’i meaning fed only by the mother’s milk or *a pepele* to be full, she holds that it refers to the nature of a mother in making sure that her child/baby is fed. In this sense the word *faafailele* connotes nursing, nurturing, feeding, of a child at all means. The goal of in the Samoan context is to receive life (*manuia*) *faamoemoeina* (reliable) *alofa ma aoga* (useful) to serve the *aiga*. The philosophy of the *faafailele* stated by Aiono Fanaafi as ‘*Fafaga lau tama i upu ma tala*’<sup>6</sup> which compared the young of the birds that are fed on flowers.

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<sup>3</sup> Personal Interview: 31 March 2021.

<sup>4</sup> This thesis uses lower case ‘f’ throughout for the term ‘*faafailele*’

<sup>5</sup> George Pratt. *Samoa Dictionary: English and Samoan*. (London: London Missionary Press 1861), 101.

<sup>6</sup> Aiono Dr. Fanaafi, *Le Tagaloa*. Motugaafa. (Apia: Lamepa Press 1996) 46.

From this perspective, what central to the reality of a mother, is the life of her child. *Faafailele* accentuates roles and responsibilities as well as obligations of a mother to her child in making sure he/she is well fed in order to sustain and have a vigorous life. This reflects both an on-going provisional and motherly nature of God to his people. For us Christians the sustenance of our lives rendered as God's intervention in our journey. As David Bebbington holds, "God gets involved and guides history to the end that he has planned."<sup>7</sup> Therefore *faafailele* as an approach<sup>8</sup> to the recording and constructing of the history of the EFKS Satapuala, guides interpretation and recording of historical events using three important aspects of *faafailele* namely: *toto* (to plant), *faasūsū* (to water) the term *faasūsū* can also means breastfeeding and to *apelepele* (to fill). As an interpretational tool it scrutinises the roles and responsibilities of the church as the portrayal of God within the village of Satapuala. As claimed by Bebbington:

The (history) discipline itself is not a matter of reading, but researching. It entails calling accepted views into questions on the basis of freshly discovered or freshly interpreted evidence. History demands a critical frame of mind<sup>9</sup>

As many elders of Satapuala believe that the first place of formal education in our village was the church (*Aoga a le Faifeau*, Sunday School, Youth etc.). These are all part of the mission of the church in any village to depict the role of *faafailele*. Significantly, historical events disclose when and where the church lapse in her role as a mother to the people.

Furthermore, *faafailele* as an approach serves the purpose of this study in recording the history as well as interpreting how God reveals in the development of the

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<sup>7</sup> David Bebbington, *Patterns in History: A Christian Perspective on Historical Thoughts* (Leicester: Apollos, 1990), p43.

<sup>8</sup> See for further reading the use of Christian Approach in History: Rev Oka Fauolo in his book titled "*Vavega o le Alofa Lavea'i*, (Miracles of the Saving Love), (2005), Latu Latai in his PhD thesis "*Recuperating the voice of the Samoan Women in the mission to Papua New Guinea*" where Latai uses "*Double Vision approach*" (2016), David Mafua BTh thesis "*Christian Approach to History*," (2020).

<sup>9</sup> Ibid. 4.

church. Most importantly in time of hardship within the mission of the church. In that sense this study will not take into account the *faafailele* role of the church to the village but also the role of the village or culture in return in upholding a better life within Satapuala. As an exercise using a *faafailele* approach allows the author to make meaning and give insights of historical happenings in the information about the EFKS Satapuala. Yet *faafailele* never takes away the reliability of historical facts.

## Chapter Outline

This thesis is divided into three chapters. Chapter one is titled ‘Satapuala: A space for Planting (*Totō*).’ This chapter looks at the history of the cultural setting of the village of Satapuala. This includes its political situation within Samoa, the origin of the name Satapuala as well as its honorifics.

Chapter two is titled The Motherly role of the CCCS Satapuala. This chapter looks at the beginning of the church at Faleolo where the airport is now located as well as the background information of the community and the reasons why the church relocated.

Chapter three begins with the shift of the church from Faleolo, and its settlement into the new environment. It also includes challenges both emotional, and logistical, around this movement as well as the *osigafeagaiga* in 1994.<sup>10</sup> Lastly will be the discussion on the development of the Church from the years 1994-2020. It also looks at the changes within the church on the continuing physical and spiritual welfare. Chapter four will be the conclusion.

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<sup>10</sup> The *osigafeagaiga* is a ceremony where the church and the new chosen Pastor and family, begin a covenant of a committed relationship to each other. In the case of Satapuala Parish and my parents, it continues to this day.

## Chapter 1

### Satapuala: A space for Planting (*Totō*)

#### Introduction

This chapter attempts to deliberate upon the historical background of Satapuala village. This includes political situation within Samoa, the origin of the name of the village as well as the honorifics. Lastly will be the beginning of the EFKS church at Faleolo.

Space connotes opportunity, chance or opening. Space according to Walter Brueggemann

[...] means an arena of freedom, without coercion or accountability, free of pressure and void of authority. Space may be imagined as weekend, holiday, avocation, and is characterized [sic] by a kind of neutrality or emptiness waiting to be filled by our choosing.<sup>1</sup>

This perspective spells out the opportunity given as a cultural contribution of Satapuala to the growth of the Gospel. As many historians give credit to the white missionaries as the sole reason of the success of the Christian mission.<sup>2</sup> However this undertaking intends to record these as a contribution of locals as equally as important in the act of *faafailele* to the development of the church. In fact, delving into the social, political and cultural stories about Satapuala brings forth how significant a piece of land offered as a space for the seed of the Gospel to be planted.

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<sup>1</sup>Walter Brueggemann. *The Land.: Overtures to Biblical Theology*. (Philadelphia: Fortress Press. 1977), 5.

<sup>2</sup> R. P. Gilson, *Samoa 1830 to 1900*. (Melbourne: Oxford University Press 1970). 67 See also Norman Goodal. *A History of the Missionary Society 1895-1945*. (London: Oxford University Press 1954). 221; Niel Gunson. *Messengers of Grace: Evangelical Missionaries in the South Seas*. (London: Oxford University Press, 1978) 76.



## **1.1 The Cultural Background of Satapuala**

### **1.1.1 The story about the name Satapuala**

Before the Gospel arrived in Samoa, during the reign of Tuifiti, Sagaate changed his name to a Samoan name Sagatea. It is said that he received his food which was a body of a person woven in a leaf, and opened before Sagatea taken with the ankles (tapuvae).

The Tuifiti said that it was forbidden to bring back ankles, and hence the name of the former village, Satapuvae, to commemorate Sagatea's prohibition on bringing ankles or tapuvae of people at his meals.

This name carried on until Samoa was of blessed with the Gospel and evangelized the country, and people were intertwined with their identities.

Then came Sinaafulilo daughter of Toala from Faga in Savaii to Tuiaana Toaletai who ruled on the Upolu coast inland of Toalepaialii and Vailituisemealelei, Safuta Manaia and Leoo. There are four boys, Tapuala, Laufiso, Pini and Vaisau and two girls, Taulua and Vasa.

Tuiaana Toaletai heard of ordinance in the village of Faga, and informed his wife Sinaafulilo to go to Savaii with his children lest the village ordinance be completed. Then Sina and her children set out, and when the appointing were completed, Toala, Sina's father, said that your children had no inheritance, but that the six men of Faga were serving. Sina was saddened that her children would not receive an inheritance, so the boys were taken to serve according to the request of Toala and the girl Taulua in Palauli was taken to the home of Sina's mother to live. , and took the girl Vasa to Safotu to live.

As the days passed, Sina told her sons Tapuala and Laufiso, "Get ready to go back to Aana to your father's house, let your father appoint you unknowingly." The boys then sailed and arrived at their father's house, but unfortunately Tuiaana Toaletai had finished his chief titles in the district of Aana. Tapuala and Laufiso were disappointed because they had not been bestowed with titles. The father then told his children, "Come to Alataua, you will meet Tutuila and Ape and go from there." In the event Tutuila and Ape arrived late, you two will be the "orators of the day".

The marriage of Vaili Tatupu II to Taavili, son of Toala Tapuala Leoo, gave the village its name, and changed it from Satapuvae to Satapuala to commemorate the appointments of Tuiaana Toaletai to his descendants.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Personal Interview: Vaili Patea Iosua (31 March 2021). Note that this long conversation was done in Samoan.

The above story shed some lights upon the claim that Satapuala did not have any titles in its outset. We have noted that there were two ordinances that Sinaafulilo and Tuiaana's children had failed to get any title. Vaili at this point contends that Satapuala had their titles during this period when they were combined with Satuimalufilufi. But their honorifics (titles and lands) were only official in 1962.<sup>4</sup> He also elaborates that the change in the name of the village from Satapuvae to Satapuala (the family of Tapuala) was most likely because of the influence of the Gospel.<sup>5</sup> Furthermore it is understood from the story that the name Satapuala was a commemoration to Tuiaana's son Tapuala due to their unsuccessful attempts to get any title from both Faga and Aana. It is interesting to note that there is a contribution of the Gospel to the naming of the village Satapuala. This shows how the church or Gospel had been woven in the identity of the people of Satapuala.

Satapuala and Satuimalufilufi (*falelua*) people shared the area where the Faleolo airport is now located in which the CCCS Satapuala was originally started. As it geographically describes in the WSTEC archive "The village of Satuimalufilufi and Satapuala was located from a point from east of the present Mulifanua wharf and extending east along the coast to where the new Satapuala is at now." Furthermore "[t]he customary land of Satuimalufilufi comprised 521 acres 1 rood 19 perches and the Satapuala customary land (extending east along the coast from the boundary with Satuimalufilufi) comprised 865 acres, 2 roods 21 perches.<sup>6</sup> Accordingly these facts are sufficient to say that Satapuala is a traditional village (*nuu mavae*), which has its *matai* titles which comprised its honorific so as its lands (*tulagamaota*). Satapuala is a sub-village of Aana.

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<sup>4</sup> Conversation with author 31 March 2021.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid, 2021.

<sup>6</sup> Western Samoa Trust Estate Corporation. SPLR 437. 1987.

### 1.1.2 The Honorific and Land (*Faalupega ma Tulagamaota*)

According to Samoan Honorifics<sup>7</sup>, each village in Samoa has their own honorifics which describe honorary titles, paramount chief and oratory chief titles, as well as important places (*tualagamaota*) of meeting within each village setting. Pronunciations must be sound and the order of priority in relation to chief titles is important here. It is sensitive in nature and is the subject of many heated debates if not treated with respect and diligence. However the undertaking admits that Satapuala, in its original location, had no titles, but it was not until the independence of Samoa in 1962 that it began to be consolidated in all these cases.<sup>8</sup> For Satapuala, the honorifics are as follows:

*Afio Toalepaialii o le matua i tofiga o le aiga sa Tuala*  
*Afio le aiga sa Tuala o le aiga faalagilagi*  
*Alalatai Vailituisemealelei o le laau na fausia, ma le mamalu o le Faleaana*  
*Le nofo a Tapuala ma le Lautinalaulelei ma le Vainalepa.*<sup>9</sup>

This study suggests that the names within honorific do not just identify who the person is; it also identifies the place that the name belongs to. Thus, an honorific exhibits a relational identity. This relational sense of an honorific situates a person within his/her village in relation to Samoa as a whole.

The *Aiga sa Tuala* (Tuala lineage) refers to *Toalepaialii*. *Vaia'ua'u* is his site of residence with his family, and has *matai* included.<sup>10</sup> *Iliolemalae*, is the *tulafale* or orator chief, whose clan complements another chief named *Vaili* in accordance having oratory protocol of the village.

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<sup>7</sup> Samoa has its own unique record of honorifics, each village, district, and even Samoa itself has its own honorific designated from the ancient past.

<sup>8</sup> Vaili Patea Iosua, conversation with author, (31 March 2021)

<sup>9</sup> Ibid, (31 March 2021)

<sup>10</sup> These are: Toesulusulu, Muagututi'a, Lilomaiaava, Tiumalumatusa, Tiumalualii, Tusagi, Tuifaasisina, Aiono, Sagatea, Tutuila.

The *Laa na Fausia* refers to *Vailituisemealelei* and *nofo a Tapuala* and *Lautinalaulelei* ma le *Vainalepa* refers to the orators of the village. *Faletasi* is the land where *Vailituisemealelei o le Laaunafausia* resides. Suelealii (*tama le fale*) also lives here along with Safuta (*aitutagata*). They are protected by Nofaituala and Faletasi.<sup>11</sup>

## 1.2 Satapuala in Samoa

Satapuala is a coastal village on the north-western side of Upolu Island in Samoa. The village is part of Aana Alofi III Electoral Constituency which forms part of the larger political district of Aana (refer to Figure 1 & 2) below. Satapuala is a 40-minute drive west from the capital Apia.

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<sup>11</sup> The story about Vailituisemealelei says that Umaga and Pasese came from Leulumoega, the first Tumua of Samoa, and that Safuta was entertained by his *laoa*. After the farewell meeting, Safuta asked his son to bring a gift from his trip. The boy then stood on a pole in the middle of the house where Safuta's food baskets hung, looking for something good to start the journey. The alagafono was his gift for those who were in the meeting.

The tour guide Alipia then asked Safuta if he had a name for his son, to which Safuta replied that he had no name, and the guide said that he had found your son's name, Vailituisemealelei to commemorate this ceremony. He searched to make the leader of the expedition.

Faletasi is the name of the *laoa* of Vaili, after which is where the Faleaana meet. The malae is also the site of Leulumoega, and is also the main malae of the Aana district known as Maauga and Nuuausala.

*Sasolomua* is the inlands and coastal areas of Iliioletutusalolo and Lesa which are also own to Taufetee and Sasolomua. This piece of land does not have a noble title. The story says that Iliioletutusalolo was the boy who sailed from the sea, the boy who came to the sea, his role is to go in search of a fish for a meal for Toalepaialii, to serve the Saoalii. Lesa was the boy who is from the inlands, a farmer who was to find legumes to make the dinner for Saoalii. It was their continued service that moved them to the Faleaana and became the Orators of the property. Their priority and respect was towards Lasei.

*Salele'aalii*. It has its own honorific: **E afio ai le toafia o alii, alalata'i le aitutagata ia Tauvalaau ma le mamalu ia Salelealii.** There are three high titles specific to this area of land; Toae, Ape and Malaculu. There is a story as to the origin of the name Tauvalaau, in relation to the honorifics. It is descended from the great hero Liavaa. It is said that Liavaa was a strong and famous man, and that he used to pray from Aleipata, Fagaloa to Atua, and then Lufilufi to Aana, and no one defeated him. The lands of Satapuala were sanctified. During the reign of Sagaate and Safiti, the gods of Fiji, they lived on the hill opposite the airport, their house was known as Fofaipaepaelele, where Sagaate lived and changed their names to Sagatea and Safuta.

It is said that the hero reached the scene and then went on his habit of yelling and shouting. Then the boy called Liavaa to Pouniufasia, the ancient weapon used to kill heroes. But the boy hit Liavaa, and the boy screamed and ran for his life. While the ghost of Safuta was carving his boat, he heard the screams of the man, so he left his work and went to where the man was screaming. When they met, Safuta struck Liavaa with his axe and killed him.

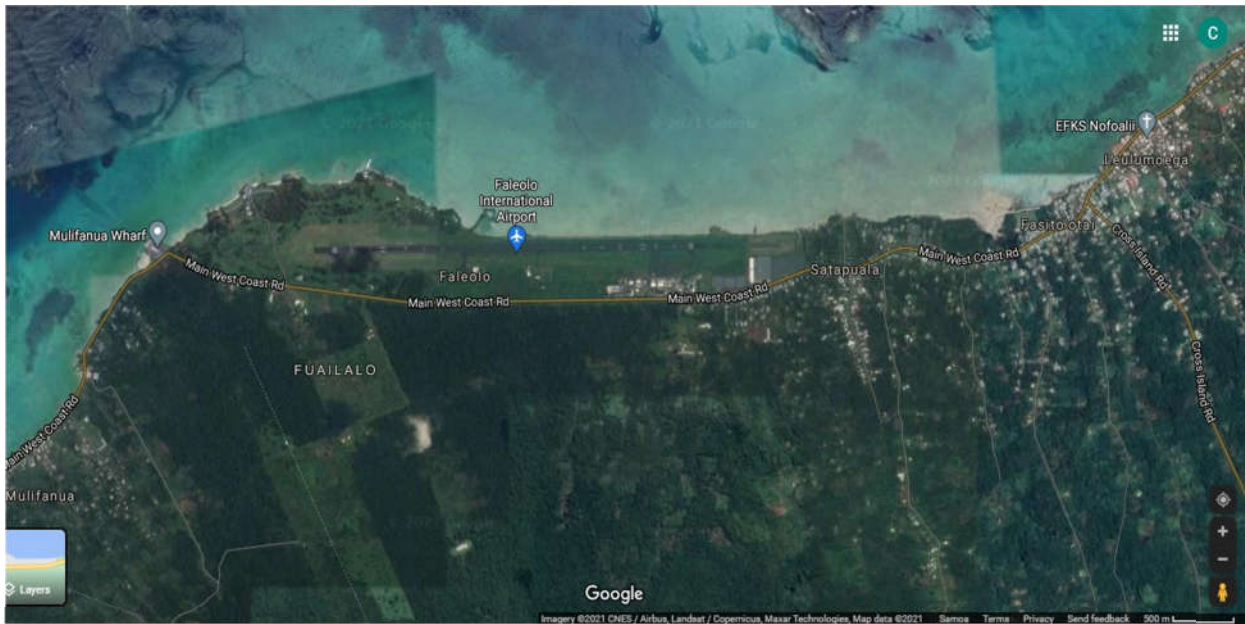


Figure 1: The map of Satapuala village

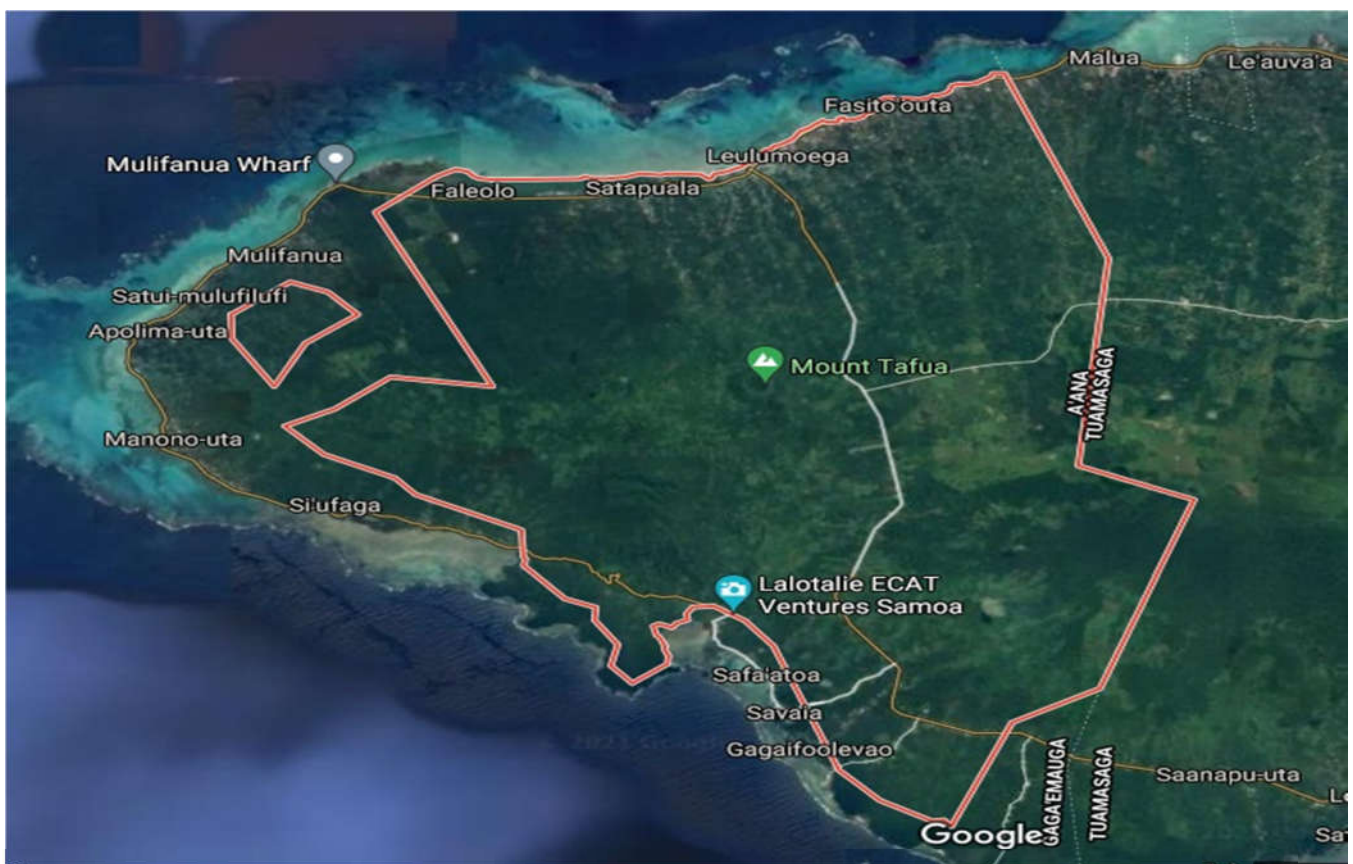


Figure 2: Aana Alofi III District

<sup>12</sup> Google Map 2013

Part of the former customary village land is where the new Aggie Greys Lagoon resort is located. The government, the majority shareholder, built a golf course near the airport.<sup>13</sup> Other Satapuala land includes a large coconut plantation opposite the airport, which the government planned to sell as small freehold lots and to attract businesses with opportunity for land developments such as resorts and hotels. Chiefs or *Matai* of Satapuala have made legal claims for the return of their ancestral lands from the government for many years. The disputed land is currently the property of the government of WESTEC, the land which came under the Samoa government when German and New Zealand colonial rule ended in Samoa.<sup>14</sup>

### 1.3 Where the seed first falls

The enthusiasm of the Samoans in receiving Christianity has been clearly recorded by many historians.<sup>15</sup> As recorded in John Williams's journal of the Pacific, when they arrived at Leone in 1832, they found that people had already erected a place for worship; the structure was said to imitate the Tahitian style at Sapapalii. When Williams asked them how they acquired the knowledge of the new religion, a man named *Amoamo* replied, as recorded by Williams:

That is my canoe, in which I go down to the teachers, get some religion, which I bring carefully home, and give to the people; and, when it is gone, I take my canoe again, and fetch some more.<sup>16</sup>

Sailing from such a far distance in a *paopao* or canoe just to fetch his knowledge of the new religion shows eagerness in receiving the gospel. However, Ruta Sinclair claims

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<sup>13</sup> WESTEC, 1987

<sup>14</sup> WESTEC, 1987

<sup>15</sup> Featunai Liuaana. *Samoa Tula'i: Ecclesiastical and Political Face of Samoa's Independence, 1900-1962*. (Apia: Malua Printing Press, 2004). 45.

<sup>16</sup> John Willimas, *A Narrative of Missionary Enterprise in the South Sea Islands; with Remarks upon the natural history of the Islands, Origin, Languages, Traditions and usages of the Inhabitants*. London: John Snow. 1837, 110.

that such enthusiasm was initiated with pride and stained by a more cultural influence.

According to Sinclair;

“[T]he Samoans refused to abandon their villages....they insisted on setting up places of worship in their own village.<sup>17</sup> This is because the nuu or village is the basic territorial unit of political and economic organisation.<sup>18</sup>

A similar enthusiasm reflected in the story about the origin of the church at Satapuala. When asked about how the church moved from Faleolo to Satapuala, Vaili Patea Iosua<sup>19</sup> said that even though there are different accounts from their own village, he believes that when the good news arrived in the village of Fasitoo Tai, it was his belief that it was there that the good news spread to neighbouring villages including Satapuala. It seems like the Satapuala people refused to go to Fasitoo-Tai but to set up a church on their own land.

However Lagilelei Taatia<sup>20</sup> says that, the good news of Christ reached Satapuala not by a missionary, but by the request of Toalepaialii. He (Toalepaialii), the paramount chief at the time, requested for Rev. Pilitati Pilitati and his wife Sopoima to bring the good news to Satapuala. In other words, it was not through a missionary as is the typical case for many villages at the time of the LMS and since the spread of the gospel in 1830, but through one of their own fellow Samoans who spread the good news. Taatia might have said in this to show pride instead of confirming the truth of her belief, or it can be both. However, it is still counted as credible evidence for the time being given the lack of resources recorded to help determine this event.

Oral history within the village of Satapuala talks of the original church being founded in the village of Faleolo, the current site of where the Samoan International

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<sup>17</sup> Note that this is one of the many reasons why the LMS missionaries hastened the decision to establish Malua Theological College in their meeting at Fasitoo-Tai in 1839, is to overcome this issue with a village based tradition.

<sup>18</sup> Ruta Sinclair, Preparation for mission the Samoan Faife'au.

<sup>19</sup> Personal Interview: (31 March 21).

<sup>20</sup> Personal Interview: Lagilelei Taatia Satapuala, (16 February 21).

Airport stands today. Although it is a point of pride and hope for the villagers to look back and ponder of their glory days, the unfortunate thing is that there is no written or recorded testimony other than word of mouth regarding the establishment of the church at Faleolo. Further adding to this difficulty is that there is no one alive who can shed light on what happened.

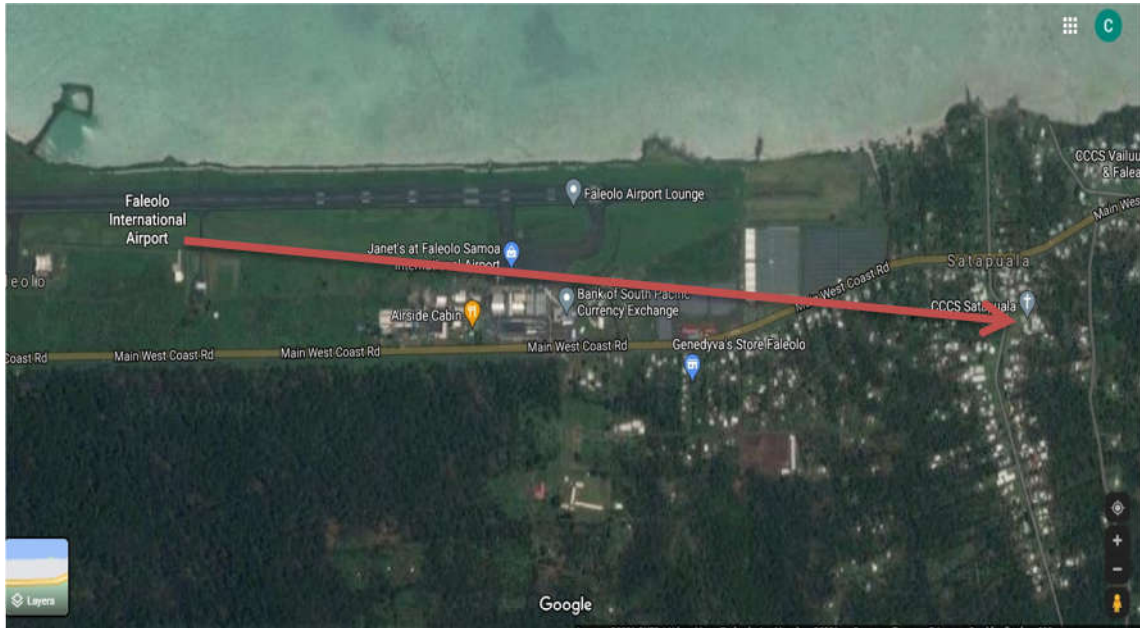
#### **1.4 The Uprooting and the New Grounds to *totō* (plant)**

The village, which is controlled by a traditional council of chiefs, was forced to relocate in April, 1942 to originally make room for an airfield built by the US Navy. The building of this airfield was a pre-emptive attempt by the Americans to set up bases around the Pacific region. This was done as a military defensive effort against the invading expansion of the Japanese Army during World War Two. The original inhabitants, the villagers, were forcibly removed in the process.<sup>21</sup> They moved away to nearby places called Salealii and Magia, but the government also wanted this land and forced the villagers to settle into nearby villages such as Faleatiu, Vailuutai, and Fasitoo-Tai.

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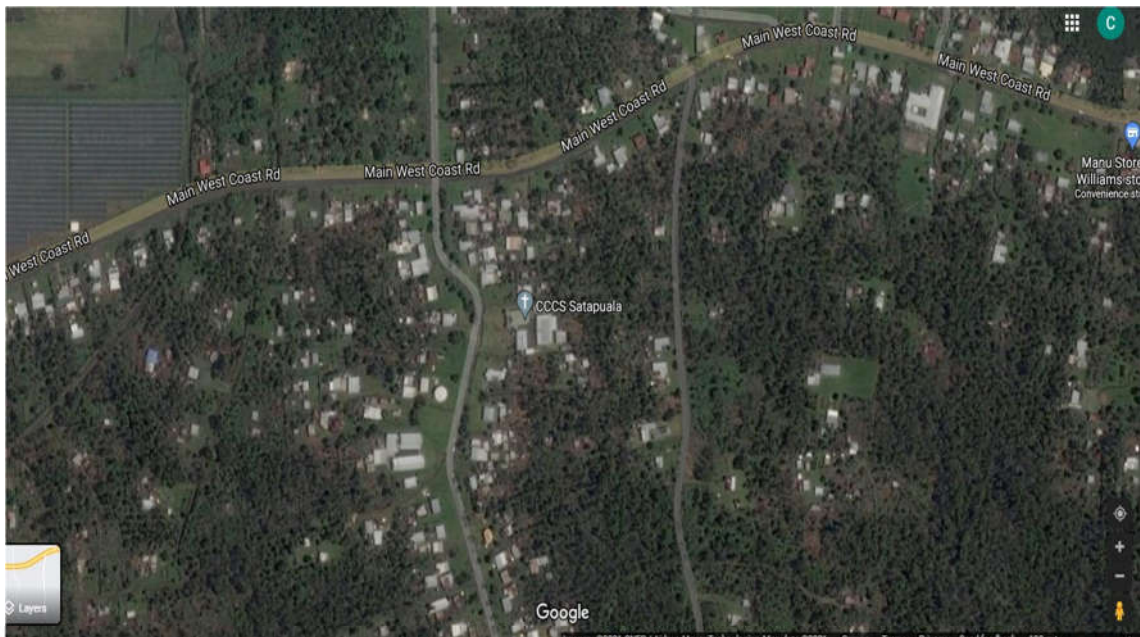
<sup>21</sup> WESTEC





**Figure 3:** The original site of CCCS

However, in March 1943, it was decided by the remaining villagers to settle in a nearby area called Tuvao, which they settled in soon after. However, it was only a temporary settlement until early 1947, when it was decided that they would relocate further inland where it currently is to this day. The period of these movements were 5 years and 6 months.<sup>22</sup>



**Figure 4:** The CCCS at Satafapuala

<sup>22</sup> WESTEC

## Summary

To sum up this chapter, this chapter reflects the contribution of locals as equally as important in the act of *faafailele* aspect to the development of the church into the social, political and cultural stories about the village of Satapuala and especially about the important of the piece of land that the church was planted (*toto*) the seed of the gospel in Satapuala. Furthermore, this chapter reveals the historical background of Satapuala, its situation in Samoa, and how this place was called Satapuala, and the beginning of the EFKS church at Faleolo. Therefore, after the investigation, clearly stated in the story how the village of Satapuala name from Satapuvae, which is name after the family of Tapuala, which is also a commemoration to Tuiaana's son Tapuala due to their unsuccessful plans to have any title from both Faga and Aana. But, interesting is the contribution of the gospel for the naming of the village. Also, it's clearly stated in this chapter the falelua of Satapuala and Satuimalufilufi in the area of Faleolo. There is also an important of the honorary titles, paramount chief and oratory chief titles, and the important meeting place in relation to the historical background of the village and the church. Nevertheless, figure 1 and 2, the location of Satapuala in Upolu Island in Samoa, not only that but it was clearly stated the movement of the Church from Faleolo to Satapuala, the reasons and the story behind the events, and it ends up the relocation of the village of Satapuala in 1942 as shown in figure 4 and 5. The next chapter will talk about the motherly role of the CCCS at Satapuala.

## Chapter 2

### The Motherly role of CCCS: *Fasūsū* (to water), *Apelele* (to fill)

#### Introduction

This chapter is a sequel of the previous one, continuing the history of the CCCS Satapuala from 1942 to 1993. The bulge of information for this chapter will be from an interview with Rev. Nuuausala Siaosi because his father Rev. Siaosi Siutaia was the pastor of Satapuala from 1945 until 1954 and some from the church members. The undertaking will document the establishment of the church in the new location. Deliberating upon these significant events reveals the motherly role of the CCCS Satapuala in the act of *faasūsū* and *apelepele* in nurturing the physical, social, mental and spiritual aspect of the life of the village people. As abovementioned these aspects of *faafailele* signifies God's intervention in the history of the Church. It is the belief that God is life, the role of human is to *toto*, *faasūsū* and *apelepele* considering that God brings life and sustenance. Though, facing challenges in the ministry are the reality of life that strengthens the service of both the church minister and the church members.

#### 2.1 *Lotu Faafetai* (Thanksgiving Worship)

The shift to Satapuala was a long process and had its struggles and challenges. Having originally been inhabitants on the coast, and having been forced off of their land by outside forces, the quest for a final place of settlement for the village was a welcome end so that the villagers could live in peace and continue their lives without further disturbance. Along with the settlement came the final establishment for a place of worship for the followers of the CCCS. Those who witnessed the founding and establishment of the Congregational Christian Church of Samoa in Satapuala where the

church is currently located, namely Toalepai Pau, Vaili Tatupu II, Malaetele I, Samatoa Fausolo, Taufetee Tuai, Sula Samusamu, Lauava Fua and Su'e Matolu.<sup>1</sup> These are also the very people who were involved and experienced the shift to Satapuala from the multiple places they had to settle into before.<sup>2</sup>

In October 1947, the villagers decided to hold a thanksgiving worship to God, now that they had settled well in their new location. On Tuesday 2 November 1947, the first church service was held in commemoration of their settlement and a grateful thanksgiving to God led by Rev. Elder Pilitati. To this day, this date has been celebrated and commemorated in the village every year without a miss<sup>3</sup>.

Initially there were 457 initial members of the parish when it began in 1947, with the total number of chiefs at 25.<sup>4</sup> Since then, those members have increased as families have grown through the generations and have become valuable to the Lord's work. There are currently more than 2,000 residents and increasing and the sea has been the main source of food supply.

The importance of honouring memorial services in Satapuala is just as important. According to Lagilelei Taatia, there is as much importance and usefulness in the celebrations in the first Sunday of November. It always reminds them of the importance of their identity even when it was taken away. It is a reminiscent of their ancestors who went through hardships for the benefit of the community.<sup>5</sup>

For Sooula Lauava, her testimony is that it is important that the annual church service is held annually not just as a reminder, but also for the younger generation and

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<sup>1</sup> Personal Interview: Rev. Nuuausala Siaosi

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Api o le Galuega (Church Records) Satapuala

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Personal Interview, 16/02/21, Satapuala.

children of the community to attend. They understood that the situation of the village and what had happened was not easy.<sup>6</sup>

Tiumalu Pose, one of the elder members of the church, believes that the memorial service is important to them.<sup>7</sup> As it is a way to remind them of the importance of the areas that their ancestors suffered in the past as well as their struggles with land inheritance. Thanksgiving worship for the love of God because even though the people were forced to leave their lands, the love of God for them to be at peace in the location they are at now.

## **2.2 CCCS Satapuala in 1945**

According to Rev. Nuuausala, who is the son of the late Rev. Siaosi, when Rev. Pilitati Pilitati passed away, his parents took over as resident pastors and began their pastoral ministry.<sup>8</sup> The place of worship was made of tin with open space. The lower half of the surrounding walls was built with wood whilst the upper half was covered by woven blinds. The place that his parents used for their ministry was a traditional Samoan fale with wooden flooring. The only place that resembled a European styled home at the time was the office which his father used during the ministry which was situated next to the church.

However, the mission of faasūsū, and apelepele of the church would not be succeeded if it was not for the good heart of the people to offer their lands. As it is recorded in the *Api o le Galuega*, the land on which the chapel and minister's residence are now erected is approximately 2 acres of land donated by the community for God's work. It is still passed on to the next generation and pastors, unless there is no longer a

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<sup>6</sup> Personal Interview, 02/02/21, Satapuala.

<sup>7</sup> Personal Interview 23 January 2021, Satapuala.

<sup>8</sup> Take note that there is a difference between Rev. Nuuausala Siaosi's timing of his parents and what is recorded in the *Api o le Galuega*.

church and the land returns to the authority of the chiefs and councillors.<sup>9</sup> There is another smaller part of this land which is about two acres, on the northern part of the land; it is a donation from a Iliolemalae Aloialofi Kilipati to the church when the Rev. George Siutaia asked if he could to set aside a portion for the project. This was because the church was too much on the north side of the land. Iliomalae accepted the offer and one of the children said that whatever the circumstances, they would donate for the church.<sup>10</sup> These offers marked as the first ever assets of the church in Satapuala which are the land, the first church building along with minister's residence.



Figure 5: CCCS old church building at Satapuala

There was a decent amount of church members at the time, but the Methodists seemed to have the most members. However, this did not discourage Rev. Siaosi, instead they continued to work and build up the congregation and develop it further with the building of a new church building. The new church building was built in the time Rev. Siaosi around 1946, beginning with the foundation on which the original

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<sup>9</sup> Api o le Galuega (Church Records) Stapuala

<sup>10</sup> Personal Interview: Faafofola Iosefa Oti the daughter of Iliolemalae Aloialofi Kilipati

church was demolished.<sup>11</sup> This is the same church building of the CCCS Satapuala Parish that stands to this day.

These contributions of the village to the ministry according to Rev. Nuuaasala meant a lot to the work of his parents. In fact the early days of the ministry were not easy as the church was poorly resourced and lacked any kind of material assets or finances, the church members were also financially lacking, but his parents nonetheless continued in their ministry to be of spiritual service to their parishioners especially the youth.<sup>12</sup> The youth were also very healthy and active but lacked education.

Rev. Siutaia started to look for ways to assist the village with this problem. As a result, he (Rev. Siutaia) tended to get the youths to live with them and raise them as their own, pay their bills for school fees, so that they could get an education for a better future. It is also interesting to note that Rev. Siutaia did confine his mission to just the children of the CCCS Satapuala but to all children of the village from different denominations. The children would come and live with his parents during the school week and return to their homes for the weekend to worship in their own denominations.

The holistic ministry of the CCCS Satapuala was not bound to just education and schooling but also a love of working outdoors so that they could understand and be aware of the importance of plantations to help with their parents, families, and village. It is worth noting to see how the CCCS church had given opportunities to for these youth of the village in developing their skills and gaining knowledge to become reliable (*faamoemoeina*) and useful (*aogā*) in the life of the church. The essence of *faasūsū* (to water) and *apelepele* (to fill) theologically brings hope for a plant to sustain living; this was also reflected in the ministry back then. Providing opportunities for the children of

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<sup>11</sup> Vaili conversation with author

<sup>12</sup> Rev. Siaosi, conversation with author

the whole village to be educated and explore working outdoors gives hope for these children in life.

### **2.3 The Contribution of the land**

The first active development of the land of the church's tenure was a banana plantation which was called "BP" (Banana Plantation) at the time. The male youths were assigned at the time to do the work, they were encouraged and pushed by the Rev. Siutaia to get used to working the land so that the church could benefit later on. Banana plantations, cocoa, coconut, coffee and *taamu* plantations were planted.<sup>13</sup> The land where they worked on these plantations was situated inland close to the village of Faleatiu, owned by a chief by the name of To'alepaialii Toivao. According to Rev. Siaosi, that land was under his father whose responsibility was to look after the land for future development and to help their church in times of need. What was crucial to such an approach was to encourage the youth that education was not the only way to success in life but the proper use of their land connotes God's way of sustaining life.

The youth also had their weekly routine. In week days they would journey inland to the plantations to source food after they finished schooling. But on Saturdays, they would journey early in the morning and return only after dark. The enthusiasm of the church minister to encourage and instil hardworking in the youths reflect in his plans. As Rev. Nuuasala stated, every Sunday evening they went with those who were not attending school anymore to the village of Saleimoa, to the land owned by a man titled Atoa. They would work the land for the whole week along with picking cocoa and then return on Friday evening to Satapuala.<sup>14</sup> The hope of these works they carried out was to get money to help out their church and its development. Furthermore, they also had a plantation behind from where they lived, they sold these crops when it's ready and earn

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<sup>13</sup> Rev. Siaosi conversation with author.

<sup>14</sup> Rev. Siaosi conversation with author



money to assist the church development. This was the youth's contribution towards developing and assisting the church.

## **2.5 The progress and challenges in Ministry**

In any ministry there would not be without any challenges. Rev. Siutaia closely followed the previous pastor, Rev. Pilitati, and the way he managed the church. However, they used the time to garner close relationships and bond with their members. One important observation from Rev. Nuuausala is the way his parents conducted their pastoral ministry as a way of fostering and maintain positive relationships between members to think of each other as family, and not as a church. Even when financial struggles hit some of their members; they would help them out without putting any favours on other members; they were all equally important to his parents.

Rev. Nuuausala said that the biggest issue of concern was the financial side of their pastoral tenure. The charity monetary donations that his parents received on Sundays were not much and were usually drafted on paper only, with the church members coming later at night with the money. As a response to the financial struggle of the church member other children and youths of the village were adopted overseas by Rev. Siutaia, so that they could have a better living and career opportunities to help with their families struggling here in Samoa.

Seemingly we have noted that financial struggles tended to hinder the progress of the church, they were seen as challenges which built them to endure and persist in the church's role to *faasūsū* and *apelepele*. What was crucial to the role of the church is the life of the people, yet that life is earned through facing challenges. The way in which the church carried out its mission reflects much caring and loving. Whilst shows how God intervenes in nourishing the life of both the church and the people.

## 2.6 Culture and Gospel

There is a Samoan saying; “*E malu le Talalelei i le aganuu, ae mamalu le aganuu ona o le Talalelei*”, translated as “The Gospel finds solace in culture while Gospel is revered by the culture.” This proverbial saying depicts an intimate interaction between the Samoan culture and Gospel.

According to Rev. Nuuausala, there were tensions amongst the chiefs within the church and especially the village, his father would not idly by but would find solutions at resolving these issues. He would be proactive in his approach and try to counsel all involved so that peace could be maintained between all and stability for the village. In other words, here the culture and gospel work together as one so that resolutions can be made to continually foster positive relationships between villagers and maintain the peace.

Again maintaining peaceful environment is another way of giving water for the healthy living of the people. Not only was it about the enthusiasm and active ethos of the church members but also the maintaining of good relations between each other. The village of *matais* as abovementioned who were involved in tensions could refer to members from other denominations but that did avoid the role of a minister (CCCS) as a reflection of God within the village as whole in fostering and maintaining positive relationships within the village people. Significantly such a ministry reveals an inclusive and a most loving way of revealing God to the people.

### Summary

This chapter is the continuation of the history of CCCS church in Satapuala from 1942 to 1993. However, part of this chapter mostly elaborate more about the establishment of the church in the new location as recorded by the interview of Rev. Nuuausala Siaosi, because his father was the former minister of Satapuala from 1945 to

1954. On the other hand, this chapter gives the motherly role of the CCCS church in Satapuala in nurturing of the social, cultural and spiritual life of the people of Satapuala. It mentions the thanksgiving worship and how it moderates with those who witness the forming of the CCCS church in Satapuala, not only that, but interviews from people around the church to give more information about the establishment of the church in the village. It was also clearly stated in the interviews with Rev. Nuuausala the settlement of the CCCS church in 1945 during his parent's time, not only that, but there is also a contribution of the land for the settlement and the development of the church in that time. By that time, he also mentioned names of chiefs who were in that church and the village on that time. He also mentioned the progress of the church in the ministry of his parent, it is not an easy development of the nurturing of the church in Satapuala, there are challenges and enforcement in the church, especially the financial area on those days. However, the most interesting part of their ministry is the interrelation of the culture and the church, in order to settle the village, and the church in peaceful and calm, by LOVE.

## Chapter 3

### ***Totō, Fasūsū and Apelepele* Enhances the Interaction between the Church and the Village**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter attempts to record the history of the CCCS Satapuala during Rev. Elder Ailepata and Nofoagaoalii Leuta (author's parents). Here the undertaking considers the continuation of the ministry strengthens the bond between the church and the village or the interaction between Gospel and culture. The chapter will firstly talk about some of the early development that were carried out by Rev. Leuta and family in their ministry. Secondly I will deliberate upon the spiritual nature of the ministry, followed by the discussion of some of the assets earned by the church as a sign of growth of the mission. The chapter will also record the significant role played by other organisations within the church that aided the mission. Challenges within the ministry will be the last part to be discussed in this chapter. The role of the church in Satapuala in *totō*, *faasūsū* and *apelepele* reflects in the social, spiritual, and cultural development of the people.

### 3.1 The Humble Beginning 1994 – 2020



**Figure 6** : Reverend Elder Ailepata and Nofoaga Leuta

The population of the village since Rev. Elder Ailepata Leuta first arrived in Satapuala was about 2000. High Chief To'alepaialii Siueva was the only lay preacher at the time. Upon our arrival, there were 4 sub-villages in the village. There were a total of 5 denominations of worship. They were, CCCS, Methodist, Roman Catholic, Mormon and the Assembly of God.<sup>47</sup>

In 2015, an accident happened during the period in which the church was preparing as usual for the annual CCCS conference held every May in Malua. On Monday after the Sunday of the Mother's Day, a fire broke out of the house which left the whole house in ruins. But thank God no one was harmed and left the house before the situation got worse.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> Api o le Galuega (Church Records) Satapuala.

<sup>48</sup> Personal Interview: Rev Ailepata Elder Leuta 18 February 2021

Even though it was a very sad time for the family especially for the church, but they were comforted and encouraged by many people within the village and especially from fellow pastors from other villages as well as the general church.

The iron shed behind the place was our temporary place of stay whilst the church decided to rebuild the property as a European style house complete with bedrooms. This was completed without any issue.

Before the accident which damaged the house, the church planned to demolish the church building and rebuild a new one, however once this accident happened, this plan was put on hold and thus priority was given towards rebuilding the pastor's house and the church hall with the hope that the church building would be repaired afterwards.

The village has its own sons and daughters who are expatriate living overseas in Australia and New Zealand. Their financial support and donations helped in the rebuilding of these houses which was a massive task in its own right.

In January 2016<sup>49</sup>, work began on the rebuilding of the Pastor's house and Church hall. The church sought for financial assistance from the village, and villagers residing overseas.

It was with the help of Iliolemalae Asivao, a builder, orator chief and deacon who was a member of the church but went overseas to live and seek a better life for his family, that returned and volunteered to lead the project. There were no hired workers but help was able to be found elsewhere through the church's own members and fellow villagers who helped with those who had carpentry skills and experience who were only a few. Even though it was carried out voluntarily, the church was able to muster some form of money as a token of appreciation to the project leader and fellow volunteer workers who were with him every week.

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<sup>49</sup> Personal Interview: Rev Elder Leuta 18 February 2021.

The building project progressed smoothly; the workers were also well fed by members of the church, three families per day, for as long as the project went on. There were also days when the church did not provide food as they were helped by the generosity of other ministers from the surrounding areas who helped in feeding the workers.

Rev. Leuta praised God for his guidance and encouragement for the church members, because the project was arduous and difficult but it did not deter the church members from their commitments to the church.

Rev. Leuta showed a feeling of appreciation, joy and relief upon completion of the project which they worked hard to complete. Not just the work done on the Pastor's house and church hall, but also the renewal of the Church building to worship God.

### **3.2 The Spiritual Ministry: 1994 -2020**

Crucial to any ministry is its spiritual development. As per usual, the church conducts its worship twice on Sunday, both in the morning and evening. The Prayer Watchers Union service is held every Wednesday evening whilst the Christian Endeavour Group holds their services on the first Sunday of each month as per usual. The Prayer watchers union makes use of the lay preachers and deacons to conduct or take part in the service, whilst the Christian endeavour service uses lay preachers only. Even in the Mother's fellowship service, it is also held but on the first Wednesday of each month at 7pm. Their service is also conducted by mothers who are wives of either the Lay preachers or Deacons.

According to Rev. Leuta, despite the many challenges within their work at Satapuala, the integral aspect of their mission is to develop the spiritual side of the people. In that sense he believes that this is the foundation to every progress in the CCCS mission. This is where the act of *apelepele* (to fill) the people with stories from the Holy Bible that reveals to them the grace of God yet people will get to know more about the sole purpose of Christianity and

its mission. This reminds me of the Protestant theology about Faith alone and Scripture alone.<sup>50</sup>

For instance, the annual tithing for Samoa was about \$2000 per year, likewise the tithing for the Talalelei. The annual tithing for the Christian Endeavour was \$100 per year, which is also the same as the tithing for the Prayer Watchers Union. The charity payments for the Pastor were from \$300 to \$600 per fortnight. In relation to tithing and financial offerings, it has improved from the initial \$2000 to \$3000. The charity contributions of church members to the Pastor increase from \$300 -\$600 to \$1300-\$1500 per fortnight.<sup>51</sup>

The weekly tithing held every Sunday were gathered for the purpose of church maintenance in payment of electricity bills and other utilities. These contributions from the church members according to Rev. Leuta are huge amount of money, yet there is quite a number of people who have a stable earnings. However he believes that these are the fruits that reveal the faith of his church members.<sup>52</sup> The sole purpose of the information is not about the increase of money contribution of the people to the pastor or the church but it shows how people appreciate the role of the church in nurturing their spiritual notion.

### **3.3 The Ecumenical Spirit**

With the 5 denominations they had at the start, they still continue to have a combined service held annually on the first Sunday of November. However, there has been a marked increase in denominations within the village. They are always invited to the annual service so that they can worship together, despite having not attended yet.

There is also a combined Youth fellowship held during the festive season every year, the aim of which is to foster fellowship and develop bonds between the youths of the village from different denominations, and to be tolerant to each other. These programmes made use

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<sup>50</sup> See for further reading in Church History in Plain Language by Bruce Shelley. pg 101.

<sup>51</sup> Rev. Leuta conversation with author

<sup>52</sup> Ibid



of performances through hymns and spiritual dances as well as re-enactments of the Christmas narrative. There was once discussion to create a competition out of this but was also shut down in case it creates unnecessary conflicts and tension.

It also happened to be the commemoration service which is held annually on the first Sunday of November every year. This service was held to remember and give thanks to God for their settlement into the land they are in now, since being removed from their original settlement where the current International Airport is situated today. Only the CCCS and Methodist churches take part in leading this commemoration.

### **3.4 The Church Development 1980-1994**

The current church building was erected and consecrated in 1980. The original pastor's house was destroyed in the cyclone of 1990 and was rebuilt as a 2-storey house consecrated on 30 December 1993. There was a master bedroom, 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, a kitchen and a sitting room. The bottom storey was used as the Church's Hall for special occasions such as large gatherings and church activities. Behind this house were 2 tinned shacks which were used by the Church for other uses such as cooking amongst others. Currently, the land which the church is situated on is a total of 2 acres. Upon arrival to the church, there were 22 registered member families, 1 lay preacher, and 14 deacons.<sup>53</sup>

### **3.5 Changes made since their arrival**

There have been changes since their first arrival to date. Church membership has grown from its original 22 member families to 32, 4 lay preachers from its original 1, and even the number of deacons have increased from 14 at the start, to 22 now. They also have 2 members who are currently enrolled as students of Malua Theological College, one is currently in his 2nd year of studies, who resided in New Zealand, whilst myself, my wife and

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<sup>53</sup> Api o le Galuega (Church Records).

our children are in our final year of studies. In relation to tithing and financial offerings, it has improved from the initial \$2000 to \$30000.<sup>54</sup>

Even in the charity contributions of members to the Pastor, from \$300-600 to \$1300-\$1500 per fortnight. So far the spiritual lives and commitment of its members continue to progress taking into account times of financial struggle and abundance, the highs and the lows, but it has not stopped the members in their commitments to God and the church.

### **3.6 Challenges of our Pastoral work**

According to Rev. Elder Leuta, there are of course challenges in any pastoral work and it is no different to theirs. Without these challenges, it would not help a person grow spiritually to overcome these in the first place. It is all about relying on the power and spirit of God to persist. There are times when members attend service in numbers, and times when they don't. Even in terms of tithing and financial contributions, there are times of plenty, where they are happy to give, and then there are also times of none, where no tithing are made due to having no money, or lack of it.

However, there was one challenging issue which was very difficult to deal with especially as it happened at the early stages of his work with the church. This issue was concerning the land which the church compound was situated. Some challenged the legitimacy in relation to the ownership of the land it was on. What was difficult for him was not only the complaints and challenges hurled against him and the church, but the amount of effort it took for him to research and investigate the true owners of the land. What didn't help with the whole situation was that even the members of the church were unaware and did not have any knowledge as to who truly owned the land. Even though this issue happened early on in his relationship with the parish, he still prayed fervently to God for guidance in dealing

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<sup>54</sup> Rev. Elder Leuta: conversation with author

with this difficult situation. Rev. Leuta persisted in looking for answers which eventually had to be taken to court.

Even though going to court was not his preferable course of resolving the issue, but he was thankful to God that he and the parish got the result he was praying for after all the commitment he made towards the cause. The court decided in favour of the parish. The land that parish compound was situated on had no evidence of previous ownership, therefore, the land was thus theirs to do however they please, unless the church ceased to exist in which they would return it back to the village. This was a favourable result which was very welcome and a major relief in dealing with such a challenge head on.<sup>55</sup> Without God's guidance, it would have been in vain.



Figure 7: Pastor's resident before 1994

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<sup>55</sup> Api o le Galuega (Church Records) Satapuala



Figure 8: Pastor's new resident built 2015

## Summary

This chapter highlighted both challenges and accomplishments faced by Rev. Leuta and his *Faletua* during their mission. The involvement of other denominations, the court cases upon the land ownership at where the church is located, the influence of culture upon the mission of the church revealed challenges. However, what is worth noting is that, Rev. Leuta admits that there was one way to counter such challenges is to develop the spiritual side of the work. This is disclosed through a constant morning and evening services on Sundays, the prayer watchers union service on Wednesdays as well as Christian Endeavour Group on every first Sundays of the months. This relays a message that despite challenges that the church is facing today, there is no other way but to feed the spiritual hunger of the church members with the word of God, tell the people what God need of us, is to worship and give Him glory in every single day of our lives.

## Chapter 4

### Conclusion

Despite the many challenges that this thesis has encountered especially the lack of sources to obtain reliable information about the CCCS Satapuala, the undertaking may have documented some of the significant events related to the aims and objectives of the study. As the study conceded in Chapter 1, there is no written history about the CCCS Satapuala. It is for some reason why the study chose to limit its scope from 1994 – 2020. Moreover, I have approached the history of CCCS Satapuala from a Christian perspective of *faafailele* and I have seen how God intervenes in the life and mission of the church.

The study has documented the cultural origin of the name Satapuala and the contribution of the Gospel in changing its name from Satapuavae to Satapuala. Considering the background information about the village brings forth the significance of Satapuala as a space for the seed of the Gospel to be planted. It reveals a huge contribution of culture to the life and mission of the church. Most importantly these stories are not recorded as they were taken from what the elders of our village could remember. It also a document that shows the huge involvement of the village people in spreading the Gospel.

The undertaking has also recorded the sad event that affected both the people of Satapuala and the CCCS Satapuala in its outset. The village was forced to relocate from the place where Faleolo airport is currently situated when the space was originally needed to build a navy airport in 1942. Hence this was seen as a major obstacle to ministry, however this is how God reveals in history what seemed impossible to human effort is possible to God. This power of God has been shown when five years later the Vaili and Ilimolemalae family approved to offer a piece of land for the church to be established upon in Satapuala.

I have also recorded the motherly nature of the CCCS is ministry in nurturing the spiritual, cultural and also the social aspect of life. During Rev. Siutaia's time at Satapuala in 1945, the church minister enabled the youth to explore various entity of life. The mission was not bound just the spiritual aspect aimed to cater the social and cultural nature of life. In that approach it reveals how the church is mission plays the role of *faafailele* within all aspects of life. Cultivating the land, searching for chances to get the youth educated also applying for overseas opportunities as well as seeking to find ways to fund the education were all signs of the *faafailele* nature of the ministry of CCCS. Significantly documenting this history of the CCCS Satapuala relays some hope for the current ministries, that the better future of any ministry depends upon the development of the youth because they are the future of today. These opportunities provided, in my opinion, reveal God's intervention in the history of the CCCS.

The study also documented the increase in the practical side of the mission. During Rev. Elder Leuta's time he believed that *apelepele* (to fill) the spiritual side of the people initiates good heart and good work out of the church members. This has been shown through the *soifua fai taulaga* of the people. As we have noted the accumulating of the tithing and *alofas* of the church minister as well as the building of the pastor's residence and the church building all in 2015, were the evidences of this belief. Therefore, the *faafailele natura* of the CCCS is ministry lies at the spiritual nourishment of the people. When people knows more about the grace of God, good works will be the nature of their *tautua* (service).

In summary this history has provided records of the revelation of God's grace within the stories about the church at Satapuala. The execution of any plan or dream of both the church minister and church members is through God. Furthermore, this piece of information will be useful for the future generation of Satapuala in exploring the love of God within the CCCS ministry.

## **Appendices**

### **1.1 Chief Members of the Church at the time**

Some of the chiefs who were members at the time of my parents' tenure

- Toalepaialii Pose
- Vaili Tatupu

Elder chiefs who were members at the time

- Malaetele Vatau 1
- Toleafoa
- Vaitusi
- Sula
- Faapa'u
- Toalepaialii Peko
- Taufetee Vailima
- Ili Tufa
- Taufetee Pio
- Tuuaga
- Kilipati
- Tukia
- Vaili Neemia
- Talafua
- Leo
- Lauava
- Filoi
- Vaaoletai Tauinaola

The above list are the members to the best of Rev. Nuuausala Siutaia's memory, of those who were members at the time of his parents' tenure as ministers. They were also major influences in his life growing up in the village.

## 1.2 Saililiga o tala o le lotu mai nisi o tuua

### Tiumalu Pose

- O le molimau a lenei tama o ia foi o le tiakono a le ekalesia, e faapea e taua iai latou le lotu faamantu e pei ona faatinoina I aso sa muamua o Novema o tausaga taitasi, e manatua ai pea le sao o tuua sa o latou finauina o latou eleele, peitai e ui ile pagatia ma le mafatia o tagata ona o o latou eleele ma lo latou tofi sa iai, ae faafetaia le alofa o le Atua aua ua mafai ona mautu ile nofoaga ua iai nei.

### Lagilelei Taatia

- Sa faaalua e lenei tina o ia foi o se tiakono, o le uluai falesa lava talu ona mautu mai le nuu ile nofoaga ua iai nei, sa faatuina ile tausaga 1947 ia Setema, ma sa faaaogaina lava fausaga o fale samoa e fausia ai le falesa. Na ia saunoa foi o le vaitau lea faatoa amata ona mautu mai le nuu ile nofoaga ua iai nei.
- Na ia saunoa foi na faatoa mafai ona maua se falesa e fausia I apa ma laupapa ile tausaga e 1959.
- le tulaga ile maota sa faaaogaina e le faifeau sa faaoga lava fale afolau ae fola I laupapa, na ia ta'ua o le taimi o le mativa ma le le tagolima ae sa taumafai lava le ekalesia ina ia faatino se maota o le galuega ina ia mapu iai le faifeau ma lona aiga I lea taimi.
- E oo lava foi I fale sa tua iai le ekalesia, sa iai faleoo sa faaogaina e le ekalesia e tua iai aua fuafuaga fai a le ekalesia.
- tulaga I atina'e sa mafai ona tua iai I ia vaitau, sa galulue lava e faatino le totoina o le koko ma toto le niu e saili ai ni seleni aua le tau atina'eina o le galuega.
- tulaga I ekalesia sa iai I lea vaitau, na ia ta'ua ai e na o le tolu lava ekalesia sa iai, o le EFKS, Metotisi ma le Katoliko.



### Faafofola Oti

- O le molimau a le tina ia Faafofola o le fanua o loo iai nei le ekalesia o loo iaia faatasi ma le sao o lo latou aiga, ina talosagaina e le sususga le faafeagaiga ia Siaosi Siutaia le isi vaega o lo latou fanua pe tusa lea o le lua mita I litu I uta o le fanua o le ekalesia e faaauauina ai le galuega mo le falesa. Ma sa faamatu e lona tuua ma talia le talosaga a le faifeau, ma le tuutuuga oa lava nisi tulaga e tulai mai o le foai lava lea a lo latou aiga mo le ekalesia.

### Sooula Lauava

- Sa iai le avanoa e fesiligia ai lenei tina matua ile taua o le lotu faamanatu o loo faatinoina pea I tausaga taitasi, ae sa ia faaalua e taua tele lenei lotu I lona soifuaga mai lava I lona laitiiti seia oo mai I lenei vaitau o lona soifuaga. E faamanatu ai pea iai latou le faigata o le galuega sa faia e nai o latou tuua ina ia maua ai se filemu aemaise ai ina ia iloa e tupulaga o loo faia'e le taua o vaega sa finauina e matua.

## Glossary

*Alii* – High Chief

*Apelepele* – to fill or to feed

*Faafa'i* – Breastfeeding

*Faafailele* – Nurture

*Faalupega* – Honorifics

*Faasūsū* – to water

*Lotu* – Church

*Tōtō* – to plant

*Tulafale* – Orator

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Personal Interview with Faafofolo Iosefa Oti, 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2021

Personal Interview with Lagilelei Taatia, 16<sup>th</sup> February 2021

Personal Interview with Rev. Nuuausala Siaosi, 29<sup>th</sup> April 2021

Personal Interview with Sooula Lauava, 02<sup>nd</sup> February 2021

Personal Interview with Tiumalu Pose, 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2021

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