

For Official Release  
PR 001-03212023  
Office of the Governor  
Utulei, American Samoa  
March 21, 2023



## *Your Language is Your Gift from God* Samoan Language Commission Church Service



On Sunday, March 19, 2023, the Samoan Language Commission held a church service at the CCCAS Matu'u and Faganeanea, to commemorate a culmination of activities and workshops to celebrate this year's Samoan Language Month. Many in attendance included Honorable Lemanu P.S. Mauga, Honorable Talauega E.V. Ale, members of the fono, cabinet, and the commission. Also in attendance were various congregations from the Catholic Church Iiili, and the Susana Uesile Methodist Church in Tafuna.

The Commission was established during the 37th legislative session and approved by the fono and signed by Governor Lemanu on April 5, 2022.

“The theme for this year’s church service is, *Your language is your gift from God,*” remarked Honorable Lemanu. He continued, “It is our responsibility and our duty to not only preserve our language, but to also support the development of the *fa’aSamoa*. It is crucial in preparing individuals, especially our youth, for more effective participation in this society and the Samoan way of life” Governor Lemanu continues to highlight that the Samoan Language is declared by territorial law as one of the official languages in American Samoa and is recognized as of equal importance with the English language in education, government, economic, and social life of the people of American Samoa.

The Samoan Language Commission, under the leadership of Executive Director Peseta Tialuga Sunia, hosted a number of activities in the month of March. These included, lyrical, translation, and media workshops, panel discussions with Samoan scholars, clergy, and the youth. The Samoan Language Commission will be hosting it’s Aso o Tupulaga/Youth Day on March 24, 2023 at the Su’igaula Park in Utulei from 8:00 am to 3:00 pm, and will conclude the month of festivities with a Samoan Summit with Former Head of State Honorable Tui Atua Tupua Tamasese Efi as the keynote speaker.

For more information on the Samoan Language Commission, please contact (684) 633 - 4121.

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