

22 October 2024

Te Tuku Whakapāha me te Whakaaro Aroha
Response of the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand to the
Royal Commission of Inquiry's findings into Abuse in Care^[1]

Waiata

Ko koe, e Ihu, tena
E patoto mai nei
E whanga tonu ana
Ko koe kia tomo mai
E ao ia nei te kino
Te hara tino nui
Ko au kia keke tonu
Ki tau i tono ai

Lament

O Jesus, thou art standing
Outside the fast-closed door
In lowly patience waiting
To pass the threshold o'er
Shame on us, Christian brothers
His name and sign who bare
O shame, thrice shame upon us
To keep Him standing there!

We are sorry.

The Church accepts the findings of the Royal Commission, including our reluctance to confront abuse, failure to remove risky individuals, and the lack of consistent policies and procedures to prevent and report abuse.

This document outlines the Presbyterian Church's acknowledgment of past wrongs, our commitment to redress, and the steps we will take to ensure such abuses do not occur in the future.

The Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand acknowledges and deeply regrets the abuse and neglect that occurred within its care. The Church accepts responsibility for the historical, societal, and institutional factors that contributed to these abuses. This includes the misuse of religious power, sexism, racism, and other negative

attitudes that allowed such abuses to occur. We are dedicated to improving this now and for the future.

We did not use our power to stand with and advocate for the vulnerable and marginalised. We were an integral part of the social structures that caused harm. We acknowledge the physical, sexual, emotional, mental, spiritual, relational, cultural, educational, and financial effects that the victims and survivors experienced on every part of their lives.

The cumulative harm and deep intergenerational impact on victims, survivors and their whanau are immeasurable and unacceptable.

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E whakapāha ana mātau

E whakaae ana te Hāhi Perehipitiriana o Aotearoa (te Hāhi) ki ngā whakakitenga o te Komihana a te Karauna, tae atu ki tō mātau kore i te hiahia ki te aro ki ngā mahi tūkino, te korenga o te muru i ngā tangata mōrearea, me te kore o tētahi kaupapa here tika, he tunganga rānei e mau tonu ana hei aukati me te pūrongo i ngā mahi tūkino.

E whakaae ana te Hāhi Perehipitiriana o Aotearoa, ā, e tino pouri ana mō ngā mahi tūkino me te whakaparahako i puta i roto i tana manaakitanga. E whakaae ana te Hāhi ki te haepapa mō ngā take o mua, ā, hāpori, me ngā whakahaere i whai wāhi ana ki ēnei tūkino. Kei roto i tēnei ngā whakamahinga kino o te mana whakapono, te whakahāwea ki ngā wāhine, ngā mahi kaikiri, me ētahi atu āhuatanga kino i taea ai ēnei mahi tūkino te puta. Kei te ū mātau ki te whakapai ake i tēnei āhua mō tēnei wā, ā, mō ngā rā kei te heke mai.

Kāore mātau i whakamahi i tō mātau mana ki te tū hei kaitautoko mō ngā hunga ngoikore me te hunga ka tukinotia. He wāhanga nui mātau i roto i ngā hanganga pāpori i āwhina i te kino.

E whakaae ana mātau ki ngā pānga ā-tinana, ā-tinana kore, ā-hinengaro, ā-wairua, ā-whanaungatanga, ā-ahurea, ā-mātauranga, me ngā pānga ā-pūtea i pā ki ngā patunga me ngā mōrehu i runga anō i ngā wāhanga katoa o tō rātau oranga.

Ko te kino whakararu, ā, te pānga hōhonu o ngā whakatipuranga ki ngā patunga, ngā mōrehu me ō rātau whānau, kāore e taea te tatau, ā, kāore hoki e whakaaehia.

How we intend to respond

The Church commits to participating in the Crown-led Pūretumu Torowhānui initiative and supports the introduction of a Care Safety Act. The Church is dedicated to continually improving robust safeguarding practices, developing coordinated leadership, and ensuring transparency, monitoring and accountability.

Me pēhea tā mātau urupare

Ka ū te Hāhi ki te whai wāhi atu ki te kaupapa Puretumu Torowhānui e arahinatia ana e te Karauna, ā, e tautoko ana mātau i te whakamana i tētahi Ture Whakahaumarua Manaaki. Kei te ū te Hāhi ki te whakapai tonu i ngā mahi whakaruruhau, ki te whakawhanake i te ārahitanga riterite, me te whakarite kia mārama, kia aro tūrukihia, ā, kia whakamanahia.

Our Pathway Forward

Our work on the Commission's recommendations has already begun. We are committed to seeing that work through and expect to be held accountable for this commitment. In the meantime, however, we grieve deeply for all who have been harmed by our actions and inaction and provide this apology as a first step in doing the work of repentance, and from which we hope that in time, restoration may come. Our sorrow is deep, and we are committed to working with all to building safe places for everyone.

Tō mātau huarahi whakamua

Kua tīmata kē mātau ki te mahi i runga i ngā tūtohutanga a te Komihana. Ka ū mātau kia tutuki tēnei mahi, ā, ka whakaaehia kia noho haepapa mō tēnei herenga. Heoi anō, i tēnei wā, e tino tangi ana mātau mō rātau katoa i pāngia e ō mātau mahi me tō mātau kore e whakatika, ā, ko tēnei whakapāha te tīmatatanga o te mahi mō te huringa, ā, ka manako mātau ka puta ake te whakaoranga i roto i te wā.

E hōhonu ana tō mātau pōuri, ā, kei te ū mātau ki te mahi ngātahi me te katoa ki te hanga i ngā wāhi haumarua mō te katoa.

Inoi/Prayer

Gracious and loving God, creator of all our lands. We acknowledge the grace, mercy, and goodness you show us every day. We need to confess that we are sinners, and all fall short of your purpose for us.

We have not loved you with every fibre of our being – heart, mind, soul, and strength. Nor have we loved others as much as we love ourselves, and we cannot hide our guilt and shame from you.

We seek forgiveness for the oppression we have inflicted on others and pray for those who have endured pain for so long. Your grace has always been sufficient for us, but we walked away from the commandments of Jesus Christ.

We are grateful for, and pray for the Royal Commission and its work. May the findings and recommendations bring healing and hope.

For those that we have hurt, for hearts we have wounded, for lives that have been damaged and minds that have been tormented, we are sorry and ask you to forgive us, merciful Jesus.

We ask for courage and grace to face our faults and address them so that others may not suffer. In Jesus name we pray, Amen.

Te Inoi whakamutunga/Benediction

He āroha te Atua,
whakatōhia mai ki roto o mātau ngākau,
o mātau hinengaro tou atawhai mē tou ārohanui tonu.
E whakaarahia ana hoki ē ia te hunga ē whakapiko iho ana.
He tika ngā ara katoa o Ihowa: He atawhai hoki ana mahi katoa.
Ka whakanui ahau ia koe ē Ihowa e Kiingi o nga Kiingi
te Ariki o ngā Ariki, kia āwhina i o mātau hoa tata anō ko mātau.

Loving God of Justice and peace
refresh our minds and stir our hearts.
Show us where we have lost our way.
Let us learn from our past mistakes
Help us to see a way forward
And in doing so
May we bring help, peace, and healing to all.

Mrs Katerina Solomona

Convener

Council of Assembly

Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand

Rev Roxy Gahegan

Deputy Convener

Council of Assembly

Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand

Endnotes:

^[1] The full legal name of the Royal Commission is the *Royal Commission of Inquiry into Historical Abuse in State Care and in the Care of Faith-based Institutions*. The terms 'Royal Commission' or 'Commission of Inquiry' are used interchangeably within this document for ease of reference.