

Honouring Survivors:

A public apology to survivors of abuse in Presbyterian Church care

Tēnā koutou katoa,

Survivors of abuse in the Presbyterian Church, your whānau and your supporters are warmly invited to attend or watch a survivor-designed public apology event.

The apology will also be provided in Te Reo Māori and NZ Sign Language, as well as video of the apology in both locations.

The apology will include details about the Church's restorative action, including survivor-designed holistic redress, and will be delivered by the Moderator of the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand, Right Rev Rose Luxford, written in consultation with survivors.

Convenor of the Council of Assembly, Katerina Solomona, will outline the Church's commitment to its new survivor-designed Puretumu Torowhanui (holistic) redress process.

There are two opportunities to attend in-person events: The first in **Dunedin at 12pm on Saturday 27 September**, and then in **Auckland at 10am on Saturday 4 October**. Location details are below. RSVPs are not required.

Wellbeing support services will also be in attendance.

The videos of the public apology will be available on the **Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand website** (<https://www.presbyterian.org.nz/honouring-survivors>), alongside a Te Reo Māori version and NZSL version. Media are invited to attend.

The Church's survivor advisory group has helped design both events, that will feature:

- Mihi Whakatau by mana whenua.
- Public apology and detailed information about the Church's new survivor-designed Puretumu Torowhānui (holistic redress) process.
- Response by a survivor, as the final words of the formal proceedings.
- On-the-spot confidential sign up for survivors wanting to commence their holistic redress journey.
- Survivor artwork on display, provided by national survivor arts collective Te Roopū Toiora.
- A warm cuppa and kai

DUNEDIN:

Saturday, 27 September at 12pm
Otago Museum
419 Great King Street

AUCKLAND:

Saturday, 4 October at 10am
Due Drop Events Centre,
770 Great South Road, Manukau

Frequently Asked Questions – Presbyterian Church Public Apology

We acknowledge this apology may be difficult and upsetting. You may have questions you want answered before deciding whether to attend an event or watch the videos, or simply to understand what is happening.

To support you, we have set out some common questions below, along with answers we hope will bring clarity and reassurance. If you have other questions, please know you are welcome to reach out to us directly.

1. Why is this apology happening now?

The Presbyterian Church made a commitment in late 2024 that a public apology would take place. This commitment still stands, and the apology can be done now that a holistic redress system can be announced.

This action follows the Abuse in Care Royal Commission of Inquiry's findings showing the scale of harm suffered in both faith-based and State care. Survivors have waited too long to hear an apology from the Presbyterian Church. It is time for the Church to say sorry to survivors without hesitation or excuse.

2. Why only 10 days' notice for the first meeting in Dunedin?

We know this is very short notice for the Dunedin meeting and recognise the challenges this creates for those who want to attend. That's why we will make accessible versions, including videos, available online. We shared details as soon as all arrangements were confirmed and we too wish we could have provided more notice.

We needed to make sure the right survivor supports were in place, including wellbeing staff, mana whenua partnership, and survivor guidance for redress processes.

Although we wish we could have given more time, moving ahead now allows us to keep our promise to make the apology this year and not postpone again. The advisory group told us it is important that the Church not delay this apology again.

3. Is there financial support to help people attend?

We recognise it may be costly for people to attend the events. Unfortunately, we cannot offer blanket travel allowances. This is why we will have accessible formats of the apology, such as video, available to everyone. Where possible, we are working with individuals to support travel needs on a case-by-case basis.

4. Who is the apology for?

The apology will be addressed to survivors of abuse in

Presbyterian Church care. The apology is a matter of significant public interest, and we encourage all people to watch and we welcome media to report on it.

5. Will media be present?

Survivors' privacy and safety come first. Media are invited to attend, so there is independent reporting of the apology, however they will need to follow protocols to ensure the privacy and safety of attendees.

Media will not be allowed to film people without permission. This will be explained to media and to attendees at the start of the events. A recording of the apology itself will be made available online afterwards, so you can view it safely in your own time if you choose.

6. Can I start the redress process at the apology?

Survivors of abuse in Presbyterian Church care are welcome to begin their redress process at these events. Private spaces and trained staff will be available to meet with you on the day.

If you prefer, you can start the process later through our 0800 number or website. Our new navigator model will give you one point of contact across the Church and support organisations, making the process easier to manage.

You do not need to attend an event to begin redress – support is available when you are ready, in the way that works best for you.

7. What is the difference between the Presbyterian Church and Presbyterian Support Services?

This apology is from the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand. Presbyterian Support Services is a separate organisation that made its own apology earlier. The two organisations are separate legal entities; however, we understand the confusion created because they both carry the Presbyterian name. We know many survivors see the Church and Presbyterian Support Services as the same and we respect that. Both organisations are working alongside each other.