

## **Opening Address at Commencement of Faith Based Redress Hearing, Survivor's Evidence, on behalf of the Anglican Church**

Good morning Commissioners, Survivors and the general public of New Zealand watching this livestream. My name is Fiona Guy Kidd. I appear with Jeremy Johnson and India Shores on behalf of the Anglican Church of Aotearoa New Zealand and Polynesia, Anglican Care Organisations and most Anglican Schools.

### *History*

I will now highlight a few aspects of the history of the Anglican Church and its structure which may not be well known.

The Anglican Church in New Zealand had its beginnings in 1814 when the Maori Chief Ruatara agreed with the Reverend Samuel Marsden to give protection to three missionaries and their families at Oihi in the Bay of Islands.

Women were first ordained as priests in 1977 and in 1990 the Reverend Dr Penny Jamison was ordained as Bishop of Dunedin becoming the first woman Bishop in New Zealand and in the worldwide Anglican Communion.

The Anglican Church in New Zealand is autonomous. It does not take direction from overseas.

In 1992 the representative governing body of the Anglican Church which is General Synod/Te Hinota Whanui of the Anglican Church adopted a revised constitution which requires equal power sharing between the three partners – Tikanga Māori, Tikanga Pakaeha and Tikanga Pasefika. Each of these Tikangas has its own Archbishop.

The approach to decision making in the Church requires that Bishops, clergy and lay people all share in leadership with the Church and are represented in the General Synod and decision making.

### *Response to Survivors*

In attendance at the Commission with these hearings for the next three days are Archbishop Donald Tamihere and Archbishop Philip Richardson. Representatives for the Anglican Dioceses, care organisations and schools will also be in attendance.

The Anglican Church acknowledges the considerable courage of the survivors who come forward and share their experiences with the Commission. The Archbishops have recently released a public message. They acknowledge that "the evidence will show that people have been abused within the Anglican Church, our schools, our agencies and our organisations."

The Archbishops record that "there are clear examples of the Church failing to handle complaints of abuse appropriately, further victimising survivors." This is "completely unacceptable".

We are committed to doing better.

When the evidence is heard from the Church at the Redress Hearings in March, an unequivocal apology will be tendered to survivors.

The Archbishops conclude:

"what is most important now is that the survivors of abuse be heard, and that they be treated with the dignity and respect they deserve."