

White Ribbon 2022

25 November



A message from PCANZ White Ribbon Ambassador Rev Hana Popea

Kia Ora, Talofa, and Greetings.

White Ribbon Day is held each year on 25 November. This international campaign is a platform for individuals, churches and organisations around the world to call for the prevention and elimination of violence against women.

This year, I would like to encourage our congregations and leaders to unite in solidarity and **worship on Sunday 27 November 2022** at the beginning of the Advent season. You could light a candle of hope, share the meaning of 'hope', pray and recommit to the task of preventing family violence in our homes, churches, work environments and local communities.

Family violence is a blight on our communities, especially violence against women and children. The high number of family harm incidents in Aotearoa New Zealand is of deep concern. Violence – including physical, spiritual, sexual and/or psychological violence – is escalating, and guns are being used more often. The impact on domestic relationships is devastating and traumatic.

According to a Newshub report in June 2022, which quotes Shine, family violence in New Zealand has reached epidemic proportions. The report notes:

- Family harm incidents increased by 7,688 to 172,727 in 2021 compared with 2020;
- In 2021, 31 victims of family violence suffered firearms-related domestic abuse;
- Nearly 500 of the 4,212 firearms-related occurrences reported were related to family harm;
- One in three women in New Zealand experience physical or sexual intimate-partner violence in their lifetime.

New figures from the Ministry of New Zealand Crime & Victims Survey (NZCVS) show worryingly low levels of reporting of sexual violence – 94% percent of sexual assaults were not reported to the Police.

Each day, as you are no doubt aware, incidents of violence that involve physical, spiritual, emotional, or sexual abuse are reported in the media. No doubt there are incidents of violence towards women and children in your local area - perhaps in workplaces, parishes, local schools, or possibly in your own homes.

Marie Fortune in her book, *Violence In The Family* writes, "The silence that the religious community has maintained on the subject has contributed to the lack of understanding by failing to correct it".

I hope you find the White Ribbon resources I have provided, including videos and Worship for Sunday 27 Nov, useful for your parish. If you have ideas on how our churches can do more to end family violence, or would like to participate in my *White Ribbon: 3 Questions on What Works to End Family Violence* series of videos (see links to these in Resources), please get in touch with me.

Rev Hana Popea

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For 2022, the Rev Hana Popea, PCANZ's new White Ribbon Ambassador, has prepared resources for parishes:

- [2022 Video resources - Q&As with Presbyterians.](#)
- [2022 Worship resources for White Ribbon Sunday 27 November - reflection, prayers, call to worship and benedictions, and music suggestions.](#)
- [Further 2022 White Ribbon resources on the PCANZ website & resource from Presbyterian Support Northern.](#)