

Justice and Action was published during the Very Rev Andrew Norton's term as Moderator. Here is what he said about Justice and Action in the foreword to the first edition of the booklet (published in 2015):

There comes a time when you can no longer be silent, a time when you are moved to speak and to act. That time is now!

The Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand has a proud history of social justice, advocacy and action. The work of Presbyterian Support is a treasure of our Church and has been an instrument of social transformation throughout our nation. Its success in this area may have had an unintended consequence, however; while many local congregations are involved in advocacy and transformation (this booklet highlights some of their stories), some appear to have disengaged from this work in favour of "the experts".

My prayer is that through this resource - [Justice & Action](#) - the Church may once again find its mandate and its voice as expressed by Jesus at the beginning of his ministry:

"The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free" (Luke 4:18).

I made a commitment to myself that I would not speak out on issues unless churches up and down the country were equipped to roll up their sleeves and take action in their own neighbourhoods.

This call to action is directed toward two of the most enduring problems in our communities – family violence and child poverty. In New Zealand, hundreds of thousands of children are living in poverty. Nearly half of all homicides and reported violent crime is family violence related. These are very sobering facts.

The impact of family violence and child poverty is far-reaching – not only affecting children now, but their future prospects as well. This alone should spur us to action, but the effects of these problems are not limited to children and their families. They are also felt in the wider community in many ways – all of which are discussed in this booklet.

It can seem as though these problems are so big that nothing we do will make a difference, but the good news is that we can contribute to change. Change starts with you and me – all we need to do is decide to take action.

The Church is called to be an agent of change in our communities, and in the pages that follow you will find resources to help you take action against child poverty and family violence.

I commend the resource to you.

*Andrew Norton
Moderator, Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand*