



Seventh-day
Adventist Church™

New Zealand Pacific

Tena Koutou Katoa,

He aha te mea nui o te Ao? He tāngata, he tāngata, he tāngata.

What is the most important thing in the world? It is people, it is people, it is people.

As leaders of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in New Zealand we have personally heard and been told stories of the sexual abuse of children and vulnerable people in our Church communities. Such instances of abuse are intolerable and inexcusable, and to those survivors of such abuse we are sorry.

We are also aware of the many instances where survivors of abuse have suffered further trauma because as a Church community we have not listened to, believed, cared for or supported survivors of abuse. For this too we are truly sorry.

It saddens us deeply that children and vulnerable people were abused by trusted members and leaders of our Church community who should have protected them. The Church has often failed in this regard.

The Church must learn from the mistakes of our past and assure those who were abused that we have heard their stories, and that we will learn from their stories and continually strive to create safer environments within the Adventist community.

We want to see Jesus' compassion and justice in our Church and its institutions. Jesus did not ignore abuse and nor should we. As a Church we must all join together to create a zero tolerance approach to all forms of abuse.

Jesus says the kingdom belongs to those who accept it as a child. It is the Church's privilege to ensure that Seventh-day Adventist communities are safe places where people, including children and the vulnerable, can continue to seek, experience and develop a meaningful relationship with Jesus Christ until He returns to make all things new.

Blessings through Jesus,

Edward Tupa'i
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