

**ABUSE IN CARE ROYAL COMMISSION OF INQUIRY
FAITH-BASED INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSE HEARING**

Under The Inquiries Act 2013

In the matter of The Royal Commission of Inquiry into Historical Abuse in State Care and in the Care of Faith-based Institutions

Royal Commission: Judge Coral Shaw (Chair)
Dr Anaru Erueti
Ali'imuamua Sandra Alofivae
Paul Gibson

Counsel: Mr Simon Mount QC, Ms Kerryn Beaton QC, Ms Katherine Anderson, Ms Tania Sharkey, Mr Michael Thomas, Ms Kathy Basire and Ms Alisha Castle for the Royal Commission

Ms Rachael Schmidt-McCleave and Ms Julia White for the Crown

Ms Sally McKechnie and Ms Brooke Clifford for Te Rōpū Tautoko, the Catholic Bishops and Congregational Leaders

Ms India Shores for the Anglican Church

Ms Maria Dew, Ms Kiri Harkess and Mr Lourenzo Fernandez for the Methodist Church of New Zealand and Wesley College

Ms Lydia Oosterhoff for the Survivor Network of those Abused by Priests

Mr Brian Henry for Gloriavale Leavers' Support Trust

Mr Chris Shannon and Ms Clare Sykes for Gloriavale Christian Community

Venue: Level 2
Abuse in Care Royal Commission of Inquiry
414 Khyber Pass Road
AUCKLAND

Date: 13 October 2022

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

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26 **HOWARD WENDELL TEMPLE (Affirmed)**

27 **CHAIR:** Thank you, Mr Temple.

28 Ms Basire.

29 **MS BASIRE:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I just wanted to check first with Mr Shannon that you
30 didn't want to do any evidence-in-chief?

31 **MR SHANNON:** Yes, I was just going to do some brief evidence-in-chief first from Mr Temple
32 and second from Rachel Stedfast for about 10 minutes in total if I could.

33 **MS BASIRE:** Yes, that's fine. I've just had a note from our technical people: "Can you ensure
34 that everyone speaks as loudly as they can."

1 **CHAIR:** Yes, please, remembering we're having to hear you from Christchurch so it's quite a long
2 way. But if you can speak up that would be much appreciated, thank you. So Mr Shannon,
3 I'll leave you just to lead your witness.

4 **QUESTIONING BY MR SHANNON:** Thank you.

5 Would you tell us your full name, please?

6 **MR TEMPLE:** My full name is Howard Wendell Temple.

7 **MR SHANNON:** You are the overseeing Shepherd of Gloriavale Christian Community at Lake
8 Haupiri?

9 **MR TEMPLE:** That's correct.

10 **MR SHANNON:** What does that mean to be the overseeing Shepherd?

11 **MR TEMPLE:** The overseeing Shepherd means overseeing the community, the operations of the
12 community and we are expecting that there will be other communities built up following
13 the pattern of the one that we are in at the present time, and the overseeing Shepherd will
14 sort of have a general oversight of all other communities as well.

15 **MR SHANNON:** I understand you're 82 years old?

16 **MR TEMPLE:** 82 years old, yes.

17 **MR SHANNON:** An American citizen by birth?

18 **MR TEMPLE:** An American citizen by birth, yes.

19 **MR SHANNON:** Just tell us a bit about your background.

20 **MR TEMPLE:** My background, I was born and raised in the southern states of United States in
21 the cotton fields. I joined the American Navy at the age of 19, on an icebreaking ship going
22 down to McMurdo Sound at Antarctica, used to stop into New Zealand quite regularly to
23 refuel and resupply. I met my wife on one of those trips, married her a little time later and
24 when my time was up in the American Navy I got discharged in New Zealand, that was
25 1964, and I've been here ever since then with my wife.

26 **MR SHANNON:** And after the Navy?

27 **MR TEMPLE:** After the Navy, yes, I went working with Christchurch, working in a motor
28 garage there, I worked there for 18 months, city life didn't agree with me, so I moved out on
29 to a farm, sheep and cropping farm in North Canterbury, and worked there for one year,
30 then moved on to another sheep and cropping farm and worked there until 1970. In
31 mid-1970 I joined up with the Christian group that I'm with at the present time.

32 That was in 1970. From then on, I worked within the church, I started a motor
33 repair and engineering workshop servicing machinery and vehicles in the community plus
34 outside business as well. And that has been my life since that time.

1 In 2008 we started to establish a Christian community on our pattern in India and
2 from that time on up until 2018 it was, I was visiting regularly in India, I spent nearly half
3 of my life over there, three months in India, three months back here, three months in India
4 and three months back here, building up that community over there.

5 **MR SHANNON:** We've obviously got limited time here --

6 **MR TEMPLE:** Yes.

7 **MR SHANNON:** -- so I understand you've been overseeing Shepherd since May 2018 following
8 the passing of Hopeful Christian; is that right?

9 **MR TEMPLE:** Correct, yes.

10 **MR SHANNON:** All right. In terms of in the past and in the Hopeful Christian days, how were
11 allegations of abuse dealt with?

12 **MR TEMPLE:** In Hopeful Christian's time, in the beginning he dealt with them on his own. As
13 time went on for a number of years then as the population grew, then he took in other men,
14 both Shepherds and Servants, to help him in making decisions along those lines and how to
15 handle these accusations and so forth.

16 **MR SHANNON:** Right. And historically, he wouldn't go to authorities, is that --

17 **MR TEMPLE:** That is right, that is right. It was a scripture of Bible which was slightly
18 misinterpreted but at the time we understood that to be true. We have come, since that
19 time, to realise that no, it wasn't perfectly true, so we have changed our attitudes.

20 **MR SHANNON:** What's brought about that change?

21 **MR TEMPLE:** Well, the change is understanding of scripture plus the way things were going in
22 the whole world, in the whole country, law changes coming into place made us have a more
23 serious look at the scriptures along those lines. Now, to comply with the Bible and with the
24 civil laws, if you call it that way, the state laws, because the Bible teaches us we must
25 comply with state laws as well as with God's law. So to bring the two together, we've come
26 to see maybe the actual wording of that scripture, maybe we were taking it a little bit too far
27 one-sided.

28 **MR SHANNON:** So what changes have been made in terms of how abuse allegations are handled
29 now?

30 **MR TEMPLE:** Now we will contact the Police, we actually have a team of leads, as Chris said
31 before, comprised of three men and four ladies that came in after investigation by Oranga
32 Tamariki and the Police, it came in after that investigation. These were a number of people
33 that our members could freely go and talk to about issues, any concerns that they might
34 have about abuse of any form.

1 So at the present time now if there's anyone with any concern about abuse of any
2 sort or any concern about the people, they can go to one of these leads and report it to them
3 and then they will contact the senior lead, which is a representative from Oranga Tamariki,
4 they get together and they will discuss it and then that lead person will contact her
5 authorities and they carry it on to there in investigating and making the decision of how
6 serious the occurrence is, and if it needs to, they will take it right on to the Police, and then
7 the Police deal with it accordingly.

8 **MR SHANNON:** I think we've got limited time so I might just ask some questions now about the
9 second witness Rachel Stedfast.

10 **CHAIR:** Before we do that, I didn't realise you were going to deal with them together, but I'll just
11 quickly administer the oath to Ms Stedfast.

12 Good morning, Ms Stedfast.