



Tira Tūhāhā
Prison Chaplaincy Aotearoa

2023

ANNUAL REPORT

RIPOATA-Ā-TAU

Introduction

He kupu whakataki

Tēnā koutou, and welcome to the fifth public annual report by Tira Tūhāhā Prison Chaplaincy Aotearoa (TTPCA) – previously known as Prison Chaplaincy Service of Aotearoa New Zealand.

TTPCA, with the oversight of a cross-section of New Zealand churches, provides religious and spiritual services to all New Zealand prisoners under contract to the Department of Corrections Ara Poutama Aotearoa. TTPCA is also contracted by Serco New Zealand to provide chaplaincy services to Auckland South Corrections Facility. The New Zealand Catholic Bishops Conference works closely with TTPCA to provide Catholic chaplaincy in all prisons throughout Aotearoa, New Zealand.

**Being the
Hope That
Transforms
Lives**

This Annual Report is based on the 2023 calendar year and our financial year 1 July 2022 – 30 June 2023. Published March 2024

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"We continue to see the significant guidance and support chaplains provide to the men and women in prisons that impacts positively on their physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being."

Board Chair's report

Te ripoata a Te Poari Matua

Mauriora ki a tātou i raro i te manaakitanga o te Atua.

The past year has been a time of significant change and transition for Tira Tūhāhā Prison Chaplaincy Aotearoa. We have made a lot of necessary changes with the introduction of new staff and Board members to build capacity and enable the work of prison chaplaincy. We have continued to develop our responsiveness to the needs of prisoners and strengthened key relationships with chaplains and chaplaincy supporters. We continue to heed the call and vision for an effective and affirming chaplaincy in prisons.

In May of 2023, we welcomed the Reverend Utuma'u Pupulu (Te Hāhi Weteriana o Aotearoa Methodist Church of New Zealand) and David Moko (Te Rūnanga Whakawhanaunga i ngā Hāhi Māori Council of Churches) as new trustees to the Board. Both have served on various boards within the Methodist and Baptist churches respectively and have had experience in ecumenical forums that we believe will be of benefit to the Board moving forward. During the year the Board also farewelled the Senior Catholic Chaplain, Veronica Casey and thanked her for her 10 years of service and invaluable contributions to prison chaplaincy. Other changes have included the appointment of myself as Board Chair (to replace the departing Chair, Anne Dickinson), and Steve O'Connor as Deputy Board Chair. We also welcomed the Reverend Henry

Feleti (Baptist churches of New Zealand te Hāhi Iriiri o Aotearoa) as a new trustee to the Board, who brings respected wisdom and experience in diverse and vulnerable Pacific and Māori communities. Later in the year we welcomed a new office administrator, Alana Hathaway-Rokotakala, who has been a valuable addition to the national office team.

We have appreciated the valued and worthy contributions of our chaplains to prison communities despite the impact of COVID-19 on their efforts. We continue to see the significant guidance and support chaplains provide to the men and women in prisons that impacts positively on their physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being. We continue to find strength in the Tikanga Māori Enabler appointment in growing competency, meaningful engagement, and productive, culturally responsive outcomes for chaplains and prisoners. We are hopeful and renewed in our commitment to providing pastoral care, supporting inter-faith approaches, and assisting rehabilitation and healing within prison environments.

Mā te Atua hei manaaki, kia rātou mā, noho ora mai kia koutou e ngā pononga whakaponono.

Te Aroha Rountree

Chief Executive's report

Te ripoata a te Kaihautū

I te tīmatanga te Kupu, I te Atua te Kupu, ko te Atua anō te Kupu.

Tēnā koutou katoa.

2023 has been a year where we've seen some exciting initiatives bear fruit while also struggling with the challenges of providing chaplaincy in difficult working conditions.

The appointment of a Tikanga Māori Enabler, Jacob Tobin, in late 2022 has generated considerable enthusiasm in the organisation for growing our skills with te reo and tikanga. This is great news for the men and women in prison especially for those who identify as Māori. It has been pleasing to see the staff and volunteers warm to Jacob's work and know that the skills they are learning really help them connect with those in prison.

Late last year we issued branded clothing to all site staff following the development of our new name and logo. It is marvellous to see staff wearing the uniforms and having a distinctive presence at the sites. The branded clothing helps to strengthen the sense of teamwork and the professionalism of our service.

The Board composition has changed markedly over the last couple of years and the new members are bringing valuable new perspectives to the work of chaplaincy. In September, TTPCA farewelled the Board Chair, Anne Dickinson, after six years in the role. I'll take this opportunity to thank

Anne for the great leadership and strategic direction she has provided over the years and for the support she provided to me. The new Chair, Te Aroha Rountree, and I have begun work on forming a partnership to support the organisation's development for the next season of chaplaincy.

The Ara Poutama site space remains a challenging environment for chaplaincy, especially as the organisation experiences a time of considerable pressure while addressing low prison staff levels. The consequent site restrictions have severely limited access by volunteers with only a few sites operating anywhere near their previous capacity in terms of delivering group services. For the most part though, chaplains and assistant chaplains have been able to provide near full-strength one-on-one services. My thanks go to the chaplains and the volunteers for their faithfulness during this difficult time.

On a final note, thank you to our supporters and those who fund our work, especially Ara Poutama Aotearoa who has steadfastly sustained us despite the challenges of their staffing situation.



John Axcell



"The appointment of a Tikanga Māori Enabler in late 2022 has generated considerable enthusiasm in the organisation for growing our skills with te reo and tikanga. This is great news for the men and women in prison especially for those who identify as Māori."



Our Board

Tō Mātou Poari

Trustees

Te Aroha Rountree - Board Chair

Henry Feleti

Seth Fawcet

David Moko

Stephen O'Connor

Shaun Baker

Utumau'u Pupulu

Richard Wallace

Appointed by

Te Rūnanga Whakawhanaunga I Ngā Hāhi o Aotearoa – Māori Council of Churches

Baptist Churches of New Zealand - Ko Ngā Hāhi Iriiri o Aotearoa

Associated Pentecostal Churches of New Zealand

Te Rūnanga Whakawhanaunga I Ngā Hāhi o Aotearoa – Māori Council of Churches

Roman Catholic Church of New Zealand

The Salvation Army

Methodist Church of New Zealand Te Haahi Weteriana o Aotearoa

Anglican Church in Aotearoa New Zealand and Polynesia – Te Hāhi Mihinare ki Aotearoa ki Niu Tireni, ki Ngā Moutere o Te Moana Nui a Kiwa

Our Management



Chief Executive

John Axcell

Regional Manager
Central

Pona Solomona

Regional Manager
Southern

Arii Taimataora

Regional Manager
Northern

Maurice McLaughlin

Regional Manager
Auckland

Richard Ward

Our Vision, Mission and Values

Anei o mātou pūtake

Our Mission

Being the hope that transforms lives

Tū Rangatira - Professionalism

He aha te kai o te rangatira?
He kōrero, he kōrero, he kōrero.
What is the food of the leader?
It is knowledge.
It is communication.

Haumarū - Keeping Safe

Waiho i te toipoto,
kaua i te toiroa.
Let us keep close
together, not
wide apart.

Mahi Tahi - Teamwork

Naku te rourou nau te rourou
ka ora ai te iwi.
With your basket and my basket
the people will live.

Aroha - Compassion

Aroha mai, aroha atu.
Love received, love returned.

Our Vision

Every prisoner has the opportunity to have
their spiritual and religious life enriched

Pononga - Servants of God

He taonga rongonui te aroha ki te tangata.
Goodwill towards others is a precious
treasure.

Whakaute - Respect

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!

About us

Ā mātou

In 2000, churches formed a charitable trust known then as the Prison Chaplaincy Service of Aotearoa New Zealand.

The new organisation set up a different structure for providing religious and spiritual services to prisoners in New Zealand, under contract to the Department of Corrections Ara Poutama Aotearoa, which is also its main funder. The Trust now employed and supplied chaplains, where previously they were employed by Corrections.

The Trust took over responsibility from Corrections for the faith-based volunteers in 2015. In August 2020, a new five-year funding agreement was settled between the Trust and Corrections.

In 2022 the Board renamed the organisation, **Tira Tūhāhā Prison Chaplaincy Aotearoa**. ('Tira' means a group of people travelling together. 'Tūhāhā' describes the ordered heavens in Māori mythology - a place of order and independence, of potential where knowledge leads to creativity and the emergence of new life. Tira Tūhāhā evokes a sense of a hopeful journey, especially for the men and women in prison, towards a lifegiving and safe destination that brings hope).

TTPCA is governed by a Board comprising representatives from the Anglican Church in Aotearoa New Zealand and Polynesia, the Associated Pentecostal Churches of New Zealand, the Baptist Churches of New Zealand Ko Ngā Hahi Iriri o Aotearoa, the Methodist Church of New Zealand Te Haahi Weteriana o Aotearoa, The Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand, The Roman Catholic Church of New Zealand, The Salvation Army Te Ope Whakaora, and Te Rūnanga Whakawhanaunga i ngā Haahi o Aotearoa (National Council of Māori Churches). Up to three members can be nominated to the Board.





Where we work

Ngā wāhi mahi

Northern Region

Northland Region Corrections Facility
Spring Hill Corrections Facility
Waikeria Prison
Hawke's Bay Regional Prison

Auckland Region

Auckland Prison (Paremoremo)
Mt Eden Corrections Facility
Auckland South Corrections Facility
Auckland Region Women's Corrections Facility

Central Region

Tongariro Prison
Whanganui Prison
Manawatū Prison
Rimutaka Prison
Arohata Prison

Southern Region

Christchurch Men's Prison
Christchurch Women's Prison
Rolleston Prison
Otago Corrections Facility
Invercargill Prison



An introduction to prison chaplaincy

Koinei te Kaupapa

What is prison chaplaincy?

The origin of the term 'chaplain' comes from the French word 'chappelle', which is a coat or covering.

The term originates from the old Christian story of St Martin who offered his chappelle to someone in deep distress and gave him a covering, a lifesaving protection, in a similar manner to the parable of the Good Samaritan; offering kindness, compassion and a Christ-like presence. Prison chaplaincy is focused on providing that covering or care to those in prison, regardless of their faith or spiritual identification.

Our organisation is dedicated to supporting some of the most disadvantaged and hurt people in our society. For many of them, this disadvantage has been experienced since birth and that has led them to prison.





Prison chaplaincy in action

Our chaplains and volunteers journey with prisoners as they encounter the challenges of incarceration and separation from loved ones and whānau.

Prison chaplaincy has two areas of focus: ministry with individual prisoners, and building a healthy spiritual community at each prison site. This ministry is delivered both intentionally and serendipitously, through good organisation and unintended encounters as chaplains offer a ministry of presence.

Day-to-day, chaplains have a critical role in facilitating the building of a Spirit-filled community at their site and ensuring that all who wish to can contribute to that community – whether they are prisoners, volunteers, chaplains or prison staff. Chaplains ensure the service at each site is of the highest quality and reflects TTPCA's values, while also leading and managing volunteers. They offer expertise in the core chaplaincy disciplines of pastoral care, delivering worship and occasional services

(for example, cell blessings), and giving opportunities to study the scriptures and other religious and spiritual material.

Joining alongside chaplains are the volunteers, who are a critical part of service delivery. There are rules and processes that volunteers are subject to in a prison setting, which adds a level of commitment not found in other forms of volunteering. There are around 500 faith-based prison volunteers across the country.

Importantly, the relationship between TTPCA, Ara Poutama Aotearoa, and Serco is a partnership. The work chaplains and volunteers do helps with the tensions that can arise, as prisoners struggle with issues that are difficult to resolve while in prison. Every day, prison staff also help facilitate the chaplains' ministry and programmes in numerous ways across the country. Government-church cooperation is truly at its best in prisons.

TTPCA strategy in action

Mahia te mahi

For the last four years, TTPCA has focused on four key areas of development including: increasing Māori involvement, developing our chaplains, strengthening volunteer participation, and community building. Work in these areas helps ensure our service is highly professional and meets the needs of the men and women in prison.

The appointment of a Tikanga Māori Enabler, Jacob Tobin, at the end of 2022 has increased TTPCA's ability to support Māori in prison. Jacob has generated enthusiasm in the staff and volunteers to become more skilled in tikanga, te reo and understanding te ao Māori worldview. One of the really important insights coming from Jacob's work is that Pakehā caring for Māori while utilising and endorsing Māori language and culture is just as valuable as Māori caring for Māori.

The return of volunteers to prison sites has been very gradual over the year with only nine of the 18 prison sites having any form of volunteer participation at the end of 2023. Those volunteers still involved in chaplaincy have welcomed our new volunteer training programme which includes a focused session on TTPCA's values, how to act safely, and how to deliver group services that are sensitive to the needs of the prisoners.

It has been great to see the first set of chaplains utilise the chaplain progression policy and progress to level 2. A level 2 chaplain has demonstrated that they possess a core set of competencies and are delivering a regular and well-organised set of services to the men and women in prison. TTPCA is putting more resources into training chaplains, especially for those entering chaplaincy from outside of a professional ministry background. TTPCA now funds a foundational block of theological papers for these new chaplains. In a similar vein, established chaplains are taking more opportunities to further theological study including participation in Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) programmes.

The key area of development in the community-building aspect of our strategy has been the willingness of chaplains to collaborate in the various initiatives taking place in the organisation. The delivery of volunteer training requires a high degree of coordination between the national office and chaplains, and this models some great teamwork for the volunteers. Also, the chaplains are providing stronger spiritual leadership at their sites as a result of their efforts to develop better relationships with staff and management.

A prisoner's story

He kōrero ā tētahi tāne

I am a father of seven beautiful blessings. I am now and always have been a child of God.

From the age of five, I was put into state care, and from the age of seventeen, I have been in and out of prison. In my captivity, I've found Jesus and received a new heart and spirit.

My journey began through God's purposeful people positioned perfectly, as prison chaplains. My first encounter with them was about five years ago. The chaplains supported me and my whānau through the stressful journey of the court system, remand, and sentencing. They helped spiritually with karakia (prayer), blessings, and speaking the word of God into my heart. Bringing the peace of Christ into my life at such a momentous time brought ever-present peace, and showed me the grace of our Lord in real time. In a field of doubt, I planted a seed of faith, and through chaplaincy, God watered the seed.

I have grown my maturity in prayer, family life, friendships, as well as my relationship with our heavenly Father. Experiencing the fruits of the Spirit, coming to know Christ's gifts through the beautiful vessel of chaplaincy and the individuals chosen in my renewal, have drawn me closer to knowing myself and the Lord.

If I could say one thing to others in prison about chaplaincy, it would be that if you seek love, truth, and faith in captivity, chaplaincy will be where you'll see it.

Ngā mihi mō te mahi, to those working in prison chaplaincy. Through the grace of God and the beautiful vessels you are, I know who I am and how much I'm loved. I thank our Lord Jesus for you all!





"Experienced chaplains can work across groups of people, no matter where someone has come from or where they're heading."

Prison Director perspective

**George Massingham, Prison Director,
Hawke's Bay Regional Prison**

I've been the Prison Director at Hawke's Bay Regional Prison (HBRP) for just over 15 years. In that time, I've seen prison chaplaincy and the service Tira Tūhāhā provides grow and adapt. They offer a very well-organised and professional service that matches the dedication and kindness of our chaplains and volunteers.

For the last few years, we've had a steady group of three very dedicated chaplains who work alongside a wider team of advisors and assistant chaplains. They run church services, study groups, and also console people one-on-one. They work across all areas of our prison, including our ISU (Intervention and Support Unit), which looks after prisoners who have a high risk of self-harm. Chaplains can be called on to spend time with someone who is in a difficult place and may be about to make a bad decision. Their presence can really settle a room, and they bring a calmness that is difficult to achieve in a prison.


Experienced chaplains can work across groups of people, no matter where someone has come from or where they're heading. We also have a diverse cultural community here, so having chaplains from different backgrounds is essential to breaking down barriers. Finding a common connection with a prisoner might be just what they need to take those first steps.

Prisoners also tend to understand why the chaplains choose to be here, so they view them from a different perspective. You can see how what our chaplains do always comes back to their calling, rather than simply meeting the job description.

Sometimes, the positive support we all need as humans doesn't come to someone until later in life. I believe that the more opportunities we can offer our prisoners, the more likely we are to create successful outcomes for our whole community. It's important to realise too, that when a prisoner comes here they may feel completely lost. Prison cuts out many of the variables that come with living in the community, so people have a lot of time on their hands and are looking for something bigger to follow or cling to.

"I truly can't even think about running a prison without the service they provide."

Through chaplaincy, we've seen how prisoners can find or reconnect with something bigger than themselves. Many prisoners who've worked with the team leave here believing in something, giving them a new purpose. They change their



circle of friends and find a different direction. This helps the Corrections team achieve our ultimate goal of rehabilitating and reintegrating prisoners successfully back into the community.

The reality is that negative things do happen in prison, and the prison chaplains are always there to provide support in a way that you can't get from anyone else. They are here for anyone to talk or cry with – whatever someone needs to get back to a place where they can carry on. Being able to provide that little bit of time, effort, and enthusiasm for anyone during a difficult period spreads hope, and that's a positive for our whole community. Our chaplains enable people to pause, take a breath, and feel like someone is looking out for them, and that moment in time can be so important for someone's well-being. The chaplaincy team has always been a shining light for everyone in our community, especially through the hardest times of COVID-19, short-staffing, and Cyclone Gabrielle.

The chaplains here at HBRP have been exceptional to work with. We really consider them to be a part of our staff, and they are knitted into the fabric of our prison. I truly can't even think about running a prison without the service they provide.

At right: A Pātaka and garden at Hawke's Bay Regional Prison.



Year in numbers 2022-2023



2,369 
GROUP 
SERVICES
WERE DELIVERED IN
ALL NZ PRISONS

AN AVERAGE OF

9.1%



OF PRISONERS ATTENDED
A GROUP SERVICE
AT LEAST ONCE A MONTH

THE TOTAL PRISON NUMBERS



AS AT 4 JULY 2023 WAS

8,698

18,949

INDIVIDUAL
SESSIONS
WERE PROVIDED
TO PRISONERS

A photograph of a black rectangular sign with the word "CHAPLAIN" written in white, bold, capital letters. The sign is mounted on a yellow wall with four screws.

AN AVERAGE OF
13.5%
OF PRISONERS
RECEIVED
INDIVIDUAL
CARE
AT LEAST ONCE A MONTH



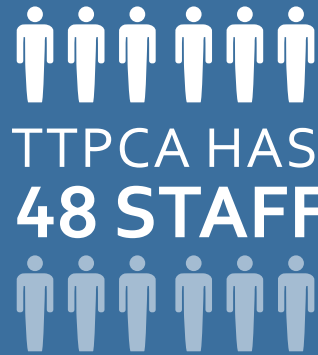
500
VOLUNTEERS
WERE ON OUR DATABASE
(AS AT JUNE 2023)



WE PROVIDED
1 FULL-TIME
CHAPLAIN
PER
329
PRISONERS



TTPCA HAS
48 STAFF



IN A TYPICAL MONTH
1,114
INDIVIDUAL PRISONERS
RECEIVED ONE OR MORE
ONE-ON-ONE SUPPORT SESSIONS



IN A TYPICAL MONTH
752
INDIVIDUAL PRISONERS
ATTENDED GROUP SERVICES





Jacob Tobin, in the role of Tikanga Māori Enabler

"...all of our chaplains sign up for this job because they have a passion for the Gospel, and if we want to share that with people from all walks of life then we have to be able to communicate together."

Introducing the Tikanga Māori Enabler

Describe your journey into working at TTPCA

Following in my grandparents' and father's footsteps led me to TTPCA. I grew up immersed in our language and cultural teachings through my grandparents, and my father was an Apotoro (Reverend) of the Rātana Church. The role of Arawhata Māori - Tikanga Māori Enabler brings together two aspects of my life I hold dearly, my culture and my whakapono (belief). What really attracted me to this role though, was the statistic that 53% of the prison population is Māori. I saw this as an opportunity to give back by supporting our chaplains in culturally aligning with the needs of our people in prisons.

What stands out to you in your role?

The most important part of my role is bridging our organisation and a te ao Māori worldview. Being regarded as that expert means I can share my experiences and skills with our chaplains, so they can better relate to the people we serve. If our chaplains are more equipped to provide holistic care in what they do, they can bring about that life-changing experience for those they work with.

How does TTPCA having an Arawhata Māori - Tikanga Māori Enabler make a difference?

Although Māori have always been involved in delivering chaplaincy, TTPCA was aware

that a lot more could be done to serve the high Māori prison population. With the strategic vision and direction from the Board, my role was created to improve the situation.

One example of an initiative we've implemented so far is our tikanga coaching sessions. I'm meeting with every chaplain across Aotearoa to discuss the cultural challenges they may face, as well as ways to create more impactful connections with particular prisoners. It's all about providing the skills and resources for our chaplains to better support our prisoners. When we do that, we're not only delivering our services and promises to Corrections, but we're also upholding our obligations under the Treaty of Waitangi.

Why do you think this mahi is so important?

If we are passionate about making an impact through prison chaplaincy, we need to be better at engaging with those we work with, whether it's the prisoners, prison staff, or even within our own team. Ultimately, all of our chaplains sign up for this job because they have a passion for the Gospel, and if we want to share that with people from all walks of life then we have to be able to communicate together. If we don't, then somebody might miss out on that life-changing message.

The purpose of the Tikanga Māori Enabler role

TTPCA is working hard to provide the best quality service it can to all the men and women in prison. As most people know, Māori make up 53% of those in prison and when it comes to Māori women in prison they are about two-thirds of the women's population in prison. This high proportion of Māori means that TTPCA is strongly committed to having service that is responsive and sensitive to their needs.

To help improve the tikanga Māori dimension of our chaplaincy, TTPCA created the Arawhata Māori - Tikanga Māori Enabler role and appointed Jacob Tobin to the position in late 2022. TTPCA is using some of its reserves to support the role and so the position is currently limited to a two-year fixed term.

Jacob's role is designed to be a bridge between worlds. A bridge (Arawhata) between the wisdom, knowledge, and language of tikanga Māori and the staff and volunteers who will express that tikanga. The bridge enables people to cross over to a deeper understanding of tikanga Māori, te reo and a te ao Māori worldview. The role also helps TTPCA develop and embed cultural frameworks and methodologies into its standard operating procedures and policies.

TTPCA recognises that in enabling its staff and volunteers to be more sensitive to the needs of Māori, they are also empowering them to be responsive to the needs of all prisoners. When a staff member has the tools to reflect on and identify the needs of Māori then they can also take the same approach to examining the distinctive needs of each demographic group in prison. Jacob's role is, therefore, more than just a role for Māori. His role is about helping TTPCA build a hospitable and caring community for everyone.

Over the last 12 months, Jacob has set up a monthly coaching session with all of the site teams. These coaching sessions allow chaplains to explore questions and discuss issues related to ministering to Māori. Jacob has developed a range of resources to support these sessions including pamphlets on pastoral practice, use of te reo and appropriate protocol around events and activities such as worship leading and interacting with Māori. These new initiatives have been warmly received by all staff and reflect our growing maturity and confidence as an organisation.



"It's about changing their point of view so they can see where God is working in their lives, to know that He values them, and can bring healing."

Joe Martin

Chaplain – Waikeria Prison

Describe your journey into prison chaplaincy

Before prison chaplaincy, I was asking God as to what I should do. I knew from my experience as a funeral director that I wanted to bring some hope into other people's lives. I studied the Bible at Laidlaw College and then began working as a parish assistant. During that time, God revealed a skill I had for working with troubled men. This is what first made me think about doing prison chaplaincy, and the Lord opened that door for me seven years ago.

What stands out to you in your role?

The core of what we do is meeting one-on-one with our tāne in a way that makes them feel safe to open up, share what's on their heart, and pray together. We also run church services alongside our volunteers, as well as memorial services, cell blessings, and spur-of-the-moment tasks that come up.

What we're doing is simply joining the Lord in His work. And the more you dig, the more you realise that God is already at work in the lives of these tāne. He is already calling them, and it's my privilege to share His love with them. It's about changing their point of view so they can

see where God is working in their lives, to know that He values them, and can bring healing.

What advice would you give to our new chaplains?

There's nothing that really prepares you for coming into the environment of a high-security wing, and then stepping into a quiet moment with a man who is devastated, and needs someone to share that with. But no matter how scary any situation might be, knowing that we are created in the image of God, and we are equally loved, takes away any of the nerves.

Something I always do before heading in is to pray for wisdom in every conversation and to be a man of healing. Then on my commute home, it's important for me to offload to the Lord all of the heavy stuff I've just heard, so I can be present with my family.

What do you do in your spare time?

I spend as much time as possible with my wife and two daughters, whether that's going for a bike ride together, or supporting on the side of the netball court. We also really enjoy camping over summer. Other than that, my go-to is reading a good book.

A prisoner's story

he kupu taūtoko ano

After leaving a motorcycle gang some years ago, I was happy with my new direction and the good news of having my first child with my long-time partner. Fast forward a few years, and I find myself facing an unexpected and life-changing prison sentence of ten years, as a father to my 15-month-old son.

I have an incredible family and partner who are supporting me through my time here. I have also experienced support from a chaplain who has made me feel comfortable to engage in the chaplaincy service, inspired me to walk with Jesus Christ, and helped me kick-start the foundation of my prison journey.

Through my struggles of settling into this new environment, my chaplain's ongoing counsel, The Bible, books, and prayer carried me through. Learning to lean on my faith has helped me on particularly bad days and reminded me that everything will be OK, and my future is not going to be defined by prison.

I continue to navigate through the feelings that arise from my reality here – things like missing my son's first birthday and first steps. But I can communicate what has been troubling me with my chaplain when he visits. We have targeted areas of growth, and we can reflect on what has been working.

Through this unexpected storm, I have slowly made significant growth. Now my faith has got to a point I could not have imagined – it's like food when my inner man is hungry. It is the source I can always draw strength from, and it moulds my character to grow as a man. It cannot be taken away, and I have real clarity in my path to be the best man I can be upon release.

To other people in prison, I would say that if you are looking for a listening ear and an unwavering supporter, you should try out the prison chaplaincy service. This may be the missing link for you, as it has been for me. Faith is something we can access wherever we are in our lives. Don't let your past define you, but let it refine you into the person you want to be.

Our volunteers

Anei ō mātou kaiāwhina

The role

TTPCA offers spiritual and religious support to all men and women inside prisons. To provide this service, TTPCA relies on faith-based volunteers to come into prisons to help deliver group worship, group study and individual pastoral care to prisoners every week. Our volunteers enable us to reach more of those prisoners who choose to begin or continue their spiritual journey.

Volunteers are managed by our chaplains at each prison site. Our professional chaplains provide leadership to the volunteers' chaplaincy activities in the prisons, maintain relationships with key Corrections staff, and liaise with the local church and faith communities.

We value the commitment of our volunteer network. They work with our chaplains to deliver religious and spiritual services to groups of prisoners, provide individual pastoral care (assistant chaplains and pastoral visitors), and facilitate Bible studies and other faith-based study groups.





Who our volunteers are

Our volunteers come from all walks of life. They vary in age, ethnicity, faith and denominational background. Most are Christian, and some are of other religions (e.g. Muslim or Buddhist). They are all endorsed members of a faith-based organisation. All are welcome and important for the service.

In 2023 we had 500 volunteers although many are still waiting to exercise their ministry on the site. This is an astounding number of people who have chosen to offer their skills, experience, faith, and time to prisoners. The diversity of gifts that volunteers bring to prison ministry could never be provided by the chaplains alone.

Safety and relationships

The process of becoming a volunteer is comprehensive. Every person is vetted by TTPCA, with commendations from their respective church or faith-based community, and there are extensive requirements from Ara Poutama Aotearoa and Serco to gain access to the prison.

When organising the volunteers' activities at prisons, the chaplains are constantly aware of the need to be prepared for disruptions. The main disruptions include sudden prison or unit lockdowns, or there being too few prison staff on-site at a given time to facilitate the volunteers' activities and/or ensure their safety.

Being a TTPCA volunteer is different to being a personal visitor to a prisoner. As a member of the public, you may be able to become a visitor to a prisoner. However, this relationship is initiated by the prisoner and must be approved by prison management (Corrections or Serco). Generally, TTPCA does not allow its volunteers to also be a personal visitor to any prisoner.



Phil Millar

Volunteer Assistant Chaplain – Rolleston Prison

Describe your journey into volunteering as an assistant chaplain

About 18 years ago, one of the senior members of my church felt that we should start a prison visiting team. I'd never been in a prison before, so I started heading along, and it just clicked for me so I kept going. Around six years ago I was given the opportunity to take up an Assistant Chaplain role at Rolleston Prison. Now I usually go in twice a week, and it's always a highlight of my week.

What do you do in your role?

On Sundays, a few of us volunteers go in and run a church service, where we sing, pray, read the Bible and discuss it. On Thursdays, I run a Bible study and occasionally I'll visit with guys one-on-one when I'm there if they request a visit. It's wonderful being trusted to do all of that.

What stands out to you in your role?

The thing that stands out to me most is how often guys say how positive coming to prison has been for them. It's not a place anyone wants to be, but it gives them time to think about their lives and eternity and consider the Gospel for themselves which is something they may not have

had the chance to do on the outside. I'm also thankful for how much they share of themselves in the Bible studies. They are really open about their lives and their struggles, and I try to share mine as well. Some of the guys will let you know how appreciative they are for what we do, and that's pretty amazing to hear, but all of the glory goes to God.

What would you say to other potential volunteers?

Prisons might seem to be a scary area to be in, but I really encourage people to consider it. Once you've been a couple of times you realise that people are people everywhere, there are lots of guys who are really friendly and appreciate what you're doing. They are at a real low point in their lives so it's a great opportunity to share the Gospel and see the difference it makes.

From a Christian point of view, it's an amazing ministry opportunity. I've found that the men in prison are eager to learn, and very open to sharing the Gospel and discussing the big questions of life.



Phil Millar, Volunteer Assistant Chaplain at Rolleston Prison

"I was given the opportunity to take up an Assistant Chaplain role at Rolleston Prison. Now I usually go in twice a week, and it's always a highlight of my week."

Developing our volunteers

New training programme implemented in 2023

Volunteers are a highly valued part of the chaplaincy team and help to create a sense of hāpori (community) within the prison. The past few years however have brought many challenges and disruptions to the normal flow of TTPCA volunteers being able to come into the prisons to run group services. COVID-19, followed by prison staff shortages, has meant that most sites have been unable to have volunteers present for the normal group services for several years.

During 2023 there were good indications that some sites would at last be able to return to normal volunteer-led group worship services. So in preparation for this, we implemented a new volunteer training package to improve the level of skill for all our volunteers.

This new training programme was developed to train new and existing volunteers across the country in two key aspects of service delivery – expressing our Code of Conduct and how to run good group worship services. The training is designed to ensure that there is national consistency in how we train volunteers in the application of our Code of Conduct. The training utilises real-life prison chaplaincy scenarios to support volunteer learning. The training also covers key concepts in running effective group worship, such as how to incorporate tikanga Māori into the structure of the service along with karakia and waiata.

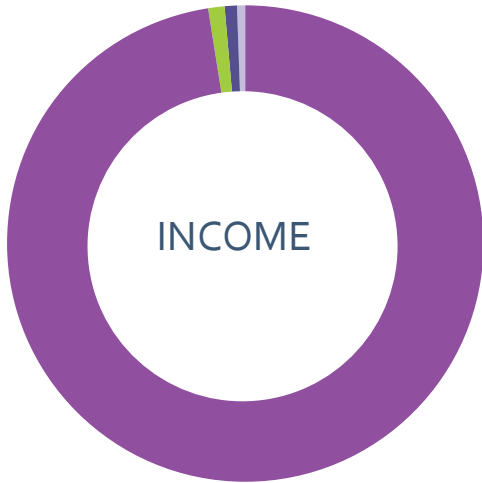
The training package was initially piloted with Auckland volunteers and was so well received that after further refinement, it was rolled out in most locations around the country. We saw large turnouts at the training events and had very positive feedback about the content and style of training. Volunteers reported that they felt valued and found the training sessions engaging and interactive saying that they “now fully understand their role” and that they “loved the variety in the training.”

These training events are part of our organisation’s commitment to continuous improvement as we seek to provide high-quality group services through our volunteer teams. We want to ensure that the men and women who participate in our group services experience a rewarding and well-run event.



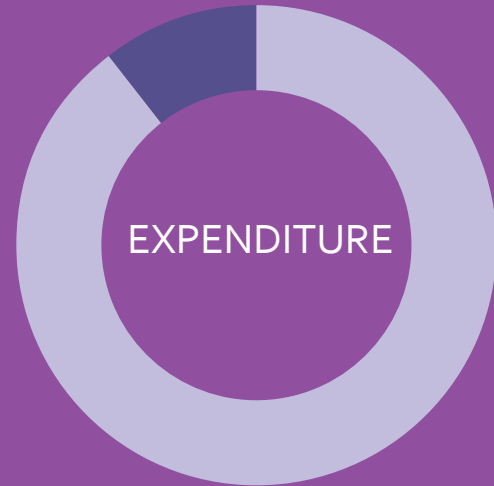
Funding

Pūtea moni



Sources of Funding
1 July 2022 - 30 June 2023

● Contracts	\$2,861,611
● Investments	\$34,259
● Other	\$25,433
● Donations	\$14,653



How funds were spent
1 July 2022 - 30 June 2023

● Personnel	\$2,619,809
● Operating Expenses	\$294,736

This financial information is extracted from the audited financial report of Tira Tūhāhā Prison Chaplaincy Aotearoa. A full set of audited financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2023 is available on request.

Charities Services Registration: CC24724.

Thank you

Ngā mihi nui ki a koutou

We sincerely thank the following donors and churches who supported TTPCA during the past financial year. Their regular contributions toward our work are very much appreciated.

Donors

Crossroads Methodist Church, Auckland

Village Baptist Church, Havelock North

St Aidan's Anglican Church, Remuera

St Stephen's (Waikiwi) Presbyterian Church, Invercargill

Tasman Smith Charitable Trust Hawke's Bay

JP Axcell & AJ Shrapnell

Anonymous via payroll giving and other

Volunteers and supporters

We thank all our faith-based volunteers, and those in the volunteer network, who dedicate themselves to helping us to deliver prison chaplaincy, through their time and skills. We are continually amazed by our many volunteers!

Department of Corrections Ara Poutama Aotearoa

A very big thank you to The Department of Corrections Ara Poutama Aotearoa for their support and funding of our service.

Bible Society New Zealand

Thanks to the support of the Bible Society, who donated 1,187 Bibles and New Testaments (180 of these were non-English) and 380 scripture portions for distribution to men and women in New Zealand prisons this year. The Bible Society's mission is to "make the Bible accessible to everyone" and we are grateful that this includes providing Bibles and associated reading material to men and women in prison including resources in English, Māori, and other languages. These books and resources are some of the few items that prisoners can keep in their cells and are greatly valued by them.

Serco

Thank you to Serco for their funding of chaplaincy at Auckland South Corrections Facility.





Tira Tūhāhā

Prison Chaplaincy Aotearoa

www.prisonchaplaincy.org.nz