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MESSAGE FROM THE CPU DIRECTOR

Vera Buvcevska

I was reminded in a sermon recently of importance of beginning with the end in mind.

The purpose of *Breaking the Silence* is to prevent and respond to abuse. This purpose stands behind a greater goal of honouring God's holy name. As churches actively work to identify and minimise risks and to seek justice for the oppressed, these are all expressions of Jesus care for the vulnerable.

A place where people can gather, to meet Jesus, to feel safe, to feel belonging, to have Christ dwell with us is where we fix our eyes. Particularly for people who have experienced trauma, it's helpful for us to understand the impact it may have so that we can relate to people in a way which is compassionate.

We can start by thinking about our ministry spaces:

- What is it like for someone to enter our church for the very first time?
- Is it inviting?
- Does it feel safe?
- Is it easy to find the toilets?
- Is there clear information about how to raise concerns and to who?
- Are exits clearly visible in case they need to leave quickly?

May we implement trauma-informed ministry practices to better reflect Christ's love and compassion to those who have experienced trauma.

In His service, Vera

CPU News

Important updates and reminders

The Trauma Informed Care Webinar Recording is now available

CPU Director Vera Buvcevska and CPU Chaplain Karen McMillan recently presented a webinar on Trauma-Informed Care for churches.

It was very well received by those in attendance. Given the high prevalence of people who have experienced trauma, applying trauma-informed principles to our ministries is not just an 'add-on' but an expression Christ showing compassionate care.

You can access it via the [Resources](#) page on the BTS website, or click below for direct access:

Click [HERE](#) to access Trauma Informed Care Webinar

The BTS Rep Webinar Recording is available

The CPU ran a webinar for BTS reps in February this year.

It's highly recommended for new BTS reps or elders to understand the different aspects of CPU and BTS compliance, or those wanting a better understanding of the CPU and BTS.

You can access it via the [Resources](#) page on the BTS website, or click below for direct access:

Click [HERE](#) to access the 2026 BTS Rep Webinar



Auditing: Evidence Required and Summary

Linda is currently organising audit visits for the Mid-North Coast Presbytery. A big THANK YOU to those churches who have responded promptly. It is very challenging to align multiple audit visits. **Your cooperation and flexibility is greatly appreciated when organising church visits across vast distances to accommodate people's schedules.**

Churches audited from February to May 2026:

- Concord
- Annandale-Leichardt
- Drummoyne
- Abbotsford-Five Dock
- Korean Canaan Petersham
- Camden
- Cornerstone churches
- Ashfield-Petersham
- Burwood

Much of the evidence required are copies of session minute extracts. Please have the evidence available in time for the audit visit as it's hard to find momentum to send evidence after an audit visit has occurred.

Disappointingly, **we can't sign off churches as compliant until ALL the evidence is received.**

This means many churches never receive full compliance due to a few evidence items outstanding.

DFV Prevention Month

May is Domestic and Family Violence (DFV) Prevention Month.

Domestic violence is a significant issue in our community. 1 woman is killed every 11 days by a current or former intimate partner, and 1 in 5 adults experience domestic and family violence from the age of 15.

Sadly, domestic violence also exists in churches, amongst the people in church communities, from Sunday to Sunday.

One of the ways that we can care for people is by equipping ourselves to respond well when someone encounters domestic violence. Domestic violence is something that Jesus is absolutely opposed to, and he calls us to love people well. We can do this by learning how to respond well and by reaching out when we are concerned. We might not be able to fix things but people are often glad when someone reaches out.

Here are some questions you could try:

- "I'm wondering if everything is okay at home?"
- "I've noticed how xxx speaks to you. How did it make you feel?"

The key thing is not to push people into talking if they are uncomfortable, but let them know you're there. The most important thing is to listen and respect their decision.

For more ideas on things you can do at your church, see DV [Tip Sheet 10](#).

Domestic Violence Online Training

CPU Director Vera Buvcevska and CPU Chaplain Karen McMillian will hold online Understanding and Responding to Domestic and Family Violence Training on the evenings of June 17th and June 24th.

This is a 4-hour training event, run as 2x2-hour sessions. We ask that people only register if they can commit to both sessions.

You can find out more and register via the BTS website, or below:

Register for June Online Domestic Violence training.

We would also love for you to promote this training at your church.

You can use [this slide](#) to promote it as a Powerpoint slide during announcements and/or as a flyer, and it includes a signup QR code. (A promotional video will be sent shortly).

Ask CPU a Question

We received the following question from Megan:

How do other churches teach children that church is a safe place and they will be listened to? Sure, you can stick the posters on the wall of the Kid's Church room but I feel the children should be advised what they mean (in a simple way). Any strategies to give this resource maximum effect?

Here are some suggestions to strengthen children's understanding that their voice is important and church is a safe place:

- Have a poster displaying photos and first names of the leaders.
- Remind kids who they can talk to if they have any issues. If they are non-readers, use the kids posters to reinforce your message.
- Have a clear way to identify kids leaders e.g. lanyard or hi-vis vest.
- Get kids to design a poster to display and promote kids speaking up.

If you have a BTS-related question you would like us to answer for the next edition, please email cpu@jerichoroad.org.au.

Renewed WWCC/WWVP checks still need to be verified by CPU

It is a legal requirement for anyone in a position of authority in the church or working directly with children and young people to have a current verified WWCC/WWVP. This includes renewed WWCC/WWVP's.

You already have my WWCC/WWVP. Why can't you just re-verify it?

We don't always know when someone remains in a ministry role. For this reason, we do not automatically verify all expired WWCC/WWVPS.

We ask BTS reps to remind people to use the [online verification form](#) to verify WWCC/WWVP renewals. (You can also access the online verification form via the BTS Website homepage).

Without the verification, you are not cleared to work with children or vulnerable people.

For more information on this, contact our Admin Manager, Bay Odontuyaa, on cpu-admin@jerichoroad.org.au.



Resources

Helping your church's ministry

**Spotlight Child Safe Standard 6:
Processes to respond to complaints of**

child abuse (or other concerns) are child-focused

Children should be encouraged to speak up about anything that concerns them.

Here are some questions to reflect on how we implement Standard 6:

- Do leaders know how to respond if a child raises a concern? (see BTS Info Sheet '[How to really listen](#)' and '[Giving a voice to children and young people](#)')
- Do leaders know who to report to if a child raises a concern? (see [BTS Training workbook](#) section 4: Reporting)
- Do children and young people in your ministries feel comfortable or know who to approach if they have a concern?
- If appropriate, do we provide feedback to the parent/carer about child concerns?

[Go To Child Safe Standard 6](#)

New OCG Resource: 'Preventing employee-perpetrated child sexual abuse in institutions'

The OCG have a webinar that you can access on how to prevent employee perpetrated child sexual abuse in institutions. The OCG is a treasure trove of resources - much like the BTS Website.

It's worth checking out:

[Go To OCG Webinar](#)

New BTS Resources to Check Out

The BTS Website is regularly being updated with new resources to help make your church safer.

Since the last newsletter, we've added the following to the website:

- Info Sheet: [Presbyterian Counselling Service Counselling for Affected Persons in relation to Breaking the Silence.](#)

Please check out the 'Resources' page on the BTS Website for other useful resources.

[Go To Resources Page on BTS Website](#)



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*But the plans of the Lord stand firm forever,
the purposes of his heart through all generations.*

Psalms 33:11

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Conduct Protocol Unit

Presbyterian Church of Australia in NSW/ACT