

Vineyard Senior Pastor Faces 'Historic' Spiritual Abuse Charges

Causeway Coast Vineyard officials have responded to allegations that the senior pastor of Vineyard Anaheim, Alan Scott, has committed "historic" spiritual abuse toward the church's staff and congregation.

Last month, The Roys Report released a story that former Vineyard Anaheim (now called the Dwelling Place) staff accused Scott of "abuse, manipulation and lies" since taking over the leadership of the church in 2020.

Former Vineyard Anaheim College Pastor Cynthia Andrews told The Roys Report that Scott, with church attendance plummeting, had allegedly "instituted salvation quotas for staff with spreadsheets recording how many people key staff had led to Christ."

Andrews told The Roys Report that Scott required her to spend more than half her work hours evangelizing and expected a conversation of three people an hour. Unable to meet the conversion quotas, Andrews said "she'd often stay at Walmart until late at night, trying to get people to pray a salvation prayer," with her anxiety mounting by the day.

"I would spend hours praying, begging God to let me see people come to faith," Andrews said. "I knew if I didn't, Alan was going to be mad at me."

Scott announced last spring that the flagship Vineyard Church would split from Vineyard USA, which has over 2,400 churches worldwide. The announcement prompted Vineyard leaders to call the departure "extreme betrayal."

Causeway Coast Vineyard and Vineyard Churches UK and Ireland released a statement acknowledging that they had been made aware of concerns raised by people in the UK after the announcement regarding Vineyard Anaheim's departure from the denomination and announced that an independent review is under way.

"We are deeply saddened to hear about historic concerns reported in the press ... relating to Alan Scott's time at Anaheim Vineyard," the statement read. "We recognize the bravery it takes to speak up, and are grateful to those who have raised concerns. We are praying for those who have come forward in this difficult time. Causeway Coast Vineyard and Vineyard Churches UK and Ireland are committed to caring for and safeguarding those who attend and visit our churches.

"On being made aware of those concerns, CCV and VCUKI commissioned an independent review process run by an experienced third party. This process is nearing completion and we [will] comment more fully in the coming weeks."

One of 11 former pastors, staff and volunteers from three Vineyard churches where Scott pastored, Andrews and others shared their stories of alleged abuse and manipulation with The Roys Report.

Others described the use of "loyalty tests" Scott would perform on staff, including scheduling last-minute meetings to see who was dedicated enough to "get a babysitter and show up." These staff members said that Scott claimed he could see people's hidden sin, judged staff according to their body type and blacklisted those he couldn't control, saying they were blocking growth."

In a lawsuit filed last November, former Vineyard Anaheim church and board members accused Scott of deceiving former board members in a premeditated play to steal the church property.

All of this comes at the same time when founder and former Hillsong Senior Pastor Brian Houston is battling allegations of sexual abuse within his former church in Australia. {eo}

Shawn A. Akers *is the online editor at Charisma Media.*