

Strategic Framework and Implementation – 2019+

(Phase Two – Final Version)

The Vision of Kaimai Presbytery

‘Our vision is that the churches of Kaimai Presbytery will be healthy and growing, their fruitfulness flowing from their experience of spiritual vitality and their engagement with the world; a united and vibrant movement of people empowered by the Holy Spirit and with a variety of different expressions of life and mission. Imagine the Presbytery like the Kaimai bush - nourished and flourishing, richly varied yet inter-dependent, fruitful and beautiful.’

Editorial Note: *This Strategic Framework paper preceded the Presbytery’s debate and decisions on its Strategic Plan in mid-2019. Some of the suggested recommendations were amended and those changes have been made to this paper. Of particular note was the agreement to use ‘the mission of God’ and ‘missional’ in place of ‘apostolic’.*

Summary

The Strategic Work Group was set up in December 2017, and after extensive consultation within and beyond the Presbytery, offers the following Strategic Plan. It is to be an active Plan with ongoing changes expected. It seeks to take seriously and urgently the challenges facing the Presbytery and its local parishes, and to offer a practical, sustainable and effective way forward. A way forward that assists parishes into greater health and growth, to facilitate more effective leadership in mission, and to raise significant resources.

The Plan is based around three fundamental changes in thinking and practice:

- [1] A Presbytery-wide transition from a ‘pastoral model’ of church, ministry and leadership to an ‘apostolic model’. See [Appendix One](#).
- [2] A planting of new congregations, within current parishes and in new settings. See [Appendix Two](#).
- [3] The raising of Presbytery financial resources and utilising them in a more effective way for mission.

Key Proposals include:

- Prioritising of spiritual vitality.
- Establishing three yearly Parish Reviews and accompanying Minister Reviews.
- Initiating a missional coaching programme for selected parishes.
- Strengthening the professional development of Ministers.
- Supporting parishes if they are ending their ‘season of life’ and release their legacy for new mission initiatives.
- Distinguishing between local ‘Parishes’ and ‘Faith Communities’.
- Creating a Mission Initiatives Fund to fund new mission endeavours.

The Foundation

The continuing and compelling call of God upon the people of each local parish and congregation to embody and witness to the good news of Jesus Christ: to be the people of God experiencing the life of their Lord as they gather, and as they are sent to fulfil his purposes in the world.

Fundamentally, profoundly and crucially we depend on God’s grace, and discerning his will is crucial to planning in today’s changing context.

(Feedback: There was widespread emphasis on Presbytery’s reliance on the grace of God; stressing the need for sustained prayer, learning to better discern God’s will, seeking the intervention and activity of the Holy Spirit, the need for personal and corporate spiritual renewal, on being open to signs and wonders, being receptive to new initiatives of God better suited in today’s context. Spiritual health also ranked top in the issues raised by Ministers in the NZ wide KCML research.)

Our Context

The Kaimai Presbytery and its local parishes (Presbyterian and Cooperative Ventures) are in the context of at least three critically important realities:

[1] The decline of the local parishes: in Kaimai a decline of 49% in worship attendance over the last 17 years (2000-2017) in the context of a 24% increase in the total population. Fewer people, sometimes exacerbated by overall aging, has led to a decline in capacities and energy and enthusiasm, in the ability to call ordained Ministers, in the skills necessary to fulfil requirements, and sometimes in morale and hope.

[2] The context of a very different world from the past within which the church formed its culture and ministries – a world today with diverse ethnicities and faiths, world views and attitudes, ethics and behaviour. A world where growing numbers of people have little or no knowledge of the Bible, the Christian story, or of the church. Estimates of such people range from 50 to 75 per cent of the population. [The 2018 'Faith and Belief in New Zealand' research portrays New Zealand's current faith context - <https://nzfaithandbeliefstudy.files.wordpress.com/2018/05/faith-and-belief-full-report-may-2018.pdf>]

[3] The limited resources of Presbytery available for use: in people and finance. This is a significant reality given that the Presbytery's 'primary function is to facilitate and resource the life, worship, spiritual nurture and mission of the congregations for which it has responsibility,' and the more focused 'primary function of facilitating the mission of the congregations for which it has responsibility.' (Book of Order 8.3/4)

Holding to the status quo, whatever the adjustments, will not address the realities outlined above. The church is in uncharted territory and faces the challenge of re-thinking what it means to be church, of engaging in new pathways of mission and of re-kindling confidence and hope for the future. It is crucial that new directions are determined, that priorities are set, and that energy and resources are focused.

HEALTHY AND GROWING PARISHES

The key phrase in the Presbytery's Vision Statement of churches being 'healthy and growing' has been strongly affirmed. Defining this health and growth is important, and there is broad agreement that the following components are all essential for a healthy and growing congregation.

[1] The parish has a culture marked by spiritual vitality and learning, unity and high morale, openness and acceptance of others.

[2] The parish is growing with the addition of new people into the community of faith. This would include those newly professing their faith, those returning to faith, and those transferring in from other churches. (The first, the evangelistic dimension, is particularly weak, with 'Confessions of Faith' few in our statistics.)

[3] The parish is outward looking, engaging with the people of the wider community with the proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ and the life of his kingdom. (Recall the Five Faces of Mission)

[4] The parish is nurturing its people, individually and corporately, in their worship of God, in their Scripture knowledge and discipleship and in pastoral care.

[5] The people of the parish reflect the demography and environment of their church's context. There should be a range of ages including children/families, but also different ethnicities / socio-economic groupings etc.

[6] The parish is capably managing its property and finances, and ensuring compliance with PCANZ and legislative requirements.

(Feedback: there was substantial agreement with this list. Most pushback was on the requirement to have 'children and families' citing local demography or that other local churches catered for children and families.)

Other parishes:

It is clear that some parishes are experiencing health and growth, along with the diversity expected from different contexts. This progress in the Presbytery is warmly affirmed and brings both insights and hope for all. In fulfilling its responsibilities it is important for the Presbytery to ensure that these parishes are still resourced

and encouraged. The Strategic Work Group is still considering how to strengthen collaboration between parishes especially where, outside urban areas, there is significant distance.

There are also some parishes experiencing ill-health and decline with significant gaps against the above measures (1 to 6 above), and experiencing major capacity issues – in numbers, in skills, in energy and in finance. There are increasing limits to sustaining present ministries, to employing Ministers and other workers, to forming new vision and ventures in mission, to financing building requirements and to covering compliance. Present capacity is insufficient for the changes necessary to arrest decline and lead to increased health and growth. (See the 'Life Cycle and stages of Congregational Development' in Appendix Two.)

(Feedback: stressed the burden of rising compliance requirements, and of finding skilled people to handle these and ministry tasks. Small churches especially are burdened by infrastructural demands of being a parish.)

Where parishes are moving toward the end of their 'season of life', the local Faith Community is still valued. There is a very important distinction here. 'Parish' refers to the institutional legal entity within the PCANZ and carries significant responsibilities – in pastoral and missional service, in administrative oversight, in compliance with regulations, in financial management, and in building maintenance. The 'Faith Community' refers to the people who gather and serve in their local area. Numbers may be of a home fellowship size, but their worship, pastoral care and service of others remains important.

This strategic plan recommends that for 'Parishes' where renewal is unlikely, they are dissolved and the equity held becomes an important legacy for the mission of the church elsewhere. When it takes place remaining members may be encouraged to join another parish or continue as a local 'Faith Community' under the oversight of 'regional' parish. Congregational centred processes are already available for conversations and decision making with parishes regarding dissolution.

(Feedback: repeated emphasis on the church being people, not buildings! When a 'season of life' for a parish ends buildings should be released and become a legacy for God's mission. Comments on the burden of buildings regarding maintenance, earthquake strengthening and unsuitability for today's needs.)

The particular culture and practices of a local parish, while valued by current members, may be a significant barrier to growth. Therefore this Strategic Plan recommends the planting of new congregations within and beyond the parish. (The 'Fresh Expressions' movement and the KCML Seedlings Projects would be possible pathways.) Parishes also tend to be mono-cultural, both socio-economically and ethnically. There is the challenge of becoming multi-generational and inter-cultural.

(Feedback: a sense of excitement. Need for younger generations. Need to discover new models beyond the primary one of separate parishes for each area. Future faith communities may not be centred on Sunday mornings, on church buildings, on present leadership expectations. Contextual differences – e.g. rural.)

Areas of Potential:

In a larger framework there are areas of the Presbytery where the capacity and witness of parishes is weak. The Kaimai Council identified Hamilton City, the South Waikato, and the Coromandel Peninsula as such areas. There may be others. The recommendation for Hamilton City is to appoint a Task Group to assess the current and future life of its parishes, with the expectation that the Group would meet first with parishes individually.

The Presbytery region also includes areas of major residential growth, but the Presbytery has had very limited success in establishing new congregations or parishes in these areas and none recently.

EFFECTIVE MISSIONAL LEADERSHIP

In the context of western world Christianity, and of the PCANZ, there is wide agreement that the church needs to transition into a missional body for today and the future, with the leadership to enable this to happen.

However, transition into missional thinking and action in the local church context has been sporadic, from:

- [a] the selection of leaders to fit the long-standing model of church and ministry that prioritises Sunday worship, pastoral care and internal management. (Called here the 'pastoral model'.)

- [b] the inability to engage enough leaders of younger generations with their different thinking and skills.
- [c] the pressures of current church life with its internal demands, incapacities, and uncertainties about the gospel and its proclamation.

These pressures include:

- [i] Increasing compliance requirements around Health and Safety, Charities Commission reporting, financial management, building codes. The legal and reputational risks for parish leaders are significant.
- [ii] Of some ministers and other leaders being at serious risk from increasing pressures and overload.
- [iii] The mistaken assumption that each parish has the sole responsibility and right to manage its own affairs and with its own resources - a non-collaborative model of church.

(Feedback: repeated comment on being isolated from Presbytery and bereft of support. Comments that local churches include many for whom being 'Presbyterian' was not part of their background, and that 'denomination' has little bearing on their belonging. Not all Presbyterian traditions and regulations may fit the future well, as current structures and practices were formed under a different model of church and ministry.)

Nevertheless many leaders and people have a deeply felt appreciation of and commitment to their local fellowship. There is a valuing of their history, a loyalty to their identity and life, and a sense of obligation for the future. Many have served faithfully for many years in church and community. These are God's people.

Among these people are the Ordained Ministers. They are key leaders with their training and experience in theology and ministry and they are a vital resource for the future. However, given the primary pastoral model of their ministry, and of future needs, significant professional development will be essential. The Presbytery as employer needs to lift the bar and this Plan proposes regular monitoring and encouragement of professional development. The Work Group is researching a missional-discipleship learning strategy for ministers.

(Feedback: broad acknowledgement of the need for new dimensions of leadership for the future. Also for new leadership alternatives – bi-vocational, Amorangi / non-stipendiary, self-supporting, etc. How can parish ministers be released from in-house demands for missional initiatives?)

A different model of church and ministry is needed. This strategic Plan recommends enlisting leaders with apostolic calling and gifts, and a transition to this new 'apostolic model'. (See [Appendix One](#) for the rationale.)

(Feedback: A few questioned the term 'apostolic' citing historical connotations (e.g. Roman Catholic, recent Pentecostal movements) or confusion with the first apostles who founded the faith and life of church. Most sought further clarification. The word is retained, holding to the terminology of the Bible and Creeds, and of having a new name for a new model. All five key ministries of Ephesians 4:11 have at times been wrongly exercised. The best synonyms for apostle and apostolic are probably missionary and mission but these too can unhelpful associations.)

Leaders with apostolic calling and giftedness have a primary focus on the mission of God in the world and on the outward growth of Christ's kingdom, working to see that mission expand among new peoples. They have a clarity and drive about the gospel of Jesus Christ and his kingdom, and work to see others come to faith. They are pioneers, with a willingness to adapt thinking and approaches of church and mission, and a willingness to lead through times of discomfort in order to grow effectiveness. (See [Appendix One](#) for a fuller description.)

As the Christ's kingdom expands and people come to faith, those with apostolic gifts are committed to new people being incorporated into a learning, caring, worshipping and missional faith community. As the key leader focuses on the primary apostolic role, others pick up the other roles necessary for the health and growth of the church. Compare the Apostle Paul's return to infant churches to appoint elders. (Acts 14:21-23)

This Strategic Plan recommends re-establishing Parish Reviews, and with a new approach. This will assist in addressing the isolation from Presbytery that many feel, but may also initiate coaching processes. This Strategic Plan also recommends establishing Minister Reviews in association with Parish Reviews, acknowledging the clear link between Minister and Parish, and the need for the Presbytery to better oversee the support and professional development of its key leaders. The terms of reference for both Reviews to be

determined, but would include progress in transitioning to an apostolic model and compliance. [Insights may be gained from some other Presbyteries working on new approaches to Reviews.]
A new name for 'Reviews' is being sought to underline their forward looking focus.

The Work Group is considering ways to better support mission in Cooperative Ventures. It recommends that CVs be invited to adopt the Strategic Plan, with such a commitment understood to be long term and in consultation with other local church partners. When the Presbytery is the Convening Partner, oversight and Reviews would be in terms of the Presbytery's Strategic Plan.

PRESBYTERY RESOURCES

The primary resource for congregations and Presbytery will always be people and leadership.

PROPERTY is another key resource and in property the presbytery is richly endowed. To give an indication: the current Government Valuation of the 42 parishes and 2 camps insured through the PCANZ totals \$106 million. (The 2 camps have a combined GV of \$5 million.)

However there are some major challenges around this property.

- [1] Earthquake strengthening requirements. One fifth of buildings were built prior to 1935 and these especially will require significant expenditure to comply with regulations. On-going maintenance (especially with older buildings) and insurance costs are climbing.
- [2] The configuration of some buildings, built in a previous cultural context, are no longer well suited for ministry and mission in today's context. Sometimes they are simply too big for the present congregation.
- [3] Changes in population, growth and decline, may well mean that Presbytery's overall property resource may no longer be in the best place for missional use.
- [4] No land has been secured in major growth areas for the future use of the church.

Property is a key resource and is a significant stewardship issue for the Presbytery. The Presbyterian Theology of property stresses that the local congregation does not own the property they use, but that they are stewards of it for God's mission in the world. A concern beyond ourselves and a spirit of generosity are key ideals. The Plan recommends some rationalisation of property and the use of it for the Presbytery as a whole.

FINANCE is another key resource and again the Presbytery has considerable resources.

The 2017 Statistics Returns record that the parishes of the Presbytery (Presbyterian and Cooperative Ventures) had a total gross income of \$7.4 million, and cash and investments totally \$10.2 million. In addition there are funds (& property) held in separate Trusts by some congregations.

However there are some major challenges around finances.

- [1] Many congregations struggle to fund basic needs, to employ ministers/staff, or to start new ministries.
- [2] With decline, finance is increasingly spent on internal requirements and less on outward mission.
- [3] Giving is often sustained by older members with the natural attrition of this age group, and with younger generations likely to have different giving patterns.

The presbytery itself has limited financial resources. In the year ending 30.6.18 gross income was \$84,628, (plus \$36,789 Vanuatu appeal) with \$48,819 from parish levies. Total expenditure was \$195,154 with a deficit of \$112,476. Funds available for mission include \$300,300 from the Ngahinapouri insurance and \$199,783 in the NE Hamilton Development Fund (as at 9.4.19). These are very limited resources to assist parishes financially, to initiate new leadership and projects, or to secure land in new residential areas. Finance is also a major stewardship issue and this resource should be reviewed. This Plan recommends the creation and growth of a Mission Initiatives Fund.

(Feedback: some concern about local funds staying local. We believe the entire fund should be available to the whole presbytery area, with any area equally able to apply for funding with a compelling mission case.)

RECOMMENDED STRATEGIC ACTIONS

OVERARCHING STRATEGIC ACTION

That the Presbytery, the Council and its Work Groups, the Presbytery's appointees and employees, and the Presbytery's programmes prioritise the mission of God and align its decisions and work with that mission.

That the Presbytery affirm the establishment of new congregations within and beyond current parishes as a key missional practice.

(Commentary: 'Transition' is the key process. While there is urgency, fundamental changes in thinking, culture and activity take time. Transition will require experimentation and learning. It will also require sustained acceptance and pursuit of this priority, and the need to build trust.)

[A] SPIRITUAL HEALTH

[1] That the Presbytery Council have as a primary role facilitating a culture and practice of prayer, and prayerful discernment in its work.

[2] That the Presbytery hold an Annual Retreat (in addition to the two Gatherings) to foster spiritual refreshment and renewal.

[3] That the Presbytery's representatives when engaging with ministers and parishes, give precedence to 'spiritual vitality'. (e.g. in Reviews, Ministry Settlement Boards etc.)

[B] HEALTHY AND GROWING CHURCHES

Reviews

[1] That the Presbytery re-establish a three-yearly face to face Parish Review process conducted by personnel from outside the parish, with new terms of reference to be determined. The Review regime to include the two Presbyterian camps.

[2] That the Presbytery create a Minister Review Process to take place alongside each Parish Review.

[3] That the Presbytery may initiate these review processes outside the three yearly regime:

- (a) When requested by the parish or minister;
- (b) When there are known concerns about health and growth, capacities for the future, key property issues, etc;
- (c) When there are known concerns about compliance – health and safety, employment, financial management, etc.

Coaching

[4] That the Presbytery enlist coaches and provide a coaching programme to assist parishes to engage with the mission of God in their locality, to growing the faith community, and where appropriate to establishing new congregations within and beyond current parishes.

[4.1] That all parishes be urged to have an up-to-date and active Mission Plan (Added 2020).

Parishes

[5] That the Presbytery invite Cooperative Ventures to adopt the Strategic Plan, as a long term commitment.

[6] That the Presbytery initiate conversations with parishes where decline or other factors have indicated that renewal is unlikely, with the dissolving of those parishes as a possible outcome, and that where appropriate exploring the formation of an on-going faith community.

[7] That the Presbytery, in line with General Assembly policy, will not approve the amalgamation of congregations where the main reason is addressing decline.

[8] That the Presbytery establish a Task Group of up to three people, led by a skilled catalyst, to assess the current health and growth, leadership and resources of the parishes of Hamilton City, and consider their future in the light of the Strategic Plan.

Partnerships

[9] That the Presbytery build partnerships with PressGo (planning and funding), the Knox Centre for Ministry and Leadership (Seedlings Projects), Te Aka Puaho, Pacific Presbytery and Presbyterian Support Northern, where such partnerships will facilitate the Strategic Plan.

[C] EFFECTIVE MISSIONAL LEADERSHIP

New ministers and other key leaders

[1] That the Presbytery prioritise the enlistment of people with developing missional gifts and experience.
(a) That this include the call to all ministers, and that Ministry Settlement Boards and parishes be aware of this priority.

(b) That the Presbytery's Terms of Call be amended to include this priority.

(c) That Ministers' Study Leave and on-going professional development reflect this priority.

[2] That the Presbytery prioritise the enlistment of people with missional gifts and experience for its Council and Work Groups, and its appointees and employees. That the enlistment emphasise younger generations.

[3] That the Presbytery and parishes cast their nets widely for people with missional gifts; open to leaders and bodies beyond the PCANZ pool and traditional ecumenical partners.

[4] That the Presbytery and parishes be open to new diverse, mission-shaped models of ministry.

[D] PRESBYTERY RESOURCES

[1] That Presbytery establish a 'Mission Initiatives Fund' and raise additional funds for the purpose of resourcing the future mission of the Presbytery. (The terms of reference for the Mission Initiatives Fund were also adopted.)

(i) That the following Presbytery funds be transferred to the Mission Initiatives Fund: the balance of the Ngahinapouri Insurance, and the Development NE Hamilton Fund. With the proviso of holding a \$10,000 reserve for legal expenses and an unspecified amount for assisting with consolidation of parish accounts.

(ii) That a qualified financial team be established to review the Presbytery's current streams of income and present financial assets, within Presbytery and across parishes and recommend any shifts in financial assets and in the creation of new income streams.

(iii) That Presbytery's Mission Initiatives Fund may provide for the financing of personnel for missional leadership and projects. The Fund may also provide for the purchase of land for new church / mission centres in growing residential areas. Projects may be on the initiative of parishes or the Presbytery.

(iv) That the Fund not be available for the maintenance or development of existing facilities, nor for the usual operational costs of Presbytery.

(v) That the entire Fund be available for mission projects within the whole Kaimai Presbytery area.

(vi) That income for the Fund be from the cash and sale of property from dissolved parishes, from net rental or leased presbytery property, interest on the Fund, and other sources as discerned.

(vii) That the Strategic Planning Group process applications to the Fund, for recommendation to the Council of Presbytery for final decision, for approvals above \$10,000.

(viii) That the Presbytery, when overseeing the dissolution of a congregation, and when selling the property of that congregation, will invest the net sale proceeds, along with the parish's cash and investments, in the Mission Initiatives Fund. Where most people of the dissolved parish join another parish, up to 10% of the sale proceeds of the property / cash, may be transferred to the new parish for

Presbytery agreed mission projects. This provision expiring 12 months from the sale date of property or 12 months from the dissolution of the parish regarding cash.

[2] That a qualified financial team be established to review the Presbytery's current streams of income and present financial assets, within Presbytery and across parishes, and consider whether any shifts in financial assets or new income streams would be desirable and possible.

The Presbytery Council enacted the following recommendations.

[3] That Presbytery appoint skilled personnel and create web-based resources to assist parishes fulfil compliance requirements, especially regarding Health and Safety, Financial management, employment and Charities Reporting.

[4] That the Strategic Work Group be a permanent Work Group of the Presbytery and that the Convenor be a member of the Kaimai Council.

[5] That the Strategic Work Group be consulted on all major property applications.

CONCLUSION

These changes being proposed are far-reaching – seeking to address the key realities outlined at the beginning of the paper, and seeking the health and growth of the church in mission. However we journey into the future, the enduring call is to be aligned to the Father's purposes in the world, to be faithful to the commission of the Lord Jesus Christ, and to be inspired and enabled by the Holy Spirit.

Jesus said, "Peace be with you!
As the Father has sent me, I am sending you."
And with that he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit."
(John 20:21-22)

Strategic Work Group personnel:

Garry Marquand (Convenor), Christine Harding, Iain Dickson, Vanya Wallis, Lisa Wells (PressGo).

APPENDIX ONE – The Church, Founded on Apostolic Ministry

**‘We are fellow citizens with God's people and also members of his household,
built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets,
with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone.’ (Ephesians 2:19-20)**

It's clear, the church was and is founded on the apostles and prophets. The twelve are called 'apostles' from the beginning - Luke 6:13; apostles are named first in the New Testament lists – 1 Corinthians 12:28-29 and Ephesians 4:11; the 'mystery of Christ' (that gentiles are also heirs through the gospel) was revealed to them – Ephesians 3:4-6; and they are singled out for rejoicing in the fall of Babylon - Revelation 18:20. The twelve, and then other apostles (e.g. Barnabas, Silas), became the key leaders of the church in mission - the witnesses chosen and sent on mission by Jesus Christ, the Cornerstone – Acts 1:2, 4:33.

The church's long history and our own experience tell a different story. We have participated in a church that we believe is founded on 'pastors and teachers'. The primacy of this 'pastoral model' of church and ministry was nurtured in the context of Christendom and entrenched theologically and in practice. It was not a model of mission because everyone in that context was considered Christian, and therefore the ministries of apostle, prophet and evangelist were not needed and often resisted. This Christendom context was markedly different from the context of the early apostles, and the context of NZ today, with its multi-faiths and diverse cultures. Christendom itself has long since passed, but not its understanding of church founded on 'pastors and teachers'. The inherited pastoral models of worship, ministry and leadership remains the primary paradigm.

The apostolic foundation is expressed in the Nicene Creed in the phrase: '*We believe in one, holy, catholic, and apostolic church*'. All major church traditions affirm that 'apostolic' here means the church is founded not only

on the teaching of the apostles but also on their proclamation of the gospel and the missional expansion of the church. Faithfulness to the Creed and to Christ is found wherever the church is apostolic.

The apostolic ministry is understood in the core meaning of the word – apostles are the ‘sent ones’. They are the ones embodying the core DNA of the church, the participation of God’s people in God’s mission in and for the world. John’s version of the great commission expresses this as, ‘As the Father has sent me, I am sending you. (John 20:21) The prophets’ associated ministry is to help guard this core DNA, to alert the church when it veers off course, so that God’s people will remain faithful to their apostolic calling.

Both apostles and prophets, and especially the former, have the responsibility of preserving the missional call of the church, actively promoting it, mobilising for it and participating in it. Mission is to be the primary organising principle of the church so that the kingdom may be extended and new churches planted. In this environment evangelism, the calling of individuals to faith in Christ, can be initiated and flourish.

The apostolic ministry, and the recruitment of people with apostolic gifts, is the primary need for the church today, given that our context is radically different from that of much of church history. Over recent decades there has been momentous societal change, the church is increasingly on the margins and having little impact on culture, large numbers have no church background, and relatively few are being won to faith in Christ.

The apostolic priority does not devalue pastoral/teaching ministries. The shepherding metaphor of Scripture stresses spiritual nurture and discipleship, so God’s people gather to grow and be equipped for the missional task. Similarly, true worship of God inevitably integrates with mission - *‘Worship which does not beget witness is hypocrisy. We cannot acclaim the worth of God if we have no desire to proclaim it.’* (John Stott) In return participation in God’s mission in the world becomes a major stimulus for spiritual growth and worship.

There is a crucial challenge around leadership. The current model of church and ministry has seen leaders enlisted for pastoral reasons, and the ministries offered (individually and corporately) have been by default pastoral. The NZ context is overwhelmingly missional and therefore the church needs leaders with apostolic gifts, with alternative approaches developed for meeting pastoral, discipleship and worship needs.

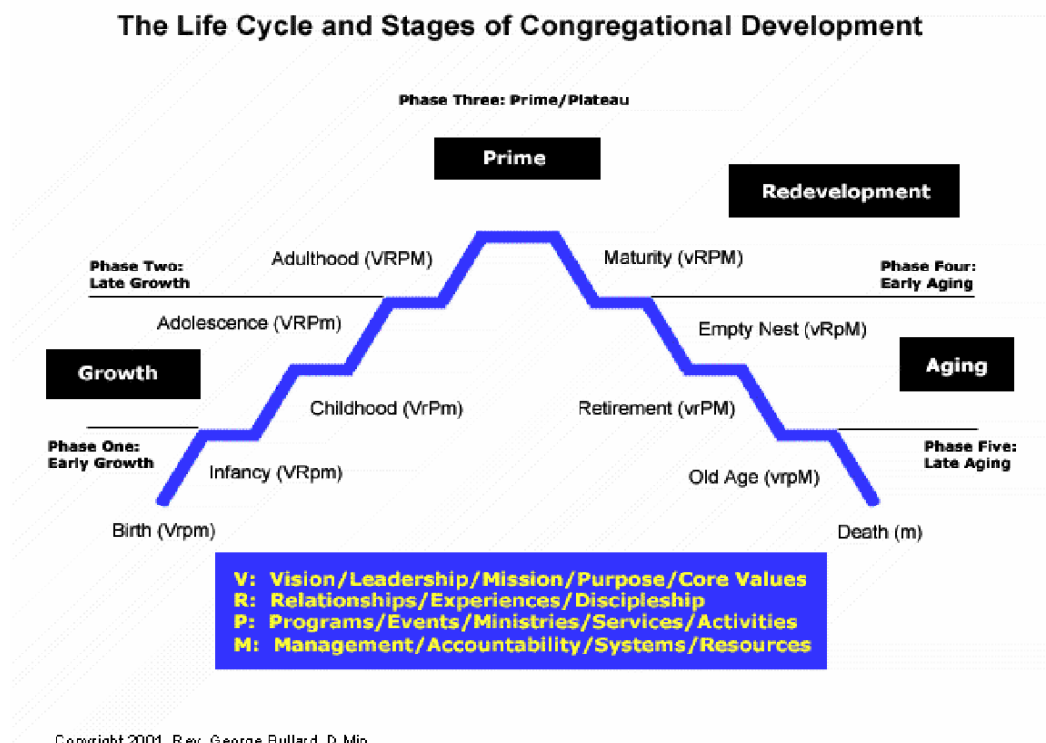
The apostolic motivation and giftedness and ministry includes the following traits:

- [1] A primary focus on the mission of God in the world and on the outward growth of Christ’s kingdom, working to see the mission of God expand into new territory – different segments of the population, completely non-churched, younger generations, ethnic groups, geographic areas etc.
- [2] A clarity about the gospel of Jesus Christ and a commitment to its effective communication. An active engagement with the evangelistic mandate to see individuals and groups journey to faith in Christ. As Jesus, to seek and to save the lost (Luke 19:10)
- [3] An understanding that the church is part of the gospel – God’s people embodying new life in Christ and aligning the church’s structures, resources and activities with its primary missional calling.
- [4] A drive to facilitate a different more effective future for the church in a changing world context, adopting ways of thinking and operating alternative from the status quo as needed.
- [5] A willingness to establish fresh expressions of faith community and create new faith communities.
- [6] A pioneering, courageous, entrepreneurial, adventurous spirit, and the ability to inspire others and mobilise them into missional service.

These gifts are essential for the health and growth of the churches today, churches ‘built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets’.

APPENDIX TWO – Church Life-Cycle and Church Planting

The Life cycle of a congregation and the need for denominations to keep planning new churches. This diagram by Rev George Buller comes from an article by him based on research into the stages of development of a congregation.ⁱ While it is true that all research diagrams are approximations and are often



inaccurate and don't reflect reality in all cases they offer a clear insight into a "normal" process in congregational life. The insight this gives helps to explain the reality which so many Presbyterian Congregations find themselves in. While it is also true that the process is not inevitable and there are examples of "Comeback Churches" i.e. churches which have reversed the trend and have arrested decline. But these churches are the exception rather than the rule. Often also new sociological factors arise that change the culture or social environment in which that church is placed.

We must also realize that if this life cycle is duplicated within our denomination then for us to not just survive but also grow we will need to plant, establish, or develop new congregations.ⁱⁱ

That was the finding of the Southern Baptist Denomination.ⁱⁱⁱ This denomination saw an increase in 2008 of .22% even though almost all other main line churches with the exception of the Roman Catholic Church saw a decline. ^{iv}Planting new churches in new areas of population's growth was a key to this strategy. The question is how can we do this?

What faces us as the Kaimai Presbytery is; if this life cycle is a reality and we have some congregations that are at the end of their "life Cycle," what we can do? Buller suggests there are 4 ways in which congregations who experience death can live through a resurrection. Note: Death here is the end of this particular congregation.

1. Another congregation can purchase the facilities and provide Christian ministry to the community targeted by the former congregation.
2. The resources of the former congregation can be used to give life to other congregations.
3. A remnant from the former congregation can be part of the birth of a new congregation. (Note: This is not amalgamation.)
4. Their denomination can use the financial assets of the former congregation to start new congregations.

Seen in this light the death of a congregation has resurrection elements that may facilitate the continued growth of the denomination.

In this **Strategic Plan** we are advocating the using of the resources that have been built up often over a long period of time as “capital” both physical and spiritual for the establishment of new congregations within the Kaimai Presbytery. For example, the assets of one church are sold and the proceeds are used to buy land or buildings or even fund new mission seedlings in a new growing housing area in a different part of the Presbytery. The new congregation is therefore thankful for the faithful stewardship of a previous congregation. This could be likened to an organ donation by the dying church.

In our present environment, Presbytery needs to see this as a valid and important mission strategy. We have many growth opportunities where a new development or mission needs the initial investment of capital to buy land. Our conviction is that our model of establishing new churches should not neglect the establishing of Parish based churches in new housing areas. This model of church growth is continuing to be effective in Kaimai. When denominations stop planting new congregations they decline. The growth of non-denominational churches is proof that establishing new congregations is fundamental to church growth.

Penny Marler and Kirk Hadaway in their analysis of 7 denominations in the research paper “Recent Denominational Research in New Church Development”^v strongly concluded: The correlation between the new church start rate and percent membership change is a very strong correlation. Growing denominations have higher rates of New Church Development.

Kaimai Presbytery needs to embrace the establishment of new congregations through and beyond current congregations as a key policy as it moves forward in mission.

ⁱ https://sed-efca.org/wp-content/uploads/2008/08/stages_of_church_life_bullard.pdf

ⁱⁱ <https://alban.org/archive/from-birth-to-death-exploring-the-life-cycle-of-the-church/>

ⁱⁱⁱ https://s3.amazonaws.com/path1/Files/recent_denominationa.pdf

^{iv} www.one-eternal-day.com/2008/02/denominational-growth-and-decline.html

^v https://s3.amazonaws.com/path1/Files/recent_denominationa.pdf