

# Northern Presbytery Strategic Plan



## INTRODUCTION

Focused on Auckland, a compelling Case for Change was produced by the Presbytery's Think Tank in late 2019 and highlighted significant challenges and opportunities. In terms of challenges, for example, there was a 7% decline in membership and a 6% decline in attendances for Auckland Presbyterian churches between 2014 and 2018. This trend of decline is occurring elsewhere. Between 2008 to 2018 membership among Northern Presbytery churches decreased by 23%, which was similar to 22% reduction in membership across PCANZ, and attendances decreased by 44%.

Further, it showed that a significant number of our ordained ministers will be retiring within the next five years, and there are few who are beginning active ministry each year. If nothing changes, there will not be enough ordained ministers to support all of our churches, particularly if the same model of ministry continues unilaterally. Conversely, the population growth that is occurring is providing opportunities and the response to Covid 19 demonstrates the church is able to adapt.

A quantum change is necessary, which will require intentionality, faith, courage, hopefulness; engagement of and support from many across the presbytery - all of us working well together! Acknowledging and expressing appreciation for our history and the continued dedication of many, this Strategic Plan provides the direction ahead for the Northern Presbytery

# VISION: WORKING TOGETHER FOR A BETTER FUTURE

## STATEMENT OF INTENT

To be a network of churches and ministry enterprises that reflect the gospel of Christ. Such churches and ministries are vibrant, life-giving, growing and making disciples, culturally adapted to their setting and reaching across generations and ethnicity. Communities gather to worship, hear from God, love and support each other, and encourage each other in Christian service and witness. These churches are renowned for their hospitality and generosity, deeply committed to justice and transformation through God's saving grace, sharing Christ in attitude, deed and word in wider society. They are innovative and imaginative, connect authentically with children and young people, reframing the one gospel in many and varied ways in their worship and life. Establishing new initiatives giving fresh expression to the gospel is a core feature of this network.

## STRATEGIC GOALS AND INITIATIVES

### Goals

1. Extend working together and leader development



2. Churches become more intentional and engaged with their communities



3. The Presbytery culture, decision making, resource allocation and operations support achieving our vision for the future



### Initiatives

- 1.1 Seek opportunities to inspire and support each other and embrace innovation aimed at helping people journey to faith
- 1.2 Encourage and increase support people progressing to become ordained or in lay ministry
- 2.1 Encourage and increase support for mission initiatives, including fresh expression to the gospel
- 2.2 Provide support for churches most at risk and address their current realities to clarify their future
- 2.3 Model inter-cultural inclusiveness within our churches
- 2.4 Provide practical tools to encourage a culture and practice of prayer and on-going growth as disciples of Jesus Christ
- 2.5 Model children and youth friendly churches, learning from one another to have vibrant ministries
- 3.1 Increase engagement between churches, ministries and presbytery
- 3.2 Align congregational reviews to encourage mission shaped churches and ministry
- 3.3 Utilise presbytery structures, processes and resources (including financial) to achieve our strategic goals
- 3.4 Collect, analyse and communicate information that conveys progress in achieving our vision for the future