

Why do we need to do this?

At the moment, we have no way to collectively fund promising growth ideas. Projects such as these:

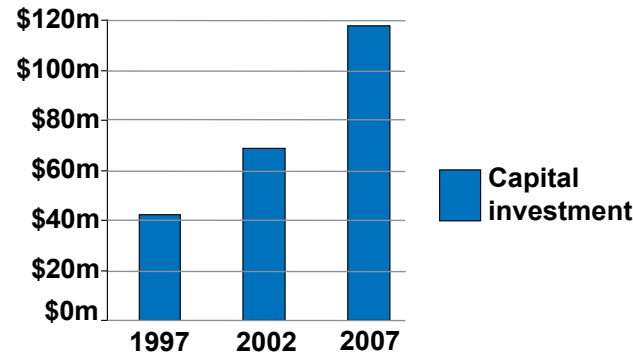
- > Bethlehem Community Church near Tauranga has invested in a multipurpose facility for its booming community. But this is just stage one; stage two would include a hall that could seat more than 350. Resource consent has been obtained, but the cost of building remains a barrier.
- > Taranaki's Knox Waitara supports a growing and dynamic mission in their community. Children and families, many from homes with very limited means, some with gang affiliations and most with no church involvement, are being reached by this work. But their work is hampered by their facilities' limitations.
- > Three adjacent congregations in a major city are looking at selling their properties and moving into a single worship and community centre. They need help paying the interest on bridging finance that will give them the time and space to purchase a new facility while selling their three existing church buildings. Cost: an interest free loan of \$100,000

These aren't the only good ideas with growth potential in our Church. But at the moment, there is no mechanism for evaluating and funding promising projects collectively. We know the qualities that successful ministries share, and we can identify whether a project has a good chance of success.

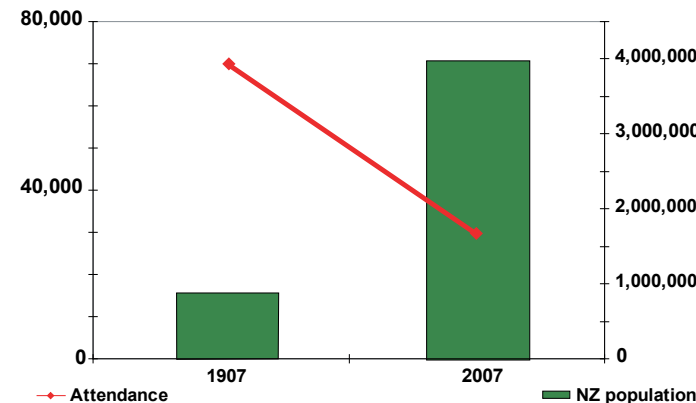
Press Go is about sharing the costs and benefits of being part of God's church, so that more New Zealanders are touched by the Good News.

How can we respond to these needs?

Our churches are collectively rich in resources, such as property, buildings and investments, and their worth is increasing.



At the same time, the number of people associated with the Presbyterian Church has decreased.



In the midst of decline, there are some real signs of growth. We **can** move to revitalise the Church. Decline is not inevitable, and we can point to successful mission projects around the country.

Many of our congregations consist of people passionate about the Gospel and about making an impact in their community. More than 600 people from churches spread between Invercargill and Whangarei attended workshops this year on "Standing out" in your community.

Where would the money come from?

- > Funds from the sale of Laughton House
- > Inviting all congregations and presbyteries to provide a 1 percent return on their cash and building investments. If parishes and presbyteries each provided just 1 percent return on their investments to Press Go, more than \$1 million a year would be available to support growth.

- > Bequests and private donors

Every week we dedicate our resources to God. As a church we have all the wealth that we need to support dynamic and growing mission projects.

How would the funding mechanism work?

A parish submits an application for initial evaluation. If the project meets key criteria, the Finance Manager will work with the parish to develop a full business plan to be submitted to the Press Go board, which is comprised of respected Church leaders and businesspeople. The board decides if projects will be funded, based on well-published criteria.

What will successful projects share?

- > The belief that we're here for others, not ourselves
- > A readiness to try something new
- > A strong administrative structure that supports a team of gifted leaders
- > Worship reflecting the culture and context of the target congregation
- > A commitment to children and young people
- > Enough resources to provide warm hospitality in a welcoming environment

The Church we know so well was shaped for another era, and that era was Christendom. Christendom assumed the centrality of the Church and the prominence of Christianity in Western society.

We now live in a post-Christendom era, which is both secular and pluralistic. Whilst overall church attendance is down on what it used to be, there is an encouraging rediscovery of the importance of mission as well as exciting pockets of growth and revitalisation in our Church.

The Spirit is reshaping us for life and mission in this new era. This brings with it certain challenges, not least of which is that of freeing up the necessary resources to fund new mission initiatives.

This is what Press Go is all about.

Where to from here?

Proposals will be brought before General Assembly 2008 on:

- > The establishment of a Growth Work Group
- > Criteria for funding
- > Inviting congregations to provide a 1 per cent return on their money and property investments

What can I do?

- > Pray
- > Discuss these ideas with your church, session and others
- > Check out more details about Press Go at www.presbyterian.org.nz
- > Suggest promising projects or offer thoughts and comments to aes@presbyterian.org.nz

Press Go 
Sharing in the future of our Church

The vision:

Every church or presbytery committed to a growth project will receive the resources they need

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