

CHURCHES OF CHRIST IN NSW  
FOR THE YEAR ENDING  
30 JUNE 2015

# ANNUAL REPORT



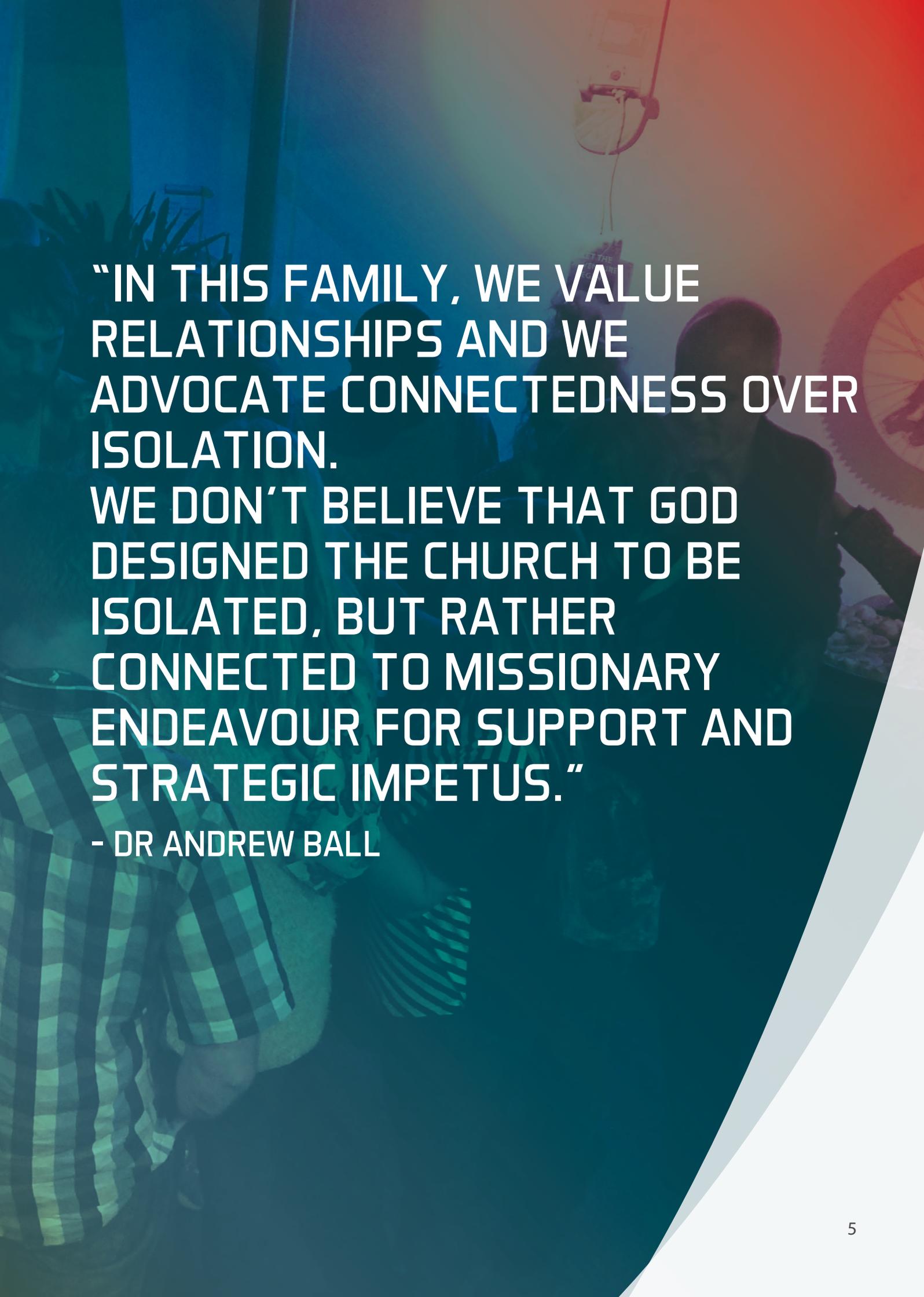
fresh hope



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STRATEGIC IMPETUS.”**

**- DR ANDREW BALL**

# THE PRESIDENT & EXECUTIVE MINISTRY DIRECTOR

2015 marks the end of another significant year for Churches of Christ in NSW and the ACT. Our Fresh Hope team aligned the reporting year around the theme 'The Adventurous Spirit' with the intention of calling our family of churches and their leaders into a new season of change, opportunity and discovery.

In a world that's constantly shifting, it seems inevitable that many see the church as a place of refuge from the buffeting cultural and societal changes that can cause trauma and pain. We would respond and assert that the church is not intended to inoculate us from pain. Rather, it's a community set apart to restore and heal disciples, and then most importantly, to train and release us for mission into wholehearted living.

Australian author, Tim Winton, in his landscape memoir 'Island Home' writes about Australians and their spirituality. "We're pretty good at maintaining a secular public space, and that's worth celebrating, but we're a bit tin-eared about matters of religion and anxious about using terms like 'sacred'. This strikes me as a bit ironic, for we live on the most spiritually potent continent imaginable. But apart from the family, the only thing sacred to most of us is our much-vaunted 'way of life'."

As followers of Jesus, there is a certain biblical assurance about our 'way of life'. Implicit is our lifestyle – we are different, set apart to offer hope and love to a hurting world. We are grateful to the many staff and disciples within our movement who offer their service freely with passion and intention. This consolidated annual report shines of

many wonderful examples of ministry and mission dispersed throughout many churches and ministries. We'd like to thank those on the front-line who continue to serve with passion and integrity.

We remain convicted that our network needs to express and model the following elements as an outworking of spiritual adventure.

## **FINDING OUR CONNECTEDNESS**

We want you to belong to this network for all of the right reasons. The Fresh Hope Network is not a structured denomination – we prefer to refer to ourselves as a family of churches and ministries. In this family, we value relationships and we advocate connectedness over isolation. We don't believe that God designed the church to be isolated, but rather connected to missionary endeavour for support and strategic impetus. Your level of connection to this network is very important to us, as we seek to provide Godly spiritual support and oversight in partnership.

## **EXPRESSING OUR MISSION**

The creativity found in God's people is outstanding – a reflection of God's grace evidenced through His church. Within the Fresh Hope Network, we intentionally encourage churches and ministries to express their mission in their context with innovation and creativity. We don't believe that God limits his mission to franchised models or pragmatic thinking, and so encourage the expression of relevant, new outreach methods and opportunities.



We must move beyond the 'we've always done it this way' thinking into 'let's have a go and trust that God will bear fruit from a new venture' thinking. This is not reckless behaviour, but a call to spiritual adventure.

### **DISCOVERING OUR KINGDOM AUTHORITY**

The mission of the church and its ministries is validated because of God's kingdom. Jesus sent the twelve disciples out in power and authority to heal and proclaim God's kingdom (Lk. 9:1-2). The distinguishing feature of kingdom activity suggests that God's primary strategy for engagement is the church and its ministries. While the kingdom transcends all creation, authority is vested in God's people to bring the kingdom to earth. We encourage you to explore the implications of kingdom living, ever reliant on the authority of God's word, the power of the Holy Spirit and Jesus.

### **NURTURING OUR SPIRITUALITY**

We are so blessed to live in this great Southland. And yet all around us we see so much striving and energy focussed on self rather than God. The essential element of Christian spirituality is a call to 'die to self' and allow God to restore and renew our personhood under His sovereignty. The frenetic pace of life, with all of its distractions and stressors, is blight to our spiritual growth and well-being. We implore you to restore healthy balance to self, family and community, modelling times for retreat and deep engagement with God in prayer through His word.

### **TRANSFORMING OUR COMMUNITY**

There is no higher calling than to offer oneself in service to God's purposes and agenda, being cognisant of the season. True mission embodies choice and cost. Imagine a church committed

to spend more resources on community than maintenance of church and programs? To this end we prayerfully ask for a revolution. Across the length and breadth of this great country, communities everywhere need to experience the transforming love and grace found in Jesus. We believe it's possible. We believe it's found in the DNA of Churches of Christ – a movement set apart by God for all peoples to utilise their gifts in community transformation.

Being the church with its activities means we are ready for the next journey.

*"That night Paul had a dream: A Macedonian stood on the far shore and called across the sea, "Come over to Macedonia and help us!" The dream gave Paul his map. We went to work at once getting things ready to cross over to Macedonia. All the pieces had come together. We knew now for sure that God had called us to preach the good news to the Europeans." Acts 16:9-10 (MSG)*

As we contemplate the challenges of the era, we respond to the still small promptings of the Spirit – move on beyond the harbour; venture forth into the wild seas for a new map awaits as we chart a course relevant to our context. Australia needs a vibrant relevant church full of disciples convicted to preach the good news found in Jesus. How willing are you to venture forth beyond the harbour?

Troy Blair  
Conference President

Andrew Ball  
Executive Ministry Director

# LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT IMPART | NAVIGATE

Spiritual leadership development is always challenging. Here at Fresh Hope, we are continually stirred to seek out ways of providing opportunities for people to grow as passionate disciples of Jesus who live wholeheartedly with the one life they are given. Willard states:

*“The greatest issue facing the world today, with all its heartbreaking needs, is whether those who, by profession or culture, are identified as ‘Christians’ will become disciples – students, apprentices, practitioners – of Jesus Christ, steadily learning from him how to live the life of the Kingdom of the Heavens into every corner of human existence.”*

- Dallas Willard, The Great Omission

This year we have had 30 students learning to become disciples of Jesus through the Fresh Hope Navigate & Impart programs.

Like any other apprenticeship models, during this time, there have been intentional learning moments, just in time learning moments and also space to process painful moments.

Confronted with the dominion of a heavenly kingdom and the invitation to surrender their personal kingdom to the rule of God is the beginning of a transformational process. False self does not surrender that easily and we need the love and care of spiritual friends to have the courage to let go and let God.

The process of alignment to kingdom values has taken most of the students to an ‘end of themselves’ experience.

I take great comfort in these words from Jesus talking about the kingdom.

**“You’re blessed when you’re at the end of your rope. With less of you there is more of God and his rule.”** Matthew 5:3 (MSG)

Our students have had a diverse range of practical learning experiences this year in mission and ministry. One has served at Food For Life in Auburn, another moved to Canberra to work with Missionheart for 5 months, another worked in Vietnam at Bright Solutions, and others have been stretched in their local churches. I am encouraged to see the intent of our students to live wholeheartedly under the teaching and rule of Jesus in a culture that is moving in the opposite direction.

The time-tested measurement for maturity is a lifelong discipleship journey towards Christ likeness. Our movement is attempting to restore this as the only benchmark that matters for those who call themselves followers of Jesus.

In the year ahead we are offering several opportunities for people to take another step towards Christ likeness. These are not limited to the young. Spiritual Mentoring is continuing to see leaders becoming practitioners of Jesus Christ and Impact and Recharge provide new opportunities for people to take time to grow in their discipleship journey.

I want to express my thanks for the opportunity I was given to take a sabbatical this year. The gift of time to intentionally take stock of my own discipleship journey towards Christ likeness was needed and appreciated after 10 years in my present role. A week in residence with Dr Larry Crabb, a week in prayerful counselling, a Ransomed Heart Men's Intensive and a couple of national parks to explore, renewed my soul and created memories that will last for the rest of my life.

I am very grateful for the team at Fresh Hope who continue to faithfully serve the Kingdom of God through the local churches that are part of our Movement.

John Crowther  
Director | Leadership Development



# LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT MINISTRY CARE NETWORK

Again this year, it has been my privilege to work with our pastors throughout the state of New South Wales and ACT. As I reflect on the past twelve months, it brings a mixture of feelings, some very positive and some very challenging. My greatest joy is seeing the growth in healthy relationships and support between pastors of different churches and the ways in which they are encouraging and assisting one another.

During my travels throughout the state, the openness and honesty of our pastors has been a great blessing, making my role so much easier and more enjoyable. It hasn't always been this way. As leaders, we have a tendency to protect ourselves at all costs. This may include painting a picture that is not all it seems, making ourselves busier, or more active, or we continue striving with the belief that if only we can do better, we will be loved more by God and by others.

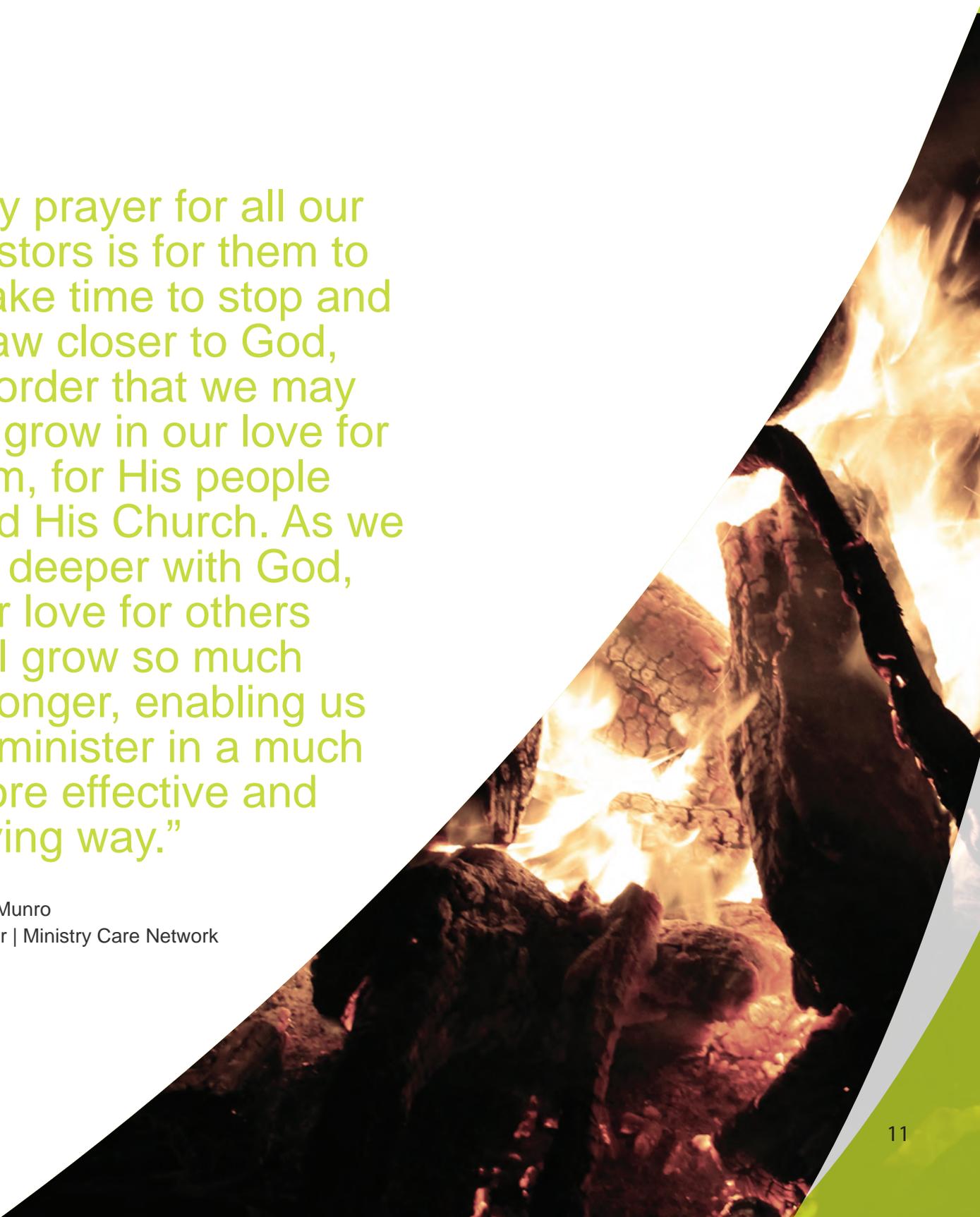
Part of Fresh Hope's desire and commitment is to help support our churches and pastors through the good times and in their challenges, helping them to be all that God has created them to be. I am finding that pastors are living and ministering with a greater sense of anticipation, excitement, expectation and joy of serving.

***"He gave constant encouragement, lifting their spirits and charging them with fresh hope."***

- Acts 20:2 (MSG)

One of the highlights this year has been the pastor's Spiritual Retreat I have been involved with. The hope, support, encouragement and personal spiritual development that I have seen amongst the pastors, have made my year. Seeing pastors openly share & pray together in a small community about their successes and importantly, their areas of difficulties, fears, anxieties and apprehensions, was such an encouragement to me and to all those involved. The honesty that pastors have shown has sometimes been raw and confronting. My responsibility is to be there and listen, support, and encourage without judgement. During the retreats, we have explored areas of personal and spiritual health and leadership. We have also studied topics such as silence, solitude, sabbath, prayer and fasting. The feedback I have had from the pastors and leaders who have attended these retreats has been wonderful to hear.

I understand how easy it is to get busy doing the work of ministry and all that it involves. I also understand that it is easy to neglect our own spiritual growth and health in the midst of everything else going on. It is so important that we intentionally invest time into these things. I encourage any pastor or leader who is not actively involved in a retreat group to join one in the coming year. It is time you make the commitment and make it happen. It's too important to overlook.



“My prayer for all our pastors is for them to make time to stop and draw closer to God, in order that we may all grow in our love for Him, for His people and His Church. As we go deeper with God, our love for others will grow so much stronger, enabling us to minister in a much more effective and loving way.”

Leon Munro  
Leader | Ministry Care Network

# LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT SPIRITUAL MENTORING

Fruitfulness and expansion have been the hallmarks in the Spiritual Mentoring Ministry over the last year. Spiritual Mentoring Cohorts continue to train and model deep community and transformation. The seventh cohort began during this period and to date, 80 leaders have concluded or are still training. A significant percentage of these are now formally mentoring ACOM students as well as church leaders and church members.

Spiritual Mentoring cohorts aim to cultivate a safe environment where the true condition of the inner life can emerge and be tended for transformation. The ongoing retreats hone skills to do this in local and leadership settings.

I continue to be amazed at the grace and excitement in trainees as they experience the insights that come from the presence of God in the group. Increasingly, an outcome in the lives of trainees is not only the capacity to mentor into the lives of others or the experience of deep personal transformation, but unexpected bursts of artistic expression such as painting, poetry and writing from many who have not thought of themselves as creative.

## COHORT E

I am indebted to Geoff Hall who capably co-facilitated Cohort E with me. Cohort E concluded their two year journey April 2015.



*"When I applied for the mentoring cohort I was seeking a professional development experience that would enhance both my personal spiritual journey and increase my effectiveness as a local church minister. The course far exceeded these hopes.*

*What I experienced was a true and rare gift.*

*[I found] a rich community committed to authenticity, people skills and spiritual tools I can use daily in both my personal and ministry life and most significantly, deeper access to my own desire for intimacy with God.*

*This year, I planted a mentoring community in my local church and am delighted to see the fruit of what I have learnt being passed on and creating life, authentic relationships and spiritual transformation in others. Hands down, this is the best personal and professional development I have invested in!"*

Anne Simpson, Community Life Minister, New Day Church Wollongong.

# COHORT F



Trainees from Tweed Heads, Armidale, Canberra, Melbourne, Port Macquarie, Coffs Harbour as well as Sydney area will conclude their unique two year cohort experience at the end of this year. Their latest triumph was to embark together on a 24 hour silent retreat and most found it a life altering experience, as a result, each person committed to live a less hurried and harried life and to find ways to incorporate a more restful rhythm directly within their family life.

*“The Spiritual Mentoring cohort F has been an experience filled with God moments. The retreats have inspired me in my mentoring, but have also cultivated a greater desire for God in my own relationship with Him. I have developed new skills, tools, techniques and insights that have already produced fruit in my current ministry, and I am sure will continue to be of benefit well into the future.”*

**Ryan Clift, Youth Pastor, Tweed Heads Church of Christ**

*“My involvement with Spiritual Mentoring F has had a profound impact upon me, firstly, as a beloved son, and naturally it has had a flow-on effect into my leadership and ministry. As a young man I have naturally sought to dive in the deep end and do it all on my own. But in Spiritual Mentoring I have learnt to slow, to know myself, and to know God’s voice in every season. My ministry and leadership is not dependent upon my busyness and ability, but rather my capacity to go deeper with God.”*

**Charlie Burke, Associate Minister, Pathways Community Church**

*“I found the Spiritual Mentoring course of great benefit to myself, and therefore my church community. I’ve found new freedom, freshness, closeness and intimacy in my journey with Jesus. I am not the same person I was two years ago. That’s a good thing.”*

**Robyn Niebling, Leadership Team, Port Macquarie**

*“ACOM’s Spiritual Mentoring course has helped me to understand more about God, myself and ministry. The course moves beyond filling up your mentoring tool box and helps the participant encounter God and deepen their faith. This has been my experience!*

*I have gone away from the course far more confident in God and His ability to use me in spiritually mentoring others.”*

**Malcolm Campbell, Part-time Chaplain  
Minister with Churches of Christ**

# NORTHERN RIVERS CHURCH OF CHRIST LEADERSHIP COHORT



With three members of Northern Rivers Leadership team already graduated from the Spiritual Mentoring training in Sydney, Northern Rivers Eldership felt led to explore what Spiritual Mentoring Training with Sue might look like transplanted into an in-house localised leadership team cohort. They invited key ministry leaders and elders to participate in a two year pilot cohort held in Federal NSW.

The goals for this cohort included:

- deep formation & spiritual renewal of the eldership/leadership team.
- understanding & equipping of leadership for spiritual mentoring as a core value in their practice.
- leadership bonding as the core team.

Part way through, the leadership is thriving together in this format and on target to meet all hopes and goals.

# COHORT G

In May 2015, Cohort G kicked off with Retreat one of six. We started with a life-story telling day to form deep bonds that propelled the group into an environment of mentoring each other through the highs, lows and hallways of life and ministry.



*"I have just started the two-year Spiritual Cohort G journey, but the reverberations of its impact on my spiritual life have been nothing short of profound. It's an opportunity to carve out space and time and reconnect with the Source, rediscover my identity as His boy, and relearn the art of spiritual disciplines, all this while discovering spiritual mentoring tools, growing in formation with others, and converting this learning into my context.*

*I am very thankful for Spiritual Mentoring because it's changed the way I participate in the mentoring journey with others, and I'm excited for our next live-in!"*

Nathan Marshall, Community Minister: Common Groundz Community Café and Café Church

## **Understanding Your Personality Workshop**

A workshop was held prior to Fresh Hope Collective to assist ministry leaders with understanding their personalities and how this impacts their personal formation, their ministry expression and their relating styles. Leaders and pastors from across New South Wales flew in early to attend this workshop prior to Collective. Another is planned for 2016.

Sue Whiteley  
Facilitator | Spiritual Mentoring

# LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT YOUTH & YOUNG ADULTS

One of the joys of my role as Youth Vision Coordinator is having the opportunity to sit with young (and not so young) leaders across our churches who are pouring themselves into seeing the next generation encounter the life transforming message of Jesus.

There are countless stories of churches engaging a generation that is increasingly alienated from the church, lives being transformed, and young people finding wholeness and restoration in Jesus.

Much of my time with these leaders is full of encouragement. However, there is also a sense that ministering to young people is becoming an increasingly difficult task for the church. We live in a society of distraction where the message of the Gospel and the voice of Jesus' church increasingly gets drowned out. I am grateful for those who serve tirelessly to disciple young people, however, I am also aware that there is a growing need for us to think intentionally about how we can work together as a discipling community. Churches must wrestle with how to become communities that invite and embrace young people into a 'family' that both model a passionate life of following Jesus as well as invites and instructs them into the deeper adventure of pursuing Jesus. This cannot be the job of only a chosen few for it is in community that lives are formed and transformed, and we must provide this for our youth more and more.



**youthvision**  
NEW SOUTH WALES

## KEY EVENTS/INITIATIVES:

### UPRISING

In its fourth year, UPRISING gathered about 50 participants - 30 students, 12 apprentice leaders and 8 core leaders. It was a powerful week for all involved. In 2014, we partnered with The Tops Southern Cross Kids Camp to give our students an opportunity to lead on mission amongst kids from difficult backgrounds. It was incredible to see year 10-12 students selflessly leading 50 kids from difficult backgrounds and expressing God's love.

### SHIFT: m2M

It was a real joy to partner with Ryan Sherring (Campus Crusade for Christ) to launch another Shift group in 2015. We had 12 participants from across a variety of ministries and missions, including 7 of our own youth pastors and key leaders from Churches of Christ. Shift has been a catalyst for helping leaders develop a discipling framework for their ministries and personal lives. We are constantly encouraged by the fruit this is bearing as these leaders continue to intentionally invest in those God has given them.

## NSW 2015 SNAPSHOT

**FOCUS:** 30 Churches employ someone in part time, student, or full time capacity to focus on youth or young adults.

**ENGAGEMENT:** Approximately 38 churches are engaged in a Youth Vision NSW Initiative.

**LEADERSHIP:** 29 young leaders engaged in Fresh Hope Leadership Pathways (Navigate/Impart/Tops Internship) & around 50 leaders attended the NYMC Encore event with Mike Pilavachi.

**CONNECTION:** Over 270 people attended DRASTIC 2014.

## YOUTH MINISTRY:

### FUSE

FUSE continues to expand as more youth groups see it as a vital event in helping their young people encounter Jesus. FUSE in November 2014 at Rivergum was an incredible event with Dan Hardie presenting the gospel, and in May at Restore Church it was a pleasure to have Emily Willard speak. FUSE has been developed with a priority of presenting the gospel and is seen as a core opportunity for young people to decide to follow Jesus.

### DRASTIC (Into the Wild)

In 2014, DRASTIC grew by almost 80 people to 260. For the first time DRASTIC was fully sold out, with a waiting list. The week was an amazing opportunity for young people to encounter Jesus. Many made first time decisions to follow Jesus and many others took significant steps forward in their faith. Thanks again to Alasdair and Michelle MacDougall for their leadership of this event, and also to Alex Murfet and Josh Pipes for their significant contributions in directing key aspects.

Thanks again to all those youth pastors and key leaders who have a vision that is greater than their local context and invest so much in building our broader movement. It is a joy to serve alongside you.

Steve Hodgson  
Leader | Youth Vision NSW/Fresh Hope Youth

# LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT CHURCH ENGAGEMENT

Since commencing this role in July 2014, I have had the privilege of leading the Fresh Hope Church Engagement Ministry focussing on church health and development.

This involves travelling across NSW & ACT for individual conversations with pastors and leaders, meeting with elderships and boards, and facilitating training and visioning workshops with churches. Over the course of the year, I have enjoyed building relationships with a range of churches from across our Fresh Hope Movement. I have worked directly with more than 15 of these churches in regards to church health & development.

## **Some of the highlights from this time have been:**

- Celebrating a number of church anniversaries and seeing all that God has done in both the past and the present.
- Working with churches who are attempting to or beginning to move in new directions, including some considering planting daughter churches.
- A successful merger of two churches, with two further churches also engaging in a merger.
- Facilitation of a number of churches in transition between pastors. For some this has meant attending to aspects of health such as relationship reconciliation, re-shaping leadership/governance, or gaining clarity around their vision.
- Working with a church in conflict.

- Two churches under Conference governance have made significant gains in their health and finances, with another appreciating a time of stability.
- Linking with churches that have been less connected to the Fresh Hope Movement.
- Assisting churches that are contemplating affiliation.
- Development of resources for pastors and leaders of churches for the Fresh Hope website.

I have enjoyed preaching at many of the churches I am working with and occasionally at other churches, along with presenting at conferences and publishing resources on faith sharing, multicultural ministry, and church revitalisation.

## **Going forward, our aim for this ministry is to:**

- assist churches to monitor their health 'on-the-fly.'
- develop training days for pastors, especially in regional areas.
- seek to widen the non-staff team of those committed to supporting church health in a variety of ways.
- continue working with healthy churches who want to take the next step in their development through clarifying ethos/visioning and in other ways.

Dr Ian Duncum  
Ministry Leader | Church Engagement



# CORPORATE SERVICES

The Corporate Services team brings together the functions of Human Resources, Payroll, Work Health and Safety (WHS), Finance, Procurement, Fleet, Insurances, Information Technology and Ministry Services, with a mandate to provide services right across our Fresh Hope activities.

The Finance team, under the leadership of Nirajah Mahendra, had a great year. Day 5 reporting has been consistently achieved along with better financial analysis and commentary. The InviBox supplier invoice processing system was implemented. Belinda Edwards went on maternity leave, Ritika Lall assumed responsibility for the financial reporting & processes, and Julie Dai joined the team for maternity relief. Leona Gong took on the accounting responsibility for Careworks, Property Trust & Conference. Claire Forbes (Procurement) negotiated some excellent contracts. Scott Griffiths (contractor) assisted with many improvement projects, including the development of dashboard reporting.

The Human Resources team of John Favaloro and Katerina Tsvirko excelled with the successful negotiation of the Living Care Enterprise Agreement, as well as the implementation of the Living Care management restructure and the recruitment of key roles. JLT provided professional advice on workers compensation claims management, Return To Work programs and WHS systems.

A Payroll Manager, Donna Vigorelli, was recruited to lead the payroll team, manage system improvements and improve stakeholder communication.

The Information Technology team, led by CIO Ivo Horner, worked on a wide range of system enhancement projects as well as support tasks. High on this list are systems for Consumer Directed Care and for aged care funding, as well as improved reporting and data management. A detailed IT Risk Review report was prepared by our outsourced system provider (Daraco), identifying opportunities to strengthen our systems.

The Audit Committee continued to play a key role in the oversight of the external audit by KPMG. Nearly all of the recommendations raised by KPMG in their audits to date have now been resolved, with no new recommendations raised in the past year.

The Investment Committee met quarterly with UBS, our Investment Adviser, to discuss portfolio performance and investment strategy. UBS have continued to impress with the quality of their advice, communication and service levels.

Risk Advisory Services was engaged to conduct a tender for our insurance broker, which led to the appointment of JLT. Significant savings in insurance premiums were made at the September renewal, with a better range of cover.

Our Ministry Services team led by Sandra Noel continues to provide assistance to churches and ministers with an emphasis on ministry support, communicating Fresh Hope stories, creating spaces for time together and assisting our family of churches to bring the message of fresh hope to their local communities. Our focus over the past 12 months included launching the first annual Fresh Hope Collective, developing a presence in social media, increasing online information in the website member's area, along with the everyday administration in Working With Children Checks, Special Religious Education and Endorsement.

A team building day for Rhodes staff was held at The Tops on 23 July 2014.

Max Hopkins  
Director | Corporate Services

# FRESH HOPE INITIATIVE CAREWORKS

Careworks seeks to be a ministry resource for local Churches of Christ that have a desire to meet the needs of people who are marginalised and oppressed in the community around them, bringing them fresh hope and enabling transformation in their lives.

This year, Careworks has focussed on the issue of food security and with the assistance of Julia Crane, our Impart student from Engadine Church of Christ, Careworks produced a video that was shown at Collective and sent to every church within our movement. The video highlighted a number of projects where our partners are providing food for people and helping them with their basic needs. We can see Jesus providing for people's basic needs in the following passage:

***When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them and healed their sick. As evening approached, the disciples came to him and said, "This is a remote place, and it's already getting late. Send the crowds away, so they can go to the villages and buy themselves some food." Jesus replied, "They do not need to go away. You give them something to eat."***

Matthew 14:14-18

Jesus had compassion on the people he saw. In Matthew 9, it says Jesus was "moved with compassion" when he saw the crowds in their harassed and helpless state. In both passages, we note that Jesus really sees people and his default response is to have compassion on them. In our hectic society, it is too easy not to see people and instead of having compassion on people, we can become bothered by the crowds. Being able to slow down, to notice, to listen and to be interested in others is a habit we need to learn as we seek to imitate our master Jesus.

## Focus on Learning

As we seek to learn better practices in the services we provide, Careworks facilitated a professional development workshop at Collective focusing on food security. Presented by "Second Bite" we were challenged to source and provide nutritious food to the people we serve through food programs. Furthermore, we were challenged to think about how we can teach and empower those who come for a meal, about purchasing and preparing their own healthy food options.

Careworks also facilitated a professional development workshop at Awakening on the topic of refugees. We were privileged to have Greg Lake (a former Manager of Detention Centres) present the moral and ethical dilemmas in the management of refugees. As Christians we were challenged to think about how we, as a church, can care for and provide a home for refugees.



In partnership with GMP and ACOM, Careworks facilitated a new subject called "Partnering together for stronger communities." Participants, including four of our partner churches, were challenged to evaluate current practices and allow broader participation from the community in their programs.



## Chaplaincy

Careworks continues to place chaplains in hospitals, prisons and schools, but primarily Careworks manages the strategic placement of chaplains with the facilities that Living Care operates and the services it provides.

Careworks provides an annual retreat for its chaplains. It's a time of refreshment, fellowship and learning. The guest speaker, Kate Bradford, a chaplain at Westmead Children's Hospital, presented a theological framework for chaplains being missionaries in a foreign context.

## Fresh Hope Housing

The regulation of community housing has recently been transferred to the federal government, resulting in all housing providers having to re-register with the National Regulator. In response, Careworks has created a new organisation "Fresh Hope Housing" so that churches can still be involved in the provision of community housing under a legally registered governing body.

Though Careworks will manage the provision of housing to people in need of accommodation, Fresh Hope Housing has been placed under the governance of the Property Trust. Strategically, churches will be encouraged to include affordable housing accommodation as part of their solution when considering redevelopment opportunities.

## 2014/15 Accounts

Careworks has formal partnerships with nineteen churches that conduct a wide range of community activities including food relief, meals, recycled clothing

shops, community sheds and spaces, housing, counselling, chaplaincy and homework clubs.

In 2014/15, a total of \$177k in tax deductible donations was received (\$224k in 2013/14). The Careworks Ministry Team granted \$99k from the general purpose fund (including past donations) to its partner churches. Careworks also facilitated the receipt of \$812k in government funding (\$1,042k in 2013/14).

Careworks would like to thank the many people who give financially to support the continuance of this ministry.

## Looking forward

From 1 July 2015, the ministry of Careworks has been strategically placed under the umbrella of the Ministry Services and Church Resource Team led by John Crowther. Careworks would like to thank the long serving members of the Ministry Team that led Careworks up until this change: Neil Preston, Lynda Clark, Wayne Morris, Steve Smith and Andrew Ball.

Careworks is committed to continuous improvement and learning. An evaluation framework will be developed to support its partners, along with reworking its partnership agreement so that it functions under a Biblical basis of care and recognises best practice principles in the provision of that care.

Richard Reeve  
Ministry Leader | Careworks

**careworks**  
...bringing fresh hope

# FRESH HOPE INITIATIVE ACOM

(1 January - 31 December 2015)

The Australian College of Ministries (ACOM) is distinctively a college of ministry. Our desire is that Churches of Christ are led by men and women who are spiritually formed, theologically sound, pastorally proficient, and missionally focused. At our core we believe the restoration plea is a current, fresh and applicable framework for the formation of effective ministers and missionaries who can lead Churches of Christ across the country.

Commencing our 73rd year of service to Churches of Christ in NSW, our courses are tailored for God's people wherever they work, minister and live - in the church, workplace and community. We develop healthy, effective leaders who can positively impact their own corner of the world. ACOM students can access accredited study from Certificate III up to PhD.

The relationship between ACOM (incorporated as a company limited by guarantee) and Churches of Christ in NSW (incorporated by an Act of Parliament) is one where both parties recognise that while they are different legal entities for the purpose of convenience and compliance, they operate as one organisation, united in their mission objectives, and reflecting the spirit and values of Churches of Christ.

The current Board of Directors for ACOM is: Neville Cox (Chairman), Dr Andrew Ball, Dr Peter Laughlin, Ray Cheal, Larry Galbraith, Alison Feldman, and Dennis Nutt. The Company Secretary is Catherine Kleemann.

ACOM is led operationally by 25 permanent staff located across Australia who are assisted by 60 sessional staff who add significantly to the quality of

the student experience. ACOM continues to invest in cutting edge online learning and e-library resources, while delivering over 90 face-to-face learning experiences across the country.

**Students in Higher Education:** Approximately 460 active students are studying for university level qualifications. 52% of these students are affiliated with Churches of Christ. ACOM has added 137 new students in 2014, 141 in 2013, and 119 in 2012. Course unit numbers have increased 45% over the last three years. This year 54 students graduated with university qualifications in the Great Hall of the University of Sydney.

**Students in Vocational Education:** ACOM has approximately 720 active students. Almost 90% are aged 19 to 33. 14% of these students are affiliated with Churches of Christ. This year, 180 students graduated with vocational qualifications.

ACOM has 113 students connected to Churches of Christ in NSW from the following churches: Albury, Armidale, Asquith, Belrose, Bowral, Campbelltown, Castle Hill, Coast Community, Coffs Harbour, Dubbo, East Nowra, Engadine, Epping, Forster, Greenacre, Kingsway, Lismore, Lower Blue Mountains, Maitland, Mayfield, North Turrumurra, Northside, Nowra, Old Bar, LifeGate (Padstow), Pendle Hill, Port Macquarie, Rivergum (Rouse Hill), Salt Ash, Southern Illawarra, Thornton, Tweed Heads and Wollongong.

Fifty-four of our students graduated with degrees at the University of Sydney on 16 May 2015. The following students attend, or have a strong connection to, a Church of Christ in NSW:

### **DIPLOMA OF CHRISTIAN STUDIES**

Rachael Bale, Restore Church (Church of Christ, Castle Hill)

Brendan Raymond, Campbelltown Church of Christ

Lynda Everett, Kingsway Church of Christ

### **ASSOCIATE DEGREE IN CHRISTIAN THOUGHT AND PRACTICE**

Kirsten Beecheno, Engadine Church of Christ

### **BACHELOR OF THEOLOGY**

Jessie Skelly, Northside (Church of Christ, Crows Nest)

Janine Thomas, Northgate (Church of Christ, Belrose)

Susan Cornish, Coast Community (Church of Christ, Erina)

Ryan Graham, Campbelltown Church of Christ

Kelly Godby, Tweed Church of Christ

Richard Reeve, Careworks and Penrith Church of Christ

Jonathan Cole, Coffs Harbour Church of Christ

Lindsay Hall, Salt Ash Church of Christ

Kyle Holm, Epping Church of Christ

Lukas Hobbs, Lismore Church of Christ

Justin Cloherty, Non-affiliated church plant, Byron Bay

### **GRADUATE CERTIFICATE IN ARTS**

Morgan Smith, Pathways (Church of Christ, Pendle Hill)

Grant Ramsey, Armidale Church of Christ

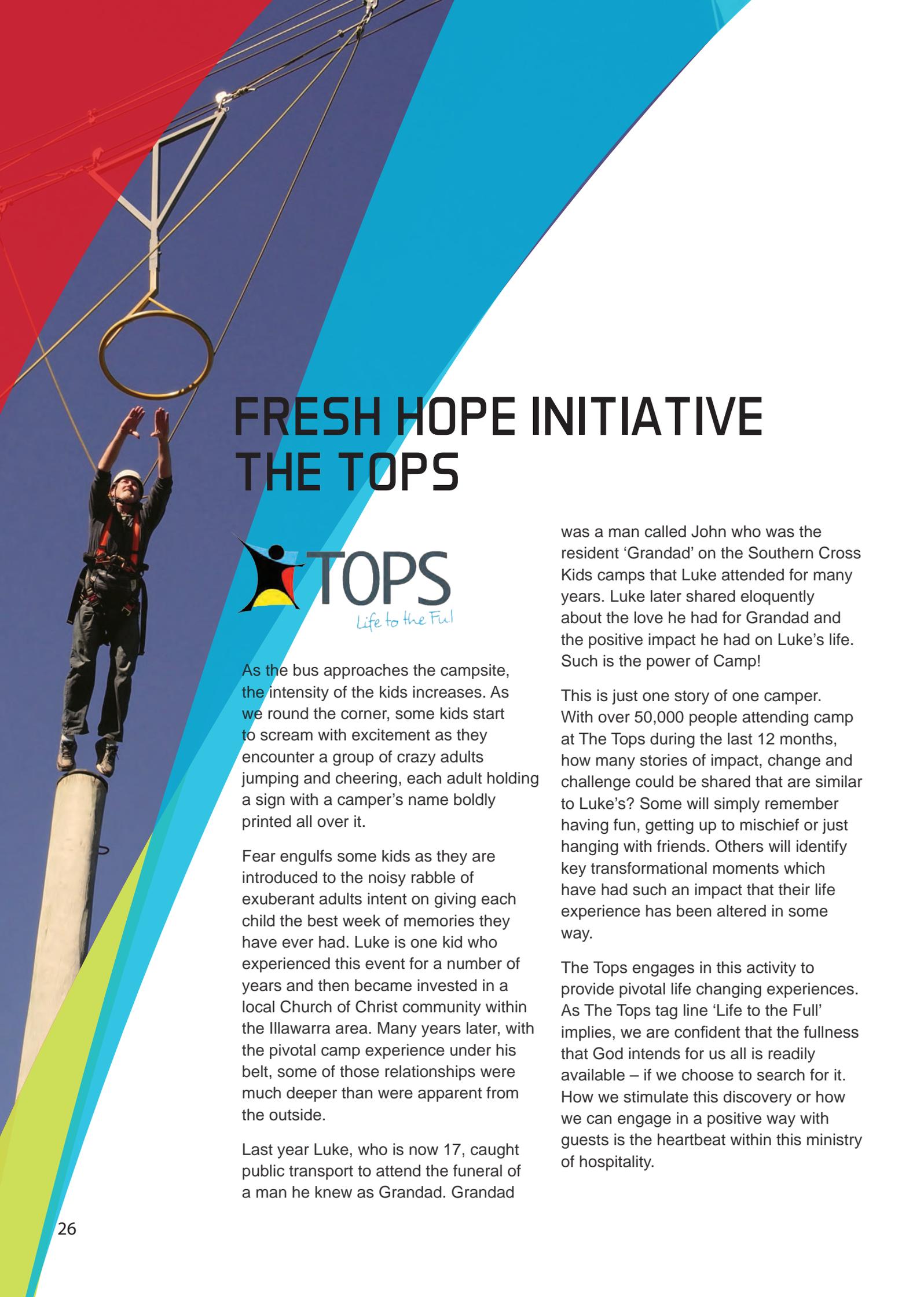
Colleen Day, Albury Church of Christ

### **MASTER OF ARTS**

Charles Burke, Pathways (Church of Christ, Pendle Hill)

A particular highlight for ACOM is the significant partnership with Churches of Christ that adds value to the quality and effectiveness of the IMPART and NAVIGATE programs. This was a year of significant growth and progress for ACOM. We request your prayers as we strive to assist God's people to be transformed into agents of change who can make a positive impact on their corner of the world – in the name of Jesus!

Dr Stephen Smith  
Principal and Chief Executive Officer | ACOM



# FRESH HOPE INITIATIVE THE TOPS



As the bus approaches the campsite, the intensity of the kids increases. As we round the corner, some kids start to scream with excitement as they encounter a group of crazy adults jumping and cheering, each adult holding a sign with a camper's name boldly printed all over it.

Fear engulfs some kids as they are introduced to the noisy rabble of exuberant adults intent on giving each child the best week of memories they have ever had. Luke is one kid who experienced this event for a number of years and then became invested in a local Church of Christ community within the Illawarra area. Many years later, with the pivotal camp experience under his belt, some of those relationships were much deeper than were apparent from the outside.

Last year Luke, who is now 17, caught public transport to attend the funeral of a man he knew as Grandad. Grandad

was a man called John who was the resident 'Grandad' on the Southern Cross Kids camps that Luke attended for many years. Luke later shared eloquently about the love he had for Grandad and the positive impact he had on Luke's life. Such is the power of Camp!

This is just one story of one camper. With over 50,000 people attending camp at The Tops during the last 12 months, how many stories of impact, change and challenge could be shared that are similar to Luke's? Some will simply remember having fun, getting up to mischief or just hanging with friends. Others will identify key transformational moments which have had such an impact that their life experience has been altered in some way.

The Tops engages in this activity to provide pivotal life changing experiences. As The Tops tag line 'Life to the Full' implies, we are confident that the fullness that God intends for us all is readily available – if we choose to search for it. How we stimulate this discovery or how we can engage in a positive way with guests is the heartbeat within this ministry of hospitality.



Last year, we engaged in 101,273 guest days, only marginally behind the previous year. The indicative surplus is in line with previous years (at the time of writing the final result is still being reviewed and prepared for audit). The team focussed on efficiency while at the same time investing in the functionality of the site and improving its presentation.

In March 2015, work commenced on the next construction project - the Reception & Administration Centre, which will open in February 2016. This will provide much needed space to house our staff, while releasing existing space for the development of an onsite café and new training/meeting spaces.

The launch of the Certificate III in Outdoor Education early in 2015 enlisted about 18 students in the first intake, including many of The Tops staff. It is now a requirement that, in addition to the onsite training, outdoor education staff will be required to have a Certificate III in order to hold a position on team. The second year intake of Tops Interns saw two young men join our ranks, adding a

whole new flavour of talent into the staff mix.

Many thanks go to the efforts of the Ministry Team who faithfully oversee the activities of The Tops and invest into the life of this exciting ministry. With the next iteration of our future planning about to emerge in a refined strategic intents document, we look forward to Gods continuing provision and guidance.

We pray that the experiences we create at The Tops emulate the pattern demonstrated in scripture; a pattern where people are moved into a place that unsettles them and moves them into a fresh place of God's presence within their life... 'Life to the Full.'

In His service,

Dave Tolman  
Executive Director | The Tops

# FRESH HOPE INITIATIVE LIVING CARE

## LIVING CARE ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2014/15

### CAPITAL REDEVELOPMENT AT PENDLE HILL AND ALBURY

One of the significant milestones of the year has been the completion and commissioning of the 34 bed extension and upgrade to Crawford Lodge at Pendle Hill. Construction work also progressed on the 22 bed extension and upgrade of Borella House with an opening of this revitalised facility expected in early 2016.

Both projects reflect Living Care's commitment to the upgrading of its older residential aged care facilities to provide the best possible care in the most appropriate setting.

### WHERE JOY LIVES

In March 2015 Living Care launched the Joy marketing campaign to differentiate Living Care from the many other aged care providers in New South Wales.

The campaign identified joy as the defining factor in everything we do:

**In Retirement Villages** – creating the joy of living in a vibrant social community.

**In Home Care** – helping to keep the joy of independence in your home.

**In Residential Care** – creating the joy of feeling that our home is your home.

## EXCELLENCE IN SERVICE

Mechelle Hastings was this year's winner of the Excellence in Service award, announced at the sit down luncheon held at the Deckhouse Restaurant in Woolwich in November 2014. As Team Leader of Opal Secure Dementia Care Unit at Living Care's Coffs Haven residential care facility, Mechelle certainly embodies the mission, values and philosophy of Living Care.

In winning the award - a trip for two to Fiji - Mechelle decided to invite her work colleague Sharon Beard to accompany her. Based on the photos, they obviously had a great time, and on her return Mechelle said "it was lovely to be acknowledged for a job that I truly love." This speaks volumes for her passion and heart for the work she does.



## ACCREDITATION

All residential aged care facilities participated in the re-accreditation process with all facilities meeting the required 44 outcomes.

In a credit to our staff and the approach Living Care adopts in the delivery of services, all residential aged care facilities and home care services maintained 100% compliance with the expected outcomes that are in place for all Commonwealth funded services.

## CONTINUED GROWTH IN HOME CARE AND RESIDENTIAL CARE SERVICES

Following on from one of its most successful Aged Care Approvals Round (ACAR) in 2013, Living Care was awarded a total of 34 residential places and 77 home care places in the 2014 ACAR.

In summary Living Care was awarded:

- 34 residential places attached to Ashwood (Crawford Lodge)
- 22 home care places at Maitland
- 16 home care places at Shoalhaven
- 21 home care places at Western Sydney
- 18 home care places at Coffs Harbour

Total places awarded – 111 (applied for 121 places).

The 77 home care places allocated builds on previous success over the last five years with the number of home care places increasing from 145 places in 2008 to 382 places in 2014.

## NEW MINISTRY TEAM CHAIRMAN

In November 2014 we farewelled Peter Davidson, the chairman of the Living Care Ministry Team, who after 8 years of service to the Ministry Team decided to return to his homeland of New Zealand. With Peter's departure we were delighted to have Chris Powell step into the chairman's role. Chris brings a wealth of experience to the Ministry Team having worked in senior roles within the corporate finance industry.

Graham Reed  
Executive Director | Living Care

**Living Care**  
Where Joy Lives

# FRESH HOPE INITIATIVE SOUTHPOINT

Southpoint continues to intentionally work with churches through our 'Transformational Church' project, encouraging leaders to clearly enunciate their ethos and future vision for their church.

The seven original churches graduated from the initial cohort making way for five more churches interested in exploring their sense of call and alignment. These include:

Penrith Church of Christ

Pathways Community Church

Kingsford Church of Christ

Campbelltown Church of Christ

Rivergum Community Church

These churches participated in a formative weekend with Fresh Hope staff in March 2015, to align their sense of purpose through teaching and facilitation. In 2016, key leaders will travel to the UK for another field trip to learn mission practice through church life in a secular culture.

Going forward, Southpoint will continue to facilitate transformational practice for churches and leaders. Our strategic partnership with the Christian Churches of New Zealand (our sister movement across the Pacific) continues as we explore partnership opportunities for training and development.

In addition, Southpoint will continue to partner with ACOM and Fresh Hope to explore further training resources in spiritual leadership and urban mission.

*“The Transformational Church journey has been very beneficial for our team in taking time to look carefully at the things that will build a healthy church on God’s kingdom agenda. The teaching, mentoring and times away have been refreshing and have forced us to reflect on things that would normally be ignored because of the busyness of day to day ministry. The connection with other churches and leaders also created a shared learning environment. The transformational church journey is not a church growth or quick fix scheme but a relational and spiritual journey with your team to discover who you’re uniquely called to be and how you will fulfil your mission in your unique context. ‘Transformational Church’ is a journey where you and your team will commit to do the difficult but rewarding work of reflecting and reimagining what a transformed church can be and will be for the world and the glory of Christ.”*

*Mike Hardie (Lead Pastor)*  
**THRIVE**



*“Having the opportunity to participate in the Southpoint Transformational Church Cohort with our leadership team is one for which I will be forever grateful. Receiving material and teaching that engaged both head and heart has had a profound impact on how we serve each other, our church family and the city we live in. My thanks go to Dr Andrew Ball and the Fresh Hope family for having the courage and love to lead us on this truly transformational journey.”*

*Rob Allen (Pastor)  
Northern Rivers Church of Christ*

Dr Andrew Ball  
Director | Southpoint

# PROPERTY TRUST

The Property Trust seeks to enable churches to develop property for ministry purposes and works closely with Conference Executive to serve the local church in this endeavour.

The Property Trust has the responsibility to ensure good governance and stewardship of the property resources of the movement. The Trust ensures compliance and regulatory responsibilities in accordance with the Act and seeks to wisely manage the churches' financial resources, developing effective risk management strategies and prudential investment policies to support future ministry growth.

## DEPOSIT FUND

The Property Trust manages the Deposits Fund which provides low interest loans to Churches to assist in the acquisition and improvement of property. Loans are also made to church pastors for the purchase of vehicles. These loans are made possible by church members, churches and ministries generously leaving money deposits with the Trust either at interest or interest free.

As at 30 June 2014, there is a total pool of \$13,053k from which loans can be provided. This pool consists of \$8,107k from churches, individuals and Conference Executive ministry teams (primarily Living Care); and \$4,946k of Property Trust equity.

There are currently 21 loans to churches comprising \$8,019k in total loans as at the 30 June 2015.

During the year, the Property Trust was also able to further reduce the interest rate for principal & interest loans from 5% to 4.75%.

## TRUST FUNDS

The trust funds are monies that have been left to the Churches of Christ (either through a bequest, trust deed or will) which the Property Trust steward and administer. Each trust fund has its own specific purpose and detailed rules surrounding how the funds can be used.

As at 30 June 2015, there are eight trust funds being managed by the Property Trust with combined balances of \$2,220k. These funds are invested and during the year distributions were made to Conference ministries and other specific purposes of \$157k.

## THORNTON CHURCH OF CHRIST

As a newly affiliated church, Thornton Church of Christ was a beneficiary of a small loan and a grant from one of the trust funds. The funds were used to purchase a demountable building and install a new fence at the rear of the church with gate access to the community garden (a community development project of the church.)



*“What can I say but thank you to the Property Trust. We are a small church but God is blessing us immensely. It is so affirming and we feel God’s hand on our lives.”*

Damien Parks, Thornton Church of Christ

## LOOKING FORWARD

The Property Trust is currently investigating how it can improve its services to the churches in our movement. A budget has been set aside in 2015/16 to strengthen the governance and policy framework of the Trust to provide a platform to serve the changing needs of churches in the coming years.

It is envisaged that this will lead to better systems that provide clear and up to date information and improve the transparency and communications of the Trust.

Richard Reeve  
Secretary | Property Trust

# COUNCIL OF CHURCHES OF CHRIST IN AUSTRALIA (CCCA)

CCCA functions as a collegial group of representatives from the five state Churches of Christ conferences. It is also a reporting body for states, agencies and national committees of Churches of Christ. Since our November meeting and AGM, a key focus for the Council has been the discernment of what God might be saying to us. Although a number of themes are emerging, perhaps unsurprisingly, one key theme could be summarised as “in essentials unity, in non-essentials liberty, in all things love.” Our founding ideals are a key part of our identity as Churches of Christ. To be loving in all things is a great thing to be known for!

## **NATIONAL BUSINESS NETWORK**

State representatives with an interest in business and finance meet periodically to discuss and cooperate around financial issues related to our churches. The National Insurance Scheme arose from these discussions, and it is able to offer cheaper and more thorough coverage to many local churches than in the past ([www.cofcinsurance.org.au](http://www.cofcinsurance.org.au).) The Members Entitlements and Benefits Scheme (MEBS) offers a portable long service leave scheme for Churches of Christ ministers ([cofcaustralia.org/mebs](http://cofcaustralia.org/mebs).) Churches of Christ Financial Services (CCFS) is developing a range of financial products for churches, including mobile EFTPOS facilities and Pushpay® (mobile phone giving) to make giving to your local church simple ([www.cfksaustralia.org.au](http://www.cfksaustralia.org.au).)

## **YOUTH VISION AUSTRALIA**

The leadership of Youth Vision Australia (YVA) comprises the state youth ministers and Neale Meredith from ACOM as chair. YVA offers 4 youth ministry subjects that can be accessed via ACOM or Stirling College. The most conspicuous YVA activity in terms of its size and impact is the National Youth Ministry Convention (NYMC), occurring this year on 7–10 October on the Gold Coast. CCCA is one of the sponsors of NYMC.

## **RESOURCES**

A resource for Churches of Christ Sunday was produced last year on ‘movements’, this year, a resource on ‘renewal’ has been produced for our churches. A number of papers reflecting on mission were requested for a gathering in Birmingham in July and can be accessed on the national website ([cofcaustralia.org/resources](http://cofcaustralia.org/resources).)

## **CHURCHES OF CHRIST HISTORY**

CCCA has released funding so that the National Archive materials can be properly housed in the new Hindmarsh Centre at Stirling College. People with a passion for the history of our movement have been involved in discussing ways in which the Churches of Christ story can continue to be preserved and told.

## ECUMENICAL BODIES

In keeping with our heritage as a unity movement, CCCA is affiliated with a number of ecumenical bodies. The National Council of Churches in Australia is in the process of undergoing a full review and is at the point of reviewing its constitution ([www.ncca.org.au](http://www.ncca.org.au)). John Gilmore from Global Mission Partners (GMP) attended the Christian Council of Asia gathering in Jakarta on behalf of Churches of Christ. This is a helpful point of connection for GMP mission work across Asia ([cca.org.hk/home](http://cca.org.hk/home)). CCCA is affiliated with the World Council of Churches and receives information about international ecumenical initiatives ([www.oikoumene.org/en](http://www.oikoumene.org/en)). There are four Australian representatives on the World Convention Board, which acts as a point of connection for Churches of Christ and other church traditions that arose from the 19th century Stone-Campbell movement ([www.worldconvention.org](http://www.worldconvention.org)).

## STRATEGIC ISSUES

CCCA provides a forum to explore key strategic national issues that impact local churches across

Australia. Some of these issues include:

- possible changes to the marriage act
- the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse
- shared learning around risk management for churches
- the need for theological training & other leadership development strategies
- possible national cooperation around church planting along with other mission initiatives
- how (and whether) to respond to issues of national significance to the wider community.

Prayer for wisdom for the Council on complex matters would be greatly valued.

Janet Woodlock  
Federal Coordinator | CCCA



# FRESH HOPE FEDERAL RELATIONSHIPS GLOBAL MISSION PARTNERS



Global Mission Partners exists for others and our work is an expression of a wholistic gospel – spiritual, relational, practical and prophetic.

Our work is a Christian ministry, guided by Jesus Christ and values compassion, no-strings generosity, and seeks to respect all people. Our identity formally and informally is Churches of Christ and we seek to be a foretaste of God's Kingdom of Good News.

## HIGHLIGHTS

2014–2015 has been an exciting year and it's been encouraging to see the difference GMP has been able to make with your help.

Highlights include the launch of embody's campaign Safe Water September (SWS) and the appointment of two Indigenous Ministries Australia Ministry Coordinators – Remy Sese (West) and Nick Wight (East). Both are active in networking with churches, communities and people. Another was the response to the emergency appeals for Nepal and Vanuatu.

What we do, however, is not without its challenges. The decline in the value of the Australian dollar is putting our budget under pressure as we seek to



*Remy Sese, Vincent Mathieson and Nick Wight at Surrender 2015*

maintain the levels of our commitment irrespective of the currency changes.

We welcomed GMP mission workers Martin Reilly and his wife Margaret Nixon based in Nicaragua and Dr Ash and Anji Barker based at the Centre for Urban Life and Mission in Birmingham, UK.

The key priorities for the International Church Partnerships (ICP) program continue to be resourcing and developing leaders, and new church development and evangelism. Churches of Christ Overseas Aid is focused on sustainable development and building capacity in our partners.



## NSW HAPPENINGS 2015

A team from Dapto explored the work of the ICP and COCOA programs in Zimbabwe as part of our annual Partner Discovery Visit. (Watch the website for the 2016 visit.)

“Seeing the work at Khayelihle Children’s Village (KCV), meeting the children there and learning about the work of Churches of Christ in Zimbabwe was a moving experience,” says Tony Roe from Dapto, NSW. “The value of the Showers of Blessing Trust in providing clean water to isolated villages was attested to by the many villagers whose lives have been changed by this program. We returned with our hearts full of joy, committed to sharing all we have learned with others.”

A team from Nowra made the church’s first visit to Fiji where they found sharing their lives was the most powerful thing they could do.

“God didn’t require us to go equipped with five year plans and programs,” said Team Leader Margaret Kirk, “Pastor Raj just wanted us to share our stories and our lives with another part of His family in Fiji. We discovered that our nervous attempts at teaching and sharing were, in fact, a welcome encouragement.”

Armidale made its sixth visit to Pentecost Island in Vanuatu. The team of 14 included three young people and two staff members from Pathfinders, a local youth service. The team undertook a range of activities and the diversity of projects enabled the team to interact with a wide range of community members and serve in many different areas.

Campbelltown sent their first full team to District 11 of the Thailand Church of Christ Conference, built a driveway for Banka Chapel and ministered in various churches.

The River Community Church opened its doors in April to the African community of Albury. BJ and Chipu Mpofu from the Associated Churches of Christ in Zimbabwe were the special guests, mingling with families from the Congo, Kenya, Ivory Coast, Zimbabwe and Australia at a meal cooked with the help of a local refugee family.

Full details including the annual report and audited financial statements are available at [inpartnership.org.au](http://inpartnership.org.au)

John Gilmore  
Executive Director | Global Mission Partners

# FRESH HOPE FEDERAL RELATIONSHIPS STIRLING THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE



## ENROLMENTS & VALEDICTORY

The past year was a very positive year for the college in many ways including many new enrolments and the graduation of other students to leadership, mission and ministry. Enrolments increased by 20% from the previous year. The Valedictory Service at Ringwood Church of Christ saw a record 35 students graduate with degrees ranging from diploma to doctorate and 2015 looks like breaking that record with 41 valedictorians. Many are now in important leadership and ministry roles in church and society.

## HINDMARSH CHURCH OF CHRIST CENTRE FOR MISSION AND MINISTRY

The fundraising campaign for the new centre was launched and many friends and supporters of the college from across Australia gave generously. Combined with earlier gifts and a large contribution from the Hindmarsh Church of Christ Trust, we were able to appoint the successful tenderers. Construction commenced in September 2014 and was completed in July 2015. The centre will bring many needed new facilities to the Mulgrave campus in the first significant upgrade since it was opened in 1989. Importantly, the new archival storage and research facilities for Churches of Christ will be of central impact to our Movement and will link in with other state archival centres and personnel.

## FACULTY REVIEWS, NEWS AND REAPPOINTMENTS

We have been pleased to welcome Dr Brian Macallum (Connection Church of Christ) as Director of Online Learning. This important appointment will enable Stirling's courses to reach regional and interstate Australia with great effect. We have also opened a successful extension annex at Kardina Church, Geelong which we hope is the first of many as we seek to make quality, university level ministry and theological education more accessible.

## UNIVERSITY OF DIVINITY CENTRE FOR CLINICAL PASTORAL EDUCATION

During the year, Stirling successfully tendered to house the University of Divinity Centre for Clinical Pastoral Education, which tracks all UD college students doing CPE through Stirling.

## NEW STRATEGIC PLAN 2016-2018

Throughout the year the board, with input from the faculty have moved to develop a new strategic plan having completed most of the current plan. An item of interest is to work with the University of Divinity in establishing a graduate school focused on human services and aged care.

## BOARD MEMBERS

Lynette Leach (Chair), Elissa Scott (Deputy-Chair), Peter Joy (Treasurer), Michael D'Rosario, Paul Cameron (CCVT EO - ex officio) Andrew Menzies (Principal).

Dr Andrew Menzies | Principal  
Lynette Leach | Chairperson



**“FEAR IS THE SHADOW  
OF CREATIVITY.  
WHEN WE CHOOSE TO CREATE,  
WE BRING LIGHT TO  
OUR FEARS”**

**- ERWIN MCMANUS (ARTISAN SOUL)**

# FRESH HOPE FEDERAL RELATIONSHIPS

## MEBS

### HIGHLIGHTS DURING 2014/2015

The Ministers' and Employees' Benefits Scheme (MEBS) is a service of Churches of Christ in Australia. MEBS exists to enable its members to access long service leave. While open to any employees within Churches of Christ throughout Australia, it is of particular benefit to ministers who may not otherwise be able to access this type of leave.

During this year the committee and staff of MEBS have continued focussing on making sure that all eligible ministers are aware of the benefits of belonging to MEBS. An email campaign to contact ministers who are not yet members of MEBS was run during the beginning of 2015. Encouragingly, membership of MEBS has been steadily increasing over the last three years.

The distribution rate to members this year of 3.85% p.a. is a positive result in a low return environment.

### MEMBERSHIP MOVEMENT FOR 2014/2015

The movements in membership numbers from 1 July 2014 – 30 June 2015 are set out below.

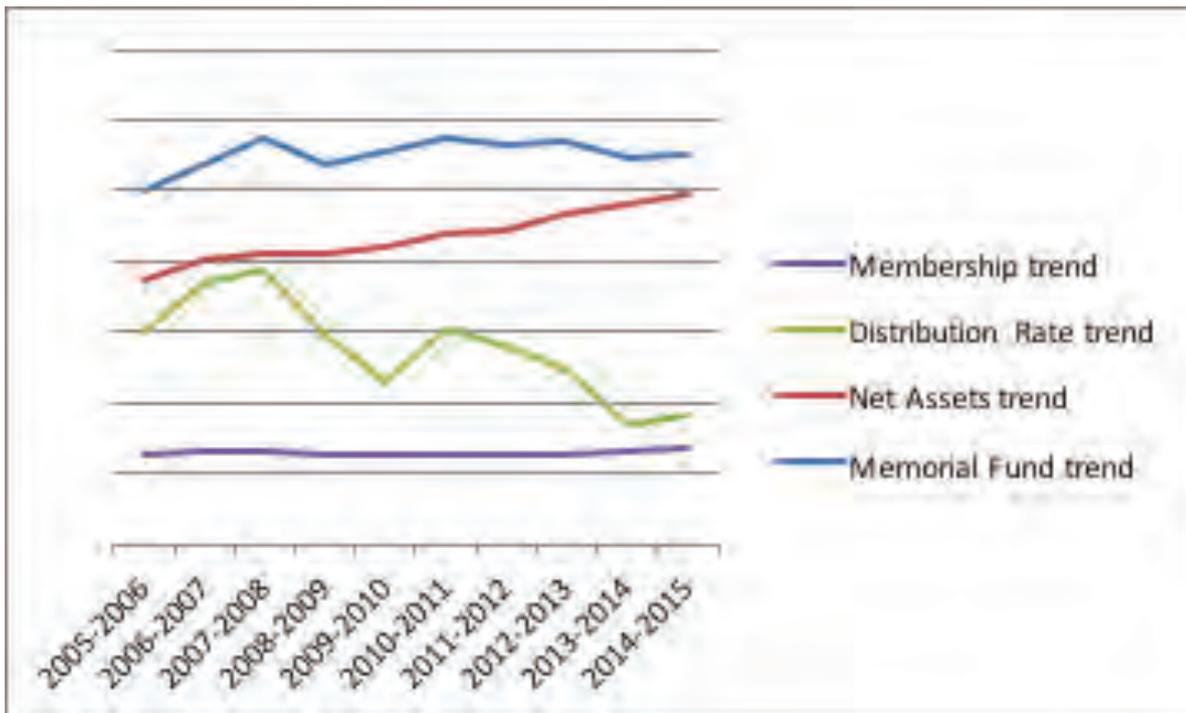
#### TOTAL MOVEMENTS TO 30/06/15

	01/07/14	Entrants	Exits	30/06/15
LSL Members	725	59	39	745

### KEY STATISTICS

Year	Membership as at 30 June	Distribution Rate	Net Assets \$	Memorial Fund \$
05/06	693	6.3%	5,337,502	138,929.40
06/07	728	7.78%	5,717,649	149,143.06
07/08	734	8.11%	5,853,706	159,215.71
08/09	692	6.17%	5,845,593	149,066.36
09/10	696	4.81%	5,960,982	154,236.20
10/11	693	6.41%	6,268,495	160,122.04
11/12	691	5.95%	6,275,802	157,673.41
12/13	710	5.14%	6,609,938	157,776.71
13/14	725	3.548%	6,857,326	151,648.99
14/15	745	3.85%	7,021,717	153,487.05

## MEBS TRENDS 2005 - 2015



## BENEFITS PAID

For the period from 1 July 2014 to 30 June 2015 various benefits for long service leave totalling \$821,914 were paid. An additional benefit of \$2,000 was paid to assist with the funeral expenses of a minister of Churches of Christ.

## MEBS COMMITTEE MEMBERS FOR 2014-2015

Peter Cranna (Secretary), Max Hopkins (Chair), Natalie Burgis, Frank Morabito, Phil Burgess

Jason Gor  
Administrator | Ministers' and Employees' Benefits Scheme



I believe in God our Father  
I believe in Christ the Son  
I believe in the Holy Spirit  
Our God is three in One  
I believe in the resurrection  
That we will rise again  
For I believe in the Name of Jesus

# FRESH HOPE FINANCIAL REPORTS

I believe in God our Father  
I believe in Christ the Son  
I believe in the Holy Spirit  
Our God is three in One  
I believe in the resurrection  
That we will rise again  
For I believe in the Name of Jesus

# FRESH HOPE FINANCIAL REPORT

This financial report includes a separate page for each of the Fresh Hope reporting entities, being Conference Executive, Property Trust, Community Care and, for the first time in this format, ACOM. Each page shows in summary form what we earned and spent, and what we own and owed. In this way we can highlight the key changes and results. The detailed financial reports for each of these entities are available in the member section of our Fresh Hope website. These reports are derived from the audited financial reports. The ACOM financial report is prepared on a calendar year basis.

## OVERALL

Total income for the year ended 30 June 2015 was \$88m (FY14: \$85m). The surplus for the year was \$9.7m (FY14: \$9.4m), which included unrealised gains on investments of \$3.2m (FY14: \$4.2m). Total assets at 30 June 2015 increased to \$266m (FY14: \$249m), and net assets increased to \$150m (FY14: \$140m).

## CONFERENCE EXECUTIVE

Net Assets of \$20.1m includes \$9.1m in property, plant & equipment and \$10.9m in investments. The transfer during the year of \$3.1m in properties from churches led to an overall surplus of \$3.3m.

## PROPERTY TRUST

The Property Trust financial report shows a \$144k decrease in the funds deposited by individuals and churches, and a \$165k increase in funds deposited by associated ministries. Loans to churches decreased by \$427k. The lower interest rate environment led to a slight drop in income, as well as in interest expense. The result for the year was a surplus of \$148k.

## COMMUNITY CARE

The net surplus for the 2015 financial year of \$6.0m was after unrealised investment gains of \$3.2m. The one off adjustment included in this result was an impairment charge of \$1.4m in relation to Henley Brae. The operating results were impacted by an increase in staff costs, improvement in workers compensation and relatively flat income.

The net assets of \$124m includes property, plant & equipment of \$104m and goodwill of \$9m. Cash and investments of \$113m cover all liabilities (\$105m). Capital expenditure of \$15m in FY15 included work on the Living Care Pendle Hill and Borella sites.

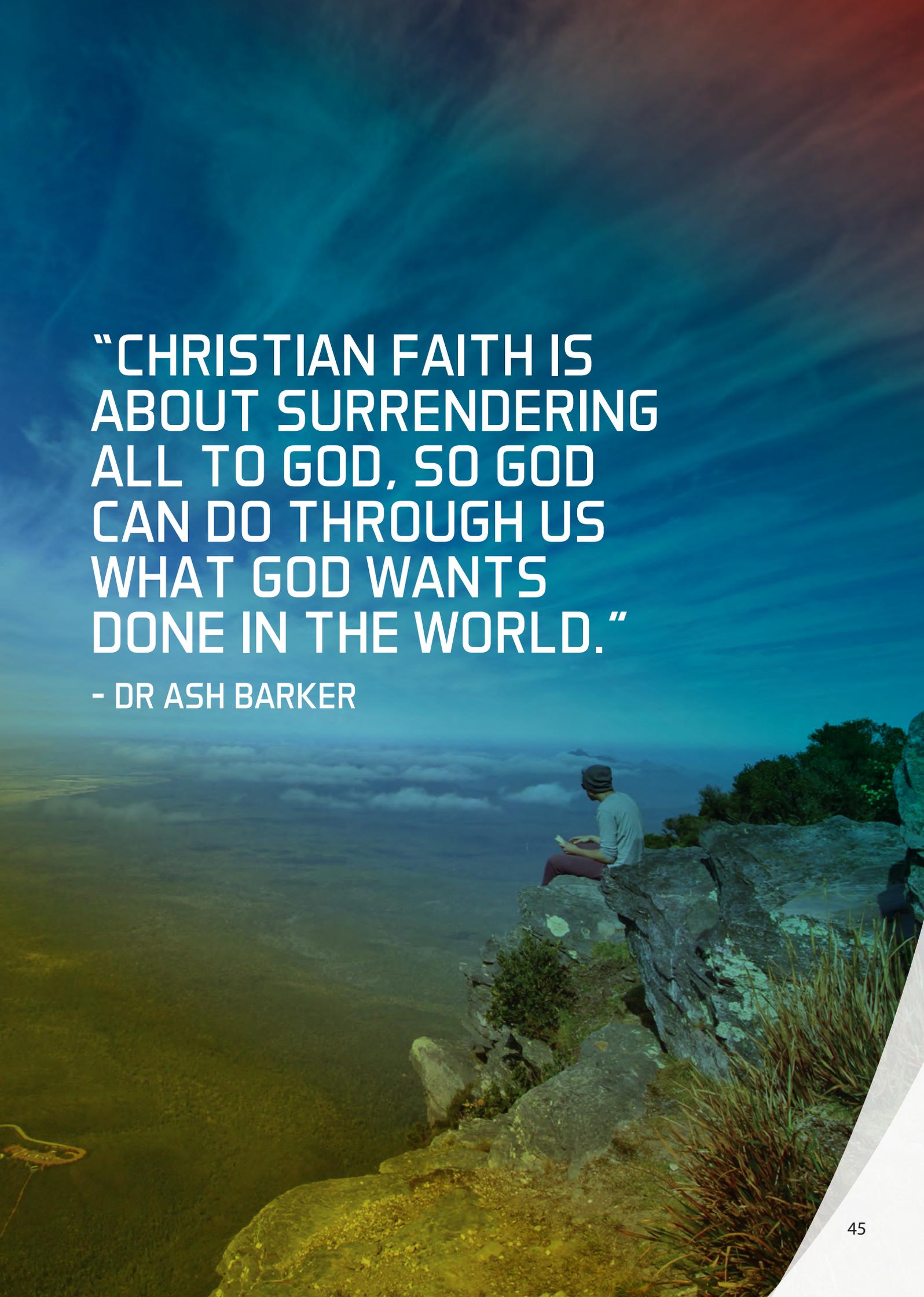
## ACOM

ACOM recorded a surplus of \$185k in the 2014 calendar year, after net returns on investments of \$37k. Operating returns were impacted by a growth in higher education students and unit numbers of 29% from 2012 to 2014. Profits from 2013 and 2014 were allocated towards development of new course material, marketing initiatives, and increasing ACOM's investment portfolio adequate to meet future development plans.

## LOOKING AHEAD

Investment returns of 8.2% provided the basis for a healthy surplus in FY15, though more modest returns are expected in FY16. Operating results came under some pressure, though are expected to improve in the year ahead.

Max Hopkins  
Director | Corporate Services

A person is sitting on a rocky cliff, looking out over a vast valley. The sky is a deep blue, and there are clouds in the distance. The person is wearing a light-colored shirt and dark pants. The foreground shows some rocks and sparse vegetation.

**“CHRISTIAN FAITH IS  
ABOUT SURRENDERING  
ALL TO GOD, SO GOD  
CAN DO THROUGH US  
WHAT GOD WANTS  
DONE IN THE WORLD.”**

**- DR ASH BARKER**

# COMMUNITY CARE

WE EARNED			WE SPENT		
	FY15 \$ 000	FY14 \$ 000		FY15 \$ 000	FY14 \$ 000
Fees & charges	25,469	24,255	Staff costs	47,432	44,727
Retentions	1,862	1,824	Workers compensation	1,889	2,611
Government subsidies	34,739	36,938	Care	1,766	1,679
Government grants	2,805	3,051	Catering	3,212	2,946
Dividend income	3,774	2,661	Cleaning & laundry	2,055	1,862
Interest income	1,787	2,368	Property & maintenance	4,857	4,448
Unrealised gains on financial assets	3,163	3,349	Depreciation	3,922	3,581
Other income	5,577	4,340	Other expenses	8,013	8,336
<b>Total income</b>	<b>79,176</b>	<b>78,786</b>	<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>73,146</b>	<b>70,190</b>

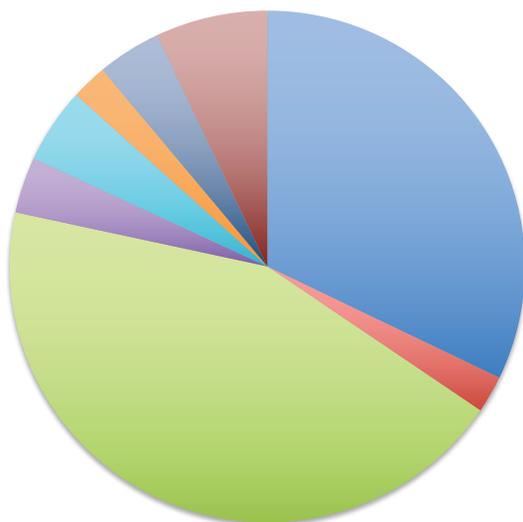
**Net surplus** **\$6,030** **\$8,596**

Community Care recorded a surplus for the financial year of \$6,029,643. This included a surplus at The Tops of \$939,685, a surplus of \$21,867 at Careworks, with the remainder being the Living Care surplus of \$5,068,091.

The unrealised gains on financial assets were \$3.16m (FY14 = \$3.35m). The result excluding these gains was a net surplus in FY15 of \$2.87m (FY14 = \$5.25m) reduced mainly due to a \$2.0m increase in labour costs.

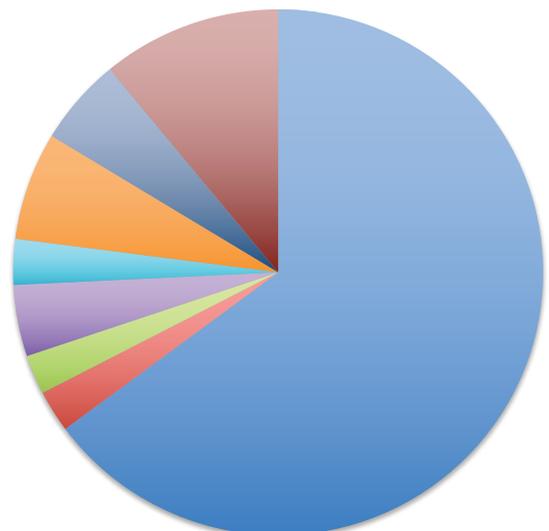
Other expenses includes an impairment charge of \$1.4m for Henley Brae (FY14 = \$1.9m for The Glen).

**WE EARNED**



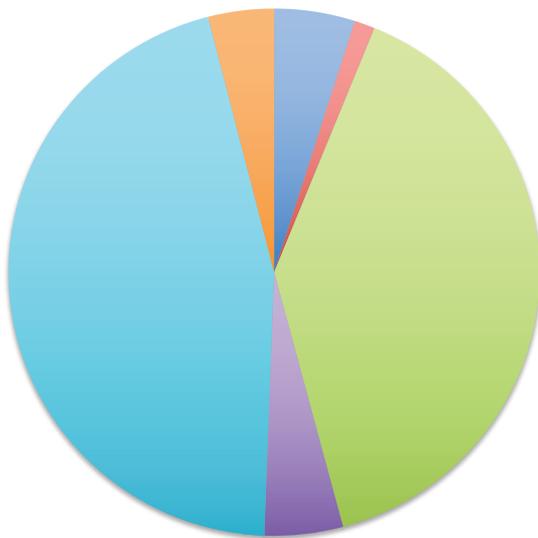
- Fees & charges
- Government subsidies
- Dividend income
- Unrealised gains on financial assets
- Retentions
- Government grants
- Interest income
- Other income

**WE SPENT**



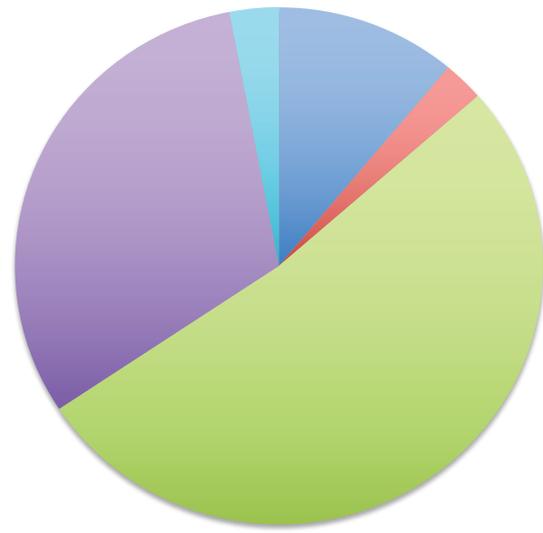
- Staff costs
- Care
- Cleaning & laundry
- Depreciation
- Workers compensation
- Catering
- Property & maintenance
- Other expenses

## WE OWN



■ Cash & deposits  
■ Financial assets  
■ Property, plant & equipment  
■ Receivables  
■ Investments  
■ Goodwill

## WE OWE



■ Payables  
■ Accommodation bonds  
■ Loans and borrowings  
■ Provisions  
■ Ingoing contributions

WE OWN			WE OWE		
	FY15	FY14		FY15	FY14
	\$ 000	\$ 000		\$ 000	\$ 000
Cash & deposits	11,259	5,296	Payables	11,628	11,062
Receivables	2,854	2,408	Provisions	2,619	2,238
Financial assets	90,737	93,561	Accommodation bonds	54,673	49,325
Investments	10,925	11,607	Ingoing contributions	32,875	32,526
Property, plant & equipment	103,903	93,109	Loans and borrowings	3,169	3,569
Goodwill	9,163	10,588			
<b>Total assets</b>	<b>228,841</b>	<b>216,569</b>	<b>Total liabilities</b>	<b>104,964</b>	<b>98,720</b>

**Net assets** **\$123,877** **\$117,849**

An impairment charge of \$1.4m was made in FY15 against Henley Brae Retirement Village (FY14 = \$1.9m for The Glen Residential Care Centre) in view of weaker operating results.

Capital expenditure in FY15 of \$15.0m (FY14: \$10.2m) was mainly for extensions at Crawford Lodge (Pendle Hill) and at Borella (Albury). This was partially funded from investments.

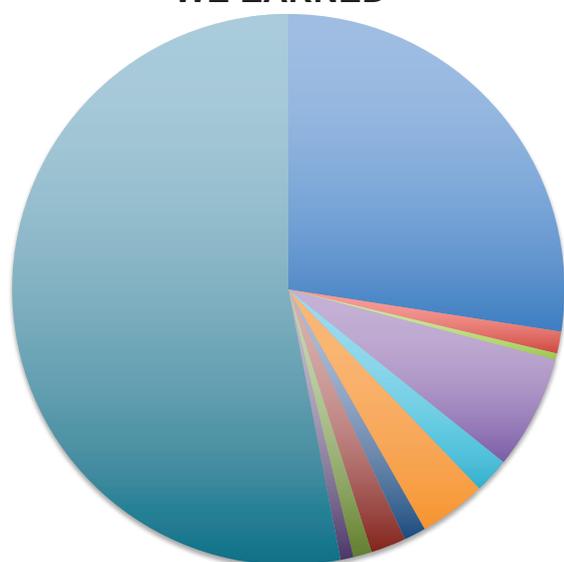
Accommodation bonds increased by \$5.35m in FY15 and this added to the cash & deposits balance.

# CONFERENCE EXECUTIVE

WE EARNED			WE SPENT		
	FY15	FY14		FY15	FY14
	\$ 000	\$ 000		\$ 000	\$ 000
Subsidies & grants	1,584	1,482	Wages & salaries	496	442
Levies & fees	74	93	Ministry support	615	999
Donations & bequests	22	39	Conference & retreat	67	57
Dividend income	385	411	Administration	692	622
Imputation credits	119	110	Depreciation	124	128
Interest income	227	48	Investment management	32	28
Unrealised gain - investments	74	801	Leasehold expense	-	-
Other income	119	80	Loss on sale of investments	-	395
Gain on sale of investments	62	260	Other expenses	423	329
Gain on asset transfer	44	2			
Contribution of assets	3,060	-			
<b>Total income</b>	<b>5,770</b>	<b>3,326</b>	<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>2,449</b>	<b>3,000</b>

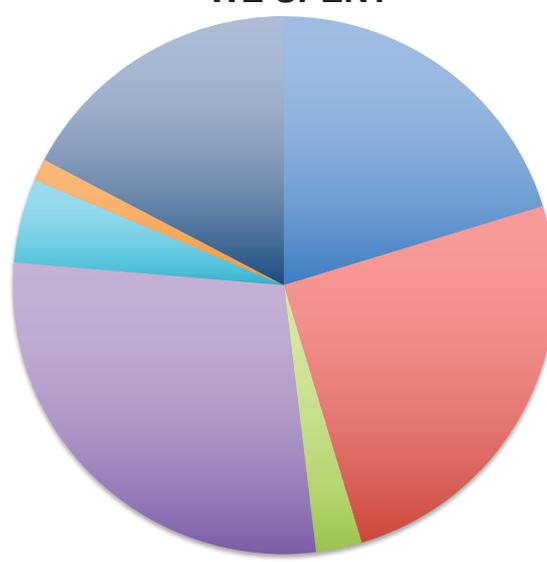
**Net surplus (deficit)**                      **\$3,321**                      **\$326**

## WE EARNED



- Subsidies & grants
- Levies & fees
- Donations & bequests
- Dividend income
- Imputation credits
- Interest income
- Unrealised gain - investments
- Other income
- Gain on sale of investments
- Gain on asset transfer
- Contribution of assets

## WE SPENT

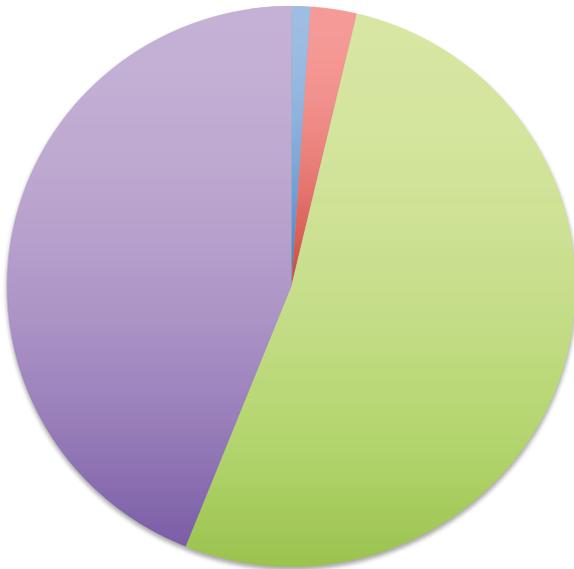


- Wages & salaries
- Ministry support
- Conference & retreat
- Administration
- Depreciation
- Investment management
- Other expenses

Conference Executive's result for the year ended 30 June 2015 was a net surplus of \$3,321,299. Note that the result includes \$3,060,000 for land & buildings at Auburn, Earlwood & Tamworth that were transferred to Conference during FY15. The result before this contribution of assets was \$260,633 (FY14 = \$325,876) reflecting lower investment returns, offset in part by lower Ministry Support costs.

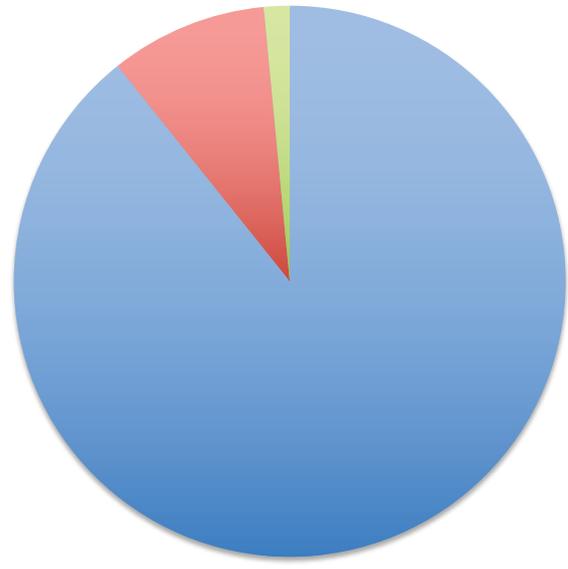
Ministry Support costs in FY14 included \$0.3m paid to a Fresh Hope ministry in Thailand.

### WE OWN



■ Cash  
■ Receivables  
■ Investments  
■ Property, plant & equipment

### WE OWE



■ Payables  
■ Provisions  
■ Other liabilities

WE OWN			WE OWE		
	FY15	FY14		FY15	FY14
	\$ 000	\$ 000		\$ 000	\$ 000
Cash	225	274	Payables	591	115
Receivables	544	454	Provisions	61	47
Investments	10,887	10,040	Other liabilities	10	10
Property, plant & equipment	9,137	6,214			
<b>Total assets</b>	<b>20,793</b>	<b>16,982</b>	<b>Total liabilities</b>	<b>662</b>	<b>172</b>

**Net assets** **\$20,131** **\$16,810**

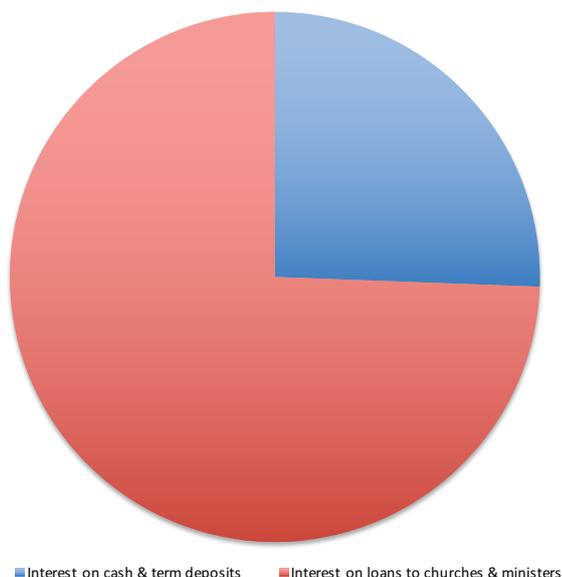
Net Assets of \$20,131,982 increased by \$3,321,299, mainly due to the \$3,060,000 in properties at Auburn, Earlwood & Tamworth that were transferred to Conference during FY15. Investments increased by \$846,572 during this period. This increase includes \$393,613 in proceeds from sale of the Swansea campsite which is to be transferred to Fresh Hope Venues in FY16 (included in Payables).

# PROPERTY TRUST

WE EARNED			WE SPENT		
	FY15 \$ 000	FY14 \$ 000		FY15 \$ 000	FY14 \$ 000
Interest on cash & term deposits	142	146	Interest to churches	33	38
Income on investments	-	8	Interest to individuals	41	46
Interest on loans to churches & ministers	413	408	Interest to associated ministries	175	178
Other Income	-	109	Administration & other expenses	158	126
<b>Total income</b>	<b>555</b>	<b>671</b>	<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>407</b>	<b>388</b>

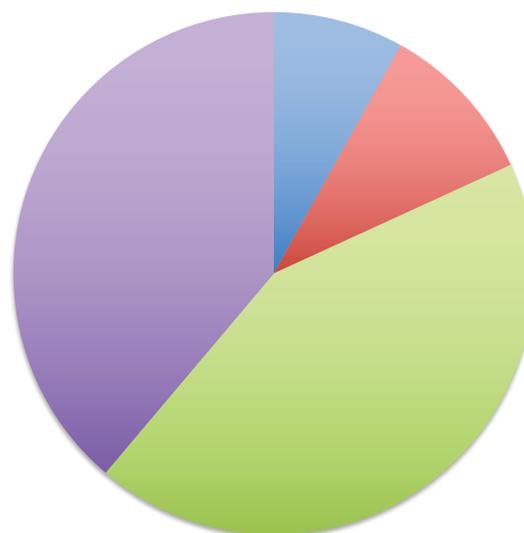
**Net surplus** **\$148** **\$283**

**WE EARNED**



■ Interest on cash & term deposits ■ Interest on loans to churches & ministers

**WE SPENT**



■ Interest to churches ■ Interest to individuals  
■ Interest to associated ministries ■ Administration & other expenses

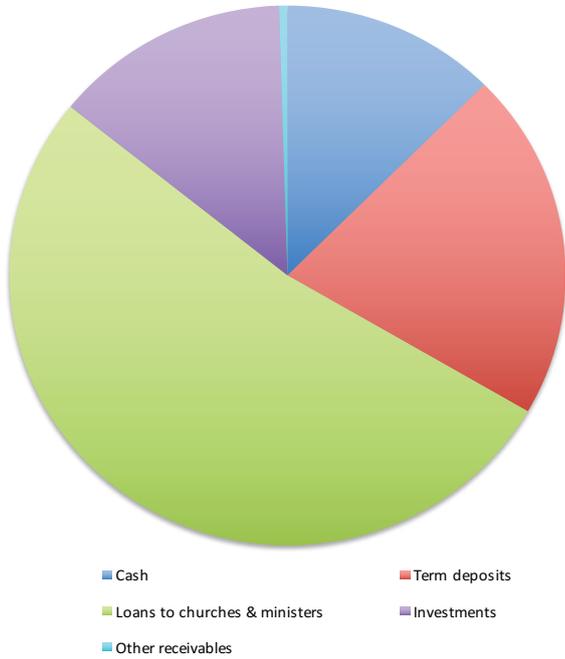
The Property Trust recorded a surplus for FY15 of \$148,134 (FY14 = \$282,600).

Total Income, excluding the \$108,578 other income (from NEICA<sup>1</sup>) in FY14, was down only \$7,140 (1.3%) mainly due to lower interest rates.

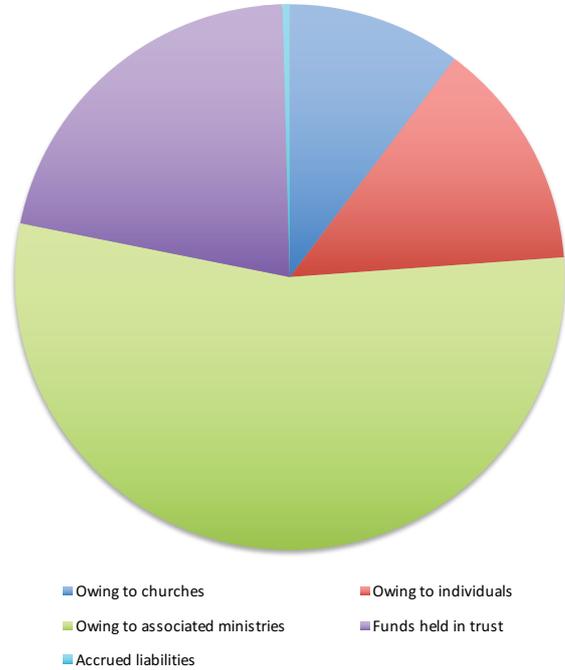
Total Expenses increased by \$18,768 (4.8%). This included a \$32,313 increase in other operating expenses, and a \$13,545 (5.2%) reduction in interest expense.

<sup>1</sup>New England Inter-Church Aid

### WE OWN



### WE OWE



WE OWN			WE OWE		
	FY15	FY14		FY15	FY14
	\$ 000	\$ 000		\$ 000	\$ 000
Cash	1,916	1,373	Owing to churches	1,062	1,134
Term deposits	3,201	3,094	Owing to individuals	1,411	1,483
Loans to churches & ministers	8,019	8,446	Owing to associated ministries	5,634	5,469
Investments	2,108	2,201	Funds held in trust	2,220	2,261
Other receivables	75	45	Accrued liabilities	45	14
<b>Total assets</b>	<b>15,319</b>	<b>15,159</b>	<b>Total liabilities</b>	<b>10,372</b>	<b>10,361</b>

**Net assets** **\$4,947** **\$4,798**

Net Assets increased during the year by \$148,134 to \$4,946,605.

Total Liabilities increased by \$11,603. This included a 5.5% (\$143,877) reduction in deposits from churches and individuals, offset by a 3.0% (\$165,195) increase in deposits from associated ministries.

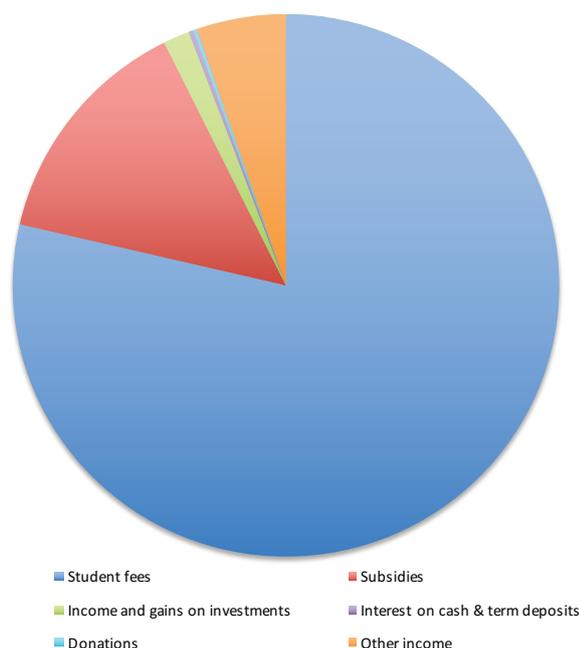
Total Assets increased by \$159,737. This included a \$649,709 increase in cash and term deposits offset by a decrease in loans to churches & ministers of \$427,054 (5.1%), due to net loan repayments.

# ACOM

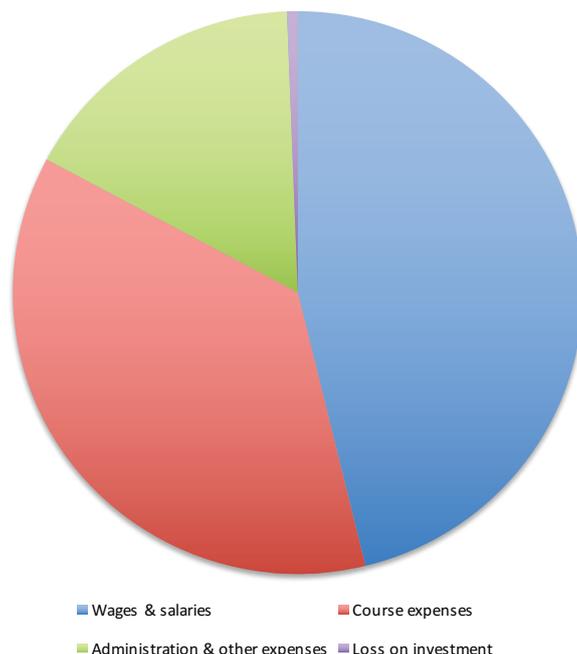
WE EARNED			WE SPENT		
	2014	2013		2014	2013
	\$ 000	\$ 000		\$ 000	\$ 000
Student fees	2,350	1,515	Wages & salaries	1,295	1,146
Subsidies	419	492	Course expenses	1,028	686
Income and gains on investments	47	111	Administration & other expenses	464	384
Interest on cash & term deposits	8	11	Loss on investment	17	-
Donations	7	23			
Other income	158	237			
<b>Total income</b>	<b>2,989</b>	<b>2,389</b>	<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>2,804</b>	<b>2,216</b>

<b>Net surplus</b>	<b>\$185</b>	<b>\$173</b>
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**WE EARNED**



**WE SPENT**

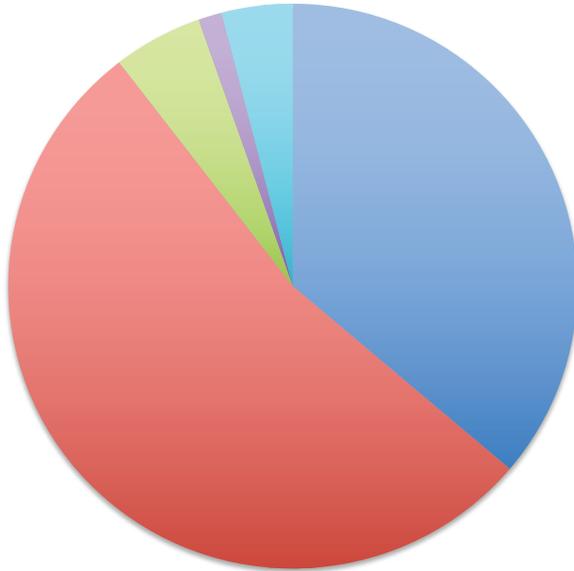


ACOM recorded a surplus of \$184,783 in 2014, after net investment returns of \$37,037. The remaining profit was allocated towards development and marketing costs in 2015.

Higher education units numbers rose from 815 in 2012 to 840 in 2013 and 1053 in 2014, representing growth of 29% over two years.

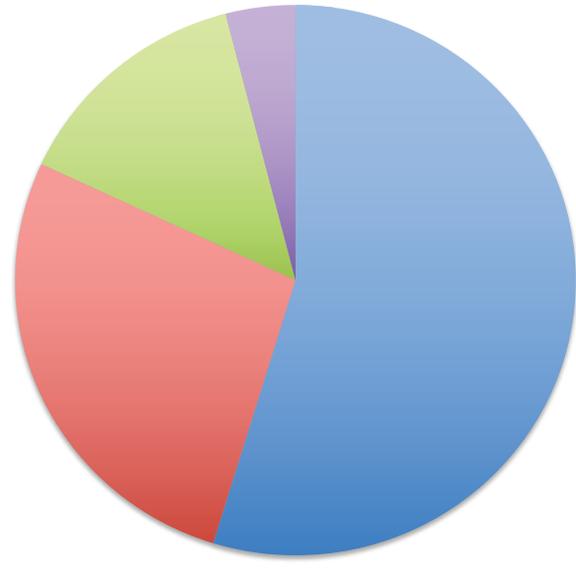
The decrease in subsidies from 2013 to 2014 represents the withdrawal of Churches of Christ in QLD as a member of ACOM.

### WE OWN



■ Cash  
■ Investments  
■ Trade receivables  
■ Plant and equipment  
■ Other receivables

### WE OWE



■ Owing to other ministries  
■ Trade payables  
■ Provisions  
■ Income received in advance

WE OWN			WE OWE		
	2014	2013		2014	2013
	\$ 000	\$ 000		\$ 000	\$ 000
Cash	492	209	Owing to other ministries	300	300
Investments	725	447	Trade payables	149	95
Trade receivables	69	494	Provisions	77	62
Plant and equipment	18	7	Income received in advance	22	326
Other receivables	55	252			
<b>Total assets</b>	<b>1,359</b>	<b>1,409</b>	<b>Total liabilities</b>	<b>548</b>	<b>783</b>

**Net assets** **\$811** **\$626**

2013 trade receivables were increased due to the impact of a January Holy Land study tour, with income received in advance representing the associated liability.

ACOM's major debtor is the Australian Federal Government, by way of FeeHelp payments.

ACOM uses a substituted accounting year, reflecting the academic year from 1 January to 31 December.





**FRESH HOPE  
ANNUAL  
CONFERENCE  
MINUTES 2015**

# ANNUAL CONFERENCE MINUTES 2015

## **Minutes of Annual Conference**

**Saturday 9 May 2015 10:30am**

**The Tops Conference Centre, Stanwell Tops NSW**

The Conference Day commenced with the worship team.

Steve Hodgson, Youth/Young Adults Ministry Leader was emcee and opened the day in prayer.

## **WELCOME**

Conference Executive President Stephen Toomey chaired the Annual General Meeting beginning with prayer.

## **FORMAL APOLOGIES**

The following apologies were noted:

Larry Galbraith, Epping Church of Christ

Terri Wilson & Stephen Hinks, Hardys Bay

Ian & Helen Allen, Katoomba Lighthouse Church

Ross Brinkman, Wagga Wagga Church

Pam Clapshaw, PSU Coordinator

Lynne Toomey, Hurstville Church of Christ

## **NOTICES OF MOTION ARE VOTED BY A SHOW OF HANDS UNLESS NOTED BY BALLOT**

### **Notice of Motion 1**

“That the minutes of the Annual Conference of Churches of Christ in NSW held 17 May 2014 as printed and circulated in the Churches of Christ in NSW Annual Report 2015, For the year ending 30 June 2014 be adopted as a true and accurate record of that meeting.”

**MOVED: Wayne Morris, Southern Illawarra Church of Christ**

**SECONDED: Alex Murfet, Northside Community Church**

Motion **CARRIED** by majority.

### **Notice of Motion 2**

“That the Annual Financial Reports 2013/2014 as printed and circulated in the Churches of Christ in NSW Annual Report 2015, For the year ending 30 June 2014 be adopted.”

**MOVED: David Hargreaves, Berkeley Vale Church of Christ**

**SECONDED: David Bentley, Hurstville Church of Christ**

Motion **CARRIED** by majority.

### **Notice of Motion 3**

“That KPMG be appointed the auditors of the accounts of Churches of Christ in NSW for the financial year 2014/2015.”

**MOVED: Michael Thomas, Northside Community Church**

**SECONDED: John Morris, Forster Tuncurry Church of Christ**

Motion **CARRIED** by majority.

### **Notice of Motion 4**

“That on the recommendation of Conference Executive, the following remuneration schedule be adopted as the recommended minimum salary for ministers in 2015/2016, to come into effect from the first full pay period in July 2015.

1. That the salary component be increased to \$ 908 per week.
2. That the housing component be increased to \$ 420 per week.
3. That the car component remains the same at \$ 176 per week. That the superannuation rate be increase from 10.5 % to 11%.”

**MOVED: Stewart Noel, Liberty Church of Christ**

**SECONDED: Sandy Timbrell, Telopea Church of Christ**

Motion **CARRIED** by majority.

Stephen thanked Andrew Ball for his service and encouraged prayers to bless him and his health. Stephen thanked everyone for the opportunity to serve as President and shared a passage from I Timothy 6:11-12.

# ANNUAL CONFERENCE MINUTES 2015

## NOTICES OF MOTION VOTED BY BALLOT PAPER

James Hogan of Liberty Church was the Returning Officer for the voting required by ballot.

### **Notice of Motion 5 (By ballot paper)**

“That Troy Blair be elected to the position of Conference President for the Conference year 2015/2016.” (By ballot paper)

Result: **ELECTED** *unanimously*.

### **Notice of Motion 6 (By ballot paper)**

“That Ian Allen, Andrew Berthelsen, Raymond Cheal, Michael Hardie, Catherine Kleemann, Victor Tee, Stephen Toomey and Raewyn Williams be elected to Conference Executive for the Conference year 2015/2016.” (By ballot paper)

Result: **ELECTED** *by majority*.

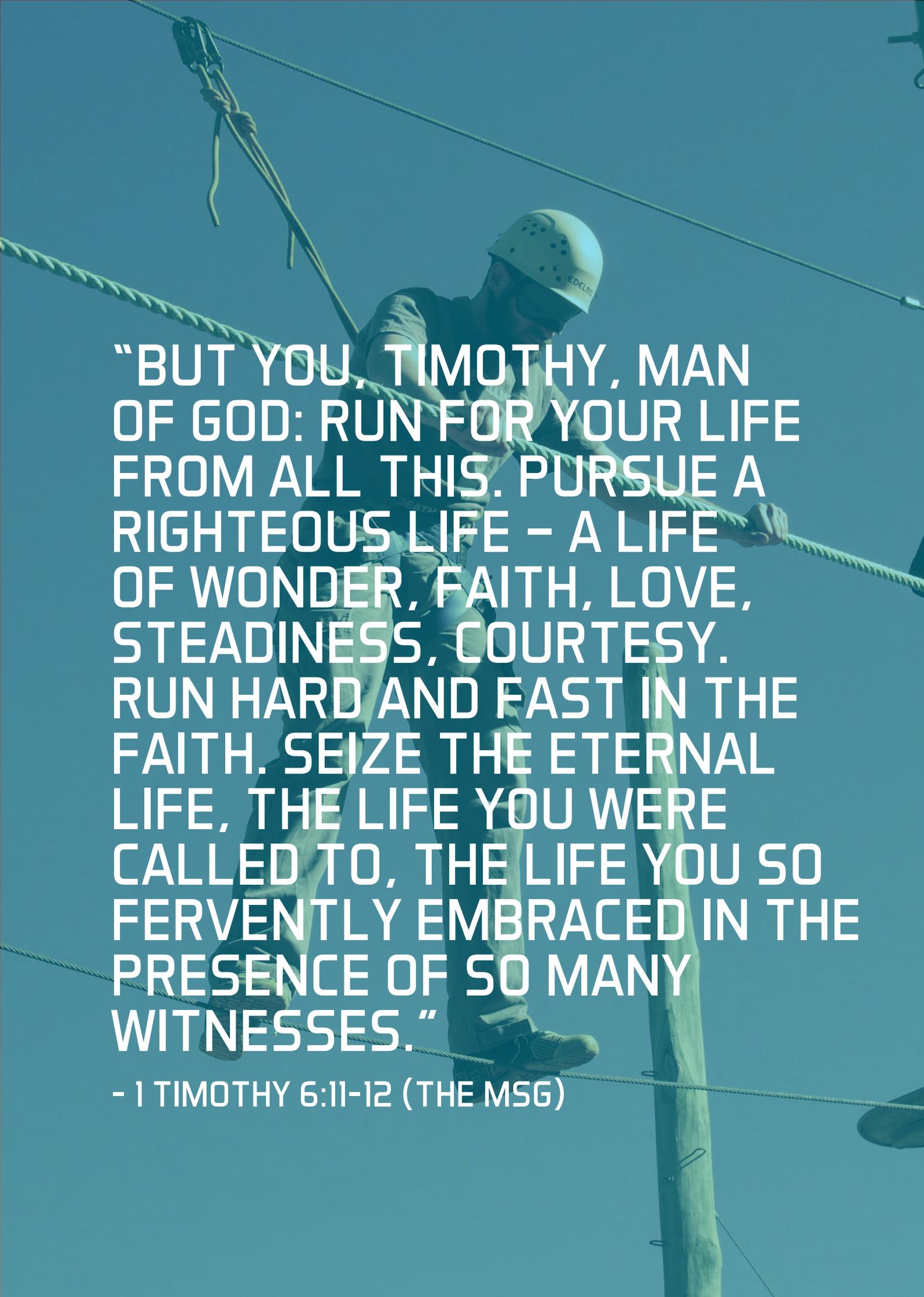
### **Notice of Motion 7 (By ballot paper)**

“That on the unanimous recommendation of Conference Executive, Andrew Ball’s contract as Executive Ministry Director be extended for an additional 5 years beyond 1st February 2016. This would extend his contract to 1st Feb 2021.” (By ballot paper)

Result: **ELECTED** *by majority*.

## CLOSE

The business session closed at 10:47am with prayer led by Stephen Toomey.

A man wearing a white helmet with the brand name 'EDELRIE' and a safety harness is climbing a rope structure. He is looking down and holding onto a thick rope. The background is a clear blue sky. The text is overlaid on the image in white, bold, sans-serif font.

“BUT YOU, TIMOTHY, MAN OF GOD: RUN FOR YOUR LIFE FROM ALL THIS. PURSUE A RIGHTEOUS LIFE – A LIFE OF WONDER, FAITH, LOVE, STEADINESS, COURTESY. RUN HARD AND FAST IN THE FAITH. SEIZE THE ETERNAL LIFE, THE LIFE YOU WERE CALLED TO, THE LIFE YOU SO FERVENTLY EMBRACED IN THE PRESENCE OF SO MANY WITNESSES.”

- 1 TIMOTHY 6:11-12 (THE MSG)



fresh hope



Churches  
of Christ  
In New South Wales

Fresh Hope / Churches of Christ in NSW  
PO Box 3561 Rhodes NSW 2138  
P/ (02) 8719 2600  
E/ [office@freshhope.org.au](mailto:office@freshhope.org.au)  
[freshhope.org.au](http://freshhope.org.au)  
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