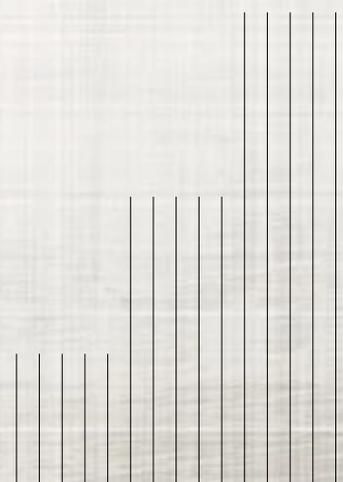


ANNUAL REPORT

Churches of Christ In NSW
For the year ending
30 June 2016





“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.”

- Dr Andrew Ball



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THE PRESIDENT & EXECUTIVE MINISTRY DIRECTOR

The 2015/16 reporting year is highlighted throughout the following pages. Each of the agencies and ministries within Churches of Christ in NSW and the ACT continue to powerfully offer ministry and assistance to churches and communities.

We want to thank the many individuals that faithfully serve across the length and breadth of the fresh hope family with passion and intention.

You will see throughout this report stories of transformation, a reflection of our mission 'transforming communities with fresh hope.'

In May 2016 we flagged a new theme for the year 'Beyond the Harbour'. It is an intentional theme designed to stimulate discussion and action for both church and our agencies. It is not simply an 'idea' in season, but a resounding call to mission and engagement in a secular culture that is becoming increasingly dismissive of the church. It is also more than a metaphor as we hope that all our churches would choose to go 'Beyond the Harbour' rather than analysing and researching what it would mean to do so. It is about mission and action rather than theory and debate.

In recent months we have noted how quickly society and culture is changing. There are a myriad of issues emerging that cut to the core of our Christian values and threaten the very essence and role of the church. While this might pose a threat to the future functionality of church, we see it as an opportunity to look outwardly, ever hopeful that God is continuing to use normal people in his redemptive transformative journey.

"No longer is the belief in God or the deity of Christ or the authority and inspiration of Scripture standard. In other words, we need to do as missionaries do: become students of the host culture so we can discover how God's Spirit intends the Gospel to become embodied in the new era. Missiologists call this contextualization."

SHIFTING FROM SETTLERS TO HUMBLE EXILES

There was a time in the history of the nation of Israel where they were exiled and held captive to a foreign King. The prophet Jeremiah spoke into the season as follows:

'Build homes, and plan to stay. Plant gardens, and eat the food they produce. Marry and have children ... And work for the peace and prosperity of the city where I sent you into exile. Pray to the Lord for it, for its welfare will determine your welfare.' (Jeremiah 29:5,7-8)

We notice that there is no call to subvert the wicked kingdom of Nebuchadnezzar, the destroyer of their temple and Babylonian captor who carried them off in chains. On the contrary, they are called to offer peace and pray for the welfare of their city.

Wayne Hudson in his book 'Australian Religious Thought' states:

"No adequate account of European settlement in Australia can ignore the role of religion in shaping Australian attitudes and institutions ... In early New South Wales the Church of England was part of the civil administration; in 1825 the leading Anglican clergyman was given a position in the Legislative Council and the Executive Council second only to the Governor."

Hudson goes on ...

“Nor was the importance of religion confined to the servants of the empire. By 1820, Catholic priests in NSW were paid by the government and, in 1834, allowance was made for the role of a Catholic Bishop, sixteen years before the Catholic hierarchy was acknowledged in England.

Governor Bourke’s Church Act of 1836 gave equal official recognition to the Anglican, Catholic, Presbyterian and Wesleyan Methodist churches and provided grants for the establishment of church buildings and for stipends for clergy of all four denominations.”

This historical commentary reminds us that in our early settlement, the role of the church alongside the State was fully integrated and appreciated. Not so now.

The parallels seem to us to be quite striking. It is highly likely that the Australian church will enter an exilic period of hostility and rejection, thereby requiring courage and humility to re-think how we engage in community as missionaries. What might it mean for each of us if the church is exiled?

PILGRIMS ON THE WAY

A helpful posture for a mature disciple is to collaboratively take the journey with others, to humble one-self and offer service to the broader community. We believe that the changing shape of culture and society warrants a re-think from pragmatic expertise to simple discipleship.

Michael Horton suggests that the goal of good theology is to humble us before the triune God of majesty and grace.

He asserts that:

“ ... the older theologians of the Reformation and Post-Reformation eras were so convinced that their interpretations fell short of the majesty of God that they called their summaries and systems “our humble theology” and “a theology for pilgrims on the way.”

As fellow pilgrims we sense it is perhaps time to lay down our petty preoccupations, our clutter and distractions and willingly walk the journey of humble obedience in the pursuit of following Jesus. We imagine a transformed church looking into the next decade with a heightened sense of urgency to re-engage with the Gospel in language and practice that’s relevant to future generations.

From this space, we might even adopt some new language orientations, seeking to be present pilgrims as cultural architects, spiritual leaders, deep disciples and redemptive motivators.

We wonder how might the church adapt to a new frontier “Beyond the Harbour” where together we view each other as learners rather than teachers?

THE PRESIDENT & EXECUTIVE MINISTRY DIRECTOR

FRESH HOPE PIONEERS

One of the early redemptive fingerprints within this 'movement of churches', was the capacity of the 'whole' to sow into new church plants or expressions of faith communities. Our early evangelists pioneered new works that were then supported and funded by the broader movement to impact new frontiers with the Gospel.

We have strong faith that God continues to raise up new pioneers to plant new faith communities that are relevant for future generations.

"God takes the initiative. God chooses unlikely people, far from the center of ecclesiastical power, and he works to remake them from the inside out. He inspires innovative insights regarding his mission and how it is to be carried out. Biblical truths and practices are rediscovered. A growing band of ordinary people emerges who have a heartfelt faith and missionary zeal that knows no bounds."

As a fresh hope family of churches, we'd like to call us back to a mutuality of service. In 2017 we will proactively launch a pioneering strategy to seed new kingdom outposts. We would love our churches together to engage opportunities to send and release ordinary people into new expressions of church. For this to happen we need to re-prioritize some of our missions funding into urban, local and regional contexts.

As a part of this journey a fresh hope pioneering strategy will be released to clarify opportunities for churches to engage and articulate important kingdom principles for new works. For we have many un-reached people groups now in Australia who have yet to hear the Gospel.

We would like to ask whether your church has church planting on your radar going forward and whether you'd be willing to contribute to a macro strategy to plant more faith communities in NSW and the ACT?

PEACEFUL PLACEMAKERS

It is somewhat ironic that within our great nation, the issues of mental illness continue to ravage families, individuals and communities. As we examine the data it seems despite our intelligence, our privileged way of life, and our collective capacities people still struggle ...

"Mental illness is very common. One in five (20%) Australians aged 16-85 experience a mental illness in any year. The most common mental illnesses are depression, anxiety and substance use disorder. These three types of mental illnesses often occur in combination. For example, a person with an anxiety disorder could also develop depression, or a person with depression might misuse alcohol or other drugs, in an effort to self-medicate. Of the 20% of Australians with a mental illness in any one year, 11.5% have one disorder and 8.5% have two or more disorders. Almost half (45%) of Australians will experience a mental illness in their lifetime."

We wonder what would happen if the church (in its local expression) became a safe-haven for people to gently find acceptance and peace despite their personal struggles. We envisage a church that intuitively offers peace into the human heart, found only through Jesus.

"I am leaving you with
a gift-peace of mind and heart.
And the peace I give is a gift the
world cannot give.
So don't be troubled or afraid."

- John 14:7 (NLT)

We imagine a church that strengthens the soul, heals shame, encourages living lightly (in freedom) and contrasts society by offering grace, peace and acceptance. We encourage you to audit your church and ask one another are you creating peaceful places for rest and healing or adding stress into already busy life-styles?

In conclusion, we cannot remember a time in our life-times when so much change and complexity is impacting ministry and mission. We are profoundly hopeful that Jesus continues to build his church through faithful disciples.

We passionately believe that the Australian church can no longer stay within the safe confines of our harbour. We must venture forth, trusting God as we engage future generations.

We are privileged to help lead this movement and as we move into the next season are excited about partnering with you in the Gospel.

Troy Blair
Conference President

Andrew Ball
Executive Ministry Director



LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT ADVENTURE | IMPART | IMPACT | RECHARGE

Raising and releasing spiritual leaders took another step forward this year. Two new programs have been piloted. Impact is a leadership/pioneering training year in which students who have completed one of the previous years of Navigate are invited to live in an intentional mission community for a year.

Seven young adults signed up to this challenge in 2016. They were accommodated in one bedroom units at our Pendle Hill site. Some of the areas they have immersed themselves in are prayer walking, chaplaincy, school scripture, youth and children's ministry, wilderness camping with marginalised youth, café mission, feeding the homeless, food for life, church planting and preaching.

In the second part of the year they will be invited to participate in a new church plant or join a leadership team of a local church ministry. Throughout the year they have been given many training opportunities, including Alpha – God in the City, Formation, Fresh Hope Collective, emotional health, evangelism and discipleship training.

Another new initiative is Recharge which has been designed for people over 50 who want to take time to have their souls refreshed. It is designed to engage with a spiritual community around God's Word and Spirit. There were eight men and women courageous enough to be part of the 2016 inaugural group. Throughout the year they are given opportunities to connect with some of our younger students studying with Navigate. I have appreciated the way ACOM has created courses which reflect the strategic learning outcomes for Fresh Hope programs such as this.

The Navigate Adventure group of ten has been led by Jessie and Abigail Skelly this year. These students have experienced the transformational power of story, community and biblical teaching.

Navigate Impart commenced the year with eleven students. This group has bonded well, with some recognising a call from God to full-time ministry and mission. The subject, 'Trinity' proves to be one of the toughest and yet most life-changing - building a strong sense of being loved and invited into the community of the Trinity.

One of Fresh Hope Navigate training goals is based on the following quote by Dallas Willard:

“The most important thing in your life is not what you do; it's what you become. That's what you will take into eternity.”

This year has had some tough moments when, as a team, we took a breath, prayed and waited for God to break through. Not all of those who started the year finished well but thankfully most have encountered the joy of the love and presence of God and taken another step towards Christ-likeness.

John Crowther
Director | Leadership Development



Recharge 2016



Adventure 2016



Impart 2016

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT CHURCH ENGAGEMENT

I have 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, facilitating workshops with churches, and ongoing contact by phone and email.

It has been a pleasure to work, in some capacity, with over half of the churches across our movement and I have enjoyed witnessing the transformation of churches and leaders as they engage further with the unique God-given calling that each of them have.

SOME HIGHLIGHTS FROM THIS TIME HAVE BEEN:

- An increasing number of healthy churches that are venturing 'beyond the harbour' and seeking to develop further. This often involves facilitated workshops around Shaping and Sharing Vision and/or Managing Change and Transition in the Church, as well as ongoing coaching around effective transformation processes.
- Facilitation of a number of churches in transition between pastors, as they develop church, community and pastoral profiles, and seek a good pastoral match.
- Churches under Conference governance that are either stable or looking to transition back to self-governance.
- Development of a number of health resources for churches, including effective pastoral call and pastoral review processes.

- Formation with John Crowther (Director Leadership Development) of the Church Planting Taskforce to provide training, coaching, prayer, and planter assessment to churches planting daughter congregations and church planters. A number of congregations are preparing to plant in the medium term.
- Development of a church dashboard, which will give churches ongoing feedback about their ministry and outreach effectiveness.
- A successful merger of two churches.

OBJECTIVES FOR THE YEAR AHEAD:

- Development of more church health resources for pastors and leaders of churches for the Fresh Hope website.
- The first Regional Collective (with Leon Munro – Ministers Care Network) for pastors and other church leaders was held in March 2016, with more planned for late 2016 and 2017 across the state. These will provide opportunities to retreat for pastors and training for leadership teams.
- Seek to widen the team of those committed to supporting church health in a variety of ways. In particular we are seeking those who can provide effective interim ministry for churches in transition.

Dr Ian Duncum
Ministry Leader | Church Engagement



LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT MINISTRY CARE NETWORK

Another year has come and gone.

My involvement in the lives and ministry of so many people this year has probably made this the best and most exciting year for me to date. It has been amazing to see people thrive in life and in ministry.

There is a great sense of anticipation amongst our pastors and leaders as to what they are expecting God to do in their ministry.

For some, this has been a challenging and difficult year, however even through this, many have celebrated seeing the goodness of God in the life of their church and ministry.

My role is to support and encourage our pastors and leaders to live a healthy, balanced spiritual life, devoted to following Jesus and encouraging others to do the same. A healthy, balanced spiritual life requires a pastor to keep every area of their lives (spirit, soul and body) in good balance. With the busyness of church life and all the activities involved in Christian ministry, life can become very demanding and sometimes overwhelming - which is why it is so important for pastors and leaders to set aside quality time to retreat with God and with others who understand the pressures and stressors of ministering.

High demands and expectations are difficulties that all pastors face at some time in their ministry. This may come from within themselves, as well as from the church family and their community. Sometimes trying to balance ministry and life can be overwhelming. Whether real or perceived, these demands and expectations often lead pastors to dig in, work harder and try to achieve more. This can lead to an unbalanced lifestyle. It is impossible to emphasise enough that for our pastors to be able to thrive in ministry, as well as for their own good health and longevity, they need to ensure that they take care of themselves.





Pastors can enhance their emotional health and stability, flexibility and resilience, with regular exercise, a healthy diet and a good regular sleeping pattern. A healthy body and a healthy mind go together.

Just as important is that pastors have a healthy and trusted support system around them. Good friends, strong family networks and mentors are important in providing additional elements of support and pleasure to life and ministry. They also help protect pastors from stressors, pressures and tensions of ministry.

If these essentials are not in place, depression and anxiety can become part of life. Loneliness and isolation can have a serious adverse impact on health. Studies show people with strong social networks tend to have better heart health outcomes and live longer.

It has been said, “Don’t look for good friends, just be one.” Finding other areas of interest to broaden an existing social circle will bring strength and support. Considering becoming involved in a new sport or activity, maybe learning a new craft activity, or joining a volunteer group for a worthy cause can all assist in achieving this.

For many years, pastors, leaders and other people in ministry have been finding great support and encouragement through attending retreats. Some examples are renewal retreat groups, special purpose groups, fraternal groups, leaders support groups, and a regional collective. In these groups there is opportunity for learning, development, encouragement and support. Pastors who aren’t or have not yet been connected with a transformation or renewal group are encouraged to get connected sometime this coming year and my role is to assist with this.

Progress and change take hard work, discipline and diligence. Most people are willing to put in the work and effort. They just don’t know how to begin the journey. “Beyond the Harbour” was the theme for this year’s Collective. If we are to go beyond the harbour and begin the next leg of our journey, we will need to leave the safety and security of the dock. What will be taken with us, and what will be left behind? It is my prayer to see our pastors living and thriving in their area of ministry. It is part of our role to bring light and salt into this world, encouraging others to find Jesus as we serve Him, our churches and our community.

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT SPIRITUAL MENTORING

Teaching leaders and pastors to foster spiritual transformation throughout the lives of their Jesus followers and their communities is one of our chief callings. Our vocation is to assist the forming of the practices and postures as Jesus modelled and taught.

This is at the heart of what Spiritual Mentoring Cohorts are all about. Overall, nine different retreats were conducted in the following areas:

ADVANCED SPIRITUAL MENTORING

An Advanced Spiritual Mentoring Cohort took its first training residential in March 2016. The Advanced Cohort included eight practicing mentors and took them to new levels of skilling, discernment, practice development and practice evaluation.

The cohort involves rigorous practice in the following areas: leadership of contemplative activities, supervision of mentors, leading group mentoring and specialised group discernment. A number of these individuals are also reproducing training in their own churches as well as leading contemplative retreats.

The Advanced Spiritual Mentoring trainees are able to align their residential attendance with post graduate studies with ACOM if desired.

SPIRITUAL MENTORING COHORTS IN PROGRESS

There were three cohorts in motion during this period. The sixth cohort (SMF - Spiritual Mentoring Group F) included fly-ins from Armidale, Tweed Heads, ACT, Coffs Harbour, Port Macquarie, Queensland and Melbourne as well as a good contingent from the Sydney area. Our 7th and 8th cohorts continued building their training through this period.

NORTHERN RIVERS LEADERSHIP COHORT CONTINUES

The Northern Rivers Church Leadership members have been deepening their own community spirit, gaining further experience in group decision-making and discernment as they study spiritual mentoring as a team. The team members are extending their knowledge and experience of personal spiritual formation, implications of personality in leadership, silent retreating and a Trinitarian philosophy of leadership.

Sue Whiteley
Facilitator | Spiritual Mentoring

Our vocation is to assist the forming of the practices and postures as Jesus modelled and taught.



Cohort G



Cohort H



LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT YOUTH & YOUNG ADULTS

As I write this, I am sitting at DRASTIC Camp 2016 surrounded by about 320 young people and leaders, all having an incredible time in a temporary community focused on seeking God and inviting him to transform lives. It really puts in perspective the great joy it is to serve our movement of churches in helping reach youth and young adults with the transforming message of hope that is Jesus.

We have youth groups involved from Sydney, the (Sutherland) Shire, Penrith, Albion Park and the NSW South Coast; people from Bathurst and Dubbo and Western NSW; groups from Forster, Port Macquarie, Lismore and the North Coast of NSW; we have people from the ACT and even one who flew in from Hong Kong!

It is incredibly exciting to see what God is doing in the lives of young people through our churches in every corner of this state. Some of the churches are small, others large - but all are earnestly seeking for ways to effectively help young people follow Jesus and make an impact in their world.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE PAST YEAR:

NYMC 2015

National Youth Ministry Convention on the Gold Coast was an incredible week of equipping, encouragement and inspiration for youth pastors and leaders from all across our state and nation.

We had approximately 60 leaders from Fresh Hope churches attend the four day conference with 420 other youth pastors and leaders. It was a pleasure to hear from some of the best practitioners in youth ministry from across the world including:

Brad Griffin (Fuller Youth Institute)

David Kinnaman (Barna Research)

Krish Kandiah (London School of Theology) and

Jo Saxton (3DM)



UPRISING: SEE THE WORLD

This year at UPRISING we focused on equipping young leaders with the ability to open their eyes and begin to see the world around them as God does. It was our largest UPRISING yet with 75 people attending.

Those who were there were trained in telling God's story and telling their own story as well as receiving practical teaching and equipping in character formation, soul formation, skill development and mission experience. It was a highlight to have 20 of these young leaders share what they had learned at UPRISING in an experiential learning activity at DRASTIC later in the year.

FUSE

FUSE again has continued to expand as more youth groups see it is a vital event in helping their young people encounter Jesus. FUSE in November 2015 at Northside was an incredible event with Steve Chong (RICE – Renewal & Inter-Church Evangelism) presenting the gospel, and in May we took FUSE to the Shire to Connect Church Engadine. Thanks to the incredible work of the two churches and their leadership teams for hosting this event.

DRASTIC: DARE TO JUMP

DRASTIC 2015 was amazing. For the second year in a row we sold out and had to find more space at The Tops to allow more young people to attend. Almost 350 people attended DRASTIC from all across NSW and we are so grateful for all

that God did in showing young people his love and inviting many to follow Jesus for the first time. A huge thank you to Alasdair and Michelle MacDougall who directed their 4th and final DRASTIC camp. Under their leadership DRASTIC has grown significantly - more than doubling in attendees, growing from 4 days to 5 days, expanding to include Study Camp and a Year 13 leaders stream.

They have done an amazing job at leading this camp for it to become the most significant youth event in the year leading to the transforming of hundreds of lives.

I have also enjoyed throughout the year travelling and catching up with many youth pastors across our state, helping develop and invest in our Navigate programs (Adventure, Impart, Impact, Tops and Recharge), as well as having numerous opportunities to speak at churches and youth ministries.

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 | Fresh Hope Youth/Young Adults
Youth Vision NSW



CORPORATE SERVICES

The Corporate Services team brings together the functions of human resources, payroll, finance, procurement, fleet, insurances, information and communications technology and ministry services, with a mandate to provide services right across our Fresh Hope activities.

The Human Resources (HR) team, well led by John Favaloro, has made good progress during the past year on improving policies & procedures as well as in assisting with recruitment and with a myriad of HR and Industrial Relations (IR) issues. Katerina Tsvirko went on maternity leave and was replaced by Craig Tolladay.

Glyn Williams joined the team as Work Health Safety (WHS) Manager and has made further improvements in that important area, and is in the process of implementing new WHS software. JLT, insurance provider to Fresh Hope, continued to provide professional advice on workers compensation claims management, return to work programs and WHS systems.

Jenny Stephenson replaced Donna Vigorelli as Payroll Manager and has developed the payroll team, made many process improvements and is well prepared for the coming upgrade to the Exolve HR/Payroll systems.

The Finance team, under the leadership of Nirajah Mahendra, had another great year despite some changes in personnel. Belinda Edwards returned from maternity leave, and Julie Dai went on maternity leave.

Ritika Lall assumed accounting responsibility for Living Care and Belinda for the other entities. Claire Forbes (Procurement) was replaced by Terry James. Scott Griffiths (contractor) continued to assist with many improvement projects, including the migration of banking to the ANZ Bank.

The Information and Communications Technology (ICT) team led by Ivo Horner expanded to six people with key new people in specialist roles. ICT along with Finance successfully completed the upgrade to Microsoft Dynamics Ax 2012. An ICT steering committee was established and a detailed work schedule was developed covering a wide range of system enhancement projects.

The Audit Committee continued to play a key role in the oversight of the external audit conducted by audit company KPMG. JLT continued to provide advice and assistance as our general insurance broker. Following the exit of finance company UBS from wealth management in Australia, Morgan Stanley was appointed as our investment advisor. The Investment Committee met quarterly with Morgan Stanley to discuss portfolio performance and investment strategy.

The Ministry Services team continues to provide support to our network churches and the Fresh Hope Leadership Development group, in addition to overseeing Fresh Hope events, communications and compliance. This year the team included students from both Impart and Impact programs.

The past year has seen the review and update of the Ministers Endorsement brochure, along with launch of the revised Ministers Endorsement Ongoing Professional Development (OPD) system as of 1 July 2016. Fresh Hope Collective 2016 was a sell-out, filling the Tops campsite to capacity. Over 340 people came together as family to embark on the challenge to go "Beyond the Harbour".

Max Hopkins
Director | Corporate Services



FRESH HOPE INITIATIVE AUSTRALIAN COLLEGE OF MINISTRIES

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.

ACOM is led by 30 permanent staff (ministry support, academic and leadership development), plus 40 contracted staff (17 formation leaders, and 23 subject facilitators) across Australia.

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

The Company Secretary is Catherine Kleemann.

LARGEST GRADUATING CLASS IN 74 YEAR HISTORY

2016 saw the largest graduating class since the College began in 1942. Seventy four students graduated with degrees in ministry and theology in the Great Hall of the University of Sydney in May 2016.

ACOM currently has 460 active students studying for university level qualifications. Of these students, 52% are affiliated with Churches of Christ nationally, 113 with Churches of Christ in NSW, including over 40 in Fresh Hope initiatives such as Navigate, Recharge, the Tops internships, and CareWorks chaplaincy training.





A FRESH EMPHASIS ON MISSION

In 2016 ACOM welcomed the Christian and Missionary Alliance of Australia (CMA) as a new member. This partnership adds the strength and experience of the Alliance movement, which has a presence in 81 countries around the world. The sponsorship of CMA will launch the Alliance Institute for Mission, a centre of excellence within ACOM focused on training missionaries for both local and global mission.

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 CAREWORKS

Careworks seeks to be a resource centre that facilitates gospel-centred community connections, and it is our desire to see local churches moving beyond the harbour, beyond the walls of their church, reaching out to people in need within their communities and beyond, bringing them fresh hope and enabling transformation in their lives.

Many of our Careworks partners continue to faithfully serve their local communities with excellent programs that provide meals, counselling, chaplaincy, crisis accommodation, training and education, to name a few.

A highlight this year was the HuB, a men's-shed-style project of "Hope Connect" at Telopea Christian Centre, which was awarded "Exceptional Project within a Not for Profit Organisation" at the Zest Awards in Greater Western Sydney.

AN EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

In March this year, Careworks facilitated an evaluation and planning day and presented an Evaluation Framework to its partners. This framework was based on an "appreciative enquiry" approach and it aims to help churches reflect on their current approaches and ask some really tough, but important questions such as: Should we keep running this program?

What does success actually mean or look like? Has there been evidence of real and lasting change in participants' lives?

Mostly the answers to these questions are that the program itself only starts that journey. The key to all of these programs is not the program itself, but the relationships made. However to really move beyond the harbour, these relationships need to go deeper, be more intentional, often with one-to-one discipleship, opening your home and your heart to journey with someone over the long haul.

But this is exactly what the Scriptures tell us to do:

What I'm interested in seeing you do is:
sharing your food with the hungry, inviting the homeless poor into your homes, putting clothes on the shivering ill-clad, being available to your own families.

- Isaiah 58:7 (The Message)

Often we narrow hospitality down to having friends or family from church over for lunch, but this is not the intent of this passage (or similar passages such as Matthew 25, Luke 10 or Hebrew 13.

It is the stranger, the unknown person, someone who may inconvenience you. They may smell or look different and they might even mess up your house. Will you go beyond the harbour and welcome such desperate people in need into your home and life?



“The kindness of Christians to strangers, their care for the burial of their dead, and the sobriety of their lifestyle has done the most to advance their cause.”

- Julian “The Apostate” (Roman Emperor AD 361-363)

CAREWORKS STRATEGY

This year, Careworks has spent considerable time praying and processing how it can best position itself as the resource centre of choice for movement churches and partners.

The key themes in the strategy are:

Careworks to be a trusted partner in gospel ministry with local churches and other movement partners.

Careworks becomes the charity of choice in the Fresh Hope family. A communication and fundraising strategy involving an advanced online solution combined with an online store to help fund its ministry.

Careworks’ Resource Centre saves churches significant time and energy by having a one-stop shop in community connection that contains the latest resources, is up to date in best practice and thinking, and provides guidance in beginning new initiatives.

The team at Careworks has already implemented a new fundraising platform on a new look website and also launched a trial of its first social enterprise initiative at this year’s Collective.

To enable the strategy to be implemented, the Careworks Ministry Leader position will be made full-time from early 2017, and resources will be allocated to be more available to local churches and their ministry initiatives.



CHAPLAINCY

In a society where there seems to be spiralling stress and anxiety, the role of the chaplain is becoming more and more relevant.

One of our senior chaplains, Dr Peter Carblis, represents Churches of Christ as our delegate on the Civil Chaplains Advisory Committee (CCAC). This committee oversees chaplains placed in hospitals and prisons in NSW. Nationally there are several peak bodies currently developing standards in relation to spiritual care and Peter has engaged with the development process and formulated a theological response to the standards being developed.

Careworks places chaplains in hospitals, prisons and schools, but primarily Careworks manages the strategic placement of chaplains in Living Care’s facilities and services.

This year, our chaplains have received some exceptional training through:

- ACOM’s “Graduate Certificate in Chaplaincy”;
- The Chaplain’s retreat with Rose Weir discussing the important topic of compassion fatigue;
- Best practice learning from John Swinton and Liz McKinlay at a Faith and Dementia Symposium;
- Fresh Hope Collective, with an inspiring presentation by our chaplains, Peter Wakeley and Astrid Elliman.

As always, the work of Careworks would not be possible without its faithful prayer supporters and the generosity of its donors. I would like to thank you for your continued generosity to this ministry.

I would also like to thank the many volunteers who serve with Careworks partner churches and with their time and contribution are making a significant difference in bringing fresh hope and transformation to their communities.

Richard Reeve
Ministry Leader | Careworks



FRESH HOPE INITIATIVE FRESH HOPE VENUES - THE TOPS

After two years of planning and preparation, and 12 months of construction, we took delivery of our new reception and administration building at The Tops in May 2016.

It's added another wonderful functional dimension to the site. Guests now have a very visible point of entry and a portal through which they can find their location while staying with us. Lost people are now fewer than ever before. Wet weather arrivals and departures are now handled with greater ease and comfort for all involved.

The overall project has been a blessing in that while the cost has gone over budget, we have managed to cover the total budget without any need to draw down on additional loan provisions. This creates a great platform for other initiatives planned within Fresh Hope Venues.

In addition there has been a significant amount of work undertaken in completing the strategic document through a consultative process with Tops management and the ministry team.

The strategy process revisited core values and identified key strategic intents for the next five years, outlining a planned path of expansion focusing on three distinct areas:

- 1. Adventure/Wilderness**
Target Mid 2017
- 2. Non-Urban**
Target End 2017
- 3. Urban**
Beyond three years aligning with
Fresh Hope Urban Mission strategy

Innovation, creativity and excellence will underpin the ongoing work of Fresh Hope Venues with a desire to multiply and expand its influence by creating more venue ministry opportunities.

The current year at The Tops has again seen fruitful results. The financial results for the year reflect consistent high guest demand and a subsequent effective operational performance of the dedicated team.

Revenue of \$9.214m was an increase of 3.8% over budget with a resulting surplus of \$658,566, 82.2% over the budgeted surplus. Underpinning the results was an average site occupancy of 74.8%, slightly under the previous year (96.2%). Despite this the guest days and number of guest groups exceeded the preceding year by 2.2% and 2.9% respectively.

This strong financial performance gives the organisation the capacity to support wider initiatives. Key support within Fresh Hope is discharged through discounts and direct subsidisation of Fresh Hope initiatives of approximately \$350k. Further to this, direct payment into Rhodes is approximately \$230k.

Additional support by way of discounts into other churches, community organisations and the like is in excess of \$300k. All of this adds up to significant capacity for significant blessing.

As we look into a future of expansion and opportunity we seek the continued prayerful support of our wider Fresh Hope family.

Dave Tolman
Executive Director | Fresh Hope Venues



Innovation, creativity
and excellence will underpin the
ongoing work of Fresh Hope Venues
with a desire to multiply and expand
its influence by creating more venue
ministry opportunities.

FRESH HOPE INITIATIVE LIVING CARE

SEASON OF CHANGE

The aged care industry is undergoing a season of unprecedented change that is causing many Not for Profit organisations to question whether they have a future in the sector. The Living Care Strategic Plan for 2016 – 2018 has been developed to ensure that Living Care remains relevant in the sector and continues to grow and adapt to the changing nature of the industry.

Recognising the importance of leadership in effecting the necessary changes that Living Care will need to undertake, the focus of the last year has been on recruiting the executive team that will lead the organisation over the next three to five years. Key appointments to the executive team include:

Paul Bradley appointed to the role of Chief Operating Officer

Anne-Marie King appointed to the role of General Manager Residential Care

Margaret Pistevos appointed to the role of General Manager Home Care,

Susanna Bradley appointed to the role of General Manager People and Culture.

CHAPLAINCY AND PASTORAL CARE CONTINUES TO BE AT THE HEART OF WHAT WE DO

This year again we have heard a number of stories that provide confirmation of the significant contribution our chaplains make to the lives of residents and consumers across Living Care. Our Christian ethos will continue to define us in an increasingly competitive and market driven environment.



CAPITAL REDEVELOPMENT AT ALBURY - BORELLA HOUSE

One of the significant milestones of the year has been the completion and commissioning of the 22-bed extension and upgrade of Borella House in Albury. The official opening of the revitalised facility was held in May 2016. The project reflects 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.

EXCELLENCE IN SERVICE

Clare Lewis was the 2015 winner of the Excellence in Service Award, announced at the sit-down luncheon held at the Deckhouse Restaurant in Woolwich in November. Clare, who works as a carer at Woodlands Residential Care Service, exemplifies what it means to provide services with joy to the residents she has cared for over the 20 years she has been employed by Living Care.

CONTINUED GROWTH IN HOME CARE

Living Care was allocated a total of 125 home care packages in the 2015 Aged Care Approvals Round (ACAR) across 7 regions of New South Wales. The 125 home care places builds on previous success over the last 5 years with the number of home care places increasing from 145 places in 2010 to 568 places in 2015. The 2015 ACAR allocations included:

- Central Coast Region - New Service - total 15 packages
- Inner West Region - New Service - total 21 packages
- Northern Sydney - New Service - total 20 packages
- Mid North Coast - Coffs Harbour - Existing Service - total 12 packages
- Illawarra - Shoalhaven - Existing Service - total 20 packages
- Western Sydney - Existing Service - total 24 packages
- South West Sydney - New Service - total 13 packages

One of the most exciting aspects of these allocations is the opportunity for Living Care to provide home care services to four new regions, namely Northern Sydney, Inner Western Sydney, South West Sydney and the Central Coast. Discussions are occurring to identify opportunities where Living Care could partner with our churches in the delivery of home care services in these new locations.

GIVE LAURA A VOICE - CLELLAND LODGE

In 2015, in partnership with CareWorks, Living Care launched the "Give Laura a Voice" campaign to raise funds for the purchase of an eye gaze technology device for Laura Boyd, a 25-year-old resident at the Clelland Lodge Residential Care Service. At the time of writing the campaign is very close to reaching the fundraising target of \$20,000.

LAUNCH OF THE LIVING CARE SIGNATURE BEHAVIOURS

With the aim of transforming our staff culture from a good culture to a great culture we launched our four signature behaviours to all staff across Living Care in April 2016. The signature behaviours:

- We deliver our services with joy
- We treat others as we want to be treated
- We work together, achieve together and celebrate together
- We do what we say we will do

These are, in essence, a call to all of our staff to live out Living Care's Christian values every day. We want to be an organisation that above all else treats others with love and respect, where staff and ultimately our residents and consumers can be confident that we will do what we say we will do.

Graham Reed
Executive Director | Living Care



FRESH HOPE INITIATIVE SOUTHPOINT

TRANSFORMATIONAL CHURCH PROJECT

Throughout the year we have worked with another cohort of five churches, helping to facilitate transformational learning. I am reminded of what American Lutheran consultant Peter Steinke communicated re transformation:

'I have my doubts about programs that claim to train transformational leaders. Most of them are implementing a pattern developed elsewhere, one that has to do with technique and data collection. I received one advertisement from a church consulting group that promised a transformed church. The brochure had the appeal of magic—quick and direct. But I know from experience that what was missing in the ad and in a lot of training efforts were the failures.

Some churches didn't experience success. What didn't work? And why? Anne Lamott advises, "When the seasons change, buckle up." I would like to see a transformation project that says, "Let us prepare your congregation for change. Buckle up!"
— Dr Peter Steinke

In this current cohort we asked 5 churches to buckle up. We didn't give them solutions or expect them to shape their outcomes in similar ways. Here is what two of those church leaders experienced.

"Kingsford Church of Christ embarked on the Transformational Church journey in 2015 with a desire in our hearts for a positive change in our church. The initial selection of members who committed to participate in this journey numbered a total of ten and included elders, deacons and young/ future leaders from our church.

I must admit that I felt rather anxious and ill-prepared as I was not provided with much information prior to attending the weekend camp at Stanwell Tops. Although the camp introduced us to the foundational concepts and principles of

the program, most of us left the camp still feeling uncertain as to how we should move forward. However, we soldiered on, first reflecting on what is required to transform ourselves from within, and then opening our hearts to each other as we shared our life stories together.

It was frustrating at first as we felt that we were not progressing or achieving anything concrete, but I subsequently realised that without going through this process, we would not have been able to work as closely or as productively as we have been able to in this second year of the journey.

This has ultimately been an invaluable journey for us as a reminder of why we exist within our local community and what it means for us to be the church that God has called us to be. We have been blessed with a sense of anticipation and excitement as we are able to clearly see the future that God has planned. This is very timely since we are also faced with plans for re-developing our church building and site.

Overall, this journey has been eye-opening and I would strongly encourage any church leadership team considering participating in the program to prayerfully consider this, if they are willing to commit to personal and corporate transformation and growth. May God bless you richly as He has done for us with this initiative."

Dr Yaw Chin
Kingsford Church of Christ (Elder)

Transformational Church leaders immersed and learning in Maidstone UK - March 2016



“Rivergum was one of several churches invited by Fresh Hope to embark on a journey called “Transformational Church”. I am profoundly grateful that this opportunity was offered to us, and so glad we have had the privilege of participating in this process of learning, growth and change.

It’s easy to sense when your church has “stalled”, but not easy to know how it can become “unstuck”. How do you rediscover God’s call, restore vision and passion, and regain traction and missional momentum?

The temptation is to find some snappy solution, some program or method, to fix the problem.

Transformational Church offered none of these.

Rather we were pushed deeper into exploring ourselves as leaders, the relational depth and integrity within our leadership team, our church culture, our understanding of church and mission, and our grasp of the underlying principles that build health and Kingdom life.

Central to that exploration was our exposure to a remarkable church in Maidstone UK, called Jubilee. The clear vision, the love and passion of the leaders, the “family feel” within the church, its intentional discipleship development, community engagement and missional impact were nothing short of inspirational.

But in the lead up to that experience, while there and since, we have been given ample guidance and support in the processing of our insights through Andrew and Wendy Ball, John and Marianne Crowther, and fellow ministry couples.

The journey has been both confronting and encouraging. As a result, I believe there will be ongoing fruit in my life, for Rivergum and for God’s Kingdom in the years to come.”

Jeff Deuble
Rivergum Community Church (Lead Pastor)

Transformation is never easy. We are grateful for opportunities to partner with leadership teams in local churches.

Dr Andrew Ball
Director | Southpoint



PROPERTY TRUST

The Property Trust seeks to serve the local church in matching the facilities of the church to the vision God has given them as a local church.

With a growing number of new opportunities being presented to our churches, the Property Trust has had another busy year assisting churches navigate the complexities surrounding their specific property projects and facilitating compliance with legal requirements.

APRA REGULATIONS

The governing body for financial institutions, APRA, has announced changes to its “Religious Charitable Development Funds Exemption Order” that governs the way that church denominational deposit funds operate. Under the revised exemption order the following changes will need to take place:

- The title “Deposit Fund” can no longer be used, requiring a change in the name for the fund
- A new constitution for the re-named fund will need to be developed;
- The development of a “fund policy” outlining the terms of its retail products;
- The development of a “hardship policy”;
- The provision of further detailed disclosures.

These changes will need to be put into effect by 31st December 2016.

DEPOSIT FUND (TO BE RENAMED)

The Property Trust will continue to provide low cost / low interest loans to assist churches to purchase, lease, sell and redevelop their properties.

During the 2015/2016 year, the Property Trust undertook a number of reviews including:

- A review of its governance and policy/procedure framework;
- A review of the due diligence requirements for churches submitting loan applications;
- A legal review of loan agreements and forms.

The Property Trust managed numerous changes in interest rates as the Reserve Bank of Australia continued to make cuts. During the year, a number of loans were repaid in full, resulting in an increase in cash holdings. The Trust is now stewarding the investment of these funds to maximise earnings whilst maintaining low risk.

As at 30 June, there were 15 churches with loans totalling \$5.7m, and for the first time the equity portion of the Balance Sheet now exceeds \$5m.

Some of the highlights of church developments have been:

- Rivergum Community Church was able to sell the back portion of its land, receiving sufficient proceeds to repay all of its loans – an amazing achievement after only 7 years since purchasing their property;
- Pathways Church was able to purchase the shop for the Common Groundz Café in Lalor Park to secure its ministry into this area;
- Southern Illawarra (a church plant from Wollongong Church of Christ, now named “New Day”) was able to purchase its first property, opening Southern Life Care in the main street of Albion Park.

Providing finance from the Deposit Fund is only made possible by the generous support of church members, churches and ministries making deposits with the Trust either at interest or interest free.

TRUST FUNDS

The Property Trust stewards a number of trust funds (monies that have been left to the Churches of Christ through a bequest, trust deed or will). A new bequest was received this year, taking the balance of Trust funds over \$4m.

As there are unique rules and purposes for each fund, a review was undertaken to ensure the distribution of funds was both consistent with the spirit of the original intentions and also relevant towards the present day needs of ministry, such as supporting training and development (through Navigate) and for supporting church planting.

One of the grant distributions this year was given to Forster-Tuncurry Church of Christ to assist with the construction of outdoor play equipment for the Church's community playgroup.

"We have just finished our first term of Community Playgroup and we have been delighted with the response from the community thus far. From the first day we have averaged 21 family members (mothers, fathers, grandparents & children [including 2 helpers]), all from within the community context. It has been an honour and an encouragement to see how God has used this space since it has been opened. We would like to once again thank you for your involvement in getting this facility up and running. This would not have been achievable without your help, so thank you."

Pastor of Forster-Tuncurry Church of Christ

LOOKING FORWARD

Many new opportunities are being presented to churches as a result of the NSW government's strategies around "A Plan for Growing Sydney 2014" which have led to the development of the "Urban Activation Precincts Guidelines" and the "Economic Development Strategy for Rural NSW 2015" that seeks to shift jobs and grow communities in rural locations.

In partnership with Conference, the Property Trust is keen to assist churches navigate the complexities inherent with major projects.

The Property Trust has therefore budgeted to employ a full-time Secretary/Manager to ensure that the governance and policy framework of the Trust is completed and the Trust is well equipped to serve our churches.

Richard Reeve
Secretary | Property Trust

David Bentley
Chairman | Property Trust





FRESH HOPE FEDERAL RELATIONSHIPS COUNCIL OF CHURCHES OF CHRIST IN AUSTRALIA

The Council of Churches of Christ in Australia (CCCA) consists of two representatives from each of the member states. Andrew Ball and Ian Allen are the current NSW representatives. The council meets biannually to discuss issues of national significance to Churches of Christ.

HIGHLIGHTS

- The council continues to engage in a discernment process around what God is saying to Churches of Christ in Australia. While this is of the utmost importance to every church and to every believer, it is easy to give lip service to this listening, and focus on our own to-do lists.
- CCCA is a reporting body for Global Mission Partners (GMP), Stirling, Youth Vision Australia (YVA), Ministers' and Employees' Benefits Scheme (MEBS), Australian College of Ministries (ACOM), the Defence Force Chaplains Committee, Christian Projects and the member states. It aims to facilitate communication and networking between states, agencies and other groups for their mutual benefit. A good spirit of cooperation among us is something to celebrate.
- The council has approved a project called Selfie Sunday, where every congregation was encouraged to take a self-portrait (photos and stories) during October 2016. This will create a giant snapshot (pun intended) of our family of churches to build community and help us learn from one another.
- CCCA gathered in April with representatives from GMP, Stirling, ACOM, YVA and Christian Projects to discuss mission and leadership development. We hope to enlarge our learning and enhance collaboration through continuing dialogue.
- A number of contributors, including Dennis Nutt from NSW, were involved in producing a Churches of Christ Sunday resource around Churches of Christ as a renewal movement.
- The council opted to register the rites of marriage for Churches of Christ with the federal Attorney General's department. This wording reflects the view that Christian marriage is a lifelong covenantal relationship between a man and a woman.
- A number of Australian Churches of Christ participants were involved in a dialogue in Birmingham with leaders from Churches of Christ in the UK. This provided an opportunity to commission, upload and promote a number of resources on mission on the National website.
- The council recommended that churches recognise the Sunday before Remembrance Day as 'Defence Sunday', and to pray for peace and for the work of military chaplains and other personnel.
- CCCA provided financial support to the Hindmarsh Centre to store our national archives, and to NYMC, Stop the Traffik, and the Australian Churches Refugee Task force.
- Youth Vision Australia did an amazing job leading the National Youth Ministry Convention (NYMC) on the Gold Coast in October. Steve Hodgson is the NSW member of this dynamic team.
- Andrew Ball was thanked for his long service as CCCA chair, and handed over to Dean Phelan from Queensland at the November meeting.
- I have visited a number of state gatherings, including Fresh Hope Collective in May, and participated in several ecumenical gatherings. It is a great joy and privilege to belong to and represent Churches of Christ in Australia.

Janet Woodlock
Federal Coordinator | CCCA





FRESH HOPE FEDERAL RELATIONSHIPS GLOBAL MISSION PARTNERS

2016 marks 125 years of Churches of Christ's collective commitment to Overseas Mission. Global Mission Partners is a very different organisation to that which commenced 125 years ago. We have partnerships with Indigenous ministries and overseas in India, Bangladesh, Thailand, Vietnam, Indonesia, Vanuatu, Papua New Guinea, Fiji, South Sudan and Zimbabwe. In all of this people come first.

THE HIGHLIGHTS OF 2015-16 INCLUDE:

- Churches of Christ Overseas Aid is now a Base Accredited Agency with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. This accreditation affirms the quality of our work.
- The International Church Partnership Program has clearer goals – planting and developing churches, training leaders and resourcing evangelism.
- Indigenous Ministries Australia continues to launch new projects, including in Port Hedland (Western Australia), while supporting ongoing and future ministries in Western Australia, Victoria, South Australia and New South Wales.
- Following the decision of the 2015 Annual General Meeting, GMP is now a company limited by guarantee.
- 'embody', the GMP community of young adults, encourages us to take seriously living with compassion and justice. Its programs of Safe Water September, Prayer Matters and Christmas Choices have grown.
- Consistent contact with churches in Australia is maintained by our state based 'Partnership Coordinators' and they are keen to visit and share about the work of GMP.

- Even though GMP had a difficult financial year due in part to cost increases, we maintained our full commitment to our partners in mission.

We value the partnerships we have with our board, staff, volunteers, churches and supporters in Australia, and affirm the courage and commitment of our partners in mission in Australia and overseas.

NSW HAPPENINGS 2016:

- A second team from Nowra connected with the Vuci Road Church in Fiji. They joined in with as many of the church's ministries as they could and gave great encouragement to Pastor Raj and his wife Nirmala, and Bruce Edwards, the country director.
- A team from The River Community Church, Albury and the New Life Chapel, Wodonga headed to Zimbabwe. Khayelihle Children's Village now has seven new hot water systems and people trained to install them, thanks to the team.
- Southern Illawarra continued to strengthen its links with the Indigenous ministry program at Dareton. New Day Church is exploring a link with the Dareton Community Centre.

Further details on the life of GMP are found in the GMP Annual Report on the website: www.gmp.org.au.

John Gilmore
Executive Director | Global Mission Partners



Nowra Church of Christ in Fiji



River Community Church in Zimbabwe



Art group at Dareton Youth and Community Centre (NSW)

FRESH HOPE FEDERAL RELATIONSHIPS MINISTERS & EMPLOYEES BENEFITS SCHEME

BENEFITS PROVIDED BY MEBS

The Ministers' and Employees' Benefits Scheme (MEBS) is a service of Churches of Christ in Australia. MEBS exists as a savings scheme for long service leave purposes. 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.

Some typical examples of churches and members who have benefited from MEBS:

- A new church treasurer is asked to pay a long serving minister long service leave. As the church has regularly contributed to MEBS in the past, the funds are readily available.
- A minister plans for extended leave to enable study or a mission trip overseas.

- A minister unexpectedly has to deal with a severe illness – taking long service leave extends time off available through sick leave.

REVIEW

As part of its overall accountability for MEBS, the Council of Churches of Christ in Australia Limited (CCCA) has commissioned a review of MEBS. This is a natural and important governance function under the rules of the scheme, and something CCCA felt was important to conduct at this time to ensure that the scheme is continuing to meet the needs of its members in relevant ways.

MEMBERSHIP MOVEMENT FOR 2015/2016

The movements in membership numbers from 1 July 2015 - 30 June 2016 are set out below.

TOTAL MOVEMENTS TO 30/06/16

	01/07/15	Entrants	Exits	30/06/16
LSL Members	745	52	62	735

KEY STATISTICS

Year	Membership as at 30 June	Net Assets \$	Memorial Fund \$
11/12	691	6,275,802	157,673.41
12/13	710	6,609,938	157,776.71
13/14	725	6,857,326	151,648.99
14/15	745	7,021,717	153,487.05
15/16*	735	6,900,000	153,000.00

* Interim results



BENEFITS PAID

For the period from 1 July 2015 to 30 June 2016 various benefits for long service leave totalling \$813,883 were paid. Additional benefits of \$3,000 were paid to minister's families requiring financial assistance with funeral expenses.

MEBS COMMITTEE MEMBERS FOR 2015-2016

Max Hopkins (Chair, New South Wales), Phil Burgess (South Australia/Northern Territory), Ross Pelling (Queensland), Frank Morabito (Victoria/Tasmania), Tania Watson (Western Australia)

Jason Gor
Administrator | Ministers' and Employees' Benefits Scheme

FRESH HOPE FEDERAL RELATIONSHIPS STIRLING THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE

The college has had strong enrolment numbers across many areas this year. In addition to normal college activities, the positive enrolments are due to a growing online presence, interest in clinical pastoral education and the Master of Arts in Pastoral Care.

This year we will graduate 47 students.

The Hindmarsh Church of Christ Centre for Mission and Ministry has been set up and archival project manager, Sam Curkpatrick, has done a wonderful job in establishing order out of chaos in the archival Centre. Please come and have a look if you are near Mulgrave and also take the time to have a look at: www.hindmarshresearch.com

Dr Alan Niven retires from his longstanding roles as lecturer and Vice-Principal at the College in December 2016. Alan will stay on at Stirling in a different capacity from 2017 overseeing research, helping in pastoral care and developing a new professional doctorate. Dr Chris Turner has been appointed as the new Lecturer in Pastoral Theology and Spiritual Care.

His Doctor of Theology from the University of Divinity is in the area of Australian culture and theology and he has an ongoing interest in the area of trauma. He will make a great addition to our movement and help centre the ongoing formation of pastoral care students around the person and teaching of Jesus.

We have also appointed Angela Sawyer as Lecturer in Old Testament and Dean of Students. Angela is an active member at Connection Church of Christ in Croydon and submits her PhD in December. Her doctorate is in the area of looking at Second Isaiah's message for post Christian culture today. Angela will also be involved in the Catalyst program as a Lecturer and Dean of Students.

CATALYST

The landing page is now live for the Catalyst pathway/vocational course which, starts in Perth in 2017 (see www.catalyst.edu.au).

The Directors (Josh Bond and Amit Khiara) are meeting with school principals and school careers counsellors across Perth and WA.

The feedback is positive and affirms that this is a relevant and needed program. Our aim is to start this from Perth and then offer it across other states and I welcome any enquiries about this if your state is interested. We are grateful for this new initiative for the next generation of our movement.

Dr Andrew Menzies

Principal | Stirling Theological College







FRESH HOPE FINANCIAL REPORTS

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 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 members section of the Fresh Hope web site. 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 2016 was \$94m (FY15: \$88m).

The surplus for the year was \$2.3m (FY15: \$9.7m), which included unrealised losses on investments of \$2.7m (FY15: \$3.2m gain).

Total Assets at 30 June 2016 increased to \$300m (FY15: \$266m), and Net Assets increased to \$154m (FY15: \$150m).

CONFERENCE EXECUTIVE

Net Assets of \$20.7m includes \$10.1m in property, plant & equipment and \$10.0m in investments. The transfer during the year of \$0.9m in properties from churches offset by an investment loss of \$0.3m led to an overall surplus of \$0.6m.

PROPERTY TRUST

The Property Trust financial report shows a \$1.2m increase in the funds deposited by individuals and churches, a \$2.7m increase in Trust Funds and a \$0.1m increase in funds deposited by associated ministries.

Loans to churches decreased by \$0.5m. 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 \$0.1m.

COMMUNITY CARE

The net surplus for the 2016 financial year of \$1.6m was after unrealised investment losses of \$2.4m. The operating results improved due to higher operating income, offset in part by higher workers compensation costs.

The Net Assets of \$127m includes property, plant & equipment of \$107m and goodwill of \$9m. Cash and investments of \$132m cover all liabilities (\$131m).

ACOM

ACOM recorded a break even result for the 2015 calendar year. Both higher education unit numbers and student fees increased during the year. However, changes to VET FeeHelp funding has impacted ACOM's VET operations, and resulted in a change of strategy.

Max Hopkins
Director | Corporate Services

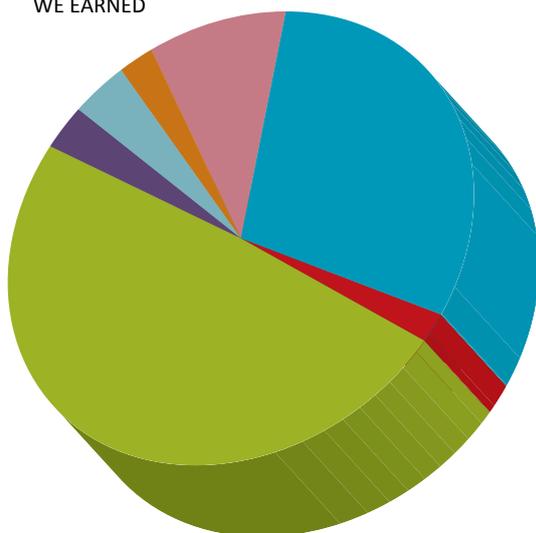


“Disturb us, Lord,
to dare more boldly,
to venture on wilder seas.
Where storms will show your mastery;
where losing sight of the land,
we shall find the stars.”

- Sir Francis Drake

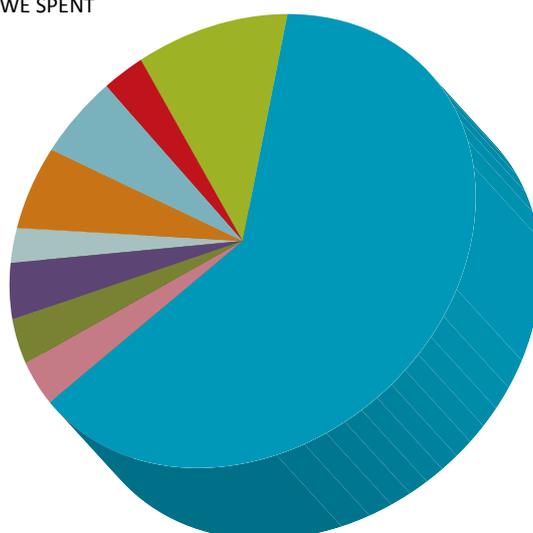
COMMUNITY CARE

WE EARNED



- Fees & charges
- Retentions
- Government subsidies
- Government grants
- Dividend income
- Interest income
- Gain on investment

WE SPENT



- Staff costs
- Workers compensation
- Care
- Catering
- Cleaning & laundry
- Property & maintenance
- Depreciation
- Loss on investment

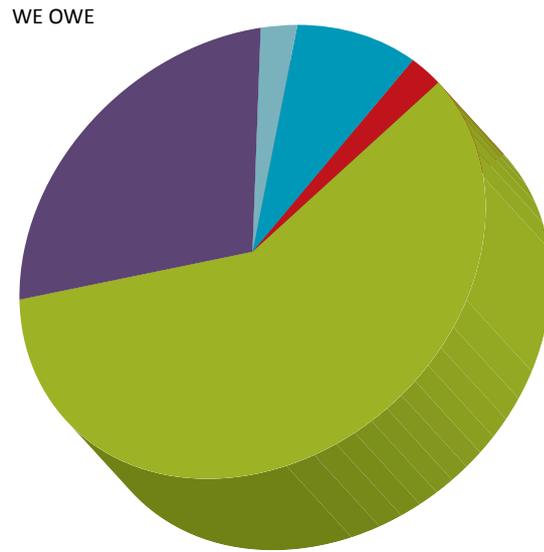
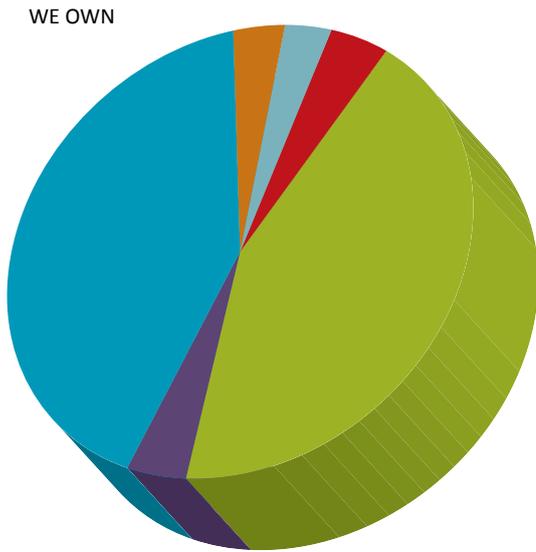
WE EARNED	FY16 \$000	FY15 \$000
Fees & charges	26,505	24,882
Retentions	1,740	1,862
Government subsidies	42,481	35,370
Government grants	2,701	2,805
Dividend income	3,155	3,774
Interest income	2,078	1,787
Gain on investment	-	3,163
Other income	8,152	6,163
Total income	86,812	79,806
Net surplus	\$1,596	\$6,030

WE SPENT	FY16 \$000	FY15 \$000
Staff costs	53,254	47,432
Workers compensation	2,910	1,889
Care	3,009	2,396
Catering	3,574	3,212
Cleaning & laundry	2,061	2,054
Property & maintenance	4,723	4,857
Depreciation	4,608	3,923
Loss on investment	2,392	-
Other expenses	8,685	8,013
Total expenditure	85,216	73,776

Community Care recorded a surplus for the financial year of \$1,596,018.

The unrealised loss on financial assets was \$2.4m (FY15 = \$2.4m). The result excluding these gains was a net surplus in FY16 of \$4.0m (FY15 = \$2.87m) reflected by increased operating income and contained costs.

Other expenses includes an impairment charge in FY15 of \$1.4m for Henley Brae (no charge in FY16).



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

- Payables
- Provisions
- Accommodation bonds
- Ingoing contributions
- Loans & borrowings

WE OWN	FY16 \$000	FY15 \$000
Cash & deposits	8,438	11,259
Receivables	10,571	2,854
Financial assets	112,319	90,737
Investments	11,303	10,925
Property, plant & equipment	106,738	103,904
Goodwill	9,163	9,163
Total assets	258,532	228,842
Net assets	\$127,228	\$123,878

WE OWE	FY16 \$000	FY15 \$000
Payables	11,996	11,628
Provisions	2,836	2,619
Accommodation bonds	79,470	54,673
Ingoing contributions	34,246	32,875
Loans and Borrowings	2,756	3,169
Total liabilities	131,304	104,964

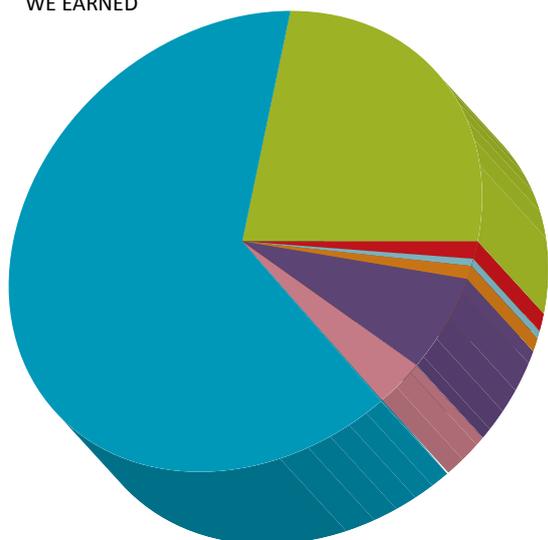
An impairment charge of \$1.4m was made in FY15 against Henley Brae Retirement Village (FY16 = \$Nil).

Capital expenditure in FY16 of \$8.5m (FY15: \$15.0m) was mainly for extensions at Crawford Lodge (Pendle Hill) and at Borella (Albury) and the new reception facility at The Tops. This was partially funded from investments.

Accommodation bonds increased by \$22m in FY16 (FY15 = \$5.3m) and this added to the financial assets balance.

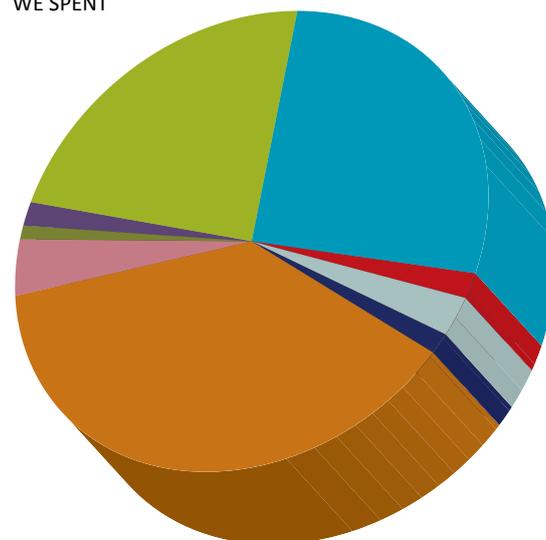
CONFERENCE EXECUTIVE

WE EARNED



- Contribution of assets
- Dividend income
- Donations & bequests
- Gain on asset transfer
- Imputation credits
- Interest income
- Other income
- Subsidies & grants

WE SPENT



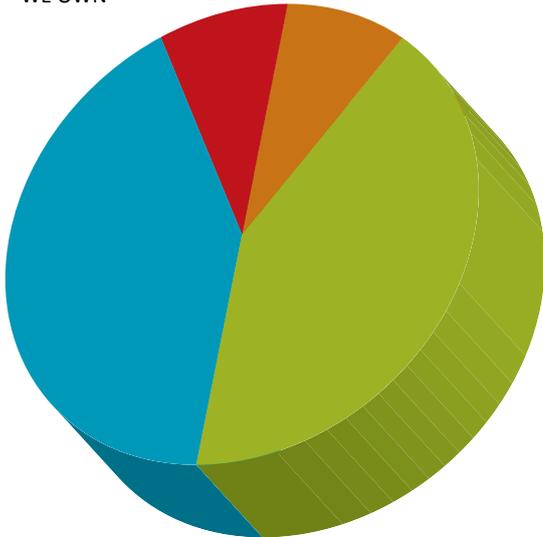
- Administration
- Conference & retreat
- Depreciation
- Investment management
- Ministry support
- Net loss on investment
- Other expenses
- Professional services
- Wages & salaries

WE EARNED	FY16 \$000	FY15 \$000
Contribution of assets	900	3,060
Dividend income	200	385
Donations & bequests	35	21
Gain on asset transfer	9	44
Imputation credits	46	119
Interest income	297	227
Levies & fees	67	74
Net gain on investments	-	136
Other income	105	119
Subsidies & grants	1,993	1,584
Total income	3,652	5,769
Net surplus (deficit)	\$574	\$3,321

WE SPENT	FY16 \$000	FY15 \$000
Administration	927	692
Conference & retreat	79	67
Depreciation	146	124
Investment management	37	32
Ministry support	684	615
Net loss on investment	312	-
Other expenses	78	217
Professional services	142	155
Rental expenses	78	50
Wages & salaries	595	496
Total expenditure	3,078	2,448

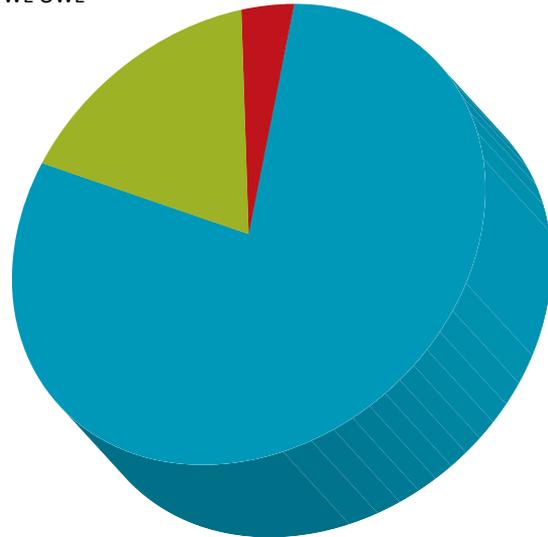
Conference Executive's result for the year ended 30 June 2016 was a net surplus of \$574,373. Note that the result includes \$900,000 (2015: \$3,060,000) for land & buildings at Moorebank (2015: Auburn, Earlwood & Tamworth) that were transferred to Conference during the year. The result before this contribution of assets was a \$324k loss (FY15 = \$261k) reflecting lower investment returns. Ministry Support costs in FY15 included \$0.3m paid to a fresh hope ministry in Thailand.

WE OWN



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

WE OWE



- Other liabilities
- Payables
- Provisions

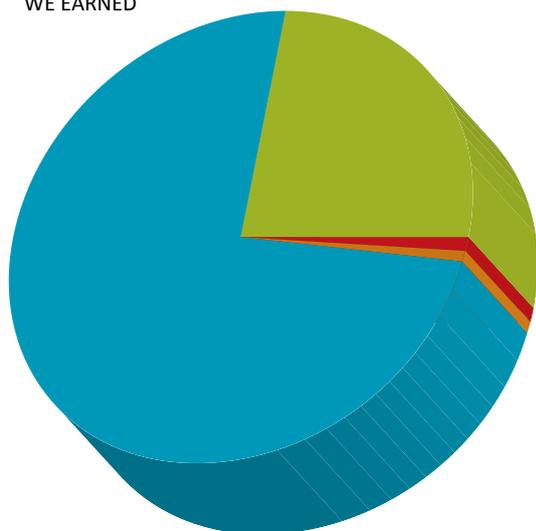
WE OWN	FY16 \$000	FY15 \$000
Cash	612	225
Investments	10,020	10,887
Property, plant & equipment	10,091	9,137
Receivables	542	544
Total assets	21,265	20,793
Net assets	\$20,706	\$20,132

WE OWE	FY16 \$000	FY15 \$000
Other liabilities	10	10
Payables	481	590
Provisions	68	61
Total liabilities	559	661

Net assets of \$20,706,355 increased by \$574,373, mainly due to the \$900,000 for the Moorebank property that was transferred to Conference during FY16. Investments decreased by \$867k during this period. This decrease includes \$393,613 in proceeds from sale of the Swansea campsite which was transferred to Fresh Hope Venues in FY16 (included in FY15 Payables).

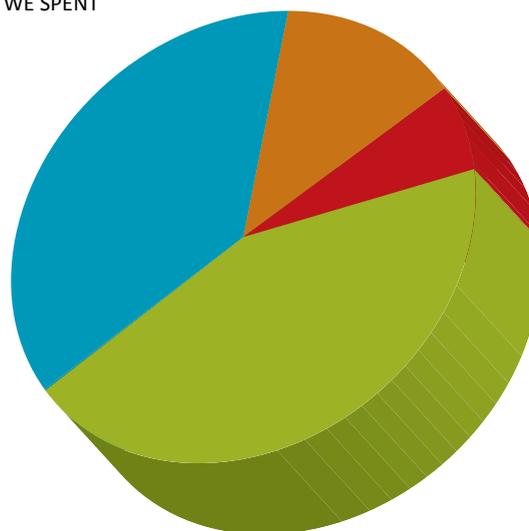
PROPERTY TRUST

WE EARNED



- Interest on cash & term deposits
- Income on investments
- Interest on loans to churches & ministers
- Other Income

WE SPENT



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

WE EARNED	FY16 \$000	FY15 \$000
Interest on cash & term deposits	135	142
Income on investments	2	-
Interest on loans to churches & ministers	364	413
Other Income	-	-
Total income	501	555
Net surplus	\$108	\$148

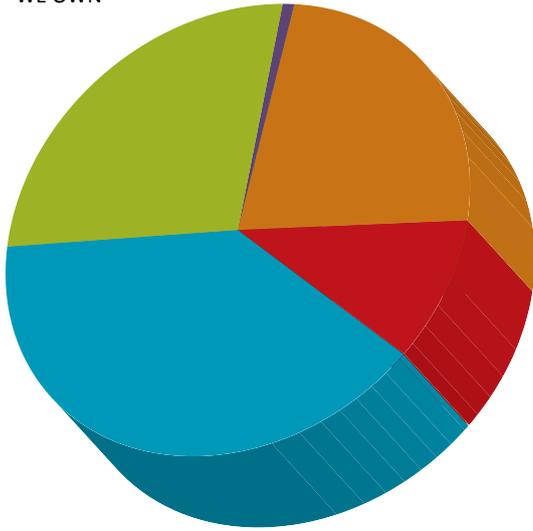
WE SPENT	FY16 \$000	FY15 \$000
Interest to churches	32	33
Interest to individuals	33	41
Interest to associated ministries	157	175
Administration & other expenses	171	158
Total expenditure	393	407

The Property Trust recorded a surplus for FY16 of \$107,983 (FY15 = \$148,134).

Total Income was down \$54k (9.7%) due to lower interest rates and loan balances.

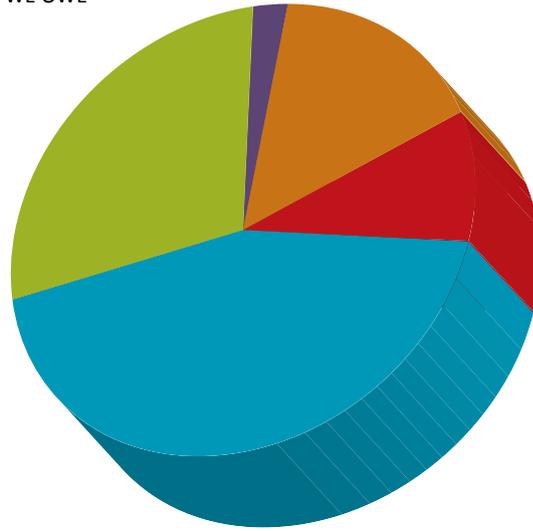
Total Expenses decreased by \$14k (3.4%), with the lower interest rates offset by a slight increase in operating costs.

WE OWN



- Cash
- Terms deposits
- Loans to churches & ministers
- Investments
- Other receivables

WE OWE



- Owing to churches
- Owing to individuals
- Owing to associated ministries
- Funds held in trust
- Accrued liabilities

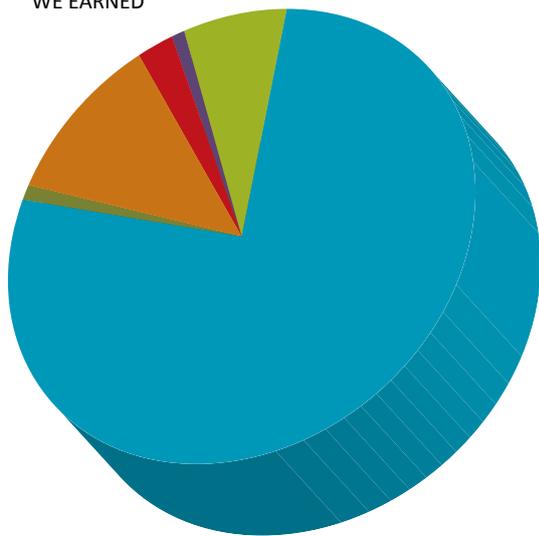
WE OWN	FY16 \$000	FY15 \$000
Cash	3,825	1,916
Term deposits	3,298	3,201
Loans to churches & ministers	7,563	8,019
Investments	4,700	2,108
Other Receivables	32	75
Total assets	19,418	15,319
Net assets	\$5,055	\$4,947

WE OWE	FY16 \$000	FY15 \$000
Owing to churches	1,562	1,062
Owing to individuals	2,085	1,411
Owing to associated ministries	5,781	5,634
Funds held in trust	4,895	2,220
Accrued liabilities	40	45
Total liabilities	14,363	10,372

Net assets increased during the year by \$108k.
 Total Liabilities decreased by \$4.0m
 Total Assets increased by \$4.1m

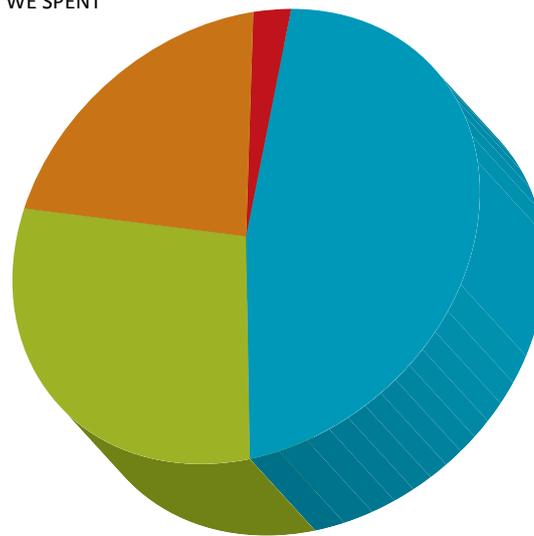
ACOM

WE EARNED



- Student fees
- Subsidies
- Income & gains on investments
- Interest on cash & term deposits
- Donations
- Other income

WE SPENT

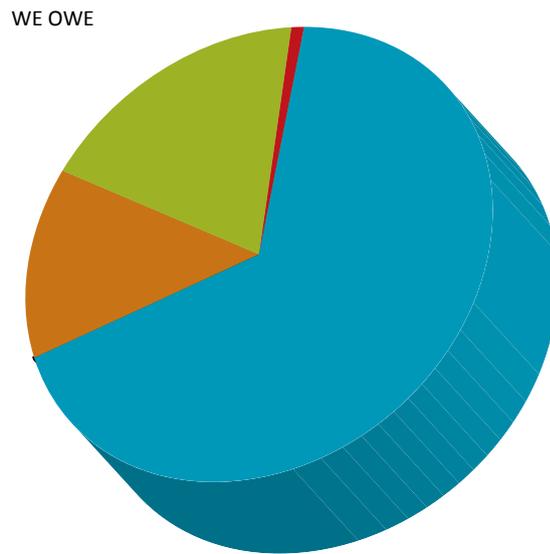
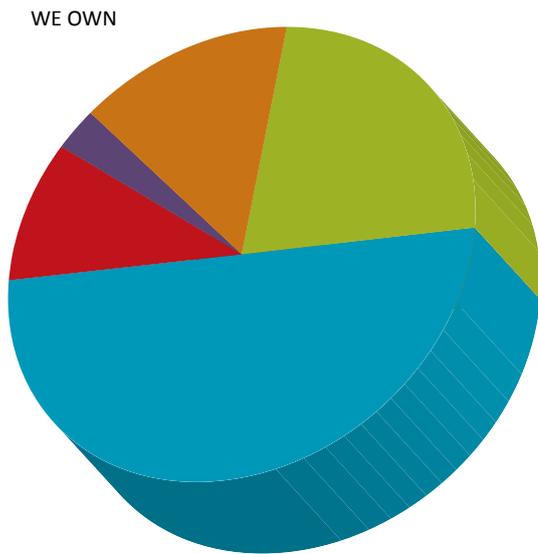


- Wages and salaries
- Course expenses
- Administration and other expenses
- Loss on investment

WE EARNED	FY16 \$000	FY15 \$000
Student fees	2,617	2,350
Subsidies	394	419
Income and gains on investments	55	47
Interest on cash & term deposits	5	8
Donations	-	7
Other income	187	158
Total income	3,258	2,989
Net surplus	(6)	185

WE SPENT	FY16 \$000	FY15 \$000
Wages & salaries	1,523	1,295
Course expenses	1,061	1,028
Administration and other expenses	662	464
Loss on investment	18	17
Total expenditure	3,264	2,804

ACOM recorded a 2015 profit of \$12,112 prior to investment revaluations, and finished with a loss of \$5,917 after revaluations in securities. Higher education unit numbers were 1,046 in 2016 representing a 9% increase on budget, and the corresponding student fees were 14% higher than budget for the year. In December 2015, the Government announced changes to the VET FeeHelp student loan scheme, with ACOM deciding to reduce its VET operations over 2016 and 2017. There is an anticipated decrease in 2016 income due to these changes.



- Cash
- Investments
- Trade receivables
- Paint and equipment
- Other receivables

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

WE OWN	FY16 \$000	FY15 \$000
Cash	260	492
Investments	626	725
Trade receivables	226	69
Plant and equipment	29	18
Other receivables	141	55
Total assets	1,282	1,359
Net assets	\$805	\$811

WE OWE	FY16 \$000	FY15 \$000
Owing to other ministries	300	300
Trade payables	100	149
Provisions	77	77
Income received in advance	-	22
Total liabilities	477	548

2015 trade receivables were increased due to the impact of a January 2016 Holy Land Study Tour. A decrease in investments also reflects cash flow required to pay for the Holy Land tour in advance. The related income & expenditure was recognised in 2015.

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 2016

ANNUAL CONFERENCE MINUTES 2016

Minutes of Annual Conference

**Saturday 7 May 2016 9:30am
The Tops Conference Centre,
Stanwell Tops NSW**

The Conference Day commenced with emcee Steve Hodgson, Youth/Young Adults Ministry Leader.

WELCOME

Conference Executive President Troy Blair (Campbelltown Church of Christ) chaired the Annual General Meeting, opening with his appreciation of the Conference Staff who stood and were affirmed with clapping from those in attendance.

Troy further encouraged those present to read the annual report as it provides information and celebration of things happening in our movement.

FORMAL APOLOGIES

The following apologies were noted:

Arthur & Judy Cayzer
Rivergum Community Church
Terry & Narelle Blue
New Day (Wollongong) Church of Christ
Ian & Helen Allen
Katoomba Lighthouse
Neil Saltmarsh & Raewyn Williams
Hurstville
Cathy Kleemann
Pendle Hill (Pathways)
Bret & Tamara Clark
Forster Tuncurry Church of Christ

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

Andrew Ball noted a number of churches cannot be here and we are looking at ways to include those churches in future.

Notice of Motion 1

“That the minutes of the Annual Conference of Churches of Christ in NSW held 9 May 2015 as printed and circulated in the Churches of Christ in NSW Annual Report For the year ending 30 June 2015 be adopted as a true and accurate record of that meeting.”

MOVED:

Stephen Toomey, Hurstville Church of Christ

SECONDED:

Dennis Nutt, Liberty Church of Christ

Motion **CARRIED** by majority.

Notice of Motion 2

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

MOVED:

Neil Preston, ICentral316

SECONDED:

Mike Schultz, Maitland 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 2015/2016.”

MOVED:

Steve Martin, Burwood Church of Christ

SECONDED:

Leon Munro, Kingsway Community Church

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 2016/2017, to come into effect from the first full pay period in July 2016.

1. That the salary component be increased to \$923 per week.
2. That the housing component be increased to \$429 per week.
3. That the car component remains the same at \$176 per week.
4. Superannuation to remain at 11.00% of remuneration package”

MOVED:

Alan Norton, Mayfield Church of Christ

SECONDED:

Sandy Timbrell, Telopea Church of Christ

Motion **CARRIED** by majority.

ANNUAL CONFERENCE MINUTES 2016

Andrew Ball, Executive Ministry Director announced that there are plans to amend the Churches of Christ in NSW Constitution at the AGM next year.

Andrew Ball also announced there will be a survey of churches regarding their Insurances coming shortly.

Lastly, Andrew Ball introduced the subject of Official Marriage Rites for Churches of Christ in Australia and read the letter attached in Appendix A headed "Marriage Rites of Churches of Christ in Australia" which was approved at the April 2016 meeting of the Council of Churches of Christ in Australia.

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 reappointed to the position of Conference President for the Conference year 2016/2017." (By ballot paper)

Notice of Motion 6 (By ballot paper)

"That Ian Allen, Andrew Berthelsen, Raymond Cheal, Michael Hardie, Victor Tee, Stephen Toomey and Raewyn Williams be elected to Conference Executive for the Conference year 2016/2017." (By ballot paper)

Result: **ELECTED** by majority.

CLOSE

The business session closed at 9:45am with a time of worship.

APPENDIX A

Marriage Rites of Churches of Christ in Australia

Churches of Christ in Australia defines marriage as being the union between a man and a woman to the exclusion of all others, voluntarily entered into for life. Authorised celebrants with Churches of Christ in Australia are only able to solemnise marriages according to Churches of Christ Rites that conform to this definition ¹.

Marriage Ceremonies according to Rites of Churches of Christ in Australia are to include the following:

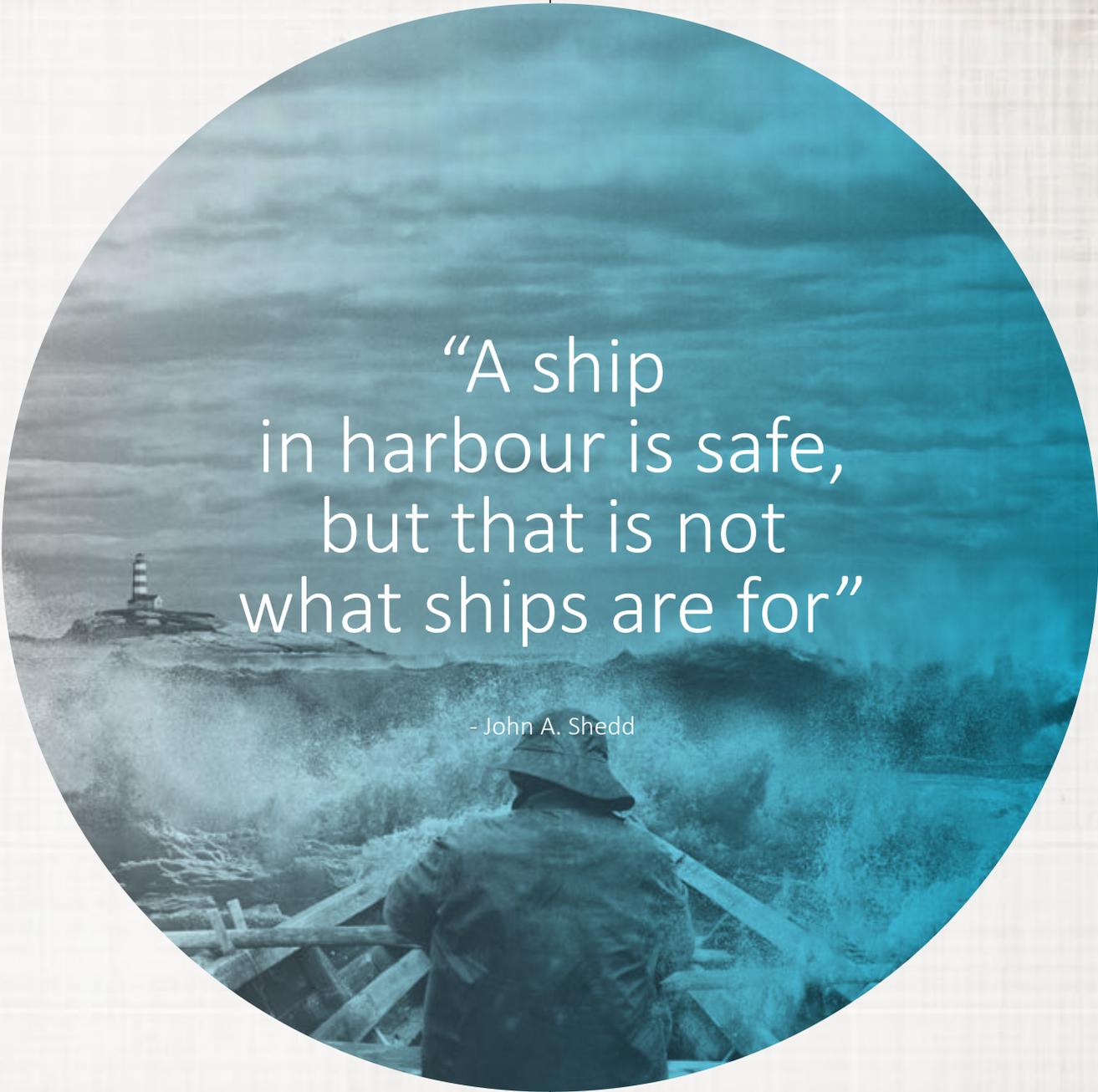
- A statement of the Christian nature and purpose of marriage and the intent of the marriage ceremony;
- An acknowledgement that this is a Christian celebration of marriage being conducted before God and those people who have gathered;
- Declarations or Statements of Intent;
- Personal Vows which are to be clear promises of commitment for life in which each takes the other to be their wife or husband; and
- Pronouncement of marriage.

Normal additional inclusions are:

- Prayer(s)
- The reading of Scripture
- An occasional address
- Exchange of rings
- Blessings or Affirmations by the parent or Parents and/or Giving of the Bride and or Groom
- Benediction and/or blessing.

Approved at the April 2016 meeting of the Council of Churches of Christ in Australia.

¹ Churches of Christ affirms that each minister of religion in possession of a marriage celebrant license has the discretionary right to perform a marriage ceremony or not.

A circular image with a teal tint. In the foreground, a person wearing a hat and a heavy jacket is seen from behind, steering a wooden boat through turbulent, white-capped waves. In the distance, a lighthouse sits on a rocky outcrop under a cloudy sky. The overall mood is one of resilience and the challenges of the sea.

“A ship
in harbour is safe,
but that is not
what ships are for”

- John A. Shedd



fresh hope



**Churches
of Christ**
in New South Wales

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