



fresh hope

FRESH HOPE ANNUAL REPORT

Churches of Christ in NSW
and the ACT for year ending
30 June 2021

CONTENTS

03 | Message from the Executive Ministry Director

04 | Message from Conference Executive President

05 | Message from Churches of Christ Community Care CEO

08 | Mission & Ministry

20 | Community Care

24 | Property Trust

26 | Australian College of Ministries

28 | Global Mission Partners

30 | Financial Reports

34 | Minutes of 2020 AGM

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Daz Farrell and his family receive prayer as he is inducted as Fresh Hope EMD at last year's AGM. Photo: Tom Fewchuk



FROM THE EXECUTIVE MINISTRY DIRECTOR

Legacy, leverage and listening

The world has changed. Doug Paul reminded us in Collective 2020 that societal change that used to occur within a generation (30 years) now happens every 18 months.

Nearly all areas of our everyday life have experienced some form of change this year. However, it is not to the changes in the world that we look for gaining a real understanding of the times. It is not to the answers 'under the sun' that we turn, but to the One from 'above the sun'.

Fresh Hope has also changed. In recognising the increasing growth and complexity of Fresh Hope NSW/ACT as an entity, Conference Executive decided that with Andrew Ball's signal to conclude his significant 18-year leadership journey in Fresh Hope, they would leverage the transition to make some key strategic and structural changes.

One key change was splitting Andrew's role and differentiating the entity parts: Churches of Christ in NSW being one entity, and Churches of Christ Community Care being the other. This led to a shared leadership model; an EMD for Churches of Christ in NSW and a CEO for Churches of Christ Community Care.

This also led to creating a new Board that reports to Conference Executive, which would make room for the technical expertise required in governing our care agencies, particularly Aged Care. The EMD would sit on both this Board and Conference Executive.

As this new shape began implementation at the beginning of 2021, much of the rest of the year was spent navigating what this change would look like and charting the waters of grief in change and loss from some historical conflict in our movement.

As the CEO of the freshly consolidated Churches of Christ Community Care, Dan Dwyer spearheaded a season of transparency, understanding and strategic intent. Partnering with Community Care in the differentiation, the transition and clarification of some of the ministry work and personnel within the Conference arm of Mission & Ministry began.

Similarly, Conference Executive, the EMD and Mission & Ministry Senior Team began the work of listening afresh to God and the churches, attempting to discern the times and the appropriate scope of their work amidst rapid change. After many conversations and a pivoting around the themes of healing, integration and unity, the

Conference team discerned 'Strengthening the network' to be the key initiative of our work.

As Andrew prophetically named in his final talk in 2020, 'power' is distributed in the next generation. Like a tidal movement, the energy was now moving outward. What would it look like to strengthen the network muscle for a time such as this? This is our present quest.

This reshaping led to some sad farewells, including the Director of Mission & Ministry, John Crowther. John has served this movement with passion and wholeheartedness for over 15 years, and in February 2021, he sensed a season of release and restoration was now beginning for him. We celebrate and honour John as a man of God who gave and still gives much to champion the hearts of all those he encounters to pursue Jesus in all things and live in and from the love of the Father. He leaves a powerful and living legacy.

As this reporting period ends, we are thrust into a lockdown in Greater Sydney. Traversing this new challenge and all that will come with vaccines, hesitancy, mental health, gatherings, and caring for the vulnerable will be uncharted territory requiring brave responses to God's leading.

And He is that – a God who leads. In our hearts, we make plans; but God guides our steps (Proverbs 16:9). Jesus is King of kings and Lord of lords (Revelation 19:16), all authority has been given to Him (Matthew 28:18), and all of heaven remains committed to the task of reconciling all things to God; whether in heaven or earth, through Jesus' shed blood on the cross (Colossians 1:20). This is also our unchanging activity as citizens of heaven (Ephesians 2:6).

It just may be that only through a wilderness is a way prepared for turning to the Lord and entering a covenant relationship with Him. We pray this for our nation and that our works, many of which are highlighted in this report, would serve His ends and be pleasing in His sight.

Daz Farrell
Executive Ministry Director,
Fresh Hope Network



FROM THE CONFERENCE EXECUTIVE PRESIDENT

What an honour it is to serve Jesus. We live in exciting times. The season we are experiencing is in the transition space between what was and what is to come. We no longer have the certainty of the past. We are to prepare ourselves for what God is shaping for the future.

Society around us no longer looks the same as it was, our lives have revolved around two dimensions, and church no longer looks like it was. If my suspicions are correct, God is preparing a new generation for a new season.

These times are navigated with both grief and opportunity, and this past year has offered both to our network. Last year, we farewelled Andrew Ball and embraced Daz Farrell as our new Executive Ministry Director. We also farewelled M&M Director John Crowther, whose leadership has strengthened our network and emerging generations over many years. The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has put a strain on our churches and provided an unexpected pause to reconsider, reinvent and regionalise. I continue to be encouraged by the sacrificial and gospel-centred leaders who love their communities and serve our network.

For Conference Executive, the transitions of the past year have also called for greater differentiation. The newly formed Church of Christ Community Care Board took some of the demands carried by our team, enabling us to reimagine our focus and energies.

These include:

- Ethos sub-committee
- Succession Planning/EMD Search Team
- Community Care Board sub-committee
- Governance sub-committee
- Navigating the transitions due to personnel and structural changes

This has enabled Conference Executive to give greater emphasis to discerning the work of integration, healing and unity foreshadowed by Daz at our last AGM. This has already revealed new horizons towards which we move. Energised and "informed by our past, we move forward in step with Jesus".

Along with the rest of the Conference Executive team, I want to express the great privilege of serving our churches throughout NSW and the ACT.

Victor Tee
President, Conference Executive



FROM THE CHAIR, MISSION & MINISTRY BOARD

In the past year, the Mission & Ministry Board provided accountability and a sounding board for Director John Crowther and the senior members of the M&M staff team.

The Board was engaged in prayer and discernment, testing ideas, giving feedback to the staff team and providing perspectives from the local church level to inform decision-making.

Members of the Board also played a key role in assessing and releasing grants and other support for local churches for their ministry context.

In the transition from Andrew Ball's leadership to the appointment of Daz Farrell to EMD, the Board provided encouragement and support for staff.

As the new leadership structure formed, it was discerned in March that the Board was reaching its natural end – as its primary task of being a spiritual discernment body was to be taken up by ConfEx.

Members of the Board in this period were Emily Drough, Gary Sullivan, Jill Reay-Smith, Brook Stewart and Victor Tee.

Naomi Giles
Chair, Mission & Ministry Board



FROM THE COMMUNITY CARE CEO

Churches of Christ Community Care ('Community Care') is the ministry of Churches of Christ in NSW that consists of Fresh Hope Care, Fresh Hope Venues, Fresh Hope Engage and Group Operations (Corporate Services).

The 2020-21 financial year has been one of change, excitement, unforeseen challenges and (at times) stress across our ministries and operations.

During this time, Fresh Hope has pulled together, and there are amazing stories of both individuals and teams going above and beyond with incredible acts of kindness and service.

As a leadership team, some of the challenges to which we have responded during the 2020-21 financial year include:

- COVID-19 pandemic (which has increased the cost and compliance of our aged care service offerings and required us to temporarily cease our Venues operations at The Tops and the development of Greenstead Valley);
- Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety;
- Governance restructure of Churches of Christ

Community Care

The impact on both our service delivery and financial performance throughout the COVID-19 pandemic across all that we do has been significant. This was managed well by our dedicated and high-quality teams and team leaders within Churches of Christ Community Care.

Of particular note in this reporting period are Lynn Bailey (Executive General Manager, Fresh Hope Care), Scott Griffiths (Chief Operating Officer) and David Tolman (Executive Director, Fresh Hope Venues).

Each of these exceptional leaders has stewarded their responsibilities and accountabilities well throughout this season. Their continued contribution, commitment and service of Churches of Christ Community Care stand us well for the future.

The wider executive leadership team of Community Care – Glyn Williams (Chief Risk Officer), Glen Hegner (Chief Information Officer) and David Hanrahan (Manager Major Projects) continued to provide significant support and service throughout the 2020-21 financial year.

We are blessed to have an array of new leaders and capabilities taking up the service-oriented leadership mantle in early 2021 – with a focus on our 2021-22 financial year ahead.



An artist's impression of the new development at Pendle Hill.

They include:

- Sam Buckerfield, General Manager Corporate Communications
- Daniela Duarte, General Manager Community Development
- Arianna Mason, General Manager People Culture & Strategy

Governance

As Daz Farrell outlined in his EMD report, the change of governance and model of leadership has been one into which both Daz and I have invested significant time and thought.

As a result of this investment, we have seen a marked improvement in the stewardship of all of our ministries. Our teams have navigated the changes with commitment and focus.

From March 2021, a Community Care Board was established to oversee all the profit-for-purpose charitable ministry activities of the Public Benevolent arm of Churches of Christ in NSW (known as Churches of Christ Community Care).

These are all the activities of aged care and retirement living (Fresh Hope Care), outdoor education training and Christian camping (Fresh Hope Venues), community engagement, church community program partnerships and auspice arrangements (Fresh Hope Engage) and social, affordable and community housing (Fresh Hope Housing).

FROM THE COMMUNITY CARE CEO CONTINUED

Interim members were appointed to that Board to establish its rhythm, governance framework, charter and committee framework.

These include:

- Stephen Toomey (Chair)
- Karen Baker
- Daniel Dwyer (ex officio Chief Executive Officer)
- Daz Farrell (ex officio Executive Ministry Director)
- Chris Powell
- Kelvin Taylor
- Victor Tee
- Kirryn Zerna

The interim members are appointed until February 2022 and have a specified mandate of establishing the Board governance structure and processes as well as convening and overseeing the following committees under their own specified charters:

- Clinical Governance Committee (new committee)
- Finance Audit and Compliance Committee (existing committee)
- Investment Management Committee (existing committee)
- People and Culture Committee (new committee)

Nominations for Community Care Board Members will be sought in early 2022. These will be capability-based appointments for a set period, with remuneration offered for the selected individuals to fulfil these roles. I look forward to providing further information to Conference churches in the new year regarding the capability matrix and the nomination of appropriately qualified and experienced persons for appointment to this Board.

Projects and Investment

Investment in the progress of updating Community Care’s built stock has been a key priority over the past three years. Currently, Community Care’s aged care and retirement living stock is outdated and is unable to serve the future aged care and retirement living needs of our community without significant planning and investment. Further, the expansion of offering in camping and accommodation operations has been a strategic priority for nearly five years. Investment in a new offering at Greenstead Valley, Joadja (in the NSW Southern Highlands) will commence in the upcoming financial year.

Two exciting initiatives and projects that will continue to be championed in the next financial year are at Pendle Hill and Kiama. The master planning and proposed staged construction of Community Care’s community and aged care facility at Pendle Hill will continue in 2021-22. This includes the intended partnership with

Pathways Church (Pendle Hill Church of Christ). The master plan envisages a worship and meeting space for Pathways, residential aged care services, retirement living, affordable housing, allied health services and community facilities.

In the latter half of 2022, we look forward to the opening of ‘Cedar on Collins’, a 54-room retirement living community in Kiama. By undertaking projects such as this, and other similar quality retirement living projects, Community Care is able to contribute to develop, fund and operate appropriate mission-oriented, high-care services in residential aged care, specifically palliative and mental health care services.

People

Community Care is continuing its investment in people – specifically their capabilities and professional and personal development. The establishment of the People and Culture Team combines Workplace Health and Safety, Culture and Transformation, Human Resources and Learning and Development. This team operates across all of the Community Care service streams.

With more than 1000 people working for Community Care, our staff team are our most important resource. We can only serve our residents, guests, and communities because of our dedicated and professional team of staff and volunteers. I’d like to take this opportunity to thank our Fresh Hope Care, Fresh Hope Venues and Group Operations staff members. Your commitment and dedication to those we serve, as well as your colleagues and those alongside you, is inspiring, particularly in the context of COVID challenges.

To our Conference Churches and representatives, thank you for your continued prayers and support. Despite the obvious challenges, all of us working in Community Care look forward to the year ahead as a team. We look forward to the opportunities of impacting the communities we serve on behalf of Churches of Christ in NSW. To continue to partner in creating of communities where those who experience us have the opportunity to connect and belong.

Daniel Dwyer
Chief Executive Officer,
Churches of Christ
Community Care



Mother’s Day at Borella House in Albury, one of our Residential Care services.

FROM THE CHAIR, COMMUNITY CARE BOARD

Dan’s modesty has prevented him from addressing all the relevant issues. It is appropriate to note the high level of enthusiasm, energy and expertise he has brought to his role as Chief Executive Officer.

The Board is extremely grateful for his significant contribution to the work and ministry of Community Care. COVID-19 has presented and is continuing to present significant challenges for our work and ministry.

The Board wishes to particularly acknowledge Lynn Bailey, Scott Griffiths, and David Tolman for their valuable and extensive work for Community Care in responding to those considerable challenges. In turn, we commend all the Community Care staff for their significant efforts in the face of COVID-19.

On behalf of Churches of Christ NSW, I also wish to thank the members of the Community Care Board who have worked diligently and well in making a valuable contribution to the work of Community Care throughout the year.

Stephen Toomey
Chair, Churches of Christ Community
Care Board



MISSION & MINISTRY – SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP

Fresh Hope Youth

Like everyone else in 2020-21, Fresh Hope Youth has been significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Youth ministries have struggled across the denominational spectrum at relating to young people online in meaningful ways. This has been primarily due to ongoing lockdowns and the roller coaster of emotions and self-esteem that results.

Some of the great highlights of this past year have included Uprising 2020, Youth Ministry 101, and leadership transitions and succession in our movement.

Uprising was fortunately able to occur in a restricted format in 2020 as we emerged from our first significant lockdown. The Tops did an incredible job at hosting and ensuring a COVID-safe event. Many young people just yearned to be there, and the theme of 'We are Pioneers' was apt as many, including leaders who were trying to make sense of following Jesus in this brave new world. Incredible shout-outs must go to the leaders that were accommodating and willing to go to any length to host and curate a space for young people to go deeper in their walk with Jesus.

Events such as Uprising and programs like Navigate have been a staple in our movement and seen significant Kingdom fruit as we choose to believe in and empower the next generation.

An additional initiative fostered in the past financial year was the launching of 'Youth Ministry 101', an invitational prototype wherein youth pastors and point

youth leaders were invited into a year-long coaching process supported by Fresh Hope and facilitated by Doc O'Connor. This was a wonderful process as the experience has provided invaluable input. The rhythm and accountability of being together monthly allowed youth leaders to think critically and creatively about youth ministry, seeing fruit that will last.

And finally, it has been an exciting development in the Fresh Hope Youth space to see Gilbert Corr (pictured right) take over the reins as the Youth Ministry Leader. This has been a six-month process in handing over.

As the outgoing leader, I am so excited for all that Gil and his wife Jade bring to this role, as those who are fiercely committed to the next generation and their hearing the gospel and following Jesus sincerely. It is the task of every generation to discover the gospel afresh, and my great encouragement to our movement as I conclude my tenure is that engaging the next generation and the raising up of young leaders in our movement has never been more important.

We are at a critical cultural moment in which youth ministries in our movement and across the Church are struggling significantly, with only a handful of churches in our movement with more than a dozen young people in their midst, and perhaps only three youth ministries with more than 20. If engaging, equipping, and raising younger leaders in our movement is not prioritised, this will continue to be a challenge and grave concern.

Charlie Burke
Youth & Youth Adults Catalyst



Photos: Tom Fewchuk

MISSION & MINISTRY – SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP CONTINUED

Navigate

Our 2020 and 2021 Navigate groups were disrupted by the challenges of COVID-19 while still producing environments that enhanced students’ spiritual and personal growth.

2020

Despite COVID-19 restrictions, most of our 2020 Navigate cohort participants were able to gather at Winter School, the mid-year retreat for Fresh Hope’s Navigate programs in July.

“The social distancing didn’t feel like a huge barrier; people were just so hungry to be together that it didn’t matter,” said Laura Payne, Winter School organiser. “People still engaged just as deeply.”

Winter School participant Kate Aird, from Restore Church, said: “Something I learned big time was how to engage in worship without actually using my voice. I learnt a lot about just sitting and being. We don’t have to get to a certain place to be with God. I think you always know that, but it’s not until you have to experience that for yourself that it impacts you.”

The group was able to conclude its Navigate journey at a final retreat in late September. As the Navigate team looked towards 2021, there was an intent to embrace a slower pace, delaying the start of the 2021 cohort until March and reshaping the experience with a more regional focus.

2021

In February, we farewelled Navigate organiser Laura Payne, who had led the program alongside Steve

Hodgson for several years. Charlie Burke and Abi Skelly stepped into the role of Navigate team facilitators for the cohort of 20 students.

Rohan Geddes stepped up to lead the Adventure group alongside Abi. Although having smaller numbers than 2020, this cohort connected well in the first two retreats in March and May, meeting for their first retreat in misty Katoomba.

“One afternoon, we all went for a walk down to one of the local lookouts, hoping for a brilliant view, but it was completely clouded over. Already the wonder and unknown of the year started right there!” said Abi. The group’s second retreat was held at Fitzroy Falls, a very cold but beautiful setting. Navigate leaders were welcomed by Bowral Church of Christ members, and several elders offered to pray for our retreat.

In the first half of the year, our Adventure students managed to fit in a rural camping trip, encountered stories of hope at SeeChange’s homelessness program, Platform 9, and experienced an overnight trip to Goulburn to the old St Joseph’s Orphanage to hear owners Maggie and Darryl’s heart for prayer and restoration! For the rest of this year, we gathered for Zoom sessions, creating spaces of connection, input, and spiritual formation.

It hasn’t been anyone’s ideal year, but it’s been amazing to see what God does in these moments – trusting can meet us where we are at!

Abi Skelly
Navigate Team facilitator and
Adventure leader



Spiritual Mentoring Training Cohorts

Spiritual Mentoring cohorts over the past year have adapted to take place either in person at The Tops or on Zoom, according to the conditions. Cohort SMK were luckily able to do their final residential in person at The Tops, much to the delight of all concerned. Cohort SML has had to adapt to most of their residentials on Zoom. Using breakout rooms on Zoom, the practical component has continued to be fulfilled. It is satisfying knowing our churches are receiving these trainees back into churches with the knowledge and skills to mentor and disciple church members of all ages.

Pastoral Zoom Support during COVID-19

John Crowther and I continued to be available to co-host and catch up with pastors and leaders during the lockdown time later in 2020, checking in to what was happening for each in their neck of the woods. The groups served to build ‘soul courage’ in pastors through very challenging times and sometimes provided technical support as services continued to transition online.

Discernment Team

The discernment team that was formed in past years has continued under COVID-19 conditions. Moving onto Zoom for panel work proved in some ways more beneficial. We served several couples in late 2020 as they sought to discern God’s directions for their ministry involvement.

In 2021, with COVID-19 restrictions, there was less traction due to a frantic energy loss and most people seeking to merely survive the current circumstances rather than dream for the future.

Our team continued to meet on Zoom and build skills, specifically around discernment and the use of ‘Clean Language’, a dialogue technique that assists in serving clarity in discernment. We look forward and are preparing for an influx when people begin to resume movement again.

Facilitating Formation Environments

Together with John Robinson from ACOM and Anne Simpson, I have been involved in exploring and extending skilling in our facilitators in the movement. This training group has been formed to build capacity and skill in facilitators that serve in many of our cohorts.

The members are training in facilitating spiritual formation groups in their local churches as well as other groups. We met in Canberra for their first residential, and their interactions continued via Zoom.

Discernment in the Boardroom

In May 2021, I was privileged to lead some workshops in the ‘Art of Discernment’ with ConfEx Board members. We examined some Quaker-styled aspects of spiritual decision-making to extend awareness and consider how it may serve our deepening wisdom. We also looked at how Spiritual Discernment is impossible in the boardroom without intentionally building personal spiritual formation outside the boardroom.

A Pilgrim’s Way

The disruption of COVID-19 still allowed for APW groups to both begin and come to completion. Three groups started and/or completed their year-long retreat journey in the reporting year. They gathered at The Tops, forming community and engaging in a process of both spiritual growth and leadership development. Thanks to Ken Wooley and Geoff and Lorraine Hall, who shared leadership with Anne Simpson in these communities.

Sue Whiteley
Spiritual Leadership Oversight



A Pilgrim’s Way cohorts.

MISSION & MINISTRY – CHURCH ENGAGEMENT

Ethos Sub-committee



Fresh Hope is a movement that prides itself on embracing and celebrating unity in diversity. To bring clarity in a time of rapid cultural change, the movement is again seeking to draw out and distil its essential DNA through the formation of an ‘ethos sub-committee’.

Executive Ministry Director Daz Farrell called for the formation of the sub-committee to begin the important work of capturing the movement’s essence and re-stating its core values. The group met for the first time on March 19 (pictured above).

“I felt we needed to bring the voices of our churches together and take the time to distil our ethos and core values. This kind of work is so important, and it must involve an intentional listening to each other and the Spirit as we come together,” said Daz.

To facilitate that, the sub-committee is comprised of nine leaders from across Fresh Hope churches and is facilitated by Kevin Sheehan of Coast Community Church. Daz, representing Fresh Hope, is also a member of the sub-committee.

“In a time of change we need to be clear about who we are,” said Kevin. “We have to go deeper, discovering what’s already there but labelling it, capturing it, so it can be communicated with clarity. It’s nothing about strategy; it’s knowing what’s under the surface at that foundational level so we can build from that. The deeper we go in understanding who we are, the more fruitful we will be.”

The members of the sub-committee are Edwina Blair (ACOM & Rivergum Community Church), Stephen Cha (Conference Executive and The Chapel Sydney), Pat Cox (Blaxland Church of Christ), Mark Curtis (Broken Hill Church of Christ), Kym Dixon (Kingsway Community Church), Ryan Graham (Campbelltown Church of Christ), Stephen Martin (Living Hope Maitland), Alasdair MacDougall (Liberty Church).

All church leaders across the Fresh Hope movement were encouraged to participate in the work of the sub-committee through a survey. A 12-month engagement process around the work of the sub-committee will begin at Collective in November.

“We can’t simply rest on the work done by those who formed our movement. Each generation has the responsibility to examine those foundational frameworks and listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches,” said Daz.

Regional Connect

A group of 17 pastors and elders gathered from around Northern NSW for the inaugural Regional Connect retreat in February (pictured below). The 24-hour retreat offered a time of encouragement and connection. Hosted by Mark and Vicki Keogh and members of the Mission & Ministry team, leaders travelled from Port Macquarie, Forster-Tuncurry and Coffs Harbour in the north, to Maitland and the Central Coast in the south. It is hoped that more regional events will be held in the future.



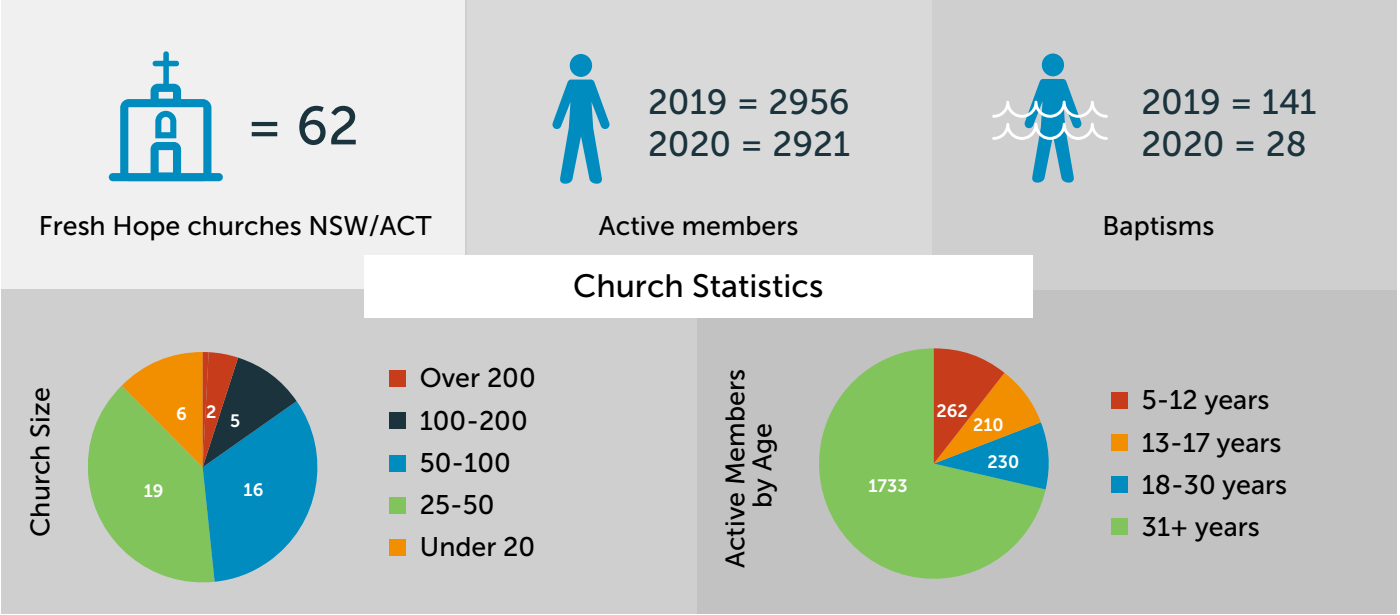
Photos: Tom Fewchuk

Pilgrimage

Exploring the history and culture that sets the Fresh Hope network of churches apart is at the heart of its annual Ministry Endorsement Pilgrimage. This year, more than 40 pastors, chaplains and governance leaders attended the event from around NSW (pictured), enjoying not only sessions that covered organisational structure, restoration history, and safe ministry training but time for relational connection and mutual encouragement.

“Pilgrimage is an orientation event for individuals who are seeking endorsement as pastors and chaplains, and churches who are exploring affiliation,” said Mission & Ministry Director John Crowther. “But how we host this event is all about connection. We hope through the introductions to key Fresh Hope staff and networking with one another, they will sense something of the dynamic and life within our family as well as hearing the heart and vision of our movement.

“One of the exciting aspects of this year’s Pilgrimage was seeing the multi-ethnic diversity among the participants, which reflects the reality across our network. I was encouraged by one of our Myanmar brothers who, at the end of Pilgrimage said to me, ‘After attending Pilgrimage, we have found our new extended family’. “Pilgrimage is a great opportunity for us to celebrate what God is doing across our network and learn from each other while we are together.”



* The comparative statistics on active members are based on information supplied by the same 48 churches in 2019/20
* Complete 2019 active members across 63 churches totalled 4190

MISSION & MINISTRY – RESOURCING

Safe Ministry

Churches of Christ in NSW/ACT was announced as participants in the National Redress Scheme on 10 October 2020 (via the CCNA Nominee Participating Group). All affiliated and provisionally affiliated churches have now joined the scheme. By joining the scheme, we demonstrate our commitment to conduct ministry safely by acknowledging mistakes from our past and taking measures to prevent harm in the future.

Creating Safe Spaces continues to be delivered across our churches, with 11 workshops hosted between July 2020 to June 2021. Lockdown restrictions meant there were no face-to-face workshops in the first half of the period. Many regional churches, such as Tweed Heads, Broken Hill, Coffs Harbour and Bathurst, hosted workshops in the first half of 2021. The feedback was overwhelmingly positive and continues to be an important component in reinforcing the importance of safe ministry across our churches.

In October 2020, we released the Safe Church package – a suite of model policies, procedures and templates for local churches to adopt. Whilst largely developed by the NSW/ACT Baptist Association, they have been adapted for use in Church of Christ settings. We intend to offer an audit component to our churches to bring assurance to their community that they are adequately implementing safe ministry practices. We offered the Safe Church package in Korean too. A thorough review of these documents will be undertaken once the NSW and/or ACT government introduce further legislation that addresses the Child Safe Standards.

As per Royal Commission recommendation 16.45, we strongly encourage endorsed people to engage in Professional Supervision as part of their Ongoing Professional Development. We have developed a list of almost 40 recommended supervisors who meet basic training requirements, development, and accountability. More than 30 per cent of endorsed people have engaged in Professional Supervision as of June 2020. I continue to advocate for local church leaders to better support their ministers/pastors by providing supervision in their annual budget.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge Maree Graham, who has assisted me in supporting churches in their safe ministry endeavours. Her supportive posture has been most helpful in resourcing our churches with workshops and elements of the Safe Church Package.

Ross Stewart
Safe Ministry Practices Leader

Communications

Our focus continues to be the championing of the stories of our churches, many of which are featured in this annual report. Our communications team has also supported Collective 2020 and the 2021 Winter Appeal. This year our team has been strengthened through the addition of Gil Corr as Social Media Strategist, Julia Gilchrist as history writer and Jade Corr as Communications Assistant. We farewelled content writer Emily Ferguson at the end of 2020 to start a new chapter as a mother of twins and have welcomed the rich contribution of content writers Josh Gibbon and Naomi Giles, Nations Heart team leader in Canberra. Videographer Tom Fewchuk and designer Glenn Newton continue to serve our wider M&M team on many additional projects.



Endorsement

Churches of Christ NSW/ACT has 197 endorsed people, including 16 new endorsed people and three people who have been endorsed previously and required an endorsement once again. We currently have 59 approved SRE teachers across NSW. I would like to acknowledge the conscientious work of Taksan Scott in ensuring that all endorsement and SRE teacher approvals are followed through effectively.

Ministry Portal

The development of the Ministry Portal has continued, giving churches increased access to key documents and their own OPD and Endorsement information and connection to churches in our network. We appreciate the architect work done behind the scenes by Hoda

Mirhashemi and the uploading of key safe ministry, church administration and endorsement documentation by Ross Stewart and his team.

Goodbye and hello

We farewelled Sandra Noel, who returned to Canada with her husband, Stuart, in the past year. Sandra was a wonderful colleague and served Fresh Hope for more than a decade. We also farewelled resourcing team member Sharayah Lardner as she embarked on a new adventure in ministry on the NSW South Coast. Laura Payne, our well-loved Navigate program leader, finished at the beginning of 2021. As we have been sad to say goodbye to these colleagues, we have also welcomed new faces – Melanie Wellings as Team Leader Resourcing and Julia Gilchrist as Resourcing Administrator. Gil Corr also joined the team to work alongside Charlie Burke to transition him into the role of Fresh Hope Youth Ministry Leader in 2022. Charlie Burke and Abi Skelly joined the team to facilitate the 2021 Navigate cohort.



Above: M&M staff farewelled Laura Payne (second from right, seated) in February. Below: Resourcing ministry leader Sandra Noel is farewelled by M&M director John Crowther at Collective 2020.



Photos: Tom Fewchuk

MISSION & MINISTRY – PIONEERING

In 2020, the Pioneering team created a strategic plan with the purpose to:

- Champion pioneering churches
- Champion pioneering individuals (and develop teams)
- Champion pioneering resources

We committed to believing and working with the movement to see (by the end of 2023):

- 24 existing churches committed to the process of pioneering and multiplication
- 24 new Kingdom-oriented faith communities
- 24 new pioneers training through 'Frontier' (one-year incubator)

We knew this was ambitious, but we needed to set faith targets to induce movement in creative and hope-filled ways. We were working with a 'batch' of pioneering expressions in 2020 but realised we needed to create a 'pipeline' of pioneering leaders and teams to see new church and missional growth. Ten men and women have now been through Frontier, the fruit-producing new work in existing churches, new church plants, missional refounding, and activating evangelism and enterprise.

In the past 12 months, we have worked to serve in different ways with existing churches. Some of our work has been to support a new pioneering chapter in an existing environment. We have one church plant that has just celebrated its election of elders and self-governance, and another in the first year of its forming, while

another is preparing to become affiliated. We have been welcoming some new multi-ethnic expressions, which has been a gift to our movement. We are working with churches that are 'working out' pioneering and some who are beginning to think and work with a 'regional connect' strategy.

Nationally, state representatives in respective roles acknowledge the declining and ageing church while wrestling with the dearth of potential pioneers. Right now, our team is leveraging 'Pioneering Month' to agitate conversations with those who might be sensing a call to pioneer. We are looking at 2022 being a year to stimulate spiritual leaders and regions, to create cohort opportunities that cross state boundary lines, to continue supporting those who have begun new ministries and churches, to keep unearthing potential pioneering men and women to be identified and equipped, and to broaden our work in the multi-ethnic space.

Pioneers are called to the hard places to recover the gospel of Jesus, practising radical hospitality and seeking shalom in life-giving and transformative ways. This is not a moment to play it safe or assume it's someone else's work. How is God calling, shaping and equipping you to pioneer right where you are or somewhere new? How might we do this together?

Nathan Marshall
Pioneering Ministry Leader



The current Frontier cohort at their first retreat in early 2021



MISSION & MINISTRY – PROPERTY AND PROJECTS

Property & Projects

Churches of Christ in NSW/ACT over the past 12 months has been engaging directly with churches by providing a range of property advice, support and process through its Church Partnership Program.

In the past 12 months we have been involved in:



4
major church projects
(1 Regional, 1 ACT and 2 Sydney)



12
church partnership projects



22
ConfEx-governed properties

Major projects:

- Project feasibility, concept, partnership and consultant and development management

Partnership projects:

1. Licencing, leasing, rental, agreement, and management of properties
2. Project advice and feasibility
3. Consultant support and engagement
4. Legal and Planning advice
5. Compliance and WHS
6. Construction and refurbishment management with builders
7. Council engagement



ConfEx Properties:

- Utilisation of ConfEx properties for establishing churches and ministries, including refurbishment, maintenance, and licencing.

Over the next 12 months, we will be involved in:



3
major church projects
(1 regional and 2 in Sydney)



6-9
church partnership projects across NSW and ACT



managing ConfEx-governed properties

Together our approach is to work with churches and their communities to best manage their properties, assets, and resources. As we partner with churches and ministries in a wide range of property projects, we seek to measure the outcome of a project through a threefold lens: Missional, Community, Financial. We call this the return on investment (ROI) lens. Linking the churches vision, mission, strategy, and health now and into the future with project management strategies such as feasibility, due diligence, stakeholder and community engagement to ensure viability and sustainability.

"Fresh Hope has backed our vision and provided professional business resources, excellent feedback, and spiritual insight. When difficult times, situations and disappointments have happened, the continued trust in us and our vision has confirmed we are not alone in our mission," John Latta, Senior Minister, Tweed Heads Church of Christ (project image pictured left).

Matt Young
Manager,
Fresh Hope Property and Projects



MISSION & MINISTRY – ENGAGE

Chaplaincy

Churches of Christ employs 25 chaplains, who are strategically placed in aged care centres, schools, hospitals, and prisons throughout NSW. The non-anxious presence of chaplains has never been more important than in these difficult times of navigating the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Strict protocols have prevented our volunteer pastoral carers from visiting aged care centres, placing extra demand on our chaplains. These chaplains must also wear a mask and practise social distancing, denying them the pastoral practice of holding someone's hand when that is often what is needed.

Our school chaplains have also had to adapt to the pandemic restrictions, often spending time with students and staff online rather than in person. The important relationships built with staff have enabled our school chaplains to be seen as dependable and a vital support for students.

Richard Howarth (pictured right), who has served as a chaplain in aged care and corrective services with Fresh Hope for over 20 years, summed up beautifully the role of a chaplain in this recent reflection:

"When Wayne Scott, Pastor of Hillston Baptist Church, picked me up whilst hitchhiking in 1985, he had no idea how broken and depleted of faith I was. When I walked in the doors of the Marrickville Church of Christ three years later as a young babe in Christ, I had no idea that the Pastor, Peter Clegg, had been praying for a young family to join the church."

"When I entered the Churches of Christ Theological

College in 1990, under Peter's discipleship, I never anticipated that the ongoing personal, intellectual, emotional, and spiritual formation, including several years of local church ministry, would be crucial for my call to chaplaincy."

"When I walked into the room of that elderly resident and was able to offer words of hope when they thought they had lost everything that gave meaning to their life, I knew I was there in God's perfect time."

"As the weeping inmate sat before me in the chapel, proclaiming that they wanted Jesus to be their Lord because of something they had read in a Christian biography a few days before, I stood in awe of the God who reveals Himself in manifold ways."

"How was I to know that the men and women God placed in my life years before would become instrumental in helping me maintain my faith and sanity during a life-changing crisis?"

"How do we chaplains know when we are going to be at the right place in God's time? What a privilege it is, and what sacred ground we walk, as we become spectators to the providence of a mighty God ... 'who accomplishes all things according to the counsel of his will' (Ephesians 1:11)."



Chaplain's retreat held at The Tops in May 2021.

Engage partners

Fresh Hope Engage has continued to partner with around 20 churches in our movement as they seek to meet the needs of those who are vulnerable, suffering or in distress in their local communities. This year, Fresh Hope Engage appointed Sheila Matete-Owiti to the role of Partnership Manager. Apart from providing financial support through fundraising, Engage also assists its partners with networks and linking with other agencies, program reviews and evaluations, and increasing governance and compliance requirements.

Sheila shares: "The basic tenet of the Engage Program is Ephesians 2:10 (NKJV), 'For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.' Fresh Hope Engage supports its partners to outwork their local mission under the leading of the Holy Spirit. The ultimate goal is that people encounter the love of God as God outworks his redemptive purpose in and through his servants. In partnership with generous donors, Fresh Hope Engage has supported many church projects. These include food pantries, opportunity shops, care for the homeless, kids camps, community meals, men's shed, community café, and refuges. Fresh Hope Engage supports its partners by establishing corporate governance structures and processes and conducting risk assessments, compliance reviews, and policy development. We are grateful for the privilege as sons and daughters to express the Father's heart through Engage."



Winter Appeal

In recent years, several of our church partners have found themselves strategically placed to respond to local disasters and crises. This year's Winter Appeal focused on supporting families rebuilding after the devastating impacts of floods, drought, and fires in recent years. Loss of livelihoods from the pandemic and negative impacts from isolation have made a recovery even more challenging. Over \$10,000 was raised, and this was distributed to the ongoing support of:



- Tweed Heads – people impacted by the 2017 floods.
- Dubbo – families and farmers recovering from the impact of the long-term drought.
- Thrive Londonderry – families affected by the 2021 floods.
- Hope Connect – families impacted by increased domestic violence and isolation.
- Batemans Bay – families recovering from the Black Summer bushfires (via local chaplain, Nicole Gorzalka).

Disaster Appeal – Hawkesbury Community Church

Damaging floods in April this year impacted the North Coast of NSW and parts of Western Sydney when the Hawkesbury River broke its banks.

Hawkesbury Community Church was quick to respond through their shop-front hub, 'Thrive', in the centre of Londonderry. Pictured right is Linda Clark supporting the clean-up crew.



Thrive quickly became a point of contact for Penrith Council and for people to connect with referrals and for different kinds of help. Thrive didn't have a food pantry before, but now they've gone through two truckloads of food to help those in need. This act of compassion and care has connected them more deeply to the local area.

"Through the flood, we've met a whole lot of people who are in need; a lot of people live in caravans in people's yards, or they are elderly and need help," said Glen Clark, Londonderry Senior Pastor.



Richard Reeve
Partnerships & Resourcing
Ministry Leader

CHURCHES OF CHRIST COMMUNITY CARE

Residential Aged Care and Retirement Living

The COVID-19 pandemic's impact upon aged care services was significant in the 2020-21 financial year and is ongoing, particularly in residential services sites. Residents and families have been understanding and supportive throughout.

This is reflected in the high number of residents who participated in our COVID-19 vaccination clinics. Staff have similarly responded enthusiastically to vaccines offered, resulting in Fresh Hope Care being well placed to minimise the effects of the virus in our services.

Industry participation

The past financial year has seen a high level of involvement with the peak bodies – specifically Leading Aged Services Australia (LASA) and the Australasian College of Health Services Managers (ACHSM).

This participation keeps us abreast of challenges and future directions for the health sector and provides an avenue for ensuring we have a voice in shaping that future. Our involvement in these industry groups increases awareness of who we are and our reputation generally at both state and national levels.

2020 Excellence Awards

Fresh Hope Care's annual Excellence Awards were celebrated virtually for the first time – due to the COVID-19 pandemic – with increased on-site participation due to the virtual nature of the event.

There were Team Awards in Creativity, Innovation, Teamwork and Resilience. A special Support Award was issued to our Pastoral Care team.

Future focus

Our vision for the future guides us in areas of mission, growth, innovation, and resident and staff experience.

The investment in the growth of our leadership teams, expansion of areas of expertise in our support services, and the pipeline of major projects results in positivity and excitement about the years ahead.

The activity on-site in preparation for the first stage of the development of the Green Hills facility at East Maitland has been well received by residents, families, and staff.



Above: Artist's impression of the Green Hills development.
Below: Cupcakes delivered on Aged Care Employee Day.



This development will be the first Fresh Hope residential facility that has been designed to deliver a better life for residents and staff while addressing the design requirements that the pandemic has produced.

It is expected that the new facility will be commissioned in two years. There are already residents and staff on the waitlist to join us when that occurs.

Lynn Bailey,
Executive General Manager
Fresh Hope Care



Above: Easter celebrations at Green Hills Residential Care Service in East Maitland. Below left: Maria Samoilenko is honoured for 40 years of dedicated service at Ashwood Residential Care Service. Below right: Green Hills staff at the virtual Fresh Hope Care's 2021 Excellence Awards.



CHURCHES OF CHRIST COMMUNITY CARE

Venues

The backdrop to the past year has been like no other we have experienced, but we have had to find a path through like many other sectors.

Bookings and The Tops Operations

The commencement of the 2020-21 financial year was bleak, with zero activity due to COVID restrictions, which caused us to cease our day-to-day operations.

At this time, we strengthened a relationship with Lee Evans, Heathcote MP, and asked him for assistance. He was very supportive and actively engaged with us. Mr Evans presented our concerns to the State Government and has joined us in advocating The Tops and other businesses like ours as beneficial for mental health and well-being.

The newly forged relationship with Mr Evans resulted in a visit from NSW Premier Gladys Berejiklian. She was impressed by our unique offering and said that she'd not come across a business like ours and mentioned that she had enjoyed some hikes in the region, though she wasn't a fan of the leeches!

The visit was a tremendous boost for staff morale amidst the easing of restrictions, where we saw a significant increase in guest activity at The Tops.

School groups, in particular, seized the opportunity for group activities in the beautiful environment of Stanwell

Tops, forging connection and fun. Inundated with activity and requests, the Tops Operations Team ran into Christmas and the recommencement of a hectic first term of the calendar year 2021.

The operating climate again shifted with the re-emergence of COVID pandemic restrictions toward the end of the 2020-21 financial year (commencing in June 2021).

Pivot and Positivity

During the rollercoaster ride of our COVID-19 pandemic operations, The Tops team rallied with the opportunity to continue to remain engaged and productive with the increase in offering from our food distribution and delivery business.

While this business stream decreased as normal operations returned, it did (and continues) to remain a feature of our service to the local Stanwell Tops community.

Our ability to retain our team with meaningful work that served the community and generated much-needed revenue for our operations.

The team has continued to look at developing new service offerings in the adventure space, with relationships being forged with National Parks for a new program and product offerings. The team remains positive, energised and as active as possible in this climate.



Above: Josh Gibbon, Internship Coordinator (far left) with the 2020-21 interns – Kodie Ninness, Will Hickey, Matthew Lockyer and Darcey Bartlett.

Greenstead Valley

We have continued the master planning and visioning of our new site at Greenstead Valley, Joadja. Activity in planning this site has also been impacted by the 'stop/start' nature of COVID and affected business operations.

The master planning recommenced in earnest at the beginning of 2021. As a part of the overarching project, Tiny homes have been constructed and installed on-site and will soon be available for short-term rentals, along with the River Cottage. The future and possibility for Greenstead Valley, Joadja, is bright and exciting.

Finally, we are grateful for the support of many who have assisted Venues in dealing with the challenges of COVID-19. In turn, we acknowledge, with thanks, the diligence, resilience and resourcefulness of our staff in the past year.

David Tolman
Executive Director,
Fresh Hope Venues



Opposite page and below: Tiny homes constructed at the Greenstead Valley site.



PROPERTY TRUST

As Chairman of the Property Trust, and on behalf of its board, it is my pleasure to present the Property Trust Annual Report for the period 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021.

The Property Trust (the ‘Trust’) serves and partners with Church of Christ churches and agencies through its services. This includes but is not limited to matters such as:

- Safe custody of certificates of title, contracts, plans and other documents;
- Property Sales;
- Property Purchases;
- Leasing and Licensing;
- Building Contracts;
- Administration of estates and trust funds;
- Registration of churches with the Trust, including appointment of the Trust as trustee;
- Investment (deposits) and Borrowing (loans) via the Fresh Hope Investment Fund;
- Execution of statutory forms (development applications, construction certificates etc.); and
- Facilitating Grant Applications – e.g. NSW Community Building Partnership.

During the reporting period, the Trust supported Churches of Christ churches and agencies by providing the services as noted above, including the review, processing, and execution of more than 81 statutory applications, sale contracts, purchase contracts, licence agreements, annual fire safety statements, grant applications and other matters (including a loan to Missionheart; refer to report opposite).

COVID-19 – relief for churches

During the unprecedented (and at the time of reporting, the continuing) COVID-19 period, the Trust continued to provide both direct and indirect relief for churches via loan ‘freezes’, loan interest rate reductions of 0.25 percentage points (on 1 July 2020) and 0.10 percentage points (on 1 April 2021), and, by continuing to maintain the standard investment (deposit) interest rate at 2.60%pa.

Purpose of the Trust

The Trust is an incorporated body that seeks to partner and serve Church of Christ churches and agencies through a range of services that support the work of the gospel and see people saved into God’s Kingdom.

Trust Meetings and Members

The ‘1947 Act’ provides for the Trust to consist of up to nine members each appointed by Conference for nine-year terms, with vacancies for three members occurring each triennium.

Trust members serve without remuneration and are provided with a meal when the Trust meets physically for meetings. The Trust also covers the reasonable accommodation and travel expenses of regional members to attend Trust meetings physically. During the reporting period, the Trust met on 10 occasions (four meetings at the Fresh Hope Rhodes office and six online meetings).

As at 30 June 2020, the Trust was comprised of the members named below (number of meetings attended shown in parentheses, with maximum number possible for the reporting period being 10):

- Mr Andrew Billing Chairman 5/2017–11/2020, & Deputy-Chairman from 12/2020 (9)
- Ms Patricia Chan [*term ended 11/2020] (4*)
- Mr Damien Hannes [*term ended 11/2020] (4*)
- Mr Steven Martin (8)
- Mr Richard Reeve [resigned 6/2021] (8)
- Mr Philip Smith (7)
- Mr Shamus Toomey Registrar (from 5/2017) (8)
- Mr Willy van den Berg (10)
- Mr Allan Vincent Deputy-Chairman 8/2018–11/2020, & Chairman from 12/2020 (8)

During the reporting period, the Trust farewelled Patricia Chan (after two years’ service) and Damien Hannes (after nine years’ service) – who had both come to the end of their terms – and also farewelled Richard Reeve (who served the Trust for more than seven years, including three years as its secretary). The Trust is thankful to God for these three members’ passion, faithfulness, and diligent service.

The Board Skills Matrix of the Trust records that its members have a range of professional skills and experience in the following areas:

- Aged Care;
- Building & Construction;
- Corporate Governance;
- Education (including Theological Education);
- Engineering;
- Finance (accounting, deposits, lending, etc.);
- Health;
- Information Technology;
- Law;

- Ministry;
- Not-for-Profit operations;
- Human Resources;
- Property; and
- Work Health & Safety.

Executive Management of the Trust

The full-time Corporate Secretary and Executive Officer of the Trust is James Cartwright [‘Secretary’], who has over 18 years’ experience in corporate governance, not-for-profit, and church property trust administration – as well as over 27 years’ experience in administration, property, operations, and management. James holds a Bachelor of Commerce from the University of Wollongong and is also an Affiliated Member of the Governance Institute of Australia.

Contacting the Trust

For Fresh Hope churches and agencies, the Secretary is the ‘early engagement’ point of contact for property matters – via phone, email or letter, and in person (by prior arrangement). I encourage you to access Trust resources at <https://freshhope.org.au/members/church-resources/property-trust> and discuss your property matters with the Secretary of the Trust. So, to discuss investments and borrowing for churches, grant applications, and other property matters, please contact James Cartwright, the Trust’s Corporate Secretary and Executive Officer, via email james.cartwright@freshhope.org.au or phone 02 8573 6031.

Allan Vincent
Chairman, The Churches of Christ Property Trust

Report from Missionheart re the Property Trust loan used to help establish the ‘Missionhouse’

For nearly two and a half decades, we have been dreaming of and praying for a property to further Missionheart’s work, to see lives transformed by God in the Christian faith community and establish ‘Missionhouse’. Today we are privileged by God’s grace to occupy that kingdom space just over the ACT border (in NSW).

Thanks to Fresh Hope and especially the Property Trust and James Cartwright – as well as an exceptional effort from Matt Young (Properties and Projects) – we have been able to secure a property to house this community and ministry that is an extension of Missionheart’s life and ministry.

If it wasn’t for the help (past, present and ongoing) of the Property Trust team and Matt Young in his role as well as Engage (Richard Reeve) and Pioneering (Nathan Marshall) and their teams, we would not have been able to advance this ministry as we are.

Thank you from the bottom of our hearts – may each of you be encouraged as we share in the work of Christ and create new stories of God’s goodness together.

Jason and Kelly Hayduk
Missionheart/Missionhouse team.

For more information about Missionhouse, go to www.missionheart.org.au/missionhouse

Below: The Missionheart property.



ACOM – THE AUSTRALIAN COLLEGE OF MINISTRIES

“ACOM exists to equip students to thrive as disciples of Christ in a rapidly changing world.” This is the opening ‘Why do we exist?’ statement in our 2021-26 Strategic Intent. It signifies ACOM’s commitment to working alongside local churches throughout Australia, particularly those that constitute the conference of Churches of Christ in NSW/ACT and our other company member, the Christian and Missionary Alliance of Australia.

ACOM’s strength has always been its commitment to partnering with local churches and like-minded organisations. This partnership provides students engaging in ministry formation an environment where they can test-drive what they are learning within the communities of enquiry in which they are situated. We believe this is where the future of ministry training lies.

Unsurprisingly, ACOM experienced significant challenges during the 2020-21 reporting period due to the impact of COVID-19. Despite the challenges of the pandemic, our staff and faculty came together to overcome complexity and ensure we continued to provide a quality ‘totally online’ learning environment for our students. Full credit to the incredible ACOM team for their quick, adaptive and creative response, ensuring that students engaging with study were able to continue in a well-supported learning environment

The past financial year has seen a renewed sense of combined mission and a positive collaboration with the Fresh Hope Mission and Ministry team. Together, we are looking to our movement’s future ministry formation needs, ensuring that emerging leaders are identified, supported, and equipped to lead and serve their local communities, seeing lives transformed.

ACOM has also used this season to work on several new awards and specialist units designed to increase

opportunities for individuals exploring the start of their ministry journey, seeking ongoing professional development, or to look for the next challenge in the last third of their lives. New awards include Graduate Certificates in Chaplaincy, and Governance and Strategy, and a Master of Intercultural Ministry. Some of our new units include Strategic Thinking and Decision Making, Creativity and Spirituality, The Theology and Practice of Social Justice & Ministering to the Muslim World.

ACOM has a dedicated team of student engagement managers, staff, and academic faculty to support student learning and welfare. This has been particularly crucial during the pandemic as many students have felt the pressure of balancing their studies with homeschooling and working from home. Our team’s support has enabled students to persist and flourish with their studies during these difficult times. In addition, ACOM’s increased social media profile, while primarily promotional, has also highlighted student stories and offered spiritual encouragement, adding to a sense of belonging for our community.

We are thankful for the opportunity to contribute to the development of high-quality graduates that sees them serving in key church and ministry positions around the country. We are pleased to report that 130 students graduated this year across a variety of awards.

Neale Meredith
Interim Principal & CEO
Australian College of Ministries



Above: Queensland graduates celebrate their achievement. Opposite page: Queensland graduates (left) and Victorian Spiritual Formation group. Below: NSW Spiritual Formation group (left) and graduates from across the country celebrate their graduation ceremony online.



GLOBAL MISSION PARTNERS

This year marks 130 years of corporate overseas mission activity by Churches of Christ in Australia. A driving aspect to this vision that, in 1891, led to the first Foreign Mission Committee, was this: "The call to mission was not just to 'people at home that are like us'; it is to the stranger in our midst and to those far off." This still rings true for GMP even as we all continue to live with the impact of COVID-19. The following examples show that mission is ongoing:

- The COVID-19 Ministry Appeal raised more than \$150,000 for churches caring for community members in Fiji, Thailand, India, Bangladesh, and Indonesia.
- We have provided support to several Indigenous communities impacted by shutdowns. This work is continuing.
- Investment in local leadership is bearing fruit with them continuing in ministry, implementing development projects and growing in confidence.
- The income targets for Safe Water September, the GMP Great Gift Catalogue, COCOA Christmas Offering, End of Financial Year Appeal and the Easter Walk for Hope have been met. However, there is a trended decline in local church giving and in support for specific mission projects.
- A number of significant bequests and large donations have been received since January 2021. The large contributions include support for church planting in Indonesia, Khayelihle Children's Village – Zimbabwe, and a new Fund for Indigenous Ministry. These Bequests are invested.
- GMP continues to take responsibility for Redress related to the former Australian Churches of Christ Indigenous Ministry (ACCIM). GMP, with Council of Churches of Christ in Australia, is seeking a way to maintain the ministry with Australia's First Peoples and to meet Redress obligations. Redress does not put at risk the giving or assets of International Church Partnerships or Churches of Christ Overseas Aid.

Other highlights:

- In Fiji, the churches have expanded their ministry and are seeing growth.
- In South Sudan, church buildings are now places of year-round ministry and evangelism through the simple act of waterproofing their roofs.

- The International Christian College of Manila (ICCM) has adapted to virtual teaching, as have our partners in Indonesia – supported by your funding.
- When a COCOA borehole was installed in Zimbabwe, one community member commented, "The water project is important as it has opened up other opportunities to plan other things at household or village level."
- During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Bandarban Hills Bawm COVID-19 Response Committee provided food and hygiene kits.
- Indigenous Ministries Australia (IMA) hosted a film and language festival, 'Our Country Speaks', in Perth. In Adelaide, a 'pilot' cultural learning city tour was successfully trialled. When restrictions are lifted, similar opportunities will be made available in other locations.
- The Embody Mission Community connected leaders and churches to explore the role of mission in discipleship. Embody continues to offer other experiences of mutual support and growth.
- The 2020 Safe Water September fundraising campaign exceeded expectations, raising over \$178,000 for safe water projects in Zimbabwe and Vanuatu.



"I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus" (Philippians 1:3-6).

The GMP Sydney-based staff, Colin Scott (COCOA) and Emily Wood (embody), value opportunities to connect with churches and individuals about the work of GMP. Suzanne Hayes and Jan Bayliss, led by Colin Scott, ensure that the work of COCOA is at a high standard and projects are well implemented.

John Gilmore
Executive Officer, GMP



Top: A new well in Zimbabwe. Middle: Ministry to those impacted by COVID-19 in India. Below (left) Worship in the new Lomowai church building in Fiji. (right) COVID-19 relief packs distributed in Australia. Opposite: online learning classroom.



FINANCIAL REPORTS

Annual financial result – year ending 30 June 2021

Our consolidated financial performance for the year ending 30 June 2021 has recovered well from the initial impacts felt by the Covid pandemic in early 2020. Returns from investments were the main contributor to this recovery, with the organisation’s approach to cashflow management and investment asset allocation strategy well placed to maximise the uplift in markets post the initial Covid outbreaks in March 2020.

It has been a very different year for our services, with our Retirement Communities maintaining a healthy level of occupancy throughout the year, however other services have been severely impacted by the pandemic, such as the Tops Conference Centre, which has been restricted from trading at varying times throughout the year.

Consolidated Profit and Loss Statement

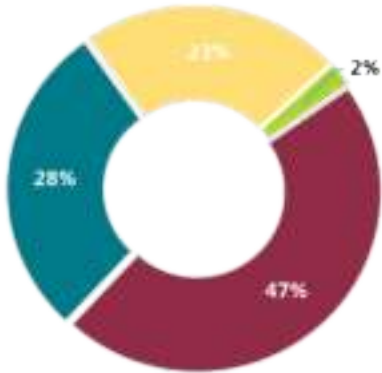
Revenue	FY21 \$'000	FY20 \$'000	Change %
Fees from residents, clients, students and customers	38,585	34,056	13%
Government and other funding	63,518	60,522	5%
Revenue from investments	31,026	1,057	1742%
Other revenue	2,838	5,947	(51%)
Total revenue	136,269	102,192	33%
Expenditure			
Staff costs	64,044	67,979	7%
Operational and care services	5,282	4,404	20%
Hospitality services	6,629	6,282	6%
Property, utilities and depreciation	14,743	12,503	18%
Administration	10,757	9,608	11%
Other expenditure	2,276	289	688%
Total expenditure	108,775	101,154	8%
Total Surplus	27,494	1,036	2553%

Our residential care services have been well managed throughout the entire duration of the pandemic, but that hasn’t been without its challenges. Occupancy has remained fairly stable at those locations where covid outbreaks have been minimised, however has declined at those services located in areas that have suffered large outbreaks such as Pendle Hill, Batemans Bay and Albury. Expenditure for cleaning services and personal protection equipment (PPE) has also increased significantly in the last 12 months as measures to help reduce the risk of covid outbreaks. The current levels of expenditure for PPE and intense cleaning of our residential care services have become a normalised operating cost as effective infection control measures to reduce the risk of future Covid outbreaks.

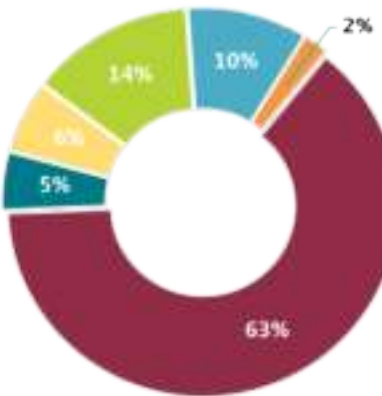
Expenditure for Conference Executive has increased in FY21 to help fund important initiatives such as providing Covid support for Churches through one-off grant funding, however healthy investment returns have helped to fund this. Proceeds from the sale of some Conference governed properties, which are surplus to current needs and have been identified as not imperative for future strategic growth, have been invested to fund future operating costs for the Mission and Ministry team and future redress obligations.

Key Revenue and Expenditure Information

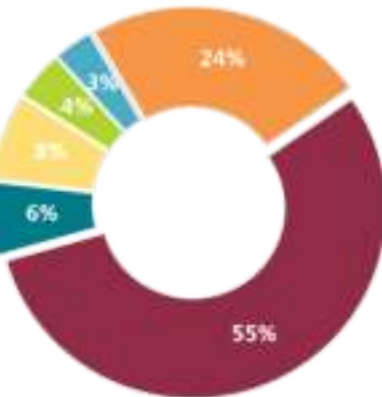
Where did our revenue come from?	FY21 (\$m)
Government funding	63.5
Fees from resident, clients and customers	38.6
Investment returns (net)	31.2
Other	2.9
Total Revenue	136.3



Where did we spend our revenue	FY21 (\$m)
Staff costs	69.1
Clinical care and allied health	5.3
Hospitality services	6.6
Property, utilities and depreciation	14.7
Administration	10.8
Other	2.3
Total Expenditure	108.8



Revenue by service	FY21 (\$m)
Residential Aged Care	75.3
Venues and temporary accommodation	8.5
Retirement living and housing	10.0
Ministry, chaplaincy and church support	5.7
Higher Education	4.5
Investments, properties and Trust loans	32.2
Total Revenue	136.3

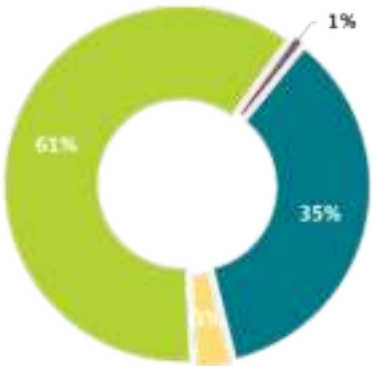


FINANCIALS REPORTS CONTINUED

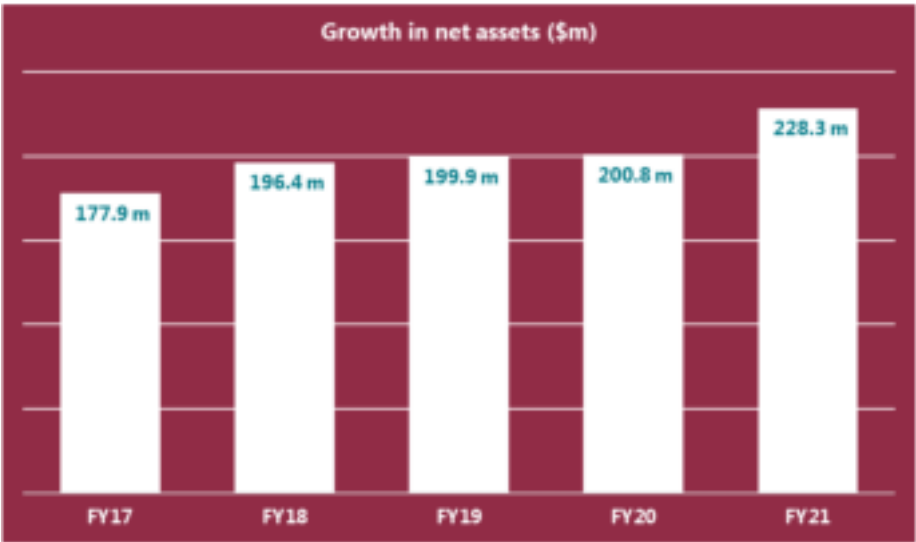
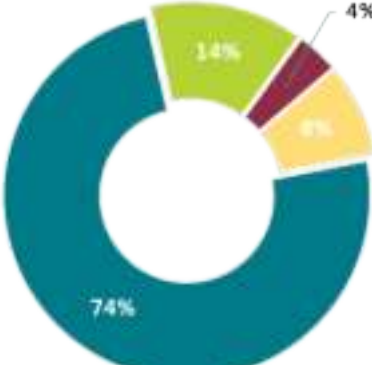
The acquisition of an existing Seniors Living community in Castle Cove (Watermark) in mid-2020 has been a sound strategic addition to Community Care’s existing portfolio of seniors living assets. Returns from this acquisition will be important in helping to fund expected losses in the short term for those services most impacted by Covid related restrictions, such as our conferences and camping venues. Expansion into new Seniors Living communities will also reduce the risk of uncertainty in the Residential Care sector stemming from the recommendations from the Royal Commission into Aged Care.

Key Balance Sheet Information

Composition of our Assets		FY21 (\$m)
Cash		5.0
Investments		210.5
Receivables and other		18.8
Fixed assets and property		362.8
Total Assets		597.2



Composition of our Liabilities		FY21 (\$m)
Payables and accruals		13.8
Refundable bonds - aged care		274.8
Provisions, loans & trust deposits		30.3
External loans		50.0
Total Liabilities		368.9



Capital Developments and Acquisitions



Capital spending to upgrade our current services, increase our current service offering and expand into new growth markets has increased considerably over the past 2 years. This has been intentional to reduce the risk of being too reliant on returns from residential care services given the uncertainty that still surrounds the sector in how the recommendations from the Royal Commission into Aged Care will be implemented and funded. Our capital spending in FY20 and FY21 has also enabled Fresh Hope to invest strategically into areas of high future growth, such as South-West Sydney in the new airport corridor and large regional areas such as the Illawarra and Upper Hunter.

- In the next 5 years, this investment into new sites and development planning will see the following new developments form part of the Community Care service offering;
- **Kiama:** a new 56-unit Seniors Living community
 - **Penrith:** a new 33-unit Seniors Living Community
 - **Maitland:** redevelopment of the outdated Greenhills Nursing home into a new 159-bed service
 - **Castle Cove:** a 76-unit Seniors Living community (existing village acquired in July 2020)
 - **Marrickville:** a new 54-unit affordable housing community (the first of its type in the area)
 - **Southern Highlands:** expansion of Venues into new wilderness and outdoor education initiatives
 - **Thirroul:** redevelopment of the existing services into a new 29-unit Seniors Living community and 60-bed residential care service
 - **Pendle Hill:** redevelopment of the entire site into a new integrating community
 - **Leppington:** development of a new integrated community

Scott Griffiths
Chief Operating Officer



MINUTES OF 2020 AGM

Saturday 14 November, 2020 – 11.02am
The Tops Conference Centre, Stanwell Tops NSW
& Online Zoom Conferencing

WELCOME (11:02 am)

The Conference Executive President Raewyn Williams (Hurstville Church of Christ) opened the meeting and welcomed all to the Annual General Meeting.

FORMAL APOLOGIES

- The following apology was noted:
- Name: Julie Dicker
 - Church: Hurstville Church of Christ
 - Name: Stephen Hicks
 - Church: Hardy’s Bay
 - Name: David Bentley
 - Church: Hurstville Church of Christ

NOTICES OF MOTION ARE VOTED BY A SHOW OF VOTING PADDLES UNLESS NOTED BY BALLOT

Notice of Motion 1
That the minutes of the Annual Conference of Churches of Christ in NSW held 11th May 2019 as printed and circulated in the 2019/20 Annual Reports, be adopted as a true and accurate record of that meeting.

MOVED: Name: Troy Blair
Church: Rivergum

SECONDED: Name: Peter Dalbrum
Church: Katoomba Lighthouse

Motion CARRIED (by majority).

Notice of Motion 2
That the minutes of the Special Meeting of Conference of Churches of Christ in NSW held 28th November 2019 as printed and circulated in the 2019/20 Annual Reports, be adopted as a true and accurate record of that meeting.

MOVED: Name: Stephen Cha
Church: Chapel Sydney

SECONDED: Name: Colin Scott
Church: Pathways Pendle Hill

Motion CARRIED (by majority).

Notice of Motion 3
That the minutes of the Special Meeting of Conference of Churches of Christ in NSW held 24th September 2020 as published and circulated be adopted as a true and accurate record of that meeting.

MOVED: Name: John Morris
Church: Forster-Tuncurry Church of Christ

SECONDED: Name: Gail Reed
Church: Austral Church of Christ

Motion CARRIED.

Notice of Motion 4
“That the Annual Reports 2019/2020 as circulated and printed be adopted.”

MOVED: Name: Kyeng Jin Jang
Church: The Chapel Sydney

SECONDED: Name: Ray Cheal
Church: Telopea Church of Christ

Motion CARRIED (by majority).

Notice of Motion 5
“That pursuant to Clause 27 (d) of the Churches of Christ in NSW Constitution, the annual audit summary for 2019/2020 as published and circulated be adopted.”

MOVED:Name: Stephen Toomey
Church: Hurstville Church of Christ

SECONDED: Name: William van den Berg
Church: Blaxland Church of Christ

Motion CARRIED (by majority).

Notice of Motion 6
That pursuant to Clause 26 of the Churches of Christ in New South Wales Constitution, that the amendment to the Regulations (in the Constitution) made by Conference Executive set out in the Schedule below, be confirmed.

SCHEDULE
‘That a new regulation be added as REGULATION (r) as follows:

“(r) For the purpose of the conduct of any meeting of Conference

Convened, Conference Executive may establish facilities and arrangements using any technology that gives the

MINUTES OF 2020 AGM

delegates of the Conference Churches as a whole a reasonable opportunity to participate in any meeting of Conference Convened.” ‘

MOVED: Name: Stephen Toomey
Church: Hurstville Church of Christ

SECONDED: Name: John Dicker
Church: Hurstville Church of Christ

Motion CARRIED (by majority).

Notice of Motion 7
That pursuant to Clause 26 of the Churches of Christ in New South Wales Constitution, that the amendment to the Regulations (in the Constitution) made by Conference Executive set out in the Schedule below, be confirmed.

SCHEDULE
‘That REGULATION (h)(ii) be amended to read as follows:

“(h)(ii) A Nomination for election must be made and endorsed by two members of a Conference Church who hold senior leadership positions with that Conference Church.” ‘

MOVED: Name: William van den Berg
Church: Blaxland Church of Christ

SECONDED: Name: Leon Munro
Church: Kingsway Church of Christ

Motion CARRIED (by majority).

Notice of Motion 8
That pursuant to Clause 26 of the Churches of Christ in New South Wales Constitution, that the amendment to the Regulations (in the Constitution) made by Conference Executive set out in the Schedule below, be confirmed.

SCHEDULE
‘That REGULATION (h)(iii) be amended to read as follows:

“(h)(iii) A Nomination must be lodged with the Conference Executive not later than one month before the relevant Conference Convened (the “Closing Date”).”

MOVED: Name: Leon Munro
Church: Kingsway Church of Christ

SECONDED: Name: John Morris
Church: Forster-Tuncurry Church of Christ

Motion CARRIED (by majority).
NOTICES OF MOTION VOTED BY BALLOT PAPER

Mr. John Latta of Tweed Heads Church of Christ was the Returning Officer for the voting required by ballot.

Notice of Motion 9 (By ballot paper)
“That pursuant to Clauses 8, 12 and 16 of the Churches of Christ in New South Wales Constitution, Darren Farrell be appointed to the position of “Executive Ministry Director” (named as Ministry Co-ordinator in the Constitution) on the recommendation of Conference Executive for a 5-year term.”

Result: ELECTED by majority.

Notice of Motion 10 (By ballot paper)
“That pursuant to Clauses 8 and 9 of the Churches of Christ in New South Wales Constitution, Victor Tee from Kingsford Church of Christ be appointed Conference President for the Conference Year commencing 14th November 2020”.

Result: ELECTED by majority.

Notice of Motion 11 (By ballot paper)
“That pursuant to Clause 9 of the Churches of Christ in NSW South Wales Constitution, the following members

Karen Baker
Simon Brailey
Stephen Cha
Emily Drough
Michael McGarrity
Stephen Toomey
Hannah Ferrari*
*Candidate withdrew after nominations closed be appointed to Conference Executive for the Conference Year commencing 14th November 2020”.

Result: ELECTED by majority.

Notice of Motion 12 (By ballot paper)

“That -Phillip Smith Be appointed to the Property Trust for a nine-year term”.

Returning officer for the meeting is Pastor John Latta from Tweed Heads Church of Christ.

Result: ELECTED by majority.

CLOSE
The business session closed at 12:12 pm in prayer.



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