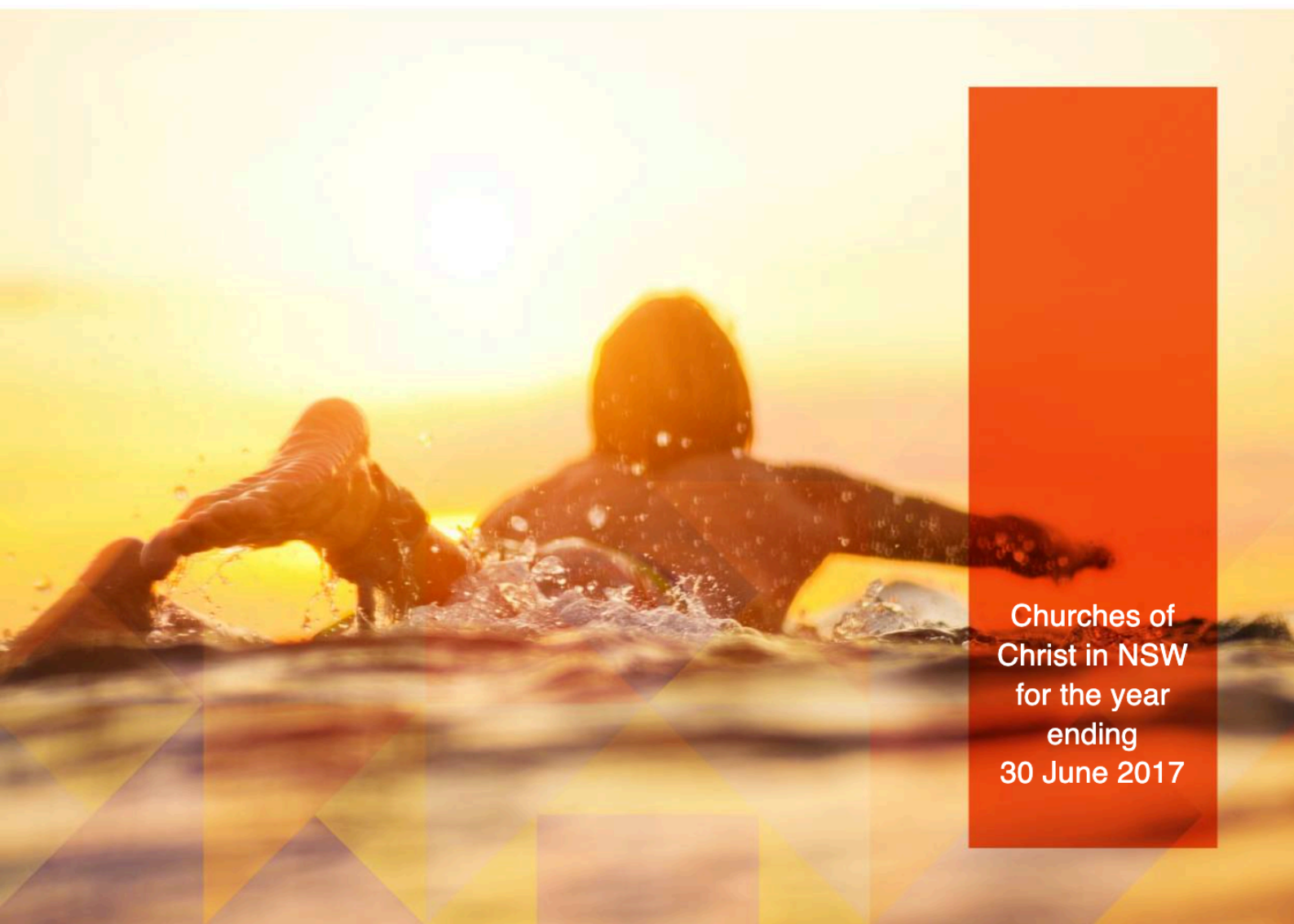


ANNUAL  
REPORT



fresh hope



Churches of  
Christ in NSW  
for the year  
ending  
30 June 2017

“And what do  
you benefit if you  
gain the whole world  
but lose your own  
soul?  
Is anything worth  
more than your  
soul?”

- Matthew 16:26



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# The President & Executive Ministry Director

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**We are delighted to report on the activities and ministries across Fresh Hope for the 2016-17 reporting year.**

Each of our agencies continues to serve individuals and communities across the length and breadth of NSW and the Australian Capital Territory.

We are both humbled and encouraged by the mutuality of ministry and the service of many individuals within our Fresh Hope family network. Our mission remains the same: transforming communities and lives with fresh hope.

The agencies overseen by Fresh Hope continue to expand and develop. Within the pages of this annual report, you will read the many stories of hope and care, of ministry and mission, of training and equipping and of engagement and service. During the year, we have re-orientated our service to churches in a new mission and ministry agency. This team is committed to value-add to the life and well-being of all our churches through agile, adaptive and adventurous ministry.

We are now in an extraordinary season of development and change. For the last few years we have been exhorting the broader church to be adventurous, to explore new frontiers and to live 'beyond the harbour'. These themes have been profoundly helpful in encouraging the church to explore new paradigms for mission and ministry.

This activity is hard work, because it includes change leadership and most of us tend to prefer what we know, as opposed to the unknown.

We are in unknown territory as a culture and society. For many, the new community posture reflects an adversarial and distrusting orientation towards institutions including church. This posture is both disruptive and disorientating. How we respond rather than react is a critical conversation going forward.

During the reporting year, we set our theme as 'Soul Strength'. This was a deliberate and concerted effort to remind our family that serving Jesus on the frontline is both a joy and a challenge. It is also a quite intentional encouragement – it is impossible to lead well on the front line unless you tend to your soul.

The late Dallas Willard wrote: 'Our soul is like a stream of water, which gives strength, direction and harmony to every area of our life. When that stream is as it should be, we are constantly refreshed and exuberant in all we do, because our soul itself is then profusely rooted in the vastness of God and his kingdom, including nature; and all else within us is enlivened and directed by that stream'.

As a part of the soul strength message, we have also suggested four orientations for leaders that are a helpful framework for Christian faith and ministry.

These include:

- / Pursuing God;
- / Slowing our speed;
- / Proactive differentiation; and
- / Innovative agility.

Space precludes unpacking these here, suffice to say that in a society that is increasingly anxious, Christian leaders need to be Christ-centric and therefore practice the disciplines of pursuit with God and personal discernment as precursors to ministry activity.

## WHAT OF OUR FUTURE?

'How does a church on an aisle slide over to a window seat? How does a church consistently engage in strength training rather than bodybuilding? How does a church become the kind of church that the community would not just miss, were it to leave, but would fight to have it stay? How does a church become both internally strong and externally focussed? How does a church become the best church for the community?

The answers to these questions are found not in programs but in paradigms.'

Our paradigms or world-views are shaped by our experiences, our exposure to new ideas, and our capacity to practice spiritual and thought leadership. For the future of our churches to prevail, we must re-imagine a future where church becomes irresistible to the community.

To be irresistible means we are salt and light to a culture that has lost its way. While holding to our central Christian beliefs unswervingly, we must navigate contextual mission with passion and clarity.

The Fresh Hope team takes its modus operandi from Paul's missionary journey in Acts 20:2:

**'Travelling from one location to another, he gave constant encouragement, lifting their spirits and charging them with fresh hope.'**

We profoundly believe in this message.

On a more personal note, we'd like to sincerely thank Conference Executive, our staff and our churches for the privilege of leading during this season. Likewise, we affirm and honour the many individuals who generously give time and energy to our agency boards and sub-committees of Conference.

It has been both a responsibility and joy to steward the broader resources of Conference to assist our mission going forward.

Dr Andrew Ball  
Executive Ministry Director

Troy Blair  
Conference President



# Leadership Development

## Adventure | Impart | Impact | Recharge

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### Our Navigate and Recharge programs have expanded in the past year.

Our Navigate Adventure group was led by Jessie and Abigail Skelly and saw transformational growth throughout the year. Laura Payne co-led the group as they completed their extreme trek in Vietnam.

Our Impart group was the first group to take up the extreme challenge of a 24-hour silence and solitude retreat on a 400-hectare property. The challenge to be totally “unplugged” was embraced by all who participated. Some of the students reported this being a significant step in their learning, to be content in their own skin and to listen to the still voice of Abba Father.

The Impact year with a group of 7 trainee missionaries was a tough year. There were many challenges, both intentional and unintentional. The following verses from Matthew 5 rang true for many of the students:

**“You’re blessed when you’re at the end of your rope. With less of you there is more of God and his rule. You’re blessed when you feel you’ve lost what is most dear to you. Only then can you be embraced by the One most dear to you.”**

- Matthew 5:3-4 (MSG)

The outcome of the Impact year has been a deeper surrendering to the Lordship of Christ and a quest to discover opportunities to make a kingdom difference.

Our pioneer 50+ group, Recharge, reported being very challenged by their formation readings and the encounters from their community and group journey. The week of connection with all the other Navigate groups immersed by learning to live in the freedom of Christ has proved to be a big step in their transformation to live wholeheartedly in the season ahead.

Summer and Winter schools have become places where temporary biblical community is expressed passionately. The teaching, emotional and spiritual encounters have broken down the barriers of race, age and gender differences as we encounter kingdom family together.

Many of our students are wrestling with the call of God in their lives to make a kingdom difference. Some are seeking further training to be equipped to be kingdom agents and to give an account of the faith that is growing within them.

John Crowther  
Director | Leadership Development



A



A - Navigate in Vietnam 2016

B - Summer School 2017

C - Navigate in Vietnam 2016

D - Recharge 2017





The reward  
for trusting Him  
will be the salvation  
of your souls.

- 1 Peter 1:9





“So here’s what I want you to do, God helping you: Take your everyday, ordinary life - your sleeping, eating, going-to-work, and walking-around life - and place it before God as an offering. Embracing what God does for you is the best thing you can do for Him.

Don’t become so well-adjusted to your culture that you fit into it without even thinking. Instead, fix your attention on God. You’ll be changed from the inside out.”

- Romans 12:1-2 (The Message)

# Leadership Development

## Spiritual Mentoring

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**Spiritual Mentoring is an intentional relationship that fosters spiritual growth in another person. Discipleship is its core focus.**

The relationship focuses on the spiritual invitations heard from God in the life of the one who seeks a deepening relationship with God. Therefore, Spiritual Mentoring is a lifelong practice. Spiritual Mentoring is also about cultivating postures and practices that create space to engage more with God. The two-pronged strength of the program is to invite spiritual deepening in the mentor's heart in readiness to engage with others as well as provide further rigour in deep listening and discernment skills. The program is enriched by doing spiritual formation in community with others. In 2016-2017, eight different cohorts ran, involving 13 different training events across the year.

### A SPIKE IN GENERAL INTAKES

During this financial year, an unprecedented number of applications were received for Spiritual Mentoring cohorts. After discernment and prayer, it was decided to stagger-start two new intakes: a March intake and a June intake.

### SPECIALISED CHAPLAINS INTAKE

The chaplains training program has been found to be a spiritual enrichment experience for its participants,

strengthening their resilience and heart for God. It also cross-trains them in complementary skilling for their roles as carers and carriers of the kind heart of Christ to those with whom they work.

### TWO ADVANCED PROGRAMS RUNNING

Two Advanced Spiritual Mentoring cohorts are in motion during this period. The Advanced program format is significantly different in process and structure to the initial training. The Advanced cohorts hone group leadership in supervision practice, policy and performance. Each participant submits and leads contemplative group practices. Anne Simpson has been a wonderful asset as co-facilitator in the second intake and shares her advanced level skilling with participants.

### CONTINUING AND CONCLUDING COHORTS

Cohort G and the Northern Rivers Leadership cohort both came to their conclusions during this period. The Northern Rivers cohort leaders are preparing to share their training with other leaders in their congregation in the art of mentoring and building fellowship.

Sue Whiteley  
Facilitator | Spiritual Mentoring





A



B



C

A - Spiritual Mentoring Chaplains Cohort  
B - Spiritual Mentoring Cohort I  
C - Spiritual Mentoring Cohort X



# Leadership Development Fresh Hope Young Adults + Fresh Hope Youth



Steve Hodgson  
Young Adult Catalyst

The last year has been one of transition and change in Fresh Hope Youth and Young Adults. Over the past seven years I have had the privilege of overseeing the network of youth and young adult ministries in Fresh Hope on a part-time basis. Our desire is to see healthy disciple-making communities of youth and young adults across all churches in NSW. And we hope to see every church raising and releasing spiritual leaders and kingdom influencers of the next generation.

Throughout the past seven years the scope of this role has increased substantially. At the end of 2016, Fresh Hope made the decision to restructure the Fresh Hope Youth and Young Adult role by creating two part-time positions to allow for further development and expansion. It has been exciting to welcome Charlie Burke to the team as he now oversees mission and ministry to high schoolers. It's also been refreshing and challenging for me to step into a new role helping to catalyse mission and ministry among young adults as well as work closely with our NAVIGATE cohorts.

Here are a few of the highlights for Fresh Hope Youth and Young Adults from the past 12 months.

## UPRISING JULY 2016 - MOVE

Uprising 2016 was a powerful week of equipping senior high students to live engaged in the Kingdom of God wherever they are.

As this camp has evolved over the past 26 years, we saw the need to develop streams of training for young leaders to help them grow each year. In 2016, we launched two streams - Proclaim and Multiply. It's been incredible to see young leaders capturing a vision that God can use them to share their faith, to change lives and to be on mission in their schools, churches, communities and even families. The stream resources are available in PDF format which can be requested from the Fresh Hope Resource office.

## GLORIOUS DUST CONFERENCE PRAXIS MINI CONFERENCE

After four years of not running any Young Adult specific events, we launched 'Glorious Dust', a one-day conference in August 2016. We saw over 160 young adults come together in Sydney's CBD for an inspiring and challenging day. A huge thank you to Brad Plush, Neridah Morris, Jessie Skelly, Charlie Burke, Glenn Newton and Adrian Tam for helping to shape the vision and implement the conference.

In March 2017 Fresh Hope partnered with Thrive Community Church to run 'PRAXIS' a mini one-day conference featuring Mark Scandrette. Praxis focused on helping young adults apply their faith to their everyday life. We were blessed by the team at Thrive, who took the lead on this event and produced a transformational experience for the 80+ young adults who attended.







# Leadership Development Fresh Hope Young Adults + Fresh Hope Youth



## DRASTIC 2016 - MOSAIC

Drastic continues to be a flagship event for our youth ministries, once again seeing over 320 people from all across NSW come together for five days at The Tops. This year's theme of MOSAIC sought to tell the great story of God's redemptive work - from Creation to Fall to Restoration. As the story unfolded throughout the week we felt a profound sense of God working to draw youth into his great love. Some highlights from the week were the Passover meal followed by a Passion play that drove home the great price Christ paid for our lives. We also had 2 young men baptised in the dam at sunrise, as well as dozens of youth come to know Jesus as their Lord and Saviour.

Charlie Burke  
Youth Catalyst

I have had the enormous pleasure of taking on the role of Youth Ministry Catalyst, standing on the foundations of Steve Hodgson's ministry in our state with youth and young adults. God has been on the move in the last seven years, and Steve has graciously and passionately led the next generation of spiritual leaders in our state. I have had the incredible joy of sitting under Steve's leadership in this time and have been a part of the network that he has helped to create. And I am incredibly excited for what lies ahead. The potential is endless, and the first portion of my tenure has been spent seeking God and developing pre-existing relationships with youth pastors and youth leaders in our state.

As Steve has noted, in addition to connecting, coaching and mentoring youth pastors and leaders in our state, part of the mandate of Fresh Hope Youth is to host outstanding, transformational events.

## FUSE - T4 & T2

FUSE is the Sydney-based night rally of Fresh Hope Youth. This is an incredible opportunity for the Fresh Hope youth ministries of Sydney and beyond to come together and celebrate all that God has been doing throughout the year.

In November 2016 and May 2017, Restore Church (Castle Hill) and Rivergum Community Church (Rouse Hill) held outstanding events, with dozens of young people choosing to publicly follow Jesus for the first time. There is something incredibly powerful about youth ministries coming together to celebrate Jesus. God shows up, the word of God is preached and transformation happens! These are great highlights of the calendar year.

## YOUTH MINISTRY MASTERCLASS

Another one of the strategic priorities of Youth Vision is the resourcing and training of youth pastors and youth leaders for ministry in our state. In late June, we were able to host our first Youth Ministry Masterclass for several years. Australian youth ministry 'guru' Tim Hawkins powerfully shared lessons from his wisdom about what it means to do ministry and make disciples among young people. For all in attendance this was a challenging and encouraging night.





























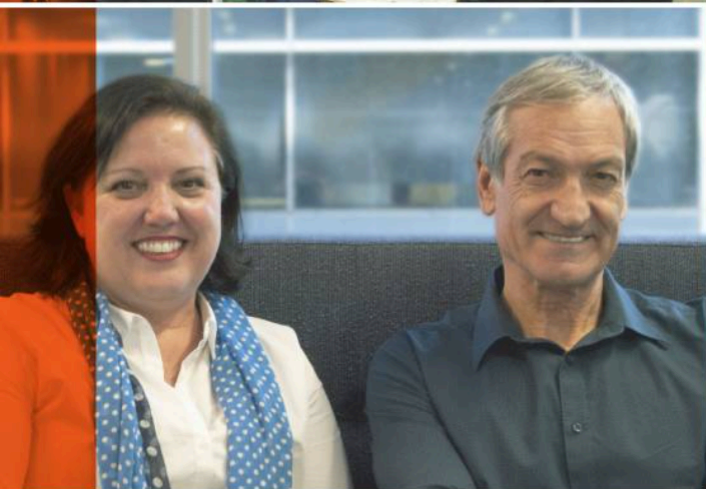














































# Financial Report

## Financial Performance



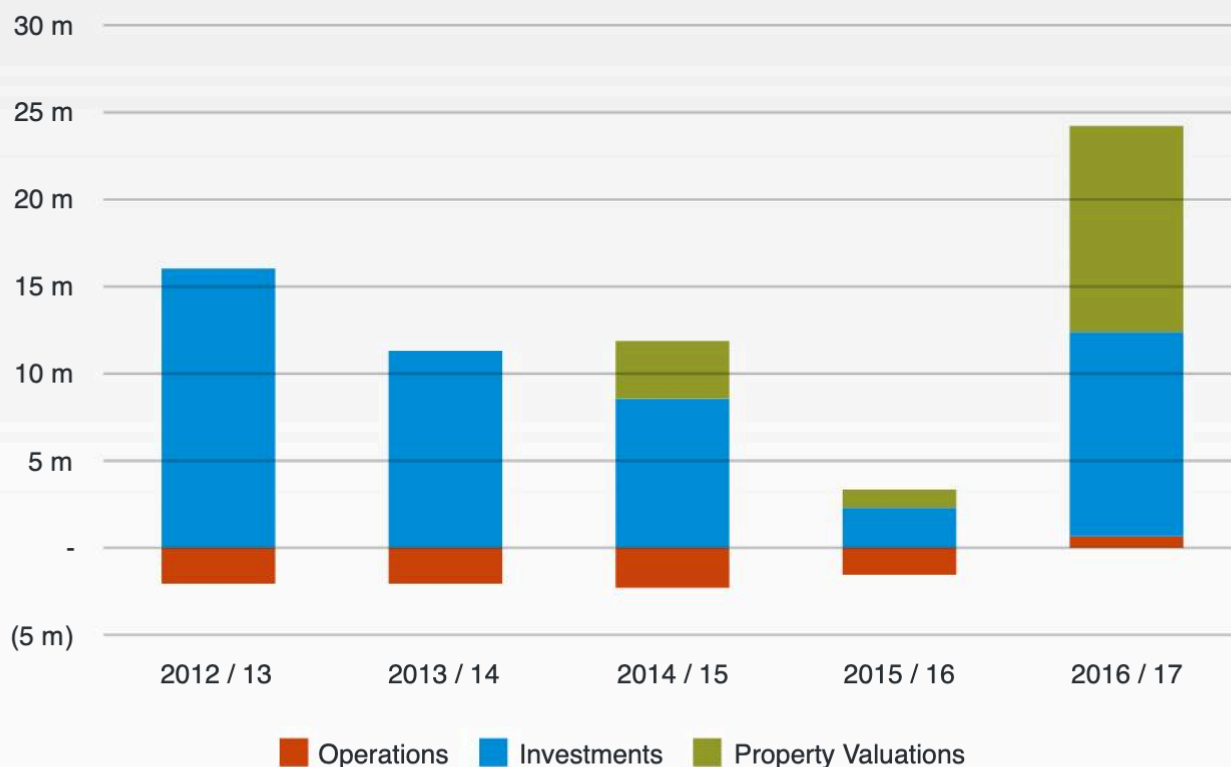
### FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

The financial result for the year ending 30 June 2017 was a total surplus of \$24.3 million, which was well in excess of the surplus from the previous financial year of \$2.1 million. Our operational financial performance, excluding revenue from investment returns and asset revaluations, was \$750k, which was also an increase from the previous year of \$2.5 million.

There were many operational improvements implemented throughout the year that contributed the result for FY17, mainly through:

- Improvements in the funding process for our residential aged care services;
- Increased pricing in line with market standards for our home care aged services;
- A reduction in workers compensation insurance premiums through reduced claims and more effective return to work programs.

#### HISTORICAL / FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE



# Financial Report

## Financial Performance / Investments

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Some of the higher than expected increases in expenditure from FY16 to FY17 were seen in the areas of staff costs, care services and administration. The recent changes to consumer choice in the home care industry increased our costs in providing home care services. However, the increase in revenue from the introduction of new pricing on 1 July 2016 outweighed the cost impact from the consumer choices legislation.

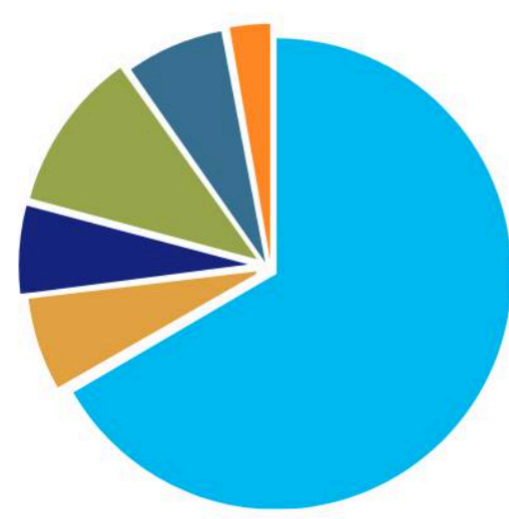
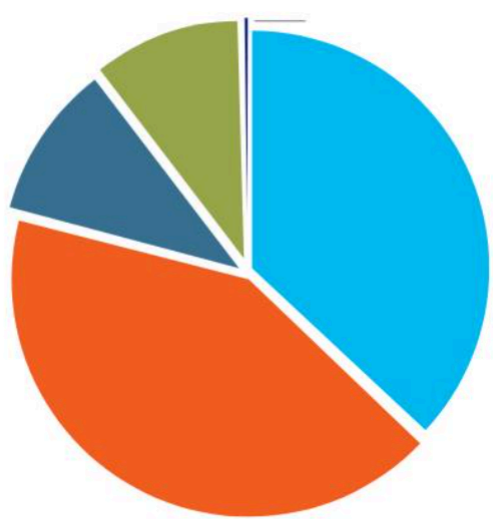
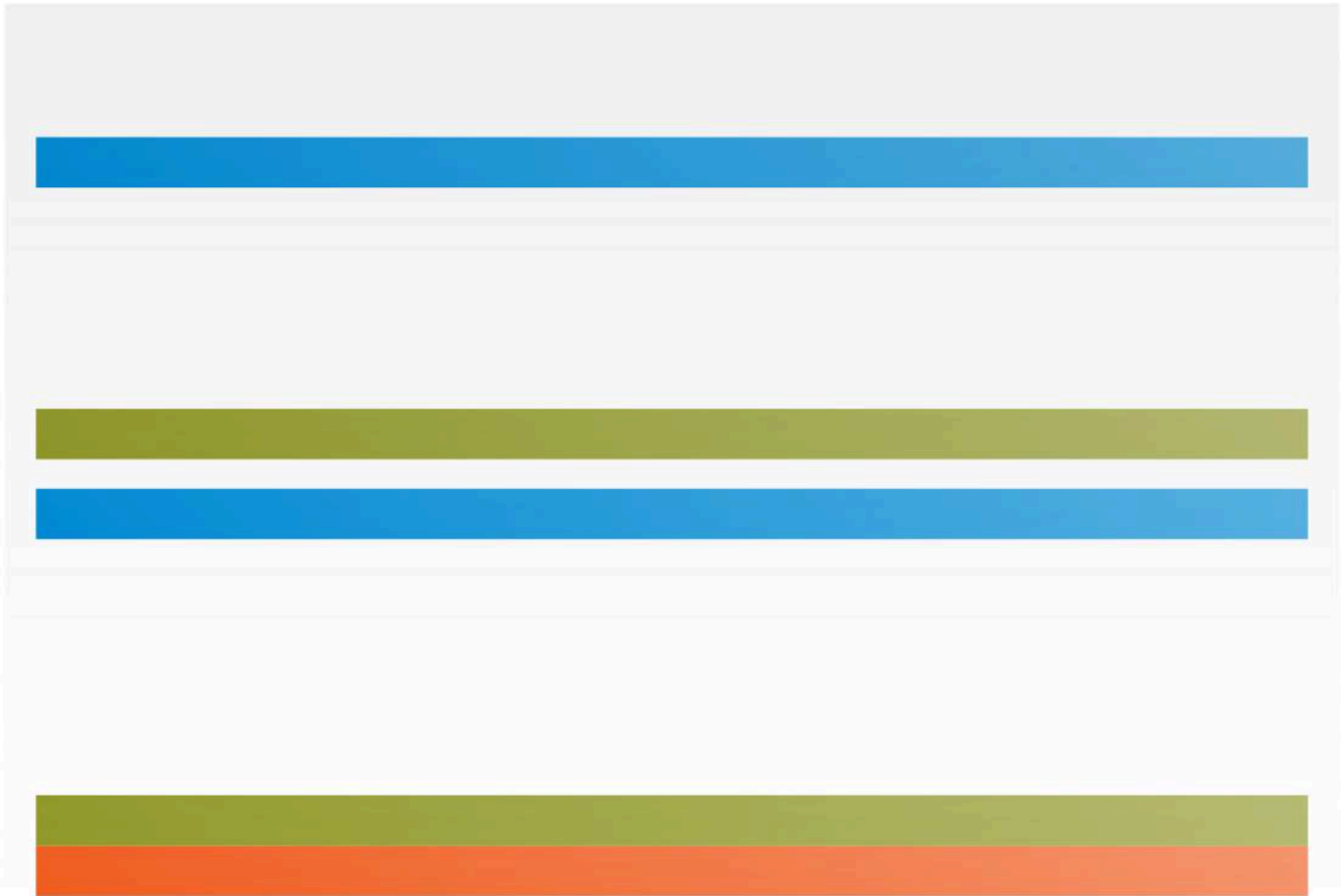
Fresh Hope Group Operations was established in FY17 to increase capability for all Fresh Hope Agencies in enterprise governance, financial reporting, regulatory compliance, operational financial management, enterprise risk and insurance, information and communication technology (ICT), procurement / asset management and human resources.

The establishment of this team has seen an increase in administration costs in FY17 with the financial and operational benefits to be realised in FY18/19. Improvements in financial and operational efficiency have already commenced through competitive contracting (procurement), ICT infrastructure upgrades, reduction in utilisation of recruitment agencies (through improved internal capability), improved board reporting, and competitive insurance premium renewals, to name but a few.

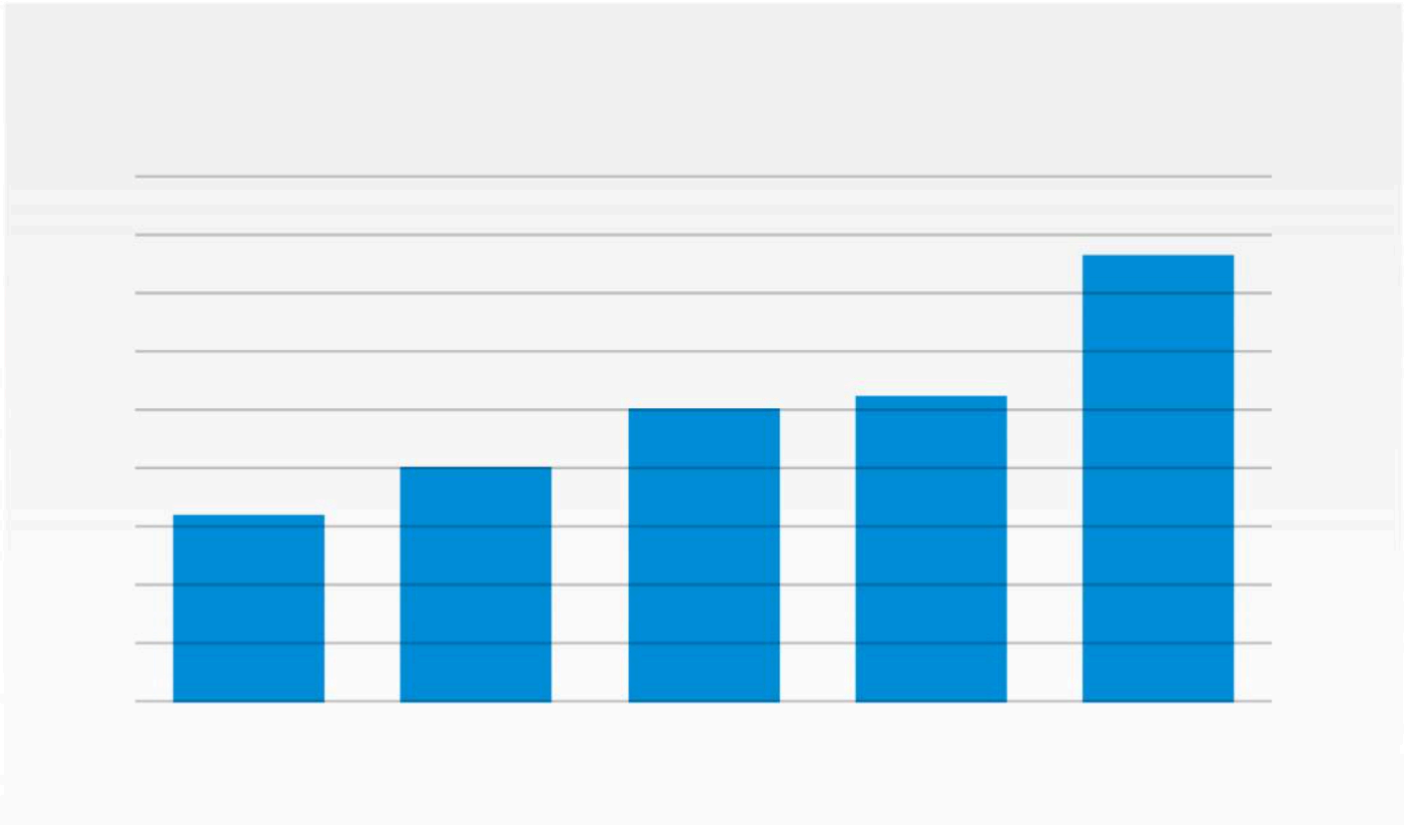
### INVESTMENTS

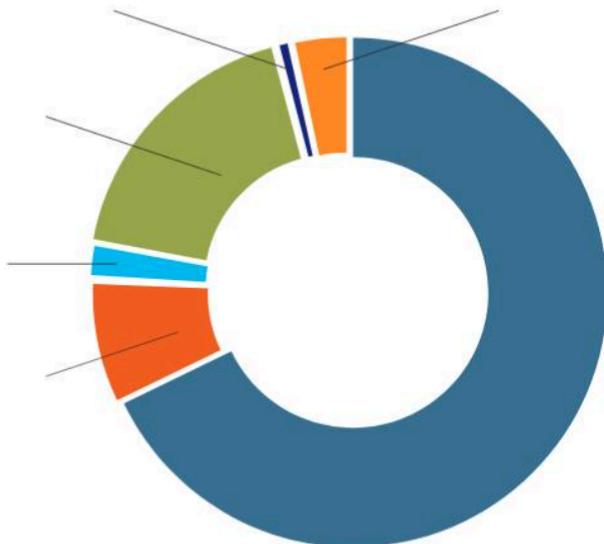
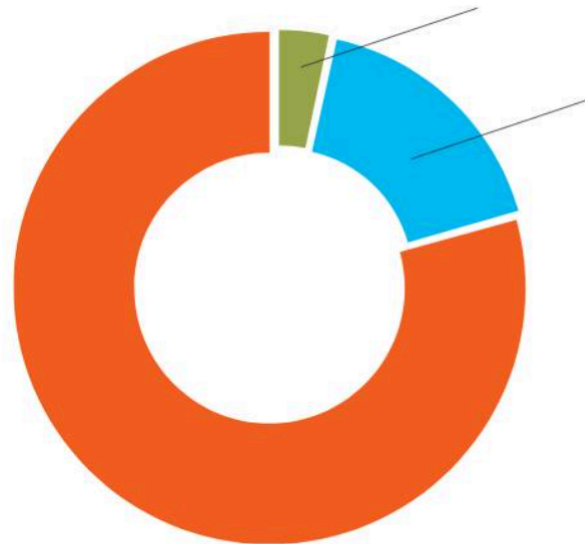
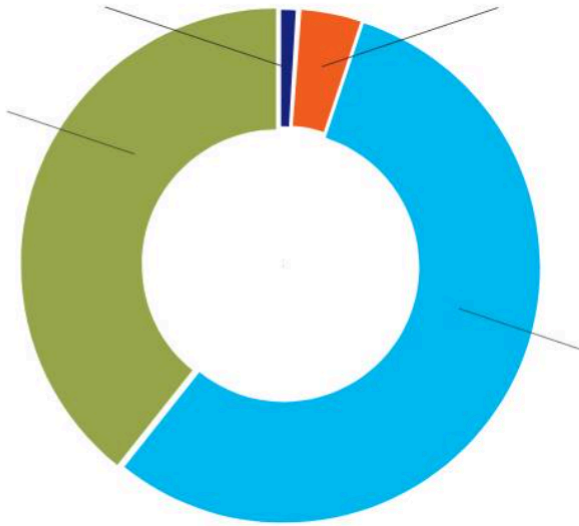
Revenue from our investments portfolio through market value movements, dividends and interest payments made up approximately 48% of our total surplus for FY17. This is a particularly strong result given our investments charter dictates a conservative investment strategy whereby 55% of our entire portfolio is invested in cash or fixed interest products, which have a relatively low risk profile.

The average consolidated return on investments for FY17 was 8.6%, with individual returns for each Fresh Hope agency delivering similar returns. Our investment policy and governance, in partnership with our current wealth management advisers, has been very effective in delivering strong consistent returns over the past 18 months.













3. That the car component remains the same at \$176 per week.

4. Superannuation to remain at 11.00% of remuneration package.”

MOVED: Glyn Williams, Castle Hill Community Church (also known as Restore Church)

SECONDED: Sandy Timbrell, Telopea Church of Christ

Motion CARRIED by majority.

It is noted, the recommended remuneration is benchmarked with other denominations for salaries for ministers of religion.

#### Notice of Motion 5

“That the Constitution of the Conference of Churches of Christ in New South Wales be amended by the addition of a Clause 30 as follows:

“30. Indemnity of Identified Persons

(a) In subclauses (b) to (g):

(i) “Agency” means without limitation each and all of Conference Executive, each Conference Auxiliary, Conference Ministry, Ministry Team, Specified Ministry Team and any other committee or organisation referred to in the Act of this Constitution (however known or styled) and any group of persons, committee or organisation appointed or formed by Conference, Conference Executive, or under this Constitution;

(ii) “Conference Body” means Conference and each and every Agency;

(iii) “Identified Person” means each and every person:

(A) who is employed by a Conference Body;

(B) who undertakes voluntary work for, or who provides services on a voluntary basis to, a Conference Body; or

(C) who is a member of any board or committee (or similar group) of a Conference Body.

(b) Each Identified Person is, to the maximum extent permitted by law, indemnified out of the property of the relevant Conference Body against any liability incurred by the Identified Person arising out of the Identified Person undertaking any activity or role as described in any of subclauses (A), (B) and (C) of subclause (a)(iii) [each a “Role”] except to the extent the liability arises out of any of the following:

(i) a liability owed to the relevant Conference Body that arose out of conduct which was undertaken intentionally and was not undertaken in good faith; and/or

(ii) a liability arising out of any criminal offence or dishonest action or omission.

This clause does not apply to a liability for legal costs.

(c) Each Identified Person is, to the maximum extent permitted by law, indemnified out of the property of the relevant Conference Body against any

# Minutes of Annual Conference

Saturday 13 May, 2017 - 11:30am

The Tops Conference Centre, Stanwell Tops NSW

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liability for legal costs the Identified Person may incur as an Identified Person arising out of the Identified Person undertaking any Role except to the extent the liability is a liability for legal costs incurred in defending an action for a liability incurred as an Identified Person where the costs are incurred:

(i) in defending or resisting legal proceedings in which the outcome of the proceedings is that the Identified Person is found to have a liability, for which they could not be indemnified under subclause (b); and/or

(ii) in defending or resisting legal proceedings in which the outcome of the proceedings is that the Identified Person is found guilty of a crime.

(d) Where any Identified Person is the subject of any legal proceedings arising out of the Identified Person undertaking a Role, the relevant Conference Body may advance funds to that person to assist the Identified Person to defend any such proceedings provided appropriate terms as to the repayment of any funds so advanced are agreed.

(e) Where any Conference Body does not have sufficient financial resources to meet any indemnity under this clause 30 Conference Executive may advance to the Conference Body, sufficient funds to enable the Conference Body to meet the indemnity.

(f) For the purposes of subclause (c) the “outcome of the proceedings” is the outcome of the proceedings and any appeal in relation to the proceedings.

(g) Subclause (b) and subclause (c) are separate and independent indemnities and one is not to be read down by reference to the other.”

MOVED: Graham Reed, Northside Community Church

SECONDED: Willy Van Den Berg, Lower Blue Mountains Church of Christ (also known as Blaxland Church of Christ)

Motion CARRIED by majority.

The President noted the addition of this clause to the constitution provides clarity and indemnification protection to all who serve on Fresh Hope boards.

## NOTICES OF MOTION VOTED BY BALLOT PAPER

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

The Executive Ministry Director thanked James Hogan who has diligently served as returning officer over the past number of years and those in the assembly responded with clapping for this service.

## Notice of Motion 5 (By ballot paper)

“That Troy Blair be reappointed to the position of Conference President for the Conference year 2017/2018.”

(By ballot paper)

Result: ELECTED by majority.











fresh hope

