



**churches
of Christ**
in NSW & ACT
Unity. Restoration. Life.

ANNUAL REPORT



2022 -23



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Welcome

from the Conference President

With each passing year, I am becoming more aware of the call to die to myself, so that Christ may live, and heed the words of John the Baptist.

"He must become greater and greater, and I must become less and less." John 3:30 (New Living Translation)

This rings true in my role on Conference Executive, where we are called to put aside our own egos and agendas so that, under the direction of God, we honour Christ and serve the churches of Christ in NSW & ACT.

I believe this also rings true for our churches, our congregations, our leaders, and our properties. **It will require a move of God, and a willingness on our part to die to our own agendas, so that Christ's agenda can be greater.**

Jesus, in speaking about his own life, says: "I tell you the truth, unless a kernel of wheat is planted in the soil and dies, it remains alone. But its death will produce many new kernels – a plentiful harvest of new lives." John 12:24 (NLT)

In this season, are we willing to follow Jesus' example and die to self, our hopes, our dreams, our agendas, and perhaps prepare the soil, and plant the seeds for future generations to reap a plentiful harvest of new lives?

Conference Executive, in its role to oversee the network, alongside the practical service of the Network Resource Team (NRT), led by Executive Ministry Director, Daz Farrell, has been witness in this past year to both the challenges and the joys of a network focused on Unity, Restoration and Life.

As representatives of Conference Convened, Conference Executive oversee the ministries designed to serve the whole, which you will read about in this annual report.

Over the past year we have overseen the development, approval and implementation of policies and protocols that serve the network, the local church, and the leaders.



Sabbatical Policy

Perhaps the most important has been the recommendation of a sabbatical policy for ministers and resources to make this a reality for local churches to implement.



Professional Conduct Protocols

Commensurate with the sabbatical policy that has been the work to update the "Code of Conduct" for ministering persons, which has brought about the "Professional Conduct Protocols", designed to provide the accountability expected from our ministering persons.



Ethics & Theology and Risk committees

This year, Conference Executive has been setting up various sub-committees, providing increased engagement from the network in this work of oversight. Along with the already established Grants Assessment Committee, it has been exciting to see participation in newly formed Ethics & Theology and Risk committees.

On a personal note, I would like to thank Conference Convened, members of Conference Executive, the Executive Ministry Director, the Network Resource Team, the Conference ministries, Kingsford Church of Christ, and my wife for your support, trust, and prayers as Conference President over the past three years.

Please join me in welcoming the incoming Conference Executive President. I ask that you show them the same level of support and prayers.



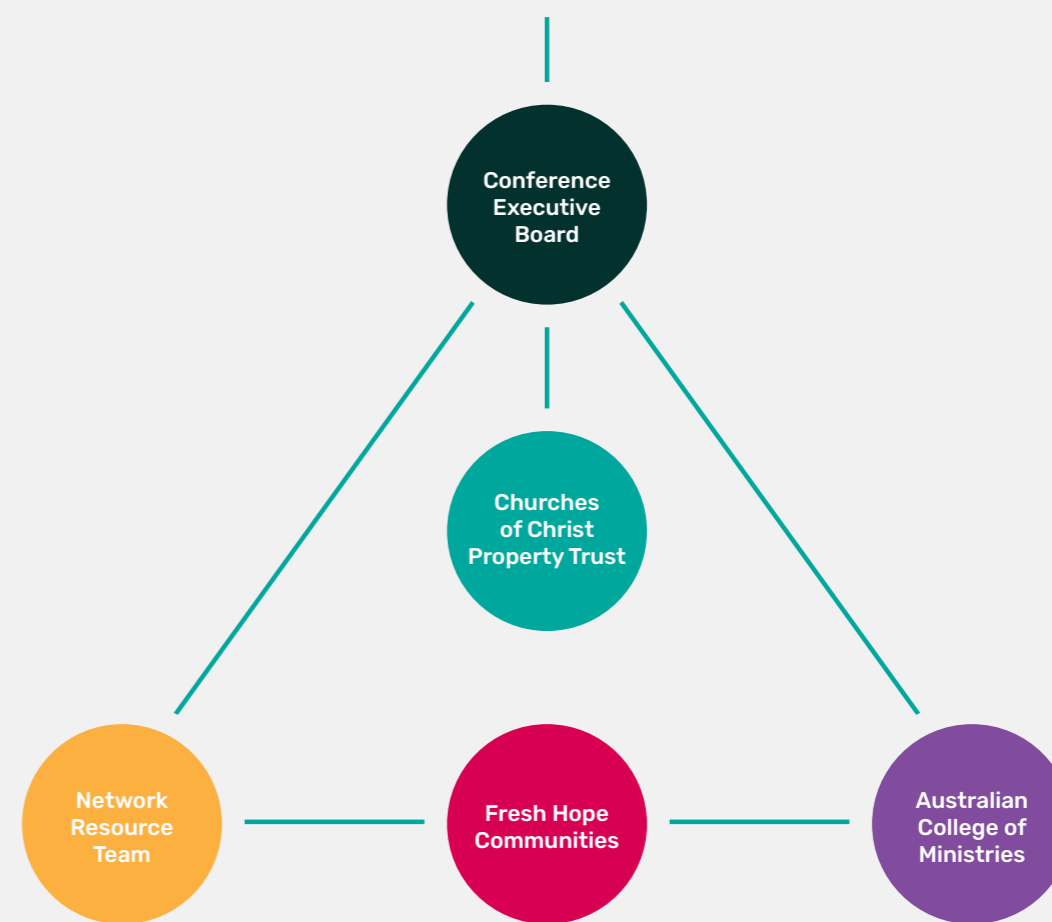
Victor Tee

Conference Executive President
Senior Minister – Kingsford Church of Christ

Our network

Unity. Restoration. Life

churches of Christ in NSW & ACT



Churches of Christ Property Trust

Holds property in trust and provides low-cost loans and grants to churches.



Fresh Hope Communities

Exists to create spaces that cultivate belonging and places that feel like home.



Network Resource Team

Supports and resources our network of churches, based in Rhodes.



Australian College of Ministries

Provides flexible online study option to equip Christians in their local church and workplace.

Witnessing presence

from the Executive Ministry Director

It would be almost too easy to move on from acknowledging the difficulty we have communally experienced over the last few years and are only now, relatively speaking, emerging from.

There are lingering challenges, ongoing change, and traumas that are still being attended to: sickness, loss, disconnection, and changes in our habituated ways of being.

As we share in this fellowship of suffering and ongoingly discover all the ways to abide in and express Jesus' loving presence in this present context, **I say with deep thankfulness to God a big 'thank you' to all of you who lead and participate in churches of Christ in NSW & ACT. Thank you for your faithfulness and perseverance.**

There truly are an amazing array of folks who serve in our network. I wish you could see it from the balcony view the NSW state team has. This team, called the Network Resource Team, has the regular privilege of witnessing to this experience of amazing people through their presence among our network of churches, communities, and ministries.



...presence with God, who is infinitely 'presencing' himself to us, and presence with each other.



You hear stories and witness works of love, care, hope and innovation from every sphere of life and you feel that the Kingdom is being 'presenced' through the 4000 or so people who call churches of Christ home. This priesthood of all believers has more stories of Kingdom impact than can be captured; some will follow in this report, and I hope you are encouraged.

What has also been beautiful to witness over this last year is the increase of churches sharing in life, mission, and ministry with each other - particularly through the various regions of our state. Some COVID Zoom groups still meet, some churches are adopting others, some sharing preachers, some buildings, some assisting in navigating conflict, some in prayer and missional activities. **I am always drawn to the clarity of priorities in times of trial. Presence stands out as high on the list: presence with God, who is infinitely 'presencing' himself to us, and presence with each other.**

The reconnections between Churches of Christ nationally and globally have also been a highlight for this year. We had Churches of Christ friends from around the nation, from New Zealand and the USA join us for Collective 2022 as we discussed being together at the edge. It was such a challenge to resist the default and have only one keynote talk. But the idea from Jack Reese, our keynote speaker, was to be present among us; to be less a sage on the stage and more a guide on the side. He encouraged me with the many conversations he had.

Challenges do lay before us. These have been named and nuanced many times in other spaces, but here I want to highlight a priority response to these challenges that I have been and will continue to champion among us. Sabbath. Sabbaticals. Rest. This mode of being is all about presence. To God. To self. To others. To creation. And there exists now a resource hub on our website for our churches and leaders to access, to shape and fund sabbaticals for those leading in these times.

As we move from doing to being, from having to beholding, I do pray we witness the works of God that he alone is and can do. And in our response of worshipful and watchful waiting, all glory abounds to him, the builder of his church!



Daz Farrell
Executive Ministry Director

Healthy leaders

Christ-like leaders

It is not surprising to us that in the modern Western Protestant church, the health of the church has a direct correlation to the health of the leader.

For this reason, Conference Executive has made decisions around resourcing, supporting and equipping the health of our leaders - the ministers who lead, feed and serve our local churches across NSW and ACT.

The latter part of 2022 saw Kym Dixon holding this space for the network, with the view that a small team would be put into place as the new year progressed. The role, approved by Conference Executive, of Leader Health - Culture and Development was assigned in March 2023, so now there is a team of two to serve and support our leaders.



In the past year we have engaged in visitations, offered online gatherings and seminars, curated places of connection and input such as Collective and Pilgrimage, provision of resources such as the Sabbatical Hub, connecting ministers to one another throughout the network, and inviting ministers to engage with other ministers and ministries from the wider church community.

With the landscape of the church shifting in this post-COVID age, with the Australian church entering its eighth decade of decline, with the pipeline of young people desiring to enter local church ministry diminishing, with the regular headlines of 'noteworthy' ministers falling from grace and disqualifying themselves from holding a ministry position, one could be excused for believing that the future of the church is in jeopardy.

BUT - Jesus is building his church and he declared that even the gates of hades will not overcome it (Matthew 16:18).



Healthy leaders contribute to healthy churches. Healthy churches will form a healthy network. This is our desire: to see our leaders living in such a way that their following of Jesus and their Christ-likeness overflows into their leadership and influence in the church.

We desire to see the church thriving in our cities and towns. We desire to see the kingdom of God displayed and demonstrated by the church for the sake of our families, friends, neighbourhoods and communities. This is our prayer. This is our work together. We pray together: Jesus - lead the way!



Andrew McInnes
Leader Health - Culture and Development

Jesus is building his church and he declared that even the gates of hades will not overcome it. [Matthew 16:18]

Healthy churches

preparing the church for Jesus

At a leaders Zoom this year, Jack Reese asked us to “think of church as ‘a caravan’, and less as a grocery store.”

The paradox wasn't lost on me in terms of our history; Albert Griffin's grocery store was the inception of the church finding a new way of being together. Yet, in this present moment, Reese's insight invites us to 'unhook' from our more present commodified ontology, creating the image of a church on the road, finding its way at the edge and travelling light. **Caravan 'rings' of the journey of faith Abraham made to live in the land of promise: "... living in tents with Isaac and Jacob, heirs with him of the same promise." (Hebrews 11:9 ESV)**

To tabernacle is a risky invitation in this season as we are often seeking permanence. Yet everything is shifting. Churches are experiencing turbulence, but there is a deep abiding that holds us in this season. Ronald Rolheiser reminds us that our depth is born out of suffering. Our 'grocery store' image of church leaves us wanting. We are invited to pick up our few belongings - the things that are worth packing for the journey - and reimagine what it means to tabernacle amongst our neighbourhoods.

I've been drawn to Richard Carter's reimagining (which is actually a very old posture of the church), that we are not to be driven "... to do more, but to actually be stiller. The need for monastic values ... for sacred space, for people to come and replenish tired, stressful or simply busy lives. To provide a space for silence. To become an oasis of the Spirit. Not simply to be managers organising resources and events, but those who seek God: to be men and women of contemplation and prayer, who know their utter dependence on God's grace; those who believe that God is incarnated in our lives and whose vocation is to make a place and a space for that presence. **The good news is that we simply prepare the space for God to be with us.**"

I have had the pleasure of visiting our churches, sojourning with leaders, engaging with elders and facilitating beautiful and difficult conversations. The rest of this report speaks to the operationalising of the church health strategy, but it is perhaps just the in-between work. The real work is sitting with the dissonance, companioning the anxiety, and making room for the Christ who is within each of us, as we long to seek first his Kingdom and righteousness. It is all grace, and I am truly grateful to be supporting churches in this season. We have and are journeying with churches as they choose to disband. Each church has unique needs and challenges in this work.



Affiliation

- Two provisionally-affiliated churches affiliating this year with 3-4 more in the process for next year.
- Development of a clearer affiliation process for provisional churches.
- Development of governance-related documents.



Eldership

- Developed a team of elder-facilitators (led by Lloyd Irwin) to create connection and ways of equipping elders.
- Hosted two Zooms with over 50 people attending and our first 'Empowering Elders' retreat with 40 Elders from regional and city churches.

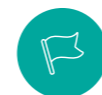


Interim Ministry

- Trained five leaders with TMAA, three of whom are now entering interim work with two of our churches!
- Difficult work of engaging with churches in conflict, journeying with pastors who pastors who have finished up, and companioning, and companioning elders in difficulty.



Some of the work this past year has been attending to pioneering, adoption, revitalisation and legacy.



Pioneering

- We farewelled Jessie Skelly at the end of June, which was bitter-sweet. Jessie has been a great advocate for pioneering initiatives and training, with a lot of engagement within the micro-church Australia conversation.
- Jo Huntington continues to champion pioneering work, identifying and coming alongside many unseen or unknown leaders in (and beyond) our network, helping them discern, finding ways of connection and resource, and raising the bar on our work of prayer in these spaces.
- Emma Gray has continued, in a contractual capacity one day a week, to support and work with Ross and I on church health-related projects, especially as it pertains to the ecosystem strategy.



Property

Our work with the property team has:

- seen the three-year pioneering and property MoU progress significantly with Katoomba Lighthouse;
- navigated the courtship of Campbelltown and Austral;
- worked with Northside and North Turramurra;
- companioned Telopea in their amalgamating process with Epping;
- assisted Living Hope Maitland with the revitalisation of Kurri Kurri;
- seen trips to Tweed, working and supporting the church through its flood journey and new premises;
- seen many road trips to inspect properties, connect with churches and work with elderships.



Indigenous connections

In the midst of all this, Daz and I were able to join Jessie Skelly in Dalby, QLD, to visit 'Bethel' with Aboriginal pastor and leader, Billie Williams - and we got to taste the warraumbal of their community - the 'infinite overflow' of their lives and the big star story. The overflow of a community on the way, more 'caravan' than 'grocery store'. Sharing in lore and ceremony and language and blessing.

I am eternally grateful for this sacred time of being. As our feet were washed at our departure as an act of discipleship and service by one of the brothers, we had uncovered a community of faith attempting to embody restoration: with God, themselves, each other and creation itself. My cup overfloweth.

Perhaps our work is its own tabernacled work? We find ourselves on the road, visiting and giving courage, attending and camping in places for a day here or there, grateful that in this season, we believe our work is with what is right in front of us. Come Lord Jesus.



Nathan Marshall
Church Health and Engagement

Statistics summary

2022



Churches

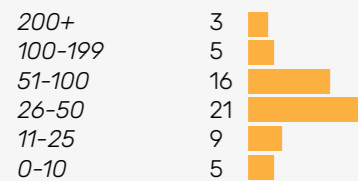
68

churches
(59 Surveys filled)

2

Newly affiliate
churches in 2022

Church size (members)



People

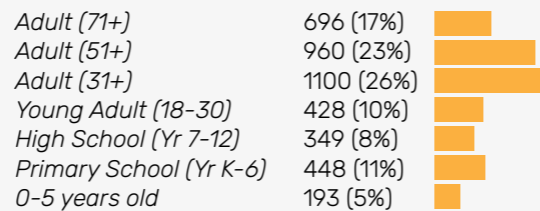
70

baptisms in 2022 (57 in
2021)

42

new Christians in 2022

Church attendance



Total

4,174



Safe Ministries

49

safe ministry teams

53

completed safe
church training in
past 3 years

47

safe ministry policies
in place



Staff

35

Full Time Positions
(30 in 2021)

6

ministry interns

116

Part-Time Positions
(102 in 2021)

353

serving in governance
(elders, board, committee,
council)

168

Endorsed staff

44

authorised SRE Teachers
from 21 churches across
NSW

224

women in leadership
positions (234 in 2021)

19

churches with shared
ministries with another
COFC church

143

non-Caucasian leaders
(137 in 2021)

23

positions to fill in churches



Services in languages other than English

4

Korean

1

Nepalese

2

Mandarin

1

Burmese

2

Indonesian

Safe Ministry

It has been encouraging to see an increasing number of churches engage more fully in ensuring they provide safe environments in their ministry settings.

During 2022/2023, we hosted 15 Creating Safe Spaces workshops. Six of these workshops were with churches that have never hosted a workshop.

As of 30 June 2023, 95.8% of endorsed people are up to date with Creating Safe Spaces training. We continue to work with those who have fallen behind to ensure they are able to get up to speed. We have seen a modest increase in endorsed people engaging in professional supervision during 2022-2023 (57.7%).

In May 2023, we had a soft launch of the Safe Church Health Check (SCHC) – an audit of the adoption and implementation of a church's compliance against their own safe church policies and procedures and the legislated requirements under the Child Safe Scheme. Epping Church of Christ has graciously agreed to complete the first SCHC, and we hope to complete that SCHC a few months into the new reporting period.



Ross Stewart
Safe Ministry Practices Leader



15

creating Safe Spaces
workshops in 22/23



95.8%

of endorsed people
up to date on training



168

endorsed people
currently at
Churches of Christ
in NSW and the ACT

Endorsed leaders in 22/23:

Existing	174 (As of 30 Jun 2022)
New	12
Reinstated	1
Concluded	19

Total **168** (As of 30 Jun 2023)

A flourishing network

marked by love

Our network began more than 170 years ago.

The reimagining of our ethos, affirmed at Collective last November, highlights our desire to remain true to those roots while continuing to work them out in a way that leads to life among our churches in this generation.

The vision of a flourishing network of churches of Christ in NSW & ACT has been at the heart of the Network Resource Team as it works alongside leaders and churches. This flourishing looks like a network that is growing in its interdependence, its capacity and its formation; that is, its resemblance to the one we follow and presence in our communities – our Lord, Jesus.

This work is one of cultivation, as well as organic, spontaneous development in the dynamic environment of culture, community and context. It cannot be rushed. Rather, it must be patiently and persistently attended to through prayer and attentiveness, courageous faith, hope and, most of all, love.

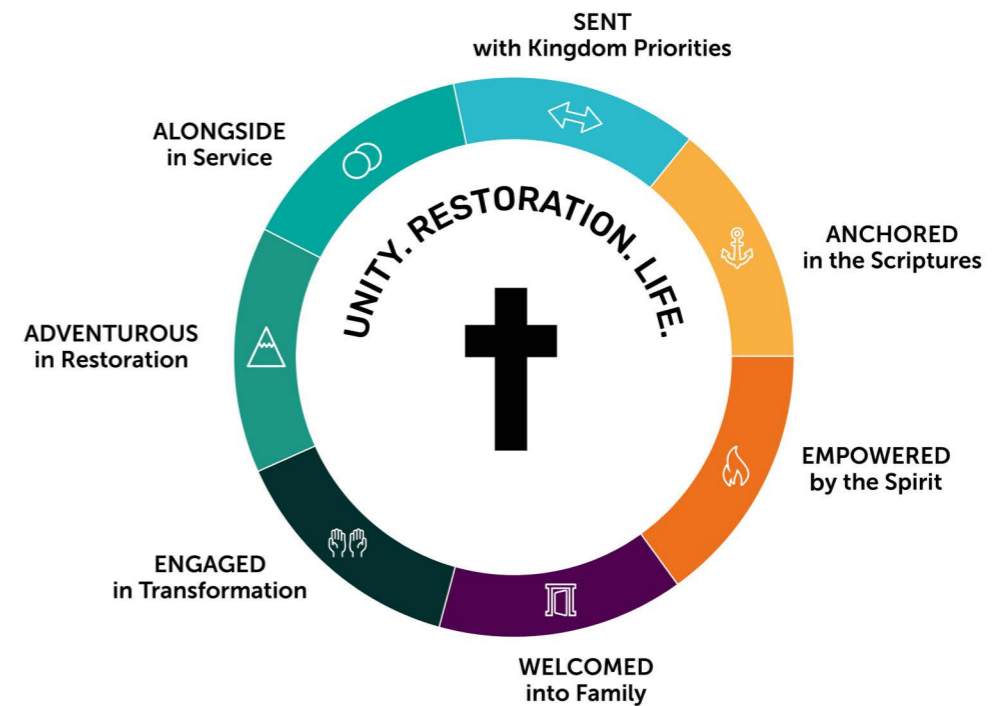


Anne Simpson
Network Health & Engagement



This flourishing looks like a network that is growing in its interdependence, its capacity and its formation.

Tangible intersections of our work



Gathering places

We as a network give ourselves to the seeing and being seen: regional gatherings, church planting networks, generations camps (SYNC, Uprising, Drastic), online groups, Pilgrimage and Collective.



Sharing stories

Telling stories through our website and social media – places where we bear witness to the work of the kingdom among us and our communities; stories of generosity, of faithfulness, of perseverance, of healing.



Resources and training

Resourcing and support of our churches through endorsement, safe churches training and companioning churches seeking to affiliate with us.



Accountability

Accountability of attending to Redress claims and matters of professional conduct.



Church support

Supporting churches (and regions) through property maintenance, sale, development, and selling, so that their mission is appropriately resourced.



Chaplaincy

Chaplaincy work continues to be our intentional presence in hospitals, residential aged care and retirement living, prisons, schools and the defence force. This group of men and women are a humble but vital part of our network's ministry across our state.

Properties & projects

supporting churches for Kingdom growth

Over the past 12 months, the Property and Projects team has been engaging directly with churches across our network in providing a range of support and advice through our Church Partnership Program.

We implemented the first year of the Property Asset Plan (PAP) for all Conference-governed properties. We also saw an increase in the utilisation of our properties, repositioned assets, and implemented a program of capital works to improve properties in terms of compliance and fit-for-purpose use.

Over the last 12 months our work has involved the following:



7 major church projects

- (3 regional and 4 metro Sydney)
- project feasibility;
 - concept;
 - partnership; and
 - consultant management and development.



13 church partnership projects

- licencing, leasing, rental, agreement, and management of properties;
- project advice and feasibility;
- consultant support and engagement;
- legal and planning advice;
- compliance and WHS;
- construction and refurbishment management with builders; and
- council engagement.



26 Conference-governed properties

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



3 grant-supported projects

Together our approach is to work with churches and their communities to best manage their properties, assets and resources.

In the next 12 months we will continue to:



Support **3 major church projects** (two in metro Sydney)



Support **10 Church Partnership Projects** across NSW & ACT



Manage **26 ConfEx-governed properties** with 38 leases and licences

As we partner with churches and ministries in a wide range of property projects, we seek to measure the outcome of each project through these three return on investment (ROI) lenses: what is the missional, community, and financial return on investment (ROI)?

Our work this year has sought to ensure viability and sustainability for the churches we have worked with, link their current vision, mission, strategy, and health into the future through project management strategies such as feasibility, due diligence, stakeholder and community engagement.



Supporting Regional Renewal at Tweed Church of Christ

Have you heard about the exceptional work that's been unfolding in the north-eastern corner of New South Wales?

My journey with Tweed Church of Christ started in 2018 with a visit to sunny Chinderah. I was there to look at their Sports Centre complex and consider opportunities to expand and develop their existing community work by establishing a support space for the many people experiencing homelessness.

In particular, hundreds of families were living in the six lifestyle villages (caravan parks) adjacent to the sports centre and the church leadership felt a burden to support them. During the devastating 2019 bushfires, the Tweed Church Sports Centre became a hub for gathering supplies to be shipped out to the local communities, and to many other communities as far away as Mogo on the NSW South Coast.

At the beginning of 2020, due to the impacts of COVID-19, the Tweed Sports Centre was reduced to very low use, causing it to close formally in 2021. During this time, the dream of Tweed Church was still to have a successful sports centre and to develop the property with a church and community centre on-site to compliment those activities.

Over a period of 9-12 months, the Property & Projects team worked with Tweed Church of Christ's leadership and a range of consultants on a number of redevelopment options. This included partnership opportunities with a sports/gym group that would see a national partnership to complement the church and its community work. Unfortunately, at the final hour this partner pulled out, creating a significant disappointment in the team and a time to reflect on what might be next.

The devastating NSW floods of 2021 saw the Sports Centre become a support hub but after suffering its own flooding, the church partnered with the local churches to provide support in other ways.

In 2022, the church - with the support of the Property & Projects team - had to make some hard decisions. Would they stay at this Sport Centre and re-develop the property, partner with a developer, or sell and purchase another fit-for-purpose property? Within days of this decision, an opportunity to purchase an existing "Place of Public Worship" - formerly housing an indigenous church community - came up. This property in South Tweed was ready to go, apart from some maintenance and signage.

The church was successful in securing the property and applying for bridging finance while they prepared the Sports Centre for sale. **Thanks to The Churches of Christ Property Trust, a loan was secured against their existing property assets and the new building was purchased - with funds set aside to do some maintenance and upgrades to make the property fit for Tweed's purposes.**

At the time of writing, I can confirm the successful sale of the Sports Centre has been completed, rounding out the end of this chapter and setting the stage for the next.



Matt Young
Properties and Projects

The Property Trust

supporting your church's mission



As Chairman of the Property Trust¹, and on behalf of its board, it is my pleasure to present the Property Trust Annual Report for the period 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023.

As the incorporated body for churches of Christ in NSW & ACT, we partner with the local church to support their establishment, growth and gospel work.

Who is the Trust?

There are nine board positions, each with a nine-year term to facilitate long-term planning and engagement with churches.

We help build churches by:



Providing low-cost loans for infrastructure



Stewarding bequests to fund grants



Holding the real property of churches in trust to ensure the sacrificial giving of past and present generations are kept for the cause of restoration

Members of the Trust as at June 2023:

- Mr Andrew Billing;
- Ms Patricia Chan;
- Mr Chris Emmanuel;
- Mr Steven Martin (Chairman);
- Mr Philip Smith;
- Mr Shamus Toomey (Registrar);
- Mr Willy van den Berg; and
- Mr Allan Vincent.

Andrew Billing will conclude 18 years of faithful and fruitful service to our network of churches at this Conference Convened. Andrew has contributed significantly to the Trust and our churches during his two terms. He connected his faith and banking experience to help prosperously steward our finances and church engagement. Andrew also served with distinction as the chairman of the Trust from May 2017 to November 2020. At this time, we seek God's wisdom in replacing Andrew.

What can the Trust do for your church?

As an incorporated entity, the Trust can enter into contracts, apply for grants, and exercise legal agreements on behalf of our churches and agencies. These services include but are not limited to:

- safe custody of bank guarantees, contracts, historic certificates of title, leases, plans, etc.;
- facilitate property sales, purchases, and building contracts;
- administration of estates and trust funds;
- investment (deposits) and Borrowing (loans);
- execution of statutory forms (development applications, construction certificates etc); and
- facilitating Grant Applications – eg. NSW Community Building Partnership.

Churches of Christ Investment Fund (NSW & ACT) (“Fund”).

Formerly the Fresh Hope Investment Fund, the Fund creates financial capacity for churches by providing investments and loans with competitive interest rates.

From May 2022 to June 2023, the Reserve Bank increased the cash rate 12 times from 0.35% to 4.10%.

Unlike banks, the Trust increased its standard variable loan interest rate once, from 4.05% to 4.30%pa. Over the same period, the Trust has raised its deposit rate multiple times to 3.00%pa. This is one way we express how we are for churches.

Do you have a financial need for ministry? The Trust can provide a Cash Boost.

Often churches find themselves with significant unbudgeted expenses without having the financial capacity to cover them. It could be replacing the sound desk, fixing the bus, or purchasing playground equipment to meet the needs of a growing childrens' ministry.



Compare the Trust with equivalent products from other financial institutions*:

	Deposits %	P&I Loans %
Property Trust	3.00 (no fees)	4.30 (no fees)
Westpac	1.25 (+ fees)	From 6.24 (+ fees)
CBA	0.00 to 2.20 (+ fees)	From 8.10 (+ fees)
ANZ	0.00 to 1.30 (+ fees)	From 6.59 (+ fees)
NAB	0.35 (+ fees)	From 7.35 (+ fees)

*NB: interest rates as at 30 June 2023.

¹ The Trust is a perpetual, “legal person” constituted and incorporated pursuant to the terms of the ‘Churches of Christ in New South Wales Incorporation Act 1947 (the, “1947 Act”): Inter alia, the 1947 Act sets out the purpose and powers of the Trust; its relationship to Conference; and other matters – for example – the process for churches passing special resolutions.



The Trust has created low-interest small loans called Cash Boosts that can spread out the expense over a five-year period.

Perhaps you want to create a space just for your flourishing youth group but don't have the financial capacity to fit it out. You could apply for a \$5000 cash boost repaid at just \$21 per week. This more manageable sum could be met from your operational budget or by a commitment by members of the church.

Contacting the Trust

For churches of Christ churches and agencies, the Secretary is the "early-engagement" point of contact for property matters – via phone, email or letter, and also (by prior arrangement) in person. I encourage you to access Trust resources at ccnswact.org.au/church-compliance/property-trust/ and also to discuss your property matters with the Secretary of the Trust.

So, to discuss deposits and loans for churches, grant applications, and other property matters, please contact the Trust's Corporate Secretary and Executive Officer, James Cartwright via email james.cartwright@cofcpt.org.au or phone 02 8573 6031.



Steven Martin
Chairman



Allan Vincent
Deputy Chairman



The Fund for 2022-23 at a glance:

40
investments held by the Trust

27
churches that invest

\$17 million
under investment

\$154,000
funds provided for grants

\$7 million
current total of loans made to churches

\$1.5 million
total of loans made this period

The Trust at work in churches

Having held significant loans to fund our church facility and commercial conference centre, we were at the mercy of commercial banks, which made for an anxious experience.

Since transitioning to the Property Trust, it has been a much easier and more supportive experience. Not only does the interest we pay go back into funding kingdom initiatives, but we've benefited enormously from the support and understanding of the Property Trust, particularly through the very difficult COVID era (when our commercial operations had to be suspended), and the competitive interest rates they offer us in comparison to the market.

James and the team have always been available to help us and provide suggested solutions to our funding needs as and when required. I highly recommend any church looking to borrow or invest to consider our Property Trust as an option.



Sam Haddon
Senior Pastor
Northside Church

Fresh Hope Communities

This has been my first year as Board Chair of Fresh Hope Communities and it's been incredibly humbling to see the work being done within Fresh Hope Communities over this period.

I am continually impressed by the quality of our staff in Care and Venues and the significant impact they have on individual lives. At times, I've been deeply moved at what they have been able to deliver, day-in and day-out, in a time of incredible regulatory change and scrutiny and in the challenging season that we have been moving through, "post pandemic".

You can't skirt around responsibilities or hide behind cheap talk or frivolous activity within the spaces we work. There are human beings with real needs that we serve – in the end, you will either meet those needs or you won't. Our job as a Board is to guide our executive leadership team and steward Fresh Hope Communities so that our staff can do what they need and want to do, always endeavouring to carry the heart and ethos of Churches of Christ as we do it.

With this in mind, I'd like to extend my thanks to my fellow Board members for serving with me in this important task. In particular, I would like to acknowledge and thank outgoing Board Member, Stephen Toomey, for his outstanding dedication and service to Fresh Hope Communities and wish him well for the future. I would also like to thank the Conference Executive of churches of Christ NSW and ACT and Executive Ministry Director for their guidance and support for all we deliver within Fresh Hope Communities.

The past couple of years have tested our resilience and commitment to providing quality, customer-centred services. We've learnt what this commitment really means over this tremendously challenging time, which will have its place in history, along with the deeds done in service to others.

When things are working against us, when it just doesn't seem possible to do it all, it's our mission and our values that guide us through. I believe there are two important success measures, ultimately: first, the welfare and wellbeing of the people we care for; and second, how we orientate ourselves with hope for a strong and resilient future. The progress we have seen over the last year in our new developments across the state in residential care, retirement and affordable housing show our commitment to resilience and a hopeful future.

As CEO Daniel Dwyer shares, it's been a challenging year operationally and financially, but it's a credit to Daniel and the leadership team for exemplifying our ongoing commitment.

My heartfelt thanks to all the staff and volunteers of Fresh Hope Communities. It is a thanks for the work you do, your extraordinary character, and the lives you change. We as a Board are committed to supporting you as you endeavour to provide the best possible care, the best possible hospitality and meaningful experiences.

Collectively let us honour the vision of churches of Christ NSW and ACT that allows us to serve in these important community sectors and commit to espousing – and living – our values of kindness, connection, optimism and integrity in all we do, and in every life we touch.



Raewyn Williams
Raewyn Williams
Board Chair
Fresh Hope Communities



“
There are human beings with real needs that we serve.”



Fresh Hope Communities

We sat down with Daniel Dwyer the CEO of Fresh Hope Communities to get a sense of the year that's past and the years ahead.

How would you summarise this past year for our organisation?

It goes without saying that it's been a year full of challenges. Yes, there was a collective sigh of relief across the nation as we "moved on" from COVID-19, but as providers of residential care to the ageing and vulnerable, Fresh Hope Communities hasn't been able to move on in the same fashion; in fact, we have adopted heightened vigilance as our normal practice. To this end—our teams have astounded me, over and over again. Through strengthening and taking care of themselves, they have been able to take care of our residents, their families, our guests and one another.

If I were to summarise the year in one word it would be 'hopeful'. Not only does the hope we find in Christ provide an anchor for us in these ever-changing times as we continue to push forward (Hebrews 6:19), it also helps me personally find peace in this season (Isaiah 26:3). We are *hopeful* because we have - together - navigated a redefining modern-day health crisis without losing our sense of gratitude or our commitment to quality care and hospitality, and we are *hopeful* because there are many thrilling opportunities in the future for Fresh Hope Communities.

What have been some of the highlights for our organisation?

On 1 July 2022, the Community Care Board - in consultation with Conference Executive - resolved to adopt the name "Fresh Hope Communities" as the trading name describing the following ministry initiatives: Fresh Hope Venues, Fresh Hope Engage, Fresh Hope Housing Inc, Fresh Hope Care and Fresh Hope Group Operations. Along with this we began to integrate our new branding across the organisation, which has given us a tremendous facelift, a strong presence in our sector, and a feeling of 'freshness'—pardon the pun!

In consultation with Conference Executive, Fresh Hope Communities established organisational values of Kindness, Connection, Optimism and Integrity. Over the year we have explored what these values look like for us in the form of behaviours as an organisation, how we embody them as a staff, and how our residents, families and guests experience us as a result. We got to celebrate the ambassadors of our values at our annual Fresh Hope Communities Awards which brought together representatives across the state in Sydney for a sit-down luncheon and award ceremony.

As an executive team we have also set focused time aside to develop our strategic intent and plan over the preceding 12 months. This has aided us onto the pathway of clearly articulating who we are, why we exist and our customer promise.

These combined initiatives demonstrate how Fresh Hope Communities continues to pivot towards a bright future. Central to everything we do are the people: those our staff teams as well as the people we serve, accommodate and host across Residential Care, Retirement Living and our Group Accommodation Housing and Venues.

To me, our individual and collective responsibility as followers of Christ is clear. To love our neighbour, care for the vulnerable and marginalised, seek justice and be a light in our communities—something both the Board and team of Fresh Hope Communities are committed to outworking through Fresh Hope Communities. (The Parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37). Being God's Workmanship (Ephesians 2:10)). And you'll see within this Annual Report there are a handful of stories that testify to the 'people first' nature of our organisation, but as you read them, bear in mind that they represent dozens of other stories that share a common thread: people matter.

What are some of the challenges we faced as an organisation?

The ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic is still very real for us, much like many households are experiencing the cost-of-living crisis, as are we in our field. We continue to navigate the increase in cost and compliance of our aged

Key highlights



Cedar on Collins, Kiama

A new Retirement Living community in Kiama, and the first greenfield Retirement Living project for Fresh Hope Communities in over 40 years. This community comprises 56 premium 1-, 2- and 3-bedroom apartments a short stroll from the ocean.

There has been the substantial progression of three key projects for Fresh Hope Communities: These are all due for completion in late 2023.

Green Hills Residential Care Service in East Maitland

This is a 160-bed residential care service that involves the implementation of a new care model for Fresh Hope Communities. This is based on a household model and also provides for day and overnight respite services, which are growing in demand in this sector.

Marrickville Affordable Housing

Working with not-for-profit housing provider Nightingale, this involves a long-term land-lease of the former Marrickville Church of Christ property at Illawarra Road in Marrickville. This project will deliver 54 long-term affordable rental units for the community of Marrickville, honouring the 100-plus year legacy of service to the community of Marrickville by churches of Christ in NSW & ACT.

care service offerings, as well as the locations in which we are best positioned to provide these services. This assessment of locations and demographics played a part in the decision to sell The Glen Residential Care Service in Batemans Bay to a local provider.

Each of our redevelopments continued to be impacted by the supply chain and workforce challenges at Kiama (Cedar on Collins), East Maitland (Green Hills) and Marrickville (Nightingale Marrickville) and the progress of our new development at Greenstead Valley which will provide onsite accommodation and outdoor experiences.

The increase in operational costs also resulted in a restructure across our service streams which sadly led to Fresh Hope Communities farewelling a number of our broader team due to redundancies and structural changes.

Is there anything you'd like to say to the staff and team at Fresh Hope Communities?

You matter. Who you are matters. What you do matters. The part you play in Fresh Hope Communities matters.

So, THANK YOU. Thank you for the way you've consistently contributed to quality care and hospitality, for your dedication, commitment and service to everyone in our care and for creating a sense of home for all. And I would also like to extend my thanks to our Fresh Hope Communities Board for their guidance and leadership.



Daniel Dwyer
Chief Executive Officer
Fresh Hope Communities

Residential Care Services



986
Residents
cared for



49
Clients
in Day Respite

Whilst many parts of the community have emerged from the COVID-19 pandemic, it is still impacting our industry and we continue to experience the pandemic's effect on the aged care workforce at large.

These challenges along with the Government's continued reform agenda following the Aged Care Royal Commission has meant our teams continue to work under exceptional circumstances. But our teams are extraordinary and continue to focus on connecting with our residents as individuals, seeing them for who they are, and ensuring that their focus isn't the task, but the person who is receiving the care.

As we slowly come out of the pandemic it has been wonderful to see our Residential Care and Respite services being able to facilitate more meaningful activities and outings with our residents and clients and seeing greater connection and engagement for residents that is bringing enjoyment and a sense of community in each location.

From dress up days at Borella House, and Laughter Yoga at Green Hills to cultural celebrations like Diwali at Ashwood Residential Care Service, our managers

are finally able to start planning better opportunities around wellbeing and meaningful connection for the residents and staff.

We are also getting ready for the completion of the redevelopment of our Green Hills Residential Care Service in late 2023 which will expand our offering to the Maitland and Greater Hunter region with a new 160-bed facility which will set the benchmark for the future in providing high quality care and service.

Sarah Ramsey
General Manager Residential Care Services
Fresh Hope Communities



587
Dedicated care
and support staff



7
Service
locations



Residential Care Stories

Bootcamp at Green Hills

At Green Hills Residential Care Service, the residents love to stay active and enjoy doing what they can to remain fit and well. In addition to the already established walking groups and exercise programs on offer, we initiated some new forms of exercise programs, one being our Resident Bootcamp.

The Resident Bootcamp runs Monday to Friday at 11am and incorporates a range of seated exercises to some lively tunes. It aims to stretch various muscle groups, get the blood flowing, improve cardiovascular function, increase range of motion, but most importantly to have fun. While a 15-minute Bootcamp doesn't sound like a lot, residents and staff alike all get a sweat on and the heart rate up!

Various members of the Green Hills staff lead the Bootcamp giving residents more variety and a slightly different approach to the program each day. With a list of exercises to choose from, the leader decides on the exercises and the format of the program for the session. You may see them 'stirring the pot', 'milking the cow' and 'swinging the lasso' just to name a few of the favourite moves. It's a great way for staff not usually involved in direct resident care to connect with the residents in such a positive way.

The Bootcamp also gives residents an opportunity to socialise and have a laugh together, fostering inclusion and a point of connection that can lead to more positive interactions in other areas.



New Green Hills Residential Care Service

Celebrations were in order in February as the Fresh Hope Communities team joined Richard Crookes Construction, ICON Project Management and Caulderflower Architects for a 'Topping Out' ceremony to celebrate the new Green Hills Residential Care Service structural completion.

"The final major concrete slab has been poured at the Green Hills Residential Care Service in East Maitland. Requiring over 270m³ of concrete and 60 tonnes of reinforced steel, this achievement marks the completion of a major project milestone," said a representative from Richard Crookes Construction.

"Fresh Hope Communities exists to cultivate belonging. So it is actually fitting that even before the doors of this development open to the community, our residents and families, that with the setting of these foundations, we begin with creating a sense of community and celebration," said Dan Dwyer, CEO of Fresh Hope Communities.

This multi-level residential care service is set to be completed later this year and will bring an innovative and integrated community living experience for residents and their families.

It will include a memory support household, communal spaces and wellness centre, respite care service and holistic care for residents that prioritises health, wellbeing and community for ageing in place.

Originating in Scandinavia, the 'topping out ceremony' is a celebration of the final beam being placed in the final stage of the construction of a building and involves the gathering of all those who have laboured and invested into a project to come together and celebrate what has been achieved.

“
The Bootcamp gives residents an opportunity to socialise and have a laugh together.



Retirement Communities

With lockdowns over and restrictions well and truly eased, our Resident communities have been at liberty to reimagine what can be.

Supported by our dedicated team of Community Managers, Residents have reveled in many new group events involving settings such as the Blue Mountains, the NSW Premiers Seniors Concert, Vivid, Byron Bay, Herb Farms, Bowling, dedicated Men's groups, art galleries, Parliament House, State of Origin nights, spit roasts and themed dinners, just to name a few. All boosting opportunities for social connection and interaction for Residents of our communities.

At many Communities, we are witnessing and enabling the formation of Resident-driven social committees, an increase in volunteerism and a deeper desire to partner with us to influence better outcomes both within our communities, and in the community at large.

Supported by our Community Liaison Officer, we continue to advocate for Residents in times of need, ensuring they are connected with services and support that enables their independence, empowerment, agency and dignity. In our space this can look like: pre-empting a Resident crisis and providing early intervention and connection opportunities, supporting a Resident or their family in navigating additional support through My Aged Care, stepping up as a voice for those Residents with no family or support, and ensuring Residents can palliate, comfortably in their homes, in line with their wishes.

It has been a pleasure this year to witness the benefits that quality, personalised and purposeful engagement from our team has brought, and continues to bring, to the lives of Residents that call our Communities home.

While we faced significant challenges with construction delays with Cedar on Collins, Kiama this year, this new 56-apartment community has made significant headway. With construction almost complete and interior design, furnishings and landscaping of communal outdoor areas nearing an end, we are eagerly awaiting the welcome of our newest Residents in late 2023. The delivery of this community is an amazing milestone for the organisation and to be widely celebrated, being over 40 years since the construction of our last new retirement community.

Belinda Edwards
General Manager Retirement Communities
Fresh Hope Communities



465

**Residents
cared for**



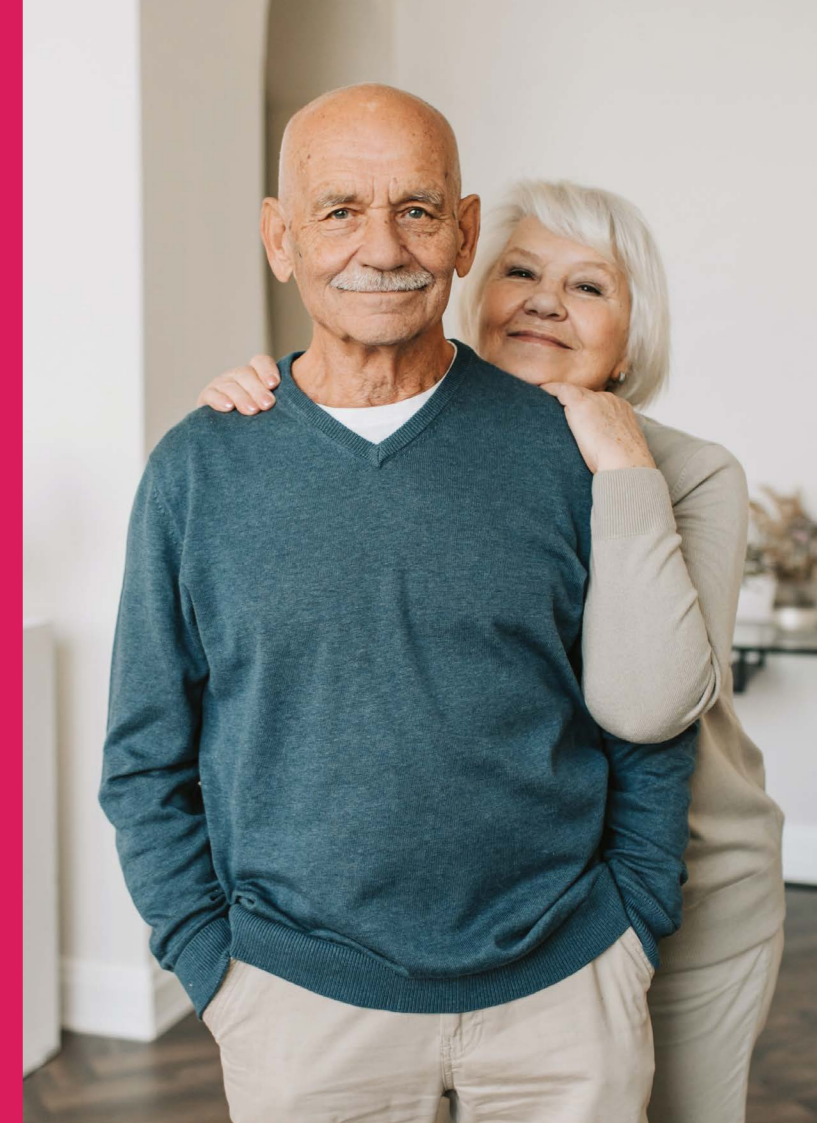
12

**Dedicated care
and support staff**



9

**Service
locations**



Retirement Communities Stories



Forestville Retirement's Majestic Day Out

Forestville Retirement Community recently had a lovely day trip to the Blue Mountains. Even the recent inclement Spring weather didn't deter the residents from enjoying this outing to the full. Beginning with an early morning bus trip, they had a brief stop to take in the views at the Three Sisters, before arriving at the Hydro Majestic hotel for a fabulous High Tea.

Scones, delicate pastries and delicious sandwiches, tea and coffee were enjoyed by the 13 people who participated in the outing.

Penny McIntyre, Community Manager at Forestville shared, "The residents loved everything. They loved spending time together back out in the community after such a long lockdown period. They loved a cheeky glass of champagne, the food was amazing and they even got to take a doggy bag home. They loved the scenery and all the blooms along the way. It has been a long time since many had been to the mountains."

One of the residents, Sue said, "What a fabulous day, each outing gets better - how can you surpass this one! You are caring and professional. Well done and many thanks Penny".

“
What a fabulous day, each outing gets better!”



University of the Third Age: It's never too late to learn

Despite the data on later-life learning being limited, one research paper says "data from a small number of studies on the topic suggest that continued learning in older age can have a linked effect on public health by raising health awareness and promoting better health practices and outcomes; providing multidimensional health benefits, including but not limited to, maintaining cognitive, mental, and overall wellbeing; building social capital and promoting motivation, social cohesion, and inclusiveness; and re-integrating and empowering older adults to withstand later-life challenges in increasingly complex realities of social isolation and loneliness, the importance of which has been highlighted during the COVID-19 pandemic."

Enter the University of the Third Age (U3A).

U3A made its way to Australia in 1985 after originating in France in 1973, with the first courses being offered in the Southern Highlands in 1997. 27 years later, it boasts a membership of over 1,000 and 70 courses being offered each school term.

Retirees have a lifetime of knowledge and experience, and the sharing of that knowledge with other members forms the cornerstone the University of the Third Age (U3A). No formal qualifications are required to lead or attend courses and there are no exams or degrees to be obtained. This all helps to remove barriers and allows people from a wide range of socio-economic and learning backgrounds to come together to learn and enjoy each other's company.

Kate Shying, Community Manager at Henley Brae Retirement Community, approached U3A with the offer of hosting some courses at the Community's Pavilion. "We had been looking for events that had some connection with the community and that stretched residents in their learning. At the end of April, we began offering three courses in the Pavilion: French, Music Basics and "Way of the Soul!"

The courses which are also open to the community, have been well attended and Henley Brae will continue to offer new courses each school term.

Kate concluded, "It is a great opportunity for our residents to reconnect and stimulate their brains without having to leaving the site." The Residences at Castle Cove has also been running U3A courses for several months. Residents have enjoyed learning across a wide range of topics covering ancient history, music, literature and the arts.

As more research comes to light about the benefits of later-life learning, one thing is for certain, older individual's active participation and contribution to society doesn't end at retirement. Later life learning opportunities like we are seeing at Henley Brae, and The Residences reactivates, enhances, and enriches it.

“
Residents have enjoyed learning across a wide range of topics covering ancient history, music, literature and the arts.”

Outdoor Experiences



In stark contrast to the past couple of years where the pandemic forced the closure of many of our operations, this year saw The Tops rebound in spectacular form, with a booking load we haven't seen in over 50 years of operation.

School and church groups and our other guest accommodation groups came back in droves and propelled the site into a heightened level of service and hospitality activity. While staff and supply chain shortages certainly created challenges in this area, the team stepped up and delivered the quality of service to our guests that The Tops is renowned for.

It was our biggest year of operation in our history, with approximately 130,000 guest days recorded, eclipsing any previous year. Revenue was up and our Outdoor Education options were secured by more participants than ever.

There was a distinct feeling of achievement this year among our team, and we recognise the extraordinary efforts of those individuals who stepped up to do many additional shifts. We are grateful for their commitment and care.

Over in Greenstead Valley, our Tiny Homes in Joadja experienced steady use and enjoyment by guests throughout the year.

As we step into a new year, we are encouraged by the strong demand shown and are optimistic for future growth. We are seeking to build greater depth among our team, while continuing to host and serve those who come to spend time at The Tops and Greenstead Valley well and are confident that they will leave better for their time with us.

David Tolman
General Manager,
Group Accommodation & Housing
Fresh Hope Communities



We cannot wait to visit again!

There are incredible stories of growth and transformation that have come out of The Tops, which has been serving the community for over 50 years and is a beloved part of churches of Christ in NSW & ACT. Earlier this year, 16 students in year four to year six and seven staff from NextSense School came for a two-day camp at The Tops. Students from this school have additional needs and so an inclusive, supportive environment that can cater for students' individual needs is important to them.

Teamwork and having fun were the desired outcomes for the school, so our Program Team carefully designed a program of activities and experiences to cater to this. During their time with us they participated in Archery, Carts, Giant Swing, Survivor, Vertical Cluster and Fireside.

They loved their time at The Tops and sent some thoughtful and encouraging handmade thank you cards and messages to the outdoor educators and staff.

"Dear Tops Staff, thank you for ensuring that the students from NextSense School had the most amazing camp experience! We appreciate how responsive and attentive you were to our students and how you listened to and applied feedback from our staff. We cannot wait to visit again!"

From Lou, Kellie, Chris, Paul and Rebekah
(NextSense School Staff).

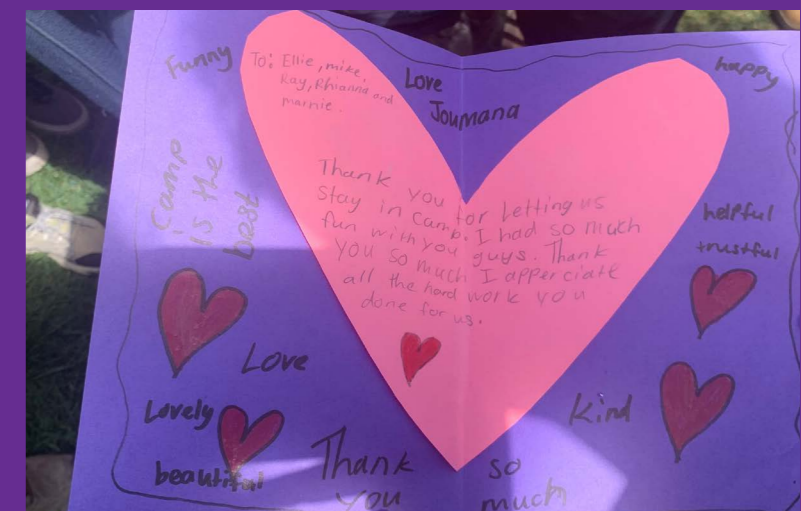


63,449
guests



184
staff

Connecting with children to explore, to feel known, cared for and understood in a fun and encouraging environment.



Australian College of Ministries

Better Together! – Is the phrase we have been using to describe the motivation for ACOM and Stirling College to come together to form one National College for Churches of Christ in Australia.

Why? Well, we believe that together we will be stronger and better resourced to respond to and meet the ministry formation needs of our churches across our movement as we seek to extend the Kingdom of God in our world.

This coming together was announced in November, and in February we began to deliver courses as one college, opening a broad range of learning opportunities for students that are relevant to life, church, the workplace, and contemporary culture.

It has been encouraging to see how the coming together of our two great colleges has captured the imagination and heart of our movement of churches around the country. We have sensed the prayers and support of our churches and partners as you have cheered us on in this endeavour. Time and again we have heard the words... "It just seems to make sense" as we have shared the story. We thank you for the many words of support and encouragement received as well as your prayers.

With the coming together of the two colleges, we were also excited to announce the launch of the *Stirling School of Community Care* within ACOM, which offers awards in Christian Counselling, Professional Supervision, Chaplaincy and in time, Pastoral and Spiritual Care.



We were excited to launch our first cohort in the new Graduate Certificate in Professional Supervision. This new award responds to the need for equipping quality professional and pastoral supervisors to come alongside those in ministry to ensure they have healthy ministry practices and are creating safe environments for those they serve. We are also excited to soon offer the Master in Professional Supervision.

Our School of Leadership continues to thrive as a place where students can grow in their practice of leadership. The School of Leadership specialises in thought leadership and training for church leaders, volunteers, boards, welfare staff managers and team leaders in the not-for-profit community sector. Caleb Ravesteyn a 2023 graduate from the Master of Leadership shared the following reflection on his study experience.

"ACOM presents a unique and stimulating opportunity for individuals to strengthen and further their understanding of key subject matter that is life-changing. My reflection on completing the Master of Leadership course is that there was a freedom I could pursue in the degree that enabled me to chase the interest areas that were most relevant and practical to my circumstances. ACOM's distinctive subjects empower students to be truly engaged with their studies, accompanied with the freedom of being online, it sets students up for success at their own pace and isn't biased regarding geography. I hope and look forward to seeing ACOM push further into its unique and creative ways of presenting education."

Finally, we are pleased to report that the Sydney College of Divinity, of which ACOM is a founding member, has been awarded University College status, making it Australia's sixth University College. This recognises the high standard of education delivery in the area of theological and ministry formation of ACOM and all the Member Colleges that make up the SCD.



Congratulations to the 114 students who graduated across a variety of awards.

We continue to be thankful for the opportunity to contribute to the development of high-quality graduates (114 this year), which sees them serving in key church and ministry positions around the country.



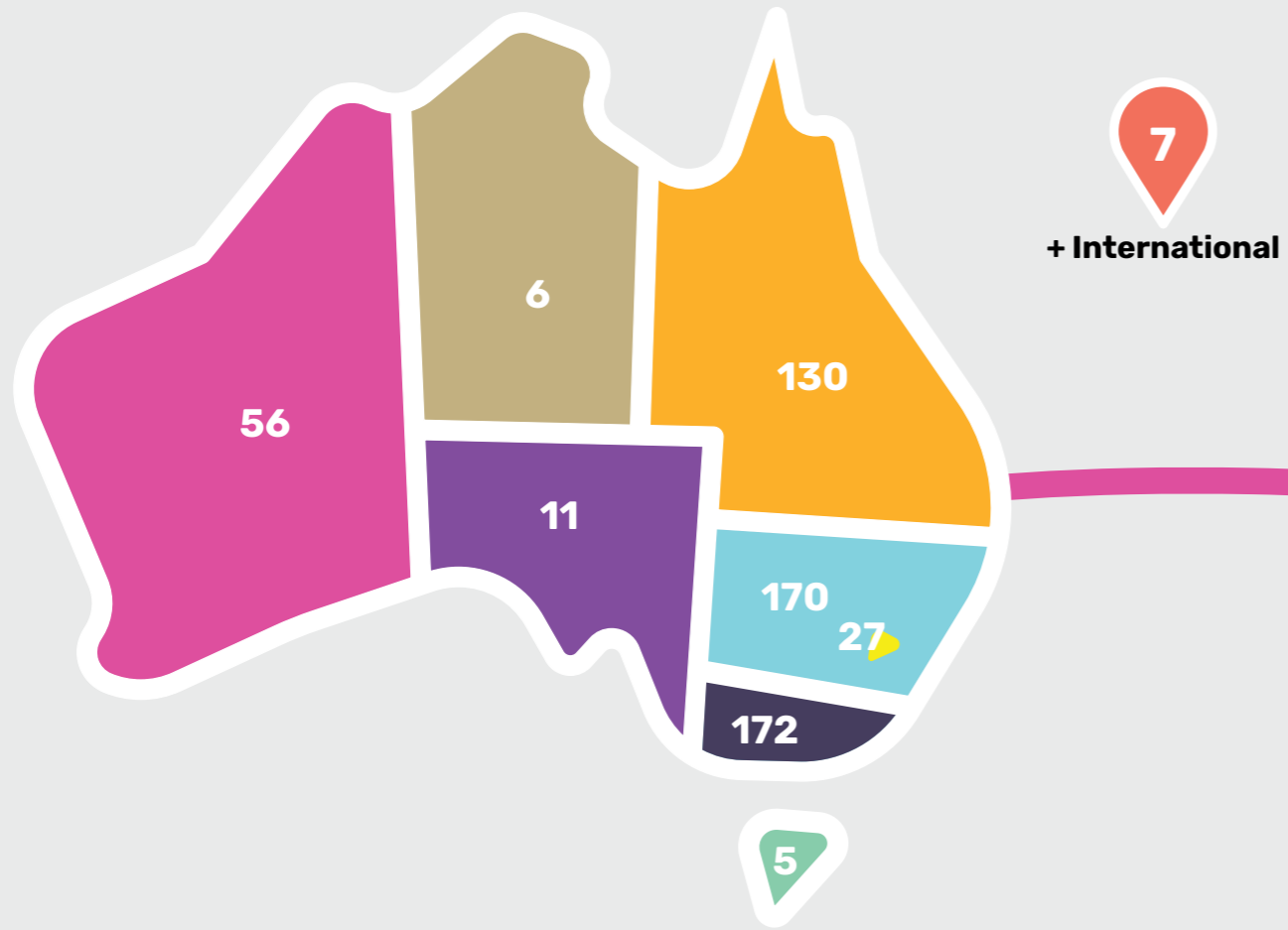
Neale Meredith
Neale Meredith
Principal & CEO
Australian College of Ministries



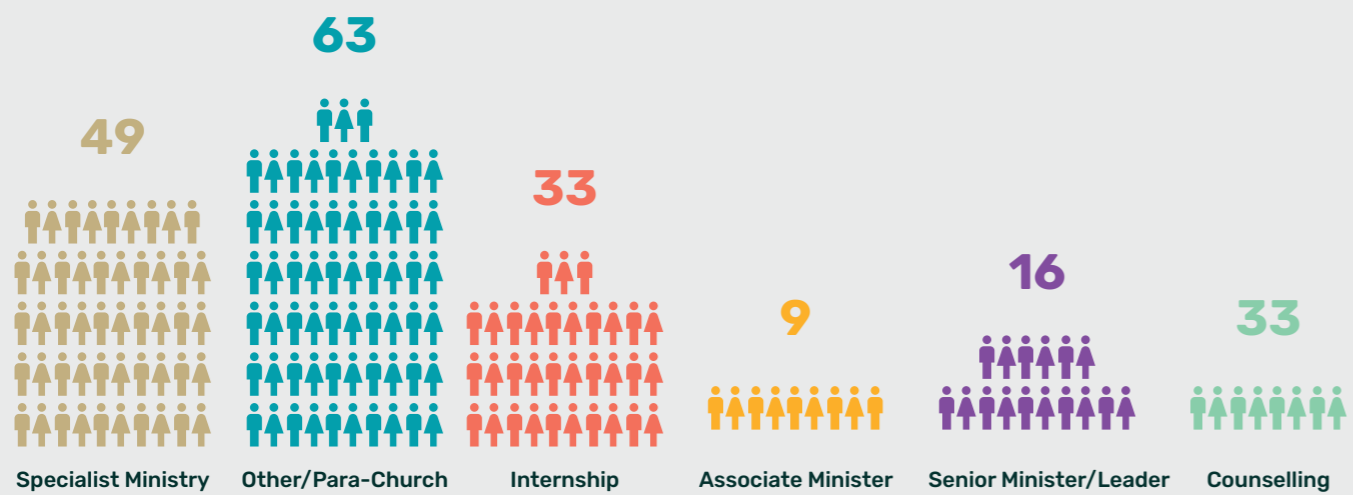
Stirling MOU Signing

Representatives of both NSW/ACT and Vic/Tas Churches of Christ State Conferences along with the ACOM and Stirling College boards and senior management, gathered in Melbourne to imagine what a new future might look like together as one national college.

Total Students by Location



Church of Christ Students Ministry Involvement



2022 Graduates

Churches of Christ in Australia

Master of Arts

Julie BALDWIN – *Whitehill* – QLD
Jennifer MOORE – *NationsHeart* – ACT
Julia POPE – *Brighton Beach* – VIC

Master of Divinity

Thomas DALTON – *Chinchilla* – QLD

Master of Leadership

Scott GIRVAN – *NationsHeart* – ACT

Master of Theological Studies

Sarah WHITEHEAD – *ACOM* – VIC

Master of Theology

Timothy CAMERON – *Discovery* – VIC

Graduate Certificate in Arts

Grace COOK – *Lifestreams* – WA
Emily DROUGH – *Mayfield* – NSW
Christopher ENGLAND – *HumeRidge* – QLD
Belinda GOODWIN – *Redhill* – ACT
Jason HAYDUK – *Missionheart* – NSW
Olivia McGRECHAN – *Discovery* – VIC
Philippa TAYLOR – *Southport* – QLD
Samuel TINSLEY – *Discovery* – VIC

Graduate Certificate in Chaplaincy

Thomas ALTOBELLI – *Kingsway* – NSW

Graduate Certificate in Governance and Strategy

Alicia CLEARY – *Rivergum* – NSW

Graduate Certificate in Leadership

Rodney CLEMENTS – *Doncaster* – VIC
Colette HARRISON – *Bowral* – NSW

Graduate Certificate in Theological Studies

Casper BADENHORST – *True North* – WA
Jacinta JOWETT – *Bundaberg* – QLD

Graduate Diploma of Arts

Elizabeth ATKIN – *Bowral* – NSW
Jacqueline GIBBON – *Lifegate* – NSW

Bachelor of Ministry

Georgia CULEY – *Seechange* – NSW
Megan RAVESTYN – NSW
Yvonne TRUEMAN – *Grace Community* – NSW

Bachelor of Theology

Jarrold CHRISTIAN – *Toowoomba North* – QLD
Christopher COOKE – *Northgate Ministries* – NSW
Monique COPE – *True North* – WA

Associate Degree of Christian Thought and Practice

Susan MEREDITH – *RED Church* – VIC
Lachlan SAVILL – *HumeRidge* – QLD

Diploma of Christian Studies

Patrina CARTER – *Penrith* – NSW
Adele HESTER – *Mildura* – VIC
Jennifer LARKIN – *Seechange* – NSW
Tarnye MALM – *Southport* – QLD
Adam MILLER – *Penrith* – NSW
Alisa WALTER – *York Street* – VIC

Diploma of Ministry

Brianna BARTLETT – *York Street* – VIC
Levi COSH – *Albany* – WA
John-Paul SCHOKMAN – *True North* – WA
Isabella SKINNER – *True North* – WA
Madeleine WILSON – *York Street* – VIC

Undergraduate Certificate in Ministry

Jessie BARKER – *Grace Community* – NSW
Bethwyn CLARKE – *Bridgeley* – WA
Hamish CURTIS – *Broken Hill* – NSW
Libby HALL – *Whitehill* – QLD
Zachery KOHLER – *Devonport* – TAS
Brian JENKINS – *Broken Hill* – NSW
Nicholas MARTIN – *Broken Hill* – NSW
Reuben MARTIN – *Broken Hill* – NSW
Willow THOMAS – *Whitehill* – QLD

Undergraduate Certificate in Theology

Riley TURNER – *True North* – WA

The Christian and Missionary Alliance of Australia

Master of Leadership

Aman GUPTA – *Wynnum Manly* – QLD

Graduate Certificate in Arts

Levi TRUONG – *Springvale Vietnamese* – VIC

Graduate Certificate in Intercultural Ministry

Jordan HARRISON – *Woden Valley* – ACT
Stuart SIMMONDS – *Wynnum Manly* – QLD

Diploma of Christian Studies

Sharnay ORMAZABAL – *Woden Valley* – ACT



Together we will be stronger and better resourced to meet the ministry formation needs of our churches as we seek to extend the Kingdom of God.

Neale Meredith

Principal & CEO

Australian College of Ministries



Global Mission Partners

Global Mission Partners is grateful for the partnership and support provided by many of the worshipping communities throughout NSW/ACT.

Over the past year, Global Mission Partners has experienced one of the biggest changes any organisation can face, that being a leadership transition from John Gilmore to myself. Coupled with a number of large-scale natural disasters and ongoing debates regarding the Voice to Parliament and indigenous affairs, our collective dependence on the Spirit of Jesus to sustain us has never been greater.

We continue to serve communities facing hardship and provide Christian witness across 12 countries, thanks to our Churches of Christ Overseas Aid (COCOA) and International Church Partnership (ICP) partners, and also nationally, with our Indigenous Ministries Australia (IMA).



Community waits as a borehole is installed, Showers of Blessing, Zimbabwe.



International Church Partnerships

Numerous stories of faith have been emerging from our International Church Partnership (ICP) partners. Hundreds baptised in the remote villages of PNG, dozens committing their lives to Jesus in the hill tribe communities of Bangladesh and over 150 church planters gathered this year in Indonesia.



Worship at Lautoka Church, Fiji.



Churches of Christ Overseas Aid

I had the privilege of meeting with our Churches of Christ Overseas Aid (COCOA) partners in Thailand this year. Each of these partners is led by passionate and credible leaders, worthy of our support and prayers. They are delivering peace training, providing access to clean water, opening schools in slums and responding to disasters.



Indigenous Ministries Australia

In June I travelled to Dareton on the NSW/VIC border, to visit a project supported by our Indigenous Ministries Australia (IMA). Back in 1944, a lady called Violet Waters, prayed that God would provide the resources to care for the young people in the Dareton town area and that an Aboriginal ministry would be established. Over 50 years of faithful prayers later when Vi was 99 years old and shortly before she passed, her prayer was answered.

The local Church of Christ merged with the Uniting church to consolidate their mission activities and together, with the leadership of John and Ruth Saulo, they started the youth centre out of a need to serve the local Indigenous young people.

When I visited, it was a hive of activity. Young people flowing in and out, doing craft, playing table tennis and PlayStation, sitting around the outdoor fire pit chatting, eating the food provided. The young people welcomed me into their space to play, eat and laugh.

“ Hundreds baptised in the remote villages of PNG.”



Tailoring Course, Hosanna Ministries, India.

These are just a few expressions of the many ministries Global Mission Partners, as part of the Australian Churches of Christ, has the honour of being a part of. Together, I hope we can create many more life-changing partnerships into the future.



John Lamerton
Executive Officer
Global Mission Partners



“In this season, are we willing to follow Jesus’ example and die to self, our hopes, our dreams, our agendas?”

— Victor Tee
Conference Executive President

The year in review

Financial Report

By **Scott Griffiths**
Chief Operating Officer
Fresh Hope Communities

The financial result for Churches of Christ in NSW for the year ending 30 June 2023 improved relative to the previous financial year.



Earnings from financial investments under management were very positive for the year, with an average return of 11% of funds invested.

Increasing interest rates helped to contribute this result with approximately 40% of funds invested in fixed interest products.

The costs of redress obligations continue to increase which has had an adverse impact on earnings for the year ending 30 June 2023, with this trend likely to continue. Rental income from Conference Governed properties has increased steadily over the past 3 years which is helping to fund important initiatives of the Network Resource Team and the Churches of Christ network more broadly.

Fresh Hope Communities

The financial year ending 30 June 2023 was one of contrast in terms of the financial performance for the year for Fresh Hope Communities. The lingering impacts of the COVID pandemic have continued to adversely affect the financial performance of our Residential Care services, a situation which continues to be felt across the entire industry.

Strong earnings in our Retirement Living communities and Venues sites have helped to fund losses in our Residential



Care services. The return of school camps from the COVID induced years has seen the Tops flourish this year given this was the first year since 2020 the site hasn't been impacted at all by COVID-related, mandated closures.

The completion of future communities at Kiama, East Maitland and Marrickville in the back half of 2023 will continue to improve earnings and will enable Fresh Hope Communities to deliver on its social promise of providing important public benevolence to the communities we serve.

The Churches of Christ Property Trust

The Churches of Christ Property Trust produced a very strong result for the financial year ending 30 June 2023, on the back of strong investment earnings and a positive year for the investment markets generally. As a result, the Churches of Christ Property Trust was able to continue to provide very competitive interest rates to its customers, both for deposits held and loans provided.

Church loans increased by 18% throughout the year and deposits invested into the Churches of Christ Investment Fund by active Churches in the network grew by 35%. This is a reflection of the Property Trust board continuing to ensure the provision of competitive deposit rates, especially when the cash rate was at an all time low of 0.10% in mid-2022.

Financial report

2022-23

Revenue	FY23 \$'000	FY22 \$'000	Change %
Fees from residents, clients, students and customers	38,298	34,633	11%
Government and other funding	45,274	49,440	(8%)
Interest, dividends and other investments revenue	3,792	7,173	(47%)
Other revenue	415	2,482	(83%)
Total revenue	87,778	93,728	(6%)

Expenditure	FY23 \$'000	FY22 \$'000	Change %
Staff costs	60,763	67,717	10%
Operational and care services	3,297	4,537	27%
Hospitality services	7,238	6,086	(19%)
Property, utilities, depreciation and amortisation	13,394	13,862	3%
Administration	11,200	8,968	(25%)
Other expenditure	908	1,365	33%
Total expenditure	96,800	102,535	6%

Net Profit / (loss)	(9,021)	(8,807)
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Other significant items	FY23 \$'000	FY22 \$'000
Gains / (losses) from market movements in investments	3,300	(18,480)
Gains / (losses) from property valuations and asset sales	5,710	31,685
Total Gains / (losses) from assets	9,010	13,205

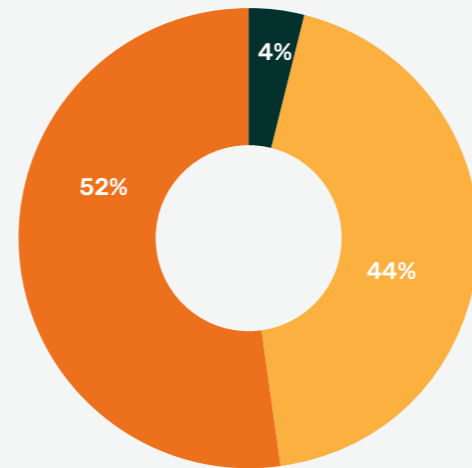
Total Profit / (loss)	(11)	4,398
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Financial report

2022-23 cont.

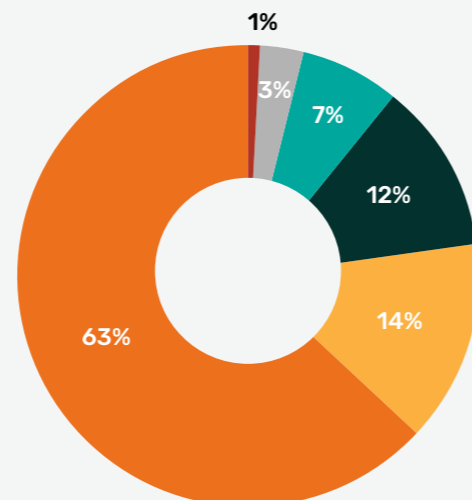
Revenue

Where did our revenue come from?	FY23 (\$m)
Government and other funding	45.3
Fees from residents, clients, students and customers	38.3
Interest, dividends and other investments revenue	3.8
Other revenue	0.4
Total Revenue	87.8



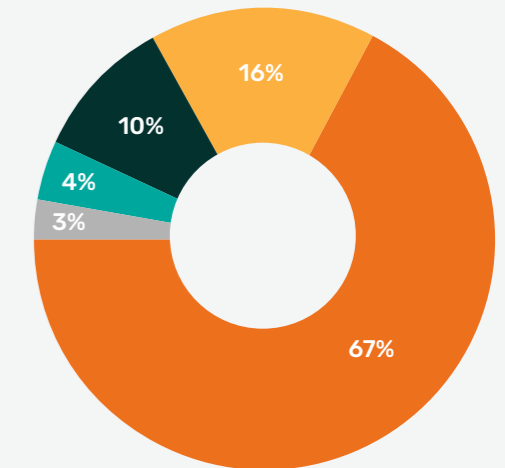
Expenditure

Where did we spend our revenue?	FY23 (\$m)
Staff costs	60.8
Property, utilities, depreciation and amortisation	13.4
Administration	11.2
Hospitality services	7.2
Operational and care services	3.3
Other expenditure	0.9
Total Expenditure	96.8



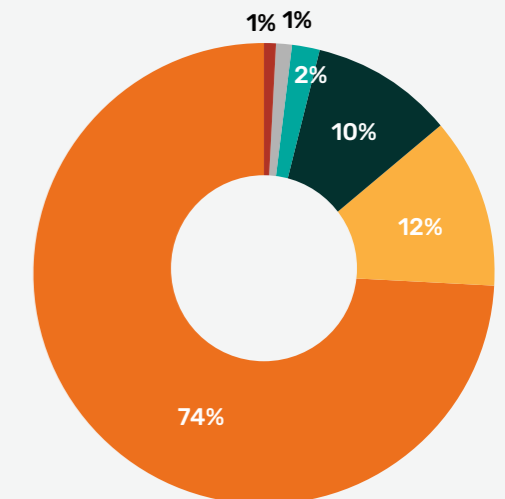
Revenue by service type

Revenue by service type	FY23 (\$m)
Residential Care Services	59.2
Venues and temporary accommodation	13.9
Retirement Living	9.1
Network resource team and chaplaincy	3.5
Investments, properties and Trust loans	2.1
Total Revenue	87.8

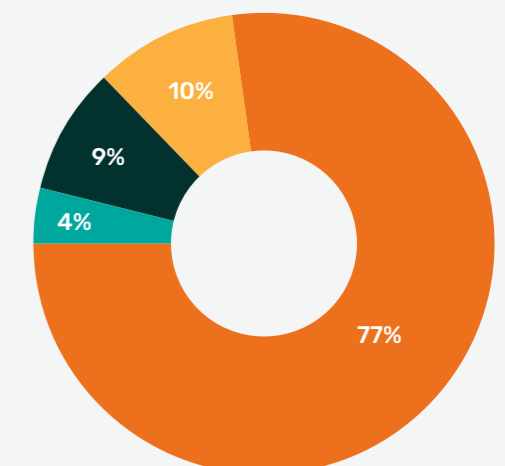


Assets and Liabilities

Composition of our Assets	FY23 (\$m)
Fixed assets and property	410.5
Investments - property	64.5
Investments - equities and financial	52.2
Receivables and other	12.3
Church Loans	7.1
Cash	6.2
Total Assets	552.8



Composition of our Liabilities	FY23 (\$m)
Refundable deposits - aged care	246.1
Provisions, loans & trust deposits	30.9
External loans	30.0
Payables and accruals	14.5
Total Liabilities	321.5



Special Meeting of Conference Convened

Minutes

Date 28 March 2023
Time 7.05 pm–7.40 pm
Location Level 3, Suite 301
Building 1B
Homebush Bay Drive
Rhodes NSW 2138
and Via Zoom

MEETING OPEN

1. Welcome

The Chair opened the meeting at 7.05 pm after declaring a quorum. He welcomed members and delegates as well as members from the affiliating churches to the 2023 Special Meeting of Conference Convened. The Chair led the meeting in prayer.

2. Apologies

There were no apologies received.

3. Address

The Chair noted that on 16 December 2022, a Notice of the proposed Special Meeting of Conference Convened was issued to all members, in accordance with clause 7 of the Constitution to consider applications for affiliation received from Sydney Manna Church and Open House. Explanatory information was also distributed regarding Notices of Motion 1 and 2.

No objections to the proposed affiliations were raised during the period of notice, which closed on 14 February 2023. Delegates were reminded that no objections could be raised in this meeting. Both churches had supplied all the required documentation to be eligible to affiliate.

The Chair acknowledged that Sydney Manna church had been with our family of churches for many years and that the affiliation application sought to correct an administrative oversight.

Two short videos were played highlighting the respective ministries of the two affiliating churches, Sydney Manna church and Open House (Church of Christ).

The Acting Executive Ministry Director, Anne Simpson, addressed attendees briefly.

4. Notices of Motion (by poll)

The Chair read each of the Notices of Motion and there was no discussion of them.

Voting meeting attendees entered the voting room at 7.34 pm where an electronic ballot was then conducted.

Notice of Motion 1

“That the Special Meeting of Conference Convened approve the affiliation application made by Sydney Manna Church ABN 67240620178

MOVED: Name: Victor Tee Conference President/Chair
Motion **CARRIED** (by majority).

Notice of Motion 2

“That the Special Meeting of Conference Convened approve the affiliation application made by Open House (Church of Christ) ABN 92135393450.

MOVED: Name: Victor Tee Conference President/Chair
Motion **CARRIED** (by majority).

Non-voting meeting attendees returned to the meeting at 7.38 pm. The Chair confirmed the results of the matters determined by poll and encouraged all participants to welcome the two churches into the Network.

5. Meeting Close

The Chair advised that he was looking forward to the gathering of Conference, most likely at Collective later this year.

The Acting Executive Ministry Director led a closing prayer at the Chair’s request. There being no further business, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 7.40 pm.

Annual Conference

AGM 22-23 Minutes



Date 15 November 2022
Time 7.35 pm–8.32 pm
Location Level 3, Suite 301
 Building 1B
 Homebush Bay Drive
 Rhodes NSW 2138
 and Via Zoom

MEETING OPEN

1. Welcome

The Chair opened the meeting at 7.35 pm and welcomed members and delegates to the 2022 Annual Conference. The Chair led the meeting in prayer.

2. Apologies

Apologies were received from the following people and churches for the 2022 Annual Conference

- Jonno Prince, New Day
- Edwina Blair, Engage Community Church
- Mark Curtis, Broken Hill Church of Christ
- John Owens, Engage Community Church
- Willy Vandenberg, Lower Blue Mountains Church of Christ

3. Address

A short video was played highlighting key moments for the movement in 2022. The Executive Ministry Director, Daz Farrell, addressed attendees. The Chair noted the recent announcement that the movement had reverted to the name 'Churches of Christ'.

4. Notices of Motion (by poll)

The Chair noted that on 18 October 2022, a Notice of the Business to be Brought Forward at the 2022 Annual Conference was sent to all members, in accordance with Regulation (g) to the Constitution. Explanatory information was also distributed regarding Notices of Motion 4 and 5.

The Chair read each of the Notices of Motion, and invited members to raise questions. There was no discussion of the Notices of Motion.

Non-voting meeting attendees left the meeting at 8.17 pm. An electronic ballot was conducted.

Notice of Motion 1

"That the minutes of the Annual Conference of Churches of Christ in NSW held 6 November 2021 as circulated be adopted as a true and accurate record of that meeting."

MOVED: Name: Mike McGarrity Church: Connect Church Engadine
SECONDED: Name: Steve Martin Church: Living Hope Maitland
 Motion **CARRIED** (by majority).

Notice of Motion 2

"That the Annual Reports 2021/2022 as circulated be adopted".

MOVED: Name: Ian Phillips Church: Tweed Heads Church of Christ
SECONDED: Name: John Latta Church: Tweed Heads Church of Christ
 Motion **CARRIED** (by majority).

Notice of Motion 3

"That pursuant to Clause 27 (d) of the Churches of Christ in NSW Constitution, the annual audit summary for 2021/22 as circulated be adopted."

MOVED: Name: Troy Blair Church: Engage
SECONDED: Name: John Dicker Church: Hurstville Church of Christ
 Motion **CARRIED** (by majority).

Notice of Motion 4

"That pursuant to clause 26 of the Constitution of the Conference of Churches of Christ in New South Wales that the resolution of Conference Executive of 10 October 2022 in the following terms:

"That pursuant to clause 26 of the Constitution, Regulation (j) of the Constitution, for the purpose of the Annual General Meeting of Conference to be held on 15 November 2022, be deemed to be amended by replacing "six weeks" with "thirty (30) days", be confirmed and approved."

MOVED: Name: Tanwin Tanoto Church: Hurstville Church of Christ
SECONDED: Name: Viera Tan Church: Hope and Harvest
 Motion **CARRIED** (by majority).

Notice of Motion 5

"That in respect of Notice of Motion No. 6, to be brought to this Conference Convened, that strict compliance with clause 28(b) of the Constitution of the Conference of Churches of Christ in New South Wales (which provides "six weeks" notice to the Administration Co-ordinator of the intention to propose any amendment of the Constitution shall be given in writing, signed by the proposer"), be waived."

MOVED: Name: Steven Martin Church: Living Hope
SECONDED: Name: Elizabeth Atkin Church: Bowral Church of Christ
 Motion **CARRIED** (by majority).

Notice of Motion 6

"That clauses 2(a), 2(b) and 2(d) of the Constitution be replaced as follows:

- (a) clause 2(a) of the Constitution of the Conference of Churches of Christ in New South Wales ("Constitution") which presently provides:
- (a) Any Church desirous of affiliation with Conference shall forward to the Administration Co-Ordinator at least twelve weeks before the date of the next Annual Conference, an application for affiliation which shall be submitted to such Annual Conference' be removed and replaced with:
- (a) Any Church desirous of affiliation with Conference shall forward to the Administration Co-Ordinator an application for affiliation which shall be submitted to Conference Convened at least twelve weeks before:
 - (i) the date of the next Annual Conference; or
 - (ii) the date of any Special Meeting of Conference that is convened in accordance with clause 7 of this Constitution, whichever is earlier'
- (b) clause 2(b) of the Constitution which presently provides:
 - (b) Notice of any application for affiliation and the name of any Church applying for affiliation shall, within not less than ten weeks before such Annual Conference, be sent to each of the Conference Churches be removed and replaced with:
 - '(b) Notice of any application for affiliation and the name of any Church applying for affiliation shall, not less than ten weeks before the next meeting of Conference Convened to be held after receipt of that notice, be sent to each of the Conference Churches'
- (c) clause 2(d) of the Constitution which presently provides:
- (d) Any objections by any Conference Church, Conference Executive or Ministry Team to any Church applying for affiliation, must be stated in writing and be in the hands of the Administration Co-Ordinator six weeks prior to the next Annual Conference. the Administration Co-Ordinator shall arrange for the Ministry Team, Advisory to meet representatives for the applying Church and the objectors to hear evidence relating to such objections, and to make a recommendation to Conference Convened on the application for affiliation' be removed and replaced with:

- (d) Any objections by any Conference Church, Conference Executive or Ministry Team to any Church applying for affiliation, must be stated in writing and be in the hands of the Administration Co-Ordinator six weeks prior to the meeting of Conference Convened referred to in subclause (a) of this clause. The Administration Co-Ordinator shall arrange for the Ministry Team, Advisory to meet representatives of the applying Church and the objectors to hear evidence relating to such objections, and to make a recommendation to Conference Convened on the application for affiliation.”

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

SECONDED: Name: Grant Pleffer Church: Liberty

Motion **CARRIED** (by majority).

Non-voting meeting attendees returned to the meeting at 8.23 pm. The Chair confirmed the results of the matters determined by poll.

5. Notices of Motion (by ballot)

Ms Jen Tjoa, as Returning Officer, chaired the meeting in order to conduct the voting on the matters to be determined by ballot.

Notice of Motion 7

“That pursuant to Clauses 8 and 9 of the Churches of Christ in New South Wales Constitution, the following member be appointed Conference President for the Conference Year commencing 15 November 2022: Mr Victor Tee”

Result: **ELECTED** by majority.

Notice of Motion 8

“That pursuant to Clauses 9 of the Churches of Christ in New South Wales Constitution, the following members be appointed to Conference Executive for the Conference Year commencing 15 November 2022:

- Mrs Jenni Gainer
- Mrs Colette Harrison
- Mr Michael McGarrity
- Mr Ian Phillips
- Mr Stephen Toomey
- Mr Tom Altobelli
- Mrs Veralisa Tan”

Result: **ELECTED** by majority.

Notice of Motion 9

“That, the following member be appointed to the Property Trust from 15 November 2022 for a term to be determined by the Property Trust in accordance with the Churches of Christ in NSW Incorporation Act 1947: Mr Christopher Emmanuel.”

Result: **ELECTED** by majority.

The President resumed chairing. He congratulated the newly appointed members of Conference Executive and the Property Trust. He thanked outgoing members Paul Campey and Emily Drough for their contribution to Conference Executive.

6. Prayer for Conference Executive

The Executive Ministry Director led the meeting in prayer for Conference Executive. There being no further business, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 8.32 pm.





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