

Book of Reports

Annual General Meeting

23 NOVEMBER 2025



LIVING SHARING GROWING
Jesus' love His hope with all in grace together

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OUR MISSION



LIVING SHARING GROWING
Jesus' love His hope with all in grace together

OUR VISION

WE ARE A **VIBRANT** MULTI-ETHNIC CHRISTIAN
CHURCH **EQUIPPING** AND **EMPOWERING**
DISCIPLES OF ALL AGES
IN **ADVANCING HIS KINGDOM**
LOCALLY AND GLOBALLY
BY **LIVING** FULLY, **SHARING** BOLDLY
AND **GROWING** PURPOSEFULLY
IN THE LIFE-TRANSFORMING **GRACE**
OF JESUS CHRIST.

At LifeWay we are committed to **LIVING, SHARING,** and **GROWING** as empowered disciples of Jesus Christ. Our belief that Jesus Christ is the Saviour, who has reconciled us to God through his death on the cross, guides and motivates our actions as a church.

LIVING PRAISE



OUR CORE VALUES

As disciples we are called to follow Jesus with our lives.

Discipleship is an intentional pursuit as we seek to walk Jesus' way and become more and more like him each day. Here at LifeWay our spiritual core values reflect that desire to embody lives of

LIVING PRAISE which bring honour and glory to his name.



P

Pray
DEVOTEDLY

Prayer is the lifeblood of the Christian. We take everything to God in prayer, not hoping that our prayer will change God, but hoping that our prayer will change us.

Matthew 6:5- 5, Philippians 4:4-7, Ephesians 6:18-20



R

Read
**GOD'S WORD
DAILY**

Luther said that we are to 'so love God that we keep his word holy and gladly hear and learn it.' Growing in grace begins with a willingness to be lifelong students at the foot of Jesus, and purposefully grow into maturity in Christ through his Word.

Psalms 119:105, John 8:31-32, Isaiah 55:11, Colossians 3:16, 2 Timothy 3:16-17, Hebrews 4:12, Ephesians 4:15-16, Colossians 1:9-10, 1 Peter 2:2, 2 Peter 3:18



A

Attend
**WORSHIP
INTENTIONALLY**

We gather weekly in worship to be transformed by the grace of God as we are equipped by God's word and nourished at his table. We gather to receive in his presence and to celebrate his living presence among us.

Luke 24:30-32, Psalm 95:6-7, 1 Chronicles 16:28-29, Ephesians 2:8-9, Ephesians 5:18b-20



I

Invest
**IN REAL
RELATIONSHIPS
FOR SPIRITUAL
GROWTH**

Living in relationship with others is what we were created for. We build among us a community of welcome, love, encouragement and support. We take every opportunity to grow in grace together through Christian fellowship as we build lasting relationships based on faith, acceptance and respect.

1 Thessalonians 2:8, Acts 2:42-47, Philippians 2:1-4, Colossians 3:12-15, John 13:34-36



S

Serve
**IN, THROUGH
AND BEYOND
THE
CONGREGATION**

"Each one should use whatever spiritual gift you have received to serve others." 1 Peter 4:10. We are strongest when all partners in this faith community discover and use their spiritual gifts to serve God's mission and his people, and share his hope both locally and globally.

Matthew 20:25-28, Romans 12:4-8, 1 Corinthians 12:7, 1 Peter 4:10-11, Ephesians 4:11-16, Matthew 28:18-20, Acts 1:8, Ephesians 5:1-2



E

Embody
**CHRIST-LIKE
GENEROSITY**

We are of all people most blessed. Jesus came that we may have life and have it abundantly. Giving joyfully, thankfully, freely and generously is one of the most blessed things we do.

John 3:16, 2 Corinthians 8:1-9, 2 Corinthians 9:6-15, Proverbs 3:5-9, Psalm 112:5, Luke 21:1-4, Acts 20:35

OTHER KEY VALUES



FAITH FORMATION IN THE HOME

We value the home as the primary place for 'incubating faith'. We equip and support parents in modelling and teaching a life of discipleship to their children.

Deuteronomy 6:4-9, Psalm 78:1-7, Mark 10:13-16, Joshua 24:14-15



GIVE OUR BEST

God gave us his very best in Jesus. He deserves no less. In everything we do in ministry, we give God our very best in response to his great love for us.

John 3:15, Colossians 3:17, 23-24, Philippians 4:8-9



'HAVING A GO'

We value people 'having a go' and taking a risk in ministry. We will celebrate and empower people to 'try' new things and to risk failure for the sake of the Gospel.

1 Corinthians 9:19-23, Acts 4:13



ACCOUNTABILITY

We keep each other accountable to our mission and commit to ongoing learning and growing as a congregation as we regularly review God's mission and purpose for us by asking:

1. What worked?
2. What didn't work?
3. What could we do better next time?

**OPERATING
ABOVE
THE LINE**



THE LINE

Adopt the 'can do' mentality

Take responsibility

Be encouraging

Be confident

Focus on the future

Be innovative

Consider our mission

Use imagination

Think of others

Plan for change

Be positive

Live our Core Values



**OPERATING
BELOW
THE LINE**

We can't do that

Make excuses

Do not accept change

Be frustrated

Dwell on the past

Blame others

Put self interests first

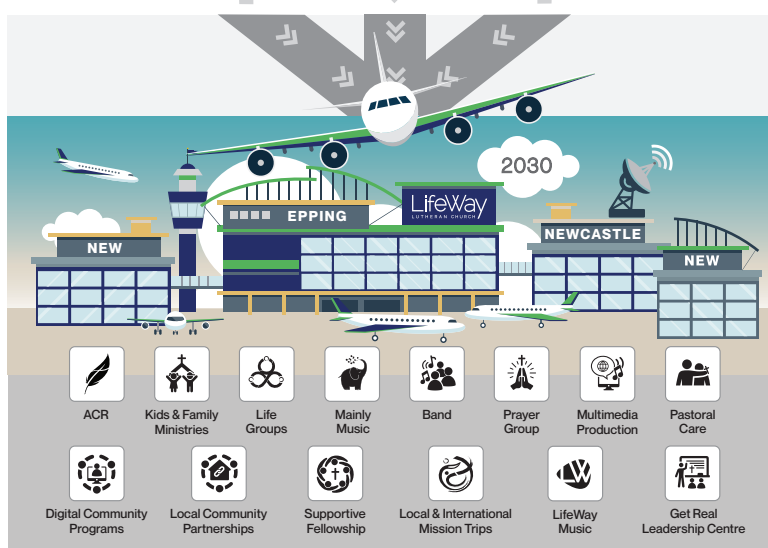
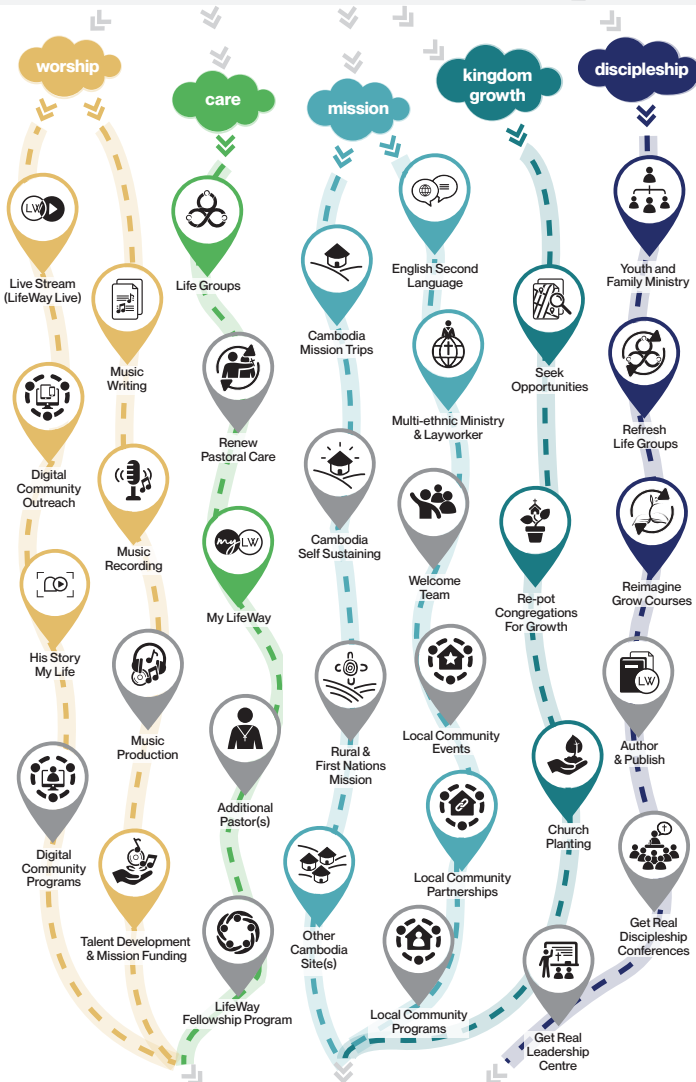
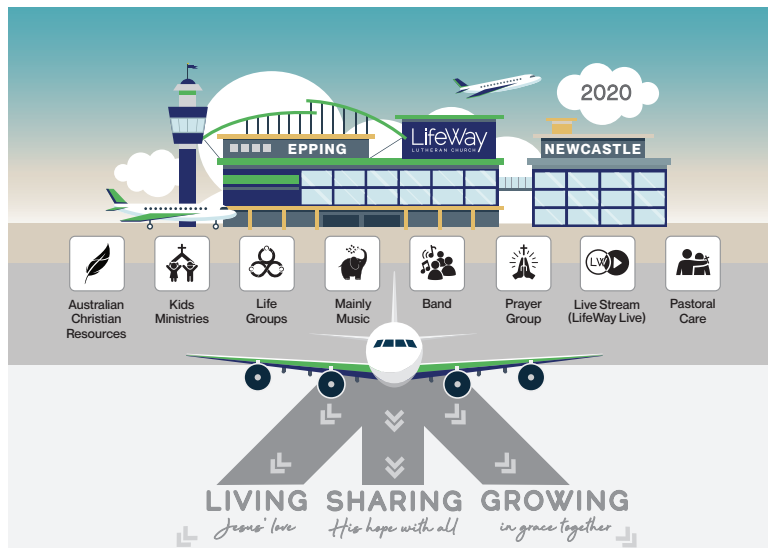
Ignore our mission

Be angry

VISION 2030

BEYOND LIMITS

ONE MISSION ... ONE COMMUNITY ... MANY JOURNEYS ... TOGETHER



AGENDA

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

To be held on Sunday 23rd November 2025 LifeWay Epping, LifeWay Newcastle
LifeWay Illawarra, LifeWay Westside and via video hookup at 11.30am

1. WELCOME
2. OPENING PRAYER - Pastor Nich Kitchen
3. PRESENT – (registration via Slido)
4. APOLOGIES
5. CALL FOR NEW BUSINESS
 - 5.1
 - 5.2
6. ADOPTION OF MINUTES OF THE 2024 LIFEWAY ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
 - 6.1 Minutes of Annual General Meeting held on Sunday 24th November 2024 at LifeWay Epping, LifeWay Newcastle, LifeWay Illawarra and online**
 - 6.1.1 Alterations / Additions
 - 6.1.2 Adoption
7. BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES
 - 7.1 Nil
8. CORRESPONDENCE - Nil
9. REPORTS
 1. Chairperson (Martin Rowney)
 2. Lead Pastors (Mat von Stanke & Nich Kitchen)
 3. Epping Report (Nich Kitchen)
 4. Newcastle Report (Mat von Stanke)
 5. Illawarra Report (Michael Dobie)
 6. Westside Report (Danny Brock)
 7. Chinese Report (Francis Leung)
 8. Cambodia Report (Khit Vibol)
 9. Finance Director's Report (Ed Burke)
 10. ACR Report (John Weiss)
10. NEW BUSINESS
 - 10.1 Account Signatories**

MOTION 1: "Be it resolved that the following LifeWay office bearers be authorised to operate all LifeWay bank accounts, with one to sign, including accounts with LLL, ANZ, CBA, Bendigo Bank and Maquarie Bank Investments: Edward Burke (Finance Director) and Martin Rowney (Chairperson) This motion replaces all prior instructions regarding access to bank accounts"

Moved: Leadership Team

Seconded:
 - 10.2 ANZ Account Signatories:**

MOTION 2: "Be it resolved, that, in addition to Motion 1, the following LifeWay members be authorised to operate the ANZ bank Account, with one to sign: Josianne Weiss, (Office Coordinator) and Sabina Pichler, (Newcastle Finance Coordinator)."

Moved: Leadership Team

Seconded:
 - 10.3 Specific Ministry Pastor for Illawarra**

MOTION 3: "Be it resolved that LifeWay Lutheran Church recommend to and request of the College of Bishops, that Michael Dobie be approved as a Specific Ministry Pastor (SMP) candidate to serve the LifeWay Illawarra community as their pastor."
11. ADOPTION OF BUDGET FOR 2025-2026

MOTION: Be it resolved that the budget for 2025-2026 as presented in the Book of Reports be adopted.

12. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

12.1. Election of Office Bearers

Leadership Team

12.1.1	Chairperson	Martin Rowney (Illawarra)
12.1.2	Vice Chairperson	Vacant
12.1.3	Secretary	Kerri Wegener (Newcastle)
12.1.4	Finance Director	Ed Burke (Epping)
12.1.5	Extra Member (3)	Florry Lung (Chinese) Naomi Moss (Epping) TBC

Word and Sacrament Ministry

12.1.6	Pastoral Assistants	Errol Atkinson (Word and Sacrament) Charles Bertelsmeier (Word and Sacrament) Elise von Stanke (Word and Sacrament) Jo Brownnett (Word and Sacrament) Michael Dobie (Word and Sacrament) Danny Brock (Word and Sacrament) Andrew Njau (Sacrament Only) Phil Wegener (Sacrament Only) Dieter Schmidt (Sacrament Only) Josh Simpf (Sacrament Only - Westside)
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12.1.7 Public Officer: Shane Albances

12.1.8 Seal Holders: Public Officer, Sabina Pichler, TBC

13. NOTE OF THANKS

14. CLOSING PRAYER - Pastor Mat von Stanke

MINUTES

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Sunday 24th November 2024 LifeWay Epping, LifeWay Newcastle
LifeWay Illawarra via video hookup at 11.30am

WELCOME- 11:30am

OPENING PRAYER - Pastor Mark Schultz

PRESENT- See Slido Registration. Confirmed quorum (75 in attendance; minimum number required for quorum is 33).

APOLOGIES- John Weiss, Michelle Brock, Michelle Shepherd

MINUTES OF THE 2023 LIFEWAY ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Alterations/additions: Nil

Motion 1: That the minutes of the Annual General Meeting, held on Sunday 26th November 2023, be accepted.

Motion as above: Moved, and seconded.

Vote for Motion 1: Majority in favour. The motion is successful.

REPORTS

Chairperson (Shane Albances)

This AGM marked the end of Shane's term on the Leadership team. He reflected on his journey as part of the Lifeway Leadership Team over 7 years. During this time, he experienced many challenges and opportunities, which included seeing the growth of additional Lifeway sites, persevering through the COVID pandemic, financial challenges, farewells to some congregation members, and even welcomed some new ministry leaders.

Everything that's happened at Lifeway is part of God's plan. Shane emphasised the importance of the impact of every person in Lifeway.

Shane provided an update on major changes in ministry at Lifeway; Pastor Mark Shultz will be taking the role of Assistant to the Bishop for International Mission, and Pastor Mark Simfendorfer will be stepping down from preaching at Lifeway.

The process of the call to replace Pr Mark Shultz involved many meetings, emails and phone calls to get running. Replacing the Lead Pastor role is not the best outcome. Lifeway is unique in what we do, and the role of the Lifeway Lead Pastor is also unique and very difficult. Getting new pastors is becoming difficult as there is a shortage of new pastors across the greater church. The role would be shared between two senior pastors, and each pastor would take the lead in certain areas of ministry.

Shane will send around a survey about the announcements, and that feedback will be used in the Pastor call process.

Shane thanks everyone for the support everyone has given him in the past 7 years he's been on the Leadership team, and the 9 years him and his family have been at Lifeway. Shane will continue to serve in any capacity where he can add value and encourages everyone to be motivated about the amazing things happening around Lifeway. God will continue to reveal amazing things to us.

Question for Shane from David Burn (in the Slido chat): Since Mark, Mark and Shane are leaving/stepping back, who are the people involved in the call? And are they continuing at Lifeway?

Shane answered: The people involved in the call are the Leadership team, supported by Pastor Mat. The leadership team members are Martin, Kerri, Rachel, Naomi, Florry and Ed.

Lead Pastor (Pastor Mark Schultz)

Pastor Mark reflected on the 18 years he has spent at Lifeway since being installed and attending his first AGM. Mark will miss the desire to live out the vision and mission of God. 58 years ago the Lutheran

Herald hoped that Epping would prosper, and over those 58 years, that is what this congregation has done. Lifeway has opportunities to make an impact globally and around Australia. This is evident through the Lifeway app as there are 600+ downloads from daily verses. One of the joys of being Lead Pastor at Lifeway is that Mark receives emails from people with feedback about the daily verses. It's not only about serving on a Sunday. Mark encourages people to continue to reach out and go beyond the walls of the church. Have a kingdom mindset, instead of a local mindset. Everyone can make a difference in the name of Lifeway to extend God's church. Having people scattered around Australia could make a difference. Lifeway could use each of our gifts from each site.

Mark thanks all the people at the sites for blessing his life. He also gives thanks to the Leadership team. Shoutout to Ed Burke who is basically an unpaid staff member for Lifeway.

Mark reminds us to not expect the next person to be like Mark Shultz; we should welcome them with grace. May Lifeway continue to receive blessings from God.

Newcastle Pastor (Pastor Mathew von Stanke)

Pastor Mat reminds Lifeway of what we have. He expressed sadness over both Pastor Marks Shultz and Simpfendorfer's departure from Lifeway. Many people have stepped up into different roles, and he thanks everybody who has contributed to the running of the church. People are encouraged to come on the roster next year, as there will be a few vacancies.

We look to Vision 2030: the idea that Lifeway prepare and equip people in training.

Pastor Mat Introduced Andrew Njau to the wider Lifeway community. Andrew will do some training with the ALC and will be equipped with the skills to help Mat lead Lifeway Newcastle.

We may have little, but whatever we bring to God will be enough for Him.

Illawarra Report (Michael Dobie)

Illawarra has faced uncertainty. This has made the congregation trust in Him more. Illawarra is building something for the future. Michael gives thanks all the volunteers from Lifeway to help them adjust to the new church building.

Michael also thanks the Leadership team, especially Ed, who helped managed their finances. Also, thank you to Pastor Mark for his pastoral management, and for having a go at things that are outside of his norms.

Westside Church Planter (Danny Brock)

Alterations / Additions: Women's bible study at 7pm, not 7am – correction to his published report.

Danny emphasises that Westside needs help. 10 months ago, he was ready to give up, as it was only his family and one other person running the church plant as they didn't have enough resources. Now, Westside has outgrown the mission house and need to move to a bigger location. They need to move from an evening service to a morning service.

Westside desperately need 4-8 people to come on the 1st and 3rd Sunday of the month to assist with children, particularly people from Epping.

Question for Danny, What time on Sundays for Westside?

Danny answered: 11:30am on Sunday morning. Venues in Penrith only allow for weekend booking 6 times per year.

Chinese Ministry (Francis Leung)

Pastor Francis had nothing further to add, and so his report stands as presented in the Book of Reports.

Sharing Ministries (Pastor Mark Simpfendorfer)

Pastor Mark had nothing further to add, and so his report stands as presented in the Book of Reports.

Thanks from Sabine Sloan – to Pastor Mark for the work he has done for the church. For doing music, mainly music, and running services. He will be missed.

LifeWay Cambodia Church Planter (Khit Vibol)

Pastor Vibol reflects on his call to Lifeway. He wants to share what they've achieved in the past 3 years. He feels like Moses who led his people to the promised land. Pastor Vibol encourages many people in Cambodia find God and live in the way of the truth and the life.

There has been generous donations to fund the two wheelchairs.

Statistic: Vibol has reached 15,000+ students at the schools.

Finance Director (Edward Burke)

Ed provided some background on securing funding for Wollongong. He explained how they secured the asset and provide the opportunity to meet and enhance Vision 2030. Protect 100% of the proceeds from the sale of the Wollongong church and put in into an investment to provide an income stream to support ministries and mission.

Shane added that for the first time in five years Lifeway has a proposed balanced budget for 2025, as there was a lot of financial pressure over the past few years.

ACR Managing Director (John Weiss)

John is an apology, so there was nothing further to add, and so his report stands as presented in the Book of Reports.

Shane wanted to acknowledge that for the first time in a few years, ACR has recorded a profit in the past financial year. He thanks John and the ACR staff for their work. ACR has also started paying back the loan from Lifeway.

ACCOUNT SIGNATORIES

Motion 2: Be it resolved that the following LifeWay office bearers be authorised to operate all LifeWay bank accounts, with one to sign, including accounts with LLL, ANZ, CBA, and Bendigo Bank: Edward Burke (Finance Director) and Shane Albances (Public Officer). This motion replaces all prior instructions regarding access to bank accounts.

Questions: N/A

Motion as above: Moved, and seconded.

Vote for Motion 2: Majority in favour. The motion is successful.

Motion 3: Be it resolved, that, in addition to Motion 2, the following LifeWay members be authorised to operate the ANZ bank account, with one to sign: Josianne Weiss, Office Coordinator, Sabina Pichler, Newcastle Finance Coordinator.

Motion as above: Moved, and seconded.

Vote for Motion 3: Majority in favour. The motion is successful.

ADOPTION OF BUDGET FOR 2024-2025

Motion 4: Be it resolved that the budget for 2024-2025 as presented in the Book of Reports be adopted.

Motion as above: Moved, and seconded.

Vote for Motion 4: Majority in favour. The motion is successful.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

- Leadership Team, Chairperson, Martin Rowney (Illawarra)
- Leadership Team, Vice Chairperson, Kerri Wegener (Newcastle)
- Leadership Team, Secretary, Rachel Widiono (Epping)
- Leadership Team, Finance Director, Ed Burke (Epping)
- Leadership Team, Extra Member, Florry Lung (Chinese)
- Leadership Team, Extra Member, Naomi Moss (Epping)
- Word and Sacrament Ministry, Pastoral Assistants, Errol Atkinson
- Word and Sacrament Ministry, Pastoral Assistants, Charles Bertelsmeier
- Word and Sacrament Ministry, Pastoral Assistants, Martin Rowney
- Word and Sacrament Ministry, Pastoral Assistants, Michael Dobie
- Word and Sacrament Ministry, Pastoral Assistants, Phil Wegener
- Word and Sacrament Ministry, Pastoral Assistants, Dieter Schmidt
- LCA Synod Delegate: Sabina Pichler
- Public Officer: Shane Albances
- Seal Holder: Public Officer (Sabina Pichler)

Motion 5: That the following be approved in the nominated roles.

Motion as above: Moved, and seconded.

Vote for Motion 5: Majority in favour. The motion is successful.

NOTE OF THANKS

Karen Dobie from Wollongong gave Michael Dobie, Karen Rowney and Ben a note of thanks for their hard work getting the book shelf sorted.

Pastor Mat thanks everyone at Newcastle for the multiple ways they have made things happen.

Pastor Mark wants to thank Mark Simpfendorfer who finishes on Christmas Day. He has served at Lifeway for 30 years. Mark will always fill a hole; preaching somewhere or something needs to happen. He's got a servant heart and always gets the job done. He will leave a hole when he leaves at the end of the year. He has helped shaped Lifeway. In December we will have the opportunity to have a rite of farewell.

Shane thanks Mark Simpfendorfer for helping his family's move and adjustment to Sydney., and making his family feel welcome. He appreciates the personal attention and friendship, and the care he has taken to people.

Karen Albances wants to thank Shane for his role on the leadership team. He has navigated Lifeway through some turbulent times.

MEETING CLOSURE

Closing prayer: Pastor Mathew Von Stanke

The meeting was then closed at 1pm.

LOOKING BACK

HOW WE'VE BEEN LIVING, SHARING AND GROWING
IN THE WORD THROUGH WORSHIP IN 2025



A special acronym by Pastor Mark Schultz for us to remember as we continue the LifeWay adventure:

- L** Live abundantly, Love fully
- I** Intentional and Innovative missional action
- F** Faith filled and Formed by the Gospel
- E** Equipping and Empowering all
- W** Wrestle with the Word, Work missionally
- A** Adventurous prayer & Above the line
- Y** Yes, Jesus loves me. Yes, Jesus use me.

GOD, PREPARE OUR HEARTS FOR WHAT YOU HAVE
FOR US NEXT AND GIVE US A HEART OF FAITH
TO GO WHERE YOU CALL US TO GO. AMEN.

www.lifeway.net.au

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CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

Dear Lifeway Members,

As we come into another AGM, it is time again to reflect on the year that has passed. It has been a fairly busy year for LifeWay, filled with change and at times emotion.

We have said farewell to Pastors Mark Schultz and Mark Sempendorfer, who have both been faithful and much loved leaders within our community for many years.

Soon after, we have welcomed our co-lead Pastors, Pastor Nich Kitchen from Mountainside Parish, New Zealand, and our Newcastle Pastor, Mathew von Stanke into a more senior role.

The leadership team looks forward to continuing to work with Pastors Nich and Mat to build on all the previous hard work that has focused on ensuring LifeWay is true to its aspiration to be a community that truly lives, shares and grows.

Into 2026, the focus of the leadership team will be on continuing to bed down organisational structures within LifeWay and its staffing teams. This is an area which requires disciplined consideration in the context of the church growth that has occurred over recent years.

To ensure ongoing success in respect of the multi-site congregational and community structure we have, there are a number of measures which need to be carefully reviewed and made fit for ongoing purpose.

We are continuing to see progress and positive developments within our communities, with it being particularly pleasing seeing growth in both numbers and

the commitment of individuals in various areas of our ministries.

In the coming year, please consider what you can do as a member to assist in any way you feel called to within LifeWay. There are many initiatives being undertaken across LifeWay, at our emerging sites, with Wollongong and Westside experiencing positive signs and direction during 2025. Our more mature areas in Epping, Newcastle and Asian Ministry (Chinese in Sydney) and Cambodia all have opportunities within them too for contribution across many volunteer areas.

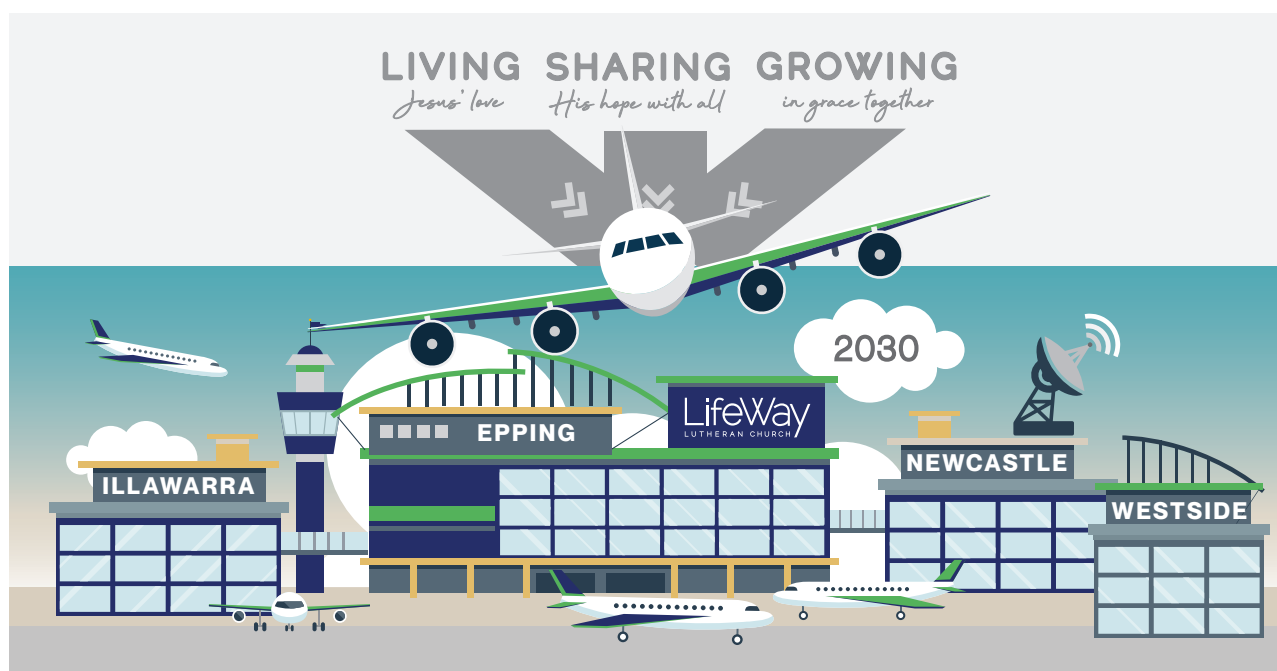
Likewise, our Leadership Team is needing ongoing new blood, with 2026 and 2027 being likely step down points for some who have served for quite a number of years. It is important that there is ongoing replenishment of the team to ensure sufficient volunteer members to work effectively on behalf of the Community.

I would like to thank all of our Leadership Team members this year, Kerri, Ed, Rachel, Naomi and Florry for your diligence, hard work and contribution. Likewise, I would like to thank our staff members, Michael, Danny, Francis, Vibol, Elysia and Josie for all the hard work that you do. Lastly, everyone who does volunteer already, some for many hours at a time, thank you!

I look forward to us all further progressing the LifeWay journey together in 2026

Martin Rowney

CHAIRPERSON, LEADERSHIP TEAM



CO-LEAD PASTOR'S REPORT



Well, there have certainly been some big changes in the LifeWay landscape over the last twelve months.

We have farewelled both Mark Schultz and Mark Simpendorfer, we have called and welcomed Pastor Nich to Epping and 're-called' Pastor Mat into a new role, allowing us to transition from having one solo lead pastor to a team of two co-lead pastors.

That already sounds like a lot doesn't it? However, that's not all! Amidst all that, we are part of the wider Lutheran Church of Australia and New Zealand (LCANZ) which is also undergoing significant changes with the decision of the 2024 National Convention of Synod to allow the ordination of both men and women in the LCANZ and the sale of some significant church properties including the Australian Lutheran College campus on Ward Street in Adelaide, signalling a huge shift in who we call and how we train people for pastoral ministry in the LCANZ.

So, what does this all mean?

What are we to make of all these changes?

We (Nich and Mat) would point everyone's attention to the Greek word '**kairos**'. It's the word often used in the New Testament to communicate a 'right' or 'appointed' time, and when it comes to Scripture, it is God who sets and establishes right and appointed times.

The teacher in the book of Ecclesiastes also uses this idea of appointed times and seasons reminding us in chapter 3 that there is a right time and season for every purpose under heaven. It would seem that God is saying to us, and showing us, that now is a time of change.

We recognise and acknowledge that every change brings with it a sense of grief and loss and that for some of us, that grief and loss may be felt more acutely than it is for

others. It is important for us to allow one another to feel and express that sense of grief and to support one another through it and we pray, that by the grace of God, we (Nich and Mat) can lead and support the members of LifeWay, across all its sites, to do that for one another. However, change, especially when it is God ordained change, in God's perfect timing, also brings with it new things, new life, and new opportunities.

There are undoubtedly also some among us who are excited about these new opportunities and what God might do with us next. And it is also important for our communities to recognise the desire of some people to celebrate new things and to encourage those who want to eagerly race off into whatever future God may have planned for us. At a change in seasons like the one we are currently going through at LifeWay, it is important that we go through them together, being aware and alert to the needs of others as we navigate the change together.

We, (Nich and Mat) have already noticed and enjoyed the process of working to plan the way forward as a team, working together at discerning God's plan for the way forward at LifeWay and we hope that you also might join us as we continue to plot the course and discern God's plan for us together.

With that said, while new pastors and staff turnover inevitably bring a certain amount of change, much about LifeWay will remain unchanged.

We give thanks for the many years of service to the St. Mark's congregation and then LifeWay Congregation of Pastor Mark Schultz, whose visionary leadership has helped establish the LifeWay Community that we all enjoy today. Through Mark's big faith, big ideas, and big thinking, God has given LifeWay a clear vision of what it can be and we remain committed to that vision:



'LifeWay Larry' (Michael Dobie) presenting Mark Schultz with a gift of suitcases at his farewell service on Sunday 2nd February 2025.

'To be a vibrant multi-ethnic Christian Church equipping and empowering disciples of all ages in advancing his kingdom locally and globally by living fully, sharing boldly and growing purposefully in the life-transforming grace of Jesus Christ.'

We give thanks also for the example and faithful courage of Pastor Mark Simpfendorfer in 'having a go' and boldly stepping out in faith and to experiment with different models of church which began with Church in the Park at Kellyville. Also his commitment and dedication to ACR and his ongoing participation in the pastoral care and worship of LifeWay, not only at Epping but also regularly at Newcastle, Westside, and most recently the Illawarra.

At a time like this, it is important to look back and give thanks for what God has done and to honour and give thanks for the people he has used to bring us to this point in his plan for us. However, at the same time it can also be very tempting to look back to the past, to want to relive the past and to rest in the successes and joys that have been our past experiences and perhaps even long to return to the past because it seemed easy or comfortable.

I (Mat) have reflected a lot on this recently. As my wife Elise and I begin the process of learning to parent teenagers, I can't help but be reminded of my own journey through those awkward years and the tension between the desire for increased freedom and independence coupled with the expectation that mum and dad would still pay for everything. The problem for most teens is a desire for independence but a resentment or rejection of the responsibility that comes with it. And yet, if a healthy transition into maturity or adulthood is to be achieved, that tension has to be addressed and reconciled.



The whole LifeWay family came together for a special celebration service on Sunday 1st June 2025 to officially welcome Nich Kitchen & Mat von Stanke as our new co-lead Pastors.

We would suggest that this 'kairos' time of change is something similar for us as a community. It's a time of growth and change in which God, our heavenly Father is calling us into a new level of maturity as the body of his Son. A time in which God is asking each of us as members of LifeWay, to grow in understanding our identity in Christ, to hear and to trust what he says about each of us and the plans and purposes he has for our lives together as his people and to live more boldly in that identity, to know and trust it for ourselves.

And while the end result of adolescence is hopefully a positive and healthy transition into maturity, teenage years are often awkward. We acknowledge and expect that there will be some awkwardness as we figure out what it means to be LifeWay in this next phase of our lives together but we know and trust that, **"He who began a good work in us will bring it to completion"** (Phil 1:6) This is God's appointed time for change among us here at LifeWay.

As your co-lead pastors our prayer and hope for all of us at LifeWay is that in this season of change and stepping into greater maturity, we might all have the courage to keep our eyes focussed forward, on where God is leading us next and that he would continue to grow in us the courage and conviction to go wherever he calls us to go.

Blessings,

Mat von Stanke and Nich Kitchen

EPHING REPORT

As this is my first report to you all, let me begin by saying thank you for your patience. I know that when a new pastor arrives in a community, it takes time for everyone to adjust — both for the people and for me - as I learn how things work and what the future holds in this new season of LifeWay's journey. I am still learning, and it will take me some more time to understand how things work, so please be patient with me a bit longer.

This settling-in period for Julie, Sam, and I has been a real blessing. I feel deeply grateful to be here, and I am confident in God's call to serve among you.

Over the past few months, I've had visits, meetings, and many opportunities to observe and listen. As someone new to LifeWay, I've intentionally taken time to go slow, not rush into new things, to look, learn, and have meaningful conversations with people from across our community. These insights are helping me form a clearer picture of where God might be leading us.

I continue to be inspired by LifeWay's vision statement:

"To be a vibrant multi-ethnic Christian Church equipping and empowering disciples of all ages in advancing his Kingdom locally and globally by living fully, sharing boldly, and growing purposefully in the life transforming grace of Jesus Christ."

This is a beautiful, stirring vision. But the question I ask myself is: how do we *live* it? The rest of this report has this question in the background, as I discuss the ministry across our LifeWay community, focusing on Epping, Illawarra, the Asian Ministry, and Cambodia.

LIFEWAY EPPING

It's a privilege to be part of this congregation. I see a community of strong faith and genuine commitment — people with a heart for God and openness to where he is leading next and a willingness to do things in a different way.

As we look forward, next year I'd like to form a local ministry team for Epping. While LifeWay is one family, establishing a small local team specifically focused on Epping can assist in gaining insight, comprehending local needs, and developing a strategic approach to ministry locally. Moving from the global to the local. I would like to see if as a team we could explore how we can:

- **Deepen community:** Though many of us come from different parts of Sydney, we need to explore how we can connect and strengthen our fellowship. Bringing a sense of community is important given our context. It also allows us to be more intentional in terms of local growth and welcoming visitors.

- **Reimagine children's ministry:** With fewer young ones currently among us in this season of LifeWay, how can we creatively consider new possibilities for engagement and growth in this area?
- **Share the load:** Many serve faithfully, often in multiple areas. How can we look for ways to involve more people in life-giving service, rather than relying on the same few, whilst at the same time being relaxed and flexible so we don't burden people?
- **Enhance our pre worship experience:** Sunday mornings at LifeWay Epping are very busy! Can we find simple ways to create calm and focus before worship begins — especially for those serving?

These initiatives will take conversation, creativity, and time to develop, but they will help us grow together into the next season God has for Epping.

LIFEWAY ASIAN MINISTRY

Pastor Francis and I have had good discussions about the Chinese language community. We both see God at work and sense opportunities to strengthen connections between the Chinese and English-speaking communities, who currently have little contact despite sharing the same space.

In the coming year, we aim to:

- **Have me preach once a month:** I'll continue preaching once a month and commit to staying for lunch (Julie also comes with me in this) so we can deepen relationships within the community.
- **Plan more meaningful combined services:** Rather than simply translating one service, we'll design times of worship throughout the year where both communities participate together. (From experience, this can be great fun; trust me!)
- **Create fellowship opportunities:** Building relationships happens best through shared time and space, so we'll look at new, flexible ways to make this happen.
- **Explore joint activities:** for example, joint children's ministry or activities that reflect the unity of our shared Gospel mission.

These steps can strengthen our LifeWay identity and enhance our multi ethnic connection as a community.

LIFEWAY ILLAWARRA

I've enjoyed working with Michael Dobbie and leading worship at both Oak Flats and Wollongong, now about once every 5–6 weeks. After conversations with

Michael and Bishop Richard (NSW ACT District), we've developed a proposal to help LifeWay Illawarra.

We are asking LifeWay to endorse Michael entering the Specific Ministry Pastor (SMP) program. This would involve LifeWay employing Michael three days a week as a candidate, with the aim of him becoming LifeWay Illawarra's pastor after ordination. He is currently discussing arrangements with the District around a second role, and we'll share details once confirmed. This role would be with the District, not LifeWay.

I've been encouraged by what God is doing in the Illawarra and by the warmth and authenticity of the people there. I look forward to working closely with Michael, the district, and the local community in what I believe are exciting times ahead.

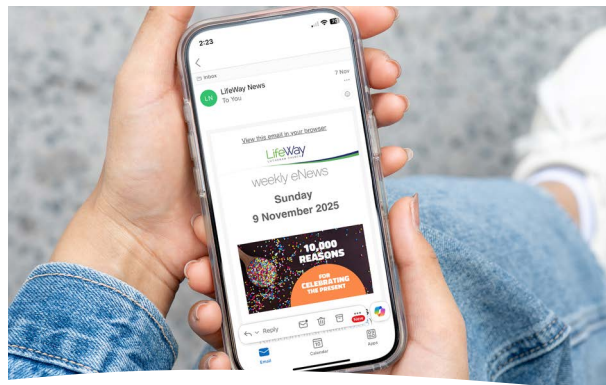
LIFEWAY CAMBODIA

I've had several conversations with Vibol about ministry in Cambodia. This is a season of transition, with the official handover from Pastor Mark Schultz to take place in January when I travel there with the team. Vibol's written report offers excellent insight into what's happening on the ground.

There has been complexity behind the scenes, and it's taken some time to understand the technical and administrative aspects (I am still learning!).

I could give a long and detailed list, but I will share just a few key points:

- **DGR Status (Deductible Gift Recipient):** This status will allow donations to LifeWay Cambodia to be tax deductible. The application is detailed and regulated, requiring proper documentation from both our end and Vibol's. This process takes time, but we're making progress. Transparency and compliance are vital. I encourage patience, as I am aware that this has taken longer than many expected. It is important for LifeWay that we do this properly.
- **Vibol's potential visit to Australia:** I'd love to see Vibol visit LifeWay communities to share about the ministry and attend a District Ministry and Mission Conference. This idea is still developing, but I am open to exploring possibilities.
- **Improved communication:** I would like to strengthen how we share LifeWay Cambodia updates with our wider community. Vibol and I are discussing creative ways to communicate more effectively and regularly.



The LifeWay eNews is sent out every Friday at 5pm. If you are not receiving it, please contact Elysia at elysia.mcewen@lifeway.net.au

COMMUNICATION ACROSS LIFEWAY

One area that Pastor Mat and I have been reflecting on is how we communicate across LifeWay more consistently. This might include:

- Regular updates from the LifeWay Leadership Team
- Local communication at each site, both online and in print
- Ongoing updates through LifeWay News and eNews from all sites.
- A LifeWay calendar for events, ministries, and activities to improve awareness of what is happening in each place and to give more time to advertise and plan for events.

Thank you for reading through this rather lengthy first report — and again, thank you for your patience, encouragement, and welcome.

I want to give a big thank you to those who have been covering me at Epping while I have been at Newcastle and Illawarra. I know that this is a big commitment, and it is greatly appreciated.

I look forward to walking alongside you all as one of LifeWay's pastors as we continue to live out our shared vision:

"To be a vibrant multi ethnic Christian Church equipping and empowering disciples of all ages in advancing his Kingdom locally and globally by living fully, sharing boldly, and growing purposefully in the life transforming grace of Jesus Christ."

God's richest blessings to you all,

Nich Kitchen
EPPING PASTOR

NEWCASTLE REPORT

Well, it has been a significant year of change for all of LifeWay, and that is also true for us in Newcastle. This year my report is more an expression of thanks.

I hope you will indulge me as I firstly, take this opportunity to thank God, and the people of LifeWay Newcastle, for the way they supported me personally through the vacancy at Epping while we awaited Pastor Nich's arrival earlier this year. While that was a very busy and often uncertain time, the people of Newcastle really stepped up and soldiered on without me when I needed to lead a service from Epping or to be increasingly available to support the LifeWay ministry at other sites.

To those of you from the other LifeWay sites, I also offer my thanks for your patience and understanding through that time. While I may not have spoken to you all individually over that period, I do hope that your local ministry leaders felt adequately supported and encouraged in their ministry among you in the absence of an Epping pastor or LifeWay Lead Pastor.

Of course the other major change has been establishing a new pattern and rhythm of working as part of a lead pastor duo with Pastor Nich. This is another space where I have to say thank you to the wider LifeWay community for your patience with Nich and myself as we find our way forward together on this journey.

Taking the reins of any church or ministry when the previous pastor had been there almost 18 years, let alone one as large and complex as LifeWay, is a daunting and often challenging process. So as well as my thanks, I'd also like to ask on behalf of both myself and Pastor Nich, for your continued patience as we work together to

figure out how this co-lead pastor arrangement can work best for LifeWay and also for both of us.

These things have of course, had an impact on a local level in Newcastle. I have not managed to be as involved with the local Ecumenical Pastor's Network here in Newcastle this year and that has had something of a negative impact on my participation and the LifeWay Newcastle congregation's participation in some of the more ecumenical Christian events held in the region this year. This is a big part of how a small church like ours can contribute to making a big difference in Newcastle as we partner with God's people from other churches to impact our city with the Gospel of Jesus. Re-engaging with this network will be a major focus for me in the New Year.

With that said, many things have also continued to move forward here in Newcastle. Our outreach and fellowship team have facilitated a number of events throughout the year to create opportunities for us to invite and engage with our friends and neighbours from the wider community. Events like the Cancer Council "Biggest Morning Tea" fundraiser, Trivia Night, Movie night, Friday Craft group, monthly Men's breakfasts and regular women's lunches have been a great start to increasing our engagement with the community outside of our church walls. A big thanks to the team for making those events happen and also to the young adults from Epping who took a road trip up the motorway to join us for our trivia night. Your presence with us was very encouraging and we hope you might come back next year to defend your title against the young adults from Newcastle.

On behalf of the Newcastle community, I want to also thank LifeWay for the way you have encouraged and supported local Newcastle member, Andrew Njau, in his first year of online studies with Australian Lutheran College through the Maitland training fund and many individual donations towards the cost of his studies.

Most recently, Andrew was able to apply much of this year's learning by working with me to put together and lead our worship service in Newcastle on October 26th and I think I speak for all of LifeWay Newcastle when I say he did an excellent job, particularly in the way he sought to include our local young people in the service.

Andrew, together with other Newcastle members who recently attended the NSW district's "Sacrament and Service leading" workshop will continue to have opportunity to help lead services throughout 2026, not only when I am on leave, but also, from time to time while



Maundy Thursday display at LifeWay Newcastle.



Celebrating John Fletcher's 100th Birthday in January this year.

I am present, so that we can continue to coach them and develop their worship leading skills and provide LifeWay with a greater pool of capable lay leaders across all sites to help address any future pastoral vacancies, long term absences, or holidays.

On a more practical level, I want to thank those Newcastle members who put their hands up to form our Newcastle maintenance team. Since the team was established in late September, a number of major works have commenced to varying degrees. Some retiling and upgrades to some plumbing in our bathroom facilities, some under-floor ventilation to address damp and warping timber floors, and the long awaited and much anticipated resealing and modification to the front entrance of the church to provide proper and safe disability access to the church. I joked about this when I came back from my recent holiday to New Zealand. Establishing the maintenance team was the last thing we did before I started holidays and, in the 4 weeks I was away, more stuff got done than in the last 6 years of me being here. Obviously, I should go on holidays more often!!!

However, on a serious note, I mention all of this because I really wanted to make the point in this report that 90% of what has happened in Newcastle this year is not directly connected to me as the pastor. If anything, I have been more absent and distracted from local Newcastle things than at any time since my arrival at LifeWay in 2019.

I want this report to highlight and to demonstrate what can happen when local people take seriously the task of being God's people together in community.

To show what can be done when each of us just asks the question, 'what part does God want me to play in this community?'

So please let me finish as I began with a great big thank you!

Thank you to all of you who have asked that question and answered faithfully.

Thank you to those who have begun helping out with youth and children's ministry.

Thank you to those who have taken up praying regularly for our community.

Thank you to those of you who host, attend, and lead LifeGroups.

Thank you to those of you who have made things happen because you have heard God asking you to get involved. As long as I am your pastor, I hope to support, equip, and encourage you in whatever way God is asking you to be a part of our community in Newcastle and together, let's see what the body of Christ can do when each member plays it's part!

Mathew von Stanke
NEWCASTLE PASTOR

ILLAWARRA REPORT

At the beginning of the year (Oct 24), I was appointed as the Illawarra Community Connector, to grow contacts in the local community and focus on local mission. The intention was for Mark Simpf to work alongside me, providing care to the existing community.

Well, God had other and bigger plans. With the two Marks leaving to serve God in new calls outside of LifeWay an immediate reassessment of ministry priorities was needed. My role expanded to Local Ministry Leader and a LifeWay wide project related to systems implementation (more on that later).

I reflected on what this meant for the Illawarra community and what part God wanted me to play in leading them. I reflected on the LifeWay vision, which calls us to be *a vibrant multi-ethnic Christian community equipping and empowering disciples of all ages in advancing God's Kingdom. By living fully, sharing boldly and growing purposefully in the life transforming grace of Jesus the Christ.*

Over some years our community has undertaken a healing process and has been showing that it is ready to move on to the next chapter of its journey. It seemed like the next change needed was to nurture the existing community, equipping and empowering disciples so that we have the confidence to share boldly (i.e. go make disciples).

I noted that Jesus started gathering His disciples with **Come follow me** (Matt 4:19) and finished apprenticing His disciples with: **Go make disciples** (Matt 28:19). So, our journey this year has been one of calling people to come follow Jesus, growing from being leader reliant members to active disciples. We have been inviting people to walk on a journey following Jesus together, reminding each other that God loves and uses broken people: even us. Sometimes we have made forward progress and sometimes we have failed, but we've done it together as brothers and sisters in Christ.

What have we done?

So, what have we done? We've leaned into trusting God and obeyed Him when He said, 'Come follow me'. We've prioritised relationships and adopted some key practices that help us grow as disciples and we've left the outcomes to God.

Our focus has been:

- Prayer
- Reading the Bible
- Meeting together (Meet in two or more ways every week to edify one another, worship and remind each other of God's promises).
- Sharing what we know of Jesus

As part of Together for the Illawarra, disciples from our community have participated in the Illawarra Prayer Breakfast and the Hope for the Illawarra evangelism event.

We supported an evangelist visiting from Hungary, which gave our people an opportunity to see what happens when you share the good news with the wider community.

Volunteers came forward to be trained in Discovery Bible Study, Sacramental ministry, prayer and Disciple Multiplication.

I also attended two LCANSW/ACT District Mission and Ministry Conferences:

- Community and Worship.
"For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them" (Matt 18:20).
- Listening and Responding (Practical ways God speaks to us today)

John 10:27 My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me.

Both events were beneficial, with themes that aligned with our ministry focus. There were also opportunities to meet and pray with other leaders and to reflect and grow.

Due to the change in roles the opening of the Next Chapter Book Shop and conversation space was delayed. We have been using the space for Bible study, prayer and training and the opening day is now set for November 18th.

The fruit:

Praise be to God there has been an increase in people praying together, discovering the Bible together and meeting on days other than Sunday. There are more smiles, more prayers and a more hopeful attitude. It's early days, but we are also seeing people being transformed and talking about Jesus with their friends. I've received feedback from several people noting that family members and neighbours have noticed a change in them. They are seeing more joy and less anxiety or irritability. I believe this is only the beginning of what God has in store.

From Strategy to implementation

In addition to local ministry activities the leadership team appointed me to take on a LifeWay wide task, looking at the implementation of duplicable systems across LifeWay. As LifeWay rapidly grew in number of sites, systems and communication had not been keeping up (this is not unusual in rapid growth).

Mark Schultz and I had discussed the need for this before he left, but with Mark accepting a new call

unexpectedly (even to him) it became evident how many procedures and processes were known by him alone. This was not necessarily a bad thing (whilst he was here) but needs to be addressed.

In summary I found that:

- People are on board with the LifeWay vision, but definitions of 'Multi-Site' are not consistently understood.
- Processes have struggled to keep up.
- Communication between sites, staff, leaders and the community need to improve.

I also studied other Multi-Site Churches. What does multi-site mean? How does it work? What are the challenges? Not surprisingly many other communities have faced the same organisational challenges that we are.

In development and ready for feedback are:

- A review of the leadership model.
- Processes to distribute responsibility.
- Standard communication channels.
- Template ministry action plans and meeting rhythms.

I would like to thank Ben Zoljan who has helped with putting documentation together and staff who answered my annoying questions.

We are hopeful that upgrading our processes in the new year will help us be more effective at walking together in mission.

Thanks:

Personally, I'd like to acknowledge and thank all who have supported me on my journey this year including the Northern Illawarra Pastors Fraternal, Move Ministries, The LifeWay pastors and staff and every single member of the Illawarra church community. You have all guided, corrected and inspired me. I'd particularly like to thank my wife Karen who supports and puts up with me in my less than perfect moments.

Praise God for all He has done and all He is about to do.

Let the peace of Christ rule in your heart

Michael Dobie

ILLAWARRA
LOCAL MINISTRY LEADER



Next Chapter

COME AND CHECK OUT OUR SECONDHAND
CHRISTIAN BOOKS & CONVERSATION SPACE

OPEN FOR VISITORS FROM
TUESDAY 18 NOVEMBER

1/8 Kenny St, Wollongong

OPENING HOURS 10AM-3PM
TUESDAY, WEDNESDAY, THURSDAY.



CHINESE MINISTRY REPORT

We believe that a disciple is someone who connects with God, grows in community, serves with one another, and gives to the mission of God.

The evidence of God's faithfulness can be seen all around us, and we are grateful for what God has done in and through us over this last year. Spiritual transformation and life change has been the norm as testimonies of the victory and hope set ablaze a bright and shining light. We exist to glorify God by helping people find and fully follow Jesus.

Give thanks to our Lord for providing LifeWay a unity of Spirit and heart and positioning us in this community to make an immediate and eternal impact. We will continue to pray, love, care, believe, hope and expect to hold wondrous things in the coming days.

Last year was a big year as we continued to take steps toward going from a come and see ministry to becoming a dynamic go and show movement. It was incredible to take a moment to recall as a congregation to reflect on the lives that have been transformed by God's grace. It has been a wonderful year of mission as we sought to live out God's grace to our neighbours. At the heart of our mission, every member of the congregation was mobilised to share gospel, distributing evangelical pamphlets, serve in evangelical nights, greet visitors as they walk through the doors. An unsung but powerful

ministry was highlighted in our midst. The expressions vary, but the goal is the same as we actively participate in the Spirit's transformation of our neighbourhood. The small acts of love take the form of invitations to dinner, open Bible studies at home. Those acts of hospitality and love take on a more poignant sense of importance in the midst of a world that is self-centred and self-serving. God knows the seeds that he planted and the spiritual fruit that will grow. We continue to seek opportunities for our congregation to grow in Christlikeness through pastoral care and spiritual development. The sermons, Bible study classes, worship, mentoring initiatives, pastoral care are some of the ways we sought to challenge one another to follow Jesus.

We are a church family that seeks to equip the congregation to glorify God, enjoy him forever and see his kingdom come in our neighbourhood. This vision is what connects us, and it also presents us with an opportunity to celebrate the one who wove our individual stories together. We pray with conviction against stagnancy and comfort. We continued to prayerfully refine the framework of our ministry and how our ministry expressions embody the vision of the Chinese ministry of LifeWay Lutheran Church.

Francis Leung

CHINESE MINISTRY PASTOR



Cell group meeting.



Chinese New Year Evangelical night.



Join us for Table Tennis, Fridays from 6pm - 9pm.



Evangelical outing.

2025年活道華人事工報告

我們相信門徒是與神同行、在教會中成長、互相服事、並為神的使命奉獻的人。

我們感謝神在過去的一年裡透過我們所做的一切，宣示神信實的證據，在我們周圍隨處可見。屬靈生命的成熟和生命上的改變，已經成為常態，勝利和盼望的見證，點燃了明亮而耀眼的光芒。我們在地上是為了透過幫助人找到並完全跟隨耶穌來榮耀神。

感謝我們的主為生命之路提供了屬靈和心的合一，並將我們定位在這個華人社區中，以產生立竿見影和永恆的影響。我們將繼續祈禱、愛、關心、相信、盼望並期待在未來的日子裡見證神奇妙的作為。

去年是重要的一年，我們繼續採取積極的行動，從被動的事工轉變為充滿活力進入社區作工。當弟兄姊妹用時間回顧被神的恩典所改變的生命時，真是令人難以置信。今年是宣教的美好一年，我們努力活出神對我們周圍未得救的人的恩典。我們使命的核心是，會眾的每一位成員都被動員起來分享福音，分發福音小冊子，在福音之夜服務，在訪客走進大門時迎接他們。一個默默無聞但強大的事工在我們中間凸顯出來。表達方式各不相同，但目標是相同的，我們都積極參與聖靈對我們周圍的人的轉變。愛的小舉動包括邀請吃飯、在家進行聖經學習等。在一個以自我為中心、自私自利的世界中，這些熱情好客和愛心的行為呈現出更令人深刻鼓舞的重要性。神知道祂所種下的種子以及將會結出的屬靈果實。表達方式各不相同，但目標是相同的，即我們積極參與聖靈對我們周圍的人的轉變。我們繼續為我們的會眾尋求機會，透過教牧關懷和靈性發展，讓他們像在基督裡一起成長。講道、查經班、敬拜、輔導活動、教牧關懷是我們尋求挑戰彼此跟隨耶穌的一些方式。

我們是一個教會家庭，致力於裝備會眾來榮耀神，永遠享受祂的恩典，並看到祂的國降臨在我們心裡。這個願景將我們聯繫在一起，也為我們提供了一個機會來慶祝將我們每個人編織在一起的故事。我們懷著堅定的信念祈禱，避免停滯在舒適中。我們繼續虔誠地精煉我們作神事工的框架，以及其實行的方式，去體現活道信義會華人事工的願景。



At the Moon Festival Evangelical Outing, Saturday 11 October at Nepean River Park, Penrith.

WESTSIDE REPORT

I have heard it said before that church work would be easier if you didn't have to deal with people. Although I have sometimes thought that myself, church is messy, church is broken, church is frustrating. Church is how God chose to work in the world, because church is people, church is what LifeWay Westside is.

Westside is a community of messy, broken, frustrating, chosen, people trying to imitate Jesus by practicing unreasonable hospitality, helping each other become better people in an attempt to make our world a little more like heaven.

2025 has been a foundational year at Westside for our community of grace empowered "Ferals" (what we lovingly call ourselves). It has involved taking a group of people with no church background on a journey into God's loving grace. It's been a process of helping them become disciples of Jesus and equipping them to be a church planting team; tattoos, cigarettes, and swearing included! (I did say messy).

Now, we hope to make 2026 a year of growth for our group of grace empowered ferals, with a bunch of big steps into sharing His grace with our wider communities within Glenmore Park and St. Marys.

With the new school year starting in February we will see the re-launch of Mainly Music in partnership with St. Paul's Lutheran Church, in St. Marys. We will be meeting at St. Paul's, on Tuesday mornings from 10am-12pm. In Term 2 we are preparing to offer a parenting course for

the parents associated with Mainly Music, the parents from St. Paul's Lutheran Kindergarten, and the wider communities and schools we are part of, in the hope of meeting some of the needs we have seen in the area for support of parents and families doing it tough and by meeting those needs, hopefully earn the right to introduce them to Jesus. We will also run at least one Alpha Course, a Marriage Course, and our regular yearly community events across the year.

With our Westside Worship moving to St. Paul's Lutheran Church building at St. Mary's (11 minutes drive from the Mission House) we have been able to develop helpful partnerships with Pastor Mark Simpfordorfer and the St. Paul's congregations efforts to become more involved as part of the St. Mary's community, even now being well known in a local café and the local bakery. All of this while still maintaining and expanding our connections as part of the Glenmore Park community.

God is still at work opening doors and building relationships for us in our community and we give thanks for the way he has broadened our influence into the neighbouring suburb of St. Mary's. But as we have grown and established a regular worshipping community, our needs have also grown.

Pastor Mat and Elise are still joining us once a month to help establish a children's ministry for the children of these new Christian families which will both teach faith to the children but also enable their newly Christian parents engage more easily with the teaching and the worship service in general. We hope that there may be some people from the local Epping community who might be willing to join us on the third Sunday of the month, to learn the ropes from Elise and eventually be able to take the reigns from her in this vital part of the Westside ministry.

Also, now that we have a regular place to worship and a reliable worship calendar, we would also love any musicians to give us some help to lead a couple of worship songs at the beginning of our service on the 1st Sunday of each month.

So if you are part of LifeWay and live anywhere in the Sydney area and have been looking for a way to contribute more to the life of our church, maybe you would consider serving in one of these ways out at Westside. We'd love to see you there.



Danny Brock
CHURCH PLANTER,
LIFEWAY WESTSIDE

CAMBODIA REPORT

“Living Like Jesus Christ”

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

God is good and faithful. In 2025, He has guided and blessed LifeWay Lutheran Cambodia in every step of our ministry. We are called to live like Jesus Christ, and together with our team, partners, and friends, we have brought God's love, grace, hope, and salvation to many people across Cambodia.

On behalf of our team, I, Pastor Khit Vibol, would like to share with you the highlights of what God has done through us this year.

Our Mission

We are committed to bringing **God's love, grace, hope, and salvation** to the people we serve. Through outreach, education, youth ministry, leadership training, and community support, we aim to make disciples of Jesus Christ and equip them to serve their families, communities, and nation.

Ministry Highlights of 2025

1. Children's Ministry

- Expanded Children Outreach at Punnarey Village.
- Weekly Sunday School & outreach: 25–50 children.
- English Class: 8 students.
- Computer Class: 10 students.

2. Youth Ministry

- Sports activities: 4–5 times this year with 35 youths.
- Youth camp: 1–2 times this year with 25 youths.
- Motivation talks & capacity building: reached more than 1,500 youths in high schools.



3. Education & Community Development

- Reached over 2,000 high school students through motivation talks and first aid training.
- Built 1 toilet (4 doors) at Hun Sen Krova High School (\$2,000).
- Donated 11 bicycles to poor students from 11 families to support their studies.
- Donated 1 wheelchair and 1 standing stick to two young men in need.
- Provided scholarships to 8 poor students for their school fees.

4. Leadership & Church Ministry

- Equipped 35 pastors and church leaders with God's Word, training them to better serve their churches and communities.

Testimony of God's Faithfulness

God is good and faithful. He has always provided what we need for the ministry. It is amazing to see how God works through each one of us, turning challenges into lessons and opportunities for growth.

Partnerships

We thank God for the good partnerships we have with both local and international partners, churches, and friends. Your prayers, support, and guidance make it possible for us to continue this ministry. Without you, we could not do as much as we have done.

Challenges & Lessons Learned

We are grateful to God even for the problems and challenges we faced in 2025. They became important lessons that help us improve and serve better in the future.

Looking Ahead: 2026

We hope and pray that with more funds, support, and volunteers, we can expand our activities in 2026. Our vision is to strengthen partnerships, involve more local volunteers, and continue serving faithfully in God's ministry.

Closing & Thanks

On behalf of LifeWay Lutheran Cambodia, I sincerely thank you for your support, partnership, and prayers. May God bless you abundantly.

With love in Christ,

Pastor Khit Vibol

LEADER, LIFEWAY CAMBODIA

FINANCE REPORT



Rite of farewell for Pastor Mark Schultz, Sunday 2nd February 2025.



Easter Sunday display at Epping.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Structural change can be daunting and challenging however through change we can see opportunity. During 2025, we saw the start of a new era with 2 lead pastors being installed. Whilst these times of transition and change may cause great worry, we must remember that our God is the one who holds our future.

So too has LifeWay seen transition and change in the structure of our finances. The Leadership Team continues to engage with professional 3rd parties that form part of our structure including Bookkeepers, Financial Advisers and Auditors. In my 2024 report I noted the requirement to change how LifeWay's income is generated to ensure we best utilise our assets and continue to strive for balanced budgets where possible. You will see in the following charts of this report, the transition in our financial structure, through the different asset categories and how our income has been generated via these different assets.

Wollongong Investments

With the Wollongong Church sale being finalised February 2024, investment of the first tranche of sale funds for \$2.4million was implemented in November 2024. The Leadership Team engaged Fortunity Advice to provide strategic financial advice to ensure transparency and an appropriate investment structure was implemented. In February 2025 after receiving the final tranche payment from the Greek Orthodox Church, we invested a further \$600,000 bringing the total amount investment to \$3 million. During the 10.5 months the funds were invested, LifeWay drew an income of \$137,500 to primarily support LifeWay Wollongong and LifeWay in general. In addition, the investment had grown to \$3,065,145 as of 30th September 2025. As a result, the investment has provided a significant financial benefit to LifeWay of >\$200,000. This is a solid result and provides the foundation for great opportunities in the future.

Maitland Training Fund

The Maitland Training Fund saw growth in its investment funds enabling LifeWay to provide grant funding to Andrew Njau to help with enrolment fees into the Australian Lutheran College to study a Diploma in Ministry. With Andrew commencing his studies, this has encouraged members to further contribute towards his study costs raising a further \$2,100. These funds will be used to contribute towards Andrew's 2026 course fees.

Grant Funding and Ministry

In supporting our Ministries, the NSW District provided Grant funding of \$102,600 for the Chinese Church Ministry and Westside Church Plants. LifeWay continued to also support the Cambodia Ministry, the Chinese Ministry and the Westside Church Plant providing over \$60,000 in assistance. With Grant funding from the NSW District due to wind down over the next 2-3 years, LifeWay will have a greater financial commitment to continue supporting these ministries.

2025 Financial Results

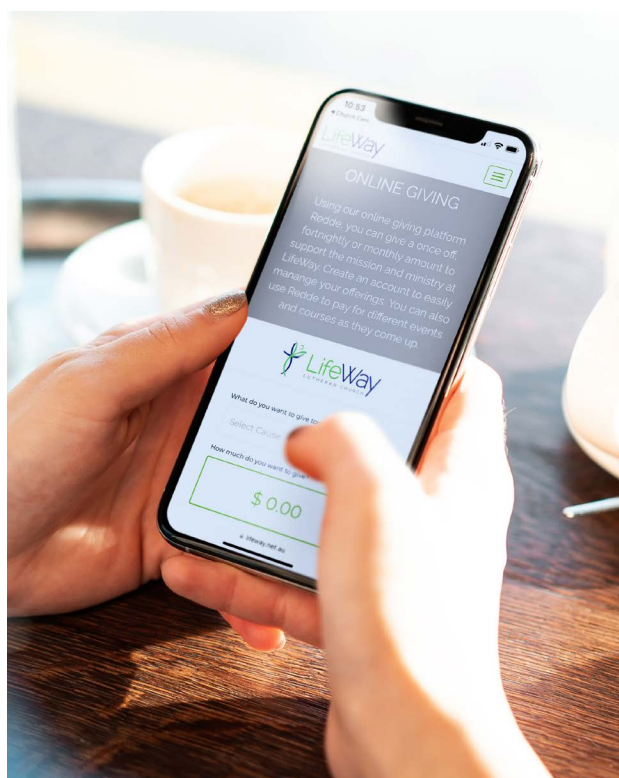
With the aim for a forecasted balanced budget for 2025, LifeWay incurred additional out of budget costs and reduced offerings resulting in a unaudited operating loss of (\$92,783).

The main items of note were:

- Total offerings were \$353,177 which was approx. \$25,000 below the budgeted amount and a change from the previous 3 financial years which was around \$378k. This is also the first year where our total offerings were below our adjusted employment expenses.
- Epping Manse repairs and maintenance costs of \$46,929 completed in preparation for Pastor Nich and his family to relocate to Sydney.
- Additional Church Repairs & Maintenance costs of \$11,879 above our budgeted costs
- Additional employment entitlement costs associated with Pastors Mark Schultz, Mark Simpfendorfer leaving LifeWay and the payment into the Pastor Transfer fund whilst we waited for Pastor Nich to arrive in May.
- Further legal costs of \$6000 related to the next stages of the DGR registry status.
- Positive Items of note within the finances are:
- Investment income was approx. \$6800 higher than budgeted.
- Capital value of Wollongong investment is approx. \$65,000 higher than original amount investment whilst providing \$137,500 in income for LifeWay.
- Our property assets increased by approx. \$1,340,000 after being revalued.
- Our income generated is more diversified than previous years.

Financial Insights:

- 64% - Offerings contributed 64.22% of our total income, down from approx. 80% in FY24
- 32% - Investment income contributed 32.29% of our total income, up from approx. 13% in FY24.
- \$550,813 – Total income received in FY 25 an increase of approx. \$74k on FY24
- \$90,000 – Lifeway's expenses continue to be approx. \$90k higher than our income.
- 61% - percentage of our employment costs against total expenses. Slightly lower than previous years however, forecast to increase in FY2027 as grant funding reduces in line with agreements.
- \$137,500 – income stream generated from the Wollongong Investment to assist with Cashflow
- \$65,000 – Amount the Wollongong Investment capital value grew after approx. \$151,000 in deductions were made for income stream, product and adviser fees.
- \$1,231,000 – the amount LifeWay's overall assets (total equity) increased by courtesy of property assets increasing during FY25.



PROFIT & LOSS / BALANCE SHEET - SUMMARIES

The summary Profit & Loss Statement shown in Figure 1 provides an overview of our financial performance for 2025 with a comparison to the 2024 financial year.

Figure 1 – Summary – Profit & Loss Statement with Previous Year Comparison

	2025	2024	\$ Difference	% Difference
INCOME				
Commercial Property Rent	\$0.00	\$10,389.16	(\$10,389.16)	-100.00%
Rent for leasing Newcastle Church	\$3,282.50	\$4,180.00	(\$897.50)	-21.50%
Offerings, All Sites	\$353,752.57	\$378,921.43	(\$25,168.86)	-6.60%
Facility Usage	\$5,400.00	\$6,808.18	(\$1,408.18)	-20.70%
Special Groups Income	\$354.85	\$1,265.69	(\$910.84)	-72.00%
Other Income	\$177,899.57	\$79,022.72	\$98,876.85	125.10%
ACR Lease Deposit Interest	\$0.00	\$744.26	(\$744.26)	-100.00%
Wollongong Ministry Income	\$509.48	\$0.00	\$509.48	NA
Div/Dist - Income MCQ Investment V59120	\$9,614.18	\$0.00	\$9,614.18	NA
Total INCOME	\$550,813.15	\$481,331.44	\$69,481.71	14.40%
EXPENSES				
Church Expenses	\$78,609.27	\$109,945.63	(\$31,336.36)	-28.50%
Office Expenses	\$28,335.36	\$29,009.19	(\$673.83)	-2.30%
Manse Expenses	\$47,354.63	\$4,349.21	\$43,005.42	988.80%
Worship Expenses (Living)	\$14,164.58	\$15,717.40	(\$1,552.82)	-9.90%
Sharing Ministries/Mission	\$1,695.30	\$4,748.99	(\$3,053.69)	-64.30%
Growing Ministries	\$2,587.61	\$1,868.12	\$719.49	38.50%
Other Expenses	\$73,296.45	\$58,882.06	\$14,414.39	24.50%
Commercial Property Stewart St	\$0.00	\$2,251.60	(\$2,251.60)	-100.00%
Employment Expenses	\$372,711.68	\$364,162.00	\$8,549.68	2.30%
Other Emp. Expenses	\$22,044.38	\$19,858.50	\$2,185.88	11.00%
Staff Education Expenses	\$2,797.24	\$864.48	\$1,932.76	223.60%
Total EXPENSES	\$643,596.50	\$611,657.18	\$31,939.32	5.20%
PROFIT / (LOSS)	(\$92,783.35)	(\$130,325.74)	\$37,542.39	28.80%



Download our app

- 1 Download/install 'Church Central'
- 2 Choose LifeWay under 'find a church' & add as favourite.
- 3 Access all the great features like a daily verse & thought, family resources, news and more!

Available on the App Store | GET IT ON Google Play

The summary Balance Sheet shown in Figure 2, provides an overview of our assets and liabilities. With the investment of the Wollongong Sale proceeds you will note the change of funds from “Bank Accounts Illawarra” to “Bank Accounts Macquarie”. It should be noted under “Other current assets” of (\$54,075) this is a book keeping entry related to how the Macquarie’s investment were initially being recorded after initial investment.

Figure 2 – Summary – Balance Sheet Statement with Previous Year Analysis

	2025	2024	\$ Difference	% Difference
ASSETS				
CURRENT ASSETS				
Bank Accounts, Common	\$90,326.44	\$90,407.15	(\$80.71)	-0.10%
Bank Accounts, Epping	\$19,679.91	\$46,933.60	(\$27,253.69)	-58.10%
Bank Accounts, Newcastle	\$64,987.49	\$62,608.86	\$2,378.63	3.80%
Maitland Training Fund	\$133,081.55	\$139,460.47	(\$6,378.92)	-4.60%
Other Current Assets	(\$54,075.14)	\$479,116.94	(\$533,192.08)	-111.30%
Bank Accounts, Illawarra	\$202,429.39	\$2,807,336.67	(\$2,604,907.28)	-92.80%
Bank Accounts, Macquarie	\$3,065,145.01	\$0.00	\$3,065,145.01	NA
Total CURRENT ASSETS	\$3,521,574.65	\$3,625,863.69	(\$104,289.04)	-2.90%
NON-CURRENT ASSETS				
Church Property, Epping	\$4,522,941.70	\$3,822,941.70	\$700,000.00	18.30%
Manse Property, Epping	\$2,377,000.00	\$2,175,000.00	\$202,000.00	9.30%
Manse, Capex 2020	\$45,671.82	\$45,671.82	\$0.00	0.00%
Church Property, Newcastle	\$2,365,740.00	\$2,365,740.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Manse Property, Newcastle	\$1,087,000.00	\$649,522.45	\$437,477.55	67.40%
Australian Christian Resources	\$614,325.71	\$614,325.71	\$0.00	0.00%
Total NON-CURRENT ASSETS	\$10,967,007.41	\$9,627,529.86	\$1,339,477.55	13.90%
Total ASSETS	\$14,534,253.88	\$13,299,065.37	\$1,235,188.51	9.30%
LIABILITIES				
CURRENT LIABILITIES				
Special Purpose Bank Accounts	\$100,046.24	\$99,065.54	\$980.70	1.00%
Maitland Training Fund	\$56,742.47	\$56,742.47	\$0.00	0.00%
Other Special Purpose Funds	\$115,289.08	\$112,394.10	\$2,894.98	2.60%
Other Current Liabilities	\$4,003.02	\$4,601.88	(\$598.86)	-13.00%
Payroll, PAYG	\$4,457.88	\$6,901.83	(\$2,443.95)	-35.40%
Payroll, Super	\$13,741.89	\$11,843.22	\$1,898.67	16.00%
Payroll, FB Allowances	\$7,509.67	\$414.09	\$7,095.58	1713.50%
Lay 5 - FB Allowance	(\$48.60)	(\$48.60)	\$0.00	0.00%
Total CURRENT LIABILITIES	\$301,741.65	\$291,914.53	\$9,827.12	3.40%
NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES				
Long Term Loans	\$54,872.00	\$61,208.00	(\$6,336.00)	-10.40%
Total NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES	\$54,872.00	\$61,208.00	(\$6,336.00)	-10.40%
Total LIABILITIES	\$356,613.65	\$353,122.53	\$3,491.12	1.00%
NET ASSETS	\$14,177,640.23	\$12,945,942.84	\$1,231,697.39	9.50%
EQUITY				
Congregation Equity	\$14,647,897.75	\$13,302,084.20	\$1,345,813.55	10.10%
Retained Earnings	(\$356,141.36)	(\$260,137.74)	(\$96,003.62)	-36.90%
Current Earnings	(\$114,116.16)	(\$96,003.62)	(\$18,112.54)	-18.90%
TOTAL EQUITY	\$14,177,640.23	\$12,945,942.84	\$1,231,697.39	9.50%

INCOME CHARTS

The following charts provide visual comparisons into the structure of how LifeWay's income is generated as well as other income comparisons between previous years.

Figure 3 – Income Category Breakdown

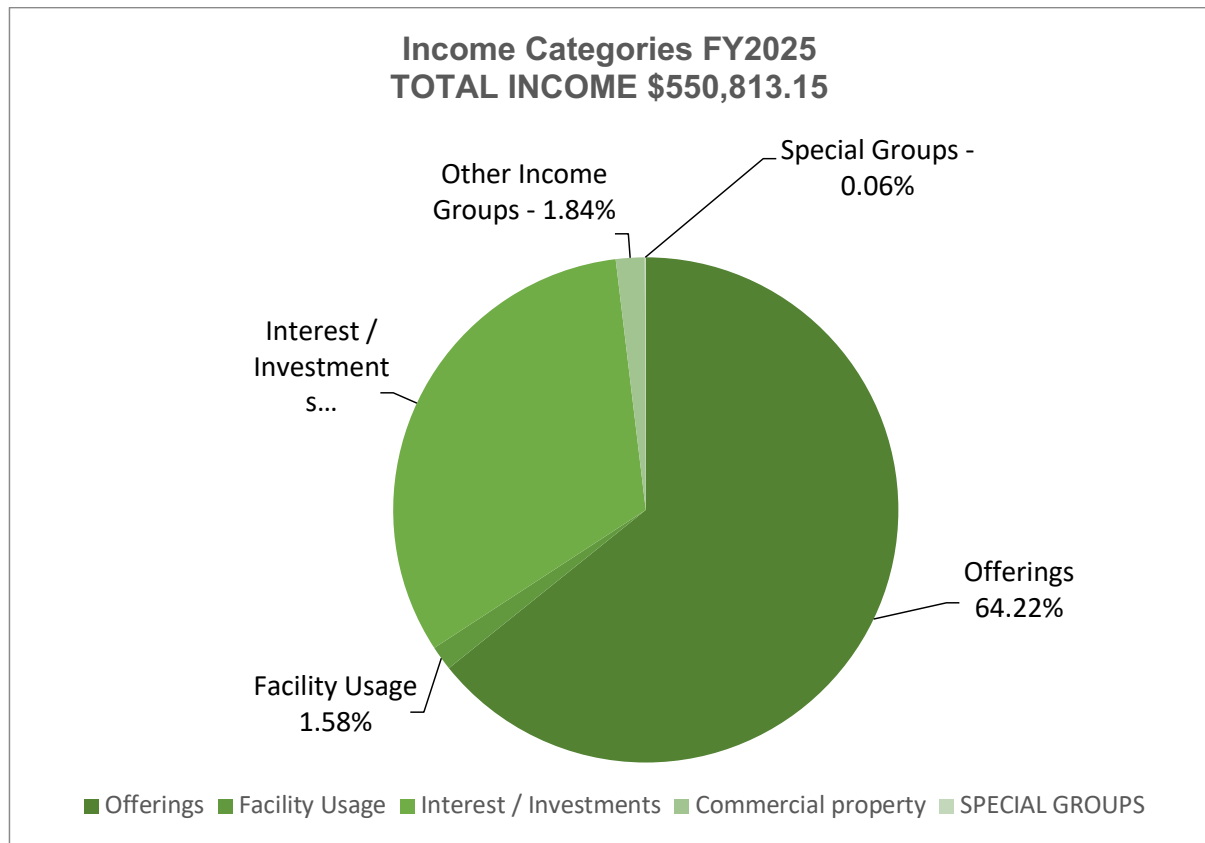
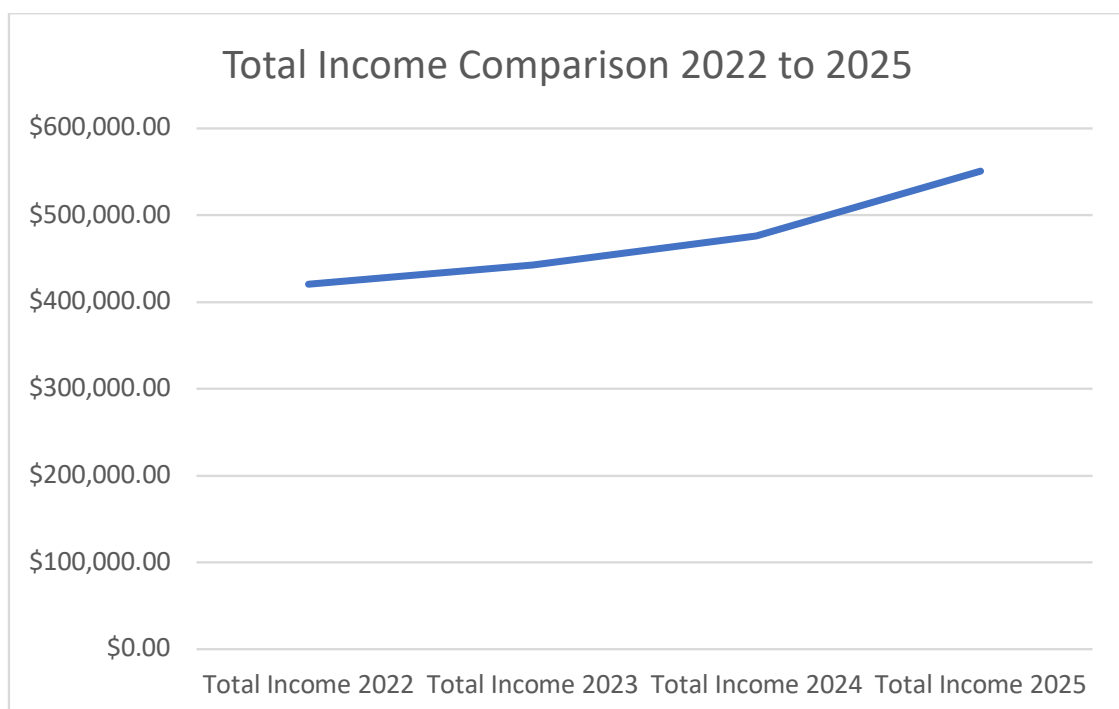


Figure 4 – Total income comparison from 2022 to 2025 has shown an increase from \$420,000 in 2022 to \$550,000 in 2025.



Figures 5 & 6 compare the movement of Offering Income and All Investment income between 2022 to 2025. You will note the structural change especially in 2025.

Figure 5 – Offering Income comparison from 2022 to 2025

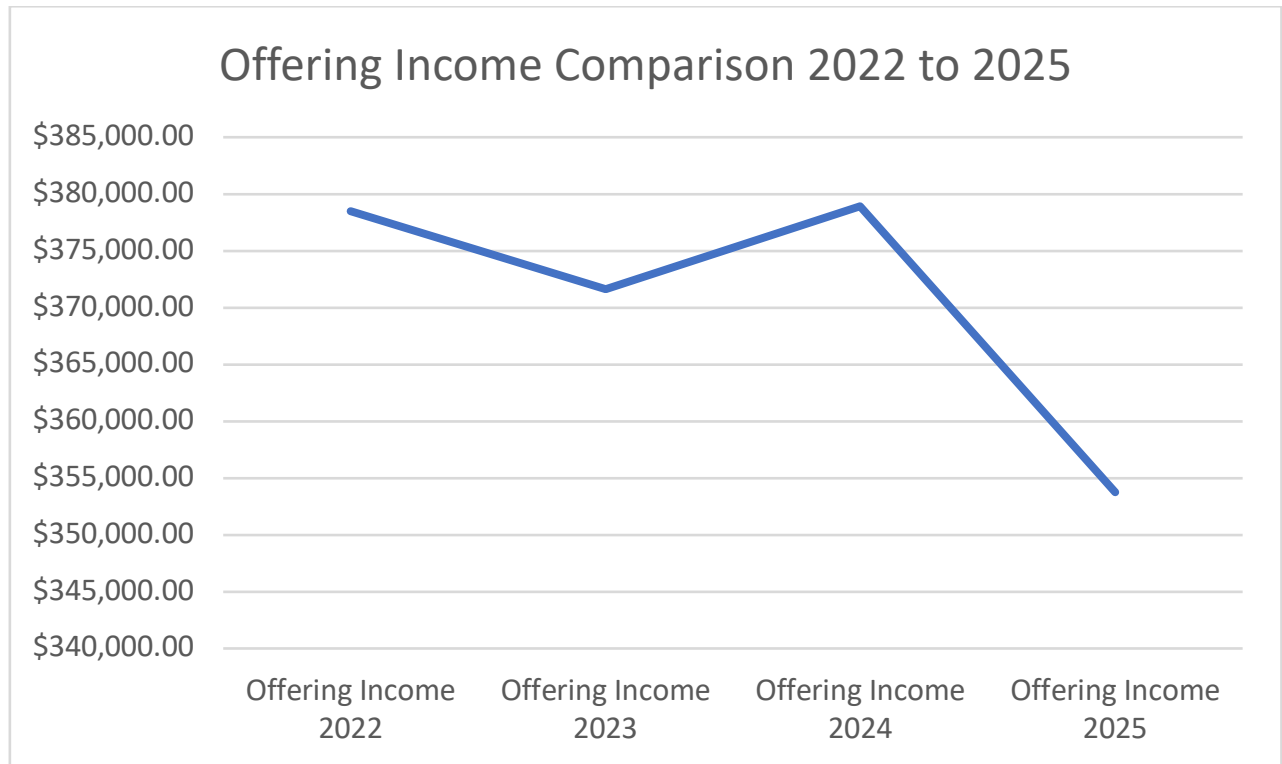
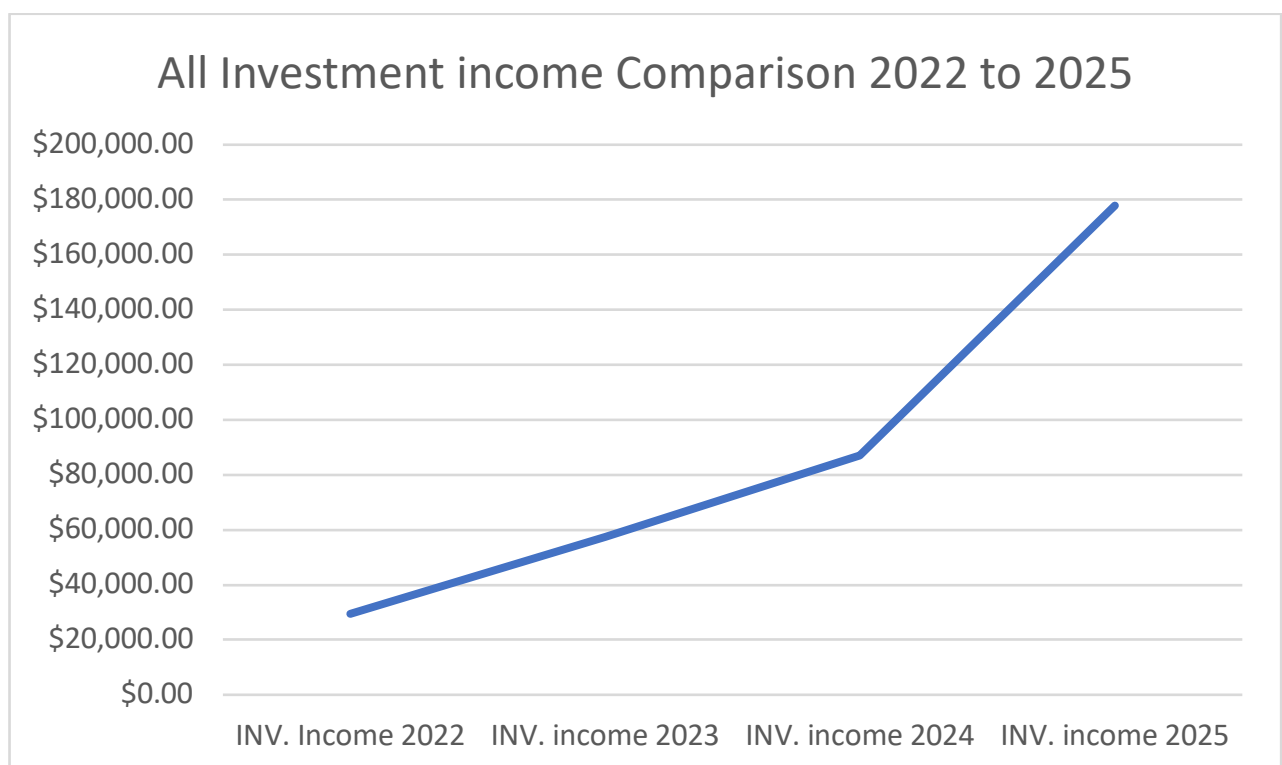


Figure 6 – All Investment income comparison from 2022 to 2025



Figures 7 and 8 compare Offerings income and All Investment incomes as a percentage of total revenue between 2022 to 2025.

Figure 7 – Offering income comparison of total income, showing the percentage has reduced from around 90% in 2022 to 64% in 2025. 5

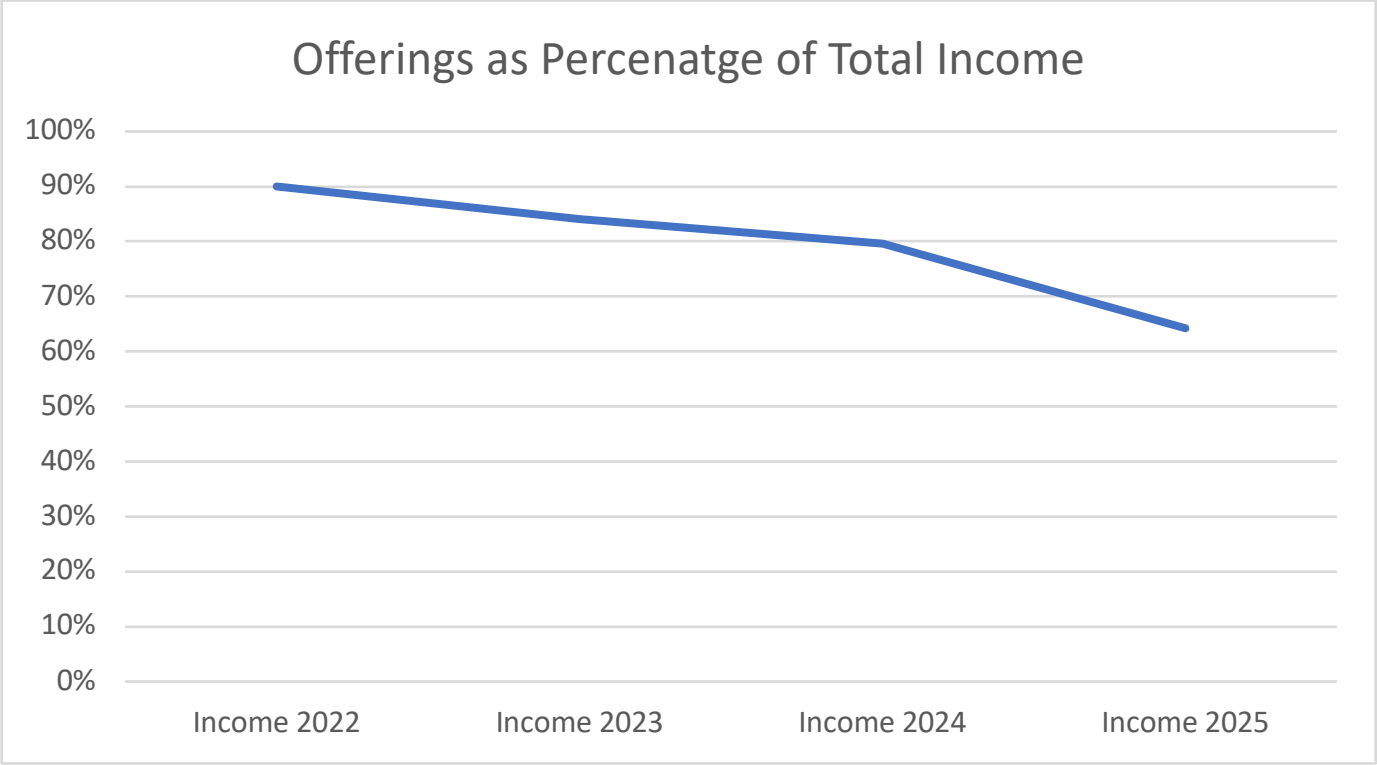
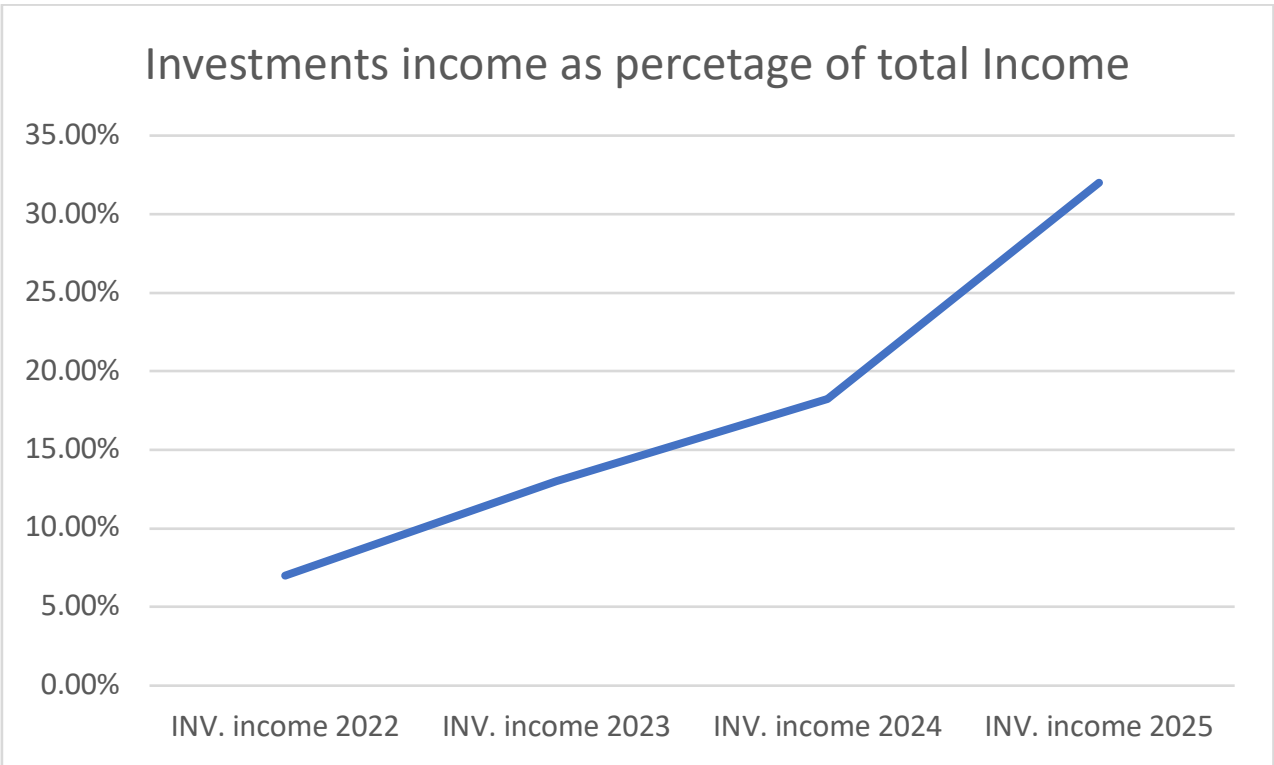


Figure 8 – All Investment Income comparison of total income, showing percentage has grown from around 7% in 2022 to around 32% in 2025.



EXPENSE CHARTS

The following charts provide visual comparisons into the different LifeWay expense categories and year on year comparison.

Figure 9 - Expense Category Breakdown

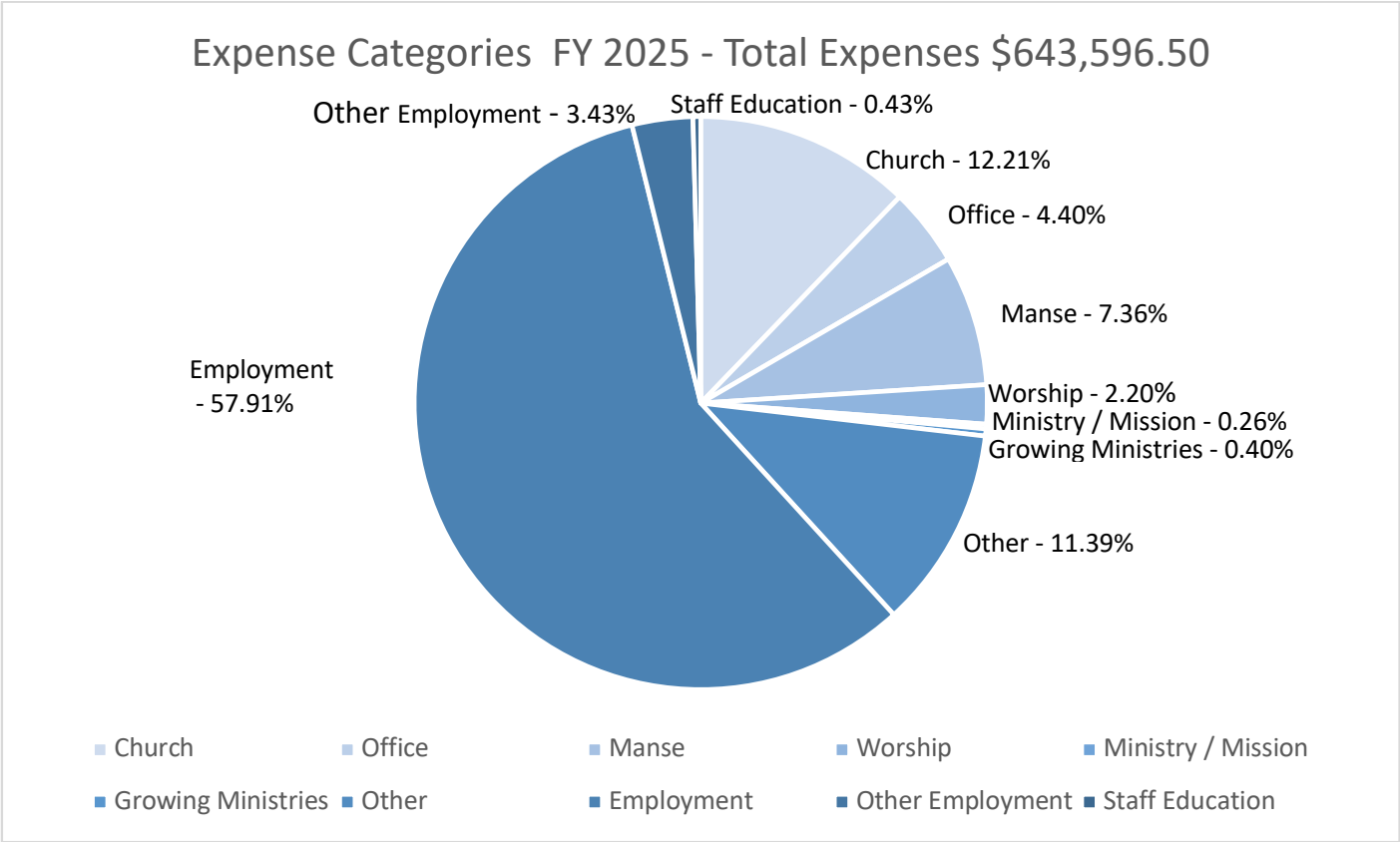
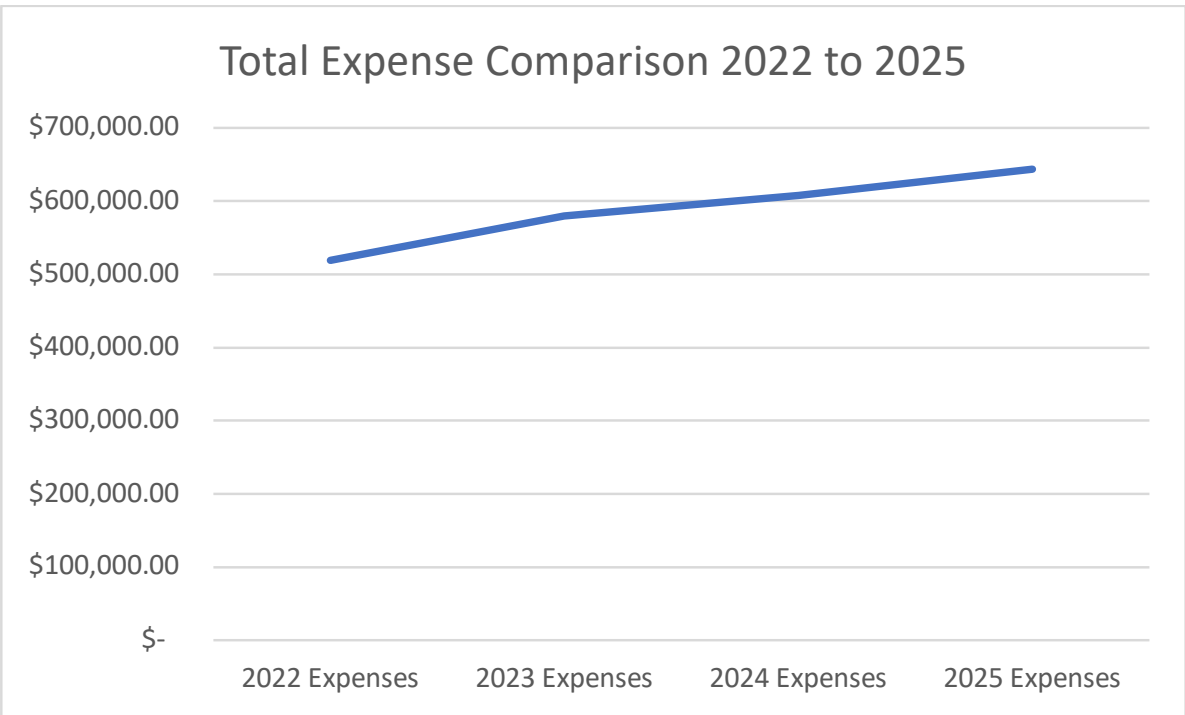


Figure 10 – Total expenses comparisons 2022 to 2025 shows expenses have increased from \$519,016 in 2022 to \$643,596 in 2025. This represents a 24% increase in our expenses over the last 4 years.



PROFIT & LOSS - DETAILED

The Profit & Loss Statement shown in Figure 11 provides a detailed view of our financial performance for 2025 with a comparison to the 2024 financial year. This detailed view also includes off budget income and expenses for example, Cambodia Ministry, North Epping Carols, completion of connecting seniors grant funding.

Figure 11 – Detailed profit & Loss statement with previous year comparison

	2025	2024	\$ Difference	% Difference
INCOME				
Commercial Property Rent	\$0.00	\$10,389.16	(\$10,389.16)	-100.00%
Rent for leasing Newcastle Church	\$3,282.50	\$4,180.00	(\$897.50)	-21.50%
Offerings, All Sites				
9:30am Service Cash Offerings	\$13,410.50	\$16,975.35	(\$3,564.85)	-21.00%
11:15am Chinese Church	\$12,459.45	\$20,338.25	(\$7,878.80)	-38.70%
Direct Offerings	\$327,882.62	\$341,607.83	(\$13,725.21)	-4.00%
Total Offerings, All Sites	\$353,752.57	\$378,921.43	(\$25,168.86)	-6.60%
Facility Usage				
Zumba	\$2,520.00	\$2,620.00	(\$100.00)	-3.80%
Other Facility Usage - Highland	\$2,880.00	\$4,188.18	(\$1,308.18)	-31.20%
Total Facility Usage	\$5,400.00	\$6,808.18	(\$1,408.18)	-20.70%
Special Groups Income				
Mainly Music	\$354.85	\$1,265.69	(\$910.84)	-72.00%
Total Special Groups Income	\$354.85	\$1,265.69	(\$910.84)	-72.00%
Other Income				
Bank Interest	\$30,763.78	\$78,275.72	(\$47,511.94)	-60.70%
Macquarie INV Income	\$137,500.00	\$0.00	\$137,500.00	NA
Other Fundraising	\$9,635.79	\$747.00	\$8,888.79	1189.90%
ACR Lease Deposit Interest	\$0.00	\$744.26	(\$744.26)	-100.00%
Total Other Income	\$177,899.57	\$79,022.72	\$98,876.85	125.10%
Wollongong Ministry Income	\$509.48	\$0.00	\$509.48	NA
Div/Dist - Income on MCQ Investment V59120	\$9,614.18	\$0.00	\$9,614.18	NA
Total INCOME	\$550,813.15	\$481,331.44	\$69,481.71	14.40%
EXPENSES				
Church Expenses				
Church Insurance	\$18,351.16	(\$2,924.40)	\$21,275.56	727.50%
Church Hall Rent Oak Flats	\$2,600.00	\$2,650.00	(\$50.00)	-1.90%
Chruch Post Box Rental	\$0.00	\$378.18	(\$378.18)	-100.00%
Church Council Waste	\$3,259.47	\$5,060.67	(\$1,801.20)	-35.60%
Church Council Rates	\$4,334.98	\$2,645.86	\$1,689.12	63.80%
Church Water Rates	\$3,469.14	\$4,620.94	(\$1,151.80)	-24.90%
Church Electricity	\$8,908.93	\$9,196.04	(\$287.11)	-3.10%
Church Cleaning	\$9,425.03	\$8,137.68	\$1,287.35	15.80%
Church Repairs & Maint.	\$12,679.84	\$13,090.10	(\$410.26)	-3.10%
Church Equipment Purchase	\$3,162.64	\$0.00	\$3,162.64	NA
Church Kitchen Supplies	\$2,274.90	\$1,684.01	\$590.89	35.10%
Church \$95k loan repayment	\$6,336.00	\$6,336.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Church Wollongong Sale Fees	\$0.00	\$59,070.55	(\$59,070.55)	-100.00%
Wollongong Ministry Expense	\$1,157.17	\$0.00	\$1,157.17	NA
Westside hall hire	\$2,650.01	\$0.00	\$2,650.01	NA

Total Church Expenses	\$78,609.27	\$109,945.63	(\$31,336.36)	-28.50%
Office Expenses				
Office Phone / Internet	\$7,344.57	\$5,934.84	\$1,409.73	23.80%
Office Supplies	\$16,756.12	\$16,217.53	\$538.59	3.30%
Office Equipment	\$2,499.99	\$5,931.24	(\$3,431.25)	-57.90%
Office Photocopier Costs	\$1,734.68	\$925.58	\$809.10	87.40%
Total Office Expenses	\$28,335.36	\$29,009.19	(\$673.83)	-2.30%
Manse Expenses				
Manse Water Rates	\$0.00	\$294.85	(\$294.85)	-100.00%
Manse Strata	\$373.50	\$387.40	(\$13.90)	-3.60%
Manse Repairs & Maint.	\$46,929.18	\$3,606.45	\$43,322.73	1201.30%
Manse Repairs & Maintenance NC	\$0.00	\$60.51	(\$60.51)	-100.00%
Manse Rent	\$51.95	\$0.00	\$51.95	NA
Total Manse Expenses	\$47,354.63	\$4,349.21	\$43,005.42	988.80%
Worship Expenses (Living)				
Worship - Setup	\$1,284.41	\$1,519.28	(\$234.87)	-15.50%
Worship - Advertising	\$2,372.68	\$922.50	\$1,450.18	157.20%
Worship - Materials	\$1,379.69	\$886.12	\$493.57	55.70%
Worship - Copyright Costs	\$3,472.18	\$6,075.97	(\$2,603.79)	-42.90%
Worship - Website Maint.	\$5,655.62	\$6,313.53	(\$657.91)	-10.40%
Total Worship Expenses (Living)	\$14,164.58	\$15,717.40	(\$1,552.82)	-9.90%
Sharing Ministries/Mission				
Mission - Pastoral Care	\$797.64	\$584.05	\$213.59	36.60%
Mission - Chinese Ministry	\$897.66	\$1,401.97	(\$504.31)	-36.00%
Mission - Local Mission	\$0.00	\$2,286.48	(\$2,286.48)	-100.00%
Mission - Overseas	\$0.00	\$476.49	(\$476.49)	-100.00%
Total Sharing Ministries/Mission	\$1,695.30	\$4,748.99	(\$3,053.69)	-64.30%
Growing Ministries				
Mainly Music	\$1,272.16	\$1,242.21	\$29.95	2.40%
Church Planting	\$102.00	\$0.00	\$102.00	NA
Sunday School	\$966.59	\$340.14	\$626.45	184.20%
KidsWay	\$31.80	\$285.77	(\$253.97)	-88.90%
Grow Courses	\$215.06	\$0.00	\$215.06	NA
Total Growing Ministries	\$2,587.61	\$1,868.12	\$719.49	38.50%
Other Expenses				
Macquarie Investment fee	\$1,900.56	\$0.00	\$1,900.56	NA
Adviser fee	\$12,833.93	\$0.00	\$12,833.93	NA
Bank Fees	\$190.17	\$383.66	(\$193.49)	-50.40%
Strategic Planning	\$185.40	\$0.00	\$185.40	NA
Financial Audit Fee	\$3,300.00	\$2,950.00	\$350.00	11.90%
Legal advice	\$6,000.00	\$1,000.00	\$5,000.00	500.00%
NSW District Contributions	\$8,199.96	\$8,199.96	\$0.00	0.00%
LCA Synod & Pastors Conf.	\$1,446.88	\$3,832.52	(\$2,385.64)	-62.20%
LCA General Levy-Pensions	\$0.00	\$17,352.00	(\$17,352.00)	-100.00%
Kenny Wollongong Church - rent	\$35,896.89	\$25,090.87	\$10,806.02	43.10%
Safe Church Training	\$0.00	\$73.05	(\$73.05)	-100.00%
Other Fundraising Expenses	\$3,342.66	\$0.00	\$3,342.66	NA
Total Other Expenses	\$73,296.45	\$58,882.06	\$14,414.39	24.50%
Commercial Property Stewart St				
Commercial Council Rates	\$0.00	\$1,665.94	(\$1,665.94)	-100.00%
Commercial Water Rates	\$0.00	\$585.66	(\$585.66)	-100.00%
Total Commercial Property Stewart St	\$0.00	\$2,251.60	(\$2,251.60)	-100.00%

Employment Expenses				
Gross Salary / Wages	\$383,874.32	\$248,525.47	\$135,348.85	54.50%
FB Allowance	\$28,507.83	\$109,408.60	(\$80,900.77)	-73.90%
Research Allowance	\$1,532.62	\$6,082.47	(\$4,549.85)	-74.80%
Car Allowance	\$4,984.56	\$21,144.32	(\$16,159.76)	-76.40%
Employer Super	\$51,441.86	\$46,384.56	\$5,057.30	10.90%
Lay 5 Grant Offset	(\$82,105.02)	(\$67,383.42)	(\$14,721.60)	-21.80%
Asian Ministry Grant Offset	(\$22,500.00)	\$0.00	(\$22,500.00)	NA
Annual leave payment	\$6,975.51	\$0.00	\$6,975.51	NA
Total Employment Expenses	\$372,711.68	\$364,162.00	\$8,549.68	2.30%
Other Emp. Expenses				
Other Employ. Expense	\$10,167.31	\$1,094.89	\$9,072.42	828.60%
Work Comp. Insurance	\$5,722.31	\$4,305.79	\$1,416.52	32.90%
Staff - Vehicle Usage	\$5,664.51	\$13,304.72	(\$7,640.21)	-57.40%
Staff - Other Travel	\$170.25	\$752.82	(\$582.57)	-77.40%
Staff - In Service Exp	\$320.00	\$400.28	(\$80.28)	-20.10%
Total Other Emp. Expenses	\$22,044.38	\$19,858.50	\$2,185.88	11.00%
Staff Education Expenses				
Education - Prof. Dev.	\$2,532.24	\$864.48	\$1,667.76	192.90%
Leadership Development	\$265.00	\$0.00	\$265.00	NA
Total Staff Education Expenses	\$2,797.24	\$864.48	\$1,932.76	223.60%
Total EXPENSES	\$643,596.50	\$611,657.18	\$31,939.32	5.20%
PROFIT / (LOSS)	(\$92,783.35)	(\$130,325.74)	\$37,542.39	28.80%
OFF BUDGET INCOME				
Special Purpose Grants				
LCA Grant for Newcastle	\$0.00	\$1,750.50	(\$1,750.50)	-100.00%
Government Grant Lighting System EP	\$0.00	\$33,000.00	(\$33,000.00)	-100.00%
LCANSW Grant - Lay5 Western Sydney	\$85,000.00	\$85,000.00	\$0.00	0.00%
LCANSW Asian Ministry Grant	\$22,500.00	\$12,500.00	\$10,000.00	80.00%
Total Special Purpose Grants	\$107,500.00	\$132,250.50	(\$24,750.50)	-18.70%
Special Purpose Mission Funds				
Cambodia - Relief appeal (prev. Bikes & Education)	\$2,800.00	\$7,322.60	(\$4,522.60)	-61.80%
Cambodia Church Plant	\$10,292.67	\$20,937.64	(\$10,644.97)	-50.80%
Total Special Purpose Mission Funds	\$13,092.67	\$28,260.24	(\$15,167.57)	-53.70%
Special Purpose Funds Raised				
North Epping Carols	\$3,044.42	\$2,762.20	\$282.22	10.20%
Other Fundraising	\$260.00	\$0.00	\$260.00	NA
Total Special Purpose Funds Raised	\$3,304.42	\$2,762.20	\$542.22	19.60%
Total OFF BUDGET INCOME	\$123,897.09	\$163,272.94	(\$39,375.85)	-24.10%
OFF BUDGET EXPENSES				
Other Reimbursements				
Misc Events {reimbursed}	\$154.46	\$883.10	(\$728.64)	-82.50%
Special Purpose Provisions				
Provision for Lay5 Western Sydney	\$85,000.00	\$85,000.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Provision for Asian Ministry	\$22,500.00	\$0.00	\$22,500.00	NA
Total Special Purpose Provisions	\$107,500.00	\$85,000.00	\$22,500.00	26.50%
Special Purpose Expenses				
Connecting seniors grant exp.	\$13,305.78	\$15,367.94	(\$2,062.16)	-13.40%
Travellers - LifeWay Music	\$0.00	\$57.07	(\$57.07)	-100.00%
Loss on Sale of Asset	\$0.00	\$4,700.15	(\$4,700.15)	-100.00%
Total Special Purpose Expenses	\$13,305.78	\$20,125.16	(\$6,819.38)	-33.90%

Overseas Mission Expense				
Thai Mission Trips Expenses	\$269.92	\$0.00	\$269.92	NA
Cambodia Mission&Trip Expenses	\$20,477.89	\$22,405.59	(\$1,927.70)	-8.60%
Cambodia - Bikes & Education	(\$4,914.15)	\$256.72	(\$5,170.87)	-2014.20%
Total Overseas Mission Expense	\$15,833.66	\$22,662.31	(\$6,828.65)	-30.10%
Special Projects				
EP Air Con - Electrical, Etc.	\$0.00	\$239.34	(\$239.34)	-100.00%
Maitland Training Fund				
Training Course Costs	\$8,436.00	\$40.91	\$8,395.09	20520.90%
Total OFF BUDGET EXPENSES	\$145,229.90	\$128,950.82	\$16,279.08	12.60%
PROFIT / (LOSS)	(\$114,116.16)	(\$96,003.62)	(\$18,112.54)	-18.90%

With changes to the financial structure commencing in 2024 and being implemented during 2025, 2026 will be the year to consolidate these changes. The Leadership Team and I will continue to focus on strategic structural improvements that benefit LifeWay and provide the ability for both Pastor Nich and Pastor Mat to lead LifeWay strategically into 2026 and beyond as we continue to grow God's kingdom.

God, prepare our hearts for what you have for us next and give us a heart of faith to go where you call us to go. Amen

Ed Burke

FINANCE DIRECTOR



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2026 BUDGET

The 2026 budget proposes a loss of (\$61,134). LifeWay continues the desire to make strategic decisions that benefit all sites of Lifeway. This proposed budget provides the opportunity to continue our financial support of the Cambodia Ministry, Chinese Ministry and Westside Church Plant in addition to the considerable grant funding being provided by the NSW district.

Please find below the proposed budget for the 2026 Financial Year.

Budget for Financial Year 2026 1 October 2025 To 30 September 2026		
	FY 2026 PROPOSED	COMMENTS
INCOME		
Total Offerings, All Sites	\$380,000.00	Similar FY25 budget
Facility Usage		
Zumba	\$3,200.00	Projected FY26 income
Leasing the Newcastle Church Hall	\$3,300.00	Projected FY26 income
Other Facility Usage	\$1,800.00	Projected FY26 income
Total Facility Usage	\$8,300.00	
Special Groups Income		
Mainly Music		
Total Special Groups Income	\$0.00	
Other Income		
Bank Interest	\$17,000.00	estimated amount from Bank deposits
Macquarie INV Income	\$150,000.00	current income distribution for FY25/26
Other Fundraising	\$5,000.00	Approx. 50% of FY25 income
Wollongong Ministry Income	\$1,000.00	Proposed for FY26
Total Other Income	\$173,000.00	
Total INCOME	\$561,300.00	Total Budgeted income for FY26
EXPENSES		
Church Expenses		
Church Insurance	\$19,406.00	Actual Premium for FY26
Church Hall Rent Oak Flats	\$2,600.00	Oak Flats Hall Rent
Church Council Waste	\$3,358.00	proposed 3.5% increase on FY25 actual
Church Council Rates	\$4,465.00	proposed 3.5% increase on FY25 actual
Church Water Rates	\$3,573.00	proposed 3.5% increase on FY25 actual
Church Electricity	\$9,176.00	proposed 3.5% increase on FY25 actual
Church Cleaning	\$9,708.00	proposed 3.5% increase on FY25 actual
Church Repairs & Maint.	\$25,000.00	Includes \$20k for Newcastle Driveway repairs
Church Equipment Purchase	\$3,257.00	proposed 3.5% increase on FY25 actual
Church Kitchen Supplies	\$2,343.00	proposed 3.5% increase on FY25 actual
Church \$95k loan repayment	\$6,336.00	actual loan repayment
Wollongong Ministry Expense	\$1,200.00	proposed 3.5% increase on FY25 actual
Westside hall hire	\$2,400.00	St Marys Church hire for Westside Ministry
Total Church Expenses	\$92,822.00	
Office Expenses		
Office Phone / Internet	\$7,565.00	proposed 3.5% increase on FY25 actual
Office Supplies	\$17,000.00	Similar to FY 25 actual

Office Equipment	\$2,500.00	Similar to FY 25 actual
Office Photocopier Costs	\$1,800.00	Similar to FY 25 actual
Total Office Expenses	\$28,865.00	
Manse Expenses		
Manse Strata	\$400.00	Similar to FY 25 actual
Manse Repairs & Maint.	\$5,000.00	No major repairs forecast for EP or N'Castle Manse
Manse Rent	\$0.00	
Total Manse Expenses	\$5,400.00	
Worship Expenses (Living)		
Worship - Setup	\$1,300.00	Similar to FY25 actual
Worship - Advertising	\$2,400.00	Similar to FY25 actual
Worship - Materials	\$1,400.00	Similar to FY25 actual
Worship - Copyright Costs	\$3,500.00	Similar to FY25 actual
Worship - Website Maint.	\$6,000.00	Similar to FY25 actual
Total Worship Expenses (Living)	\$14,600.00	
Sharing Ministries/Mission		
Mission - Pastoral Care	\$1,000.00	higher than FY25 actual
Mission - Chinese Ministry	\$1,000.00	higher than FY25 actual
Total Sharing Ministries/Mission	\$2,000.00	
Growing Ministries		
Mainly Music	\$1,000.00	Same as FY24 proposed amount
Church Planting	\$500.00	Same as FY24 proposed amount
Sunday School	\$1,000.00	Same as FY24 proposed amount
KidsWay	\$100.00	Same as FY24 proposed amount
Grow Courses	\$400.00	Same as FY24 proposed amount
Total Growing Ministries	\$3,000.00	
Other Expenses		
Macquarie Investment fee	\$2,000.00	Product fees for Macquarie INV AC's
Adviser fee	\$13,000.00	Ongoing Adviser fee for Macquarie Investments
Bank Fees	\$190.00	estimated amount for FY26
Strategic Planning	\$200.00	Similar to FY25 actual
Financial Audit Fee	\$3,300.00	Same as FY25 Budget
Legal advice	\$0.00	Would relate to finalisation of DGR status
NSW District Contributions	\$8,200.00	
LCA Synod & Pastors Conf.	\$2,000.00	Extra funding allloated - more attendees in FY26
Kenny Wollongong Church - rent	\$40,000.00	Rent Paid for Wollongong Church
Other Fundraising Expenses	\$1,000.00	Proposed for FY26
Total Other Expenses	\$69,890.00	
Total Employment Expenses	\$385,757.00	Net of Grant funding - 3.5% increase on FY25
Staff - Vehicle Usage	\$5,000.00	similar amount to FY25
Staff - Other Travel	\$200.00	
Staff - In Service Exp	\$400.00	
Total Other Emp. Expenses	\$14,600.00	
Staff Education Expenses		
Education - Prof. Dev.	\$5,000.00	Additional funds allocated for training
Leadership Development	\$500.00	Estimated expense for FY26
Total Staff Education Expenses	\$5,500.00	
Total EXPENSES	\$622,434.00	
OPERATING PROFIT / LOSS	(\$61,134.00)	Budgeted loss for FY26

AUSTRALIAN CHRISTIAN RESOURCES REPORT

Australian Christian Resources (ACR) performed well in FY2025.

Sales increased by 5.5% and we posted an improved profit of \$16,257.

Capital repayments of \$10,000 were made to LifeWay, in addition to paying out a lease deposit loan of \$11,825.

Each year we pick a strategic theme to give purpose to our broader actions. In FY24 it was Consolidation – for a grass roots rebuilding of the business. This year the theme has been Sustainability – setting the business up to perform reliably year on year. We undertook a limited amount of promotional activity, and continued to improve our internal processes, pricing, and margins, as evidenced by a 4% lift in our overall gross margin.

In FY26 it's time to focus on the customer! So, our theme for this year will be Service Excellence – how do we better meet the needs of our customers and start exceeding their expectations. That objective will help focus our weekly actions.



ACR has a ministry purpose. While the business performs an important practical function of supplying resources and consumables to congregations of all denominations, its ministry goes well beyond that. We know that good Christian resources deepen our faith journey. We believe that Christian-oriented products and gifts for others can be conversation starters. God can do wonderful things when we put our Christianity on display.

This Christmas, check out what ACR might offer for your family and friends.

Our staff are critical to our effectiveness. They're a dedicated bunch of part-timers, and I thank the Lord for each of them! It's not so easy to maintain a continuity of focus when working part-time. Bandwidth and limited crossover hours are an ongoing challenge, but they bring a passion and enthusiasm that is critical for success.

May God continue his good work through Australian Christian Resources. See you online!

www.shopACR.com.au

John Weiss

ACR MANAGING DIRECTOR

Attachments:

- 1) ACR FY2025 P&L
- 2) ACR FY2025 Balance Sheet

Note: Attachments are management accounts, pending completion of work by the tax accountant and auditor.



ACR 2024-2025 FINANCIAL STATEMENTS



Profit & Loss [Last Year Analysis]

July 2024 To June 2025

ABN: 57 125 531 375
Email: service@shopacr.com.au

	This Year	Last Year
INCOME		
Sales	\$361,417	\$342,731
Other Income	\$2,230	\$5,066
Total INCOME	\$363,648	\$347,797
COST OF SALES		
Direct Cost of Sales	\$170,011	\$177,726
Other Cost of Sales	\$37,611	\$36,916
WEB TEST COS A/C	\$0	\$0
Total COST OF SALES	\$207,622	\$214,643
Gross Profit	\$156,025	\$133,154
EXPENSES		
Operating Expenses	\$24,977	\$21,308
Marketing Expenses	\$21,860	\$12,036
Employment Expenses	\$89,398	\$70,063
Other Fees	\$3,533	\$3,781
Total EXPENSES	\$139,768	\$107,187
Operating Profit	\$16,257	\$25,967
Total OTHER INCOME	\$0	\$0
OTHER EXPENSES		
Finance Expenses	\$0	\$6,880
Special Projects	\$0	\$5,503
Total OTHER EXPENSES	\$0	\$12,383
Net Profit/(Loss)	\$16,257	\$13,584

This report includes Year-End Adjustments.

Balance Sheet [Last Year Analysis]

June 2025



ABN: 57 125 531 375

Email: service@shopacr.com.au

	This Year	Last Year
ASSETS		
Current Assets		
Cash On Hand		
BSA Business Account	\$6,597	\$11,839
StG Business Account	\$10,114	\$21,109
LLL Operating Account	\$0	\$217
PayPal Account	\$3,319	\$172
LLL Capital Account	\$0	\$36,060
MBL4.15 Capital Account	\$29,746	\$0
Undeposited Funds	\$817	\$1,179
Total Cash On Hand	\$50,592	\$70,575
Accounts Receivable		
Accounts Receivable	\$20,201	\$19,082
Inventory		
Stock on Hand	\$180,978	\$180,608
Other Assets		
Deposits Paid To Suppliers	\$592	\$592
Total Current Assets	\$252,363	\$270,857
Non-Current Assets		
Goodwill		
Goodwill	\$321,626	\$321,626
Plant & Equipment		
Website Development - Cost	\$29,888	\$29,888
Website Development - Accum Dep	-\$29,888	-\$29,888
Total Plant & Equipment	\$0	\$0
Total Non-Current Assets	\$321,626	\$321,626
Total ASSETS	\$573,989	\$592,483
LIABILITIES		
Current Liabilities		
Customer Prepayments	\$2,474	\$2,555
Customer Gift Vouchers	\$412	\$610
Customer Unmatched Deposits	\$162	\$670
Accounts Payable	\$4,744	\$18,665
Stock Payable - Provision	\$0	\$0
GST Collected	\$6,821	\$8,503
GST Paid	-\$4,713	-\$6,207
PAYG Payable	\$2,715	\$2,066
Super Payable	\$2,450	\$1,131
Total Current Liabilities	\$15,066	\$27,992
Long Term Liabilities		
LifeWay Capital Loan 1	\$183,636	\$183,636
LifeWay Capital Loan 2	\$130,000	\$130,000
LifeWay Lease Deposit Loan	\$0	\$11,825
LifeWay Stock Loan	\$5,000	\$15,000
Total Long Term Liabilities	\$318,636	\$340,461
Other Liabilities		
Franking Capital	\$82,689	\$82,689
LifeWay General Capital	\$72,718	\$72,718
Total Other Liabilities	\$155,407	\$155,407

Balance Sheet [Last Year Analysis]

June 2025



ABN: 57 125 531 375

Email: service@shopacr.com.au

	This Year	Last Year
Total LIABILITIES	\$489,109	\$523,860
Net Assets	\$84,880	\$68,623
EQUITY		
Share Capital	\$218,001	\$218,001
Current Year Earnings	\$16,257	\$13,584
Retained Earnings	-\$156,720	-\$170,304
Historical Balancing	\$0	\$0
Total EQUITY	\$77,538	\$61,281

2026 NOMINATIONS

	Nominations	1 year remaining
Chairperson	Martin Rowney (Illawarra)	
Vice Chairperson	Vacant	
Secretary	Kerri Wegener (Newcastle)	
Finance Director	Ed Burke (Epping)	
Extra Members		Florry Lung (Chinese)
		Naomi Moss (Epping)
Public Officer	Shane Albances	
Pastoral Assistants	Errol Atkinson (Word and Sacrament) Charles Bertelsmeier (Word and Sacrament) Elise von Stanke (Word and Sacrament) Jo Brownnett (Word and Sacrament) Michael Dobie (Word and Sacrament) Danny Brock (Word and Sacrament) Andrew Njau (Sacrament Only) Phil Wegener (Sacrament Only) Dieter Schmidt (Sacrament Only) Josh Simpf (Sacrament Only - Westside)	
LCA Synod Delegate (till next Synod)	Sabina Pichler	
NSW Synod Delegate (three to be elected)		



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