



## HOPE MISSION NETWORK REPORT

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### 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Hope Mission Network's priority and main purpose is to support member congregations as they express the presence of Jesus Christ in worship, witness and mission in their local communities. We share a common evangelical understanding of the place of scripture in the life of the church in discerning the living and active Word of God. We rejoice with one another as we see evidence of the Spirit of God at work in God's mission in the world through our member congregations as they make their good confession in word and deed.

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### 2. INTRODUCTION

HopeNet involves about 60 congregations and faith communities (large and small, metropolitan, rural and regional) spread across the state from the South East, Kangaroo Island, the Fleurieu Peninsula, metropolitan Adelaide, the Yorke Peninsula, the Riverland, the mid-North, and the Eyre Peninsula. The majority are rural or regional and many are without paid ministry.

The business of the network is conducted by an Executive Committee which meets monthly, reading the scriptures, praying, and considering the pastoral and missional issues of HopeNet congregations. The Executive comprises: Rev. Jonathan Button (PRC/Placements Representative), Rev. Ian Clarkson (Field Minister), Rev. Andrew Klynsmith, Dr. Neil McIntosh, Ron Tiller (Network Administrator) and Rev. David Hoffman (Chairperson). David Hoffman has recently been placed at a church in another network and Mr Warren Mack has recently been appointed as a new member of Executive.

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### 3. SUMMARY OF KEY ACTIVITIES AND OUTCOMES SINCE NOVEMBER 2015

Some of the significant events and outcomes for 2016 were as follows

- The opportunity to meet together during Presbytery/Synod Gatherings happened on the Friday evening immediately prior to the start of Synod (June/July Synod) and during the meal break (October/November Synod). We heard from Rev Andrew Everson about the growing youth work at Morgan, and from Rev Nathan Whillas who spoke of the families' ministry on a weeknight at Loxton. At these meetings we share a meal and anyone from HopeNet congregations, from other networks for that matter, is welcome to attend. Those attending have been greatly encouraged by the stories of how the Spirit of God is moving in individual lives, in ministry activities, in healings or conversion experiences, and in congregations across the state.
- The annual Ministers'/Pastors' retreat was planned for Kangaroo Island but the weather forced the cancellation of the ferry. Instead we held the retreat over 2 days at Glenunga and a particularly special time of sharing around Psalms that had influenced our lives was enjoyed.
- The Stir the Fire Conference and HopeNet AGM was this year held in conjunction with the ACC teaching weekend where the significance of our relationship with the UC foundational document, the

Basis of Union, was explored. Many HopeNet and ACC congregations were looking for teaching on and encouragement in the Basis of Union and the conference fulfilled that need.

- Ps Grant Jewell and Ps Andrew Klynsmith joined Rev Ian Clarkson in field ministry for HopeNet this year. This has meant that Ian while maintaining general oversight has concentrated on the northern and western regions of the network while Grant has developed relationships with those congregations in the eastern and south-eastern areas and Andrew with Pinnaroo. Developing these ministries alongside the changes in Synod rural resourcing has had benefits for our rural congregations.
- Ian Clarkson has run workshops on worship, the conduct of Holy Communion, and Apologetics to assist lay ministry teams to minister effectively to their congregations.
- Executive and the field minister have provided an extensive range of ministerial support and participation with projects in Africa and SE Asia and with indigenous people. The cause of the Persecuted Church has been supported and promoted by visiting speakers and is a major matter of prayer in many HopeNet congregations.
- HopeNet congregations have asked for advice and leadership on the marriage issue and this has been a major focus of Executive in discussions with Synod. HopeNet remains committed to the stated and received position of the UCA on this issue and thus does not accept ministry placements which are at variance with, or unwilling to support and teach this orthodoxy, especially given the current national debate and uncertainty on marriage.
- HopeNet Connections is a newsletter servicing the network congregations and is a major platform for communication across the network and is widely read and appreciated.

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#### 4. FORWARD THINKING

Some of the goals and expectations for 2017 are

- To continue to work closely with the Synod rural and regional resourcing team to bring better outcomes for our congregations and to further develop the work of HopeNet's Field ministers, Ian Clarkson, Grant Jewell and Andrew Klynsmith.
- To ensure that the gospel remains central to all the issues we face and deal with across the network.
- To support and encourage congregations as they engage in mission and outreach.
- To provide a Ministers'/Pastors' Retreat and a Stir the Fire Conference for HopeNet congregations.
- To continue to inform and encourage HopeNet congregations in the marriage debate as it impacts the Uniting Church and the nation through the possible plebiscite.

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