**Synod of Otago & Southland and Southern Presbytery**

**Joint Working Group**

**Terms of Reference**

Synod Executive and Presbytery Council have agreed:

That we set up a joint Presbytery and Synod working group to describe a helpful process

that a parish or group of parishes might engage in to address issues of mission, relationships, buildings and finances.’

The Joint Synod/Presbytery Working Group is to carry out the following Terms of Reference:

1. Thoughtfully evaluate the interrelationships between ‘mission, relationships, building and finance’, as they impact on the future of church-life in Otago & Southland, the Synod/Southern Presbytery region
2. Gather information regarding parish life, congregational health, building health and future expectations
3. Identify the major challenges faced by parishes, Presbytery and Synod for the next 10 years and beyond
4. Evaluate congregations region by region  - in terms of the ‘mission, relationships, buildings and finances matrix’
5. Develop regional mission and building strategies in consultation with Presbytery Council, Synod Executive and Resource Groups - in terms of the ‘mission, relationships, buildings and finances matrix’
6. Discuss possible regional strategies with parishes through Resource Group meetings
7. Maintain contact with Cooperative Venture partners where issues relate to C.V. parishes in terms of their ‘mission, relationships, building and finance’.
8. Facilitate congregational and regional mission planning in conjunction with the Synod Mission Advisor
9. Make recommendations to Synod Executive and Presbytery Council for invitations to mission educators from NZ and overseas in the light of identified needs
10. Gather information regarding Council and Government requirements for building standards
11. Take responsibility for regional evaluation of IEP and DEE reports and any other structural and related reports
12. Receive all building proposals from parishes [and alternative ministries, camps etc.] in an early draft form, before these receive detailed development and before parish leadership and congregations make formal decisions and consider these building proposals in terms of parish and regional mission strategies
13. When the Working Group deems that proposals are ready for the formal decision making processes, they will advise the Parish(es) of this so that parish leadership and congregation(s) can make the appropriate formal decisions. Once these decisions are made and the appropriate Synod forms are completed to the satisfaction of the Working Group, they will sign off the application(s) and forward them to the Presbytery Executive Officer for processing through the formal Presbytery and Synod processes.