



SECTION 1 — BASIC INFORMATION

1.1 Placement Name: Highfield Road Uniting Church

1.2 Please list congregations/agencies names below

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1.3 Profile approved by Church Council/Governing Body 31/1 /2023

1.4 Primary purpose of placement:

- Lead worship and pastoral care activities
- Support the faith and energy evident within the congregation while developing and encouraging leaders to work together to ensure the HRUC mission, strategic plan and congregational needs are met.
- Challenge the congregation to reflect the gospel in the community while supporting existing outreach activities

1.5 Suitable for: Minister of the Word Ordinand Deacon Pastor

1.6 Time fraction: 100 %

1.7 Term:

Undefined up to 10 years (See Reg 2.7.3(a)) Yes No

Fixed Term: Years

Initial Term reviewed in: Years

This profile should be prepared by the Congregation(s) or appointing body in consultation with Presbytery. It is specifically designed to assist in the placement process but it can also be used as a record of mission planning. Sections 1, 2 & 3 of this profile will be uploaded to the VicTas website.

Contents

- Section 1: Basic Information
- Section 2: Mission Direction
- Section 3: Context
- Section 4: People and Activities – to be completed by each congregation in the placement.
- Section 5: Joint Congregations – to be completed if more than one congregation in the placement.
- Section 6: Working Relationships
- Section 7: New Minister – this section contains a list of mission and pastoral activities which are also listed on Minister’s Personal profiles
- Section 8: Presbytery – to be completed by Presbytery Pastoral Relations Committee.
- Section 9: Terms of Placement

Enclosures

Please mark all the documents attached to the profile:

- Floor plan of residence
- Financial information including a copy of last year’s Financial Statement and financial projections
- Position descriptions of relevant ministers
- Others

SECTION 2 — MISSION DIRECTION

2.1 What is the Vision statement and/or Mission priorities of the placement (or of the individual congregations)

To promote vibrant faith and exercise gracious hospitality to all

The mission of Highfield Road Uniting Church Canterbury 3126 is to promote vibrant faith and exercise gracious hospitality to all. As a congregation we look forward to being challenged on our faith journey, being introduced to fresh expressions of the Gospel, in ways which are relevant to our neighbours and the wider society. Through our YouTube outreach and joint activities with adjoining Uniting churches and those of other denominations, we can continue to be a vibrant witnessing congregation.

Gracious hospitality is extended to all in the community, no matter what their ethnic, cultural, or social backgrounds through outreach activities which meet their needs.

We are open to being challenged to seek new ways of joining with others in asserting the rights of those who suffer disabilities and inequality in our city, our nation and throughout the world.

As pilgrim people, we seek to enlarge and strengthen our foundations of faith and hospitality

Our congregation seeks to fulfil this mission by:

- Engaging in thoughtful worship
- Providing opportunities to nurture and grow in faith
- Offering pastoral care to all
- Maintaining a range of outreach activities

2.2 Date adopted by Church Council:

Our congregation adopted this mission approx. 10 years ago. It has been reaffirmed on a number of occasions and is the starting point for the current HRUC Strategic Plan

2.3 Provide a short description of the placement/congregation(s)

HRUC is geographically located in Canterbury, and has 67 people who participate regularly in the worship activities of the congregation. The Sunday Service is live streamed. Wednesday worship is conducted on Zoom. 10 members of the congregation are in care and cannot watch the service on YouTube however they are able to be involved via the physical delivery of the Order of Service and Sermons as well as pastoral visits.

The congregation is primarily monocultural with many retired folk. The congregation engages in many activities and shares the Gospel's good news with visitors, others in the community and overseas.

The joys experienced by this congregation include the quality of preaching, music, friendship / fellowship and being part of a welcoming community. A culture of service supports outreach programs and activities at HRUC locally and internationally.

2.4 What Church Style best describes the congregation(s)? (See [Church Style Document](#))

The HRUC congregation enjoys traditional and contemporary worship with thoughtful preaching, beautiful music and caring fellowship.

Sunday Worship

A traditional style Worship Service is held each Sunday morning at 9.30, at which approximately 45 attend in person.

Services are live-streamed and 5 people regularly attending worship through this medium - there are an average of 20 views of the service each week.

Choir

The choir gathers weekly to prepare for the Sunday Service. During the year, choir members organise up to 4 concerts that become an extended enjoyment on a Sunday afternoon. The concerts promote fellowship and opportunities to connect with the local community. Funds from the Sunday Concert Afternoon Tea are directed to the HRUC Music Fund.

A quarterly '**Engage**' Sunday Service with an alternative format has also been held for some years.

Examine Wednesday Worship

This is a weekly 'zoom' service held on Wednesday. It was created and introduced by the Rev. Ross Pearce and since his departure is currently led by an Elder.

This worship is an intergenerational style and is liturgically based including the 4 criteria for worship but is fully interactional - replacing the homily with a discussion of the gospel reading for the forthcoming Sunday.

There are currently 4-8 people attending on Zoom each week from a distribution list of 20 and 2, who meet face to face, using the printed order of service.

Examine moved to Zoom as a result of Covid restrictions, although it was previously held in the foyer, followed by coffee and fellowship. Others using the building were welcome to attend.

2.5 How has the placement/congregation(s) changed over the last 5 years?

- Children have grown older and moved on or overseas
- Some older folk have died while others have arrived
- Covid brought changes, including online services, which have continued as live-streaming
- Zoom interaction was also used socially during covid, this maintained connection within the congregation.....

2.6 What are the congregation(s)/placement's goals?

As a congregation we look forward to being challenged on our faith journey, being introduced to fresh expressions of the Gospel, in ways which are relevant to our neighbours and the wider society. Our Minister will:

- Lead worship and pastoral care activities with the congregation
- Support the faith and energy evident within the congregation while developing and encouraging leaders to work together to ensure the HRUC mission, strategic plan and congregational needs are met.
- Challenge the congregation to reflect the gospel in the community while supporting existing outreach activities

Reasons for this response

- These goals aim to enrich, connect and care for the congregation. They also aim to ensure the current congregation is nurtured and not alienated as we maintain the many existing activities to the best of our ability, which hopefully will attract new comers.

Gifts, qualities and skills of the successful applicant?

- Thoughtful and intelligent preaching and the ability to nurture people in their faith
- Willingness to maintain and build strong pastoral connections, particularly with older members of the congregation, including those in care facilities
- Effective communication and the ability to foster leadership in others

How will these gifts, qualities and skills complement those already present in the congregation?

The HRUC congregation has a great deal of energy and many gifts and interests, for example – its heritage of music, its caring community, its connection with young families through playgroup and the wide range of congregational groups and activities. The person filling the placement would observe, engage, guide and where appropriate introduce new ideas.

2.7 What are the next Strategic Steps to achieving those goals?

The Strategic Plan needs to be updated with the involvement of the new Minister, church Council and Congregation.

SECTION 3 — CONTEXT

3.1 Describe the communities in which this placement is located (Mission context).

- Canterbury
 - Private homes, rapidly increasing number of units due to subdivision of plots
 - Many in the community are time poor, have conflicting interests and are largely indifferent about faith
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3.2 How does your congregation reflect or vary from the age, and ethnic mix of your local community?

- All ages - relatively affluent
- Predominantly Anglo Saxon / European with increasing diversity particularly Asian families.

3.3 What are the opportunities and points of stress and pain in the wider community?

Points of Stress:

- Many recent residents are double income families / with stressful high mortgages
- Lack of quality time with children
- Rejection of faith e.g., religious education is no longer available outside the family in State Primary Schools
- Kids' Hope is offered at Canterbury PS but with reducing in numbers

Opportunities

During the discernment some opportunities were suggested by congregation members. A number of these have been under discussion for some time and would require planning, resourcing and leadership. We are acutely conscious of the finite resources of the congregation, where most already contribute their time.

Opportunities include:

Faith-based outreach - Based on the question, 'How may we share our faith outside the Sunday Service & beyond social groups?

- Post Covid resumption of child friendly activities such as Advent Worship/Workshop
- Taking church to the community
- More active online presence • Joint services at Christmas and Easter
- Multifaith programs which might be organised through the Victorian Council of Churches or other ecumenical or cross-cultural organisation.
- More engagement with the Romanian Orthodox Church congregation that worships at HRUC every Sunday after the HRUC service
- Breakfasts with other churches were mentioned as a potential activity for social engagement, although these are already held 4 times a year now.
- Assisting newcomers to Australia with language skills
- Considering what might be offered to homeless people in the local area, and/or residents of public housing in the Ashburton/Alamein area
- A food kitchen, community sausage sizzle
- Breakfast/homework club at Camberwell HS
- A café/chat space, whether in the local shops or elsewhere.
- Beyond our existing connections with Balwyn and Surrey Hills, possibly through Corner Connection which is being monitored by Church Council
- Property

Further use of the property and facilities, including expanding the use of the tennis court

Engaging with other churches / Ecumenical activities:

- Community service / community engagement ideas
- Engagement with other Uniting churches:
- Further use of the property and facilities, including expanding the use of the tennis court.

Additional Note:

COVID and associated lockdowns affected many regular activities; the impact continues to be felt. Concerns were raised about the lack of cultural diversity, need for better inclusion of gender diverse people and those with disability. As members of the congregation age and the number of people attending worship declines, there are fewer people to do the many tasks required to maintain programs and activities, as well as an increased need for pastoral care. We also have more compliance requirements. We must NOT burn out our willing volunteers.

3.4 List ways in which you connect with, serve, or partner with people in your wider community?

- An annual combined service is held with Balwyn and Surrey Hills Uniting Church Congregations to celebrate Pentecost, with each congregation taking turns to host the service
- The Minister visits HRUC Aged Care residents to offer Communion and for pastoral care
- HRUC is a member of, and participates in, the activities of the Canterbury Council of Churches in particular:
 - o World Day of Prayer
- Carols in Canterbury
- HRUC Play Group (see relationships 4.1)
- Examine Services open to all
- Use of premises for Ballet School (40+ years), Theatre Group, Opera Group, Tennis Coaching and many short-term activities
- Eight recycling bins support the work of Uniting Care Lentara and HRUC members assist with sorting prior to collection
- HRUC is part of the Camberwell Refugee Support Committee with Camberwell Uniting and St Johns Anglican Churches based in Camberwell. The congregation supports this program financially and by participating in the committee's work.
- HRUC is monitoring the activities of the Corner Connection but the Council has made no commitment at present.

3.5 What schools/agencies/institutions are in your local communities?

Schools

- Education Dept: Canterbury PS, Hartwell PS, Camberwell HS
- Strathcona BGS
- Camberwell Girls and Camberwell Boys Grammar
- St Dominic's PS, Siena College

Churches

- *Romanian Orthodox* – shares our church HRUC
- *Uniting*: Balwyn Rd, Surrey Hills, Camberwell
- *Anglican*: St Paul's Canterbury, St Dunstan's Middle Camberwell
- *R Catholic*: St Dominic's
- *Baptist*: Canterbury, Middle Camberwell
- *Camberwell Chinese Methodist*
- *Presbyterian*: Trinity Camberwell, Korean Surrey Hills, Canterbury
- *Church of Christ* Heartwell (Surrey Hills)
- *Armenia Apostolic Church of St Mary* – Norfolk Rd

Aged Care

- Nazareth House
 - Condare Court
 - Lynden Aged Care
 - The Gables
 - Hedley Sutton (Baptcare)
 - Cameron Close
 - Uniting Aged Care Hawthorn
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