

Uniting Church in Australia Synod of Victoria and Tasmania

PRESBYTERY OF GIPPSLAND

Time Fraction:	Full time
Term:	Five years
Suitable for:	Minister of the word/Deacon/Lay person
Approval date:	

PROFILE:

PRESBYTERY RESOURCING MINISTER - PASTORAL CARE

1. Description of the geographic and demographic area of the Presbytery

The Presbytery of Gippsland covers approximately one fifth of Victoria, and extends from Koo Wee Rup and Lang Lang in the west through to Croajingolong in the east and from Philip Island and Bass Coast in the south to the Victorian High Country in the north. It is the only area in Victoria where the people are known by the same name – ‘Gippslanders’. The only ecosystem missing from our area is a desert – otherwise Gippsland really does ‘have it all’.

The Presbytery has an extensive and varied demography. There are a small number of medium sized regional centres, numerous small towns, many small settlements and people living in isolated areas. Gippsland is predominantly rural. It has established towns and centres with good employment levels and socio-economic status plus pockets of low socio-economic living and significant unemployment. There is a large variety of retail businesses and light industrial areas throughout the Presbytery.

In general, congregations have an aging membership which provides a great reservoir of received wisdom and ‘know how’. In many parts of the Presbytery there are energetic and dynamic programs of outreach and children’s ministries. Typically, members of the congregations are involved in community activities to a significant extent. The age profile is higher than the average of the UCA in Victoria. Most congregations are predominantly Anglo/Celtic and they, along with the Presbytery are experiencing difficulty in filling leadership positions.

2. Presbytery organization and structure

The Fig Tree Project was endorsed by the Presbytery of Gippsland in May 2019. It was born from the struggle of Mission Areas unable to meet ministry expectations and needs. At its simplest, the Fig Tree Project enables congregations to offer ministry in their own context without the need to combine with other congregations under complex structures. Ministry agents are called to the Presbytery into teams with pastoral responsibility for one or more congregations. The team model offers flexibility and a greater range of ministry gifts and skills.

The Presbytery of Gippsland has been structured in a way that provides leadership through elected office-bearers (Chairperson, Pastoral Relations Committee Chair and Treasurer), Resourcing Ministry placements, and a number of committees and working groups that involve both lay and ordained members of the Presbytery. There is a diminishing number of people offering to be volunteers on committees and in leadership roles.

3. SPECIFIC ROLE DESCRIPTION:

The particular responsibilities and skills required of the **Presbytery Resourcing Minister, Pastoral Care** are:

3.1. Working with Ministry Agents

- Coordinating the work of pastoral care of ministry agents and their families across the Presbytery;
- Facilitating relationships between those in various ministries of the UCA;
- Encouraging ministry agents in regard to continuing education, annual ministry conferences, supervision, peer support groups, taking leave entitlements, updating profiles, conducting reviews of ministry, mentoring and compliance with the Code of Ethics;
- Conducting or participating in debriefing at the end of placements with another member of PRC;
- Engaging in crisis work with ministers and congregations, conflict resolution and support in times of loss and grief;

3.2. Working with congregations, agencies and institutions

- Developing expertise in pastoral care and theological discernment in congregations, faith communities and agencies
- Helping congregations and agency identify and develop suitable placements for both specified ministries and pastor positions;
- Work with congregations to support them in adapting to current and future needs and implement appropriate changes.

3.3 Support and Resourcing for congregations without ministry agents in place

- Help identify key lay leaders within congregations and give support and resourcing for their tasks and assist with access to training.
- Help facilitate co-operation and sharing between congregations where appropriate
- Lead occasional services in those places without a ministry agent.

3.4 Presbytery

- Resourcing the Pastoral Relations Committee:
- Working with the PRC to manage the appointment, training and support of Joint Nominating Committees;
- Membership of Presbytery in Council, the Presbytery Standing Committee, the Presbytery Pastoral Relations Committee; supporting the Chairperson in matters of discipline; assisting with conflict resolution; and Synod or Assembly responsibilities as required.
- Keeping the Standing Committee fully informed in the regular reporting at all Standing Committee meetings of conversations, discussions and relationships and recommendations of any proposed actions
- Helping Presbytery establish and strengthen links with the agency within its bounds;
- Encouraging the development of local Presbytery leaders for their ministries;
- Helping with the preparation for the ordination and commissioning of those in specified ministries;
- Supporting the Chairperson of the Presbytery in matters of discipline
- Participation in discerning applications for candidature, including the period of discernment;
- Encouraging ministers in regard to continuing education, annual ministry conferences, supervision, peer support groups, leave taking, updating profiles conducting reviews, debriefing at the end of placements, and mentoring;
- Assisting with mission studies prior to profile writing; assisting Congregations in defining their commitment to mission and the stewardship of resources.

- Being part of the discernment within Presbytery and Congregations needed to see the big picture of the call of God to be the people of God and what this might mean 'on the ground'.
- Oversight of the provision of supply ministry, crisis work with ministers and congregations, conflict resolution and support in times of loss and grief.

3.5 Synod

- Representing Presbytery on the Advisory Committee on Ministerial Placements (ACOMP);
- Would be involved in no more than 2 positions at Synod level that require monthly attendance (one day meetings) without consultation with the Chairperson.

3.6 Ecumenical

- To support the Presbytery of Gippsland's cooperating parishes (UC/ANG, UC/ANG/CC); ecumenical relationships which are significant and of great importance. The **Presbytery Resourcing Minister, Pastoral Care** role may include participation in bi-monthly Anglican/UCA heads of churches meetings and associated tasks, in order to build this collaborative culture.

4. Ministry gifts and skills required in team ministry within a Presbytery context

The Resourcing Ministers work together as a team. While each Minister will have the freedom to work and operate independently, it is expected that there will be an understanding of the way the roles complement each other and those of the elected leaders, and a willingness to work together to ensure both continuity and seamlessness in the support of the Presbytery. The following are seen as characteristics that will be shared by the team:

4.1. Personal Qualities and Experience

The **Presbytery Resourcing Minister, Pastoral Care** will have:

- A sound knowledge of the structure of the UCA, and prior involvement in a range of UCA Councils, including an understanding of, and commitment to the ethos of the UCA and the Presbytery model adopted by the Synod in 2017;
- Familiarity with the UCA Basis of Union, Constitution, Regulations and Manual for Meetings;
- An understanding of ministry and mission in the UCA, with developed theological insight and reflective skills;
- An understanding of and commitment to the multi- and inter-cultural nature of the UCA and its commitment to working with both First and Second Peoples.

The **Presbytery Resourcing Minister, Pastoral Care** will:

- Be a confirmed member of the Uniting Church
- Understand that re-definition and role adjustment may take place as the Presbytery discerns its way forward;
- Have competency as a leader, and be able to inspire others;
- Be able to articulate the importance of a Call to Ministry of **Presbytery Resourcing Minister, Pastoral Care** for the life of the Church and for him or herself;
- Have a realistic sense of her or his own identity and an awareness of strengths and weaknesses;
- Have the flexibility to work with people in a variety of contexts;
- A commitment to Team Ministry and regular team meetings, while able to work independently and co-ordinate activity within a team environment
- Be motivated with energy and enthusiasm.

4.2. Skills and Abilities

The **Presbytery Resourcing Minister, Pastoral Care** will have:

- Demonstrated pastoral skills;
- An ability to reflect on issues theologically within the broad theological framework of the Basis of Union of the UCA;
- Demonstrated capacity to act as change agent, comfortable with change and able to manage change while energizing and resourcing complex organizations;
- Demonstrated capacity to lead and work with people, councils and agencies within the UCA in an encouraging and constructive manner;
- Demonstrated effective interpersonal communication skills, particularly in the areas of liaison, negotiation, mediation, decision making and problem solving;
- Demonstrated capacity to implement policy decisions, coupled with compassion.

4.3. Desirable skills and qualities:

- A pro-active approach that listens and responds to people;
- Creativity; and an ability to deal with ongoing role adjustment;
- Clarity on responsibilities and boundaries;
- Willingness to break new ground without losing focus on 'business as usual';
- Accountability – in the role and with others;
- A well-organized approach, with good time management, relevant IT and administrative skills.

5. Resourcing Ministry Team

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In walking the way of Jesus, it is expected that the Presbytery Resourcing Ministry Team will reflect a healthy model of shared servant ministry, and:

- provide a leadership role together with the Committees and Task Groups of the Presbytery;
- meet and pray together at least monthly and work as a team;
- support each other and respect each other's role and expertise;
- accept a discipline of openness to accountability;
- engage in individual and team supervision;
- model team ministry within the Presbytery, in relationships with Synod staff and the other Presbyteries;

The Resourcing Ministry Team has previously been made up of FTE Synod-funded placements for the 2.5 Resource ministries (Pastoral, Mission Education/PeLM and Missional Support - Admin and supporting congregations in their Governance responsibilities.)

These positions are all currently being reviewed in line with the Presbytery Strategy and current needs.

5.1. Placements

The FTE Synod-funded placements for the two Resource ministries (Pastoral and Mission Education/PeLM) will be approved through the normal placements process. A lay person appointed as a remunerated Resourcing Minister (Admin) will be classified as Pastor (Regulation 2.2.2) There will be opportunity to advertise the positions.

5.2. Accountability

The **Presbytery Resourcing Minister, Pastoral Care** will be part of and accountable to the whole Presbytery through the Standing Committee.

The Standing Committee will seek concurrence of the team in recognising a team member to convene team meetings and coordinate ministry functions (Regulation 2:11.3(b)).

The Presbytery Chair will exercise both pastoral care and oversight of the Resourcing Ministry team. This will include review of tasks when necessary, through negotiation.

The **Presbytery Resourcing Minister, Pastoral Care** will be member of the Presbytery Standing Committee and the Pastoral Relations Committee and will be expected to relate to

one or more committees and other groups within the Presbytery, providing leadership and liaison with the Standing Committee and other groups as required. The Presbytery Standing Committee will ensure an annual review of the ministry of each Resourcing Minister.

5.3. Shared Responsibilities

The Resourcing Ministers will work together in the following areas, taking both group and individual responsibility for:

- Relational oversight of those providing ministry in the congregations in the Presbytery;
- Upholding the ethos of the Uniting Church as expressed in the Basis of Union;
- Attending regular Resourcing Minister team meetings;
- Assisting and encouraging the development of Presbytery leaders for their ministries;
- Taking initiatives to fulfil key priorities and policies as determined from time to time by the Presbytery;
- Working with and supporting Presbytery committees in ways which ensure efficient use of time and skills;
- Facilitating relationships between those in various ministries of the UCA;
- Helping to equip and enrich all congregations and agencies to engage in mission beyond the bounds of the church;
- Engaging in regional planning for the life and work of the Uniting Church in the area through congregations, faith communities, Uniting and chaplaincies;
- Facilitating the preparation for Presbytery and committee meetings and ensuring the keeping of accurate records of meetings;
- Fostering local and regional ecumenism;
- Participating in worship in the Presbytery and in its congregations; and
- Advocating throughout the Presbytery for the work of the Uniting Church in Synod and Assembly.

6.. General

The position of **Presbytery Resourcing Minister, Pastoral Care** within the Gippsland Presbytery is either a placement or appointment within the Uniting Church in Australia, and is open to ordained and lay members of the Church. The person appointed to the position will require:

- Flexibility in work practice, including availability for scheduled after-hours and weekend work;
- Occasional intra- and interstate travel may be required;
- A current Working with Children Check as a mandatory requirement;
- A valid driver’s licence.
- A current National Police Check
- The Person will reside in the Eastern half of the Presbytery. There is a manse available in Sale.

10. Presbytery Details

10.1 Effective Date

The earliest date at which the placement is available is

10.2 Joint Nominating Committee Chair:

Name:		Phone:	
Address:			
Email:			
Name:		Phone:	

Address:	
Email:	

10.3 Date of Presbytery Approval 8th December 2023

The profile was approved by the Presbytery Standing Committee on

10.4 The date of Submission 8th December 2023

The profile was forwarded to the Placements Committee on

11. Terms of Placement

The Presbytery has adopted the terms of Placement described in the standard pro forma shown on the following page:

APPENDIX:

1. Description of the Uniting Church within the Presbytery of Gippsland

The Gippsland Presbytery is a region of great diversity. It includes older and well-established areas, others which are brand new and developing with the expansion of urban areas, small towns and remote settlements. Congregations are also very diverse: in size, in expressions of worship, theologically and in the level of resources.

There are congregations which are growing in size while some are declining. Some are looking at new ways of co-operating together whilst other want no change. There is an increasing number of congregations that struggle to be financially or structurally viable. This raises issues of missional strategy, maintenance and use of resources for the people of God in a particular time and in a particular place. Some congregations have active outreach to and support ministry with Pacific Island rural workers in their communities, enriching the worship life of those churches.

The Presbytery of Gippsland has currently 21 ministry placements involved in mission and ministry, some of which are part-time; with some congregations and clusters being linked for shared ministry purposes. There are six ministry area teams. The Presbytery includes approximately 57 preaching places and one faith community.

Chaplaincies in the Presbytery include:

1. Tertiary Chaplaincy at Federation University Churchill
2. The Presbytery (in partnership with Frontier Services and the Synod of Victoria and Tasmania) supports ministry:
 - 2.1 High Country; providing ministry to settled communities in Omeo-Swifts Creek and the Frontier Services Bush Chaplaincy area.
 - 2.2 Ministry in bushfire affected areas provides ministry to settled communities in East Gippsland
 - 2.3 Prom Country Bush Chaplain (with ministry in Corner Inlet)

Co-operating Parishes:

Within the Presbytery there are a number of Co-operating Parishes: Neerim South Co-operating Parish, Croajingolong Co-operating Parish (both Anglican/Uniting), and the Co-operating Churches of Churchill, Boolarra - Yinnar (UCA, Anglican and Churches of Christ). There are a number of other congregations which have a covenanted agreement or arrangement to share in, offer to, or receive ministry or hospitality from other denominations. Representatives of the Presbytery meet regularly with the Anglican bishop.

Camping:

the Presbytery has an active Camping Committee that conducts a 5 day Youth camp each year and is currently investigating the possibility of developing other camping opportunities. The Presbytery operates the Lake Tyers Camping and Caravan Park.

Uniting:

Since 1st July 2010 the Uniting Church agency working across Gippsland has been known as UnitingCare Gippsland. Since July 2017 UnitingCare Gippsland's work of caring for communities has come under the newly formed agency Uniting. Representatives of the Presbytery meet regularly with agency staff and where possible attend agency staff induction days to continue the strong link between Church and Agency.

Financial resources:

Synod encourages Presbyteries to develop sources of income beyond that provided from the Synod budget, through the appropriate stewardship of property that does not deprive the wider church of just and appropriate sharing.

Regional property values are low in relation to city values and vary widely according to location. A typical 2 bathroom, four bedroom home could be valued at between \$900,000 and \$250,000, depending on location. Property sales do not provide significant income for congregations to allow the possibility of contributing to the overall income of the Presbytery. Average income is significantly below that of the average in Victoria. To date there has been little financial capacity to raise sufficient funds to support the costs of staff additional to that available from Placements, the Pooled Fund and other grants. A couple of recent property sales within the Presbytery may allow for access to some additional funding from 2024.

2. The Role of Presbytery

The function of Presbyteries is to perform all the acts of oversight necessary to the life and mission of the Church in the area for which it is responsible, except for those agencies which are directly responsible to the Synod or Assembly. It will, exercise oversight over congregations within its bounds, encouraging them to strengthen one another's faith and bear one another's burdens, and exhorting them to fulfil their high calling in Jesus Christ. It will promote those wider aspects of the work of the Church committed to it by the Synod or the Assembly (Para 15, The Basis of Union, 1992 Edition).

It is best when these functions are dependent upon the key factor of Presbyteries having relational oversight for those congregations within its bounds. This is not oversight as exercising power or control but a relational way of being where the gathered members of the Uniting Church are cared for and working together to fulfil their call to discipleship in Jesus Christ. Where relationships breakdown, oversight may mean intervention.

2.1 The functions of the Presbytery

We are first and foremost called to be disciples of Jesus Christ. We gather together as the body of Christ and join in his life and mission. The Uniting Church, according to the Basis of Union, has structured itself through a series of inter-related councils to meet this end.

The core responsibilities of presbyteries are laid out in the Constitution and Regulation 3.1.3, and fall into three key areas: Pastoral, Mission/Education and Administration.

When Presbyteries are functioning well, the life of the whole church is enhanced:

- Congregations are supported and their life enriched;
- Congregations are helped in identifying and building their missional and ecumenical possibilities;
- Links between congregations, schools and agencies and the wider church are forged and strengthened;
- People in ministry roles (lay and ordained) are encouraged, equipped and supported;
- Educational possibilities for congregations and those in ministry are facilitated;
- Relationships are developed with cross-cultural ministries;
- The relationship with Congress is strengthened (where applicable); and

- Communication with the various parts of the Synod is clear, building up strong relationships between all councils of the Church.

2.2 Presbytery–Synod Relationships

The Presbytery does not exist in isolation, but in relationship with the Synod and other Presbyteries and Congregations. It is part of the interconciliar structure and relationships of the Uniting Church. In 2016 the Synod of Victoria and Tasmania adopted a set of core relational expectations which set out the basis for the Synod and Presbyteries to work together to build capacity for being the church at mission in contextual ways, ensuring the strategic use of property for missional purposes, and establishing a coordinated relationship between the Synod's leadership and presbyteries' leadership, with a spirit of mutuality and mutual accountability.

These expectations were further detailed by the Synod in 2017 when it requested Presbyteries to engage collaboratively and in a coordinated manner with the Synod to enable Presbyteries to function in ways that are "lighter and simpler", and so be free to give priority to the Presbyteries' vital task of oversight involving pastoral-missional leadership. In order to ensure that these expectations are embodied in the ministry team models adopted by Presbyteries, the Synod further resolved to request each Presbytery and the equipping Leadership for Mission unit to enter into a process of conversation and discernment as part of the implementation process to develop a ministry team model appropriate for its life and for effective resourcing for enabling mission.

Resourcing Ministers have a key role in facilitating collaboration between the Presbytery and congregations and the Synod. As a church we have shared Vision, Mission Principles and Strategic Priorities (see <https://ucavictas.org.au/visionandmission/>) which outline our shared priorities in discipleship together. Presbytery appointed staff work collaboratively within the Presbytery and in relationship with congregations and the Synod in line with the Vision and Mission Principles. In particular, Presbytery appointed Resourcing Ministry roles will relate collaboratively in a coordinated way with the Synod to foster cooperation between Synod units and the Presbytery, so as to enhance our worship, witness and service across the Synod.

The Presbytery needs to manage this interface carefully to ensure that the Resourcing Ministry remains focused on the needs of the Presbytery. For Gippsland, a meeting in Melbourne incorporates up to a full day's travel in addition time spent at the meeting. This means that the amount of time spent outside of the Presbytery can be detrimental to the work of the Presbytery.