



A Placement Profile

A1 Presbytery	Western Victoria Presbytery		
A2 Name of Placement	Horsham and District		
A3 Placement city/suburb/town	Horsham		
A4 Church/Office location(s)	Horsham		
A5 Congregations and agencies associated with this placement	Congregations: Horsham-Pimpinio, Natimuk-Goroke-Minimay, Dimboola, Rupanyup, Murtoa Agencies: Uniting Wimmera (through three-year-old kindergarten)		
A6 Ministry leadership being sought	Specific ministry role:	Leadership & Vision	
	Minister of the Word <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Deacon <input type="checkbox"/>	Ministry of Pastor <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Ordinand <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
A7 Specific details	Additional placement <input type="checkbox"/>	Replacement placement <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
	Full Time <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Part Time <input type="checkbox"/>	Time fraction <input type="text" value="1.0"/>
	Earliest Start Date:	Click here to enter a date.	
A8 Placement term	Undefined <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Up to 10 years (see Reg 2.7.3(a))	
	Fixed Term	Required for non-congregational placements (see Reg 2.7.3(b))	Years <input type="text"/>
A9 To be completed by Presbytery, with reasons given on page 13:	Is permission sought to advertise? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>		
	Is a Priority Placement recommended? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>		
A10 Website	Horsham.unitingchurch.org.au		
A11 Social Media	Facebook: Horsham and District Uniting Churches Victoria Australia		
A12 Google map link	https://www.google.com/maps/@-36.3117481,140.9461297,8z?entry=tu&g_ep=EgoyMDI0MDkwOS4wIKXMDSoASAFQAw%3D%3D		
A13 Area map (paste image)			





B The Congregation

B1 Tell a potential minister about this placement and yourselves, in your own words and pictures, in no more than one page. Share something of your congregation's values, beliefs and ways in which you live out and share the gospel message.

Include comment about why you need a new minister. How will this placement be exciting, challenging, and attractive to a minister? How can God be served in new ways here? What do you want the Minister to do with you and for you?

This is your chance to 'be creative' and catch the attention of someone who is thinking of sharing their call, their gifts, their life with you.

This placement consists of a number of congregations that are dedicated to their faith and being drawn together for mutual support, to build resilience and survive as beacons of hope and care in our community. We need someone to help us manage the challenge and change of working together more closely and someone who will encourage us to be open to what God is doing in our district. We are hopeful the church will be sustained and build to thrive across this district. We are open to new ways of being church. We want the minister to lead worship, strengthen our faith and mission to serve, but also encourage us to adapt, be open and make new partnerships in the wider community.

Horsham & District Uniting Church



Horsham Worship Space
- front & back view

Horsham Tech Desk Set up



Horsham Cafe Worship & Messy Church



Murtoa Ecumenical service & fellowship
Dimboola fun & friendship Group

B2 List and explain any particular priorities which the congregation has identified and which it will address in the next two to five years?

- Review of the Governance Structure
- Defining the ministry roles and relationship between this role and the 0.6 Pastor's role
- Working on developing active participation by the smaller congregations in the live-streamed worship
- Some congregations in the district have identified fostering deeper Ecumenical relationships as a priority

- Encouraging greater participation of younger families and children in the life of the church
- Building the capacity and capability of members to take on different roles to sustain the life of the church
- Becoming a visible presence in the life of our communities, inside and outside of church
- Reaching a more sustainable financial position to maintain our church and wider mission

B3 Does this placement relate to more than one congregation?

Yes

No

If so, provide details on page 9.

B4 What ethnic and language groups are represented in the congregation? What proportion of the congregation does each represent?

Murtoa includes a small number of Filipinos and French.

B5 What languages are spoken in the life of your:

Congregation, by		Community, by	
Individuals	English	Individuals	English
Groups	English	Groups	English

B6 What languages are spoken by the congregation in worship?

English only.

B7 Describe any involvement your congregation has in covenanting with first nations people.

There is no involvement or agreements in covenanting between any of the congregations and First Nations people.

B8 List any UCA Schools and/or agencies (Uniting VicTas, Uniting AgeWell) with which the congregation has an existing relationship.

Uniting Wimmera.

C Mission

C1 List three of your missional activities that your congregation does best?

HORSHAM: Live-streaming enabling people to experience our services wherever they may be. Messy Church linking the Church with young families, Craft for Cause Shop serving the community.
 MURTOA: Involvement in community. Encouragement awards weekly for junior sports. Ecumenically able to help local needs e.g. Water for Homeless, Bags of Hope, Nursing home knee rugs.
 NATIMUK/GOROKE: Stations of the Cross, World Day of Prayer, Getting newsletters out and keeping in touch with the community.
 DIMBOOLA: Hosts the town's Friendship Group, Provides low-cost venue for the local brass band, Offers funerals for First Nations and other non-UCA people.
 RUPANYUP: Support for World Vision, though that has recently stopped for lack of finance. Maintenance of grounds at the Sweetman Court flats, though Uniting Wimmera now responsible for letting the units.
 Christmas Eve service for the community in the church.

C2 What are three missional activities your congregation would like to develop?

HORSHAM: Increasing participation from outlying congregations in live-streamed services, Increasing the use of social media to build our profile in the community, Increasing openness through Mission Action Group.
 MURTOA: Continuing ecumenical co-operation
 NATIMUK/GOROKE: To be open-minded to ongoing missional opportunities.

DIMBOOLA: Increase the size of the Friendship Group, Better organised pastoral visitation plan, Occasional events e.g. midweek lunches, Pancake Day.
RUPANYUP: Continue Christmas eve service plus support for Sweetman Court flats.

C3 How has the congregation changed in the past two years?

HORSHAM: Sunday services reduced from three to one in response to reduced attendance and to manage the load on the Ministry Team. Introduction of Café Church, once a month, as a different style of worship. Our choir has gone into recess.

MURTOA: Ageing, but remaining static. Several new members.

NATIMUK/GOROKE: Congregational changes due to health issues.

DIMBOOLA: The very experienced treasurer passed away. Several regular attenders no longer attend worship due to age/health. A few members of the congregation are less regular at worship, but the core group is constant. Age caught up with the catering ladies who ceased catering for funerals.

RUPANYUP: Congregation has aged; several long time faithful members have died.

C4 What changes and developments are anticipated in the next three to five years?

HORSHAM: More flexible and adaptive worship to cater for different styles, needs and circumstances. More participation by small groups and individuals within or leading worship.

MURTOA: Increased ecumenical co-operation.

NATIMUK/GOROKE: Less parishioners able to attend services.

DIMBOOLA: Repairs will be done to the hall. A disabled toilet may be built within the building. A reliable tenant will be found for the manse. The Church Council will end when the Horsham District Council is formed.

D The Community

D1 Describe the wider community in which your ministry is located.

The Wimmera region, located in western Victoria is characterized by its unique geography, economy, and community life. It's a region with rich indigenous and historic heritage and ongoing opportunities for growth and development.

The Wimmera includes the lands of five Traditional Owner groups; the Wotjobaluk, Wergaia, Jupagulk, Jaadwa and Jadawadjali peoples; represented by the Barengi Gadjin Land Council.

The landscape features a mix of flat and gently undulating terrain, famous for its expansive agricultural lands, including vast grain fields and pastures. The Grampians (Gariwerd) National Park to the south offers rugged, mountainous terrain and is a notable natural feature of the region.

The climate is temperate with hot, dry summers and cooler winters. The usually clear skies make for bright days and spectacular starry nights.

The Wimmera is known for its strong sense of community and traditional rural values. Local events, agricultural shows, and community festivals play a significant role in social life. There is a mix of long-standing residents and newer arrivals, contributing to a diverse community fabric.

Horsham is the largest town in the region, Horsham serves as a central hub for services, commerce, and cultural activities. It provides educational and sporting facilities, healthcare services, library, and a range of retail options. The Wimmera River runs through the town, and along with various lakes in the region, supports year-round recreational pursuits.

There are other small towns with strong community spirit, historic and cultural significance, tourist attractions, and local amenities:

Dimboola: Adjoins the Wimmera River and Little Desert National Park.

Murtoa: Famous for the Murtoa Stick Shed, a historic grain storage facility.

Natimuk: A small town offering community events and a vibrant local culture, just minutes from Mt Arapiles, an internationally renowned rock-climbing destination.

Rupanyup: Home to Woods Farming and Heritage Museum and Silo Art.

Agriculture is the backbone of the Wimmera's economy. Key agricultural activities include grain farming (especially wheat, barley and lentils), sheep grazing, and cropping. The region is known for its productive farmlands and is a significant contributor to Australia's agricultural outputs. While agriculture is predominant, there are also mining and renewable energy industries in the region.

D2 What makes this an enjoyable place to live?

It is a joy to feel connected and welcome in a community such as Horsham and surrounding districts. For young and old, generational residents and new arrivals, singles and families, it is great place to live, work and create life-long friendships.

The region boasts scenic landscapes, including the Wimmera River, picturesque farmland, and nearby national parks like the Grampians. This offers ample opportunities for outdoor activities like hiking, fishing, and camping.

The slower pace of life and less congestion compared to metropolitan areas contributes to a higher quality of life.

The area hosts various local events, markets, and festivals that celebrate the region's culture and community spirit. These events contribute to a vibrant local culture and provide opportunities for social engagement.

Sporting clubs, particularly football - netball clubs, form the focal hub for many families. In Horsham there is also a basketball stadium, a velodrome and skateboard park as well as opportunities to play soccer and hockey.

While enjoying the benefits of rural living, Horsham is relatively close to larger cities like Ballarat, Bendigo and Melbourne, providing access to additional services when needed.

Overall, Horsham and the Wimmera region combine the benefits of a close-knit community, natural beauty, affordability, and a balanced lifestyle, making it an attractive place to live for many people.

D3 What are the points of stress and pain in the wider community?

The region is economically reliant on agriculture. Climate variability create risks to agricultural productivity, and human and environmental health. But the region is adapting. New industries like mining and energy generation create change, impact employment, housing and agricultural land, but also opportunities.

The population is in decline, other than in the regional centre Horsham which is growing as people relocate from smaller towns and farming areas. Small towns have become attractive to people seeking cheaper housing.

Horsham has its share of social issues reflective of broader trends in rural and regional communities.

Many families face social and financial challenges. Some are dependent on government and volunteer services for the simplest needs like food and housing. While it is an overwhelmingly safe community, there are emerging issues with suicide, domestic violence, substance abuse and homelessness. Some people feel isolated, and struggle with mental health and general well-being, especially elderly residents and those living in more remote areas.

Access to suitable housing, childcare and specialist medical services are ongoing challenges, particularly in smaller centres. These issues can have an acute impact on attracting and retaining skilled workers and professionals.

The community has a high proportion of older persons with 34.6% aged 55 and over, compared to 28.3% for Victoria. Providing adequate services and support systems for older residents is a key issue. Young adults are drawn to larger regional centres and capital cities for tertiary education and employment opportunities.

D4 How closely does your congregation reflect the demographics of your local area?

The demographics of the congregation are somewhat different to the local community.

The median age in Horsham is 41 years (2021 Census), with 34.6% aged 55 and over. The congregation is much older on average, with at least 80 % aged 55 or above. There is a particular lack of young adults.

Messy Church in Horsham is well attended by young families; typically, 5-10 families attending each month; but these are typically not regular worshippers.

The community is becoming more ethnically diverse with a greater number of persons with Asian background (predominantly Indian, Filipino, Thai, Chinese, Malaysian and Karen). Even so 87% of the community was born in Australia. This diversity is generally represented. English is the only language used in ministry, though contributions from various culture are welcomed to diversify Sunday services.

In Horsham, males make up 49%, and women 51% of the population (2021 Census), whereas the congregation has a much greater proportion of women.

D5 What community facilities are present in the local area?

HORSHAM: Horsham, as the largest town in the region, offers a range of community facilities and services that cater to various needs and interests, including:

- Health: The Wimmera Base Hospital provides a range of medical services including emergency care, general surgery, and many specialised treatments. Local clinics provide general practice, dental and specialist services. Goolum Goolum Aboriginal Co-operative (GGAC) is an Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation, providing a range of health, support and cultural engagement services to our regional community.

- Education: Holy Trinity Lutheran school (Foundation to year12), St Michael & St John Primary, St Brigid College (secondary), Horsham Primary (with additional campus at Horsham North), Horsham West Primary (with additional campus at Haven) and Horsham College (secondary). A Federation University and TAFE campus provides vocational training.



- Arts & Culture: Horsham takes pride in its regional library, art gallery and modern theatre, home to stellar exhibitions and performances from local and touring artists.

- Various sporting and service clubs, gyms and an Aquatic Centre with indoor and outdoor pools.

Shopping: A shopping plaza and central business district, including specialist stores.

- Transport: Local bus and taxi services. V-Line services provide connections to regional rail services.

These facilities and services contribute to the quality of life in Horsham and the Wimmera region, supporting education, health, recreation, and community engagement.

MURTOA: Medical Centre, GP & Pharmacy, P12 College & Catholic Primary, Swimming Pool, Caravan Park, Post Office, Supermarket, Hardware, Butcher, Neighbourhood House, Cafes, CBA, many sporting clubs, Lake Marma, Rabi Park and tourist attractions.

RUPANYUP: Several shops, Post Office, primary school, Stonehaven Nursing Home, agricultural businesses.

DIMBOOLA: several shops, plant nursery, Post Office, Nursing home as part of hospital.

NATIMUK and GOROKE: few shops. NOTE: Fuel station in Goroke only, card activated..

MINIMAY: One small shop.

PIMPINIO: Caravan and other business. No shops.