



Chaplaincy Profile

Grampians Healthcare Chaplaincy

Presbytery:	Western Victoria
Time fraction:	1.0 FTE
Term:	Undefined up to 10 years
Suitable for:	Ministry of Deacon, Minister of the Word or Pastor (see Appendix A for pastor requirements)
Approval date:	March 6th 2026

Ministry Agent

Signature

Date

PRC Secretary Presbytery of Western Victoria

Signature

March 5th 2026

Rev. Dr. Graeme Sutton

Chair Grampians Health Chaplaincy Committee

Signature

30th March, 2026

Date

Grampians Healthcare Chaplaincy

Grampians Healthcare Chaplaincy commenced 48 years ago as a ministry of the Presbytery of Grampians and now the Presbytery of Western Victoria. Over those years Chaplains were appointed and funded by the Presbytery and with volunteers, offered pastoral ministry, visiting or providing worship services to the two hospitals in Ballarat and a number of aged care facilities. In 2009 the Presbytery approved the formation of the Ballarat Chaplaincy Support Group (BCSG) with a broader brief to "take responsibility for the 'on-the-ground' support and operation of chaplaincy". This structure was also founded on the conviction that Chaplaincy is a key of ministry that the church needs to develop to meet the future challenges of mission and outreach. Presbytery funded it to a full-time position in 2012.

A revised Terms of Reference was approved which detailed the authority, roles and responsibilities of the 'Ballarat Regional Healthcare Chaplaincy Committee' and was approved in 2018. At this time this ministry operated out of the Wendouree Uniting Church. With the sale of the Wendouree Church in 2021 the Bev Pratt Chaplaincy Centre was officially opened at 14 Thompson Street Brown Hill. As a consequence, the Chaplaincy Committee now had both ministry and ministry oversight. The closure and sale of a number of Uniting Churches in Ballarat enabled the Chaplaincy ministry to benefit from property sales funds. Invested in the Church's Money for Mission program, the Chaplaincy ministry in its current and proposed form is fully self-funded.

COVID brought immediate cessation to hospital visiting and worship services in aged care facilities. This had a devastating effect on the Assistant Chaplains who could no longer function. Eventually worship teams were able to be kept active through the establishment of a roster of teams to record a weekly half hour service which was posted on the Chaplaincy Youtube channel. As it became clear that the ministry of chaplaincy would never return to the form that it had taken prior to the pandemic a planning day in January 2023 identified four areas as priority areas of further work: Ecumenical, training, recruitment/succession planning and tech (IT).

A new Action Plan was developed in 2023 which recognised that, although the hands-on chaplaincy work is focussed in Ballarat, the Chaplaincy Committee, as a Presbytery Committee, is able to resource congregations across the Presbytery. The Ballarat Chaplaincy Service became the Grampians Health Chaplaincy Service, reflecting an expanded and inclusive ministry area. Arising from a Special Consultation in 2025, a whole new approach to Chaplaincy has been proposed which will require a Chaplain Co-ordinator to help guide its implementation using the Action Plan and its goals as a basis of moving forward.

MISSION STATEMENT

For anyone in health care or aged care facilities to be a companion on the journey.... for when you are far from home.

VISION STATEMENTS

- To equip volunteers through quality theological and pastoral education and training across the Presbytery to support them in their hospital and aged care visiting or worship services in local facilities
- To provide appropriate pastoral support to patients in health care or residents in aged care, their families and staff
- To employ both the medium of face to face and on-line learning modules for basic training
- To provide regular worship services for those in Aged Care facilities and on-line worship opportunities where face-to-face worship is not available.

Over the 48 years, Chaplaincy has had many "companions on the journey" and been a companion across the Presbytery, especially when people have been "far from home." We now seek a new companion who can journey with us, to lead, guide, converse as we continue on this new, exciting journey - whose destination is in the hands of our Guiding Spirit.

What we are Seeking

The Chaplain we are seeking will be based in the Bev Pratt Chaplaincy Centre in Brown Hill, a suburb of Ballarat. This centre is the home of the Chaplaincy service and also acts as a meeting hub for other small Presbytery meetings.

Grampians Healthcare Chaplaincy is at the beginning of a journey of expansion and transition. It is expected that there will be other staff appointments to work in a team with the Chaplain appointed to this role. The role and location of these subsequent positions is still a work in progress and it is expected that the new appointment will assist the Chaplaincy Committee in their development and implementation.

We are seeking a Chaplain who is able to think strategically and be a resource person.

The Chaplain needs to have the capacity to facilitate and run training/education events and be available to assist communities across the Presbytery to offer pastoral support in their location.

We are seeking a chaplain who will be actively involved in leading worship at a variety of Ballarat based aged care residences as well as being available to visit the Ballarat Base Hospital and St John of God Ballarat Hospital.

The Chaplain needs to be available to attend worship in congregations across the Presbytery on an ad hoc basis to promote the work of Chaplaincy.

This is not a role that is based in an institution or accountable to one, but the Chaplain needs to be able to work alongside regional healthcare institutions.

Presbytery of Western Victoria

The Presbytery of Western Victoria (PWV) is a large presbytery stretching from the South Australian border to Ballarat in the east, Warracknabeal in the north to the Southern Ocean and some 60-65 congregations in between. It includes a number of major centres such as Ballarat, Warrnambool, Horsham, Colac, Hamilton, Portland, Ararat and Stawell. In common with much of rural Victoria, agricultural activity is varied, including dry land cereal and grazing, dairy, forestry, wool and beef production. Tourism and service industries, education and medical facilities are spread throughout the region. The most remote parts are about five hours from Melbourne.

The congregations range in size from the faithful handful to nearly 300 members. Many have celebrated between 100 to 160 years of witness. The geography in which they are set is as varied as the buildings and the congregations themselves - from the wide Wimmera plains to the highlands of the Great Divide, from coastal towns to places hundreds of kilometres from the sea. While some areas continue to grow, others are declining in population and services.

To try to overcome the 'tyranny of distance', the Presbytery is divided into six regions, each with its distinct characteristics. Ministering to such dispersed and disparate populations when the numbers of ordained ministers and deacons in placement are declining continues to provide great challenge. Many congregations depend on lay people who are supported through continuing education and training programs which aim to equip the whole people of God for effective witness in their various communities.

As regional and rural communities change we are experiencing ageing communities and fewer volunteers. There is a general movement away from traditional faith expression more broadly and communities face many challenging issues. Rural decline and government decisions have led to an increased rural suicide rate and growing incidences of DV. Closure of services in smaller outlying communities is common, and people have to travel more to access many services or become more digitally savvy.

The UC no longer is representative of the broader community demographics. Closure of congregations, ageing members and smaller congregations mean the UCA is not as well represented as in years past as an active missional force in many communities.

Ballarat city is a well serviced, well-equipped city across all levels of education, health and community activity. As is Warrnambool and Horsham.

Role purpose

There is need for an expanded ministry across the three northern regions of the Presbytery. This expansion will align the Chaplaincy service with Grampians Health Services, which manages the hospitals in Ballarat, Stawell, Horsham and Edenhope. This will enable the church to have a

strong presence and assure that people will be visited and supported whether they are in their local facility, or are sent to a Base hospital "away from home".

In the light of a lack of ministerial placements, congregations, and particularly Elders, need support and training in pastoral care to equip volunteers in congregations to undertake their local pastoral ministries and hospital visiting programs.

The Committee envisages and expanded chaplaincy, with appropriate Chaplaincy staff, will have the capacity to meet needs and be available to undertake this ministry.

An additional team member will be recruited with a view of offering chaplaincy to other locations within PWV where Grampians Health has a footprint. It is also envisaged that pastoral education will be offered across the Presbytery.

Governance

Chaplaincy is a ministry of the Presbytery who has constituted the Chaplaincy Committee as a Committee of the Presbytery. It is appointed bi-annually at the Presbytery AGM and led by a Chairperson with up to 10 people all of whom are appointed by the Presbytery of Western Victoria and currently come from the Ballarat congregations. The Committee provides a written report to each Standing Committee/Presbytery meeting.

Decisions are made by the Committee and any major policy or structural changes are presented to Presbytery (usually Standing Committee) before implementation.

The Chaplain works closely with the committee and is accountable to the committee. In many ways, the committee operates in a similar way to a Church Council, but is accountable directly to the Presbytery.

Key selection criteria

Qualifications and experience

This position requires the following knowledge and experience:

- Ministry of Deacon, Minister of the Word or Pastor
- Previous Chaplaincy experience
- Experience in and understanding of a medical setting

Skills and abilities

The person for this position should:

- Be able to demonstrate ability in and a commitment to pastoral ministry
- Have leadership skills
- Have skills in recruitment, support and supervision of volunteers
- Have an adequate general and theological education to diploma or degree level or equivalent
- Have completed at least two units of CPE or equivalent, or a commitment to undertaking and completing this requirement
- Have previous pastoral or counselling experience
- Have a well-developed skill in the practice of self-care
- Have a police and probity check for every jurisdiction lived in over the last 10 years
- Have a current Working with Children Check (WWCC)
- Have competencies in IT which will assist in service delivery, program development and the development and maintenance of on-line training resources

Personal competencies and qualities

The successful applicant will also have these personal competencies and qualities:

- Understanding of and empathy with the impact of the emotional, physical and spiritual aspects of illness, trauma, treatment related to acute care.
- The capacity to respond appropriately to crisis and critical events in the life of another
- The capacity to assess and prioritise ministry needs
- The ability to exercise ministry within a multi-disciplinary health care team

- The ability to participate as part of a pastoral care team
- The ability to recruit, support and supervise volunteers
- Skills in developing appropriate liturgies for the conduct of services of worship
- An understanding of ethical issues that may arise in this setting and an availability to negotiate/advocate such issues if when or where the need arises
- The capacity to understand and work within inter-faith and ecumenical professional and pastoral relationships
- Computer competence
- Flexibility in terms of working hours, with work on weekends and/or in evenings necessary
- A current driver's licence
- Willing to work within the UCA's Workplace Values and Characteristics

Personal Attributes

- A commitment to his/her own spiritual growth
- A capacity to engage with patients, family, staff
- A commitment to regular professional supervision
- A commitment to regular professional development

Other requirements

Applicants will be required to obtain a Working with Children's Check, and their employment will be subject to satisfactory completion of a National Criminal History Check.

Key activities

Key Areas	Key activities
Education and Partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthcare Chaplaincy Hospital/Aged Care: Negotiate MOUs with Grampians Health services, pastoral visiting 2 days per week, at Grampians Health Service - Ballarat Base, be on call to Grampians Health Services Ballarat Base and St John of God hospitals. • Aged Care Worship Services: Critical examination of current arrangements, develop formal agreements in each facility, co-ordinate services and worship teams. • Education Training and Supervision: Oversee pastoral ministry at the Bev Pratt Chaplaincy Centre (BPCC) in conjunction with Grampians Health Services which may include CPE units. Liaise with the Synod of Victoria and Tasmania equipping Leadership for Mission unit, Pilgrim College and Presbytery of Western Victoria Education Committee to oversee training of worship leaders. Maintain and co-ordinate the chaplaincy website.
Support and resource	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pastoral Care of Congregations: Support and resource pastoral care ministry in Local UC congregations. Provide supervision and accountability as needed. • Regional Pastoral Ministry team: When established, support and resource the Chaplaincy ministry team to avoid isolation.
Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oversee pastoral ministry at the Bev Pratt Chaplaincy Centre (BPCC) in conjunction with Grampians Health Services which may include CPE units, liaise with the Synod of Victoria and Tasmania equipping Leadership for Mission unit, Pilgrim College and Presbytery of Western Victoria Education Committee, oversee training of worship leaders, maintain and co-ordinate the chaplaincy website.

<p>Work in partnership</p>	<p>As the new direction is rolled out over the next 12 months it is envisaged that there will be 3 other ministry roles:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Regional Pastoral Ministry Worker - North-east (.6eft = 3 days) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Healthcare Chaplaincy Hospital/Aged Care: Work within MOU with Grampians Health Services - pastoral visiting at the hospital and aged care. b. Pastoral Care of Congregations: Work with UC congregations in the North-east region of the Presbytery to strengthen pastoral care of congregations, respond to end of life and other urgent pastoral needs, located in hospital, aged care and congregation settings c. Aged Care Worship Services: Oversee worship services in aged care facilities in Ballarat and associated areas as appropriate. d. Education Training and Supervision: participate in education, training and supervision of lay pastoral carers and worship leaders in congregation. e. Regional Pastoral Ministry team: when established: become part of the Chaplaincy Ministry team. 2. Regional Pastoral Ministry Worker - Gariwerd/Wimmera (.8eft = 4 days) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Healthcare Chaplaincy Hospital/Aged Care: Work within MOU with Grampians Health Services - pastoral visiting at Grampians Health Services sites in Stawell and Horsham at least one day a week in each hospital. Be on call to Grampians Health Services at Stawell and Horsham and other health service providers in those two regions. b. Pastoral Care of Congregations: Work with UC congregations in the Gariwerd and Wimmera regions of the Presbytery to strengthen pastoral care of congregations, respond to end of life and other urgent pastoral needs, located in hospital, aged care and congregation settings c. Aged Care Worship Services: Resource worship services teams in aged care facilities in associated areas as appropriate. d. Education Training and Supervision: participate in education, training and supervision of lay pastoral carers and worship leaders in congregation. e. Regional Pastoral Ministry team: when established: become part of the Chaplaincy Ministry team. 3. Moyne-Warrnambool Pastoral Worker (a payment to the Moyne-Warrnambool Parish Mission the amount of a .2eft of a stipend to supplement the position already undertaken out of the Parish Mission. Resource worship teams in aged care in associated areas as appropriate. Be part of the Chaplaincy ministry team.
<p>Missional goals of Committee.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pastoral care in hospital and aged care settings, although it has been our primary focus, as previously indicated, keeping this focus needs much attention. 2. Recruitment, training and support of volunteers - visitors and worship teams 3. Worship in aged care facilities 4. Expand Chaplaincy presence across the whole of the Presbytery by adding 2 Regional Pastoral Ministry Workers: .6 in Ballarat and .8 in Horsham 5. Develop a renewed volunteer base 6. Consolidate a relationship with Grampians Health Services pastoral care staff.

Appendix A

Pastor Requirements

Any lay person applying for this position will need to meet both the core and general competencies as set out by the UCA Assembly. (Link below)

Core Competencies are those areas determined by the UCA Assembly as essential minimum requirements for an appointment for the ministry of Pastor. The Assembly has determined that these Core Competencies address two areas: The Basis of Union and UCA ethos, and the UCA Code of Ethics and Ministry Practice. Competencies include knowledge, skills and other abilities. Both these competencies are vital to this role of Chaplain.

The General Competencies are grouped under the following headings. Note that the categories are not mutually exclusive, so there are some overlaps of competency in some areas.

1. Community Development
2. Education
3. Evangelism
4. Leadership
5. Pastoral Care
6. Organisation & Administration
7. Worship & Preaching

This role of Chaplain is focused primarily on pastoral care with some administration and will include some aspects of worship and preaching especially in relation to funerals.

Detailed information about both the [core and general competencies](#) can be found on the Assembly website.