

The Fig Tree Project PLACEMENT PROFILE

SECTION 1 – BASIC INFORMATION

- 1.1 **Placement name:** Presbytery of Gippsland,
Wattlebird Ministry Team - vacancy 2.5 FTE
- 1.2 **The Wattlebird ministry team works within the following congregations:**
(bold indicates current vacancy)
Bunyip District (Bunyip, Garfield, Longwarry), Darnum, Drouin, Trafalgar, Warragul, & Yallourn Congregation (Narracan, Newborough, Yallourn Nth) Yarragon
and in connection with the UCA & Anglican co-operating congregation of Buln, Buln, Neerim South & Noojee.
- 1.3 **Profile approved by the Presbytery of Gippsland (delegated to PRC)** 11/09/19
- 1.4 **The Primary purpose of placement:**
To exercise ministry within the Wattlebird team:
 - to know and to love congregations
 - to participate with congregations in their worship, ministry and mission
 - to share diverse gifts within the team
 - to offer collegial support and cooperation within the team
 - to encourage and empower entrepreneurial and innovative ministry together
- 1.5 Suitable for Minister of the Word / Deacon / Ordinand/ Pastor
- 1.6 The Wattlebird ministry team has capacity for approximately 3.5 FTE. including the co-operating congregation of Neerim Sth.
The time fraction for each ministry placement is open to negotiation.
- 1.7 **Term:** Undefined up to 10 years (see Reg 2.7.3(a))
Ministry within the Wattlebird team will be open to the needs and capacities of the congregations. While the Terms of Placement are fixed, particular responsibilities will change in consultation and agreement with ministry agents, within the team and with the Presbytery.

The Fig Tree Project – Ministry Teams in Gippsland

Purpose of Ministry Teams

Through resourcing, support and leadership of the Presbytery, for ministry agents to:

- work cooperatively and share complimentary ministry, leadership & skills in Ministry Teams in the Presbytery of Gippsland;
- share mission and strategy within and beyond the gathered congregations;
- offer innovative and entrepreneurial ministry across the team
- be the primary pastoral minister for nominated congregations.

Vision and Mission priorities of Ministry Teams

- For each ministry agent to find collegial and Presbytery support within teams
- For ministry agents to embrace a 'common wealth' model of cooperative ministry.
- For mission and strategy to be an ongoing journey of conversation and discernment under the leadership of Resourcing Presbytery ministers.
- To share gifts, skills, and time based on needs and initiatives of ministry offered by the team.

Goals of Ministry Teams

- To love and to know congregations.
- To offer good leadership and support of ministers.
- To discern mission and strategic needs of ministry encompassed by the team
- To work creatively and cooperatively to meet ministry needs with available resources.
- To assist congregations in their mission and strategy.
- To encourage congregations to bless and support where possible emerging and innovative ministry beyond the gathered community.

Resourcing of Teams

- The Presbytery of Gippsland is committed to provide training in team and innovative leadership.

History of The Fig Tree Project and ministry in Gippsland

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.

Bunyip District

Bunyip – 9 Nash Rd, **Garfield** – 13 Garfield Rd, **Longwarry** – 9 Drouin Rd

SECTION 2 – MISSION DIRECTION

Mission priority: "Linking God and community" adopted 30/05/2019

Bunyip, Garfield & Longwarry townships are situated 4-5 km apart and they have been worshipping together for 3 years, currently moving each week between churches. A worship group meets monthly. They use a podcast from Glen Waverley, facilitated by a lay person and enjoy occasional supply ministry. The Bunyip District congregation came into being after a separation of the Drouin-Bunyip Parish on 01/01/19. There has been a variance of worship times and a decline in numbers due to the deaths of elderly members. Bunyip District's goals are to maintain a strong UCA in the area, seek missional opportunities, nurture leadership within the congregation, explore and develop new forms of worship and foster Christian fellowship and spiritual growth in the church and wider community. They plan to make their properties more available to the community, exploring potential programs and missional opportunities and building bridges of friendship through social events.

SECTION 3 - CONTEXT

Approx. 80 km from Melbourne's CBD via the Monash Freeway or the Gippsland Rail service, we are part of the growth corridor of the Baw Baw Shire. Many people commute to work, shop and play in the CBD or other large towns making us dormitory suburbs where people are less likely to connect with community. We have hobby farms alongside 2nd and 3rd generation farmers with industries from asparagus, beef, dairy, orchards & horses. We are mostly in our 70's while the median community age is 41. Many young families are moving in and many are single parent families. We connect with our community through funerals, worship in Nursing Homes and participation in community events. We work with the local Community shop & Bunyip Opp Shop, with the sewing of Boomerang bags, and are members of local service clubs. We were active in the recent fires with financial and pastoral support particularly through Blaze Aid. The Garfield church is a safe place to drop-off/pick up for the local school and we participate in the breakfast program. There are State Primary Schools in Bunyip, Garfield, Labertouche & Longwarry, a Catholic Primary School in Bunyip and also a Catholic Kinder- yr 12 in Tynong.

Drouin

7 Sinclair St. Drouin

SECTION 2 – MISSION DIRECTION

Drouin's mission statement adopted on 26/07/2017 is: We follow Christ – loving God and neighbour in Word and Action. We are a small congregation and for the past 10 years we have been part of the Drouin – Bunyip Parish. At the end of 2018, a major change came when the Church Council agreed by consensus to dissolve the parish.

Our goals are:

- to gain ministry to provide Sunday worship, pastoral care to our ageing congregation.
- to work with our congregation in Out Reach programs eg: Playgroup, Frontier Ministry
- to explore forming links with neighbouring denominations to work with First Peoples initiatives.

We need to prioritise our Out Reach programs and the reality of staffing and to seek conversations with the Anglicans to explore a partnership for working with First Peoples.

SECTION 3 - CONTEXT

Located in the Baw Baw Shire, 100km east of the CBD, there is a high commuter workforce that relies heavily on road and rail networks for work and leisure. The Shire offers a mix of rural and urban living with affordable housing, scenic views and relaxed lifestyle making it an attractive option for new residents, leading to unprecedented growth. The population of the Shire is expected to rise from the current level of 50,000 to 70,000 by 2030. The major industries include manufacturing, construction and agriculture, with the largest employers being healthcare, agriculture and education. Our congregation occupies the 'mature' Anglo Saxon end of the scale. We worry that the elderly become disconnected from community and are concerned about the lack of connection in the growing population. We serve, connect and partner with the local community through our playgroup, financial support of the "Crossing" drop in centre, conducting services in the Aged Care Facility, run Pancake Day and participate in the School Breakfast Program. There are 3 Primary Schools (1 government & 2 religious independent) and 2 secondary schools (1 government & 1 religious independent).

Trafalgar

38 Contingent St.

NB: information on this page taken from profile dated Dec 2009

SECTION 2 – MISSION DIRECTION

To continue exploring new ways of worship that allows congregation participation while retaining a strong focus on Jesus Christ.

To help congregations attend worship regularly by providing transport.

To continue to reach out into the community using the Craft Group, Men's Shed and other possibilities to be explored.

To continue a ministry to women through the Craft group and Women's Fellowship

To revisit outreach through the Willow Grove Faith Community, currently in recess.

To establish a public promotions role that can better inform the community of the Church's groups and activities.

To plan and run more family-oriented activities beyond worship, such as picnics, video nights and social occasions.

To maintain and expand the school chaplaincies in the Primary and Secondary schools

Mainly retired people. Outreach to men and women who don't normally attend church through Men's Shed and Craft Group. Caring and compassionate group of ladies who cater for functions.

SECTION 3 - CONTEXT

According to the 2016 Census Trafalgar has a population of 3912 people, with 220 identifying as UCA. It is a small rural town on the Princes Highway between the major towns of Moe and Warragul and is 127 km's from Melbourne's CBD.

Warragul

210 Sutton St, Warragul

www.warragul.uniting.church.org

SECTION 2 – MISSION DIRECTION

Warragul describes 'Living God's love without borders' as an action statement. We adopted this on 09/11/2016 and achieve it through; engagement with issues of social justice and environment, our connections with each other and the community, worship in different styles and study and discussion groups. We have an average age of 70 and are primarily retirees, a mixture of couples, singles and a few families. Warm, welcoming and friendly we enjoy a vibrant and inclusive worship life with strong congregational involvement through a variety of ministries offered by members.

We've decreased in capacity over the last 5 years as members age and a number of activities have declined or ceased. Our congregation numbers have grown as has a feeling of vitality and hopefulness and we share a number of community and fellowship events on a regular basis.

Our goals are to be a socially relevant church, to meet the needs of an ageing congregation and to offer an open-minded ministry. We'll do this through exploring opportunities to engage with the wider community, particularly how we walk together as First and Second peoples. We hope to establish a 'not for profit' charitable fund to expand the community garden and fund other projects. We will continue to provide pastoral care to the congregation and worship in the Aged Care facilities and encourage opportunities for increased lay participation in worship.

SECTION 3 - CONTEXT

Warragul is predominantly Anglo/Celtic with a strong farming, milling and industrial history. We are both a settled and growing community with rapidly expanding housing estates and provision of shops, healthcare and leisure activities that attract people from surrounding areas. There are 21 churches in town, many with a conservative evangelical orientation. The average age of the congregation (72) is higher than that of the community (42) and we have very few members in the 0-30 age group, although they comprise 36.5% of the community. Community points of stress include lack of affordable housing and work for young people, lack of dementia care and aged care and issues arising from domestic violence, alcohol and drug abuse and gambling. Our public transport makes travel easy locally and into Melbourne. Our members are involved in many community groups and service clubs; Red Cross, Lifeline, Food Bank, Meals on Wheels and Singers of Joy. Our church buildings host Arthritis groups, Young Mothers, AA & Al-Anon. Our church groups include – playgroup, Men's Shed-Trains, Craft, Men's group, Open door, Catering and Women on Wednesdays. There is a Uniting Kindergarten onsite. We support Frontier Services and Vanuatu seasonal workers. There are many Kindergartens, 2 Government Primary & a Secondary School, 3 independent religious schools, a TAFE College and University and Specialist school.

Yarragon - St David's

7 Campbell St, Yarragon <http://yarragon.unitingchurch.org.au/>

SECTION 2 – MISSION DIRECTION

To serve our local community by faithfully sharing God's love and word in a welcoming environment. Priorities are to have a team ministry agent who supports our existing ministry activities and encourages our emerging mission opportunities, visiting in times of need, encouraging and supporting our younger members to take on leadership responsibilities and looking for opportunities to engage with other groups within the community. Our congregation is ageing, and some members have passed away over the last few years. Since the departure of our last Minister we have been having joint worship services with Trafalgar. We are a small rural congregation that serves God in our community via Worship including Alternative Family worship, Ladies Guild, Craft Group, Young adult Bible study group. Our buildings and facilities are in very good condition and serve us well and our hall is hired by various groups. We hold an ANZAC Day Service and Easter Sunday Service in the Main Street.

SECTION 3 - CONTEXT

Yarragon is a blend of tourist and farming activities and while the town is growing and changing, most newer community members have employment and other interests outside of the town. We have active sporting clubs, Primary School, Lions Club, Baw Baw Sustainability Network, CFA and other groups. Yarragon is a tourist destination with numerous shops and has a population of 1650 with 128 people identifying as UCA. We have a Medical Clinic and chemist and the Yarragon and District Community Association is active in the town. The congregation age profile is mainly 50+ with little in the way of ethnic mix. The future of old school site is a stress point and may be the new home for Baw Baw Sustainability Network based in Yarragon. Another is the loss of young people from town for education and employment opportunities. Local dairy farmers are struggling with the stresses linked to the difficult nature of the market and many aging farmers are leaving the industry. There are significant housing developments in progress and planned which will increase the town's population. Schools: Yarragon pre-school and Primary (K to 6). A new Day Care centre has recently opened. Lions Club is very active in the town and recently opened an Opportunity Shop. Similarly, the CFA is active and a long-term town entity. The Public Hall, next to the Church, has a wide range of events for local and out of town groups.

Yallourn

Narracan – Cnr Coalville & Narracan Connection Rds,

Newborough – Cnr Chamberlain & Old Sale Rds., Yallourn Nth – Reserve Rd

SECTION 2 – MISSION DIRECTION

We meet regularly to hear God's word, to celebrate the sacraments, to build one another up in love, to share in the wider responsibility of the church, and to serve the world. We are now one caring, ageing Caucasian congregation who meet in two places – Newborough and Yallourn North – alternating weekly. The Congregation is elderly and less physically able, with very few young people or children. Five years ago we were separate congregations with a joint Church Council. Attendances were typically 18 - 22 in Newborough and 8 – 10 in Yallourn North. We run a very successful Opportunity Shop (The Thrift Shop) and groups such as AA and Al-Anon use our facilities weekly at reduced rates. A Community Craft Group meets at Newborough weekly and a Community Play Group meets weekly at Yallourn North and a variety of other groups use the facilities regularly.

Our goals:

- To have stable ministry with the capacity to lead worship twice a month

- To continue with current outreach activities

- To provide pastoral care, particularly to those who can't attend worship services.

Strategically we plan to participate in The Fig Tree Project to achieve these goals.

SECTION 3 - CONTEXT

The Yallourn Congregation is situated approximately 130 km east of Melbourne in the western part of the Latrobe Valley. It covers an area to the North and South of the Princes Highway, and encompasses the towns of Moe, Newborough and Yallourn North and the farming area of Narracan. Since the privatisation of the Power industry, the Yallourn district has suffered a severe economic decline, causing many people to move out of the area to find work. This has impacted on the church membership in the area. Asbestosis affects many households. Unemployment across the region is double the national average. The age profile in the Valley is older than the national average. The availability of public housing has meant many people have moved to the area with all the challenges of establishing roots and community connections. The most recent wave of migrants includes a group from the Sudan. Most welfare agencies are present and active in the Valley. Global warming and the future of the coal industry adds a layer of uncertainty. The people are resilient and look for ways to keep their communities alive. We are a caring community who always look out for each other. The unemployment rate is one of the highest in the State and the Latrobe Valley still has a struggling economy. Housing is very cheap but rental availability is low and relatively expensive. Yallourn North has 1 primary school. Moe has 3 State primary schools and 1 Catholic PS. Newborough has 2 State and 1 Catholic PS; and 1 State Secondary College.