



## The Fig Tree Project PLACEMENT PROFILE

### SECTION 1 – BASIC INFORMATION

- 1.1 Placement name:** Presbytery of Gippsland,  
Kookaburra Ministry Team – **vacancy 1.0 FTE**  
- April 2023
- 1.2 The Kookaburra ministry team works within the following congregations:**  
*(bold indicates current vacancy)*  
Koo Wee Rup-Lang Lang Anglican-UCA (Koo Wee Rup, Lang Lang, Corinella) (0.8); **Loch-Poowong (incl. Keroth) (0.2); Korumburra (incl. Arawata & Kongwak) (0.2); Leongatha (0.6).**
- Profile approved by the Presbytery of Gippsland (delegated to PRC) 12/04/23**
- 1.3 The Primary purpose of placement:**  
To exercise ministry within the Kookaburra Ministry 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
- 1.4** Suitable for Minister of the Word / Deacon / Ordinand/ Pastor
- 1.5** The Kookaburra ministry team has capacity for approximately 1.5 FTE  
The time fraction for each ministry placement is open to negotiation according to the ministry agents in the team.
- 1.6 Term:** Undefined up to 10 years (see Reg 2.7.3(a))  
Ministry within the Kookaburra Ministry 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.

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#### 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

# 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.

**UCA/Anglican: 348 Rossiter Rd, KooWeeRup,  
Uniting: Cnr James St & Westernport Rd. Lang Lang  
Anglican: 6 Whistable St, Lang Lang & 24 Smythe St, Corinella**

NB: This information is from the profile lodged with the Placements Committee on Jan 29, 2015

## SECTION 2 – MISSION DIRECTION

Three principal characteristics:

- Understanding and acceptance.
- Willingness to embrace the different traditions and worship styles.
- Strong Christian faith and commitment.

Mission goals:

- develop greater connection with local communities,
- continue to support a range of Christian missions,
- continue with pastoral care, for each other and for wider community through Op Shops.

## SECTION 3 - CONTEXT

Farming, growing country town, mix of retirees & families. Attracts those seeking a rural lifestyle within commuting distance of Melbourne. A number of holiday homes in Corinella and recreational fishing is very popular. New housing developments.

The faithful and committed older congregations have connections with Bass Valley Primary School and Killara Hostel. In KooWeeRup, having successfully merged Anglican and Uniting congregations no longer see themselves as Anglican or Uniting, but as a Christian community within the town. The merged congregations in Lang Lang still worship in two buildings, they tend to embrace change slowly, but then accept it.

They cater for funerals, operate monthly community lunches, and outreach through the Op Shops. Lang Lang holds an annual quilt and flower show. They have quarterly whole of parish services and bi-monthly social functions.

# Korumburra (incl. Arawata, Kongwak) **[seeking 0.2FTE]**

**Churches - Korumburra:** 18 Bridge St. **Kongwak:** Brownes Rd, **Arawata:** 340 Fairbank Rd.

## SECTION 2 – MISSION DIRECTION

Our vision is to be a community of ordinary people, formed by the love of Christ, which is open to the future, life giving and outwardly focussed. We seek ministry that will resource us in our capacity, confidence and leadership so we can strengthen our presence and support for others. Our congregational worship and activities happen across three centres but is mostly located at Korumburra. The COVID-19 pandemic has caused many changes and came just as we farewelled our previous ministers who had been pastoring us for ten years. We have been creative through this time and have found comfort in online worship and through use of the Fig Tree worship sheets. We seek to grow in the grace and love of Jesus. We would like to connect to and engage people in our local community and are open to doing things differently. We need to be resourced and encouraged to see new ways. We are continuing to explore the shape of resourcing ministry across the Kookaburra Ministry Team and share more deeply with Loch-Poowong and Leongatha. We need leadership that works realistically with who we are and what we can do.

## SECTION 3 - CONTEXT

Korumburra is a community of approximately 5,000 people. Kongwak and Arawata are smaller rural areas. Kongwak has a weekly market which draws people from a wide area. Arawata and Kongwak both have community halls which host community events.

Korumburra is situated on the South Gippsland Highway, 118 kilometres (1.5 hrs) to the southeast of Melbourne. The town was established with the finding of black coal deposits and the construction of the Great Southern Railway (1890's). The dairying industry followed including the establishment of small butter factories. Farming has since diversified and remains significant. The town has primary and secondary schools, a medical centre, and a hospital (offering advanced care), and aged care facilities. Korumburra receives good rainfall and is surrounded by beautiful rolling hills. 'Coal Creek Historical Village' displays the history and beauty of the area.

The town is well served by service clubs, and a variety of sports are catered for. A Community House provides a meeting place for many of the groups of the town, as well as giving the community access to a range of adult education possibilities. It also offers support to families facing difficulties, low-income pressure being one of these.

The congregation has mostly people of retirement age and predominantly of Australian/English background.

There is a secondary college and a primary school (adjacent to the Uniting Church). The Karmai Children's Centre is located close to the primary school. There is a school attached to the local catholic church. Kongwak has a primary school.

# Leongatha **[seeking 0.6FTE]**

St Andrew's Church: 16-18 Peart St. Leongatha

## SECTION 2 – MISSION DIRECTION

### **Growing in Christ and sharing his love.**

**Our goals:** To support members of our congregation as they seek to live as faithful disciples of Christ: weekly worship services, opportunities for fellowship, prayer, study and meditation, for people at all stages of their lives. To welcome newcomers to our church community. To offer a catering team for refreshments following funerals. To seek further opportunities to organise events of interest and concern to the local community. To seek ways of offering support to groups of people sometimes overlooked in our wider community. We hope this might involve supporting UnitingVT when their offices adjoin our Church. To continue offering our facilities for meetings of interdenominational groups. To continue offering our facilities to the community, at reasonable rentals, for appropriate meetings, workshops and displays.

**Strategic steps** include: Training for lay people to lead worship and offer pastoral care. Continue our opportunities for fellowship – morning tea on Sundays and special events. To maintain our pastoral care network. Explore possibilities for sharing with Uniting Care and/or other opportunities for leasing or selling part of the property. Make more use of our Facebook Page and develop a website.

## SECTION 3 - CONTEXT

Access to central Melbourne is approx. 1 hr 45 min drive, and there's easy access to the coast. Leongatha township supports the surrounding dairy and grazing farming community and has the offices of the Shire of Sth Gippsland. Leongatha has educational, medical, legal, trades and retail services and employment is in these sectors. The dairy processing company, Saputo, and education are among the larger employers. Growth in housing has been strong in the past 5 years, with prices increasing, especially recently.

**Stressors:** Loneliness. Aging population remote from specialist medical services and some removed geographically from younger members of their families. Housing affordability. Lack of respite housing. Drug and alcohol abuse. Problem gambling. Asset rich, cash poor households.

**Opportunities:** To support those living alone, single parents and families; encourage our community to welcome greater ethnic diversity in the region; model and encourage local leadership and the community to make progress in reconciliation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

**Education:** Two childcare centres, two preschools. State primary, secondary and specialist schools, Catholic primary and secondary schools, Parent-controlled Christian School. TAFE Gippsland - Leongatha Campus. **Agencies/Institutions:** UnitingCare, Anglicare, Salvocare, Yooralla Community Hub, Gippsland Southern Health Leongatha (Hospital), two medical clinics, Koorooman House and Woorayl Lodge Aged Care, Senior Citizens Centre, Men's Shed, Community House, RSL.

**Community:** Pool; Stadium; Cinema; Library; Rail Trail; Probus; Rotary; Lions; Genealogy and Local History groups. Car, gardening and plant clubs; many sports clubs. Community garden; farmers markets. Arts Network; Lyric Theatre; Brass Band; South Gippsland Orchestra; South Gippsland Singers choir.

According to the 2021 census, the population of Leongatha was 8,194 with 422 listing UCA. The church has 50 confirmed and 12 baptised members who are children. Nine members in association and 8 adherents. There are 4 Elders as part of the 8 members of Church Council which meets monthly. There have been three baptisms and 19 funerals in the past two years. An estimated 51 people attend worship at least monthly and we are in contact with around 50 people in mission on any month. Lay members assist during worship – scripture reading and notices, for special occasions members assist in planning and leading worship. Teams deliver the Fig Tree Worship Resource once or twice a month. We have enjoyed a very stable period with activities continuing from year to year. We find increasingly fewer people are able to share administrative tasks and responsibilities. We participate in inter-denominational groups: GEMS (Men's Group), Walk for Witness, World Day of Prayer. We connect with the community in the following ways: Funerals, including catering for refreshments and supporting families. Offered public talks: Parenting (S. Biddulph), Cyber security for children, mental health. Participation in Leongatha Daffodil Festival and Shire-wide Carols Service. Community Groups using our premises: Shire Immunisation Program, and Gipps. Embroidery Group, and pre-Covid the Aust. Plants Society and Horticultural group. Prior to 2020, we offered Knit and Natter, Mixed Ability Music Group, meditation, interdenominational events such as Hymns Alive, Days for Girls group. Individually, many of our members are active, some are in leadership positions, in a wide variety of community groups.

# Loch-Poowong (incl. Kernot) **[seeking 0.2FTE]**

**Churches - Kernot:** Woodleigh Rd. **Loch:** Roy St. **Poowong:** 11 Nyora Rd.

## SECTION 2 – MISSION DIRECTION

We have a vision to build on our strengths through worship and serving God meaningfully in our community and beyond. We are seeking ministry that will resource these things in order to strengthen our presence and support for others. Our congregation has three worshipping places with most worship and activities centred at Poowong. We have a deeply faithful core group of people who live out the gospel in practical ways, offering hospitality, and support to our community and people in a variety of ways. A key priority is to be resourced and supported in the ministry we offer to one another and our community. An important aspect of this is training and equipping local leaders.

Like many, the COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted many of our activities (ie. we no longer run a Messy church program) and being without a minister during this time has impacted on confidence and capacity. New ministry will assist us in rebuilding and to explore what can be done together.

## SECTION 3 - CONTEXT

We are located in a generally prosperous rural district with beef and dairy-farming being the major activities. Poowong is a small rural town of about 450 people, Loch is a popular tourist town with a population of about 650 and Kernot is a rural district.

Our congregation is similar to the local community in ethnicity (mostly Anglo) but the ages of members tends to be higher on average than the community (mostly 60+).

Poowong is a vibrant community which is experiencing a significant growth phase. A large new housing estate is currently being developed and there has been keen demand for the house blocks. Loch is a very popular tourist stopover village. There is a huge influx of visitors on weekends and holiday periods.

Church people run a weekly café at Poowong (the Mya Mya café) and the Poowong church is used by a number of groups regularly (line dancing; garden club; Poowong Community Consultative Committee; The 150 Committee). The Loch church hall is used by Art Space.

There is a playgroup at the Poowong Church.

We have been co-operating with Korumburra for more than 10 years, firstly by sharing services on 5<sup>th</sup> Sundays and then on Christmas and Easter and more recently on a monthly basis.

There is potential to deepen sharing with Leongatha.