

PRESBYTERY OF PORT PHILLIP WEST



Uniting Church in Australia
SYNOD OF VICTORIA AND TASMANIA

PRESBYTERY MINISTER GENERALIST

Presbytery:	Port Phillip West
Time fraction:	FULL TIME
Term:	Undefined up to 10 years
Suitable for:	Minister of the Word/ Deacon / Pastor (see Appendix C for pastor requirements)
Approval date:	Presbytery Standing Committee and Pastoral Relations Committee Dec 5 2023

Primary purpose of the Placement

The Presbytery of Port Phillip West seeks a collaborative, pastoral and creative leader to join the Presbytery Ministry Team in resourcing the Uniting Church throughout the Presbytery.

This position provides opportunities for innovative mission and ministry, as well as encouraging and nurturing ministry agents and contexts. We require an experienced and committed Uniting Church ministry leader with adaptability, resilience and strong collaboration skills. The Presbytery Minister Generalist works together with other Presbytery leaders (meetings in council, the five committees and other UCA staff) to implement the Presbytery's vision,

“Through the work of the Spirit of Christ: For the Presbytery of Port Phillip West to be a network of increasingly **vibrant, diverse, contextual** and **disciple-making** communities of Christ participating in and witnessing to the wonder of God's mission”

and the 5 foci of the Regenerating the church Strategy 2022-2026: New and renewing, intergenerational, intercultural, digital church and collaboration.

List of Abbreviations

PPPW: Presbytery of Port Phillip West

PRC: Pastoral Relations Committee

MFC: Ministry Formation Committee

MSE: Mission, Strategy and Education Committee

APF: Administration, Property and Finance Committee

SC: Standing Committee

ACOMP: Advisory Committee On Ministerial Placements

PSF: Presbytery-Synod Forum

JNC: Joint Nominating Committee

Presbytery of Port Phillip West

Position: Presbytery Minister Generalist

1. Purpose of presbyteries:

The presbytery is the district council of the church, which according to the Basis of Union 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 in particular exercise oversight over the congregations within its bounds, encouraging them to strengthen one another’s faith, to bear one another’s burdens and exhorting them to fulfil their high calling in Christ Jesus. It will promote those wider aspects of the work of the Church committed to it by the Synod or Assembly.”¹ The core responsibilities of Presbyteries fall into three key areas: Pastoral, Mission/Education and Administration. When Presbyteries are functioning well, they contribute to the building up of the whole Body of Christ. For more information and an introduction to the Presbytery of Port Phillip West, see Appendix A.

2. Purpose of the role:

In the Presbytery of Port Phillip West, a Presbytery Minister Generalist is a member of the Presbytery Ministry Team (see Appendix A). The person will share some roles and responsibilities with the whole team, while other tasks are the particular responsibility of the Presbytery Ministers Generalists, as outlined in the following subsections. The Generalists may divide tasks between them as suits their gifts and graces or for logistical convenience (e.g. geographical considerations), by mutual agreement in regular Ministry Team meetings. Therefore, the Ministry Team is required to provide a high level of mutual support to each other and maintain open and healthy communication. If a lack of clarity in terms of roles remains after discussion within the team, the Standing Committee will be consulted.

The Presbytery Minister Generalist will be a member of and report to the Standing Committee (SC). They will participate in the Pastoral Relations Committee (PRC) and may also be part of Mission Strategy and Education committee and/or the Ministry Formation Committee (MFC). They will work collaboratively with the whole Ministry Team, guided by the Regenerating the Church 2022-26 strategy.

3. Primary tasks of the Presbytery Minister Generalists

- Working with and supporting Presbytery committees (PRC, MSE, MFC and SC) in ways which ensure efficient use of time and skills;
- Encouraging Ministry Agents in regard to continuing education, annual ministry retreats and reports, supervision, peer support groups, leave taking, updating profiles, exit interviews, and mentoring;
- Support ministry contexts with their worship, witness and service which may involve crisis work with ministers and congregations, conflict resolution and support in times of loss and grief;
- Oversight of supply ministry and Joint Nominating Committees with PRC;
- Being involved in regionalization across the presbytery which may include leading mission studies; and will include facilitating relationships between those in various ministry contexts;
- Arranging appropriate retreats for those in ministry contexts;
- Providing appropriate education and training opportunities;
- Offering Ethics training and maintaining records including safe church and Working with Children documentation;
- Represent the presbytery at Synod committees such as ACOMP, PSF, and JNCs for other PM roles;

¹ The Basis of Union (Para 15, 1992 edition)

- Taking initiatives to fulfil key priorities of the presbytery strategy of Regenerating the church and other policies of the presbytery as determined from time to time by the standing committee;
- Fostering local and regional ecumenism;
- Supporting candidates, PODs and mentors through the work of the Ministry Formation Committee;
- 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.

4. Accountability

The Presbytery Ministers (Generalist) will resource, participate in and be accountable to the whole Presbytery through the Standing Committee.

The Ministry Team meeting reports to the Standing Committee and, in conjunction with the presbytery committees, has responsibility for the allocation of tasks to the ministry team.

5. Key selection criteria

Qualifications and experience

- Membership of the Uniting Church in Australia.
- A sound knowledge of the structure of the UCA, and prior involvement in a range of UCA Councils, including an understanding of, and the ability to theologically reflect on the UCA Basis of Union, Constitution, Regulations and Manual for Meetings;
- Theological, educational and/or missional leadership qualifications. See Attachment C for specific requirements for a pastor;
- Competence with IT software, equipment and applications, including Microsoft Office.

Skills and abilities

1. Leadership: Exercises leadership in a proactive but co-operative style, with strategic perspective.
2. Team Membership: Has experience in working in a team and an ability and commitment to work as an equal member in a shared team environment.
3. Relationship development: Identifies issues in common and seeks knowledge to build mutually beneficial partnerships and displays CALD sensitivity and intercultural awareness.
4. Planning and organising: Sets clearly defined objectives and priorities and operates accordingly.
5. Understanding and empathy: Relates to people in stressful situations and can provide relevant advice and assistance.
6. Creativity and Innovation: Generates new ideas; draws on a range of information sources to identify new ways of doing things.
7. Drive & commitment: Enthusiastic and committed. Demonstrates capacity for sustained effort and hard work.

Personal competencies

1. Initiative and accountability: can be proactive; can seize opportunities and act on them; takes responsibility for own actions.
2. Communication skills: has excellent verbal and written communication skills, excellent interpersonal skills, and can interact effectively with a diverse range of individuals, groups and committees.
3. Spiritual awareness: can demonstrate insight into the importance of faith; can reflect on one's own spiritual life and journey; interacts comfortably with people of all faiths.
4. Can articulate the importance of a Call to the Ministry of Presbytery Minister

5. Ability and willingness to engage in meetings outside normal working hours.
6. Ability and willingness to work in conflicted and difficult situations.

Additional requirements

- The Uniting Church in Australia is committed to keeping children safe so a Working with Children Check and a current police check are required.
- Current Australian driver's licence – please note that there is significant travel associated with this role.

Appendix A

Presbytery of Port Phillip West

1. What is a Presbytery?

“Christ is the Good Shepherd who loves, knows, leads, protects, cares for and guides his flock. This is the loving oversight that God in Christ offers all creation and calls the church to embody. In seeking to embody this oversight the church does so not for the church’s own sake, but for the sake of all God’s people.

Presbyteries are one means by which we as church discharge the ministry of oversight entrusted to us as followers of Christ at mission in the world. The Basis of Union (Para 15, 1992 edition) describes the Presbytery’s function as the district council 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 in particular exercise oversight over the congregations within its bounds, encouraging them to strengthen one another’s faith, to bear one another’s burdens and exhorting them to fulfil their high calling in Christ Jesus. It will promote those wider aspects of the work of the Church committed to it by the Synod or Assembly.”

Presbytery Transition Team Report, 2017, Section D1, pg D1.4

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, they contribute to the building up of the whole Body of Christ:

- Congregations, agencies, faith communities and chaplaincies are supported and their life enriched; Congregations, agencies, faith communities and chaplaincies are helped in identifying and building their missional and ecumenical possibilities.
- Links between ministry contexts (schools, agencies, faith communities, congregations) and the wider Uniting Church are forged and strengthened.
- People in ministry roles are encouraged, equipped and supported.
- Educational possibilities for congregations and those in ministry are facilitated.
- Intercultural relationships thrive.
- The relationship with Congress is strengthened; and
- Communication with the various parts of the Synod is clear, building up strong relationships between all councils of the Church.

2. The Context of Presbytery of Port Phillip West

Description of the geographic and demographic area of the Presbytery

The Presbytery's boundaries stretch from Lorne in the south-west to Queenscliff in the south-east and include all the Bellarine Peninsula and Geelong. The western edge of the Presbytery includes Bacchus Marsh and Sunbury.

In the north, the Presbytery includes Macedon Ranges, and then on the eastern boundary it includes Wallan, Craigieburn, Darebin Northwest, Preston and Northcote. All of Melbourne's western and northwestern suburbs are within the Presbytery's boundaries.

This Presbytery has an extensive and varied demography, from high density inner city living, to medium density living in the northern suburbs, to low density housing of the rural countryside from the Surf Coast and surrounding area across to the Macedon Ranges. It has pockets of low socioeconomic living as well as established neighbourhoods of great wealth, and a large variety of retail businesses and light industrial areas.

The Uniting Church in the Presbytery of Port Phillip West

The Presbytery of Port Phillip West has 65 congregations and several agencies and schools. It also includes Narana Aboriginal Cultural Centre, located in Armstrong Creek, which is a division of the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress, the Aboriginal arm of the Uniting Church in Australia. Narana is an organisation which provides an education- and tourism-focused destination committed to providing a welcome into today's First Nations culture. Narana's emphasis is on building healthy relationships and developing a shared understanding, and the Presbytery is committed to developing partnerships.

The Presbytery of Port Phillip West is a region of great diversity: large and small, city and country, mono- and inter-cultural, traditional and experimental. It includes older and well-established areas and others which are brand new and developing. Congregations are also very diverse:

- ethnically;
- in size;
- in expressions of worship;
- theologically;
- in resources.

There are congregations which are growing in size while some are declining, and others are looking at new ways of "being church". It is a vital time to look at the viabilities of congregations. There are several 'gathered congregations' – congregations in which members come from a wide range of places to worship together.

Intercultural congregations and faith communities include communities whose backgrounds include Vietnamese, Dinka, Filipino, Fijian, Samoan, Cook Islander, Arabic, Tongan and Macedonian members as well as individuals from other ethnic groups. There are also some specific ministries with families and children in both new and established housing areas, ministries with faith communities, and ministry amongst people with mental health needs. There is also a significant chaplaincy ministry within aged care and community service institutions, universities, hospitals, prisons and schools. These ministries are both spiritual and practical in nature.

The Presbytery carries responsibility for a great deal of property which raises issues of missional strategy and maintenance. The Presbytery is asset rich and has carefully developed a strong investment portfolio. However, future development is predicated on investment growth.

The Presbytery Office is located at St Albans Uniting Church, corner East Esplanade and Elaine Street, St Albans 3021.

Our Strategy

The "Regenerating the Church" [Strategy – Presbytery of Port Phillip West \(ucappw.org.au\)](http://ucappw.org.au) seeks to encourage, nurture and sustain a culture of church renewal across the Presbytery through developing new forms of church, planting a variety of expressions of church and encouraging new missional life in existing congregations, faith communities, agencies and schools.

God's work of love in the world, namely, the mission of God – has a Church - the Body of Christ.

The church has been called into being by God and empowered by the Holy Spirit. As first-fruits of the coming reign of God, we are collaborators in God's mission. The church is the people of God, a servant people, a reconciling community of the Holy Spirit where divisions are broken down, the body of Christ in the world. As the church of God, we are a pilgrim people, called to "to confess the Lord in fresh words and deeds", worshipping God and serving the world in our time and place. The church is called to be a lived-out expression of the Gospel, communities of reconciliation, and a blessing to our communities.

Our Purpose and Vision

As the Presbytery of Port Philip West, we are called by God to steward our resources wisely, discerning what we are called to do in our part of God's vineyard. In particular, we will seek to work in partnership with the Uniting Church in Australia Synod of VicTas, following their vision of "Following Christ, walking together as First and Second Peoples, seeking community, compassion, and justice for all creation." Within that overarching vision for the Synod, our vision and hope is:

Through the work of the Spirit of Christ: For the Presbytery of Port Phillip West to be a network of increasingly vibrant, diverse, contextual and disciple-making communities of Christ participating in and witnessing to the wonder of God's mission.

Our Focus

New and Renewing: We live in times of great change and the UCA continues to adapt to bring life in all its fullness as promised by Christ. We need to be “inspiring and enabling more new contextual Christian communities to be born, and to renew existing ones to be more faithful and missional”.

Intercultural: We learn from and enable diverse cultural groups within the Presbytery to flourish and grow together.

Intergenerational: We welcome, equip, and empower the different generations, in their life together, discipleship-making, ministry and mission.

Digital Church: We take risks and embrace digital technology that enables the church to engage in missional engagement online. Creating discipleship pathways in social media and other on-line platforms.

Collaborate: We need to work with partners to engage in mission.

3. Presbytery Organisation, Structure and Leadership

According to the Regulations, Presbyteries must undertake a number of tasks to fulfil their role, and to do this, they need to be well resourced. In 2017 the Synod resolved to fund two positions. Additionally, the Synod 'Equipping Leadership for Ministry' (eLM) unit adjusted its staffing model to ensure a close working relationship between unit staff and each Presbytery; this has resulted in a 0.5 FTE “adjunct staff” position connected to the unit and engaging in its activities and resourcing. In response to these funding changes and in order to fulfil its mission, the Presbytery of Port Phillip West devised a new staffing model resulting in the Ministry Team described below. There is also an Executive of the Standing Committee comprising the Chairperson of Presbytery, Secretary/Administrator, Treasurer and Chairperson of PRC.

The PPW Presbytery Ministry Team

The Presbytery of Port Phillip West has six paid staff.

- Chairperson,
- Two full time Presbytery Ministers, (one the subject of this Position Description)
- A Mission Development Strategist, and 0.5 FTE eLM Presbytery Minister
- Secretary and Property Administrator
- Administration support person.

The Presbytery defines the 'Ministry Team' as the Presbytery Chairperson, Secretary-Administrator, the two Presbytery Ministers and the Mission Development Strategist/eLM Liaison. The Ministry Team meets for mutual support and allocation of specific tasks. The Ministry team currently consists of:

- Rev. Narelle Collas, Presbytery Minister - Generalist,
- Rev. Linley Liersch, Mission Development Strategist, and 0.5 FTE eLM Presbytery Minister,
- Heather Loader, Secretary, Administration and Property; and
- Marie Craw, Administration Support person.

The Presbytery Chairperson is a .5 position.

How the Ministry Team works in the Presbytery

The Ministry Team will:

- Provide leadership across the Presbytery by having clearly defined roles and meeting regularly together to clarify particular responsibilities,

- Meet with the Presbytery Chairperson as required, usually monthly, to review current and potential ministry issues and tasks,
- Work as a team supporting each other,
- Respect each other's unique roles,
- Model team ministry across the Presbytery,
- Participate in regular professional team supervision,
- Regularly use the facilities of and support the Presbytery office in St. Albans,
- Self-determine a leader to convene team meetings.

Appendix B

Synod of Victoria and Tasmania Vision, Mission Principles and Strategic Priorities

In June 2016 the Synod adopted a strategy that supports a coordinated, intentional focus on mission that encompasses the very nature of the Christian life in all its liturgical, communal, institutional, spiritual and service dimensions. The Synod is seeking to lighten burdens and to encourage proactive spiritual discernment in our councils and committees, so we may be freer to join in God's mission.

At the core of this new strategy is the Strategic framework made up of the Vision and Mission Principles with a focus on three priority areas:

Vision

- Following Christ.
- Walking together as First and Second Peoples; and
- Seeking community, compassion and justice for all creation.

Mission Principles

- God in Christ is at mission in the world and sends the Church in the Spirit to:
- Share the Good News of Jesus Christ.
- Nurture followers of Christ in life-giving communities of reconciliation.
- Respond in compassion to human need.
- Live justly and seek justice for all.
- Care for creation.
- Listen to each generation and culture so as to live out the Gospel in fresh ways; and
- Pursue God's mission in partnership.

Strategic Priorities

- Ministries which foster diverse gathered communities of renewal, Christian practice and mission.
- Culturally diverse mission and ministry; and
- Mission and ministry with children, youth, their families and young people.

Appendix C

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 PM Generalist.

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 PM Generalist requires all of these general competencies with less emphasis on Evangelism and Education than the others. While this PM role does include an education competent other members of the Presbytery Ministry Team have educational backgrounds so training and help in this area can be provided.

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