

PARISH PROFILE – ARARAT

MAIN TOWN

Location:

Ararat is situated at the junction of the Wimmera and Western districts in Victoria.

The town is on the Western Highway with freeway most of the 200 kms to Melbourne.

Ballarat, a city of nearly 100,000, is less than 100km to the south. To the north the large rural city of Horsham (pop. 17,000) is less than 100km away.

We are in close proximity to the magnificent Grampians ranges and an easy 90 minute drive to the seaside at Warrnambool.

Profile:

The town has a population of ~8000. It is the hub for a number of small surrounding country centres.

Major employers in the town are the hospital, two industrial manufacturing companies, and the prison.

It is largely a wheat and sheep farming area. It is also a well known viticultural area with many well established vineyards.

Services:

We are well serviced with health care and education.

There is an acute hospital, a nursing home, a hostel, and a retirement village.

We have 3 government primary schools and 1 catholic; a secondary government and a secondary catholic college. There are 4 kindergartens and child care centres.

We have an excellent Arts Centre, gallery, picture theatre, and library.

V Line services provide easy access to many areas, including Ballarat and Melbourne.

There are numerous sporting clubs in town, 2 fitness centres and an excellent outdoor swimming pool and indoor heated pool

OTHER TOWNS WITHIN THE PARISH

Willaura is a small country town approx. 45 kms from Ararat. It is a very prosperous farming area but also has a number of people in a low socio economic bracket living in the town.

It has a small non acute hospital and nursing home. There is a primary school and a sporting ground.

All Saints Church and Hall are at Willaura. They are both timber structures in a reasonable state of repair. Services are held there 3 times a month. The congregation is small, approx. 8 regular attendants, but swells at Easter and Christmas. There is an organ and organist. They host an ecumenical Christmas Carol service each year which draws a crowd both from the Church and the local community.

Willaura has a Women's Guild which no longer meets but attends to things such as church cleaning etc. as needed.



Great Western is a country village approx. 16 kms. from Ararat. It has a primary school, sporting ground and race track. It is the home of Seppelts wines and has a number of other wineries and eating places in the area.

Christ Church and Hall are at Great Western. They are very old solid brick buildings, again in a reasonable state of repair. There is only one service a month here with perhaps 4 people attending. This also increases at Easter and Christmas.

The Church recently formed a Parish Partnership with Anglicare and the local Primary School, which is next door to the Church. The school has free access to the Hall during term time and it is now their Arts Precinct. The school community redecorated the Hall and it has been a positive outcome for everyone.

Great Western also has a Guild, whose members care for their Church.



Other townships which the parish encompasses are Moyston, Buangor, Warrak, Bayindeen, Maroona, and Tatyoon.

ARARAT

Rectory:

4 bedroom brick home with a tiled roof. Has an office, lounge room, dining room and kitchen; one bathroom, 2 toilets, laundry. Has central gas heating throughout and cooling in the living area. The garden is pleasant and manageable; well fenced for animals. There is a garage and carport. The Rectory is next door to the Church and in close proximity to the shopping centre.

Church:

Holy Trinity is a beautiful bluestone building. It has a central nave and side aisles; choir stalls and pipe organ towards the front of the church; seating for 150 people. There is a vestry, separate choir vestry, and flower room. A large narthex which is a newer addition makes all activities easier as the weather is no longer an issue. The Church is directly connected to the Hall. An indoor memorial garden has been constructed between the narthex and Church.

Hall:

The Hall is a large building containing a well appointed registered kitchen, storage rooms, and toilets –including disabled facilities, the clothing shop, an office, and a flat.

The office is used by Anglicare for their outreach services in this area.

Church House:

Built many years ago by church members, this is on church ground and is now rented out. This is done as a commercial agreement using local real estate agents.

Flat:

This is part of the Hall construction and is rented out. As in the case of Church House, this is also managed by a real estate agency.



Worship:

A Eucharist is held every Sunday at 9.30 a.m. in Holy Trinity; 1st, 2nd, 3rd Sundays in All Saints Willaura at 11.30 am; and on the 4th Sunday at Christ Church Great Western at 11.15 a.m.

These times allow the priest to travel comfortably from Ararat to the out centres.

Every Thursday morning there is a Healing Mass in Holy Trinity at 10 a.m.

People are encouraged to attend morning and evening prayer at Holy Trinity every day.

A Eucharist is held at the Retirement Village every fortnight, and the priest is also on a roster to provide a service at the nursing homes in Ararat and Willaura, and the Day Centre at the Ararat Hospital.

Holy Trinity has a pipe organ and 2 organists, with a 3rd "in training". We also have a choir.

Some members of the congregation are currently taking part in the Bishop's Certificate Course.

Each year when bible studies are offered, there is always a group keen to participate.

Ministry:

We currently have 2 non stipendiary Deacons, 4 Lay Ministers, and 3 retired clergy in the congregation.

Groups:

- Anglican Ladies Fellowship Group meets monthly in the Hall at Holy Trinity. They are a busy, energetic team of ladies who take on many very successful fund raising tasks. Their reputation for catering goes before them.
- There is a Men's Dinner Group which meets 5 times throughout the year. The format is dinner and a guest speaker. The dinner may be a casserole meal in the Hall at Holy Trinity, or a local eating place may be used. These nights also attract men from other denominations.

Outreach:

- We participate with other churches in the town in providing emergency relief.
- We provide free breakfasts and a warm, non threatening environment; once a week, to anyone who is hungry and cold.
- We participate every year in the Samaritans' effort, putting together Christmas boxes for disadvantaged children overseas.
- We have provision for mission collections every week in our giving envelopes.
- The Deacons are volunteer Prison Chaplains at Hopkins Correctional Centre, the prison in Ararat.
- We give an annual donation to the chaplaincy fund at the Ararat Secondary College. We also fund 3 scholarships each year.

Regular/annual events:

- The annual Fete, Shrove Tuesday celebrations, and Christmas dinner are All-Parish activities which are very sociable and well patronised.
- Dances are held in the Hall once a month, and a Spring Time Ball is held every September.
- The Ladies Fellowship has an annual Ladies Day to which they invite all the ladies of the parish and ladies from the other churches in town. A delicious afternoon tea is enjoyed, an interesting guest speaker spikes imaginations, and ecumenical relationships are firm.
- The Pre Loved Clothing Store is open 4 days per week, staffed by volunteers who are both church and non church members, and is an important fund raiser/outreach venture.

Stawell

The nearby town of Stawell can no longer function as a separate parish, and the Diocese and Parish believe that there should be a common ministry team for Ararat & Stawell.

Finance:

- We have some invested trust funds, as a result of generous bequests and sale of unwanted church properties; and the interest payment from this is essential to keep us afloat. However in the current financial climate interest is low.
- Collections do not vary markedly. We lose people, but new people come along. However as our congregation is composed in the main, of older people, who are more likely to be on fixed incomes, there isn't room for a great deal of movement.
- We are fortunate in having 2 rental properties. One is a small flat, the other a 3 bedroom house. The income from these helps a great deal.
- Occasional one off donations can occur.
- Fund raising is organised, consistent, and diligent. As mentioned earlier we have a fete, monthly dances, annual ball, the clothing store, garage sales to clear leftovers from the fete, and a cake stall. There is a wood chopping team which this year managed to chop and sell 46 loads of wood. We look for opportunities to hire out our Hall. The ALF ladies do very well, particularly with funeral catering.
- Maintenance of our buildings can be a potential, but essential, drain on funds.
- Our congregation is generous in time and donations.
- Wardens and Parish Council do our utmost to make wise decisions when spending money, however it can seem to be a precarious existence at times.

Reflections:

- Ararat Parish can offer a comfortable home and a friendly, generous church community to a new priest.
- We have the skills and knowledge to do the humdrum, the administration; while you do the pastoral and priestly, building our Church.
- We want others to know God and His love, as we do.
- We want to offer people something they are looking for, and can't find in their present life style.
- It is important for the church to be relevant in today's society.
- You will need to enjoy visiting people and becoming involved in local activities.
- The Deacon and Lay ministers are there to assist, but the Ararat community needs to know and recognise you as the Anglican Church leader.