

THE
 **wesleyan** METHODIST CHURCH

THORPDALE

CHURCH PROFILE

2021

The purpose of this profile is to provide information which will enable a prospective Minister to prayerfully discern if this is a community in which their gifts and graces can be expressed and utilised.

Thorpdale.

The town is in the Gippsland area of Baw Baw Shire, in the Latrobe Valley, East Victoria.

The following data (circa 2016) will give an overview:

	Population	Median age	Median weekly personal income
Victoria	6,016,556	37	\$644
Latrobe-Gippsland	271,416	45	\$540
Baw Baw Shire	48,626	42	\$585
Thorpdale	471	42	\$519

First 'settled' in the 1870's, Thorpdale has a Kindergarten, a Primary School (prep to 6), a Post Office, a bakery, and a Fire station. There is a bowls club, a tennis club, a football (AFL) club, a swimming pool, and a sports oval. The local pub has recently been restored and re-opened, following a fire in early 2017.

The only other Church in Thorpdale is an Anglican Church, meeting on the first and third Sunday each month. (There was another church building, the Uniting Church, but it closed in late 2017 and is now a personal home). Nearby Trafalgar is the hub for the Anglican Church. The current Anglican Minister has been in post since 2009. Trafalgar also has Catholic and Uniting Churches.

Famous for its potatoes, Thorpdale is a rural community of mainly farmers, including beef, dairy and sheep farming. But the township is gradually becoming smaller, due largely to farming families moving to larger towns. The town holds a bi-annual Potato Festival (2nd Sunday in March – next one due in 2021). Up to 2002, this was an annual event. Restarting in 2015, it has seen record numbers attending, and has many attractions, including sack races, historic machinery, eating contests, market stalls, etc.

The area is a peaceful rural setting, with several scenic highlights, including the 'Narracan Falls', the 'Lookout', and the 'site of the world's tallest tree'.

Thorpdale is less than 20km south of Trafalgar. It is approximately a one hour drive to the nearest beach (Inverloch) in summer, and a one hour drive to the nearest snow (Mt. Baw Baw) in winter. Main shopping centres are in Moe,

Morwell, Traralgon and Warragul; with 'Fountain Gate' about an hour away. Trains run hourly.

The Church.

The Church is part of the Southern District of the Wesleyan Methodist Church.

Established in the 1980's, Thorpdale Wesleyan Methodist Church has seen many people go out over the years into various areas of ministry.

A service is held every Sunday at 10.00am.

The average Sunday attendance, like the township, has gradually become smaller, going from a high of 80 in 2000 to 15 in 2020 (pre-COVID).

The service is contemporary, with traditional overtones. A roster of leaders creates the style of family worship, with each presenting a little differently.

Musically, a team has previously led but in recent years the absence of a team has brought in the use of recorded music, via DVD's with lyrics being on-screen. The congregation has adapted to this very well indeed.

The preaching of God's Word is an important, integral part of this service.

Communion is shared on a monthly basis, on the first Sunday.

Prayer meetings are held prior to Church each Sunday, with a monthly prayer breakfast on the 3rd Sunday; plus, a Monday night prayer meeting for an hour.

There is a Thursday night Bible study, with an average of 12 attending. This is predominantly led by the Pastor. Several attend from other local Churches.

Current Church membership lists 12 Covenant, and two Community members. In addition, there are regular attendees who are not formal members.

A weekly Sunday School/crèche has between 2 and 6 children attending.

The Church has run a kids club and junior and senior youth groups in the past. Currently, the Church supports an after-school kids club, run by the Anglican Church.

Church Ministers.

Rev Max Richardson (1979-1989) (Deceased 2012)

Rev Jeff McGrath (1990-1994)

Rev Peter Keilar (1994-1997) (Deceased 2015)

Rev Frank Lees (1998-present)

The Pastoral position.

This position is primarily for an Ordained or Commissioned Minister (Rev.).

The Pastor should be a man or woman of prayer; and be compassionate, sociable, a person of sound doctrine, Biblically based teacher, approachable, people person, a leader who inspires others. If married, their partner must have similar qualities.

The current Pastor has a call until the end of 2021, leading to retirement. The Pastoral search now being conducted is subject to the 'preaching with a view to a call' process of those who may apply.

In the event of a suitable candidate being found within 2021, an allowance for a good transition could be agreed. For instance, the current Pastor could be retained as an assistant to whoever is appointed, if that is agreeable to both.

The Pastor is usually expected to preach every week.

The terms of employment.

The position is permanent part-time.

The 2020/21 total salary package, \$25,853.36pa, covers 1½ days per week.

At present, this is represented as: \$5,343pa (Wages); \$16,029pa (Employee Fringe benefits – salary); \$2,039.96pa (Employee Fringe benefits – travel); with \$411pa (Long service leave); and \$2,030.40pa (Super contributions).

Leave is 4 weeks per year (plus any long service leave component).

Housing is not provided, but an allowance is included in the above package.

Church Budget.

The 2020/21 Budget has a total income requirement of \$35,048pa (\$674pw).

Tenure

Any initial appointment is for a 2 year period.

Contact

Applications should be sent to: Thorpdale Wesleyan Methodist Church - PO Box 120 - Thorpdale Vic 3835 (Email: thorpdale@wesleyan.org.au)