



GEORGES RIVER  
LIFE CHURCH

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# CHURCH PROFILE

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2025

# GRLC Church Profile 2025

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# Who we are

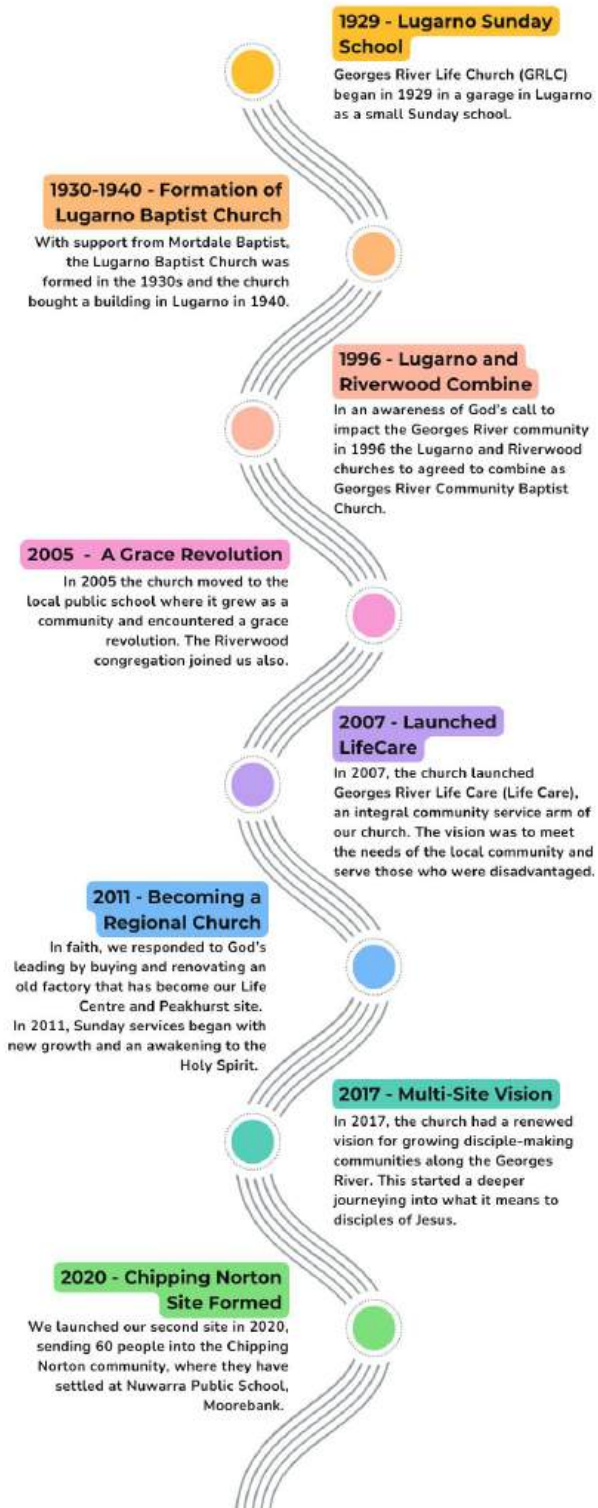
## History

Georges River Life Church (GRLC) began in 1929 as a garage-based Sunday School in Lugarno. Through the support of other churches, faithful witness, and a deep love for the local community, it grew into Lugarno Baptist Church. Over the years, the church experienced several building changes, the opening and closing of various ministries, and a significant milestone in 1996 when it joined with Riverwood Baptist.

In 2011, we moved to our current site at 23 Stanley Street, Peakhurst. Then in 2017, we sensed a renewed vision—to grow disciple-making communities along the Georges River and to go deeper in living as disciples of Jesus.

This vision led us in 2020 to send 60 people into the Chipping Norton community, where they have now settled at Nuwarra Public School in Moorebank. We're excited and prayerful about opening additional sites in the near future.

# Our History



## Affiliation

Georges River Life Church is a member of the Baptist Association of NSW & ACT. We affirm the Founding Doctrines, and Statement of Belief of the NSW & ACT Baptist Association. We are a charismatic, evangelical Baptist church eagerly partner in God's mission.

## Organisation

Our Church is an unincorporated association organised under a congregational model which includes 177 voting partners (who are constitutionally defined members).

These partners elect the Church Leadership Team (CLT), a Board of Elders responsible for overseeing church governance and supervising the Senior Pastor, who also serves as a member of the CLT. The team currently consists of 8 members, with a maximum of 10. Members may serve up to two consecutive 3-year terms, for a total of 6 years.

In addition, our organisation includes a Finance Committee, which functions as a sub-committee of the CLT. The Operations Manager also serves as the Treasurer.

The CLT also serve as the appointed members of Georges River Life Care, a Company Limited by Guarantee. This role gives them governing authority through the Life Care constitution, including the right to elect the Board. For more information, the CLT Charter is available upon request.

To better support the needs of a multi-site church, we recently reorganised our staff into two main groups under the leadership of the Senior Pastor; a central support and ministry, and site staff led by each Site Pastor.

We have 18 staff members, the majority of whom work part-time, collectively making up approximately 8 full-time equivalent (FTE) roles. The staff structure is outlined over the page.

# GRLC Staff Team 2025



## What are we going after?

Over the last several years, our church has done considerable work to develop and refine its mission, vision, and values, which were re-affirmed by the partners at the last Church Meeting. These have informed the current church strategy.

Additionally, our church uses a principles-based decision-making system that endeavours to align all church activities with our guiding principles. Practically, this has led us to be wary of how many programs we run and to ensure that our activities align with our objectives; for example, our annual children's vacation activity is now deliberately community focused.

## Mission Statement

Our mission statement is "To be and to make wholehearted Disciples, loving, living and revealing Jesus."

## Vision

Our vision statement is "To be a disciple-making community growing along the Georges River and beyond, revealing the love and life of Jesus for today, impacting thousands of lives for eternity."

This vision is the core driver of our strategic focus and planning. We are focussed on building a discipleship culture and multiplying sites along the Georges River. We also have an active engagement with missional partners across the world, with a long-standing relationship to the work of the gospel in Thailand and Taiwan.



## Core Values

We are a grace-based church, anticipating the leading and empowering of the Holy Spirit in every area of life, in alignment with our core values.

1. Surrender to God – obediently submitting to the love of the Father, the leading of the Spirit and the Way of Jesus under the authority of Scripture.
2. Walk intimately with Jesus – empowered by the Holy Spirit, we devote our lives to being with and becoming like Jesus.
3. Partner in Jesus' mission– loving people, making disciples and redeeming all aspects of life on earth.
4. Commit to one another in love – serving and pursuing each other with the same love and grace Jesus shows us.

## Principles

To guide our decision-making, we've developed the following principles that shape how we pursue becoming a disciple-making community:

1. We actively discern and partner with God's will and way in everything.
2. We prioritise making new disciples by building relationships and loving without strings attached.
3. We partner with the Holy Spirit to promote transformation in people's lives.
4. We engage in spiritual practices that lead us to be with, become like, and live life in the way of Jesus.
5. We prioritise people and relationships over events and programs.
6. We contend for unity and love in pursuit of our mission and vision, amidst a diversity of people and perspectives.
7. We empower all to contribute to the Kingdom of God, generally and uniquely, locally and beyond.
8. We prioritise an intergenerational paradigm for our shared discipleship journey.

## Current Strategy

Our vision is reflected by our current strategic focus on multi-site discipleship and to achieve this we have three main aims for the next 3–5-year period:

1. Maturing organisationally and culturally to the life-long journey of discipleship.
2. Becoming a people of prayer who are deeply dependent on, and expectant for, the Holy Spirit.
3. Becoming a church with 3 healthy sites.

To deliver on these aims, we have discerned seven key goals to achieve:

1. Build a common understanding for discipleship.
2. Infuse formational practices into our rhythms and DNA.
3. Build a discipleship framework that empowers a whole of life discipleship
4. Develop metrics of success that are formation focussed.
5. Align the structure and operations of Life Care to our multi-site discipleship model.
6. Embed a leadership pipeline and strong volunteer culture.
7. Prepare the next site team to launch in a third site.

## Discipleship Approach

Discipleship is increasingly at the core of the why, how and what of Georges River Life Church. Our definition of discipleship is: The lifelong journey of believing in Jesus, being with Jesus, becoming like Jesus, and living life in the Way of Jesus.

We understand the purpose of discipleship as being in relationship with the living God, being transformed into the image of Christ, and living for His glory. It is also for the abundance of our own lives, for the sake of others, and for the world.

Discipleship happens as we partner with the Holy Spirit, model our lives after Jesus—through His practices and His truth— and live in community. It touches every aspect of our lives. Our people are engaged in the vision of discipleship; prioritising rhythms of life that lead to abiding in Jesus and being transformed by the Holy Spirit.

In prioritising relationships and discipleship, we focus on living with 4 core rhythms. These are our Sunday gatherings, small groups, intentional spiritual relationships and our personal daily practices. Small groups are where we prioritise connection, practices and sharing. We have over 30 small groups across our sites over half of our congregation participate in these groups. The intentional spiritual relationships are one-on-few and are built for shared accountability, support, and the deeper wrestling in our discipleship journey. They are informal by nature and represent a cultural movement within our church, rather than an organised ministry. Personal daily rhythms are at the core of a flourishing life with Jesus. We equip, support and teach into the daily habits that lead us to be with Jesus and become like him.



## What we do

As one church in multiple sites, we are a complex community with greatly diverse ministries, programs, and services which are intended to reflect and shape our discipleship. Our multi-site strategy empowers both central and local ministries to reflect the needs and strategies of each site and local community. Across all our sites, we have a strong focus on the next generation, building relationships and meeting the practical needs in our community.

## Gatherings

The church operates three Sunday gatherings, each of these with their own programs.

### Peakhurst AM

Our Peakhurst AM gathering is the largest, primarily made up of families with children under the age of 12, as well as older adults aged 50-75. Each Sunday we welcome approximately 60-80 children in the River Kids program which caters for children aged 1-13, supported by a large and dedicated River Kids leadership team. We also see new visitors joining us every week.

This service has a warm and contemporary style. On alternate Sundays, after the AM service, we host a morning tea for social connection. On the other Sunday the service is shorter to allow for our Life Care Community Connect program to take place. This program serves the community by dispensing food hampers and offering opportunities for connection through coffee, lunch, and children's activities. A dedicated team of church volunteers serves at Community Connect every fortnight.



### Peakhurst PM

Our 5pm gathering is well attended by young adults and older adults, with approximately 70% of people aged under 30. The gathering has a relaxed feel, due to less people, flexible seating arrangements, and less time constraints to have the service concluded for other events.

The preachers are often the same person as the AM service, but occasionally a young adult will preach. The PM Site Pastor leads the gathering, but service

leading is done by a roster of young adults. Worship times are more flexible and often extended as this congregation has a hunger to encounter Holy Spirit through worship. After church, there is a group dinner at a budget-friendly venue, and once a month, it's hosted at the church to help build community and allow older teens to connect as they transition into young adults.

### Chipping Norton

Our Chipping Norton site is building after some significant changes in leadership, rhythms and location over the past 2 years. The gathering is family and community orientated with a relaxed style and the teaching predominantly led by the Site Pastor.



The CN site has a strong culture of hospitality, serving and community, driven by a deep commitment to the mission of connecting the broader community to Jesus and His kingdom. They are dedicated to a strong partnership with Life Care in both organised and organic ways, including after-service community lunches. The site also places a high value on children and is working toward becoming increasingly intergenerational, while creating diverse spaces for young people of all ages to connect with each other and with Jesus.

### Generations Ministries

We prioritise the younger generations, by partnering with their families to empower their voice, emphasising their contribution and investing in their formation. Children are involved in our Sunday gatherings through intentional intergenerational experiences, as well as seeking generational involvement in all church wide initiatives. There is a strong focus on developing and involving children in serving, with 45 teens and children regularly participating in ministry teams. Additionally, around 20 more join in during Kids Connect.



We have tailored, age-specific ministries, including River Kids during gatherings at both AM sites (approximately 130 children and 42 leaders), Georges River Youth, which meets on Friday nights (90 teens and 28 leaders), and engagement with young adults (50 young adults). Our community program, in partnership with Life Care, includes Kids Community Connect (30 kids and 12 leaders, plus 12 River Kids serving on the team). Additionally, we host several key events each year, including our school holiday program, Kids Connect.

## Local and Overseas Mission

GRLC has a long-standing commitment to both local and overseas mission, managed by a dedicated and passionate Mission Committee. Every May, we hold a church-wide Mission Month, which connects the congregation with our mission partners and support them through additional sacrificial giving.

Apart from Life Care the church's local mission mainly focuses on supporting local Scripture teachers and School Chaplains. This is primarily achieved through giving to individuals and Scripture Boards.

Our overseas mission focus has been in Thailand, where we have a long-standing relationship with a missionary couple since 2004 through the BMA, and separately with the Lahu Evangelical Baptist Convention. We provide financial and practical support for the Lahu Sunshine Hostel, which enables their children to access education. This mature partnership between two Christian communities has included building projects, hands-on service, child sponsorship, and regular visits from GRLC teams.

More recently, we've been expanding our connection with ZOE, a Christian child welfare organisation working in both Thailand and Australia. In addition, we support several mission families, including a couple from GRLC currently serving in Taiwan.

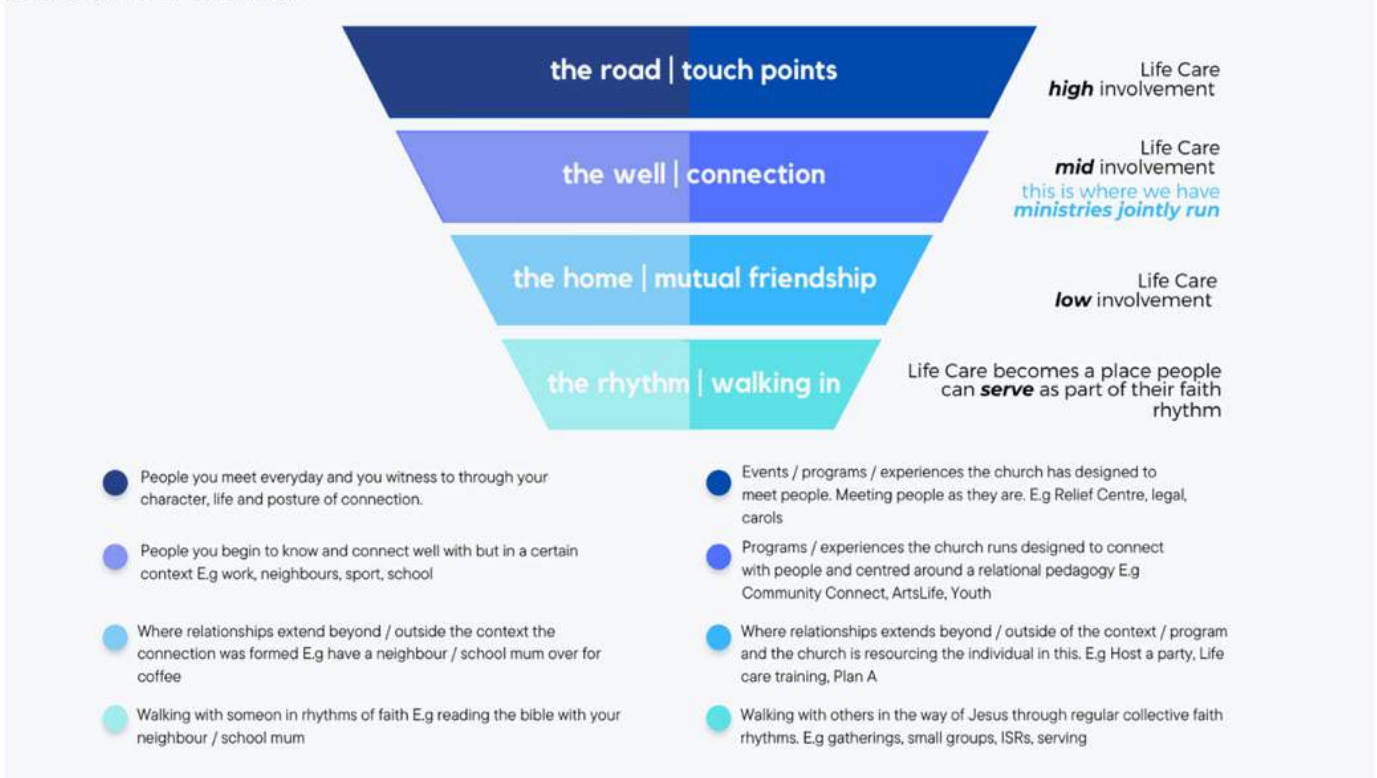
## Life Care

Life Care is the community service arm of our church, making a meaningful difference in the lives of thousands of people in our local communities every year. Life Care is the vessel that mobilises our church to build new relationships and love our community well.

Life Care is integrated into church activities and plans across all sites, with community connection events and many church members volunteering in the work. The diagram, over, shows how the community connection can lead people into the life of the church.



## GRLC DISCIPLESHIP STRATEGY



Georges River Life Care operates with a focus on three core areas:

1. Community Relief by providing local community services to support people experiencing financial hardship, crisis, homelessness, and social isolation. This support is delivered through a range of practical and relational initiatives.
2. Domestic Violence Recovery by providing holistic support to individuals who are experiencing, or have been impacted by, domestic violence—helping them regain safety, stability, and control of their lives.
3. Family Support by coming alongside families to provide resources and support that help build and sustain thriving, healthy family environments.

Life Care has a staff team of eight, who are led by the CEO, Karen Power. These include three part-time Case Managers, Community Relief Coordinator, a Marketing Manager and an Administration Assistant. There are over 50 church members serving as volunteers in the ministry across both sites.

Georges River Life Care is a registered charity and Company Limited by Guarantee and is governed and financed separately to the church. The CEO also serves as a church staff member and works alongside the church team. It's charity status allows funding to come from several sources including: 35% fundraising (mainly through events in which the church engages heavily), 14% Government grants, 40% Club grants, and 11% Corporate partners. Life Care is embedded within the church facilities and relies on church support to minimise running costs. The latest Life Care Annual Report is available on the church website.

# Our Resources

## Facilities

Our church owns one facility at 23 Stanley Street, Peakhurst and has rent free arrangements to access other facilities.

1. The Peakhurst site is a converted commercial complex located in a light industrial area. It features a large multi-purpose auditorium and a smaller auditorium, both of which are reconfigurable for various uses. The site also includes a café/foyer area, an outdoor café space, a relief centre (Food Bank) operated by Life Care, a dedicated Kids Centre with five rooms, 12 offices/meeting rooms, and ample storage space. The other three units and shed are rented at commercial rates to non-church businesses. The carpark is sufficient to support most church activities, although there is a requirement for street parking on Sunday mornings.
2. The Chipping Norton site gathers in a local Primary School free of charge. This has sufficient space for the main gathering, children's activities, and has support for running community connection luncheons. Life Care has access to rooms at Nuwarra Public School, Moorebank High School, and Liverpool Neighbourhood Connections in Warwick Farm.
3. There is no manse or supplied accommodation for staff.

## Finances

The church finances are commensurate for our size. These finances are managed by the Operations Manager using the accounting software, MYOB. Our financial accounts are audited by a CLT appointed external auditor every year.

In 2024, the church operated with an 8 percent surplus budget and has planned to do the same for this year. The largest church cost is staff remuneration, with income coming from church giving and rental income. We look to prepare a balanced budget each year to ensure financial stability and effectively support our mission.

There are sufficient operating reserves to cover contingencies, and the church is fully insured.



# Supporting Data

## Church Health

The church conducted a Church Health Assessment in March 2025 and a BA Health Team report on the survey can be provided on request. The report summarised that the church appears to have very good overall health, with most responses tend to be either “Agree” or “Strongly Agree” with positive statements regarding church health.

The highest scoring area was in being a “Christ Centred” church, with the church appearing to have excellent health in this area of church life. This is closely followed by the areas of being “Well Governed” and “Relationally Committed”. The main area identified for growth is being "Partnership Oriented." While health in this area remains generally strong, the lower rating is attributed to increased uncertainty and a slight increase in disagreement with the related statements.

## Data Points

Some useful data is tabled below.

	<b>Peakhurst AM</b>	<b>Peakhurst PM</b>	<b>Chipping Norton</b>	<b>Church Total</b>
<b><i>Attending<sup>1</sup></i></b>	290 adults + 195 <sup>2</sup> children	90 adults and youth	60 adults + 12 teens and children	440 adults + 195 children
<b><i>Baptisms in 2024</i></b>				9
<b><i>Active in Ministries</i></b>	145	55	25 <sup>3</sup>	305 (including Life Care and non-GRLC)
<b><i>Being developed as Disciples<sup>4</sup></i></b>	150	65	45	260
<b><i>Released to Ministry in the last 5 years<sup>5</sup></i></b>				30 <sup>6</sup>
<b><i>Partners<sup>7</sup></i></b>				176

<sup>1</sup> Attending a church gathering at least once a month, weekly attendance is often about 60-70%. It does not include community joining for post-church community-connect events or Life Care events.

<sup>2</sup> This includes children attending River Kids and Youth.

<sup>3</sup> CN as a smaller group relies on a “chipping in” culture, so there are no formal teams.

<sup>4</sup> Primarily based on Small Group attendance, although many members’ services are discipleship based.

<sup>5</sup> Includes attending specific ministry vocational training such as Morling, overseas mission, and release to service outside the church both inside and outside the BA.

<sup>6</sup> In the time frame an addition 70 people were released from PK to be the core team for the CN site.

<sup>7</sup> GRLC Constitution term for registered members. The Registry is actively maintained.

## Challenges and Opportunities

While the church is overall healthy, the leadership team has identified the following challenges for the church.

1. **New Site:** The church conducted a review of the lessons learned from launching the Chipping Norton site, providing valuable insights into the preparation required before selecting the next location. This work has commenced, with our intention to launch new sites that are positioned for long-term success while maintaining the strength of the existing sites.
2. **Leadership development and pipeline:** There is a culture already for developing our young people as leaders and we are working to a uniform and consistent approach to better equip for mission and discipleship development. This is seen as a precursor to starting more sites.
3. **Discipleship:** Embedding a discipleship culture in our church including the role of formation, managing our priorities, combatting spiritual consumerism, being equipped to disciple others, being passionate and equipped to be individually missional and orientated to the lost.
4. **Aligning Life Care and Life Church:** There is always the danger with two dynamic organisations working in partnership that they suffer missional drift. This is an area that needs to be watched and five steps made to deal with it.
5. **Financial sustainability:** The church budget is balanced, but staffing expenses are very high and insufficient funds are being reserved for anticipated future costs. A longer-term financial plan is being developed which balances current needs with anticipated future expenditures, including new sites and capital expenditure.
6. **Restructure:** While the church has recently undergone a restructure it is anticipated that changes with moving to a full-time Senior Pastor and better integrating Life Care operations may require further adjustment.
7. **Property Asset Management:** The church's main asset, the Peakhurst facility, is old and has maintenance issues that need addressing. The Leadership team is undertaking a facilities survey and developing a long-term asset management plan.

## Further Reading

The following can be provided on request

- Church Strategic Plan
- Life Care Strategic Plan
- Life Care 2024 Annual report
- Church Financial Statements
- GRLC Church Health Survey - March 2025





GEORGES RIVER  
LIFE CHURCH

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