

Youth Worker at St John's Hartford

1. Introduction and Background

St John's is a medium sized, conservative evangelical parish church on the edge of Northwich, a mid-Cheshire market town of around 50,000 inhabitants. The church will celebrate its 200th anniversary in 2021, and has had clearly evangelical vicars for just over 50 years.

Our main Sunday morning service is currently averaging around 220 people, of whom around 50 are under 16 and in our flourishing Sunday School. The church has recently experienced gentle growth. We are a genuine family, with newborns to 90-somethings, committed to "walking in truth, and living in love". Youth work takes place on Friday and Sunday nights. We have a small 8am BCP communion with around a dozen regulars and an evening service which averages about 40. Neither of our smaller services currently attracts young people. We have a strong commitment to supporting mission.

Christ Church Greenbank, also in the parish, was planted in 2002 and has thrived. It has its own full time minister and part time youth worker.

The west end of the parish, served by St John's, is largely owner occupied housing, with significant new housing developments in recent years. Most people commute to work. There are relatively few 18-30 year olds in the local demographic, and this is reflected in the congregation. The parish has numerous educational institutions, catering to approximately 5,000 young people. These include state, private and special schools, and a number of nurseries/pre-schools. One, re-founded in 2012 in partnership with St John's, is an 11-16 Church of England high school with a stipendiary chaplain.

Our mission is to reach these residents and students with the gospel, and to serve them in Christ's name.

2. Job Overview

The Youth Worker will take overall responsibility for the 11-18s ministry in our parish: we are looking for someone who will evangelise those outside our church, and disciple those within. Both aspects of the role will involve working alongside other church staff and volunteers.

Evangelistically, the Youth Worker will fulfil existing opportunities and create new ones in our local secondary schools and church-based youth groups and more broadly, in both term time and school holidays. Pastorally, the Youth Worker will oversee our Sunday teaching ministry for 11-18s, and develop a broader discipling strategy amongst our young people.

While the bulk of the work will be amongst 11-18s, some aspects of the role will involve working with under 11s, or those who serve them.

The Youth Worker will work alongside the Children's Outreach Worker and under the authority of the Associate Vicar (for whom an appointment process is underway).

We are looking for someone who loves the Lord Jesus and young people, and who has a passion to connect the two.

3. Personal and Leadership Qualities

The Youth Worker will need to be:

1. someone who knows and loves the Lord Jesus Christ, and who displays clear evidence of this in his or her own deepening faith and obedience, prayer and godliness;

2. committed to the supreme authority and inerrancy of Scripture, recognising the Bible as 'God's Word written' (Article 20);
3. committed to the centrality of the cross, and subscribing to our Church's teaching that there the Father was reconciled to us (Article 2);
4. a warm-hearted and humble leader, committed to working collaboratively with staff colleagues and church members, and in partnership with other local gospel churches;
5. committed to making disciple-making disciples of Jesus Christ, beyond just seeking converts;
6. able "to do the work of an evangelist", and to encourage and equip their fellow believers in the same task;
7. able to develop the ministries of others, seeing their own calling as "equipping the saints for the work of [their] ministry" (Ephesians 4.12);
8. able to develop and implement strategies for continued gospel growth amongst the young;
9. a hard worker in a place where many people contribute many hours to church work on top of busy work and family lives;
10. someone who can help us build further links into the wider community of young people for Christ;
11. a person who is able to work with people of all ages from a diverse range of socio-economic and educational backgrounds;
12. a person who is well-organised;
13. if married, a person who has the full support of their spouse;
14. a person who is able to work alongside and encourage men and women in many and various ministries, but who will be in sympathy with the church's position that the church office of presbyter ('priest') is limited to men, in the light of Biblical teaching on 'headship'; and
15. able to subscribe to the PCC Motion on Marriage, passed on 23 October 2017 (attached).

4. Particular Responsibilities

Particular areas of work will include, but not be limited to:

1. Youth Ministry (11 to 18 years):
 - a. pastoring, equipping and enlarging our existing youth leadership teams;
 - b. building up and nurturing Christian teenagers in their faith and commitment to Christ, including preparing them for baptism and confirmation;
 - c. fostering a sense of mutual love and commitment between young and old in church, especially by involving young people in church services;
 - d. developing the many evangelistic opportunities available for reaching out to teenagers in our parish;
 - e. continuing and expanding gospel work in all the parish's high schools by involvement in (for example) assemblies, lessons, chaplaincy work, Christian Unions and school visits to church;

- f. working with the Chaplain at Hartford Church of England High School to develop links between church and school;
 - g. overseeing and developing the main weekly teenage gatherings (currently Friday Night Live (11-14s, Friday evening), Pathfinders (11-14s, Sunday morning), Crossfinders (14-16s, Sunday morning) and Crossover (14-18s, Sunday evening)) as well as evangelistic and social events;
 - h. starting a Friday night, outward-facing, 14-18s group;
 - i. exploring opportunities for joint youth and children's ministry with Christ Church with the Christ Church minister and youth worker;
 - j. encouraging the participation of leaders and young people at the various "Sound Holidays" children's and youth camps (The Buzz, Ashville and The Vibe); and
2. Children's ministry (0 to 11 years):
- a. exercising pastoral oversight of the Sunday School alongside our volunteer Sunday School Co-ordinator, including training, encouraging, equipping and enlarging our dedicated team of Sunday School teachers, as well as overseeing the children's teaching programme and follow-up work;
 - b. working with the Children's Outreach Worker to develop a consistent evangelistic strategy among 0-18s; and
 - c. developing evangelistic ministry amongst older primary age children (7-11s) in collaboration with the Children's Outreach Worker.

5. Conditions

This is a permanent, full time position and carries an annual salary of £20,000. The church will make a contribution of 10% of your salary into the Church Workers' Pension Fund.

Legitimate expenses will be paid, as agreed with the Churchwardens and Vicar. A book allowance and financial help towards further studies may be given.

There is a shared office in the Church Centre.

The Youth Worker will have one full day and one additional evening a week off, plus public holidays (which may be transferred if they are required to work on those) and an additional day off in months without any public holidays. Annual holiday entitlement is six weeks, including Sundays.

Hartford PCC Resolution passed 23 October 2017

This PCC affirms, in accordance with Canon B30, and according to our Lord's teaching, that marriage 'is in its nature a union permanent and lifelong, for better for worse, till death them do part, of one man with one woman, to the exclusion of all others on either side, for the procreation and nurture of children, for the hallowing and right direction of the natural instincts and affections, and for the mutual society, help and comfort which the one ought to have of the other, both in prosperity and adversity.'

In the light of the above, we intend

- a) To continue to teach that heterosexual marriage is the only right context for a sexual relationship.
- b) To continue to welcome all who come to our churches, to make charitable assumptions, to respect all as people made in the image of God, to teach and preach the good news of Jesus to all, and to call all to repentance and faith, irrespective of sexuality and lifestyle.
- c) To reject all actions, words and attitudes which victimise or diminish people, and to make clear that these are sins to be repented of.
- d) To engage pastorally and gently with those who become regular attenders and are open about being in a sexual relationship outside of heterosexual marriage; and to make it clear to them that we are all sinners, and that their being in a sexual relationship is a sin to be repented of.
- e) To be discerning about who we invite to engage in ministries in the church, so that we 'practise what we preach' on sexual matters. Those who are open with us about a sexual relationship outside of heterosexual marriage, and show no sign of wishing to put it right, will not be asked to serve in church life though they will always be welcome to attend. If they are already serving, they will be asked to step down.
- f) To exhort all who come to Baptism or Holy Communion to do so with a true penitent heart and lively faith, heeding the warning of God's word to so judge ourselves that we practice repentance, pursue holiness and above all things give thanks to God for the redemption of the world by the death of our Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ.
- g) To urge the Diocese of Chester, and the Church of England and other churches too, to uphold the Christian teaching that marriage between a man and a woman is the only right context for a sexual relationship.

In all of this, we wish to hold ourselves to the high demands of Christian love and care in all our dealings with people inside and outside the church, knowing that for some people the intentions outlined above will be hard to understand, and very hard to put into practice. We nonetheless believe them to be the way of Christ, who loved us and gave himself for us, for our everlasting good.