



The Parish of St Peter and All Saints, Nottingham



Ministry Assistant 2021

Role description and parish profile

Introduction

The parish of St Peter and All Saints, Nottingham is seeking to appoint a Ministry Assistant, beginning in September 2021. This post is for a period of twelve months, but this could be extended for a further year by mutual agreement. The role is designed to be helpful to someone who is exploring the possibility of ordination, but it will also provide valuable experience to anyone who is wanting to learn more about the life and ministry of the Church and to contribute to this. The work and the parish context provide ample opportunities for theological reflection.

The parish context

This parish covers part of Nottingham city centre, as well as the Park estate, parts of Radford, and the area near the Arboretum.

St Peter's is the oldest building in constant public use in Nottingham. It lies in the heart of the retail area of Nottingham, close to the Old Market Square, and includes the Broadmarsh Shopping Centre, department stores, and a range of hotels, financial and legal firms, pubs and clubs. This area is known for its night life, which ranges from late night bars to the wide range of events staged at Nottingham Playhouse, the Theatre Royal, and Concert Hall. Its prominent location means that many people, including tourists, are drawn to visit and/or pray during the week. This part of the parish also includes the Park estate, which is very different, however, and consists mainly of higher value residential properties but also flats and some houses shared by students.



All Saints' church is a large and prominent Victorian building just north of the city centre, in Radford. For many years this area has suffered from economic decline and deprivation, with considerable numbers of residents on low incomes and in poor quality housing. The area is characterised by a wide racial mix. There is considerable student housing (mainly Nottingham Trent University), as well as some shops, light industry and various community organisations.

The churches: Worship, Mission and Ministry

The worship in the parish is primarily Eucharistic. St Peter's and All Saints' churches each has its own style, but both fall within a modern broad church/liberal catholic tradition. The Eucharist is seen as the coming together of the worshipping community around the sacrament, but with a strong outward-looking and inclusive focus.

All age groups are represented, with a family service taking place at St Peter's every month, which attracts around ten children and their families. Each church includes a good number of young adults, although it has been hard to maintain contact with some of these over the last year. Much pastoral work is linked with Sunday and weekday worship, as this is the time when contacts are

made and developed, and when congregational members share their needs with one another and with the clergy. Worship in this parish needs to relate to everyone from rough sleepers and asylum seekers to people of various professional backgrounds.

The parish is a member of Inclusive Church; it is also currently undertaking work towards the series of 'Eco Church' awards.

The main features of the worship, mission and ministry of each church are as follows:

St Peter's holds three Sunday services, with a total attendance of around 140. The main Sunday service is a Eucharist (Common Worship rite A), with Matins once a month. In the evening, depending on the Sunday of the month, there is a Eucharist with prayers for healing, Choral Evensong, a Taizé service, and Compline. Weekday services are also well attended, especially the two Eucharists which each attract 15-20 people.

St Peter's attracts people who are seeking Eucharistic worship which is traditional, but with a contemporary outlook, and theology which is not too rigid or dogmatic. The congregation has a wide range of backgrounds, with a reasonably good racial mix. Many are also drawn to worship at St Peter's because of its strong choir and its thrice-yearly series of Saturday morning concerts.



In normal times, St Peter's is open to the public every day of the week. This means that considerable numbers of people come to the church on weekdays for a wide range of reasons, some of whom are in need of various forms of support. Rough sleepers, addicts, ex-offenders and people with a variety of vulnerabilities tend to gravitate towards St Peter's, as they know they will receive a welcome. The vergers and lay pastoral volunteers play an important role in this. There is also a weekly 'Drop-in' group for people suffering from mental health problems, and two Drop-in groups for rough sleepers and similarly vulnerable people. A pastoral care and support network revolves around the Thursday morning Eucharist.

From time to time, circumstances permitting, St Peter's hosts public meetings on topical issues, which make a contribution to the work of the Church in the social and political arena. Subjects covered in recent years include the Climate Change crisis, the problems facing the UK economy, peace and justice issues, and approaches to the economy from the perspectives of different faiths. This ministry has connections with the work of the workplace chaplaincy, which had its origins in St Peter's church some years ago.

Substantial areas of the roof of St Peter's church have recently been renewed; there is also an ongoing programme of heritage education and outreach work. This includes an exploration of historic links between St Peter's and slavery, which has led to plans for a commemorative display about this. There are plans to enhance the entrance lobby of St Peter's church, and also to upgrade the dais adjacent to the chancel screen.

St Peter's has a thriving cafe ('Coffee Room') which in normal times serves several hundred members of the public every week. This is staffed by a combination of paid and volunteer staff. There is a fair trade and Christian book and gift shop alongside the Coffee Room.



All Saints has a usual Sunday congregation of around 20-30, within which is found a strong sense of fellowship, mutual care, and concern for issues of community and justice. The church is located in the most deprived part of the parish, which means that there is an ongoing ministry of pastoral care and support to a wide range of people, including rough sleepers, asylum seekers, people suffering from mental illness etc, ex-offenders, the elderly, etc.



All Saints' normally hosts a monthly lunch meeting for asylum seekers and refugees, although this has not been possible over the past year or so. There has until early 2020 also been a community coffee morning following the Tuesday eucharist; as with other activities, this should resume when circumstances permit. The church has historic connections with the West Indian community of Nottingham; a Chinese church meets in All Saints' on Sunday afternoons. The church has made a parish house available to a local trust for the purpose of accommodating asylum seekers and refugees, and a 'Peace Garden' has been set up in the churchyard.



The role of the Ministry Assistant

The Ministry Assistant will work as part of a team of clergy, other staff and volunteers, and will be involved a range of tasks within both of the two churches in the parish. In normal times, this will involve some or all of the following responsibilities, although since March 2020 the nature of church life and ministry has changed considerably as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic and we have had to move many activities online:

- Taking part in the leading of worship, including reading, leading the intercessions, and (after suitable preparation), preaching. This should include weekday as well as Sunday services.
- Engaging with some of the various groups which use the churches, such as the drop-in groups for rough sleepers at St Peter's, the Mental Health drop-in group, also at St Peter's, and the 'Women of Faith' monthly lunch for asylum seekers at All Saints' church.
- Being available in St Peter's church from time to time to talk with those who come in search of support etc (following appropriate training).
- Pastoral care generally: visiting the housebound and those in hospital, including the possibility of taking communion to the housebound.
- Helping to lead study groups as agreed, and, as appropriate, to help with baptism and confirmation preparation.
- Taking part in some or all of the various groups and committees of the parish, such as the Overseas Committee, the theology study group, the Caring for our Common Home Group (which focuses mainly on environmental issues), and groups which work on heritage education and outreach, including a City Stories group which is exploring the historic connections between St Peter's and slavery.
- Working with students and other young adults, perhaps arranging activities which would strengthen their links with the church.
- The Ministry Assistant would be expected to attend weekly clergy/office staff meetings.

The first few weeks of the post will be largely centred on getting to know people within the churches, as well as the particular features of the parish and its ministry. A large element of this period will therefore involve learning and reflection. A structure will be given which will help this to take place, but as time progresses a more flexible and less structured working pattern is likely to emerge.

If the Ministry Assistant brings particular strengths, skills or interests which might contribute to other areas of the mission and ministry of the parish, this would be welcome. We will try to offer opportunities for exploring specific areas of ministry, theology and church life which might help with any preparation for a future role in the wider Church.

Person Specification

The Ministry Assistant should possess the following qualities:

- a readiness to learn
- the ability to work as part of a team as well as independently
- an open and non-judgemental faith which is receptive to spiritual growth and development
- the ability to relate well to a wide variety of kinds of people
- the ability to take responsibility, while understanding when and how to consult
- good communication skills, both oral and written
- a caring and sympathetic nature, with a sensitivity to pastoral needs
- an affinity with the ethos and values of this parish, especially inclusiveness
- the ability to live independently and to be resilient in adapting to a new environment

- a readiness to live and work within a context which may sometimes be structured but at other times can be quite unstructured
- an ability to use modern forms of digital technology to support worship, ministry and mission
- the ability to undertake the tasks of the post in a mature and responsible manner.

Training and development

The Ministry Assistant will receive 'on the job' guidance and training in the parish itself but will be encouraged to take advantage of training and learning opportunities offered elsewhere in the diocese or elsewhere. The Ministry Assistant will also probably be linked with the 'Sheppard Scholars' scheme operated by St Martin in the Fields church in London as part of the HeartEdge network, of which this parish is a member.

Line management and supervision

The Rector of the parish will provide line management and supervision. This will involve, normally, a weekly meeting for planning and review purposes, including ongoing discussion of the areas of work in which the Ministry Assistant is involved. It is important that he/she become well acquainted with the complexities of life and ministry in this large parish, both as part of their learning experience and also in order that his or her contribution to ministry may be as effective as possible.

We also encourage the Ministry Assistant to have a 'mentor', who will provide an opportunity for wider reflection on the experiences of ministry which he/she is having in the parish. This may involve an element of spiritual direction or guidance.

Stipend and hours of work

Hours of work: 37 hours a week. It is expected that the post should be of roughly twelve months' duration; including paid leave of 6 weeks within a twelve-month period. There will be a three month probationary period.

Rent-free accommodation is available in a two bedroomed house owned by the parish through a church charity, at St Peter's Court, Woodborough Road, Nottingham. An allowance of £120 per week will be paid to cover living costs etc, with an additional allowance designed to cover gas, electricity and internet costs, also Council Tax and water charges.

The Parish Ministry Team

As well as the Rector, Rev Christopher Harrison, the parish has a part-time Associate Priest, Rev Dr Richard Davey (who is also Co-ordinating Chaplain at Nottingham Trent University). A retired priest, Rev James Saxton, and a non-stipendiary priest, Rev Dr Helen Hall, play an active role in the parish. There are also two lay readers. The parish has a paid administrator, based at the parish office, and a director of music. Lay leadership is strong and effective, with active and committed churchwardens. There is a weekly staff meeting for parish clergy and other staff.

Wider church links

The parish is part of the South Nottingham Deanery, and meetings of clergy chapter and Deanery Synod are generally well supported.

Parish support

Modern office facilities are located at the St Peter's Centre, adjacent to St Peter's church.



More Information

For further information about the parish visit www.nottinghamchurches.org .

For a conversation about the Ministry Assistant post, or to enquire about an informal visit please contact the Rector, Rev Christopher Harrison (tel. 07973 754165 or christopher.d.harrison@btinternet.com)

To apply for this post, please use the application form which can be found on the parish website.