**St Mary’s Parish Church, Portchester: Youth, Children & Families Minister**

**JOB DESCRIPTION**

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To develop and lead a team of volunteers who, together can offer spiritual and emotional support to children, young people and their families.

To promote the spiritual welfare and encourage growth in Christian maturity and discipleship of young people and children.

This would primarily be to St Mary’s members and pastoral contacts, and also expanded to outreach in the wider community.

**OUR PARTNERS IN YOUTH MINISTRY INCLUDE**

* Scripture Union
* Portsmouth Diocese youth activities
* High Tide

**ST MARY’S VISION FOR MINISTRY FOR CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE**

As a church committed to people of all ages, St Mary’s is dedicated to encouraging and supporting families and children in Prayer, Learning and Growth in Faith. Being Disciples of Jesus Christ, we are united on the PATH to God by:

**PRAYER** – praying for and with our children, whilst offering them an engaging experience of Christian Worship;

**ACTION** – developing activities and play that express our Christian commitment to protect the Environment and our response to human need by Loving Service;

**TRUST** – fostering friendship with one another and our church community, encouraging Young People to express their Faith and contribute to our life and worship;

**HOPE** – forming a life-long relationship with Jesus Christ, who is the strongest foundation to Life, no matter what our lives may bring.

**MAIN PRIORITIES**

1. To review and refresh our existing provision for young people on Sundays by ensuring that we have the right people and the right resources at the right time; by experimenting with new approaches to youth and children’s worship; by encouraging young people to express themselves in conversation and activities.
2. To build our numbers by reaching out to local families.
3. To strengthen young people’s confidence, fellowship and service outside Sunday services (Friday youth groups, film nights, BBQs, activities after church, weekend events; local projects, residentials).
4. To raise the confidence and profile of our young people in the life of the church by empowering the use of their gifts and celebrating their achievements (Social media, All Age Services, St Marys News)
5. To put faith into action by fundraising and participating in projects for those in need.
6. Outreach into local schools.

**DUTIES AND GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES**

**Engagement with St Mary’s Church**

Because of the importance of seeing this role as a ministry of St Mary’s, it would be ideal if the post-holder was to be (or become) a member of this church. However, applicants from other churches may apply. We would, however, look for some attendance at services at St Mary’s.

**GENERAL LEARNING AND TRAINING**

The Minister would be required to undertake 2 hours per week (or the equivalent) in attending training (probably on-line) provided by appropriate youth agencies. In addition would supplement this by attending any other relevant courses, and reading resources on the internet or in books. Training courses if agreed with the line manager, would be paid for by the church.

**CURRENT / FUTURE POTENTIAL AREAS OF MINISTRY**

**Sunday Morning Junior Church**

Currently this meets at 11.30am as part of our Later Morning Service which focuses on more informal and contemporary worship. We have between 10-20 children of all ages who attend. Due to shortage of space we meet together as one group in the New Room. We have been using the ‘Energise’ material published by Urban Saints (formerly Crusaders). There is a large screen which can be used for video teaching and worship.

There are areas we could develop:

* Better quality participation in the services by children.
* The 9.30am Parish Eucharist has normally one or two families attending and it would be good to develop also a Junior Church.

**11.30am All Age Services**

On the 4th Sunday of the month we hold an All Age Service. The worship is mainly through videos (which also gives our praise band a break!); the service is shorter (around 45 minutes); there are craft activities and the talk is related to all ages. The service is followed by a buffet lunch.

**9.30am All Age Services**

At present these are held 3 times a year:

* Palm Sunday – with a procession led by a band
* Harvest Festival – last Sunday in September
* Christingle – second Sunday in December (4pm)

**Uniformed organisations**

We invite the local uniformed organisations to these, and there is good support from some.

Areas for development:

* To build stronger links with the 2nd Portchester Scout Group (Beavers, Cubs, Scouts, Sea Scouts) which is actually St Mary’s own group.
* To make contact with all the uniformed organisations in Portchester, or at least to have leaders contact details to send them invitations to services.

**Sunday Crèche**

A Crèche facility during the 9.30 and 11.30 services has been a bit ‘hit and miss’. The minister would not be expected to run this, but could help encourage a more organised and disciplined approach to this.

**St Mary’s Lambs Toddler Group**

This meets every Wednesday in the church from 10.30am – 11.45am. It is currently supported by about 10 parents/carers and 10 children. We begin with a time of worship (simply prayer and action songs) followed by a story, and then the children play with toys etc while the parents have coffee and cake (provided freely by the Tea Room). We also organise social events for the parents. We have an excellent team who run this, so the minister would only need to drop in and say ‘hello’ and get to know the families.

**Friday night ‘Connect’ Youth Group**

This meets from 6.15pm – 7.30pm in the Parish Hall (and sometimes at the church). It is for young people in years 4-8.

**Friday night ‘Momentum’ Youth Group**

This meets at 7.45pm – 9.00pm in the Parish Hall (and sometimes at the church) and is for young people in years 9+

Sometimes both groups meet together. There are indoor and outdoor games and sports activities, a teaching slot based on Energize material, and sometimes an outside speaker. There are sleep- overs with a film, and recently 14 of our young people attended a weekend on the Isle of Wight.

We have also recently organised monthly events for the whole family which have been well supported by parents. These included a BBQ and bonfire night.

**Monthly ‘High Tide’**

Once a month around 60/70 young people from church youth groups in and around Portsmouth join together for an event called ‘High Tide’ which is held at various church locations, including our own. This is a well organised evening of worship, teaching, food and games. It tends to be for older teens, and the younger ones who aren’t able to go, have a smaller event at Portchester.

**Scripture Union Light Party**

This Christian alternative to Halloween is held in the church on 31st October and includes worship, games and food.

**Schools visits to the church**

Occasionally we have groups of school children who visit the church as part of their local history or RE national curriculum. This would give the youth minister an opportunity to meet local schools or to be involved.

The following are projects which we offer:

* Sacred Spaces – travelling around the church building with an explanation of what the various bits of furniture are used for.
* The Priory (Monastic) Project where the children dress up as monks for a 2 hour ‘Day in the life of a monastery’
* The Church Year – with food!

**Ministry to schools**

There are 5 schools in the parish (4 Primary and 1 Secondary). There is also a Secondary just outside the parish where we have connections. Some of the local schools have been very welcoming, but currently we have not been able to make the most of this opportunity. We see these areas developing:

* Open the Book
* Assemblies
* RE lessons
* Networking with Christian teachers (if they make themselves known)
* Developing good links with the school in general.

**Youth Alpha**

We are starting the first course in the autumn of 2022 on a Wednesday evening. It will include a meal, video teaching and discussion.

**Messy Church**

There are three churches in Portchester (St Mary’s Anglican; Portchester Methodist and the Good News Fellowship) There is also a small Roman Catholic group, the remnants of a former congregation in the village. Together they are ‘Churches Together in Portchester’ who run Messy Church on the 3rd Thursday of the month at the Methodist Church from 3.30pm – 6.00pm. The minister would not be expected to lead this, but to attend and make links and help where they felt able.

**Young Servers Team**

A year ago we had a young Server’s team for the 9.30am Parish Eucharist. However, with some leaving and others losing interest, this has fallen into abeyance. However, there is the potential for this to start up again, and would be of more interest to the older teenagers.

**Pastoral Visiting**

As part of pastoral care and building relationships, the minister could visit families at home, and perhaps situations might arise where this would be welcome.

**Administration**

We hope that the minister will not need to spend an inordinate amount of time in administration. We have an excellent Parish Administrator and office who will help with design, printing and social media. However, the minister should be aware that there are certain administrative tasks they would be ultimately responsible for:

* Social Media
* Programme Planning
* Publicity
* Risk Assessments
* Grant applications

**Networking**

Full time or part time youth leadership can be lonely at times (as can all ministry) and it is good to make links with other youth leaders and Scripture Union ministers. We would encourage the minister to make such relationships for mutual encouragement and exchange of ideas, and perhaps to visit other church and secular youth groups.

**Future development of the role.**

We hope you have not been too daunted and exhausted by reading this so far! We realise that all of this cannot be done in a week, month or even a year. We have excellent teams in place in many of these ministries and you would in these cases be more of a team leader, encouraging others. The role may grow (and we hope it does) to require more than 20 hours per week, or perhaps more than one person! It is also hoped that the role could extend beyond 2 years. It is also possible that ‘youth, children and families’ might be too big a remit for one person, and there is potential for splitting these roles in the future.