



St Matthew's
Westminster

Pastoral Assistant Programme 2016-17

St Matthew's Westminster is seeking to employ one Pastoral Assistant for a year from September 2016. We have two Pastoral Assistants, and one of this year's PA's will be staying on for a second year. The post is open to men or women of the Church of England, and is particularly suited to those who are exploring a vocation to priesthood or other ministry in the Church, although this is not a prerequisite.

Who we are

The church is located at the heart of the city, very much at the centre of the 'Westminster Village'. St Matthew's stands within the Catholic tradition of the Church of England, and has an open, friendly congregation. The church is constantly developing its understanding of mission at the heart of the city, within a threefold ministry of prayer, hospitality and dialogue. St Matthew's fully supports the ordination of women to the priesthood.

St Matthew's occupies a large site with good facilities, which include a conference centre, a flourishing church primary school, and residential accommodation in St Matthew's House.

The church is open every day, and worship is at the heart of our life together. There are daily services of Morning Prayer, Mass, and Evening Prayer. On Sundays the main celebration is at 11am.

There are strong international links, and the church has a steady stream of visitors from across the Anglican Communion, with particularly strong connections with the church in North America and Ghana. We regularly welcome priests and bishops from overseas who visit for sabbatical study leave.

A particularly important focus for our work in the coming year will be with the developing partnership between St Matthew's and St Mary le Strand, a West End church which will be a focus for *Anglican Catholic Future*, details of which can be found at www.stmarylestrand.org and www.anglicancatholicfuture.org. A third Pastoral Assistant is based at St Mary le Strand and works closely with the two based at St Matthew's.

What we offer

The Pastoral Assistants are part of a supportive team of clergy and lay people, and play a full part in the round of daily prayer and social involvement. There is excellent liturgical experience, including serving, reading and intercession, leading the daily office and administering communion. There are many opportunities for developing pastoral skills from home visits to engagement with casual visitors. Pastoral Assistants are encouraged to develop particular strengths and interests, and the posts have a flexibility to allow them to grow and develop around the individual.

Pastoral Assistants are actively involved in the life of the church school and local community, working with children and their families, staff and volunteers as a pastoral presence offering support and helping strengthen the school's holistic approach to education.

Another focus for work is in the church office, working with the clergy and Administrator in the daily life of the church. The Pastoral Assistants collaborate closely together on a number of shared projects, and we are keen to ensure there is a wide diversity of experience. Theological reflection involving other pastoral assistants in central London will be encouraged and facilitated.

The opportunities offered through this scheme will hopefully be of real help to those seeking to discern their vocation within a supportive and prayerful community.

A stipend of £6,000 is payable with expenses met in full. Free accommodation is provided in an attractive two bed-roomed furnished apartment next to the school, with its own roof terrace. Heating and lighting bills are met in full. During the year Pastoral Assistants will be expected to go on retreat, and there will be a residential staff trip. The costs for these will be met in full by the church.

What we are looking for

In the past ten years there have been over twenty Pastoral Assistants, most of whom have gone on to ordination. Each one has made a distinctive and valued contribution to the church and remained an ongoing friend of St Matthew's. We are looking for mature individuals with enthusiasm, energy and imagination, who will enjoy the unique opportunities of this fascinating church, particularly at a time of debate and challenge in the life of the wider church.

Interested applicants are welcome to call Fr Philip Chester for an informal chat on the number below.

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