HOPE | church winchester

JOB DESCRIPTION

MINISTRY TRAINEE

Reports to
Senior Pastor

Contract
Two-year fixed-term appointment

Working pattern
Part-time and negotiable; anticipated to begin at approximately 2.5 days per week (0.5 FTE), with scope to increase by mutual agreement.

Primary locations
Hope Church Winchester, the placement church (TBC), and other Commission contexts as appropriate.

Role purpose

The Ministry Trainee role is a two-year leadership development appointment for someone with an established sense of call, some ministry experience and clear potential for future pastoral and church leadership. The role is intentionally developmental and apostolic: its purpose is to invest in, equip and ultimately release a leader for significant future ministry, rather than simply to fill an immediate staffing gap.

The trainee will work closely with the Senior Pastor, receive structured mentoring and theological development, gain experience across the breadth of church life, and carry meaningful ministry responsibility. A significant part of the pathway will be a secondment to a placement church (TBC), with a view to discerning and preparing for a possible future leadership role there.

Key responsibilities

1. Ministry responsibility at Hope Church

- Take responsibility for clearly defined areas of ministry, with responsibility increasing as experience and competence develop.
- Lead two evangelistic courses each year, normally Alpha or Christianity Explored, including planning, team recruitment, delivery, follow-up and evaluation.
- Preach and teach in appropriate settings, receiving regular feedback and coaching, and contribute to Sunday gatherings, pastoral ministry and church-wide initiatives as agreed with the Senior Pastor.

2. Ministry focus placements

Across the two years, the trainee will undertake a programme of focus placements in key areas of Hope Church life. Some placements may run for around six months where sustained involvement is especially valuable; others may be shorter, typically three to four months. This will provide meaningful experience across a broad range of church life while retaining flexibility around the placement church secondment.

- The programme is expected to include youth ministry, student ministry and children's ministry, alongside exposure to ministry among older people (including Pick 'n' Mix), cross-cultural ministry (including All Nations), Sunday gatherings and worship, and small groups/community groups. The precise sequence and duration will be agreed in light of the trainee's development needs, the needs of the church and likely future responsibilities.
- During each placement the trainee will work alongside the relevant ministry leader, participate in planning and team life, carry agreed responsibilities, and conclude with a review of learning, strengths and priorities for growth.

3. Placement church secondment

The trainee will be regularly seconded to a placement church (TBC). The secondment will provide meaningful experience in another local church and will be a principal context for discerning suitability for a possible future leadership role.

- Build relationships with the leaders and congregation through regular presence and participation; preach, teach and contribute to pastoral and leadership responsibilities as invited.
- Take on increasing responsibility as trust, experience and clarity develop, while remaining accountable to the Senior Pastor for the overall traineeship.
- Participate in periodic reviews involving Hope Church and the placement church. Any future appointment would remain subject to separate discernment and the appropriate processes at that time.

4. Leadership, governance and wider ministry

- Gain exposure to the wider responsibilities of local church leadership through time with elders, trustees and suitable staff, teams and leaders.
- Attend selected trustee meetings and learn about governance, financial stewardship, risk, charity responsibilities, safeguarding, operations, staff leadership, communications and administration.
- Be drawn into appropriate Commission meetings, training environments and leadership contexts; travel with the Senior Pastor where beneficial, contribute to training where appropriate, and preach in other Commission churches when invited and agreed.

5. Training, mentoring and theological development

- Meet regularly with the Senior Pastor for mentoring, review, theological reflection and leadership development, including intentional coaching in preaching and teaching.
- Develop in pastoral leadership, team leadership, vision, strategy, decision-making, governance, handling difficult situations and sustainable patterns of ministry.
- Engage seriously with theological study. The preferred candidate will either have suitable theological training already or be willing to undertake further training, potentially through the Commission and Union Graduate Diploma in Biblical Studies and Theology.

Review and intended outcomes

Progress and future direction will be reviewed formally at least every six months. The development plan and balance of responsibilities may be adjusted to reflect emerging strengths, weaknesses, the needs of Hope Church and the objectives of the placement church secondment. The two-year period should be approached with the next stage of ministry in view from the outset.

- By the end of the traineeship we would expect clear growth in Christian character, leadership capacity, preaching and teaching; practical experience of evangelism, pastoral care, team development and ministry leadership; a working understanding of governance and organisational leadership; broader Commission relationships; and a clear, realistic plan for the next stage of ministry.

Person specification

Character and calling

- Demonstrates the character and maturity expected of Christian leadership according to 1 Timothy 3, together with humility, integrity, relational warmth and teachability.
- Has a clear and tested sense of call towards vocational Christian ministry and future church leadership, and is committed to the theology, mission and values of Hope Church.
- Is able to work faithfully under authority while showing initiative, receiving feedback well and developing a growing capacity to lead others.

Experience and potential

- Has existing experience of church leadership, preaching, teaching or significant ministry responsibility, with a developing preaching and teaching gift.
- Can build relationships across generations and ministry contexts, organise and lead ministry initiatives, and is willing to travel and serve in Commission contexts and the placement church.
- Has received theological training or is willing to undertake further theological study during the traineeship.

Accountability and employment requirements

- The trainee reports to the Senior Pastor, who holds overall responsibility for the role, development plan and allocation of responsibilities. The placement church will identify an appropriate leader to provide local supervision and feedback during the secondment.
- The post holder must be a practising Christian able to affirm and live consistently with the Christian ethos of Hope Church; the role is subject to the relevant occupational requirement provisions of the Equality Act 2010.
- The post holder will be expected to be, or become, a member of Hope Church, normally within four months of appointment, unless an alternative arrangement is agreed by the Senior Pastor and trustees. Appointment will be subject to appropriate safeguarding checks, including an enhanced DBS check. Annual leave, pension, expenses, and other employment provisions will apply in accordance with Hope Church staff policies and will be pro-rated where appropriate.

Interested?

Email a covering letter and CV to **office@hopewinchester.org**