

Hatfield Ministry Experience Scheme – exploring ministry

Pastoral Assistants in Hatfield and the University of Hertfordshire
September 2020 – July 2021

Are you 25 or under and exploring your call to ministry within the Church of England? We are looking for up to three pastoral assistants to work in the Team Parish of Bishop's Hatfield and the University of Hertfordshire Chaplaincy from September 2020 to July 2021. This unique scheme will give you the opportunity to explore your vocation while:

- Gaining practical parish experience while working as a team
- Working in a multi-faith student environment
- Building a new worshipping community for students

You will also undertake some theological study and appropriate skills training, and will have a personal mentor.

We are looking for enthusiastic people who will get stuck in to both parish and University life; who are willing to grow their faith and share it with others; and who will be comfortable working with people of diverse backgrounds.

The accommodation will be free (rent, Council Tax and utility bills will be covered) and an allowance of £100/week will be paid. The normal working week will reflect the practice for clergy, with one full day off and 32 days holiday (i.e. 36 days pro rata). Two PA's will be accommodated in individual staff flats on campus, the third will be accommodated locally.

What we offer

This is a new and exciting season for the parishes of Hatfield and the University chaplaincy. A new University chaplain, Revd Fiona Souter, has been appointed with a fresh vision to reach out to the University and be a supporting and enabling presence for those of all faiths and none. At the same time, and as part of the 'Reaching New People' initiative of the Diocese of St Albans, the parish of St John's South Hatfield (which takes in the University) under its new Vicar, Revd Andy Gardner, is working in partnership with Soul Survivor Watford to develop St John's as a church for the student population and a place where new young potential church leaders can be formed and trained.

The Pastoral Assistants will be part of supportive teams of clergy and lay people in parish and chaplaincy settings, and will play a full part in the round of daily prayer and community involvement. They will play a key role in developing new worshipping communities for students and families based at St John's, South Hatfield. There is scope for liturgical experience, developing new forms of worship, as well as serving,

reading and intercession, and administering communion. There are many opportunities for developing pastoral skills in engagement with students and local families either informally or through developing small groups. Pastoral Assistants are encouraged to develop and offer their particular strengths and interests, and the posts have a flexibility to allow them to grow and develop around the individual.

The Pastoral Assistants will receive day-to-day supervision from the parish priest and the University Chaplain but will also be offered support and the opportunity for reflection outside the parish. There will be opportunities for ongoing training and study, depending on the individual's previous experience and needs.

Background to Hatfield and the University of Hertfordshire

Hatfield is a diverse community, being designated one of the eight 'new towns' to ring London after the war. The closing of British Aerospace, the major local employer, in 1992 had a serious impact on the area, but the expansion of the University and the establishment of the Hatfield Business Park along with redevelopment of the airfield site have meant that the town has continued to grow. The range of the local community is reflected in the town centre where Polish and Chinese supermarkets sit next to halal butchers near the Asda superstore (along with the plethora of fast-food outlets that can be found in many student influenced towns!). The town has good shopping facilities including The Galleria (<http://www.thegalleria.co.uk>) complete with multi-screen cinema (<http://www.odeon.co.uk/cinemas/hatfield/7/>) and sports facilities. There are good links to London and to nearby St Albans.

The University of Hertfordshire is the UK's leading business-facing university and consists of a diverse community of staff and students. The student community of over 24,600, which includes more than 3800 international students, study on two modern campuses in Hatfield and across the globe in partner institutions and through online study. This global community represents all the major world faiths. With over 2650 staff, it is one of the region's largest employers and has been ranked as one of the top 100 universities in the world under 50 years old. There are a range of student faith societies and the University's main purpose-built multifaith centre, **The Key**, sees over 1500 visitors each week during term-time serving as a focal point for the spiritual life of this diverse community. This is supported by a smaller Multi Faith Space on the de Havilland Campus. The University Chaplaincy (<http://go.herts.ac.uk/chaplaincy>), supports and encourages the spiritual wellbeing of the whole University community. It currently offers two short services at lunchtime as well as a weekly meditation session and events to mark the main festivals. There are prayer sessions, drop in cafes, craft sessions and social activities The Chaplaincy is active on social media and through the University's managed learning environment (known as 'studynet'). A range of student faith groups meet in **The Key**, including the Christian Union and the Islamic Society.

The Bishops Hatfield Team Ministry consists of five parishes: the town of Hatfield recently divided into three parishes, St Etheldreda's in old Hatfield (with St Luke's adjacent to the town centre); St Michael's Birchwood to the northwest; and St John's Hatfield to the southwest of the town. In addition there are the two village parishes of St Mary's North Mymms and St John's Lemsford.

The present Team consists of five clergy and four readers spread across the five parishes of the team. Strong ecumenical links are maintained with the University, and the local Methodist Deacon attends the Team Meetings and is responsible for taking the leadership of the De Havilland Community project, an Anglican/Methodist joint initiative. We also work with one of the local Catholic parishes.

Principal Supervisors

Revd Andy Gardner – Vicar, St John's South Hatfield
Revd Fiona Souter – University Chaplain.

Team Rector: Fr Darren Collins

Scheme co-ordinator: Revd Charles Burch, Diocesan Vocations Officer

For further information, please contact: bhteamoffice@gmail.com tel 01707 262072

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