



Additional information

The Church in the Westlands Newcastle under Lyme

The Vision

Our vision is to reach out to the young people of the Westlands and the surrounding area by presenting the Christian Gospel in a way that is meaningful to them.

The need for a Youth Worker

The Church in the Westlands believes it has a key contribution to make to the spiritual life of the community in which it serves and in reaching out with the gospel message to all. The only large institutions in our immediate area are schools, and the whole of our work benefits from having someone with the necessary skills and time to take a lead in relating to young people in their own situations and culture, both through their own ministry and in envisioning and equipping others.

Support

Our first project worker began in 2005, and there was an initial period in which external grants were available. In recent years however the post has been funded by giving from members of the Church in the Westlands. We now have at least 75% of the annual costs of the post covered by regular giving pledges, with some capital in hand too. This means that if we were able to appoint someone to start with us on Sept 1st, funding has already been pledged to enable the post to continue till Feb 2020; and we are hopeful that further appeals to church members will enable the post to continue for considerably longer than this (NB if needed a start date before Sept could be possible too)

Background Information

The Churches

St. Andrew's and St. Peter's stand together at the heart of the Westlands area. They have worked together in a formal covenanted partnership for 40 years and have a full range of activities - much of which is carried out jointly — whilst maintaining their individual identities, particularly through separate Sunday morning worship and Church Councils. The vicar of St Andrews is Andrew Dawswell who was appointed in 2011, currently assisted by a curate, Leslie Siu. The part-time minister of St Peters (shared with another neighbouring Methodist congregation) is John Taylor, appointed in 2016.

The Mission Statement of the Partnership is that “As the Church in the Westlands we are committed in the power of the Holy Spirit that our worship, service and witness will demonstrate to everyone the love of Christ”.

St. Andrew's has a definite evangelical tradition with a strong emphasis on Biblical preaching and teaching. St Peters also sees itself as biblically based, though its identity is as a broader-based Methodist congregation. Needless to say, both churches contain people with a diversity of

approaches to the Christian faith. St. Andrew's has an average Sunday attendance of 120 adults and 20 under 16's. St. Peter's has up to 40 in worship each Sunday.

You can find out more about the 2 churches by looking at www.churchinthewestlands.org.uk

The Westlands

The Westlands is a residential suburb of Newcastle-under-Lyme in North Staffordshire, just to the South West of the Town Centre. It is situated in a triangle formed by the M6, the A53 to Market Drayton and Shrewsbury and the A519 to Eccleshall and Telford. All but a couple of church members live in the South Newcastle area within a mile or two of the churches. Though the Westlands has a reputation for containing some of the most expensive housing in the conurbation, there is a greater diversity in housing provision than is sometimes realised, and this is reflected to some degree in the make-up of our congregations.

Worship

For the most both churches services would be seen as fairly formal/low church/traditional. However St Andrews has a monthly morning all age service, and there is also a well-established monthly contemporary united evening worship service with a strong teaching element, which in the past has given appropriate opportunity for young people to be brought together.

Children and Young People

There are on average about 15-25 children and young people who meet in joint groups on Sundays and there is provision for babies and young toddlers too - especially in St. Andrews where there is a purpose built and equipped room within the worship area. In addition to the Sunday morning Climbers, Trailblazers and Pathfinders, there is a small group of four 14-15 year olds who meet currently on Tuesday evenings for bible study and games.

In addition we run Messy Church bi-monthly on Saturday teatimes, and have recently begun experimenting with running something similar on Sunday mornings. There is also a much appreciated puppet ministry currently involving 3 adults and 5 teenagers

There are a number of uniformed groups linked to both Churches, and a two weekly parent and Toddler groups too, one of which is currently run by our curate and his wife to include worship and teaching as part of each week's programme

Schools

- The Churches have very strong ongoing relationships with 3 infant/junior schools (with a 4th nearby too).
- There have also been some openings for ministry over the years in the 2 closest secondary schools; For the first few years the post-holder spent several hours a week mentoring pupils, and it may be possible to again negotiate an invitation to help in this way. The most recent post-holder has used his technical skills to help support their termly music & drama performance weeks (NB we share the care for the 2 secondary schools with other Churches and we have their support in this venture.)
- There are also 2 special needs schools within a mile of the churches who are very receptive to our input.

About the area...

Culture and Leisure

Theatre lovers will enjoy the New Victoria Theatre in Newcastle and the Regent in Hanley. The "New Vic", opened in 1986, was Europe's first purpose-built theatre in the round. It offers a full programme of entertainment throughout the year, including modern and classic plays and impressive concert performances. The Regent offers big stage performances ranging from opera and plays to popular music shows.

The Victoria Hall in Hanley hosts a season of classical music concerts with national orchestras and soloists, and provides a popular venue on the touring circuit for other large audience performances.

The Sugarmill is a 400 capacity live music venue in the city centre of Stoke-on-Trent that has hosted many hundreds of bands many of whom have gone on to massive success.

The latest films are shown at the Newcastle "Vue" multi-screen cinema, within walking distance of the Westlands, and the Hanley "Odeon". The Stoke Film Theatre, adjoining Staffordshire University, screens independent and foreign films as well as mainstream releases.

The UK's biggest theme park, Alton Towers, is around 45 minutes from Newcastle. The leisure facilities of Trentham Gardens are within 15 minutes drive.

The Newcastle Borough Museum and Art Gallery depicts the civic history of the Borough of Newcastle under Lyme and an authentic, life-size Victorian street-scene whilst the art gallery hosts work by local and national artists as well as 'travelling' exhibitions.

Stoke-on Trent Museum has a host of ceramic treasures and proudly displays the recently much publicised "Staffordshire Hoard".

Health Care

The University Hospital of North Staffordshire is just on the boundary of the town and only about 1.5 miles from the churches

Colleges

Post Secondary education is provided at Newcastle College in its state of the art new facilities. It caters for an ever increasing range of undergraduate, school leaver, vocational and part-time courses. Its facilities include the Lifestyle Academy with modern gym, luxurious spa, beauty salon and Chefs' Academy restaurant and a £21 million Performance Academy for music and performing arts.

There is also another new Sixth Form College facility in Stoke on Trent and further options for post 16 studies include St John Fisher (R.C.) High School in Newcastle, Newcastle-under-Lyme School and St Josephs (R.C) Academy in Stoke-on-Trent.

Local Universities

There are two universities in close proximity to the Westlands, Keele University, and Staffordshire University.