

# Assistant Minister in the Hanley Team Ministry (Interim)

## Profile & Information for Candidates

ST. MARK'S



ST. MATTHEW'S



CHRIST  
CHURCH



ST. LUKE'S



HOLY  
TRINITY



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## Introduction

- St. Mark's, Shelton, part of the Hanley Team Ministry in Stoke-on-Trent, is coming to the end of a £2.5million repair and restoration programme. As well as capital repair works, this has included a substantial community heritage project with the local community. We have also renewed relationships with the neighbouring church primary school.
- We are looking for someone who can build on this community engagement and develop the relationships to grow a renewed congregation at St. Mark's. It is hoped that a part-time Community Development Worker will be appointed by the church, alongside this post.
- St. Mark's is a large building with huge potential. The local area is a place of great diversity and challenge, but also of great potential.

See full role description and person specification on page 7.

## Context

We are in Staffordshire, the sixth largest shire county in England. Stoke is 40 miles north of Birmingham, 40 miles south of Manchester and close to the edge of the Peak District. Stoke-on-Trent achieved unitary status as a local authority in 1997.

Hanley is one of the six towns in the Potteries that make up the City of Stoke-on-Trent. It is a city that has changed beyond recognition in the past 30 years. The closure of coal mines, steel works, and of coal-powered bottle kilns has led to the greening of our city. Whilst some brownfield sites remain, each town has its own parkland, a legacy of the Victorian era, which collectively used to be called the 'lungs' of the city. Just outside Hanley we have now an additional well-established Forest Park and lake.



There is energy here, and a sense of renewal. Whilst our high street has gone the way of many others around the country due to the effects of internet shopping and the relocation of large department stores to retail parks, city centre development has attracted large investment projects, along with associated social capital, hotels, food outlets, and theatre venues.

Recently, Airbnb, the online home rental platform, placed Stoke top of a list of key UK destinations. They explained this was due to many attractive barn conversions in our nearby countryside and named five attractions that draw in families for interest, education and entertainment – Trentham Gardens and its Monkey Forest, World of Wedgwood, Emma Bridgwater pottery factory and its literary festivals, Regent Theatre, and Alton Towers.

The city centre shopping area, retail parks and 'Cultural Quarter' of theatres and museums are a substantial element within the parish. The renowned Victoria Theatre in the round and Shelton Repertory Theatre are not far away.

There are two professional football clubs nearby, Stoke City (Championship) and Port Vale (riding high in League Two). Additionally, there are a couple of local amateur football clubs. North Staffordshire also boasts a number of competitive cricket leagues.

The Caldon Canal runs through the Team Ministry area, from Etruria and Shelton to Birches Head, then onward to Froghall in the Staffordshire Moorlands. A walk along the towpath yields good exercise, pleasant views, the Etruria Museum, and exquisite birdsong. The canal, too, has seen much improvement and renovation in recent years and shows off our area to many leisure and holiday boats.

The parish comprises a number of smaller identifiable communities, 'urban villages', each with a long and proud local history. There is a strong sense of loyalty in Stoke-on-Trent; people move out but are drawn back to their 'home' for life events or significant occasions. Some couples move into the area for starter homes and stay, whilst others may move out to housing estates whilst retaining a strong tie to the area and its heritage. There are many streets of terraced housing, but in the past five years the pace of housing redevelopment has picked up, with new homes being built and new communities developing across the parish as a consequence.

## Challenge



*"We aim to be a visible sign of Christ, with a passion to Serve God in the Heart of the City."*

The purpose of this post is to build on the work done both through the Under One Roof community heritage project associated with the repair works and recent work with the neighbouring church school, in order to create a new congregation at St. Mark's, Shelton.

### **The Hanley Team Churches**

There are five churches in the Hanley Team Ministry: St. Mark's, Shelton; Christ Church, Cobridge; St. Matthew's, Birches Head St. Luke's Wellington (Hanley); and Holy Trinity, Northwood.

The team staff is currently one stipendiary incumbent (Rector), a post of Strategic Missioner for Review and Development (of two of our churches – a time-limited post) and a SSM Assistant Minister who has until recently worked extensively in some of our schools in the parish, including two in St. Mark's area.

### **A New Way Forward**

Emerging from Covid and onward, we have worked hard to establish a pattern of services (two Sunday services and two mid-week services across four of the Team churches) that is sustainable within the current staffing and resources.

Members of the churches across the Team have worked together to achieve this and there is a greater sense of cohesiveness as a result. Currently, there is no regular worship at St. Mark's.

### **St. Mark's**

St. Mark's, Shelton is nearing the end of a £2.5 million repair programme. The repairs are the most visible part of the work, but because most of the funding has come from the National Lottery Heritage Fund (the Heritage Fund), part of that funding is required to be spent on community heritage activities. This is to enable people to appreciate the heritage of the building and its place in the local area, on which so much money has been spent repairing it.



Although the project was set up to do the repairs, we have realised that this has been a real opportunity to connect the church in new ways with its local community and to renew old contacts. We have a formal partnership agreement with 'All the Small Things', a local Community Interest Company with extensive experience and contacts in community development in the area.

The project has to be professionally evaluated for the Heritage Fund and the following is from their most recent mid-term review (July 2024):

- The total number of engagements with the Heritage Fund programme activities has grown to 2,102 attendees, not all as unique individuals, as some are regular workshop attendees
- Of these, approximately 34% are young people aged under 18; 51% are adult working age; 14% older, retired people.
- 92% of participants are local but non- congregation,
- At least 1,430 hours of volunteering on the project to end March 2024 with over 40 individual volunteers.
- Relationships are positive especially with the local school.
- Engagement across the project has been enhanced by utilising the expertise of people with significant local contacts and agency.



The capital (physical) works will finish early in 2025. There is a plan to obtain grants to then enhance the churchyard and make it more attractive for community use. We also know that there will have to be a further phase of work to the chancel and east end, at some time in the future, when further grants have been obtained.

The community heritage activities programme will continue into the first half of 2025. Beyond this, there is a Business Plan, as required by the Heritage Fund grant, to ensure viability into the future. This will be updated shortly. It currently envisages:

### **Community Outreach**

A Community Outreach Worker post will be developed in the new project. This would work alongside the proposed minister post and will build on established relationships and expand community engagement, making the church a hub of local activity.

### **Sustainable Future**

Increased space letting, future projects, and continued partnerships with All the Small Things and Letting in the Light (a community arts company) will help make the Community Outreach position self-financing over the next five years.

This will add considerable value to the work done by the half-time minister post.

### **School**

Alongside the community activities, part of which has been to engage with the school in a variety of arts and practical activities with a heritage theme, Rev Gill Shilkoff, SSM Associate Minister and retired teacher, has over the past two years spent a day or more a week working in the adjacent St. Mark's CofE primary school. This has rebuilt relationships and opened up the church building to the children and staff, and also to parents who remember going to the church themselves as children at the school. There is real enthusiasm from the school to build on contacts with the church. The school is part of the Orchard Community Trust MAT and other local schools within the MAT are also keen for closer links.

Continuing these developments will support St. Mark's part in the Diocese of Lichfield's successful £5.9 million SMMIB bid to enable church schools and their churches in the city to work closely together to plant nine new worshipping communities.

### **St. Mark's Congregation**

For some years, St. Mark's hosted Sanctus St. Mark's, an asylum seeker and refugee project alongside a traditional inner-city congregation. Over time the congregation changed to include many more asylum seekers and refugees and fewer of the original congregation. The congregation eventually became 'Beheshtion', a Bishop's Mission Order of largely Iranian Farsi and Kurdish speakers, that rented the church from St. Mark's. During the lockdowns of the Covid pandemic, Beheshtion went online. Unfortunately, it never returned as a physical congregation, so that St. Mark's has no regular services and only a few former members scattered around. Sanctus now operates from the nearby YMCA and has no regular contact with St. Mark's.

Recently, we have begun hosting an Eritrean Orthodox congregation and a Ghanaian congregation in one of the meeting rooms in the church.

## **Role Description**

### **Role Description**

The primary purpose of this post is to establish a new worshipping community at St Mark's, Shelton for all ages and many cultures out of the community connections which are being established as part of the regeneration project, and through connection with the school.

*The new post-holder will:*

- Provide pastoral care to this community, and the local community of Shelton.
- Run faith exploration and discipleship courses appropriate the context of the local community, building a culture of invitation to faith in Jesus Christ.
- Lead regular worship

*The new post holder will achieve this by:*

- Using the opportunities provided by community activities and events, working in collaboration with the Community Outreach Worker, to build up a network of contacts and good relationships in the locality.
- Building on renewed working with St. Mark's school to develop a strong partnership between the church and the school with a view to St Mark's involvement in the Stoke Encounter Project.
- Supporting the District Church Warden in the day-to-day management and care of St. Mark's church building.
- Working in partnership with the Rector of Hanley Team Ministry, who will share wider pastoral care in the area and strategic management of St. Mark's building as incumbent of the parish of Hanley.

### **Person Specification**

- Able to work with others within the Church and beyond to establish a new worshipping community.
- Warmly welcoming to new people with the creativity, innovation and perseverance required to form and sustain new Christian communities
- Confident and intentional about inviting people to explore and grow in faith in Jesus.

- Able to lead both more traditional worship and appropriate forms for those new to worshipping communities
- Adaptable and confident to build new collaborative relationships and develop networks of people and community partner organisations, especially schools
- Ability to work independently whilst also remaining accountable and part of a team
- Capacity to seek new users/uses of church buildings.
- Sympathy with the mission and values of the CofE.
- Commitment to urban life and ministry
- Experience in church leadership with an appropriate level of theological education. The postholder may be an ordained or lay Christian able to hold a bishop's licence.

## **Stoke-on-Trent Deanery**

The deanery is large, with 35 church buildings, a hospital and a university. We have some 30 licensed clergy of various categories and a small number of active PTOs. Chapter meets about 8 times a year and is well attended. It usually involves worship, eating together, and the opportunity to talk through a specific issue. There is a good spirit of collegiality across the range of traditions and theological perspectives. Deanery Synod meets 3 times per year, aiming to support and encourage the ministry of our parishes. The deanery is blessed by a legacy fund that is able to make small grants to clergy for their well-being.

## **Hanley Team Ministry**

Formed in the mid-1970s, the Parish of Hanley, the Holy Evangelists covers the whole city centre and its five surrounding districts, which form a ring around the centre, with a mix of housing, retail and industrial buildings. The parish has a population of 27,000 and scores around 400 out of 12,500 CofE parishes on the CUF (deprivation) look-up tool. There are two church Aided primary schools in the parish. There is a church in each district.

We have recently been working on our vision and values and have developed the following values statement:

Hanley Parish will:

- be a loving family that mirrors the diversity of local communities
- create an intergenerational culture
- demonstrate generous friendship and service through a teamwork approach to ministry and mission



Each of these headings has a further explanatory statement.

Our churches have a common Eucharistic style of worship. Churches use common weekly readings and pew sheets. There is a monthly parish magazine, called **'In Touch'**.

Each church has an older congregation, who are having to work very hard simply to stand still and face financial challenges. Despite that, there is an abundance of talent across the laity and, not only do they do their best to maintain their churches and contribute to the diocesan Common Fund, through events, clubs and fund-raising of all sorts, they also strive to maintain their giving to charities.

## Our Churches

| HANLEY        | Building             | Electoral | Average    |
|---------------|----------------------|-----------|------------|
| TEAM          |                      | Roll      | Weekly     |
| MINISTRY      |                      |           | Service    |
|               |                      |           | Attendance |
| St. Mark's    | 1831<br>(Grade 2)    | 1         | See above  |
| Holy Trinity  | 1849<br>(Grade 2)    | 40        | 23         |
| Christ Church | 1839-45<br>(Grade 2) | 25        | 21         |
| St. Luke's    | 1854                 | 20        | 10-12      |
| St. Matthew's | 1958                 | 13        | 9-12       |

### Christ Church (Cobridge) Weekly Eucharist Sundays 9.30 a.m.

**Morning Prayer (lay led) Thursdays 10.00 a.m.**

Christ Church is very visible, situated in a busy spot at a crossroads between the towns of Burslem and Hanley.



The congregation attempts to put mission into action by:

- Regular Sunday Eucharistic services
- Thursday service of Morning Prayer led by the congregation
- Monday a parent and toddlers' group (led by members of Urban Expression)
- Tuesday weekly lunch club
- Wednesday coffee and chat with offering of prayer
- Friday Open Door breakfast café
- A monthly service at Camoys Court residential home

- Three other denominations hold services in the church
- Social events are also arranged.



## **Holy Trinity Church (Northwood)**

**Weekly Eucharist Sundays  
11.00 a.m.**

**Monthly Evensong (BCP)  
second Sundays 4.00 p.m.**

Holy Trinity Church is situated within a residential area of mainly old, terraced houses. It enjoys a good relationship with the local Northwood Broom Infant Academy (Co-op MAT).

Various social activities take place in Northwood Parish Hall, which is situated a short distance from the church, as well as a wide range of lettings to local groups, including Rainbows, Brownies and Guides, a YMCA Go! youth group, and many others. This facility is kept going by a small group of dedicated people and this helps with essential fund-raising through lettings as well as offering a much-appreciated community facility.

Holy Trinity is hospitable and supportive towards the Eritrean Orthodox Church in using the Hall for their services on a weekly basis.

## **St. Matthew's Church (Birches Head) Weekly Eucharist Tuesdays 10.00 a.m.**

As well as a weekly Tuesday morning Eucharist there is:

- A monthly Messy Church
- Holiday Clubs in the school holidays
- A new parent and toddler group organised by local parents.
- An over 55s Club
- Harvest and Easter Assemblies in the church.
- Community and social events.



The church building is in good repair and will seat up to 200, though we only have chairs out for half that as the rear half of the nave is clear for use as a 'hall'. There is a small side chapel as well as a meeting room, kitchen and toilet. The modern brick building contains a faux stained-glass WW1 commemorative window, which was sponsored by local businesses and completed with help from local schools.

## **St. Luke's Church (Wellington, Hanley) Weekly Eucharist Wednesdays 11.00 a.m.**

In addition to the weekly regular Wednesday morning Eucharist service, St. Luke's Church is:

- running a Church-run Parent and Toddler Group
- running a holiday club in the school holidays
- shortly starting Bubble Church
- in the first tranche of the diocesan SMMI supported Encounter programme
- running a Places of Welcome group
- bringing more people into the church by re-establishing and developing links with the voluntary aided primary school
- encouraging other groups to use the church as a place for their activities.

The church's beautifully tended grounds bring pleasure to many and have recently been the recipients of several diocesan and other awards.

A South Indian Orthodox Congregation uses the building for worship twice a month.



The church seats 100 with movable chairs. There is a good-sized meeting room, kitchen and toilets in the former north aisle and a separate side chapel off the chancel.

## Ministry Team

**Team Rector:** Phillip Jones has been Team Rector of the Hanley Team Ministry since 2017. In addition to being team rector, he has been responsible for a variety of churches in the team during his ministry here. He took on responsibility alongside some of our other churches for St. Mark's and the 'Under One Roof' project in 2019. It now feels right to pass responsibility for St. Mark's to whoever takes on this post, as we seek to discover where God is leading us into the future.



Before coming to Hanley, Phillip was a vicar in two different team ministries in Worcestershire and alongside this a workplace chaplain for many years. Latterly, he held chaplaincy and a number of other diocesan roles as his full-time post and was associate minister in an inner urban parish similar to Hanley and helped support a small missional community and pioneer mission project there.



**Strategic Missioner (for Review and Development):** Mike Bridgewater has been the Strategic Missioner based at St. Matthew's, Birches Head and St. Luke's, Wellington (Hanley) since June 2023 (a three-year, half-time post) and has led the renewal of these two churches. He has worked for many years as a community development worker and as a minister in various local parishes including at present being also an SSM assistant minister in another local group of churches.

**Assistant Minister:** Gill Shilkoff was ordained as a Self-Supporting Minister in 2019, and prior to ordination training was a Lay Reader for 20 years. Until recently, her focus was as a Pioneer Minister to the church schools in the St Marks area, and she is attached to Christ Church, Cobridge where she presides and preaches once a month. Although retired, during her working life she was a telephone engineer, full time mum, high school teacher, professional counsellor and trainer. She was born and has lived in North Staffordshire all her life, so has a good understanding of the area and people. She joined the Team in September 2022



**Worship Leaders:** John Bennion, Mary Chanot, Glenys Paterson, Chris Turner and Winnie Wilshaw are members of our churches who on occasion lead worship, either Morning Prayer/Service of the Word or occasionally Communion by Extension.

In addition, each church has a number of people who read lessons, lead intercessions, assist with the chalice and with home communion.

## **The Post**

The post is offered on a half-time basis (0.5 FTE) for three years, as an employee of Lichfield Diocesan Board of Finance.

Regarding housing we would either (if it is a clergy person) provide a house or housing allowance pro rata (if not already housed by us) or, if a lay person, housing allowance pro rata.

Full expenses will be offered by the parish, and we will of course, respect days off and holiday entitlement, in accordance with diocesan policy.

Working times will be negotiated according to the requirements of the post.