

## **The Methodist Circuit of Gloucestershire**

**Job title:** Lay Worker for Community Outreach

**Place of work:** Bishops Cleeve community and surrounding villages, and Bishops Cleeve Methodist Church, Bishops Cleeve, Cheltenham GL52 8NT

**Duration of appointment:** The appointment will start as soon as practicable and funding is in place for a period of 3 years.

**Hours of work:** 24 hours per week

### **Background to post**

The post is being created out of a generous legacy to address some of the social and pastoral needs of Bishops Cleeve and the surrounding villages, working alongside the Methodist Minister who has pastoral charge of Bishops Cleeve Methodist Church.

Bishops Cleeve is a large village approximately five miles from Cheltenham town centre. Recent housing developments have led to a considerable expansion of the village, however amenities and facilities have not necessarily grown at the same rate. Whilst the village is home to many working age people, often commuting for work, the village is also home to many elderly people. Social isolation has been a particular concern, especially for people living alone, which has increased during the recent pandemic. With the housing expansion, many working people have recently moved to the vicinity away from former social networks, exacerbating isolation during lengthy periods of homeworking. Loneliness has a determinant effect on all aspects of the human condition; physical, mental and spiritual, and this post will seek to address some of the needs arising from the loneliness experienced by those living in the community.

Bishops Cleeve Methodist Church has a membership of about 60, mainly comprising retired people. There are regular activities including mid-week communion, fellowship groups and coffee mornings. The church also has several external organisations that hire the premises on a regular basis. We are seeking the postholder to build on the work already being carried out by church members and the Minister, to engage with those in the village who are socially isolated as well as those who frequent the premises.

### **Purpose and objectives**

- To identify the social and pastoral needs of the community with a particular focus on those socially isolated or digitally excluded. This will involve liaising and forming networks with existing local authorities, agencies, and organisations and establishing a mutually beneficial referral system
- To develop and establish new activities involving Bishops Cleeve Methodist Church targeting those experiencing isolation and loneliness, creating a welcoming space which is intentionally Christian in its mission. Examples could be lunch clubs or Holiday

At Home events, but there is flexibility to shape this post around the specific requirements of the context as well as building upon the previous experience of the postholder

- To offer Pastoral Care: Supporting and assisting the Minister as necessary in the pastoral needs and care of those identified as part of this appointment, as well as the congregation and throughout the wider community

### **Main responsibilities**

- To initially identify the needs of the community with the support of the Minister, with the opportunity to regularly review these needs;
- To identify existing referral networks where there is the potential for Bishops Cleeve Methodist Church to become a referral partner, or to establish community relationships with existing agencies to promote the holistic wellbeing for those identified as socially isolated;
- To plan activities and identify new opportunities that can meet the needs of those socially isolated and, with support, to execute that plan;
- To involve and encourage the congregation in this outreach;
- To maintain confidential records;
- To maintain regular contact as a befriender to those who have become church users through this project, including offering prayer and conversations of faith;
- In consultation with the Minister, to encourage those who have become church users through this project to explore matters of faith and to become part of the church community;
- To be seen 'out and about' in the community, and be recognised as a point of contact outside the church, creating relationships of trust;
- To work alongside the Minister in offering Pastoral Care throughout the church community;
- To attend worship at Bishops Cleeve Methodist Church at least once per month to establish good relationships with those within the church community;
- To attend appropriate circuit meetings and church meetings such as Church Council and Pastoral Team;
- Any other reasonable duties and responsibilities identified by the Minister, and where significant as agreed to by the management and support group, as are within the postholders capabilities and level of responsibility, in order to meet the needs of the church.

### **Terms and conditions**

- Salary: £13552
- Normal working pattern: 24 hours per week; flexible, including some weekend and evening working
- At least one day free of responsibilities each week
- All reasonable agreed expenses will be reimbursed
- A Workplace Pension scheme is in operation:
  - Criteria:
    - Salary over £833 per month (£10,000 per year)
    - If you are aged 22 or over **and** are under state pension age.
  - Contribution:
    - Employer 6%, Employee 6%

You may opt out if you wish.

- Opportunities for study and training
- 5.6 weeks pro rata statutory annual leave entitlement per year
- The successful applicant will provide their own accommodation
- It is desirable the postholder have their own transport due to the peripatetic nature of the post
- Appointment will be subject to satisfactory references
- Appointment will be subject to a satisfactory enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check (DBS)
- Appointment will be subject to the satisfactory completion of a 3 month probationary period

### **Accountability**

The lay employee will be employed by the Methodist Circuit of Gloucestershire and will be under the supervision and line management of the Minister with pastoral charge of Bishops Cleeve Methodist Church, or such other person as may be notified to you by the Circuit Superintendent Minister.

### **Management and Support Group**

The Lay Employee will have a management and support group whose responsibilities will be to:

- Become familiar with the work of the employee;
- Work with the employee to encourage the church to respond to new challenges and opportunities in mission;
- Determine with the Minister priorities for the work;
- Ensure good communication between all groups involved;
- Monitor and evaluate progress with the employee on a regular basis;
- Act as a 'sounding board' to the employee;
- Ensure that the employee receives suitable pastoral support;
- Undertake a review at the end of the probationary period, and an annual review of the work.