

Search Statement from Bristol Unitarians for a new Ministry Leader

Bristol Unitarians comprises 2 sites/buildings and congregations with a Group partnership structure (members come from across Bristol and wider area):

Frenchay is a small 1691 chapel with a kitchenette/toilets extension (picturesque garden setting for weddings) with c.20 members and average Sunday services of 10 (6-24).



Extensive parkland/nature resources surroundings. Poor Public Transport. Small lettings income.

UMB (Unitarian Meeting Bristol in the city centre) building is a larger mixed 1830/1980s complex with kitchen, toilets & meeting rooms with c.10 members and average service attendance of 5 (3-14). Good lettings income -wide range of groups and the graveyard behind is a public space.



Main activities today organised by members are:

Weekly Sunday morning services at Frenchay & twice monthly service at UMB Sunday evening.

A spiritual development monthly workshop called Rainbow Path (online/inperson).

2 meditations a month at Frenchay with average attendance 4 (3-8) and Wild,Wise,Curious Cafe discussion group after Pilates each Monday with an AA group meeting each Sun evening. Monthly Sound Bath experience. Pastoral care is spontaneous but could be more effective.

Various community events such as Flower Show, Heritage Day, concert, talks and Regional events.

Vision of Opportunities

Congregation growth and visibility, Young people/student services, various self-help groups, wellbeing skills/support, welcome hubs and other discussion groups, community art based/social events, music, community college events, community action, course venue, Online offerings, yoga, more rites of passage services, etc.

Bristol is a dynamic multicultural city and suburbs with a rich history and strong economic growth. Metro city population 700,000+ and 45,000 students. It has some of the poorest and richest wards in the country. The city centre has many new developments, student accommodation, shopping and art/entertainment venues of all types.

Finances and buildings position

Both buildings are in a reasonable state at present. There are sufficient capital and income funds to support a half-time minister (de facto historic), with the potential to invest in a full time minister dependent on activity/growth plans and potential wider area congregation partnering.

Post Potential

The ministry post is at baseline a half time one for Bristol Frenchay and UMB congregation work, with up to full time potential for the right candidate community/growth plan including GA/WU support with wider area/congregation delivery (please share your own ideas/vision/plan). This could include the new Innovation fund proposed by the GA. Note: The expectation for the applicant is to lead services in Frenchay/UMB only every other week (may be similar & can adjust for holy days). The job holder would be expected to live in or easily accessible to Bristol to cover cultural/pastoral activities.

Days/online working can be negotiated as well as key objectives and roles that will include enriching the current congregations and growing communities in the fertile Bristol area.

Stipend, pension, manse allowance and other terms of appointment would be in line with the General Assembly recommendations taking into account the cost of living in Bristol.

The congregations support the GA "Challenging Leadership" support actions.

Applicant characteristics

The congregations are used to a global wisdom, indigenous or faith based ministry including Christ. An experienced Unitarian leader is preferred but someone under training or with compatible experience will be considered. Zoom/hybrid services have been used and social media outreach skills are viewed as essential. A dynamic leader is sought who can innovate, create and lead activities to grow diverse social/community groups that support reigniting our Unitarian presence, values and action in Bristol.

Next Steps

We are open to ideas or initial proposals from candidates for discussion and would like to hear what you feel you could bring, around which roles could be defined. This can be discussed with the Group/Congregation chairs Mark Stewart, Peter Bruce and Karl Stewart initially through info@bristolunitarians.org.uk or 07527-118586. From this a role and job descriptions could be produced to be applied for more formally with the congregations/partners involved. There is no closing date until any formal job description is advertised.

For current info. visit our website at www.bristolunitarians.blogspot.com