



CHRIST CHURCH
SOUTHAMPTON

Ministry Training Scheme 2026-27

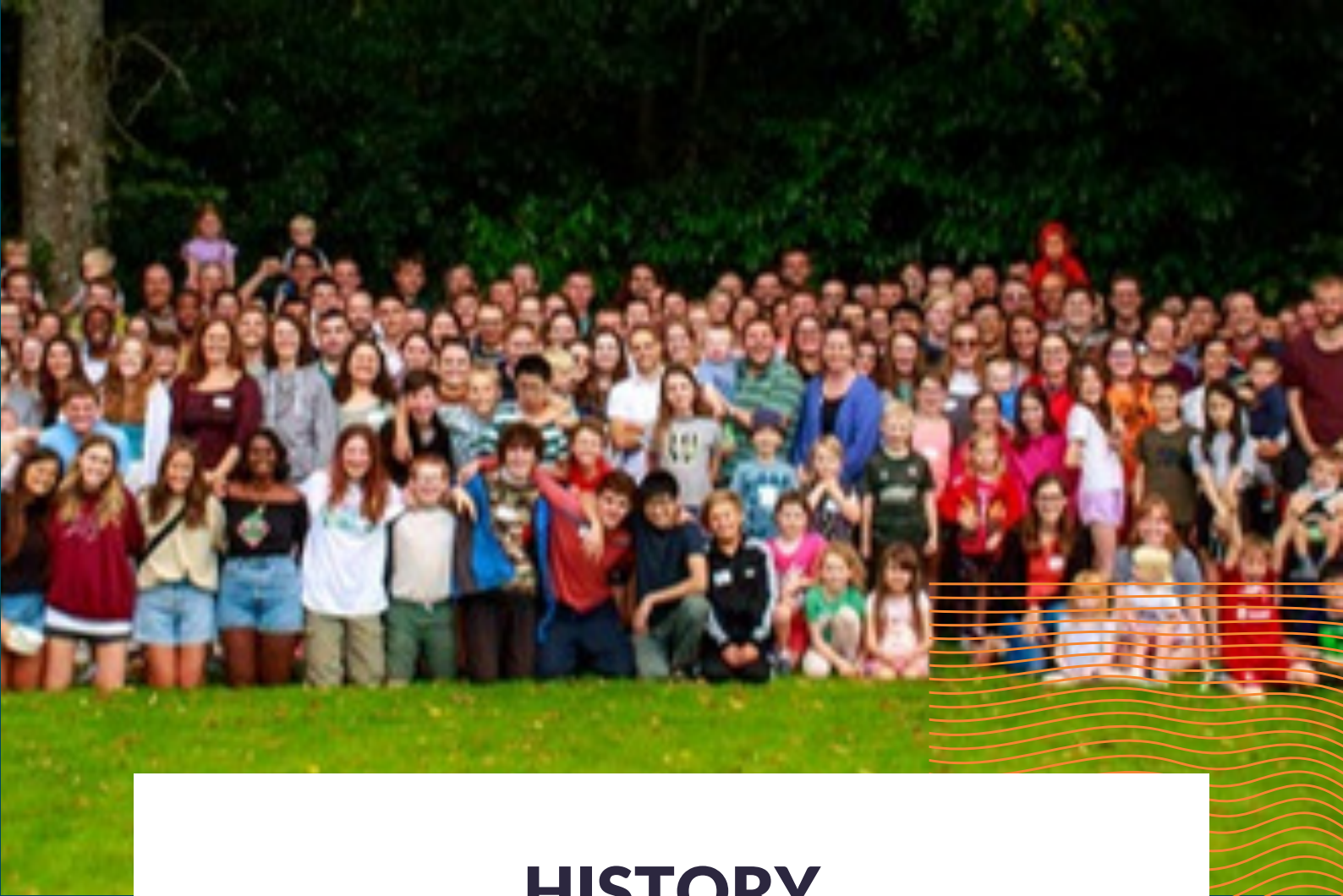
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AN INTRODUCTION TO CHRIST CHURCH

Christ Church Southampton is a young independent evangelical church, committed to glorifying God through bringing the gospel of Christ to the people of Southampton.





HISTORY

In 2006, a small Bible study group in the area decided to start Sunday meetings at a local primary school. In 2010-11, the group branded itself 'Christ Church Southampton', moved to a larger venue at Cantell School and invited its first full-time pastor, Orlando Saer. The church is now a vibrant community, and has experienced rapid numerical growth over recent years. There is a strong commitment to beginning new congregations and churches as necessary to bring the gospel to the region, and in 2016 saw the first church planted to this end: Cornerstone Church Portsmouth. Also in 2016 the church entered into a partnership with the council to take over the running of a local library. As part of the arrangement Christ Church now has its own building, where our midweek and Sunday evening gatherings happen and where our offices are based. In February 2019 a second church plant was launched under the leadership of former CCS Associate Pastor Jonny Clifton – Redeemer Winchester. In September 2023 a church plant was launched in the city of Salisbury by Pete Bentley-Taylor, former CCS Student Pastor. And, in September 2025 the newest work was launched, Hope Church Chichester, led by Chris Fry, who was on staff at Cornerstone Church Portsmouth. 2019 saw the formation of Reach South, a network of churches (currently Christ Church, Cornerstone, Hope Church, Redeemer & Trinity) committed to seeing more churches planted across the region and more and more people won for Christ.

OUR MINISTRY

Although every generation – from babes in arms to people in their 80s – is represented at Christ Church, the ministry is particularly focussed in four directions:



BRITISH STUDENTS

Ministry among British students. Our main Sunday meetings take place right in the heart of student-land, so this is a natural ministry focus for us. There are over 40,000 students in Southampton, including 25,000 at the University of Southampton which is on our doorstep and has one of the largest Christian Unions in the country. We aim to offer every student at Christ Church the chance to meet 1:1 with an older Christian, as well as teaching and training them to love and trust Jesus more, serve him more faithfully and effectively, and to handle the Bible well. *Student Connect* is the focal point of the work among undergraduates: it is a network of Bible study groups meeting together for a meal and training, before splitting into groups for Bible-study and prayer.

OVERSEAS STUDENTS

Ministry among overseas students. Along with Friends International and the Southampton University Christian Union, we look for opportunities to bring the gospel to those from overseas who are in the city temporarily for study purposes. The work is centred on *iConnect*, a meeting each Tuesday evening where attendees can make friends, learn about British culture and study the Bible. We also host Free English Lessons which meets before *iConnect*. A good number of internationals attend, both from the university and the surrounding area.

20S

Ministry among those in their early/mid twenties. 20s Connect. The focus of our work among this grouping aims to further the understanding, discipleship and mutual encouragement of people in this age group – in practice, largely recent graduates – whether working or engaged in postgraduate study.

CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Ministry among children and young families. The children's work is centred on 'Treasure Seekers' which operates during our Sunday morning gatherings. The aim is to work in conjunction with parents to nurture and disciple children and Christian families, as well as to create opportunities to reach the unchurched, through various events and activities.





THE MINISTRY TRAINING SCHEME

2026-27 will be the sixteenth year of the scheme. The scheme is intended to prepare young men and women for a life of faithful and effective gospel ministry in whatever context they find themselves.

It aims to provide training and nurture in three key areas.

1

Understanding

Each Ministry Trainee has a directed reading and study programme for the year, as well as the opportunity to undertake a study project addressing an issue of their choice under supervision. There is a weekly training day at the Equip Course (equipcourse.org.uk) which is run by a number of local churches including Christ Church Southampton. The purpose of Equip is to sharpen exegetical skills and grasp of biblical doctrine; also, to discuss issues connected with ministry and work together on bible study and talk preparation. In addition to the training day, we have a Ministry Trainees' workshop once a week in which we look at areas of doctrine or ministry not covered by Equip. Some preparation for the training day and the weekly workshop will be required during the week. There is also an expectation of attending at least one conference during the year.



Character

Each Ministry Trainee meets regularly with a mentor to read the Bible, pray and discuss different aspects of the Christian life. Feedback and help will be given in areas of godliness which need addressing. In addition, a servant approach to ministry is fostered through various practical areas of service (anything from helping with chairs or the crèche rota to photocopying and washing up) – Sundays in particular are busy days!



Ministry Skills

The church's student work provides many opportunities for Ministry Trainees to experience and grow in ministry. Ministry Trainees with a student focus will be expected to meet 1:1 with 3-4 students during the course of each week in term-time. Ministry Trainees also generally co-lead one of the *Student Connect* Bible Study groups. They may be involved to a degree in international student work and / or children's work. There are also likely to be opportunities for preaching, leading seminars and other activities like door-to-door evangelism.



2

3

PRACTICALITIES

FINANCE

The scheme is voluntary and therefore there is no formal contract of employment or salary. However, single Ministry Trainees are typically able to access funds of around £10000pa for living expenses and accommodation. This comes through different sources, but we will walk you through the steps to fundraise this support. We will also cover your training costs and you will be given a book allowance to purchase ministry related books.

REST DAYS

You will be expected to take one full rest day each week, and will be encouraged to enjoy 1 further rest day per month and 5 further weeks, usually to be taken during the university vacation period. In addition to this, you will be encouraged to attend at least one conference, a university events week and at least one camp (or similar).

NUMBER OF MINISTRY TRAINEES

Currently we have 7 (5 in the first year and 2 in the second year). There will be space for at least 6 new Ministry Trainees in 2025-26.

OFFICE

All the Ministry Trainees and staff work in our office space at the Burgess Road Library. Each Ministry Trainee will have their own desk and be expected to base themselves there for the majority of the week. The office environment is a busy and bustling environment, but it provides lots of opportunity to build friendships amongst the team and to discuss ministry together.

TERM

The scheme is normally 2 years in duration. We encourage Ministry Trainees to volunteer with us for an initial one-year period, beginning 1 September 2026. It is then extended to 2 years by mutual agreement.

WHO WE ARE LOOKING FOR

First of all, please note that the nature of Christ Church as a young, energetic church will make the experience of a Christ Church Ministry Trainee slightly different from a typical apprentice in a large and established church. It may therefore appeal to a different kind of person and require certain qualities that may be less crucial in another context.

In particular, you are likely to be:

- **Very flexible.** Your time at Christ Church may well be a roller-coaster ride! You will be presented with opportunities and challenges which neither you nor – to some extent – anybody else could have predicted. The only reasonably sure thing is that your expectations will be confounded.
- **A self-starter.** You will get plenty of opportunity to talk and pray with others, and a lot of access to senior staff during the week, but you will be thrown into the deep end in terms of initiating friendships and ministry opportunities. It won't be handed to you on a plate.
- **Disciplined.** You will be treated as an adult and left to get on with things. You won't have every minute of the day planned out for you. So you need to be able to organise your time well so as to get everything done.

On the other hand, there are qualities we are looking for which are common to most similar trainee schemes. For example, you need to be:

- **Bible-oriented** – committed to being shaped by God's word and keen to share it with others
- **Humble** – willing to learn new things and to roll up your sleeves and get stuck in wherever you're needed
- **Competent** – able to handle the Bible and to communicate it to others reasonably proficiently
- **A team player** – secure enough to ask for help, caring enough to offer it, able to take direction and correction, more interested in the outcome than personal recognition

You may have a particular interest in ministry in the context of a church plant, or a desire to minister among a large student population (around 100 students attend our weekly services or Bible-study groups). You will certainly be excited about being involved in at least one of the church's key ministry areas and a heart for seeing the gospel go forward and people coming to faith. And you will be keen to 'test the waters' of gospel work to see how you can be most useful to the Kingdom in years to come.

HOW TO APPLY

Still interested after all that?

The first step is to get in touch with John Taylor by email without delay (jonti@christchurchsouthampton.org.uk). Please provide contact details and a brief self-introduction. Jonti will reply and suggest a time for an exploratory telephone conversation. After this, by mutual agreement, he will send an application form and invite you for interview.

