



Recruitment Pack

Minister

About Union Chapel

Union Chapel describes itself as an open, progressive, liberal, inclusive church. Our congregation is diverse, welcoming, creative, and questioning. While relatively small, averaging 35 each Sunday, it is growing in both numbers and commitment.

The church holds special services and events for Holocaust Memorial Day, Homelessness Sunday, LGBTQ+ Pride Month, Refugee Week, Black History Month, Trans Day of Remembrance, and Remembrance Sunday.

Besides Sunday worship, there is a weekly Bible Study group. There is a regular programme of films, discussions, and speakers addressing contemporary topics relating to the environment, social justice, and international concerns.

The church has an online presence on YouTube, Facebook, X, and Instagram. Services, Bible Studies, and events are recorded, and online participation is offered in some instances.

The church's programme in recent years has included performances of Handel's Messiah and Bach's Magnificat, Gospel Music from Shalom Chorale and London African Gospel Choir. Union Chapel Voices have produced several very successful evenings of poetry and music. Canvas of Courage was an art exhibition held recently with Amnesty International. The Annual Carol Service is a major event with a capacity congregation of 900. Lent and Easter celebrations include special music events, services, and reflections.

The church supports The Margins Project which it founded. The project provides a meal, twice a week for local people experiencing homelessness, and affected by the cost-of-living crisis along with advice and casework. There is also a training project preparing for work in catering.

More recently, the church initiated an outreach project to two hotels housing asylum seekers. Funded by the local authority it employs two staff members, who provide orientation, support, ESOL and a range of social activities. The workers are engaged in demanding casework and some very challenging situations.

Music is an important part of the Chapel's life. Our services include high standard music from accomplished musicians. Music styles are eclectic. Union Chapel Voices is an auditioned choir whose members participate in music for services and special events. Union Chapel Singers are a community choir.

The Chapel hosts regular concerts and has featured many well-known artists including Amy Winehouse, Ed Sheeran, Tom Jones, and Mavis Staples. More recently evenings have included podcasts and book launches.

The three manual Father Willis organ is put to good use in services and recitals. UCP's Organ Director Claire Singer curates the Organ Reframed Festival of experimental music. Regular recitals are held together with organ lessons for local school children, workshops, and tours.

History

Union Chapel's progressive outlook has been a feature throughout its history, having supported education, children's and youth work, abolitionists, and anti-poverty. Two Liberal Prime Ministers, Gladstone, and Asquith, were closely connected to the Chapel. The church archive will shortly have its own home in a restored Sunday School Room.

The Chapel has a unique ecumenical history, having been formed in 1799 by a small group of Dissenters and Anglicans. The congregation grew under the ministry of renowned preacher Rev Henry Allon. The first building in Compton Terrace became too small and was replaced by the present building in 1877. It is impressive, Grade I listed, a prominent local landmark and much loved, especially by the Friends of Union Chapel.

Congregational

Union Chapel is affiliated to the Congregational Federation and conducts its affairs according to the faith and order of the Congregationalist tradition.

Minister

Union Chapel is recruiting a new Minister following Rev Vaughan Jones' announcement of his intention to retire at the end of July 2024.

The Minister has pastoral oversight of the church congregation, conducts worship, and supervises the church staff team.

The staff team currently consists of a Social Justice and Community Outreach Worker, a Communications and Development Worker, a Musical Director / Organist, an Administrator, and an ESOL and Volunteer Coordinator.

The Minister will be, ex-officio, a Director of Union Chapel Project (UCP), which manages the church building. The Minister will also liaise with the Margins Project. The current and previous Ministers acted as Chair of the Margins Project. .

Job Description

Oversight

Provide leadership, together with the Deacons, office holders, and church members, in maintaining and developing the church's mission and ministry.

Attend Church and Deacon's meetings and encourage participation in the church's governance and decision-making processes.

Worship, Study, and Sacraments

Lead the community in Sunday worship and preside at the monthly communion service.

Work with the church's musical director / organists and musicians to arrange music for services and events.

Enable the weekly Bible Study sessions and occasional theological discussions.

Promote and encourage church membership and baptism, conduct preparation for baptism; and perform baptisms. (In accordance with the established position of the Congregationalist tradition, Union Chapel practises both infant and adult baptism.)

Support members in their varying discipleship journeys, recognising that the Union Chapel congregation includes new Christians, engaged and thoughtful believers, and experienced theologians.

Officiate at weddings – including of same-sex couples – funerals and memorial services.

Union Chapel Staff Team

Provide support to the church's other staff members, and exercise line management responsibilities to the appropriate and required extent.

Encourage the team in prayer, reflection, and planning.

Ensure appropriate expert support is available if needed for specialisms including work with asylum seekers and digital marketing / communications. (The Minister is not expected to have this expertise personally.)

Pastoral Care

Be available to church members and regular congregants, staff, volunteers, and other users of Union Chapel's premises for support in challenging situations and life events.

Encourage the leadership of the Deacons, and the development of mutual support among the congregation.

Social Justice

Encourage a broad programme of awareness raising on issues of social, racial, economic and climate justice.

To engage in themes agreed with the church concerning climate justice, social justice, racial justice and inequalities

Liaise with partners to our social justice and community outreach programme.

The new Minister will be expected to fully support Union Chapel's work with asylum seekers, and the activities of the Margins Project, recognising that these are understood to be necessary consequences and outworkings of Union Chapel's theological convictions. However, Union Chapel employs a Social Justice worker, and Margins employs multiple people, to undertake this work. It is anticipated that the new Minister will focus primarily on public worship and ministering to the church congregation, and will directly participate in Union Chapel's social justice work to a limited extent only.

Wider Union Chapel Community

Serve as an ex-officio Director of Union Chapel Project.

Maintain a close working relationship between the church and The Margins Project.

Ensure good partnership working with the (UCP) Events team.

Diversity, Equality, and Inclusion

Union Chapel works towards being a safer space for all. In doing so we are aware of ongoing challenges, and that through language and deed we do not demonstrate one particular identity is more worthy of inclusion than another. We look to a new Minister to assist us find the best way to articulate our conviction and aspiration that the message of the Gospel forms one body out of many people.

Challenge discriminatory behaviours and promote gender equality and inclusivity, anti-racism, anti-homophobia, anti-transphobia, and openness to people of different faith backgrounds.

Encourage awareness of disabilities and work with others towards improving access in Union Chapel.

Safeguarding

Ensure church activities comply with Union Chapel's health and safety policies and procedures.

Comply with best practice in safeguarding for children and vulnerable adults.

Undertake other duties as may be determined from time to time by the Deacons.

Person Specification

Essential

Be an ordained Minister in good standing with their denomination.

Be knowledgeable of and sympathetic to Congregationalist faith and order.

Demonstrate a good understanding of theology.

Have knowledge and experience of liturgical practice.

Have experience of supervising and supporting staff.

Be a good team member.

Have good organising skills.

Have experience of providing pastoral care.

Be empathetic to diverse communities.

Accept and fully affirm the participation of male, female, and non-binary people in every aspect of church life and ministry.

Accept and fully affirm the participation of LGBTQ+ people in every aspect of church life and ministry. This includes (but is not limited to) recognising the validity of civil partnerships and marriage, baptism into church membership, and recognising that there is no ministry role from which an individual is excluded by any LGBTQ+ identity.

In view of the church's relationship with UCP, the expectation that the Minister will be a Director of UCP, and the church's anticipated budgetary challenges, some basic familiarity and comfort with financial recording and reporting is essential.

Desirable

Have a strong interest in the arts.

Have a broad knowledge of diversity in church music and styles.

Have a knowledge of pedagogical approaches to adult Christian education.

How to apply

Please send an up-to-date Curriculum Vitae together with a supporting letter indicating your motivation for applying, your ability to undertake the duties of the ministry, and any personal circumstances to be taken into consideration.

Please address this by [email](#) to the Church Secretary, M.G. Jones, or by post to Union Chapel, 19b Compton Terrace, London N1 2UN.

Timetable

15 April	Recruitment open
3 June	Closing date for applications
12 June	Interviews
30 June	Option to preach with a view.
7 July	Option to preach with a view.
10 July	Church Meeting.
11 July	Job offer and references.

Starting date at the earliest opportunity following the appointment, notice to current employer and negotiations on terms and conditions.

Terms and conditions

To be negotiated dependent upon personal circumstances.