

SAINT THOMAS CHURCH FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK

ASSOCIATE PRIEST for CHRISTIAN FORMATION AND ADULT EDUCATION

Saint Thomas Church Fifth Avenue, New York, NY, is a growing and energetic parish of around 800 active members and a larger group of people associated through the webcast ministry, the Choir School, and music programs in the Diocese of New York.

Our mission is to worship, love and serve Our Lord Jesus Christ through the Anglican tradition and our unique choral heritage.

Just before the Pandemic, the parish had completed a rigorous period of self-study with *Wellspring Consulting* and had produced a 5-10-year strategic plan. Although the pandemic brought great challenges, far from delaying the implementation of that plan, it provided opportunity for growth and new ways of working. This included the implementation of a number of action plans with renewed vigor; namely, the search for a new Head of School, the setting up of a new Office of Institutional Advancement with a new staff, the appointment of a Director of Communications, and the expansion of the 'global parish' through the installation of a state-of-the-art camera system in the Church, and utilizing social media platforms.

Despite the challenges posed by the pandemic, the parish Adult Education and Formation program continued to thrive. During the course of 2020, there were over 3,000 attendees who participated in our live and Zoom adult education and formation classes (not including Bible study). These online participants were from across the United States and around the world. In addition, there were over 3,400 views of the recordings of our 2020 classes on YouTube as well as the STC website as of June 2021. Over 120 people regularly attended Sunday classes each week via the livestream or on-demand.

Sunday School and youth events ran all through the year and more families have joined the parish, albeit remotely.

The church has been open for a limited number of hours each day since the summer of 2020, and the daily mass has not ceased. Choral worship resumed last fall, and after several weeks in isolation at Incarnation Camp in Connecticut, the choristers returned to school using a cohort method after Christmas.

As we move towards the end of the pandemic we are able to reflect on how the strategic plan has evolved due to the pandemic and the kind of ministry that we wish to emphasize going forward. A number of new initiatives are evolving:

1. A phone ministry using trained lay people as pastors.
2. An outreach project with the music department for local children and the creation of a children's choir for the 9am Sunday mass.
3. An Asian-American project to build community and grow Asian leaders in the Church. A Korean priest has already been identified to join our team.

We are searching for a priest to assist the Rector in leading worship, in preaching, in teaching, in pastoral care, and the overall ministry of the parish. The Associate priest will be a loving pastor, an effective preacher and a strong teacher who is spiritually centered, self-motivated, creative and able to empower to exercise their Christian ministry. As a member of a very collegial staff, the Associate will have specific responsibilities for Formation and Adult education and work closely with the Associate for Children and Family Ministry (also the Choir School Chaplain).

The expectation is that the priest appointed will serve for at least five years.

A two-bedroom-two bathroom apartment is provided in the Choir School.

Job Description

Report to the Vicar and COO and work collaboratively with staff, including the other clergy, the Chief Advancement Officer, the Headmaster, and the Director of Music, and the lay leaders of the parish.

Overview

- With the Rector, to provide pastoral leadership for a dynamic parish as part of a team of clergy and lay leaders.
- Develop and support adult education opportunities and Christian formation ministries including Sunday and weekday classes; Bible study; meditation and opportunities for contemplative prayer; and retreats and pilgrimages that help our congregation explore ancient and emerging practices within the Christian tradition.
- With the Associate for Children and Family Ministry, to create a policy for parish-wide education and formation for all ages.
- Explore opportunities for building links with students and staff from the Universities and Seminaries associated with the New York City region.
- Help parishioners explore social justice and ethics as part of their own journey of faith and the responsibility of the Christian Community to respond appropriately as need arises.
- Assist the Rector in the planning and execution of the liturgy, including liturgical formation (such as lectors and acolytes).

Job Responsibilities

Common clergy responsibilities

- Participate in the spiritual and pastoral care of the community, including taking a share in visiting the sick and the housebound when necessary.
- Participate in weekday and Sunday liturgical and preaching responsibilities.
- Participate in the ministry of spiritual direction, the ministry of reconciliation (hearing confessions), healing, and other spiritual disciplines.
- Participate in social gatherings of the parish, including Sunday coffee hour, regular fellowship events, and the various social or interest groups in the parish.

Specific responsibilities

- Organize and support adult Christian formation opportunities on Sunday mornings and during the week by teaching classes, and arranging classes to be taught by existing staff, parishioners and guests: including:
 - Sunday morning at 10am and, very occasionally, during coffee hour.
 - Friday Bible Study at 1pm (currently led by another priest)
 - Some 'short courses' of 3-5 weeks duration on Tuesday or Thursday evenings at 6:30pm
 - Spring and Fall Theology lectures with a guest speaker.
 - January to May: Offer support and input to 'The Pilgrims Class' for enquirers, those seeking baptism and/or confirmation, and those wishing to be received from other Church traditions.
 - September to December: Offer, with the help of others, a 'Pilgrims Class II' for those newly baptized, confirmed, or received.

- Organize opportunities for spiritual formation and help parishioners to connect their faith across the week, including support for spiritual practice in everyday life.
- Be responsible with the Associate for Children and Family Ministry in providing a policy for parish-wide education and formation for all ages.
- Work closely with the Associate for Children and Family Ministry in implementing that policy and monitoring it.
- Coordinate with the Vicar and the Website Manager in the timely release of information, including social media, and weekly theology e-news.
- Take responsibility for the oversight of liturgical publications (such as Sunday and Feast day leaflets) and to work collaboratively with the Vergers' Department, Music Department, and Communications Department.
- Oversee the production of the monthly liturgical rota, liaising with the Vergers' Department and the Rector's office.

The Associate will be supported by an *Adult Education Advisory Council* who act as a sounding board with regard to the programming of adult education activities. The Council includes parishioners and distinguished academics such as Professor Jeremy Waldron (NYU), Professor Winnie Kung (Fordham), the Seminary Deans of G.T.S and Berkeley at Yale, and the Rev. Dr. Patrick Cheng our *Theologian in Residence*.

Skills and Abilities

- Gifted in preaching and teaching, especially in the area of systematic theology; an interest in theology, in contemporary theological and biblical scholarship, and particularly in the ethical relevance of those disciplines, and an ability to communicate that interest to lay people; making connections between the Gospel and the real world.
- Good knowledge of and connections in theological and religious studies circles in the greater New York area or a willingness to establish the same.
- Comfortable with and committed to formal liturgy within the Catholic expression of Anglicanism.
- Open to a variety of forms of worship and spirituality and willing to engage with them.
- Calling to parish ministry and to care for the small and large events in parishioners' lives.
- An enthusiastic readiness to meet the challenge of a congregation accustomed to a high level of intellectual engagement in the adult education activities of the parish (bearing in mind also that a proportion of those attending our classes and lectures are not regular attenders at Saint Thomas Church).
- Ability to work well with a diverse group of people.
- Pro-active and highly-organized.
- Skilled organizer of both people and logistics.
- Team-player who does not work in isolation and can comfortably assist others or take on responsibility for other areas of parish life as necessary and for the good of the team.
- A willingness to explore new formats for adult education in the parish, taking carefully into consideration the formats that have been successful in the past.

Requirements (essential)

- Ordained or pursuing ordination within the Episcopal Church or a Church in the Anglican Communion with post graduate degree.
- Experience of providing education programs and programs of nurture.
- Experience nurturing spiritual practices within a diverse community.
- Experience in liturgical formation or planning.
- Committed to his or her own professional development.

Desirable abilities (not essential)

- Currently engaged in doctoral research or having earned a doctorate.
- Recognized success in publishing articles and/or books.
- A confident liturgical singer.
- A member of the Association of Scholar-Priests.
- Experience integrating arts and spirituality.
- Fluency in New Testament Greek and/or Biblical Hebrew and/or Latin