

Christ Church Boston – The Old North Church
oldnorth.com

Position Description – Assistant Vicar

Background – Built in 1723, The Old North Church was made famous by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's poetic description of the events of April 17, 1775, when lanterns were hung in its steeple to warn colonial patriots of the British army's march on Lexington and Concord. Perhaps the most recognized church structure in the United States, the Old North is visited by hundreds of thousands of tourists each year, while remaining a fully functioning Episcopal Church with a vibrant and committed congregation and active lay leadership.

The Old North Church's official name is Christ Church in the City of Boston. The congregation of Christ Church consists of around 160 members and 85 pledging units. Old North's ASA is about 130 attendees per week, which includes a substantial number of visitors. Two services are held on Sundays. The 9:00 a.m. service is Holy Eucharist, Rite II without music. The main service is at 11:00 a.m., includes an excellent music program, and offers Holy Eucharist, Rite II most Sundays and Morning Prayer on the second Sunday of the month.

Old North's congregation has an unusual demographic shape, reflecting the North End neighborhood. The majority of members are either "empty nesters" or "young professionals". There are a substantial number of toddlers, but few school age children. The young professionals tend to leave the neighborhood once they form families. The church offers special programming for children around major holidays, but has been unable to build a critical mass of families to sustain a church school. As elementary schools expand in the North End, this may change.

Old North does have a thriving young professionals group which meets once or twice a month for social and/or educational gatherings. Functions are attended by an average of ten to fifteen members out of a mailing list of thirty-five.

Old North's education programs are oriented towards our adult membership. A lay led bible study meets every Sunday between services with a regular attendance of ten members. A book club, held jointly with St. John's Charlestown, meets every six weeks and draws fifteen to twenty members from both churches. The two churches co-lead an inquirers class every Lent. Old North members also participate in educational programs sponsored by the Old North Foundation, usually history lectures or historical tours.

Old North hosts a number of social/work activities spaced throughout the calendar year. The beginning and end of the summer are bookmarked by parish picnics held in the church courtyards. The annual brass polishing party draws fifty volunteers and is held in November. December includes a stewardship thank you party and two Saturdays for decorating the exterior and interior of the church for Christmas.

An annual gala is held in February or March to raise funds for church preservation and outreach.

Old North has a strong music program, led by Dr. Libor Dudas, who is also on the faculty of the Bard/Longy School of Music. Old North co-sponsors a monthly music series with the North End Music and Performing Arts Center. The highlight of the year is the choir's annual Christmas concert.

Old North's primary church outreach program, called Piccolo Regali (little gifts), is a Saturday food pantry and social program for the primarily elderly low-income population in the North End. The congregation also participates in a number of food and clothing drives through a "donation box pew".

Active committees at Old North include: a pastoral care committee, new members committee, and building and grounds committee. The church is governed by a vestry that meets monthly. Old North is a "mission not in union with the diocese", which means that the church operates under closer supervision of the bishops and Standing Committee. The vicar is very active in diocesan affairs and currently serves as dean of the Boston Harbor Deanery.

The staff of the Old North Church includes: the vicar, The Rev. Stephen Ayres, an assistant vicar, currently The Rev. Matt Kruger, a deacon, The Rev. Cynthia Pape, a part time administrator (shared with St. John's Charlestown), a half time music director, a part-time bookkeeper (shared with the Old North Foundation) and a sexton (shared with the Old North Foundation). The current assistant vicar is finishing his PhD. and departing to pursue an academic career.

The Old North Foundation was founded in 1989 as a fund raising conduit for the preservation of the Old North Church. The Foundation was spun off into a quasi-independent entity in 2003 and given the charge of running the historic site and raising preservation funds. The Old North Foundation is led by a interfaith board representing civic leaders from across the Boston area. About one third of the board members are members of the church or diocese, including Bishop Gayle Harris.

Old North Church is visited by more than 500,000 tourists and school children each year. Visitors can tour the sanctuary for free, take a behind the scenes tour, and/or visit the gift shop, colonial chocolate shop, and colonial print shop. Several specialty tours are offered for school groups. The main tourist season runs from April through October.

The Old North Foundation staff includes: an executive director, and education director, a business manager/gift shop director, a part-time development assistant, a sexton, and about twenty part-time or seasonal tour guides and retail clerks.

The Old North's dual mission presents challenges, and for the foreseeable future Stephen Ayres, the Vicar, will also be filling the role of Executive Director of the Old

North Foundation. Being the operational leader of the secular, non-profit organization responsible for preservation, restoration and operation of the Old North historic site will limit the time Steve will have to devote to the liturgy and programs of the Church. As a result, the Old North is seeking to obtain the services of an Assistant Vicar starting in the early autumn of 2013.

While the precise division of clerical responsibilities between the Vicar and the Assistant Vicar will not be determined until a candidate has been selected, an allocation approaching the following is anticipated:

Position Descriptions – Vicar and Assistant Vicar – These descriptions assume that the Vicar will spend approximately 70% of his time in the role of Executive Director of the Old North Foundation.

Vicar's Clerical Responsibilities:

- Preach twice a month, share in celebrating;
- Oversee building and grounds, supervise sexton;
- Attend and participate in major parish functions and meetings;
- Advise and mentor the Assistant Vicar;
- Maintain open communication between Church and Foundation; and
- Participate in clergy day, clergy conference, diocesan convention and other diocesan events.

The Assistant Vicar's Responsibilities:

Note: Old North Church is seeking candidates to fill two distinct needs: 1. To relieve vicar of some administrative and leadership responsibilities for the congregation so the vicar can focus on the Foundation and an upcoming capital campaign. And 2. To continue to grow the young professional program and help the congregation through a generational change in lay leadership. We recognize that candidates may not have equivalent strengths in both areas and are willing to consider a wide range of skills and experience.

- Preach twice a month, share in celebrating;
- Supervise or share supervising organist, direct liturgy;
- Conduct the majority of weddings and baptisms;
- Work with deacon in providing pastoral care to the congregation;
- Participate in leadership of "Young Professionals" group activities;
- Attend and participate in major parish functions and meetings;
- Share in supervision of administrator;
- Oversee stewardship and finances, supervise bookkeeper;
- Lead or select lay leadership for parish committees and programs;
- Work with new committee to design and implement parish growth programs, including participation in the Leadership Development Initiative; and

- Participate in clergy day, clergy conference, diocesan convention and other diocesan events.

Skills and Experience Sought in Candidates for Assistant Vicar

- At least two years experience in parish ministry or in ministry with young professionals
- Strong pastoral skills
- Experience working with young professionals
- Experience with new member ministry
- Strong preaching skills
- Ability to work collaboratively
- Vision, creativity, outgoing personality

Hours and Compensation

The assistant vicar position is envisioned to be three-quarter time and will be compensated according to diocesan guidelines. The contract for the position is for three years.