

*ST HELEN'S CHURCH, BISHOPSGATE, LONDON*

# **ASSOCIATE SCHEME 2008**

*Becoming better servants of Jesus Christ*

An apprenticeship programme that aims to train excellent Bible students & teachers

Built around ministry & service in a thriving, gospel focused church

For at least 10 people starting at the end of August 2008

## THE ST HELEN'S ASSOCIATE SCHEME

Our greatest desire as a church is that God is honoured and the church of Jesus Christ is built and extended. For this to happen godly leaders are key – leaders who will serve God and His people, either full-time or in a lay capacity. These servant-leaders will be people who have a genuine relationship with God characterised by:

- A love for God, a passion for His glory and a longing to know and love Him more;
- A firm grasp of what God has revealed in His Word, a whole-hearted trust in what He has said and a clear understanding of the importance of teaching that Word to others; and
- A genuine desire to further God's purpose of rescuing a people for Himself for eternity and a real commitment to these people.

The purpose of the Associate Scheme is to help to develop the next generation of servant-leaders. We seek to train and equip Associates in the multitude of different areas in which they need to grow if they are to be good servants of Jesus Christ. Associates are helped to grow in Christian discipleship; in theology and knowledge of the Bible; in how to study the Bible for themselves and how to teach it to others; and in being servant-hearted and ministry-minded. This is all built round and focused on ministry, which is the heart of the Scheme.

Growing as servant-leaders takes place in four ways:

- 'On the job' as Associates teach the Bible, work with people and take the lead in various ministry areas;
- 'In the classroom' with a significant amount of personal study;
- In doing the many practical jobs that need to be done if the Bible is to be taught; and
- Through a large amount of contact with the St Helen's staff team, including participation in staff meetings and individual supervision by a more senior staff member.

St Helen's is committed to the Associate Scheme because of the huge long term benefits to the wider church of training people to be good servants of God and His people. However, we benefit enormously from the Associates during their time with us as a result of the important contribution they make to the life and mission of the church.

## ST HELEN'S CHURCH

We are a large evangelical church, committed to the Bible as the Word of God, to the importance of having a living relationship with Jesus and to proclaiming the good news of salvation through him. We are located in the heart of the City of London, with meetings on Sundays at St Helen's and on weekday lunchtimes at a number of different venues across London. Linked to these are many Bible study and evangelistic groups. In all our meetings and groups the focus is on the Bible being taught, because we are convinced that as God's Word is taught His voice is heard, His work is done and His name is glorified

We seek to use the fantastic opportunities provided by our location to reach out to and build up the following groups of people for a lifetime of service in God's kingdom:

- *The three hundred thousand students in London.* The nature of London means students often live far from their colleges so a centrally located church can have a key role in building up Christian students and equipping them to serve the gospel.
- *The many new Christian graduates who come to London to start work.* They need to be helped to remain Christian and to grow as Christians when faced with the pressures of the working world. They also need to be helped to see and to seize the opportunities for the gospel of Jesus presented by their new circumstances.
- *The half a million people who work within a mile of us.* For many, their place of work is the best place to hear the gospel, since it is where they spend much of their time. For others who are already Christians, we provide Bible teaching and an opportunity to get involved with gospel work that many have found revolutionary.
- *The many from overseas who work and study in London.* Around a third of all people living in London were not born in the UK. Our focus on those who work and study in central London enables us to reach and build up people who come from countries with far fewer opportunities to hear the gospel and be taught the Bible.
- *The long term St Helen's church family.* Many people have chosen to stay in London and commit to St Helen's long term. These people form the settled core of the church and an important part of our ministry is to them, their families and their contacts. We have a large Sunday School and a growing youth work.

## THE TRAINING PROGRAMME

The Associate scheme is a full-time programme designed to prepare and equip people for paid Bible teaching ministry. It will, however, also be of great value to those who go on to serve God in other capacities, and it will help Associates decide whether full-time Bible teaching ministry is the best way for them to serve in the long term. Associates are initially appointed for one year, but many stay on for a second which builds on the first.

The scheme comprises three parts:

### Training through being taught

Associates spend about a third of their time being taught the Bible and how to study it for themselves. One of the greatest needs of the church throughout the world is for really good Bible teachers, so our goal is to help Associates maximize their potential in this area. In order to be a good Bible teacher it is essential to know how to hear in more depth what God is revealing in His word and how to think about and use what He is saying, so this is what we focus on in our teaching.

The main teaching programme for first year Associates is:

- *A morning a week going through the letters to the Ephesians and the Galatians in depth.* This key session teaches Associates how to study Bible books for themselves – a skill full-time Bible teachers need to use daily. Several hours preparation is required each week and all Associates are expected to work hard at the biblical text and to participate actively in the discussion as we strive to hear more clearly what God is saying.
- *An afternoon a week learning theology and ministry skills.* This teaches Associates how the whole Bible fits together and so what it says about some key themes, i.e. how to do theology in a Biblical way. The radical nature of the Bible becomes clear as we do this. We also look at different facets of Christian ministry. Again, preparation is required and everyone is expected to participate actively.
- *A morning a week learning how to handle different types of biblical literature.* This session is provided at the Cornhill Training Course which is nearby and Associates will be taught alongside the Cornhill students.

There is also teaching input at the weekly staff meetings and in many other areas of the church's life.

### Training through involvement in Christian ministry

Associates spend a further third of their time involved in Christian ministry. The best way to learn how to do Christian ministry is actually to do it in a supportive environment where there is lots of guidance and advice. Associates, therefore, are given a significant amount of hands on experience of some of the key areas of Christian ministry. As they do this they have training and feedback from those with more experience in ministry than them and the benefit of working as a team.

The ministry an Associate does will depend on their experience and gifts, but normally every Associate will:

- *Have an area of the church's ministry to develop.* The ability to be responsible, take the initiative and grow a work are key to being a Christian leader. We seek to develop these in Associates by giving them a relatively small patch where they can experiment and learn in a safe setting. This will teach them key skills like working with, motivating and leading others, and strategy and judgement in seeing how best to develop a work. A wide variety of opportunities are available to suit different levels of maturity e.g. working with students from a particular college or developing the nucleus of a new lunchtime ministry in a different part of London.
- *Study the Bible one-to-one with several individuals.* Working with someone individually is a great way to disciple a young Christian, train a potential leader or help a non-Christian understand the gospel. These are all core skills for anyone seeking to serve God, so our aim is that each Associate leaves able to do all three.
- *Lead a Bible study group.* A well led Bible study group is a superb means of teaching the Bible and building up individuals in the church, so we work hard to ensure our Bible study groups are led as well as possible. Involvement in this area will help Associates grow in the vital skill of leading a group and will help them develop significantly in the most crucial ability of all, teaching the Bible.

Most Associates will have additional areas of responsibility, including running evangelistic groups and giving talks in various settings.

By the end of their time on the scheme, Associates should be able to engage in some of the most important areas of ministry in a church's life. They will also be much more 'ministry minded' and be seeking in everything they do to serve God and His people and to advance the gospel. If they go on to theological college then this ministry experience will help them get much more out of their time there.

### **Training through doing practical tasks**

Associates spend the remainder of their time involved in practical tasks around the church. These include setting up rooms and buildings for meetings, cleaning and performing administrative tasks in the church office. As well as being essential to the running of the church, this enables Associates to grow in three important areas:

- *It teaches Associates what is involved in running a church and enabling Christian ministry to happen.* It is easy to get the wrong impression of Christian ministry and think it is all glamorous, upfront work. However, there is a lot of behind the scenes work involved in all Christian ministry and it is important for anyone going into Christian leadership to learn what is involved. To help Associates further see what happens behind the scenes in a church, they are fully involved in the church staff team.
- *It develops a servant heart.* Christian service is just that, service, and again it is vital that everyone seeking to serve God develops the attitude of looking for what needs doing and then getting on with it, even if it is a humble, dirty, unseen job.
- *It teaches Associates to work as part of a team.* Christian ministry should never be a one man show, so learning to function well in a team is an important part of an Associate's training. Previous Associates have also found that they thoroughly enjoyed working as part of a team.

## **FINANCES**

The Associate Scheme is a training programme for volunteers, so we expect Associates to raise as much as they can towards their own support. However, we are conscious that living in London can prove expensive, especially due to the cost of accommodation. For those requiring it, therefore, we will seek to provide suitable accommodation for the duration of their Associate training. We estimate that an Associate also needs £4000 per year for basic living expenses (e.g. food and travel). Applications can be made to the St Helen's church council for one-off grants to cover any shortfall in an Associate's income for the year.

## **THE PEOPLE WE ARE LOOKING FOR**

We are looking for Christians, male and female, who want to serve God and the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. In particular, we are looking for:

- A commitment to the supreme importance of the Bible's message.
- The Christian maturity and gifts to be able to teach the Bible in groups and one-to-one.
- An eagerness to learn and serve and a willingness to take on a variety of responsibilities and tasks around the church.
- The desire and ability to work as part of a team, both with the other Associates and with the rest of the church staff and congregation.

Associates at St Helen's are usually a mix of new graduates and people who have been working. Many, but not all, have become Associates with the intention of staying in full-time Christian ministry or going directly to theological college after doing the Scheme. They have joined the Scheme to prepare for a variety of different Bible teaching ministries, including leading a church, women's work, student work, youth work and cross-cultural ministry. A number come to us already having done an apprenticeship at another church, Relay with UCCF or similar.

## **IF YOU ARE INTERESTED**

Further information and an application form are available from our website [www.st-helens.org.uk](http://www.st-helens.org.uk), or contact Jenny Anderson at:

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London EC3A 6AT  
tel. 020 7283 2231  
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We will start interviewing candidates in November 2007 and will accept applications until all the places are filled.