

A WINDOW ON THE DEWSBURY EVANGELICAL CHURCH GOSPEL TRAINEE SCHEME

I. A window on our Gospel Trainee Scheme

Training

We would like to train an individual who demonstrates some gifting in handling the Word of God and who is passionate about gospel ministry in:

- a. Teaching and preaching the Bible
- b. Mission in a working class urban context

Our Trainee will be offered structured training through

- either the Yorkshire Training ministry course or the Porterbrook Network
- our in-house training programme
- monthly one-to-one discussion with mentors

We will also send our Trainee on the 9:38 Apprentice's Conference and at least one other conference related to their own particular ministry interests.

Ministry experience

We would like to give our Trainee the opportunity to develop their gifts in ministries they are passionate about, as well as give them experience in new opportunities. We have opportunities in:

- Outreach to Muslims
- Outreach to the urban poor
- Outreach to white working classes
- Youth work
- Families
- Leading services and preaching sermons
- Small group bible studies
- Mentoring
- Leadership
- Street and door-to-door evangelism
- Social action
- Administration

An example time-table

| | Morning | Early afternoon | Late afternoon | Evening |
|-------------|-----------------|------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| Mon | Prep & planning | Ministry activity | Rest | Small group bible study |
| Tue | Prep & planning | Ministry activity | Administration | In-house training / Elders |
| Wed | Rest | Mentoring | One-to-one study | Church prayer meeting |
| Thur | Training course | | | Rest |
| Fri | Administration | Reading & study | One-to-one study | Youth club |
| Sat | Rest | | | |
| Sun | Church meeting | Rest | | Church meeting |

The practical details

We can offer you accommodation and a small training bursary, a book allowance, expenses paid

attendance at a couple of conferences (one of which most likely will be the 9:38 Apprentices Conference).

We are however open to discussing with you a different arrangement, such as helping you to find part-time secular work leaving you free to do our Trainee scheme part-time.

We would like the year with us to start ideally in September running through to the end of August. However there may be some flexibility in this.

Interested?

The best thing to do in the first instance is contact Ian Goodson:

ian@dewsbury-church.org.uk

01924 438061

07817 213660

Ideally we would like to arrange an opportunity for you to come and see what we are doing and plan to do and have a conversation about how a year training with us might shape up.

2. A window on Dewsbury Evangelical Church

We are an evangelical and Reformed independent church subscribing to the 1689 Baptist Confession of Faith. We are members of the Yorkshire Gospel Partnership and associate ourselves with Affinity.

We have a formal membership of 111 and our main Sunday morning congregation numbers approximately 130 people.

Our church membership is varied in terms of its make up. The majority of the membership is white. We have a large proportion of Asian members, particularly from the local Pakistani community. We have a good number of converted teenagers, many families, a growing number of older members and some single people.

We have not however seen a great deal of adult conversions in recent years and want to take steps to address this. In particular we are troubled that we have not seen any conversions from either the large Pakistani/Muslim community or the indigenous white working-class population. We have however rejoiced to see conversions among the minority and marginalised ethnic communities.

We are a forward-thinking church. We have recently started a separate work among marginalised ethnic communities focussed around a ministry teaching English to asylum seekers and refugees. This group now meets separately on Sunday mornings in order to develop its work in more specialised ways. We also have a full-time Pakistani evangelist working with the church with the aim of making in-roads in to the large Muslim population in the town. We have also recently appointed a second full-time paid pastor, and employ a Pastoral Assistant part-time.

We have recently had to begin meeting on Sunday mornings in a local community centre since our church building is too small to accommodate everyone. Our current intention is to purchase a larger building for our needs.

We have a thriving young people's work, with youth groups for children from ages 4 – 18+. We run a well-attended Mums and Tots group. And we partner with a local church to run an extremely popular summer camp every August.

We support missionaries around the world. We have close connections with a missionary who is church planting in Tajikistan, and we support a family in Kazakhstan where the husband is the pastor of a small church plant in the city of Kostany. We also have links with many other missionaries who we support financially and in prayer.

We are committed to systematic expository Bible teaching and preaching. All our Sunday services centre around the preaching of God's word.

We are committed to training God's people. Several young men in our church are part of our in-house '2 Timothy 2:2' preaching workshop. Two of our members currently attend the weekly Yorkshire Training course run by the Yorkshire Gospel Partnership. And we are currently developing a leadership training programme to run along-side our Gospel Trainee scheme.

One particular frustration we experience is able young people leaving our church for University and never returning. We are working through how we can reverse this trend, and we feel that our Gospel Trainee scheme will help facilitate this.

3. A window on Dewsbury

Dewsbury is a traditionally working class town of approximately 60,000 people. It is in West Yorkshire, a metropolitan county of 2.2 million people. It lies in between the cities of Bradford to the north and Leeds to the east and the large town of Huddersfield to the west. The local authority is Kirklees Metropolitan Council.

The traditional industry of Dewsbury, alongside its close neighbour Batley, was the wool trade. Indeed our particular area of West Yorkshire is known as the 'Heavy Woollen District'. But in recent decades the mills have closed down and now the town suffers from high unemployment and some severe pockets of deprivation.

The majority population is white and might be described as 'proud working-class'. But Dewsbury is now perhaps better known for two other population groups, it's large Muslim and Pakistani population (one area of the town is 95% Muslim) and Dewsbury Moor, a 'sink' estate where crime is twice the national average and that recently reached national notoriety due to the kidnapping of nine-year-old Shannon Matthews in February 2008.

There are about 200 people in Bible-teaching churches in Dewsbury. That equates to roughly 0.3% of the population. There are three evangelical churches in the town, of which ours is by far the largest and best-placed to develop gospel work in the town.

Although Dewsbury has it's problems it has much that is attractive about it. For example it boasts many wonderful examples of Victorian architecture, has a thriving market and housing is affordable. It is surrounded by beautiful country side, is close to the Yorkshire Sculpture Park (a national museum in all but name) and the National Coal Mining Museum, has excellent transport links and is proud of it's favourite sports team: Dewsbury Rams Rugby League Club! When you visit Dewsbury (and of course you must) make sure you enjoy the best fish and chips in the world from a local 'fish shop' (which must be enjoyed with a 'tea cake' (a bread roll) and endless cups of Yorkshire Tea), and if you are feeling up to it sample the tripe from the famous market stall! And if you speak to any locals you will not fail to be impressed by the welcome from some of the most warm-hearted people you are ever likely to meet.

Any approach to gospel work in Dewsbury has to take in to account the severe social need apparent in the town. However, the most urgent need is for people to hear the Word of God,

repent and believe.