



The Church of Scotland

Appointment of

## **PARISH ASSISTANT/DEACON**

Armadale and Blackridge Parish Churches,  
Presbytery of Edinburgh and West Lothian  
Closing date – 12 noon Monday, 26 May 2025

Job Reference Number: M11/25

Responsible to: Parish Minister



## About the Church of Scotland

The Church of Scotland is a national Church providing ministry, care, witness and service across the whole of Scotland and engaging in other parts of the UK and across the world. It has been a significant part of the life of Scotland for more than 450 years. As well as providing worshipping communities of faith that testify to the truth and relevance of the Christian faith, it also plays a significant part in the community life of Scotland in a variety of ways and adds significantly to its social capital.

The Church of Scotland today works in partnership with others, including churches from around the world, ecumenical partners, interfaith networks, charities and individuals. It engages with Government and civic society, believing that the Good News of Jesus is relevant within the spheres of politics and decision-making, as well as in our local communities and congregations.

## Ministries Development Staff

Working in the parishes across Scotland, our Ministries Development Staff (MDS) provide additional support locally to complement the work of Parish Ministers. Employed by the Ministries Council of the Church of Scotland, the work that is carried out by our MDS colleagues is invaluable in making a difference to the lives of people in our churches and communities. The Ministries Council employs over 100 staff who are working in roles such as Deacons, Parish Assistants, Children, Youth and Family Workers, Outreach Workers, Pastoral Assistants and Community Development Workers. With support provided centrally from the Faith Action Programme and Human Resources team in the national offices, our MDS colleagues will have access to a full suite of wellbeing and learning opportunities. This sits alongside local collaborative working between line manager, kirk session and presbytery.





## About the Parish

Armadale linked with Blackridge are part of the rapidly-growing Central Belt, with the linkage coming into existence on 1 March 2024. With the Bathgate-Airdrie portion of the train service restored in 2011, home construction has boomed and many families with children have moved in to take advantage of the quieter life and lower costs of living in a more rural setting. This has opened up opportunities for outreach to families and new community links. Both congregations are active in their communities and desire to nurture those links further.

## Context of the role

As part of the ministry in these linked parishes, the post holder will be part of a varied, busy life alongside the minister. While focus will be on coordinating a summer holiday club and developing links begun through last year's holiday club, the person will also support the minister by being part of regular worship leadership and sharing in officiating the significant number of funerals that come our way.

We hope that the postholder will be able to help develop pastoral teams from the congregations to assist the minister and elders with pastoral care, as well as to be a reliable point of contact alongside the minister.



## Role description

### Title of Post:

Parish Assistant/Deacon

### Responsible to:

Parish Minister

### Purpose of Post:

To support and facilitate the ministry and outreach of Armadale and Blackridge Parish Churches.

### Main Duties

- Prepare and lead various acts of worship including creating comprehensive worship plans on a regular basis as mutually agreed with the minister
- Engage with the local schools and take a full part in the school chaplaincy team
- To undertake pastoral visits to parishioners and others in their homes, care homes, in hospital or by phone or online
- Respond to pastoral issues including bereavement care that may occur within remit
- Liaising with funeral directors and families to prepare and lead some parish funerals
- To identify and utilise opportunities to build and develop meaningful and lasting relationships between the church and individuals and families in the community.
- Working with other members of staff and volunteers, identify and coordinate outreach opportunities within the parish, such as a summer Holiday Club
- Contribute to discipleship and to supporting the spiritual growth and nurture of those within the congregation
- Support various groups within the congregation and develop connections between the community and church.
- Additional Duties
- To communicate to the Presbytery, information, and vision for the work at least half yearly
- To contribute fully to the appraisal process

### Main Duties (for those candidates applying for the post as a Parish Deacon)

Ordained/probationer Deacons appointed to a Parish or Presbytery role, are called and equipped to carry out additional duties consistent with their office and supported by their training including, but not limited to:

- Attending Kirk Session meetings within the parish in which they serve.
- Fulfilling tasks associated with the work of the Kirk Session or Presbytery that might be understood to be missional, pastoral, prophetic, community orientated, educational or collaborative and therefore consistent with the training and ethos of the Diaconate (Deacons of Word and Service: A Vision Statement of the Church of Scotland Diaconate 2018)
- Leading worship including where appropriate, conducting weddings and funerals – in consultation with the Parish Minister/Line Manager.
- Attending Presbytery meetings and participating in the work of the Presbytery in which they serve.
- Accepting a commission to the General Assembly when appointed by Presbytery.
- Attending and participating in the work of the Diaconate Council and local Diaconate associations.
- Maintaining links with the wider church in accordance with the ethos of the Diaconate and the mission of the Church of Scotland.

## Person Specification

It is an essential requirement of this role that the post-holder is a committed Christian with a live Church connection which is a Genuine Occupational Requirement in terms of the Equality Act 2010.

The successful candidate will have:

- Ability to lead worship to a membership with a broad range of understanding of their Christian faith
- Experience in conducting funerals or willingness to be trained to do so
- Ability to carry out effective and empathetic pastoral care
- Experience of recruiting, working with and motivating volunteers
- Ability to build and maintain effective working relationships with individuals of all ages
- Ability to engage with people who have little or no Church connection
- Excellent communication skills both written and oral
- Experience in working with children, young people and families
- Ability to plan effectively, implement plans, and to prioritise work and workload
- Holder of valid driving license or access to unrestricted alternative private transport if required
- Ability to communicate effectively with others using highly developed interpersonal skills
- Openness to and able to evidence different ways of working and trying new initiatives
- Approachable
- Creative
- A self-starter with proven ability to work unsupervised with readiness to use own initiative
- Proven ability to work collaboratively with colleagues and contribute to effective team working
- On-going commitment to continuing professional development including willingness to work towards qualifications and accredited training Qualification in counselling or social care or can demonstrate significant, recent and relevant work experience in these areas.

It is also desirable, however not essential that you have:

- Experience of setting up, developing, and evaluating programmes and activities
- Ability to promote the work through effective use of IT packages and social media

For those candidates applying for the post as Parish Deacon:

- An ordained Deacon of the Church of Scotland or a probationer Deacon eligible for ordination in terms of the General Assembly's Act 8, 2010

Applications will be assessed in respect of the above criteria.



## Employment Benefits

As a member of staff within the MDS, you will be able to access a number of benefits. All eligible MDS employees will be automatically enrolled into a defined contribution pension arrangement where you will be auto-enrolled at the default rate of 2.5% employee contribution and 14% employer contribution. You will have the option to reduce your contribution or opt out of the scheme.

### Current Pension Contributions

Employee Contribution	Employer Contribution
0%	11.5%
0.5% and less than 2.5%	11.5%
2.5% and above	14.0%

You will also have access to our Employee Assistance Programme, Occupational Sick Pay, enhanced family friendly policies, Flexible Working Policy, Hybrid Working Policy, Cycle to Work Scheme, Chaplaincy Service and Death in Service Benefit.

## Terms and Conditions

- Salary is based on the MDS scale of £29,535 - £33,389 per annum. This is the full-time salary scale and actual salary will be pro rata to 0.5 FTE.
- Normal hours of work will be 18.75 hours per week.
- The nature of the work calls for a degree of flexibility, thus hours of work, which are as agreed with the line manager, may vary from day to day.
- This is a permanent post.
- The post is based at Armadale and Blackridge Parish Churches.
- There are five weeks paid leave (187.5 hours pro rata) in each full holiday year which runs from 1 January to 31 December. Entitlement is based on full weeks worked. There are also nine statutory holidays. Entitlement increases after five years' service to six weeks (225 hours pro rata) annual paid leave
- Travel expenses by public transport or by use of own car (if appropriate) at rates agreed by the employer are payable and reviewed annually.
- Membership of Disclosure Scotland PVG Scheme will be required.
- It is essential you have the **right to work in the UK** before applying to work with us. You will be asked to provide proof of your eligibility to work and remain in the UK if you are invited to attend for an interview.
- In order to comply with the Asylum and Immigration Act 1996, the successful applicant will be asked to provide document(s) confirming their eligibility to work in the United Kingdom.
- An employment medical check will be undertaken as part of our recruitment process.

## Terms and Conditions: Deacon

A Deacon bringing the gifts of ordination and a ministry of word and service to the role will be remunerated on the relevant pay scale MDS Deacon salary, pro rata.

**Informal enquiries can be made to Julia Wiley, [jwiley@churchofscotland.org.uk](mailto:jwiley@churchofscotland.org.uk)**

## How to Apply

Applications should be sent by email to **recruitment@churchofscotland.org.uk** and must be received by 12 noon on the closing date.

Applications should comprise:

- A personal statement, outlining how your skills, experiences and personal qualities match the requirements of the role outlined in the job description. Please provide reference contact details for your last two periods of employment (this would normally be your direct line manager/supervisor). If you have had more than two employers in the last three years, please provide referee contact details for that period. References will not be contacted until later in the process.
- A full CV, including educational and professional qualifications alongside a full employment history showing positions held, responsibilities and relevant achievements.
- A personal information form, to be downloaded and attached.

Applications without a CV, personal statement and personal information form will not be taken forward in the process.

Each document should be a maximum of two sides of A4. For more information on any of our roles, please contact **recruitment@churchofscotland.org.uk**