

Questions & Answers

Will there be the usual collection for the on-going work of the church? Yes, the usual collection will be taken up as normal. Gifts toward the youth worker will be collected separately. Details of this process will be given on the day itself.

Do I need to give? Do I need to give a certain amount? No, please only give if your financial circumstances permit. You can give whatever you like, small or large, either as a one off gift or a regular contribution. Some of us may be able to give at this time; others of us may not. That's to be expected.

What if I can't afford to give now but would like to in the future? If this is not the right time for you to make a contribution to the employment costs of our youth worker, but you would like to do so at a later date, you can either set up a standing order to start sometime in the year, or you could pledge to give a certain amount next year.

Will I be held to my pledge? It would be helpful if you could only pledge what you are reasonably confident you will be able to give in the future. However, if your financial circumstances change unexpectedly and you find yourself unable to fulfil your pledge, please be assured you will not be held to it.

I already give by standing order to the church. Do I need to complete a new standing order mandate? The choice here is yours. You can simply contact your bank and increase the amount of your standing order. Otherwise, if you would prefer to keep this payment separate from your regular giving, you can complete a new form making sure your bank knows this is an additional standing order not a replacement of your existing one. In both cases please complete the form overleaf so we can be sure to allocate your increased giving to the youth worker fund.



Youth Work

GIFT DAY

29 September
2019

The Vision

At John Knox we are delighted to have the services of Gillian Burns as our youth worker. This is part of our vision to develop outreach and discipleship programmes for every age range in our community. Gillian's contracted hours are currently 20 hours per week but her passion for this ministry means she works far more than these hours. The Kirk Session would love to continue to employ Gillian and indeed increase her current working hours.

In her four years with us there have been many highlights from her work. The pick of these are:

- a well-received new seminar-style, interactive Religious Observance programme at the Academy
- a highly successful Paired Reading programme at the Academy
- running Youth Alpha and now providing the opportunity for our young people to run it themselves for their friends
- establishment of Christmas, Easter and Academy-transition events for the town primary 6 and 7s
- seeking to integrate our young people fully into the life of the church through the "Growing Young" initiative

The Purpose

The main tasks of the youth work would be:

- to build on and encourage existing youth work in John Knox and the local schools and organisations
- to pioneer new youth work in our community

John Knox currently has a small but active youth group, H2O. They are making significant contributions to mission such as helping in our holiday club and running Youth Alpha; to fellowship by encouraging and running social or fundraising events for the church family; to the vision of the church by supporting SIG groups and the Growing Young conference. These young people continue to need taught and disciplined in the faith so they can go deeper still in their love of the Lord. We need to invest greatly in this age group to help them face the challenges to faith that they experience in their teenage years and beyond.

There are a lot of young people in our community. Stewarton can support a secondary school and a number of youth organisations. Many of these young people will be interested in faith but for whatever reason do not currently wish to explore the Christian faith with the church. We need to look to engage with these young people in ways and places that they feel comfortable. This will require us to try new things, to pioneer new ministries. By continuing to employ Gillian, we want to explore how we as a church can engage more and more effectively with the young people in our church and wider community.

The Cost

All of this comes at a cost. We would love to increase Gillian's hours but we currently have a considerable short-fall in funding, even for her existing hours. The cost of employing our youth worker is £14,000 including salary, pension contributions and ministry expenses. At present we only have regular payments amounting to £1700 per annum and the shortfall has been made up from general funds. However, these

funds are currently significantly stretched by a fall in congregational giving. In addition, we will also need to replace our heating boilers in the short to medium term, at a cost in excess of £20,000.

Ideally we would like to raise our annual income by £12,300 to cover the total annual costs of employing a youth worker so that this much needed ministry does not cause us to stop any of our existing activities at John Knox. We are trying to secure grant and other external funding but we are also inviting the members and friends of John Knox to consider making a contribution. To that end, **Sunday 29th September 2019 will be a 'Gift Day'**.

How You Can Give

On our gift day, there is an opportunity for you to contribute to the costs of employing our youth worker. You can do this in 3 ways. You could make a donation on the day by cash or cheque, or you could set up a monthly standing order which could start straightaway or at a later date. If you wish to make a donation by cash or cheque but now isn't the right time for you to be doing this, you could make a pledge that you will donate a particular sum during the next year. A form is attached for completion but people will be available on the gift day to receive donations, help with Standing Order mandates and Pledges and encourage all tax payers to claim Gift Aid which adds 25% to the value of your donation.

The Lord has brought much blessing to our church and community through Gillian's ministry and so I believe with courage, faith, wise planning and the Lord's continuing goodness there are exciting times ahead for us and the young people of our community. Can I commend this initiative to you and encourage you to consider prayerfully how you could give towards this new ministry on our Gift Day, Sunday 29th September, and beyond.

Warmly in Christ,



Rev Gavin Niven