

Secretary for Prison Chaplaincy Information Pack



Dear Applicant,

Thank you for your interest in the role of Secretary for Prison Chaplaincy. This vacancy has arisen because of the retirement of Bob Wilson, who used to carry out this role.

The information here will tell you about this part-time role, the skills it requires, and explains our mission. Applicants must be practicing and professing Christians. You will need to have the right to live and work in the United Kingdom and the appointment will be made subject to satisfactory references and DBS being received.

If you would like to discuss the role, please contact Peter Flower, H.R. Consultant who has been retained to help us in the recruitment and selection of the right candidate for this role.

Please apply by completing the application form (including a CV if you want) and e-mail these to Peter Flower at dickinsonflower@btinternet.com

The closing date for applications is noon, **Wednesday 30th September 2026**. Interviews for those selected to meet with the Selection Panel will be take place on either 22nd or 23rd October at our offices in London.

You may also be interested in applying for the role of the Free Churches Faith/Belief Adviser in His Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS -16-20 hours per week). Bob carried out this role before he retired.

It is currently being advertised at: <https://jobs.justice.gov.uk/careers/SearchJobs>

These two posts would complement each other, and applicants are invited to consider whether they wish to apply for both to make a full-time role.

Yours

Revd Paul Rochester
General Secretary

1. WHO WE ARE

The Free Churches Group (FCG) seeks to express the unity in Christ that is shared by a wide range of over 29 church denominations and para church groups in the non-conformist, evangelical and pentecostal traditions across England and Wales including denominations such as The Assemblies of God, Baptist Union, and Methodist Church to the United Reform Church, New Testament Church of God and the Vineyard Churches UK & Ireland.

2. OUR MISSION

Our charitable objective is *'the advancement of the Christian religion'*. We achieve this by promoting fellowship, shared counsel and working together, where possible, to extend Christ's kingdom in every sphere of society.

We have a special focus on chaplaincy work in Prisons, the Armed Forces, Healthcare and Education. More information is given in our latest Annual General Report 2025 available on our website: <https://www.freechurches.org.uk/>.

3. OUR TEAM

You will join a small, motivated and professional team based at our offices at 27 Tavistock Square, London WC1H 9HH.

You will work remotely from your home but will need to attend team meetings at the office on a regular basis.

Travel will be required to visit prisons, attend meetings held by His Majesty Prisons and Probation Services (HMPPS), support the FCG Group members and attend ecumenical/interfaith events.

4. YOUR ROLE

Reporting to me as General Secretary you will work in partnership with the Free Churches Faith/Belief Adviser (FBA) to HMPPS to provide support, endorsement and advocacy for 220 prison chaplains serving in 124 prisons in England and Wales. Where the postholder covers both roles, different arrangements will apply.

Your core focus will be to:

- Support Free Church Chaplains in the Prison Service.
- Advocate for justice and equality through a Free Church voice in the public square.
- Expand engagement with Free Church denominations and local churches.
- Engage confidently in the ecumenical efforts to support the full range of our membership.

You will work in partnership with The Free Churches Group Trustees and staff, Free Churches Steering Committee for Prison Chaplaincy (SfPC), Prison Chaplains, Free Churches Faith/Belief Adviser to HMPPS, and Trustees of The Welcome Directory.

Your key responsibilities will be:

- Faith endorsement of Free Church candidates for prison chaplaincy posts (paid and volunteer chaplains) within HMPPS.
- Raising awareness of Free Church chaplaincy vacancies amongst the churches, nationally and locally.
- Pastoral and professional support of Free Church prison chaplains particularly through regional and national gatherings.
- Offering advice to chaplains on appropriate issues in liaison with the Free Churches Faith/Belief to HMPPS, Chaplaincy HQ (HMPPS) staff, Managing Chaplains and others when issues arise.
- Acting as an advocate for prison chaplaincy within denominations/para church groups who are members of the Free Churches Group and those exploring membership of the group through speaking engagements.
- Working collaboratively with colleagues within the Free Churches Group to help achieve shared objectives determined by the Free Churches Group's trustees.
- Actively represent the Free Churches Group as a supporting organisation of Prisons Week, contributing to the preparation of the annual prayer resources.
- Acting as an ex-officio trustee for The Welcome Directory.
- Engaging with HMPPS on issues related to prison chaplaincy including working in partnership with the Free Churches Faith/Belief Adviser (HMPPS).
- Undertaking other additional activities from time to time, which are appropriate to this role as required by me.



5. YOUR SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE.

You will need to have strong relevant and recent experience in prison chaplaincy to carry out this strategic role, and it is open to any ordained minister or lay person eligible to serve as a Free Churches Prison Chaplain. Experience as a practicing Prison Chaplain or HMPPS Chaplaincy HQ staff is highly desirable.

Essential Requirements

Personal Attributes:	Commitment to the Christian faith and life Ability to work collaboratively and flexibly Self-directing with capacity to prioritise Ability to lead ecumenical Christian and interfaith services within and outside the prison estates Ability to meet deadlines
Education:	Formally educated to UK University (or equivalent) degree level
Skills/Aptitudes:	Theological competence Good written and oral communication Advanced Inter-personal skills Pastoral skills Analytical skills IT skills to Intermediate Level in Word, Excel and PowerPoint
Knowledge	Current and continuing experience of Prison Chaplaincy Knowledge of prison chaplaincy national leadership structures
Experience	Knowledge of the Free Churches Group and an understanding of the breadth of views within it Experience of dealing with those in leadership in church, Government and society Knowledge of Churches other than the Free Churches and of Multi-Faith practice Experience in organisational management. Experience in planning and chairing meetings, and in executing their outcomes
Circumstances:	Willingness and ability to travel widely, with occasional overnight or longer stays

Desirable

Education:	Higher degree or evidence and/or research/reading in proffered area of interest
Knowledge:	Knowledge of the workings of the wider criminal justice system Advanced IT and Presentational Skills

YOUR MAIN TERMS OF EMPLOYMENT

Salary

£46,700pa on a full-time basis (35 hour week) pro-rata on hours agreed.

Type of Contract

Permanent

Hours of work

16 hours per week on days to be agreed but there is scope to consider up to 20 hours per week.

Annual holiday

30 days per year, on a pro-rata basis, excluding public holidays.

Sickness Pay

Two weeks occupational sick pay on joining, increasing with length of service to eight weeks after three years' service.

Pension

The FCG will contribute 10% of your salary to our Aviva pension scheme.

Probationary Period

6 months and then you will be confirmed in your role if your performance and conduct is satisfactory.

Notice period

Two weeks during probationary period increasing to four weeks after confirmation in post and increasing to eight weeks after twelve months employment.

GENERAL CONDITIONS – please note:

Equality of Opportunity, and Diversity

Equal treatment amongst people from diverse backgrounds and with diverse perspectives is one of the central precepts of The Free Churches Group. The Free Churches Group working as an employing body values the richness which this equal treatment brings to the workplace. It therefore has an equal opportunities policy in place which not only requires the employer to fulfil certain obligations but also places responsibilities on staff. Staff found to be contravening the policy or acting outside its spirit will be subject to disciplinary action, which could lead to dismissal.

The Free Churches Group is committed to implement the terms of all relevant diversity legislation and to improving opportunities for people safeguarded by the protected characteristics.

Standards of Behaviour and Conduct

Staff are expected to always act with due consideration for others and in a manner befitting their position as employees of a body representative of the Churches and as professionals, whatever their job.

It is important that all members of staff always present a neat and tidy appearance. You will be expected to model this to all staff and stakeholders. Your general appearance should therefore be smart and helping to convey a professional and efficient approach to work and representing the organisation.

In this post, any action that would exclude the holder from attending a prison will disqualify them from this employment. In cases the post-holder may require security clearance to access HMPPS prisons and offices.

It is a condition of employment that you are in possession of a recent and valid DBS Enhanced Certificate

Health and Safety Responsibilities

Staff must ensure that they do not endanger themselves or others by any act or omission on their part.

Home-working staff must ensure that they are mindful of health and safety responsibilities in their workplace.

Confidentiality

Staff must not pass on to unauthorised persons; any information obtained in the course of their duties without the permission of their line manager or the trustees.

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