



St. Mary's Parish Comber
The Square, Comber, Co Down, BT23 5DU

FAMILY DEVELOPMENT WORKER

FOR

ST. MARY'S PARISH, COMBER

Closing date:
Friday 30th January 2026 at 12:00 Noon

Interview:
Monday 9th February or Thursday 12th February 2026

St. Mary's Parish, Comber, is seeking a dedicated and enthusiastic Family Development Worker to join our growing community. The ideal candidate will be a committed Christian with a strong understanding of children's and family ministry and the ability to connect with people of all generations. This part-time role, for an initial fixed term of three years, offers a unique opportunity to make a significant impact on the lives of children and their families within our parish and the wider community.


As a Family Development Worker, you will play a vital role in establishing a thriving Children's Ministry within St. Mary's Parish. Your responsibilities will include building a welcoming environment for children and families, fostering faith formation, and developing outreach initiatives to connect with families beyond our parish community.

There is an occupational requirement for the post-holder to be a practising Christian, able to subscribe to the attached excerpt "Being a Christian", also found at:

<https://www.ireland.anglican.org/our-faith/being-a-christian>

St Mary's Parish Church, Comber is a registered charity in Northern Ireland (no NIC 102535), with its principal place of business at The Square, Comber, Newtownards, County Down, BT23 5DU.

 www.stmarysparishcomber.com

 028 9187 3963

 office@stmarysparishcomber.com



St. Mary's Parish Comber

JOB DESCRIPTION

Job title:	Family Development Worker
Hours of work:	Part-time, 20 hours per week, for a fixed-term of 3 years (the term may be extended, subject to review of success criteria and funding)
Place of work:	The Parish Halls, St. Mary's Parish Comber, The Town Square, Comber, Newtownards, Co. Down BT23 5DU. (There is the possibility of some elements being managed by occasionally working from home, with the prior agreement of the Rector)
Salary:	£29,540 - £31,022 (pro-rata), commensurate with experience.
Actual Salary:	£15,968 – £16,769 per annum for 20 hours per week <i>(Based on a full-time equivalent of 37 hours per week).</i>
Reporting to:	The Rector
Purpose:	<p>The Family Development Worker will play a key role in building a thriving Children's Ministry within St Mary's Parish. This role focuses on both internal development and outreach, fostering a welcoming and nurturing environment for children and families already connected to our church community. The Family Development Worker will also explore opportunities to connect with young families in the wider community, introducing them to the church and its ministries.</p> <p>In addition to programme development and volunteer recruitment, the Family Development Worker will play a vital role in making Sunday Worship more accessible and engaging for children and young people, under the supervision of the rector.</p> <p>This will involve exploring creative approaches to integrating children into the service, while also offering age-appropriate learning opportunities alongside the main worship. Ultimately, the Family Development Worker will help children grow in their faith, connect them with other in the parish, and contribute to a vibrant, inter-generational church community.</p>
TASKS:	The order in which these tasks is detailed does not reflect their respective importance. Priorities may vary each week and should be regularly assessed by the individual in consultation with the Rector.

Pastoral and spiritual responsibilities

- Discipling children in the Christian faith, encouraging them to be active in reading the Bible and prayer, both corporately and privately
- Participate in leading worship, including teaching the Bible at all-age services
- Build relationships with children and their families within the church, and in the local community



Responsibilities for Church Activities

- Recruiting, training, equipping and supporting a team of ministry volunteers and any interns
- Developing a Sunday Children's programme in partnership with volunteers
- Organising outreach events for children and their families
- Co-ordinating the parish's social media communications with children and their families
- Developing and leading new ministries for children and their parents
- Providing regular reports on outcomes and effectiveness of the development action plan to the Rector, select vestry and funders

Responsibilities Relating to the Wider Community

- Raising the profile of the church amongst existing organisations and in the local community
- Working with the Rector to build and develop links with schools
- Building relationships with Diocesan Children's Development Officer and other children, and family workers in nearby churches and exploring possible joint activities
- Co-ordinating and / or leading groups of children attending residential events – e.g. J.A.M. Camps at Kilbroney

Other Requirements of the Post

- Putting in place a suitable action plan for development of ministry to local young families in the St. Mary's parish for the next 5 years
- Carrying out all duties in compliance with health and safety policy and statutory regulations
- Creating and maintaining accurate records appropriate to the role
- Complying fully with the Church of Ireland Safeguarding Trust Policy
- Maintaining skills and knowledge through training opportunities as agreed with the Rector
- Any other duties as needed that are related to the role

This job description is subject to review in the light of changing circumstances and is not intended to be rigid and inflexible but should be regarded as providing guidelines within which the post-holder works. It may be modified to meet changing needs and other duties of a similar nature may be assigned from time to time by the Rector



PERSON SPECIFICATION

	Essential	Desirable
Qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 GCSEs / O Levels at Grade C or above (must include Maths and English) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accredited qualification in a relevant discipline (e.g. theology, teaching, evangelism, youth and children's ministry) • Educated to degree level (2:2 or above)
Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least 2 years' experience in children's or families' ministry, in a paid or voluntary capacity, in a faith context • Experience of working with volunteers • Experience of planning and delivering children and family outreach events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of leading in Sunday worship services • Experience of managing a budget • Experience of delivering school assemblies / working with schools • Experience working with children with additional needs • Experience of having responsibility for social media content for an organisation or department • Experience of building relationships with different community groups outside of church settings
Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A self-starter with initiative, hardworking and able to enthuse others • Proficient in IT/multimedia and digital platforms • Ability to work independently and as part of a team • Good communication, organisational and record keeping skills • Hold a current driving licence and access to a vehicle 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to play a musical instrument • Skills in creative communication, such as arts and drama • First Aid qualification
Personal / Character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A committed Christian, subscribing to our statement of faith which can be found at www.ireland.anglican.org/our-faith/being-a-christian • A heart to serve the church, for evangelism and for those on the margins of society • Views the role as a calling • Flexibility and willingness to work outside office hours, especially Saturdays and Sundays • Become, along with their family (if relevant) a worshipping member of the parish 	



Appointment will be subject to satisfactory background checks, as required under the Church of Ireland Safeguarding Trust policy, including contacting referees and AccessNI disclosure.

Any appointment will be subject to a probationary period of 6 months

Please note that no candidate will be short-listed unless their application demonstrates that they meet all the essential criteria. In the event of several candidates meeting all of the essential criteria, the desirable criteria may be used to assist with short-listing. Candidates are therefore advised to set out in full in their application how they meet the essential and (where appropriate) the desirable criteria.

**Enquiries relating to this position should be directed to the Rector,
Rev. Sam Johnston, jobs@stmarysparishcomber.com.**

*Submit your application form to the email address or postal address below by
Friday 30th January 2026 at 12:00 Noon
Late submissions will not be accepted.*

Email Address:

jobs@stmarysparishcomber.com

Postal Address:

**Rev. Sam Johnston, St Mary's Parish Office, The Square, Comber, Co. Down,
BT23 5DU**

Please mark the envelope as *Application*



BEING A CHRISTIAN

An excerpt from the Church of Ireland Website
<https://www.ireland.anglican.org/our-faith/being-a-christian>

A personal relationship with Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is at the heart of the Christian faith.

Men and women are created in the image of God yet separated from Him by our rebellion against Him. In His unconditional love for us, God entered our world in the person of Jesus Christ – fully human and fully divine – to give a new life through the cross which reconciles us to God. Thereafter we begin a new life with Jesus as Lord which continues into eternity as He has conquered death through His resurrection.

The Apostles' Creed affirms our belief in God as Trinity – Father, Son and Holy Spirit – and that Christ was born to the Virgin Mary, died and rose again from the dead, ascended into heaven, and will come again.

We have the privilege and opportunity to approach God in prayer and to receive His teaching through the Bible. The Ten Commandments teach our duty towards God and towards our neighbour, as affirmed by Jesus: “ ‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbour as yourself.’ ” In the Lord's Prayer, we express our worship for God and our desire to see His kingdom come on Earth as it is in Heaven.

The Church of Ireland has two sacraments – Baptism and Holy Communion (also known as the Lord's Supper or Eucharist) – which are outward and visible signs of an inward and spiritual grace given to us by God, and also a means to receive that grace.

Baptism is administered by water in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Infants are baptised on the understanding that they will be brought up in the fellowship of the Church, taught the Christian faith, and then confirmed by the Bishop and admitted to Holy Communion when they have publicly confessed the faith. Adults are also baptised, if they have not been baptised as infants, as they too place their faith in the promises of God.

In Holy Communion, Christians continually remember the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross through the taking and receiving of bread and wine. A variety of interpretations of the meaning and significance of the bread and wine exist within the Church of Ireland, although our doctrine would not include transubstantiation. Holy Communion strengthens and refreshes the souls of those who receive it by faith.

