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Sophie Phenix soon to be our new Youth and Children's Worker

As a part of our church's mission, we are always seeking to resource God's kingdom globally, including training future workers for the kingdom of God wherever and however He chooses to take them.

We are delighted to report that the church staffing team has further expanded to now include a **Youth and Children's Worker** starting in September 2024.



Since her return from university, Sophie Phenix has been involved with our children's work and shown herself to be very capable. To that end she made an approach to be considered for a role as a BBC children's worker and this was the subject of several discussions among the church leadership.

At the last members' meeting, we had heard Sophie's heart for the children as she gave the report on the Friday evening Kids' Club. She had previously been exploring a call to mission, but the Lord had turned her heart towards working with children.

After prayer and discussion, the trustees proposed to appoint Sophie Phenix as Children's and Youth Worker and be given appropriate external training in what will be a paid full-time role. The proposal was put before a specially convened Members Meeting on July the 8th and the voting for her acceptance was unanimous. Congratulations to Sophie, who is set to join her mum and dad on the church staff team!

Sophie is currently employed at Keith Jones Christian Bookshop, who speak very highly of her, but this would cease in September.

Sophie tells us "I am so excited to take on this role as a children and youth worker. I can't wait to get to know them more and to show them just how incredible and loving our God is. I hope to disciple and nurture them with God's help. I also hope to grow in relationships with their parents, supporting them in their journey. I also hope to not only work with the kids but also young adults and others within the church."

So, her new position will involve times of serious study mixed in with practical training.

The studying element will be at the “School for Discipleship (SFD)” run by Lansdowne Church. That will occupy two and a half days a week, plus at least 8 hours study time.

The aim is not to fill heads with knowledge but to shape the character of students, who must be those looking to serve in a local church. Our Assistant Pastor Steven Driver will also have input, working through a book called “Raising the Bar” with Sophie.

The content of the School for Discipleship is Evangelical Theology and will cover various areas like Bible overview, Christian Doctrine, Church History and Church planting. It is an evangelical school bringing together students from different denominations, who share that love for Jesus and trust in the Bible as the word of God. The course will be taught in conjunction with the Wessex Gospel Partnership, a network of evangelical churches, committed to resourcing local churches through a programme of training and equipping.

The practical experience at BBC: The rest of Sophie’s week will be taken up with preparation for, and running, children’s work here, and hopefully increased involvement in local schools, including Broadstone Middle School, who have asked to bring a year group to visit the church. Sunday School leaders commented that, when Sophie helps in Sunday School, she is very enthusiastic and just gets on with things without needing to be asked.



To help you learn more about Sophie we asked her to tell us about her life, her family, her education, and her interests and hobbies. Read on.. it’s quite a story!

Family and Education: Born in Poole hospital I have lived in Broadstone in the same house for my whole life. I have two sisters, Emily who is 4 years older than me, and Hannah who is 4 years younger than me.

I went to Broadstone First School for 4 years, Broadstone Middle School for 2 years and then Parkstone Grammar School for 7 years, as I stayed on at Parkstone to complete my A-Levels. I studied Music, Maths and Theatre Studies for A-Level but sadly didn’t do my actual exams because of Covid, so my final grades were just predicted by the teachers.

University: Next came a three-year degree course at Bath Spa University and I graduated with first-class honours in BA Music. When I went to Uni, I didn't have a specific career in mind, however I knew that I loved performing, especially musical theatre, and that I was interested in learning more about ethnomusicology.

(Ethnomusicology is the study of music in its social and cultural contexts. Ethnomusicologists examine music as a social process in order to understand what music is and what it means to its practitioners and audiences.)

A Lifestyle of Music and a Variety of Instruments: I have a very musical family. My mum, Helen plays many instruments and is part of a choir. My Dad, John played the saxophone and is also a great singer. Emily studied music at Uni as well as me and she is amazing at the piano, she also taught herself how to play the viola to play in the orchestra. Hannah plays the trombone and did music at A-Level. My extended family are also very musical and creative, so it runs in all the family! There's rarely a quiet moment in our house.

I have been extremely blessed with my upbringing. I have very caring and loving parents, who allowed us to try out different activities and supported us through everything. Over the years I have played many musical instruments but my main three are singing, piano and flute.

I think the first instrument I learnt was the recorder. I also learnt the guitar and piano in first school. I joined a theatre school when I was 5 and had group singing lessons there. I never did any proper classical vocal training until I was at uni. In my second school I picked up the cello for a year before deciding it was too big and I also learnt the flute. In senior school, I taught myself to play the baritone saxophone for the school concert band as it has the same fingering as the flute, so was relatively easy to pick up.

We have a white grand piano at home which gets regular use. I also have a keyboard which I bought to take with me to Uni so that I always had access to one. Our grand piano lives in our music room at home and my keyboard lives in my room.

No less than three Grade 8's ! I took my grade 8 piano in 2022 and passed with a merit. I took my grade 8 flute in 2020 and passed with a merit. As it was during covid, I did this exam at home and had to send in recordings to be examined. I took my Grade 8 musical theatre singing exam in 2017 and passed with a merit.

I have also participated in activities such as diving, girl guides, and attended a musical theatre school. I still attend a dance school where I learn tap and ballet and have learnt other styles in the past.

Diving, Dancing & Drama: I used to do the sport diving. I competed in competitions at Poole dolphin swimming pool in 2013 and 2014. I have been dancing since the age of 3 and I still attend the same dance school, the Orchard Academy of Performing Arts. I have achieved Bronze Jazz, Grade 5 Modern Theatre, Grade 6 Tap, Intermediate vocational Ballet, and Grade 8 Ballet. I have also completed Grade 5 Acting, Grade 5 music theory, and grade 4 violin.

I was a part of an agency through the theatre school I attended (Swish of the Curtain Theatre School in Christchurch). This was an agency for extra roles in films and TV shows. I was in Downton Abbey and a 2017 film called Hampstead. Me and my mum were in an ad for a Bank. I also filmed for the TV show Wolf Hall, but I believe that the scene was cut which is very common in film and TV. I also auditioned for different films such as "Pan", however sometimes you were just picked based on the colour of your hair or something like that. The reason that I was picked to film Wolf Hall was because they had a dress, and I was the one who fit it.

Church and Christianity: I am extremely privileged and thank God for blessing me with my mum and dad for not only supporting me through my busy schedule but also in my personal and spiritual growth. They prayed with us every night and showed us the importance of going to church on Sundays and attending church events or kid's clubs when they were on. We were shown that God should always come first and should be the priority in our life. Although this meant that sometimes I would miss out on things such as shows which rehearsed on Sundays or even opportunities to be on tv, I am so glad that I was shown from a young age just how amazing God is and that He is worth sacrificing things for.

The first church I went to was Chapel in the Valley in Corfe Mullen. I loved my time there and I believe we left when I was around 6. I remember some of the Sunday school teaching and the kids club. Moving to Broadstone Baptist Church, I loved the Sunday school teaching, and the Friday night kids group and would often bring friends along.

I became a Christian on the 22nd of October 2010 when I was 8 years old. I knew that I needed to say a special prayer to ask Jesus into my heart to become a Christian. However, I was a bit of a perfectionist and didn't know what to say and didn't want to say the wrong thing. My parents bought me a book called 'Crazy Christians' which basically explains what a Christian is. About halfway through it gives you the option of saying a prayer to become a Christian, so I did.

I was baptised on the 18th of January 2015. My Dad and Pastor Tim baptised me which was so amazing. Having my dad pray over me afterwards was such a beautiful moment which I still remember.

In terms of contemporary Christian singers, I love Lauren Daigle, For King and Country, Elevation worship, Brandon Lake. I have fond memories of growing up surrounded by musicians such as Rend Collective, Matt Redman, Chris Tomlin and a favourite in the Phenix household was 'Majesty' by Delirious?

I helped at the Ventures camp last year (Barnstaple 2 at Sherborne) as an assistant leader and I loved it so much that it stirred something in my heart. I have always loved kids and have wanted to be a mother for as long as I can remember, but I never thought that I would work with Kids. However, God has showed me through many ways that working with Kids and young people is what He wants me to do right now, and I am so excited and can't wait to get started.

I am extremely excited about this new role. I honestly never imagined that I would work for a church, but God has a funny way of doing things and showing you what He wants for your life. I am most excited to see how these children and young people grow in their relationship with the Lord. I also hope that I can build up a relationship with them where they feel safe and supported and feel they can ask me questions about God and other things.

