# Senior Pastor Vacancy

**Title:** Senior Pastor

**Location:** Sudbury, Suffolk UK

**Position:** Full time (Part-time and bi-vocational arrangements would be considered, as would a couple job-sharing the appointment)

**Commencement:** Ideally late Spring/early Summer 2026.

**Salary:** £39,500 per annum (variable depending on experience and/or pro rata)

**Applications Close:** Friday 30th January 2026

# Who are Stour Valley Church?

Stour Valley Vineyard Church (SVV) was planted in 2007 and is based in Sudbury, a beautiful and thriving market town in South Suffolk. We are a vibrant, spirit-filled church of around 80 adults and children/youth, and part of the global Vineyard movement. At SVV, “we seek to encounter the presence of the Living God, and we believe we are transformed by that encounter” (Church Vision Statement).

SVV is renowned as a welcoming place, with a friendly and relaxed atmosphere. SVV has many fully committed people who love to share the gospel and disciple others. We are blessed with a team of talented musicians with a heart to bring the church community into the presence of God, and we are passionate about experiencing God's presence through prayer and the power of the Holy Spirit. The church has grown both in number and spiritual depth in recent times as more people come to find the truth and be empowered by it; this has resulted in regular baptism services.

We have a strong sense of community within the church family, with people coming from different areas around Sudbury. We hold weekly Sunday Services and host four midweek home groups (including one for youth). We also have mid-week bible studies, monthly prayer meetings and various outreach activities into the local community, including our Storehouse foodbank. We currently rent a hall for our meetings and a separate space for our offices and Storehouse. We have recently been negotiating over the lease of a town centre location to house all our activities, though negotiations have ceased to await the vision of a new pastor on a change of premises.

**What are we looking for?**

Our previous pastors, Joel and Kady Taylor, moved on from leading SVV in November 2025 and so we are seeking a new Senior Pastor. We are looking for someone who can lead our church deeper into our encounter with God and into a new season of mission and growth. This is an exciting opportunity to lead a church with a solid foundation of faith and significant outreach opportunities.

Our ideal candidate will be a passionate spiritual leader, a compelling Bible communicator, and a nurturing pastor committed to relational ministry. The successful applicant will have completed a level of theological training and have at least two years of pastoral experience within a Vineyard Church or a church movement with similar values. They must be a committed Christian and baptized as a believer and filled with the Holy Spirit. The successful applicant will also have good people and managerial skills, being able to oversee teams and develop leaders. The role is outlined in more detail below and the successful candidate will ideally have the competencies and character outlined in the Person Specification.

The successful applicant would ideally be in place to start in late Spring/early Summer 2026.

Applications from outside the UK will be considered, but all research into visas, travel arrangements and relocation costs would rest with the applicant.

# Where does this role fit?

SVV is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, run by a Board of Trustees who have legal responsibility for the management and conduct of the church. The Senior Pastor is appointed by and is accountable to the Church's Trustees. Once appointed, the Senior Pastor becomes a member of the Board of Trustees and takes part in all decision making except in matters relating to: his/her employment including salary and employee benefits; performance issues; and any other issue where there is an actual or potential conﬂict of interest. The Senior Pastor is solely responsible for all spiritual matters at SVV.

The Senior Pastor provides line management to three members of paid staff: an administrator, a finance assistant, and the Storehouse Foodbank Manager. The Senior Pastor also directs and supports a team of volunteer team leaders, who oversee specific areas of ministry (children, youth, prayer etc.). The church currently has an interim Leadership team, appointed from within the congregation. A new senior pastor would have the freedom to review this arrangement. The church would like to encourage a team structure supporting the pastor and church activities.

# Next Steps

If you would like to apply for this role, please send the following to the SVV Succession Panel at [office@stourvalleyvineyard.org](mailto:office@stourvalleyvineyard.org), with the subject line of your email marked as "Senior Pastor Application - [Your Name]".

* **Completed application form.** We will not contact your referees unless you are shortlisted for an interview, and will provide you with notice before we do so.
* **Covering letter.** Please tell us about yourself, and explain how you meet the qualities, skills, and experience outlined in the job description and person specification. We’d also like to hear why you believe God is calling you to the Senior Pastor role at SVV.

The closing date for applications is **Friday 30th January 2026**.

Our selection process is designed to be prayerful, thorough, and fair.

* **Short informal video call**: Before we invite anyone to travel to interview, we would like to invite some candidates to have an initial informal conversation with us over a video call. This will enable us to seek any clarifications needed to assist with the shortlisting process.
* **Panel Interview:** Shortlisted candidates will be invited for an in-person interview with a panel of representatives from SVV and the local Vineyard region, expected in the week commencing 2nd March 2026.
* **Practical Assessment & Congregation Meet**: Preferred candidates will be invited to meet the congregation through guest preaching at a Sunday service, participating in a congregation Q&A or through a church lunch. The candidate will get the chance to meet with the leadership team, trustee team, and ministry leaders. These meetings will be a two-way street—where you will be able to ask us your questions as well as be asked questions.
* **Vineyard Licensing:** The preferred candidate must be approved by the Vineyard Area Leader prior to appointment.
* **Decision:** We aim to reach a final decision and inform all candidates by early April 2026.

We appreciate your time and prayerful consideration of this role. If you’d like any clarification over anything in our application pack, or would like us to answer any specific questions, please do get in touch. We look forward to receiving your application.

# Senior Pastor Job Description

# Roles and Responsibilities

1. **Set compelling vision, values and strategy.**
2. Prayerfully discern, develop and communicate God’s vision and strategy for SVV.
3. Model and communicate the values of SVV and the Vineyard movement to create a culture where the person and gospel of Jesus Christ is at its centre.
4. Encourage members to exercise their gifts to enable fulfilment of the vision.
5. Work with the Trustees and Leadership Team to ensure a suitable strategy, budget and staff team are in place to deliver the vision.

# Develop effective, engaged and supported staff and leaders.

1. Model discipleship within the church by mentoring, training and inspiring individuals to grow in their personal relationship with God.
2. Encourage ministry in the power of the Holy Spirit and ensure this is modeled,

taught and practiced in church services, small groups and one to one.

1. Establish a culture of service where God’s love & mercy are shared with others.
2. Identify, train, equip and support leaders.
3. Provide pastoral care to members of the congregation.
4. People management skills - to line manage, support, care for and develop staff, to maximise the effectiveness of paid staff

# Mobilise people to deliver the vision together.

1. Seek to advance God’s kingdom through relevant ministries and activities recognising that “everyone gets to play”.
2. Ensure SVV contributes to the social needs of vulnerable people, the local and wider community and seeks opportunities to support mission within and beyond Sudbury.
3. Sustain and advance good relationships with other church leaders, community associations, businesses, civic leaders and the wider Vineyard movement.

# Ensure good governance and operate responsibly.

1. Deliver the charity’s business functions of finance, human resources, health and safety, safeguarding, regulatory compliance, etc. through an appropriate combination of staff and volunteers, as required by the Charity Commission and Companies House.
2. Maintain good relationships with the Trustees (and serve as a Trustee yourself) to ensure that SVV fulfills its objectives.
3. Maintain good relationships with the Vineyard Area / Regional Leader and participate in and contribute to Local Vineyard and Vineyard Churches UK&I events.
4. Operate under the spiritual oversight of Area Pastors
5. Undertake other duties and responsibilities as agreed with the Trustees.

# Senior Pastor Person Specification

# You will have completed a level of theological training and have at least 2 years pastoral experience with a Vineyard Church or a church movement with similar values. The successful post-holder must be a committed Christian and baptised as a believer and filled with the Holy Spirit.

# Skills and Abilities Required:

# Ability to lead prayerfully and with authority

# Strong biblical understanding and application

# Ability to gather people into the church community

# Ability to disciple people in their journey of faith and provide pastoral support

# Ability and experience of working in a team, and taking on board the ideas and advice of that team whilst being able to make clear and final decisions

# Ability to communicate in a clear and engaging way both verbally and in writing through preaching and teaching, and in all interactions with church members and others

# Ability to inspire and motivate others, with experience of managing paid staff and volunteers

# Good administrative and personal organisational skills

# Understanding of charity commission requirements and working with a board of Trustees

# A clean financial history and appreciation of financial management

# Previous experience as a Pastor/Assistant Pastor necessary

# Ability and skill to lead worship is desirable (but not a requirement)

# Conduct and behaviour must align with Christian values and with the Vineyard Churches Code of Conduct

# Personal Qualities and Attributes Required:

* Confidence in one’s calling to church leadership
* Courage to make decisions, coupled with kindness to communicate well

# Positivity, commitment and energy

* Resilience: a “thick skin and a soft heart”

# Acts with integrity, honesty and transparency

# Models a culture of servanthood

# Shows humility and had a commitment to continuing personal and professional development

# Willingness to be connected and accountable across the Vineyard movement

# Disclosure and Barring Service Check (DBS):

# The position involves contact with children and vulnerable adults, so the post-holder will be required to have Enhanced DBS Clearance and any offer of employment will be subject to the outcome of this check being satisfactory.

# Terms and Conditions

1. **Occupational Requirement:** This post carries an Occupational Requirement on the grounds of religion and belief. Candidates applying must be able to demonstrate a Christian belief and value system in line with Vineyard Churches UK & Ireland Statement of Faith. <https://www.vineyardchurches.org.uk/resources/statement-of-faith/>
2. **Contract Period:** This is a permanent position with a 6-month probationary period.
3. **Eligibility to Work in the UK:** The job holder must be able to provide evidence of their eligibility to work in the UK prior to appointment and for the entire duration of employment.
4. **DBS Clearance:** The job holder is required to obtain and maintain satisfactory DBS enhanced clearance for the entire duration of employment.