



THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND

**Diocese of St Edmundsbury
and Ipswich**

Pioneer Ministry

Pioneer is a new licensed ministry in the Diocese affirming the pioneering ministry of leading teams that develop Fresh Expressions of Church for the 95% of people who are not a regular part of a local church.

Since 2004 the Church of England, in partnership with other denominations, has witnessed the growth of a wide variety of forms church for example Messy Church and Café Church.

What are Pioneers?

Pioneers are people called by God who are the first to see and creatively respond to the Holy Spirit's initiatives with those outside the church; gathering others around them as they seek to establish new contextual Christian community. They combine the ability to see a new future with the skills and gifts to make the future accessible now.

What does becoming a Licensed Pioneer give you?

- Affirmation of God's call by the wider church.
- Tailored training and on-going support for your ministry.
- Accountability for your vocation from your local church and/or the Lightwave community.
- A learning community of others doing the same thing.
- Opportunity to reflect as you go.
- Financial support for training and on-going support.

Are you called to be a Pioneer?

Maybe God is inviting you to join him in a mission adventure in your locality or community. Four key things might help, most Pioneers...

Feel inadequate

Many find themselves asking questions about how to connect people with God but, to be honest, hoped they were not the answer.

Follow the Spirit

God is prompting them to ask questions about the people God has placed in their lives. Through the Spirit's work they are willing to take up the challenge to find out how God wants to connect with these people and is enlisting our help to do this.

Fall into God's mission

They discover that God loves those outside the church and is not locked up in any one building. Rather than asking people to come to church, they see God forming church in new places and new ways.

Found some principles to help them

Many people want to connect with God but will not darken the door of a church for a variety of reasons. Simple principles are emerging that require few resources and only a small group of people.

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My ministry is to pioneer and shape new relationships with the unchurched in the community with a hope to make church relevant to the community entrusted into our care. I do this by encouraging and supporting the Church family to be mission and outward focused and alongside this I build relationships with the community and then bring the two together.

My role is a partnership between the Methodist Church and the Anglican Church, this creates the wonderful opportunity for our Church family to experience the joy of a living faith through acts of service.

We do different things to connect to the community and we do this out of love – the motive of our hearts – We love because Jesus loves. We go to where the community are, for example joining an existing community cooking group which was running in the community centre, hosting cooking lessons and using this time to get to know the people there. We build these relationships overtime and it is of course intentional – to invite them to explore faith.

The biggest challenge is that once we have connected with people in our community - how can we bring that connection into the church – moving from presence to proclamation? We have found that by being ourselves, we are able to build trusting relationship, one in which they can ask questions which gives us an opportunity to share our faith, and in doing so, we can learn together.

Having this trust makes it easier to talk about Jesus and say that Jesus loves them too. We continue to look for opportunities to shape a community of people toward serving each other and the wider community, intentionally influenced with the love of Jesus.

It is important that we take time to 'be' in the midst of our doing.

Discernment

Discernment is undertaken either prior to, during, or on completion of, the Mission Shaped Ministry Course (MSM). The expectation is that you will already be involved in some form of pioneering work.

With the support of your Incumbent, please contact the Archdeacon for Rural Mission. At an appropriate point an application is completed with references both from your Incumbent, Resourcing Church Leader or Lightwave leader and from a participant in your pioneering role. The support of your PCC will also be required.

An interview with either the Bishop of Dunwich, Archdeacon for Rural Mission or Director of Mission and Ministry follows and if appropriate a three-year renewable license (Canon E8.4) is recommended. All candidates will need a DBS check and to complete a C3 Safeguarding training course.

Training

Initial training is normally undertaken through MSM, the nationally recognised ecumenical one-year foundation course. Some potential Pioneers may have undertaken other forms of training which will be taken into account.

Once licenced, you will be supported in developing a Ministry Training Plan to continue in life-long training. This will help you identify appropriate tools to develop reflective practice and engage in learning with peers as well as receiving coaching and taught modules. This is likely to include aspects of Lightwave's leadership training and other specialist modules. Each Pioneer gets a training allowance to support them.

Support and Accountability

If your Pioneering ministry is contained within a Benefice you will normally be part of the Benefice Ministry team under the authority of your Incumbent. If the context is network-focussed over a wider area, the Bishop's Mission Order for Lightwave will provide an alternative framework.

A working agreement will define the range of relationships to help your ministry to flourish. This and your licence will be reviewed and considered for renewal every three years.

Regular opportunities will be provided to reflect with your local Pioneer team, alongside a Mission Accompanier or Coach regarding the development of the Fresh Expression of Church being formed.

Pioneers will be invited to be part of the Diocesan Missional Network. This will provide peer support, on-going theological reflection, fellowship and worship. On occasions you would be expected to support the promotion of Pioneer Ministry and Fresh Expressions of Church in the Diocese.

Pioneers will also be invited to join the National Anglican Community of Pioneers. Further resources are available from the Diocesan website:

www.cofesuffolk.org

For more information

For general enquiries about new Pioneers or their initial or ongoing training please contact:

Mrs Lesley Steed

Mission and Ministry Team Senior Administrator

lesley.steed@cofesuffolk.org

Phone: 01473 298510

Regarding discernment please contact:

Archdeacon Sally Gaze

Leader of the Lightwave
Community and Archdeacon for
Rural Mission

13 Spring Park, Otley, Suffolk
IP6 9NX

archdeacon.sally@cofesuffolk.org

Phone: 07446 933129

The Revd Canon Dave Gardner

Director of Mission and Ministry

dave.gardner@cofesuffolk.org

Phone: 01473 298521

The logo for 'Growing in God' features the text 'Growing in God' in a bold, blue, sans-serif font. A small green sprout with two leaves is positioned above the letter 'i' in 'Growing'.

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