

My journey to being a priest

I had a 'call' to ministry from a young age, at 15 I started to feel that church leadership was what I was going to do. I can't really explain how I knew or felt it I just couldn't deny it. Then lots of people in my life started to mention it my friends who weren't Christians called me the 'dancing vicar' and my minister (as at that point I attended a Methodist church) said to me as I was preparing to leave for university, 'I look forward to the news of you getting ordained.'

I discovered the Anglican church through the Christian union at university and the university chapel. Both the Chaplain and my Vicar noticed that I could be a candidate for ordination. At 19 very reluctantly I visited the Diocesan director of ordinands. I brought to the meeting a list of all the reasons why I either didn't want to do it or felt I couldn't do it. But along with the list I brought a feeling that hadn't gone away that maybe this was what God had planned for my life. Unfortunately the DDO dismissed my concerns and felt they weren't that big a deal after all to him some of them felt flippant especially as one of them was because I didn't want to wear the uniform! But to me they were important. I left the meeting and then stopped replying to his emails. I didn't think about it again for 6 years, in that time I got married and had two children. While on a bike ride with a very discerning friend, I talked about feeling lost and directionless, I didn't know where God was leading me. She laughed and said, 'Yes you do, you always have.' That was my prompt to start praying and discerning if actually that feeling that I had put on the back burner and ignored was still there, was God really calling me to be a priest and could I ever come to terms with the 'uniform'. Thankfully the DDO was willing to see me and really made me question and explore what that feeling was and what it could mean. 18 months later I moved my family to Bristol and I started ordination training. It has been a steep learning curve and an emotional rollercoaster, but I no longer need to ask where am I going as I feel I'm already on the road.