

Called by God

Deacons' Ordinations, 30 June 2019



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LICHFIELD



Come follow Christ
in the footsteps of St Chad

All are called

God creates and calls everyone – including everyone in the Cathedral this morning. But we are here to celebrate the calling of ten women and men to the ministry of deacons in God’s Church – an ordained ministry through which they will serve God and other people by the way in which they live and the things they will do – in their communities, their churches, their neighbourhoods, their workplaces. This booklet tells you a bit about each of them, and what has brought them here. If you would like to talk to anyone about God’s calling to you, please contact angela.bruno@lichfield.anglican.org and Angela will put you in touch with someone who can help you explore this further.

Diana Barnett

Diana was born in London but describes herself as a Home Counties girl, having lived in Hertfordshire, Kent, Surrey and Berkshire before ‘escaping to the country’ 32 years ago, moving to Shropshire with her young family.

Diana has worked as an accountant, piano teacher, driving instructor and for the last eighteen years as a driving examiner.



She was first called by God to study, and began a degree in Theology, Ministry and Mission as an extension student of St John’s, Nottingham,

before experiencing a further calling to ministry. She then continued her studies and training with The Queen's Foundation in Birmingham.

Diana was widowed in 2016 and although her husband, Mike, had shared part of her journey with her, his absence is keenly felt today. She will forever be grateful for the love and support shown by her son, three daughters, their partners and her grand-daughter.

Her advice to anyone who gets the 'niggle' that God is calling them is not to resist but instead to explore what God is asking you to do. It could be the last thing you were expecting – but embrace whatever it may be, and let God embrace you.

Julie Birkin



Julie has lived in Stoke-on-Trent all her life. Her family have all been either pottery workers or coal miners, and she herself currently works at the Emma Bridgewater pottery factory as a sponge/fettler. This has been her trade for most of her working life, apart from the 25 years she was at home looking after her disabled son. She always believed that God was calling her to ministry, and is looking forward to her curacy in Stoke. Julie is passionate

about Stoke-on-Trent and its people, and believes that her ministry is as much in her place of work as it is in the church.

David Clark

While training to be a maths teacher in Plymouth David met and subsequently married Angela 36 years ago; they are blessed with two children and two grandchildren.

Over the years several people asked David if he'd considered ordination but he always dismissed the idea on the grounds that he was fully occupied as a parent/ teacher/school leader/ churchwarden/ hockey-player. Finally God intervened and David was made redundant from his



school post at the same time as the parish entered a vacancy. By being available to offer practical help in the church he experienced a definite sense of calling – and about five years ago, he began the process of discernment, formation and training.

One of the great joys of the past few years, says David, has been journeying alongside others who are outwardly from different traditions and backgrounds, yet inwardly united by a compelling sense that their lives to this point have been about God getting them to the right place at the right time.

If any *person* says to you "Have you ever considered ministry?", before you dismiss the idea do consider if it is actually *God* who is doing the asking.

Samuel Crossley

Sam is married to Hilary and they have three children (Fraser, Iona and Esme). Also a dog called Juno. He is from Devon, Hilary is from Glasgow and they've lived all over the place.



Sam had a call to ministry when he was 19, studying Land Management at university. Since then he has spent nearly 10 years as a Christian youth worker while trying to work out what ministry God is calling him to. Ordination is the next step on that journey. Sam feels a particular call to Bible teaching and preaching as a vital aspect of the worshipping life of the Church. He has loved being part of Cranmer Hall, Durham, and the last two years have proved crucial to his formation for ministry, particularly in helping him to think about how to communicate the Christian faith to those outside the Church.

Duncan Gorwood

Duncan was born and raised in Yorkshire before moving across the Pennines to train first as an opera singer and later as a teacher. Duncan met Caroline while working as a newly qualified teacher, and they have two children, Ellie and Guy.

Duncan has a passion for inclusion and has spent his career working with those at the margins of society in special education. His call to priesthood and his desire to share the gospel is shaped by these experiences.

Two years' full-time training at Ripon College Cuddesdon has been a wonderful and enriching experience. He has become particularly interested in prison ministry, and hopes to be able to continue this ministry in the future.

As Duncan says, 'God's call is unique and it's not always easy to answer it. It may seem odd, or even scary, to consider giving up a good career to follow a calling to serve God, but the rewards are immeasurable.'



What advice would Duncan give those who are exploring God's call? 'Be rooted in prayer and be patient. It takes time to fully discern a vocation and the journey is full of ups and downs! Keep your loved ones alongside you as you travel the path God puts in front of you – it's much better when it is shared with and shaped by those close to you.'

David Green



David grew up on the edge of Sheffield, with views over Peak District moorland. For much of his career as an engineering geologist, he worked in and around the Peak District inspecting and maintaining roads and railways. His curacy is a step over to the other side of the National Park. David is married to Karen, who he met at the University of Leeds when they were both studying geology.

A growing confidence in the Christian faith and a sense of the importance of worshipping and praying together as a church, rather than merely as individuals, led David into the Church of England. His call to ministry grew alongside that. David already had a strong interest in theological learning before training; but his time at college has led him to believe that even more important than academic learning is the formation that takes place through living and worshipping with a diverse group of others as a community.

For those exploring what God is calling them to do, David would say prayerfully explore, listen to others and be willing to try out things that don't seem like they would suit you. When a church leader once asked him whether he had considered ordination he replied, 'That's not exactly on my to-do list' and began to make his excuses. Within a few years none of those excuses seemed relevant.

Paul Lucking

Paul was born in Stoke on Trent, has been married almost 40 years, and is the father to two boys (men really), and grandfather of three. He has been a university lecturer for 34 years and will continue doing this part-time after ordination, as an SSM curate. He has previously been a Street Pastor, on the city streets late at night, where people don't expect to find the Church. He feels drawn in his ministry to the forgotten, the marginalised and the outsiders in our midst.

Paul never really 'saw' God until his mid-forties, and that came through the witness of a dying friend. He then understood that from death can come life; when in those dark times people say it is hopeless, they are wrong - there is always hope, he says.

Paul goes on: 'Of all the people to call, God wouldn't be calling me, you may feel! And you may take a few detours, but that itch, that small voice just keeps coming back. If you feel called, don't ignore it. The Diocese has people to help with your vocational exploration, and as you follow this calling, you will find yourself in a place that is challenging and exhilarating at the same time. Through training we realise we don't have to all be the same, that we are not perfect, and that God loves those imperfections.'



Derek Pamment

Derek (pictured with his wife Lynne) was born in Yorkshire but has lived in Staffordshire for over 20 years. His ordination marks an exciting step in a very long journey. He would encourage everyone to follow their calling and never give up – he first offered himself for ordination some 40 years ago.



Since then Derek has enjoyed a successful career in the NHS, both as a biomedical laboratory scientist and latterly as a manager and director. His career even took him to the South Pacific where with his wife and two children, Derek worked as an adviser to the Ministry of Health in Fiji.

Having taken early retirement from the NHS, Derek again felt the prompting from God towards priesthood. Undeterred he has undertaken an amazing journey and is really excited to be serving his curacy in Trentham.

Derek would encourage everyone to follow their heart wherever it leads them and not be deterred by life's obstacles. If God wants you in ministry he will bless, support and lead you all the way...

Gillian Shilkoff

Gill (above left, with daughter, mother and husband) was born and raised in Stoke on Trent, and has been married for 40 years to Tony; their daughter Alex lives in Sheffield. Gill came to faith in her thirties through the witness of some Christian women at her antenatal class and play group, leading her to the church where she was confirmed in 1989. She became a Reader in 2000, and will now serve her curacy in the same church – St James, Clayton. Gill first felt called to ordained ministry 20 years ago, but has a strong sense that now is God's timing for her to serve in ordained ministry.

Gill's previous life has been varied. She was the first female telephone engineer in Stoke on Trent, and has also been a stay-at-home mum, a high-school teacher and head of department, and a self-employed counsellor and trainer, before retiring and taking up voluntary work with refugees.

Gill sees her ministry as reaching out into the community bringing the love and compassion of Christ through meeting need, generosity of spirit, abundant hospitality, and inclusivity.

Her advice to those who might be wondering about whether God is calling them? 'Pray, talk to trusted people, get in touch with the Vocations and Training department. Listen when people out of the blue



say, "Have you ever thought about being a priest? You'd be wonderful." Then be careful what you pray for – it can have life changing consequences!'

William Small

William was born in the British colony of Northern Rhodesia (now Zambia) and since then has lived in South Africa, Sweden, Israel, France, Burundi, Spain and now England. His family consists of Lissi, his wife of 38 years, and four adult children: Sarren, Casey, Elias and Tabitha. There are now four grandchildren with another granddaughter due days after ordination – so Sarren will not be joining us today, just in case . . .



William's spiritual journey has been as multifaceted as the physical one. He started life as a Roman Catholic, worshipped in a Pentecostal church as a young adult and was led by God into the Church of England where he feels he has come home to a Church that encompasses and encourages diversity. God's mission to the world has been the driving force behind his nomadic lifestyle, and being educated as a hydrogeologist, he has worked to bring clean water and the gospel of Jesus Christ to the people he has met along the way.

Trying to fit into where God's mission was taking him – whether it be to answer the call to move to a new town, a new country, or to say Yes to the call to pursue a path to ordination, and stick to it through the rigours of theological and personal formation – has taught William one thing: to trust God. Once you have heard a call from God, and you've said your "Yes", be prepared for the most exciting, alarming, fulfilling, confusing ride of your life! And as you learn to trust the God who has called you to wherever you land up and whatever you find yourself doing, you realise that you are exactly where you should be, because God does not make mistakes!