



READERS



Training for Reader Ministry



THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND
Diocese of Manchester

CHURCH
FOR A
DIFFERENT
WORLD

Training to be a Reader:

What does it involve?

Christian ministers are people who draw close to God and help draw others closer to God. There needs to be a spiritual depth (e.g. prayer life), a level of learning / understanding (e.g. knowledge of Bible and doctrine and how these connect with the modern world) and various key skills (e.g. communication, pastoral care).

Training involves the initial preparation for being a Reader, but it is also a life-long attitude which wants to keep fresh and alive to what God is doing.



Before being licensed as a Reader, candidates train for two years part-time at the All Saints Centre for Mission and Ministry, a course in partnership with several dioceses.

The course is divided into modules or areas of study such as the Old Testament, Worship & Preaching, Mission, etc. You would study three modules each year. Two modules are taught on weeknight evenings (about 12 sessions per module) and in this Diocese the classes are in south Manchester. One module is taught on six Sundays during the year at Chester University's Warrington Campus with candidates from other dioceses. The Sundays include a major act of worship and some practical sessions.

Once training begins, you would be on placement in your home parish, with your incumbent giving you opportunity to preach and take part in leading worship. During your first year, you would also do an external placement in a nearby but very different parish in order to widen your experience. In your second year there is an optional non-parochial placement which may be, for example, in a chaplaincy, secular or 'fresh expression' setting.

You would be expected to spend between 8 and 12 hours per week preparing for sessions or assignments. Training is designed to stretch you, but you would be supported by many people including your Director of Studies, module tutors, course chaplains and other course staff.

Read the stories of real students, and contact us if you have any concerns or questions.

The Following are stories from Readers who have recently completed training and are now serving as Readers

Carole Gallagher



My journey began the first time I walked into St. John's Church. It was a peace-filled experience that continued through my first two years there. Once I had finished training as an NNEB and found a job, I also settled into church life which began to change drastically, first through bible study, youth work and being drawn into the church family. I felt God chipping away at my stubborn nature but kept ignoring his call until 2007 when the chipping became a little too painful, resulting in the need to act. I explored various avenues, along which I experienced laughter, tears, joy and incredible friendships; resulting in Reader Training and being blessed knowing God holds me in the palm of his hand and walks with me as I continue my journey.

Pete Haslam

After becoming more involved in church life over the last ten years, which started with me joining my PCC and then moving on to becoming warden, I felt I was being directed by the Spirit to a form of ministry. This was reiterated by my incumbent who discussed with me the possibilities of Ordination or Lay ministry. Having chosen the latter, the lay Reader course has given me the opportunities to enhance my personality, deepen my faith and change me into the person God wants me to be. The lay Readers in training whom I have grown to know have now become very good friends and I know we will stay in touch. The course has allowed time for a great home and study balance and has been an experience to enrich me in my journey of faith.



Angela Bilbruck

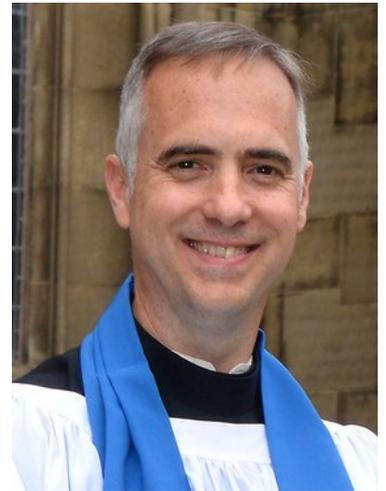


Since I was asked to consider Reader ministry by our Church Wardens I've experienced doubts, shock, joy, inspiration, friendship, and fellowship among many other emotions. It hasn't always been an easy journey, there is a lot of work involved which can impact on other areas of your life. However, the rewards received far outweigh any of the difficulties encountered. I've made lifelong friends both students and tutors at All Saints who have travelled with me for the last two years.

I've been inspired by my mentors and colleagues who have supported me through the highs and lows and the fellowship, sharing in worship and prayer has sustained me. The debates and discussions around scripture, faith, theology, and doctrine have been lively, challenging and enjoyable. I've learnt so much not just about the academics but myself as well and I've changed, hopefully for the better, into a more understanding and tolerant person who will be able to support the community that has encouraged me to enter Lay ministry.

Steve Mawhinney

My Reader journey has been all about making connections. It has helped me to connect my experience and learning as a leader in my working life at the BBC and in my church context, shaping a fresh vision of servant leadership that God is calling me to live out wherever I am. It has helped me build connections with other parishes and Christians across the Diocese, not least with my fellow Reader trainees, which have blessed me and opened my eyes to more of what God is doing in Manchester and given me new opportunities to serve. Finally, it has helped broaden and deepen my personal connection with God, giving me a fuller understanding of his Word and his world, and shaping me to follow Him wherever He leads on the next stage of my journey. I can't wait to get going.



Further information

For more information about Reader ministry please see the leaflet **Called to be a Reader?**

Our leaflets can be downloaded from the Readers' pages of the diocesan website **www.manchester.anglican.org** which also gives contact details for the Warden of Readers, the Rt Revd Mark Ashcroft, Bishop of Bolton, as well as your Archdeaconry chaplain.

There is also useful information on the central Church of England Readers website: **www.readers.cofe.anglican.org**.

To explore Reader ministry further and the training involved, please contact Nick Smeeton, Director of Vocations, at **nicksmeeton@manchester.anglican.org**