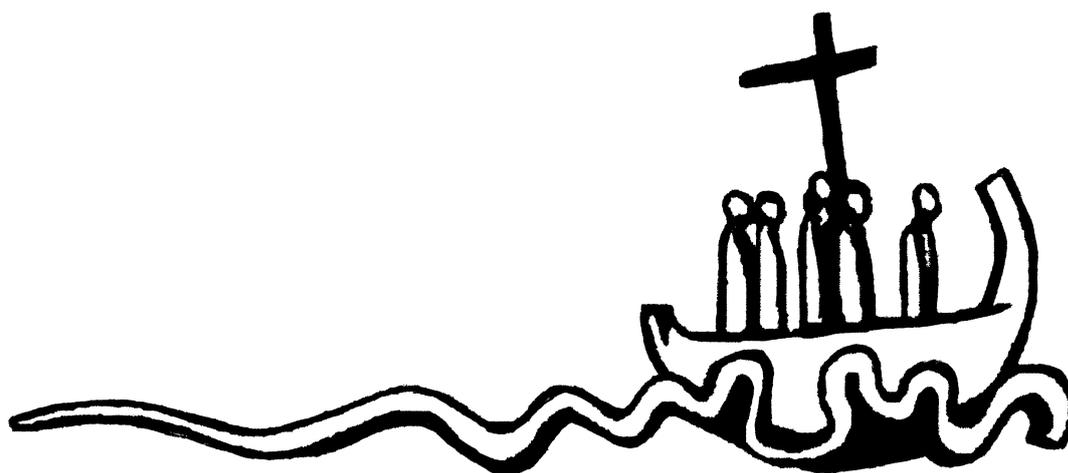


Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich



**Lay and Ordained  
Ministries  
in the Diocese**  
***Information Booklet***  
***Spring 2016***

## **Front cover**

*Godspeed V - A sculpture in aluminium by Jonathan Clarke*

Godspeed was one of the 3 ships which sailed from England in 1606. Captain of the Godspeed, Bartholomew Gosnold, was one of the prime movers in the founding of the first English speaking settlement at Jamestown, Virginia, in 1607.

(used by kind permission of the Dean and Chapter of St Edmundsbury Cathedral)

# Preface

*“Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone.”* 1 Corinthians 12.4-5.

Living the Christian life means discerning those gifts, services and activities that St Paul assures us God activates in everyone.

Amongst the people of God with all their gifts, some are called to particular forms of ministry. We live in times where the varieties of recognised ministries are greater than in the recent past. As it happens there are more people in authorised ministry in the Diocese now than there were even ten years ago. Whilst there are fewer stipendiary clergy there are more self-supporting clergy and more forms of authorised lay ministry.

These developments are both exciting and challenging. The challenge comes in discerning where a person’s true vocation lies.

This booklet is the start of that process of discernment. You will find information about lay and ordained ministry that is exercised in the Church. There is information about selection and training and information about whom to approach for further guidance and support.

It is designed to help individuals who are making initial explorations. It is also for churches and Christian communities, to consider how they are nurturing vocation in their midst, and to what ministry people may be called.

St Paul assures us that we all have a part to play in the Body of Christ, the Church. We hope and pray that this booklet assists many people to discern what their particular role may be, and helps others to encourage them in that exploration.



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# Lay Elders

## *Their ministry*

Lay Eldership is particular to Suffolk, providing a flexible ministry through which a variety of lay Christians can offer their gifts, skills and experience. Lay Elders are chosen by the local Church and authorized by the Diocesan Bishop to minister in the local congregation and community, mainly in pastoral care and leading worship. Currently the Diocese has over 500 Elders.

As the Elders' Certificate says, Elders' ministry may include 'visiting parishioners, praying with and for them, and encouraging them in Christian discipleship; leading Morning and Evening Prayer, and other forms of a Service of the Word; reading the Bible in worship; assisting in the administration of the sacrament at the Eucharist; and distributing the sacrament to people in their homes or in hospital.'

Elders focus on particular areas of work within this wide range, according to their skills and availability, and local needs. Usually a benefice has a group of Elders with complementary ministries, working alongside the Incumbent.

## *Selection and training*

Anyone who is baptised and confirmed and a regular communicant member of the local Church and normally resident in the community may be considered for Elder training and ministry. There is no upper or lower age limit.

Elders are selected by the local Church through the Incumbent and PCC, who then formally request their commissioning. Commissioning by the Diocesan Bishop (or his representative) happens locally, at any time of year. The commission is for 3 years (renewable).

Elders may lead worship or exercise pastoral care across parish boundaries within their benefice, provided that each PCC concerned has given its formal assent.

The Diocesan training course for new Elders is *Getting Started*, 6 sessions which may be done either side of Commissioning. For more experienced Elders, there are two 8 session courses, *Leading Worship* and *Pastoral Care*, one or both of which are done during the first year or two of ministry. Training runs on a benefice or deanery basis and develops the skills, knowledge and confidence needed for public ministry. It involves no formally assessed written work.

A range of further in-service training opportunities, sometimes shared with other ministers, is available to Elders as their ministry develops.

*For further information*

Mrs Lesley Steed, Lay Elders Administrator

*Contact details are on p 13*

# Licensed Lay Ministers (LLM)

## *Their ministry*

Licensed Lay Ministers (Lay Pastors, Local Evangelists) are lay people called to work within the collaborative ministry of the local church to focus and enable the church's pastoral and evangelistic ministry, respectively and equipped to do this through their ministerial and theological training. Their ministry has a strong outward impulse into the community which complements the liturgical and preaching ministries of Readers and clergy.

*Licensed Lay Ministers (Lay Pastors)* are called to:

- Challenge the Church to care for the world as Christ does
- Undertake specific tasks of pastoral care
- Enable the church to express Christ's ministry of healing
- Use different liturgical forms in support of this work

*Licensed Lay Ministers (Local Evangelists)* are called to:

- Proclaim and live the Gospel
- Interpret the Church to the world and the world to the Church
- Encourage the Church in the work of evangelism
- Undertake liturgical tasks in support of this work

Licensed Lay Ministers are licensed by the Bishop under Canon E7 which authorizes Licensed Lay Workers. As such they may be given the Bishop's permission to preach and carry

out other liturgical functions. Normally, however, the request to receive the Bishop's authorisation to preach etc would come as the Lay Pastor or Local Evangelist's ministry developed and they would be required to take further training.

### *Selection and training*

A call to local ministry involves both the personal vocation of the individual and the corporate vocation of the local Church. To be considered for Licensed Lay Ministry a person needs to be put forward by their local Church for selection. Licensed Lay Ministers should be baptised and confirmed, and 68 years of age or under when they first enter training.

After Diocesan selection, Licensed Lay Minister candidates are trained alongside Reader candidates on the diocesan Lay Ministry Training Course. This is a three year part-time training programme delivered regionally in partnership with the Eastern Region Ministry Course (ERMC), Reader Training courses in other dioceses, at diocesan seminar days and in the trainee minister's local benefice.

### *For further information*

The Revd Canon David Herrick, Lay Ministry Training Officer  
*and* Warden of Readers and Licensed Lay Ministers

*Contact details are on p 13*

# Readers

## *Their ministry*

Readers are lay people called to a ministry of preaching, teaching and leading worship. They provide a lay theological resource for the Church and their perspective as lay Christians complements the ministry of the ordained.

As theologically-trained lay people, often involved in secular employment, they are particularly well-equipped to interpret the traditions of the Christian faith in ways that speak to the culture they live in, and to bring the concerns of society and of ordinary Christians into the Church's preaching and teaching.

Readers have been an important part of the ministerial provision of the Church of England since their ministry was revived in 1866. It is a lay ministry which is voluntary, nationally accredited, episcopally licensed, and governed by Canon Law. A leaflet explaining the ministry can be obtained from the Warden of Readers (details on p13).

Readers are licensed to a benefice by the Bishop. In the Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich they are viewed primarily as Local Ministers, normally exercising their ministry within the collaborative working practice of the local Church. However, their licence permits them to lead worship anywhere in the Diocese, when invited, and this can be an important resource for the wider Church.

### *Selection and training*

A call to local ministry involves both the personal vocation of the individual and the corporate vocation of the local Church. The Reader will work at their sense of vocation with other people and the local church will consider its ministry and mission. To be considered for Reader ministry a person needs to be put forward by their local Church for selection. Readers should be baptised and confirmed, and 68 years of age or under when first entering training.

After Diocesan selection, Licensed Lay Minister candidates are trained alongside Reader candidates on the diocesan Lay Ministry Training Course. This is a three year part-time training programme delivered regionally in partnership with the Eastern Region Ministry Course (ERMC), Reader Training courses in other dioceses, at diocesan seminar days and in the trainee minister's local benefice.

### *For further information*

The Revd Canon David Herrick, Lay Ministry Training Officer  
*and* Warden of Readers and Licensed Lay Ministers

*Contact details are on p 13*

# Ordained Ministers

## *Their ministry*

Every ordained minister is a deacon or a priest within the universal Church: a reminder of Christ's ministry, called to encourage, enable and challenge the Church to be a priestly people. As a public minister in the Church of England, (s)he presides at the sacraments and is a pastor, teacher and preacher of God's word.

For those who feel called to serve God in this way there are a number of options. Some will serve in their home parishes while others will explore ministry elsewhere at ordination. Some will remain as Assistant Priests, some will become Incumbents (as a Vicar or Rector in a parish), some will be chaplains in hospitals, prisons or schools. All priests are involved in the worship, educational, mission and pastoral life of congregations and communities.

'Deployable' priests may or may not be paid. If they are not, they will be deployed within reasonable reach of where they live. If they are paid, they are expected to be able to take up leadership rôles in a parish or chaplaincy, and to be willing to move for jobs, including moving to other parts of the country. Frequently there are competitive interviews for stipendiary posts. Moving from one parish to another is always subject to discussions with Bishops and the parishes concerned.

### *Selection and training*

Ordination only happens after rigorous discernment and training processes. Discernment includes working with the Diocesan Director of Ordinands (DDO) before being sponsored by the Bishop to go to a residential panel outside the Diocese which advises on suitability for training. Discernment often takes twelve months or more as vocation, spirituality, personality and beliefs are explored.

Candidates should be baptised and confirmed, and have experience of the Church of England. All candidates should be under 65 when ordained, and those expecting to receive a stipend considerably younger than that.

Training takes two to three years, residentially at a Theological College (there are several, geographically dispersed), or on a part-time basis on the Regional Course. In both cases, study is to at least Diploma level. Training continues during three to four years of initial ministry in a parish arranged with the Bishop.

### *For further information*

The Revd Tim Jones, Diocesan Director of Ordinands and New Ministries

*Contact details are on p 13*

# Vocations Advice

The Diocese can put you in touch with an Adviser who can offer care and a listening ear to those who feel called to some kind of ministry or service. This could be to lay or ordained ministry within or outside the Church, to the religious life, or to some form of Christian work here or overseas. The Adviser will hear your story and work with you, over one or more meetings, to discover where it might be leading.

## *When and how to contact them*

Contact with an Adviser often comes after discussion with the local Incumbent, or normally at least with the Incumbent's knowledge. The Advisers can be approached whatever form of ministry or service you are considering.

## *For further information*

In order to contact an Adviser, telephone or email the Ministry, Education and Training (MET) Team on 01473 298510 or [lesley.steed@cofesuffolk.org](mailto:lesley.steed@cofesuffolk.org).



# Further exploration

## *More information*

For more details about particular ministries, contact the Diocesan Advisers and Officers named in this booklet. This does not commit you to anything, or start an unstoppable process; it is simply the best way to check out your queries.

For information from the National Church, contact: Ministry Division, Church House, Great Smith Street, LONDON SW1P 3NZ, tel: 020 7898 1000, [www.cofe-ministry.org.uk](http://www.cofe-ministry.org.uk). Ministry Division publishes an excellent booklet, *Ministry in the Church of England*. See it online on their website or ask for a copy from Ministry Division. An informative website specifically for the ministry of Readers is [www.readers.cofe.anglican.org](http://www.readers.cofe.anglican.org).

## *Talking with other people*

You should talk to your Incumbent at an early stage. He or she has experience of helping people develop their gifts, and will be involved if you go on to explore ministry more formally.

The Diocese can also put you in touch with Advisers who are happy to meet and talk with you about your sense of calling - however vague or confused you feel! See more on p 9-10. There is a Ministries Fair in the Diocese each year, when you can meet others who are exploring their calling and talk with people engaged in various ministries. In order to contact an Adviser, telephone or email the Ministry, Education and Training (MET) Team on 01473 298510 or [lesley.steed@cofesuffolk.org](mailto:lesley.steed@cofesuffolk.org).

Suffolk has a network of people who are skilled in Spiritual Accompaniment. They can meet with you, once or twice, or over a longer period, to help you reflect and pray about how God is working in your life. To find out more, contact Mark Booth on 01728 454349 or [spiritual.direction@cofesuffolk.org](mailto:spiritual.direction@cofesuffolk.org).

Do not forget your family and friends! Whether or not they share your Christian faith, they know you well, and your strengths and weaknesses; and they are the ones who will be most affected by any decisions you might make.

*Prayer, Bible study and reflection*

If God is calling you, He will find a way of letting you know. But you need to be ready to listen, and perhaps to wait until the time is right. It also helps to reflect on how God has called people before, in the Bible and the history of the Church.

Any of the people named in this booklet can give guidance with prayer, Bible study, or suggestions for what you might read.

# Contact details

## **The Revd Canon David Herrick**

Lay Ministry Training Officer *and* Warden of Readers and Licensed Lay Ministers

[david.herrick@cofesuffolk.org](mailto:david.herrick@cofesuffolk.org)

Tel: 01473 298552

Diocesan Office  
4 Cutler Street  
Ipswich IP1 1UQ

## **The Revd Tim Jones**

Diocesan Director of Ordinands and New Ministries

[tim.jones@cofesuffolk.org](mailto:tim.jones@cofesuffolk.org)

Tel: 01284 729148 or 07468 474065

The Rectory  
Ingham Road  
West Stow, Bury St Edmunds IP28 6ET

## **Mrs Lesley Steed**

Administrator for the Ministry, Education and Training team

[lesley.steed@cofesuffolk.org](mailto:lesley.steed@cofesuffolk.org)

Tel: 01473 298510

Diocesan Office  
4 Cutler Street  
Ipswich IP1 1UQ

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For further copies of this booklet, contact any Ministry Officer.