



Inspiring *each* Generation



Think again about Reader Ministry...

Reader ministry has been around a long time: in its present form it was established in 1866. There are now around 10,000 Readers in England and around 80 active in Hereford Diocese.

But - Reader ministry is changing!

In recent times the ministry of all the baptised has been widely rediscovered by the Church. In this changed context, the Central Readers' Council (CRC) has been discerning how Reader ministry in the future can best serve the Church's mission. Following a series of consultations around the country, the following themes have emerged:

- Enabling mission
- Teaching faith
- Leadership in Church and society

Sound interesting? Then read on...



Enabling mission

Bishop Martyn Snow, chair of CRC, says:

Readers can envision and empower congregations for their mission in their Monday to Saturday contexts. In a church where so much attention is paid to what we do for an hour on a Sunday morning, Readers remind us that God is at work in every sphere of life. Arguably the most pressing challenge for the church today is to enable all baptised Christians to live out their faith in their workplaces, their social networks and their homes.

Teaching faith

In recent times, the ministry of catechesis has been fulfilled by small group leaders, and those who have facilitated nurture courses such as Alpha, Emmaus and Pilgrim. However, Readers, with their formal training as lay theologians, are ideally placed to renew this ministry in the 21st century. Teaching the faith has always been at the heart of Reader ministry, even if it is expressed in a number of different contexts.

Leadership in Church and society

As formally trained lay theologians, Readers are ideally placed to provide leadership, particularly through offering mentoring and coaching to other lay ministers. This might involve, for example, helping others to develop confidence in ministry, to navigate times of transition, and to explore God's call on their lives.

Could any of this be you?

If you want an informal chat about this, why not contact the DDVO (details on the back page)

The next step would be to talk it over with your Incumbent. All candidates for Reader ministry will need the support of their local parish church, must be, or become, confirmed and regular communicant members of the Church of England.

How does discernment work?

Having got the support of your incumbent and PCC, the DDVO will arrange an interview with a small panel. In advance of the meeting you'll have been asked to write something about your sense of calling, and a short article for a parish magazine.

At the meeting you'll be asked to speak briefly about how you feel ministry as a Reader might contribute to the Church's mission in your benefice.

The panel will then want to explore the three themes mentioned above with you.

What training would I need to do?

Reader candidates undergo two years of training on the Cuddesdon: Gloucester & Hereford (CGH) course. This involves weekly evening classes during term-time in Ludlow, along with a number of residential events.

Alongside the academic training, a Reader candidate receives training in practical and pastoral skills. This includes a placement in another parish to broaden the prospective Reader's experience.



The same – but different

These new themes don't mean that 'traditional' Reader ministry – what has sometimes been described as 'a teaching and preaching ministry within a pastoral context' – is over and done with. Readers, old and new, will still lead worship and be involved in pastoral care.

But the themes do mean that the Church is keen to be developing the gifting of Readers – new and old - in the areas of mission, teaching and mentoring.

We look forward to hearing from you!

To find out more, contact the Diocesan Director of Vocations and Ordinands (DDVO)

Revd Dr Elizabeth Wild

The Diocesan Office

The Palace

Hereford

HR4 9BL

elizabeth.wild@hereford.anglican.org



The Diocesan Office • The Palace • Hereford • HR4 9BL

t: 01432 373300 e: info@hereford.anglican.org

www.hereford.anglican.org