

## What Readers are...

The Reader ministry can be described as a bridge - a bridge that encourages lay people whilst remaining lay, to exercise an official and crucial leadership in the Church of England, a bridge between day to day life and the world of the church, a bridge which witnesses to the unchanging love of God in a changing world.

Those who are Readers within our diocese know that the challenges are great, the work is rewarding and the friendship of the fellowships particularly supportive.

Training for Reader ministry is essential, not only so that we have a high standard of ministers, but also so that individuals are fully prepared for the challenges of ministry.

## What Readers do...

Readers work in partnership with the congregation and with the incumbent, to forward the mission of the church.

In our diocese we have over 200 Readers with a further 80 retired Readers, many of whom are still in active service and believe that Readers play a crucial and developing role within the Church of England.

As collaborative ministry becomes the normal pattern of ministry for each parish, the office of Reader will demonstrate the partnership and lay leadership essential to the mission of the church.

The Reader ministry is one of preaching, teaching, and leading worship, together with appropriate pastoral work arising from these ministries.

So it is that around the diocese, we have Readers

- ✓ Leading non-Eucharistic worship
- ✓ Sharing leadership of Eucharistic worship
- ✓ Preaching
- ✓ Conducting funerals
- ✓ Leading study groups, enquirers' groups, confirmation and admission to communion preparation, Alpha, Emmaus and Start courses
- ✓ Leading school assemblies
- ✓ Involved in baptism preparation and follow up
- ✓ Serving as chaplains in health care, retirement homes, schools, colleges and the prison service

.....and much, much more

## From Chris Edmondson Bishop of Bolton

I'm delighted to have this opportunity of introducing you to Reader ministry in the Diocese of Manchester.

In my ministry as a parish priest in a variety of settings, I have had the opportunity to encourage a significant number of women and men, of different ages, into Reader ministry.

As you will see from what is set out over the page, when it comes to Reader ministry two key aspects are particularly important: bridge-building, and partnership.

My experience has shown me that lay people exercising this particular form of leadership, have unique opportunities to commend Christ in their work-places, neighbourhoods, and networks, as well as within the Church community.

Readers also act as a 'model' for other lay Christians, as they develop and use their gifts in a variety of ways within and beyond the Church over the next few years.

I look forward to seeing many more people joining the ranks of the already greatly valued Readers in the Diocese!



## Further information

For more information about selection and training please see the leaflets "[Called to Reader Ministry?](#)" and "[Training for Reader Ministry](#)".

All our leaflets can be downloaded from the Readers' pages of the diocesan website; [www.manchester.anglican.org](http://www.manchester.anglican.org), which also gives contact details for the Warden of Readers, the Revd Canon Dr Chris Bracegirdle as well as your Archdeaconry chaplain. There is also useful information on the central Church of England Readers website: [www.readers.cofe.anglican.org](http://www.readers.cofe.anglican.org).

To explore Reader ministry further, speak first to your parish priest or for general enquiries about selection, contact the Revd Jayne Prestwood on **0161 828 1456** or by e-mail at [jprestwood@manchester.anglican.org](mailto:jprestwood@manchester.anglican.org).



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# Readers

in the Diocese of Manchester



## A guide to Reader Ministry

## Here, three Readers tell their stories in their own words...

### Elaine Greenhalgh St Luke's Halliwell

A very good friend challenged me to consider how I could best serve God within the church using the gifts He has given me. After initial exploration, selection and training, I was licensed as a Reader.

My main ministry in Church is the leading of services and preaching. There can be no greater privilege – and responsibility. I passionately believe that the faithful preaching and teaching of God's word is urgent and fundamental in impacting and underpinning all aspects of Christian life. I lead a weekly Bible study group and have responsibility within church for heading up the mission committee. I am also able to take funerals.

My secular work is as a science teacher in a large non denominational secondary school. I am known to be a Christian, who does not shy away from posing questions to help pupils explore the big issues in life. Relationships built both with colleagues and pupils have allowed natural conversations about faith.

Pupils like to chat, sometimes when facing difficulties or crises. As a Reader I am seen to have a pastoral role as a Christian counsellor. I regularly lead acts of worship on school scout camps. I have the opportunity to take full school assemblies; being a Reader has given me greater confidence and real credibility in this daunting and yet exciting situation.



### Martin Tonks St Edmund Whalley Range

In addition to the occasional preaching, leading and intercessions my reader ministry has three strands – I help run the Pathfinders youth group, I play in the worship group and I also help local community groups with planning issues. The latter area is the main crossover between ministry and work as a self-employed town planning consultant. I work mainly for Councils advising them on major retail proposals by large supermarkets.

These are usually accompanied by Retail Impact Assessments containing reams of statistics that demonstrate, according to the applicant, the proposal is a 'good thing' and won't put any smaller shops out of business.

Sadly the reverse is often the case and, in my opinion, my fellow professionals sometimes go beyond making the 'best case' for their client (something I refuse to do) and occasionally I have to expose this at public inquiries that can be particularly uncomfortable adversarial forums that I don't enjoy but am quite good at!

The picture below shows me and fellow objectors successfully haranguing local councillors on a site visit to a proposed Supermarket in south Manchester. Whilst we persuaded the councillors of the merits of our case, sadly an independent planning inspector overturned their decision.



### Trish Lindsay Holy Innocents Fallowfield



Licensed in 2006, a step along the journey of following God... being a Reader can't be separated from anything else I do or am...

I've been an Admin Assistant with HM Revenue & Customs since 1988, and a trade union rep for most of that time, with the PCS (Public & Commercial Services) Union, currently as a Branch Equality Officer.

Some say "the church" should stay out of politics, but I don't see how that's possible, especially in an established church, where parliament has a say in how the C of E operates. There are similarities in the roles of union rep and Reader, "bridging the gap" between both laity and clergy, staff and management.

I became a Christian in 1985, partly because I discovered the potential for equality within Christianity; having been a feminist since my sixth-form days in Bury, I became involved in politics at University and ever since have been working on equality issues, at work and in the church, particularly how we treat women, LGBT people, physically-disabled people and those with mental health issues.

At Holy Innocents' Fallowfield I preach, lead worship, convene the children's church and, as in all my ministry, talk with people a lot! I am also licensed to HM Prison Manchester, where I assist with Sunday worship, preach and help with evening prayer groups. Part of my belief in equality is a conviction that everyone is capable of repentance, forgiveness, redemption – everyone can, with the help of God, become the person God wants them to be.

The chaplaincy is there for staff too; being a fellow civil servant helps me understand some of their problems. I'm studying for an MA in Contextual Theology at Luther King House: brilliant, life-changing, another step along that road?