

Exploring Christian Vocation

The Diocesan Training Partnership offers training opportunities for anyone exploring their vocation, especially the Vocations Evenings which are open to anyone in the diocese who wishes to attend. They can be taken in any order and don't need a specific recommendation for you to come along. You might, however, take the opportunity to talk to your vicar, curate or chaplain in advance so they know some of your current thinking. The 3 sessions are:

Is God calling me? – who am I, and what might God be calling me to?

What is God asking of me? – accredited ministry as privilege and sacrifice.

Where do I fit in God's story? – joining in with God's mission in the world.

More details at www.dioceseofcoventry.org/vocations

or contact

The Revd Ellie Clack (DDO & Vocations Adviser)

Ellie.Clack@CocCofE.org

Tel: 07802 657768

The Bishop's Certificate in Discipleship & Mission

BCDM is a collection of open-access short modules in discipleship and mission for lay people. Modules explore the Bible, the world and faith in everyday life.



www.dioceseofcoventry.org/bcdm

or contact **Katherine Walakira** (Discipleship & Mission Development Adviser)

Email: Katherine.Walakira@CovCofE.org

Tel: 07944 053346

Useful websites

The Church of England:

<https://www.churchofengland.org/life-events/vocations>

Church of England - Readers

<http://www.readers.cofe.anglican.org/index.php>

Church Pastoral Aid Society:

www.cpas.org.uk/vocations resources from an Anglican evangelical perspective

Additional Curates' Society:

www.additionalcurates.co.uk resources from an Anglican catholic perspective, linked with the Forward in Faith network

Your SHAPE for God's Service:

www.germinate.net/church-life/your-shape-for-gods-service-2/ a 6-week course suitable for a small group

The Diocesan Discernment Team

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Welcome to the

Coventry Diocese Discernment Process

The Church often refers to this work as the Vocations Process - a space and time when individuals explore their sense of God-given vocation or calling.

However, we are keen to emphasise the importance of recognising that vocation applies to all Christians and their ministries, not just to those who undertake authorised or accredited ministries.

So in this more specific discernment and selection process we work with those who want to explore a sense of calling to the authorised ministries exercised by Deacons, Priests and Readers. For a wider exploration of vocation, and other forms of Christian ministry, please see our diocesan webpages.

dioceseofcoventry.org/vocations

The Diocesan Discernment Process focuses on formally recognised ministries, but we believe that God calls every Christian in three ways:

to be human

(the calling in creation)

to be a disciple

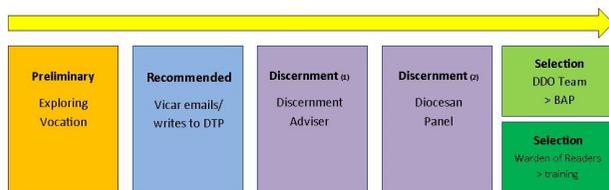
(the calling to God's kingdom)

to be part of the worshipping community

(the calling into the Church).

How, and to what, God may be calling you in terms of your ministry in creation or God's kingdom is something best discussed with your own vicar, curate or chaplain before embarking on the formal diocesan process. This process is designed to help you find out whether God is calling you to be part of the formal leadership of the Church, within your call to belong to the worshipping community.

The process operates in five main stages:



1 The preliminary stage will usually take place in your own parish or church setting, as you think and pray about what God might be calling you to. You might like to do some reading to resource your thinking - please contact ellie.clack@covcofe.org if you need some ideas. More importantly than anything, you'll need to find some time to pray - asking God to help you to see the way ahead, without pre-judging what that may be.

2 As a second stage, you'll need to have talked to your vicar about this and, if he or she feels it's right to do so, to ask them to recommend you to the Diocesan Training Partnership to begin the discernment process. They will need to complete a recommendation form www.dioceseofcoventry.org/vocation/vocationsprocess.

3 You will then be sent a registration form and soon after be put in touch with a discernment adviser, who will generally meet with you 4-5 times over several months. These meetings will be looking at the Church of England's Selection Criteria. A good introduction to read at this stage is "The Life and Work of a Priest" (J Pritchard) or "Reader Ministry Explored" (Rowling & Gooder).

As a result of these meetings, your adviser will identify which criteria you already fulfil, and which you may need to work on. They may recommend that you do a placement at a different church, complete some extra written work, or fulfil some other task to provide evidence against the criteria.

Once the adviser is satisfied that you have covered the criteria, they will recommend you to the next stage - a Diocesan Panel. On the other hand, they may feel that there isn't enough evidence that you're called to an accredited form of ministry. If they reach this decision they will be clear with you which of the criteria they feel you don't meet.

4 Diocesan Panels happen on a Saturday and you'll meet other candidates in the process, as well as having some short interviews based on the national selection criteria.

In preparation, you will need to complete a substantial registration form and prepare a short presentation to be given on the day.

At the end of this process we will let you know whether we feel it's appropriate to prepare you for the national selection stage for clergy, called a Bishop's Advisory Panel (BAP), or recommend you for Reader ministry. Alternatively, the panel may not feel that they've seen enough evidence that you're called to an accredited form of ministry or that you're ready to progress to the next stage. This will be made clear to you in the feedback after the panel.

5 For candidates who get a 'green light' to progress, there is a further process of preparation and selection. Potential Readers have an interview with the Warden of Readers and Principal of the Training Partnership and may begin training the following September.

For ordination candidates, preparation for a BAP with a member of the Director of Ordinands' (DDO) Team takes a minimum of three months, and the BAP itself will require you to attend a 3-day residential conference, usually in either Stafford or Ely.

You will realise from this that the absolute minimum time to progress through the system, if you're called to ordained ministry, is usually about a year. If a BAP recommends you for clergy training, it would need to be done by June to start training in the following September. Therefore, if you enter the process at any point after the summer in any one year, you are very unlikely to start training until two years later.