

Diocese of Bristol | Ministry Development

## Vocation, Discernment and Selection in the Bristol Diocese

### Hearing God's Call

# Diocesan Discernment Days

For more information, contact the Advisers for Licensed Ministry:

Revd Sam Rushton  
Church House  
23 Great George Street  
BRISTOL  
BS1 5QZ

[sam.rushton@bristoldiocese.org](mailto:sam.rushton@bristoldiocese.org)

0117 906 0100 or  
01249 660 451


Revd Canon Ray Brazier  
51 Chalks Road  
St. George  
Bristol  
BS5 9EP

[rayvb@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:rayvb@tiscali.co.uk)

0117 329 4611

August 2011

---

Church House, 23 Great George Street, Bristol, BS1 5QZ  
0117 906 0100 | [www.bristol.anglican.org](http://www.bristol.anglican.org) | 

The Bristol Diocesan Board of Finance Limited | Reg. in England: Charity 248502, Company 156243

August 2011

## What is the purpose of the Diocesan Discernment Day?

The aim of the day is to help potential candidates for authorised ministries in the Bristol Diocese discern their vocation. The Bishops have chosen a group of experienced lay and ordained ministers to help candidates discern, collaboratively and guided by the Holy Spirit:

- the nature of their call, whether to lay or ordained ministry;
- whether their call is obedient, informed, and realistic;
- whether they have the skills and gifts to enable them to exercise their ministry in the place to which they have been called and for the task that the local church has allotted them;
- and, if called to ordained ministry, whether their call is sufficiently developed to encourage them to present themselves for national selection at a Bishop's Advisory Panel (BAP).

## How does the Diocesan Discernment Day relate to Diocesan strategy and to the rest of the 'Hearing God's Call' programme?

The purpose and structure of the Day is designed to reflect key elements of the Diocesan strategy:

- It puts God, in the person of the **Holy Spirit**, at the heart of our discernment.
- It is **collaborative**: candidates are allocated to groups of up to 8 people who together undertake a group exercise, testing presentation, facilitation and small group work skills, and who provide support and encouragement to each other during the Day; and the Diocesan Vocation Advisers work in teams of 3 to help each group of candidates discern their vocation.
- It encourages people called to different roles in the church and on the edge of church, lay and ordained, mission-oriented and ministry-oriented, to test their call against a set of **common criteria** but recognising and affirming difference where appropriate.
- It emphasises the **leadership** qualities required in today's church.
- It provides a **clear process** for discernment which can be understood by all - candidates, their incumbents, Advisers and other supporters of the process – which is owned by all, and which makes the best use of available resource.

Candidates are encouraged to attend a Discernment Day as part of the Exploration phase of the 'Hearing God's Call' programme. Those who feel called to licensed lay ministry and who are undertaking the Exploring Christianity course<sup>1</sup> will normally attend the Day during their first year or early in the second year of the course. Those who feel they may have a call to ordained ministry are encouraged to meet with an Adviser for Licensed Ministry who may suggest deferring attendance at a Discernment Day until after attending the 'Am I Called to be Ordained?' course.

## How do I apply for the Discernment Day?

Candidates should talk through their application for the Discernment Day with their Incumbent before applying. They may also feel it appropriate to discuss it with their Exploring Christianity<sup>2</sup> tutor or with the Adviser for Licensed Ministry. An application form for the Discernment Day is attached in the Appendices. Candidates who have not registered for the 'Hearing God's Call' programme should also complete the registration form in the Appendices.

## How regularly are Discernment Days held?

We aim to hold two Days each year, one in March and again in October.

---

<sup>1</sup> Or EGP course (EGP is the course which is being replaced by Exploring Christianity in 2010)

<sup>2</sup> or EGP tutor

## What is the output from the Diocesan Discernment Day?

The role of the Day is advisory; the Diocesan Vocation Advisers, supported by a Team Secretary, will:

- advise the candidates, affirming their call or perhaps suggesting to them ways in which they still need to develop in order to achieve their aspirations;
- advise the Sponsoring Bishop (+Lee) so that he can make the appropriate decision as to whether to license the candidate as a Licensed Lay Minister (LLM) or to allow a candidate for ordained ministry to go forward to a national selection conference (Bishops' Advisory Panel or BAP<sup>3</sup>).

The primary output from the Day is a report on each candidate, written on behalf of the Advisers by the Team Secretary, which details the evidence for each criterion as collated by the Advisers and their advice and encouragement for each candidate. It also contains one of the following recommendations to the Sponsoring Bishop: the candidate:

- should be licensed as a Licensed Lay Minister on the successful conclusion of their training;
- should go forward to a national selection conference (BAP) within 6 months, sponsored as a:
  1. candidate with potential to achieve incumbent status (ie they have the potential to one day lead a church or be a lead chaplain; may be paid or self-supporting ministry)
  2. candidate with potential to achieve assistant minister status (self-supporting ministry)
  3. candidate for ordained local ministry.
- should continue to pursue a call to ordained ministry but should delay going to a BAP while they continue to work on some aspect of their formation;
- is not recommended for authorised ministry at this stage but should continue to pursue God's call on their life in some other role as appropriate.

In addition to the above, Advisers may make certain recommendations to the candidate to enable them to pursue their call more effectively. Suggested areas for development may include, for example, advice to candidates to:

- deepen their spiritual lives;
- undertake a further period of study to develop a particular gift eg an evangelism course, more theological study etc.;
- become engaged in some form of mission activity, at home or abroad;
- or to gain more experience of ministry in the Church of England, through a placement or becoming more engaged in the ministry and/or leadership of their own church.

## What criteria will be used to help candidates discern their vocation?

Candidates for both ordained and lay ministry will be assessed against a common set of criteria based on the national selection criteria for ordained ministry. Selection in the Church of England today is very much 'criteria-based' - Vocation Advisers locally and at a national level are looking for evidence that candidates satisfy criteria under nine headings (see Appendix A). In this Diocese we have chosen to use the same nine headings for all candidates for authorised ministry, reflecting the increasing requirement for lay and ordained ministers to work alongside each other in collaborative teams and for all ministers to take increasing responsibility for leadership of their local church and/or missional communities. However although the basic criteria are the same for all, the substance of

---

<sup>3</sup> BAP Advisers will make the definitive recommendation to +Lee as to whether the candidate may go forward into training and it is he who will then make the final decision.

the criteria vary according to the kind of ministry to which the candidate is called. As a general rule, the more autonomous the ministry (ie the more remotely the minister works from a 'supervisor'), the higher the standard the candidate is expected to achieve in each criterion. The most 'supervised' ministries will tend to be Licensed Lay Ministers (LLM) and Ordained Local Ministers (OLM) who will generally be ministering with the close guidance of an incumbent; the least supervised ministries will be potential incumbents and particularly Ordained Pioneer Ministers who will often be exercising their ministry outside the normal structures of the Church of England.

All candidates will complete the same paperwork leading up to the Day, indicating in their application form which ministry they feel called to. The Vocation Advisers will assess them against the criteria appropriate to that ministry – see Appendix attached. However it may be that during the Day Advisers may become aware that a candidate is not best suited to the ministry indicated on their form; in this case, Advisers will also be looking for evidence that the candidate fulfils the criteria in the category they believe the candidate may be called to. The team of Advisers will then make a collective decision at the end of the Day as to which ministry they believe the candidate may be being called and will detail their reasons under the criteria headings for their advice.

## **What evidence will Vocation Advisers use to help candidates discern their vocation?**

The evidence used by the Advisers falls into two categories: written evidence which they will receive two weeks before the Day, and experiential evidence gathered during the Day, including evidence from the group discussion, interviews and pastoral exercise.

### **1 Written Evidence**

Candidates will be asked to provide the following:

- an application form;
- 4 references – an Incumbent's reference, a reference from a lay person in the candidate's church, an employer's reference and an educational reference;
- a parish profile / job description (for LLM and OLM candidates);

Candidates for ordained ministry will also be supported by copies of the assignments they produce as part of the 'Am I Called to be Ordained?' course.

### **2. Evidence from the Discernment Day<sup>4</sup>:**

#### **a The Presentation and Group Discussion**

On the Discernment Day, the candidates will be placed into groups of up to 8 people. In those groups, each candidate will be asked to:

- make a 5 minute presentation on a topic of their choice but which relates directly to one of the nine criteria;
- to facilitate a group discussion for 8 minutes on that topic;
- and to summarise the discussion.

Advisers will observe each candidate from three perspectives during this exercise: as a presenter, as a group facilitator, and as a group member.

They will observe both style and content of candidates' contributions, looking for both how candidates fulfil each of these roles (were they collaborative, inclusive, engaging, were they clear,

---

<sup>4</sup> For guidance on how to approach the Discernment Day, see the 'Notes to Candidates' in the Appendices

coherent, concise etc) and also what they contribute (did they understand the task, did they progress the task through adding knowledge or making connections, etc).

Evidence will be collected during this exercise primarily under the criteria headings:

- Personality and Character
- Relationships
- Leadership and Collaboration
- Quality of Mind

Although these criteria are the primary focus of this exercise, the content of the discussions may speak to other criteria, eg Faith, their understanding of the nature of Mission or Ministry in the Church of England. These observations will be noted by the Advisers.

## **b. The Interview**

Normally candidates will be interviewed by two of the Advisers allocated to their group for 30 minutes each. The Advisers will focus primarily on those criteria which cannot be readily assessed in a group situation

- Vocation
- Spirituality
- Faith
- some aspects of Personality and Character
- Quality of Relationships

However Advisers may press the candidate on any criteria where they require more evidence or wish to clarify the evidence they have been given. For example, if the candidate has expressed an opinion during the group exercise which is controversial or poorly thought through, they might wish to question that opinion or statement, testing their Quality of Mind.

## **c. The Pastoral Exercise<sup>5</sup>**

During the afternoon, the candidates will be given a pastoral situation to which they will be asked to respond with a piece of written work. Advisers will be looking for evidence that the candidate can

- understand and respond to a complex human situation in a timely fashion
- show an appropriate pastoral response
- communicate in writing in terms appropriate to the context

## **How will the Advisers use the evidence gathered during the Discernment Day to help candidates discern their vocation?**

Once the candidates have left the Discernment Day, the Advisers will meet in their groups to collate the information they have gathered and come to a recommendation. The Team Secretary will take notes during this meeting in order to write up the candidates' Reports. A copy of the Report will be sent, with a recommendation for action, to Bishop Lee and to each candidate within two weeks of the

---

<sup>5</sup> An example Pastoral Exercise is included in the Appendices in the Notes for Candidates

Discernment Day. A copy may also be sent to the candidate's Incumbent to enable him/her to support the candidate in acting on the advice contained within the Report<sup>6</sup>.

### **Where can I find more information on the Discernment Day?**

The Advisers for Licensed Ministry listed on the front of this paper are always happy to answer questions regarding any aspect of this process. Additional advice for getting the most out of this Day is to found in the Appendices.

---

<sup>6</sup> Candidates who do not want a copy of the report sent to their Incumbent should notify the Adviser for Licensed Ministry in writing before the Discernment Day.

# **Appendices**

**Appendix A: Summary of Licensed Ministries in the Bristol Diocese**

**Appendix B: Criteria for Selection for all Licensed Ministries**

**Appendix C: Recommended Reading for those exploring their vocation**

**Appendix D: Application form for Diocesan Discernment Day (Parts 1-6)**

**Appendix E: How to survive A Diocesan Discernment Day – notes for candidates  
from 'A Well Wisher'**



## Appendix A: A Summary of Licensed Ministries in the Bristol Diocese

Ministries currently licensed at Diocesan level comprise:

- Ordained Minister with the potential to become an Incumbent or Incumbent Status (ISM)
- Ordained Assistant Minister (AM)
- Ordained Pioneer Ministry (OPM)
- Ordained Local Ministry (OLM)
- Licensed Lay Ministry (LLM)

Other ministries may be recognised and commissioned at a deanery or parish level, eg Evangelist, Pastoral Care Assistant, Youth Worker, Worship Leader, etc.

Policy statements regarding authorised ministries in the Bristol Diocese are available from the Adviser for Licensed Ministry on request. In summary:

ISM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Age range at ordination normally 23 – 50</li> <li>• Normal preparation time prior to starting training: 1 – 2 years</li> <li>• Training period               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ two years full time (or three years part-time) at college if over 33 (three years if under 33), then</li> <li>○ three – four years in a full time curacy at a parish which is not the ‘sending parish’</li> </ul> </li> <li>• National Selection Criteria apply, however, this Diocese places particular emphasis on the candidate’s ability to lead people in mission</li> <li>• Candidates may be either stipendiary or non-stipendiary (ie paid or self-supporting)</li> </ul>
AM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Age range at ordination normally 23 – 55</li> <li>• Normal preparation time prior to starting training: 1 – 2 years</li> <li>• Training period               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ three years part-time on a course if over 33 (four years if under 33), then</li> <li>○ four years in a part-time curacy at a parish which is usually not the ‘sending parish’</li> </ul> </li> <li>• National Selection Criteria apply, however, this Diocese places particular emphasis on the candidate’s ability to lead people in mission.</li> <li>• Candidates will normally be non-stipendiary (ie self-supporting)</li> </ul>

OPM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Category reserved for exceptional, entrepreneurial candidates who have already set up and are leading a Fresh Expression of church but who also have the capability to undertake a more traditional pastoral, liturgical and sacramental role. Significant ability to reflect theologically on today's culture will be required.</li> <li>• Age range at ordination normally 23 – 50</li> <li>• Normal preparation time prior to starting training: 1 – 2 years</li> <li>• Training period to be undertaken usually whilst maintaining an existing Fresh Expression <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ two years at college if over 33 (three years if under 33), then</li> <li>○ three – four years in a full time curacy, at least 75% of which is spent leading a 'Fresh Expression' , but will also be required to fulfil standard training requirements of an Anglican curate.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
OLM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Age range at ordination normally 55 – 70</li> <li>• Normal preparation time prior to starting training: 1 year</li> <li>• Training period <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ three years part-time at Trinity College (may be reduced if candidates have prior theological learning or lay ministry experience)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• three years in a curacy at their sending parish</li> <li>• OLMs must be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ able to satisfy the national criteria for ordained local ministry, judged by a national selection conference</li> <li>○ settled in their community and unlikely to move to a new parish</li> <li>○ exercising an existing ministry in their church which is recognised and affirmed by the local church</li> <li>○ able to define with their parish an ordained role which is likely to be an extension of their existing ministry</li> <li>○ part of a collaborative mission-oriented ministry team in their local context</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
LLM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Age range at licensing normally 18 – 70</li> <li>• Training period <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 2 years part-time on Exploring Christianity plus a further year of vocational training<sup>7</sup>; or</li> <li>○ 2 years part-time on a specially designed course run by Trinity College</li> </ul> </li> <li>• LLMs must be able to satisfy national criteria for selection as amended by Bristol Diocese to take into account the higher degree of supervision in ministry pertaining to this category. Candidates will normally attend a Diocesan Discernment Day to confirm their calling.</li> <li>• In Bristol Diocese LLMs will not normally be permitted to pursue a calling to ordained ministry within 3 years of being licensed. (This stipulation applies to all those licensed after February 2008)</li> </ul>

<sup>7</sup> or for 2010/2011 only, two years training on the EGP course plus attendance at the Pastoral care course

## **Appendix B: Summary of the Criteria for Selection**

### **Criterion A: Vocation**

Candidates should be able to articulate a sense of vocation to the ordained ministry and reflect on the effect of this on their life. They should be able to speak of the development of their inner conviction and the extent to which others have confirmed it. They should be able to show an understanding of what it means to be a deacon or a priest. Their sense of vocation should be obedient, realistic and informed.

### **Criterion B: Ministry within the Church of England**

Candidates should show an understanding of their own tradition within the Church of England, an awareness of the diversity of traditions and practice, and a commitment to learn from and work generously with difference. They should be able to speak of the distinctiveness of ordained ministry within the Church of England and of what it means to exercise public ministry. They should be able to reflect on changes in contemporary society and the implications of this for ministry and the Church.

### **Criterion C: Spirituality**

Candidates should show evidence of a commitment to a spiritual discipline, which involves individual and corporate prayer and worship. They should be committed to a developing pattern of disciplined prayer, Bible study and the regular receiving of Holy Communion. They should be able to show how they discern God's activity in their life, how their spiritual practice may have changed over time and how it is changing them. They should be able to reflect on how engagement with the world and others both affects, and is affected by, their practice of prayer. Their spiritual practice should be able to sustain and energise them in daily life and future ministry.

### **Criterion D: Personality and Character**

Candidates should be sufficiently self-aware, mature and stable to show that they are able to sustain the demanding role of an ordained minister. They should be able to demonstrate how they have faced change and pressure in a balanced and flexible way and how they manage stress. Candidates should be seen to be people of integrity who can generate trust and display honesty. They should be able to speak of how they have coped with difficult life experiences, how they have reflected upon them and incorporated them within their life and understanding.

### **Criterion E: Relationships**

Candidates should show the capacity to build healthy personal, professional, and pastoral relationships. They should demonstrate an awareness of the need for, and ability to establish and sustain, appropriate boundaries between personal and professional life and within pastoral relationships. They should be able to manage conflict and show an ability to negotiate difficult relationships. Candidates should demonstrate good interpersonal skills, the willingness to learn from experience, and a commitment to building inclusive relationships within diversity. They should show the potential to exercise effective pastoral care. Candidates must be willing to live within the discipline of *Issues in Human Sexuality*.

### **Criterion F: Leadership and Collaboration**

Candidates should demonstrate an ability to offer leadership in the Church community and in the wider community as appropriate. This ability includes the capacity to offer an example of faith and discipleship which is inspiring to others and witnesses to the servanthood of Christ. They should show a commitment to identifying and nurturing the gifts of others and be able to collaborate effectively. Candidates should be able to identify their own leadership style, and reflect on the strengths and weaknesses of this and of the different ways in which leadership may be exercised within the Church. They should be able to be flexible and adaptable in leadership and demonstrate ability to guide and shape the life of the Church community in its mission to the world.

### **Criterion G: Faith**

Candidates should show an understanding of the Christian faith and a desire to deepen their understanding. They should demonstrate a personal commitment to Christ and a mature, robust faith which shapes their life and work. Candidates should show an ability to reflect critically on their faith and make connections between faith and contemporary life. They should demonstrate a capacity to communicate their faith engagingly and effectively.

### **Criterion H: Mission and Evangelism**

Candidates should demonstrate a personal commitment to mission that is reflected in thought, prayer and action. They should show a wide and inclusive understanding of mission and the strategic issues and opportunities within contemporary culture. Candidates should be able to articulate the good news of the Kingdom appropriately in differing contexts and speak of Jesus Christ in a way that is exciting, accessible, and attractive. They should enable others to develop their vocations as witnesses of the good news. They should show potential as leaders of mission.

### **Criterion I: Quality of Mind**

Candidates should have the necessary intellectual capacity and quality of mind to undertake satisfactorily a course of theological study and ministerial preparation and to cope with the intellectual demands of ministry. They should demonstrate a desire to learn through the integration of academic study and reflection on experience and a commitment to this as a lifelong process of learning and formation. Candidates should show flexibility of mind, openness to change and challenge, and the capacity to facilitate learning and theological reflection within the Church community.

**An incumbent (or incumbent status) candidate** should fulfil all the Criteria for Selection and in addition fulfil the core elements in the Criteria for Selection for ministry at incumbent level namely:

*Criterion F (Leadership and Collaboration)*

Able to assess, set objectives and take church and community forward. Capacity to become team builders and leaders, enablers and sustainers. Able and willing to guide and shape the life of the church in its mission to the world. Able to build community and to offer a ministry of reconciliation and mediation.

*Criterion H (Mission and Evangelism)*

A sense of how to lead a church/churches in defining and implementing its/their mission tasks. Potential as leaders of mission.

*Criterion I (Quality of Mind)*

Enthusiasm for theology as a tool for life for the whole people of God. Wide ranging intellectual interest.

**An assistant minister candidate** should fulfil all the Criteria for Selection.

**An ordained local minister candidate** should fulfil all the Criteria with different emphases in two areas:

*Criterion B (Ministry in the Church of England)*

A greater emphasis upon knowledge and experience of the local church rather than the wider Church. However they will be expected to show that they are open to broadening the experience of their own church through leading their congregations in using aspects of other traditions in their local context.

*Criterion F (Leadership and Collaboration)*

A greater emphasis upon collaboration and working as a member of a team rather than primary or sole responsibility leadership.

**An ordained pioneer minister candidate** should fulfil all the Criteria for Selection for an Incumbent status candidate (see above) and also fulfil the following criteria for pioneering ministry namely:

*Criterion B (Ministry in the Church of England)*

Have a track record and experience of leading or involvement in a fresh expression of church or have the potential for such ministry.

*Criterion C (Spirituality)*

Have a spiritual life with sufficient depth to sustain and energise them in the demanding role of spiritual leadership in the church.

*Criterion F (Leadership and Collaboration)*

Have the leadership skills and an ability to collaborate with others which point to the capacity to deliver imaginative, pioneering ministry.

*Criterion G (Faith)*

Have good and effective communication skills with an ability to present the gospel in an attractive way.

*Criterion H (Mission and Evangelism)*

Have passion for mission and evangelism and an enthusiasm for reaching out to those outside the church.

*Criterion I (Quality of Mind)*

Have the capacity to think on their feet and 'outside the box' in a way that is creative and imaginative.

**A Licensed Lay Minister** should fulfil all the Criteria for Selection<sup>8</sup> with three main differences:

*Criterion A (Vocation)*

An understanding of the role and responsibilities of Licensed Lay Ministers in the Church of England

*Criterion B (Ministry in the Church of England)*

A greater emphasis upon knowledge and experience of the local church rather than the wider Church. However they will be expected to show that they are open to broadening the experience of their own church through leading their congregations in using aspects of other traditions in their local context.

*Criterion F (Leadership and Collaboration)*

A greater emphasis upon collaboration and working as a member of a team rather than primary or sole responsibility leadership.

---

<sup>8</sup> Note: our Licensed Lay Ministers will be increasingly responsible for leading local congregations under the oversight of an ordained minister who may have responsibility for multiple churches and congregations. We therefore expect them to meet similar criteria regarding spirituality, personality and character etc to their ordained colleagues, recognising that their role will be more closely supervised and supported than that of an incumbent and is lay rather than ordained.

## **Appendix C: Recommended Books**

### ***Vocation***

- Live for a change by Francis Dewar. pub: DLT
- Called or Collared by Francis Dewar. pub: SPCK
- Life calling: a 5-session course on vocation for Lent by Robert Warren and Kate Bruce. pub: CHP
- What color is your parachute? 2009 by Richard Nelson Bolles. pub: Ten Speed Press
- The Abolition of the Laity by R. Paul Stevens. pub: Paternoster Press

### ***Ordained Ministry***

- The Life and Work of a Priest (Very highly recommended- start with this one if you are considering being ordained) by John Pritchard. pub: SPCK
- Being a Priest Today (Recommended) by Cocksworth/Brown. pub: Canterbury Press
- Ministry in Three Dimensions by Stephen Croft. pub: DLT
- Here I Am by Richard Giles. pub: Canterbury Press
- The Christian Priest Today by Michael Ramsey. pub: SPCK
- Praying for England by Samuel Wells and Sarah Coakley. pub: continuum
- Working the Angles/Contemplative Pastor by Eugene Peterson. pub: Eerdmans
- The Curate's Guide edited by John Witcombe. pub: CHP
- If You Meet George Herbert on the Road, Kill Him by Justin Lewis-Anthony. pub: Continuum

### ***Licensed Lay Ministry***

- Bridging the Gap – Reader Ministry Today edited by Gordon W Kuhrt and Pat Nappin. pub: Church House Publishing
- Reader Ministry Explored by Cathy Rowling and Paula Gooder. pub: SPCK

### ***Ministry/Leadership***

- Jesus' People – What the Church Should Do Next by Steven Croft. pub: CHP
- Mission Shaped Church/Generation Y/Evangelism in a Spiritual Age. pub: Church House Publishing (CHP)
- Transforming Community by Steven Croft. pub: DLT
- Courageous Leadership (don't miss Chapter 11!!) by Bill Hybels. pub: Zondervan
- Beyond the Good Samaritan (Mowbray) and Journeying Out (Morehouse) by Ann Morisy
- The Provocative Church by Graham Tomlin. pub: SPCK
- Who moved my cheese? by Dr Spencer Johnson. pub: Vermilion
- Leadership by the Book by Blanchard, Hybels and Hodges. pub: Harper Collins

### ***Spiritual Development***

- Silence and Honey Cakes by Rowan Williams. pub: Lion Hudson Plc
- God of Surprises by Gerrard Hughes. pub: DLT
- Anything by Henri Nouwen but particularly : The Return of the Prodigal; The Wounded Healer; The Way of the Heart; and In the name of Jesus (all published by DLT)
- The Life You've Always Wanted by John Ortberg. pub: Zondervan
- Spirituality Workbook by David Runcorn. pub: SPCK
- Now is the time by Sr Stanislaus Kennedy. pub: Town House (Dublin)

### ***Theology***

- Introduction to Theology by David Ford. pub: OUP
- The Christian Theology Reader by Alastair McGrath. pub Blackwells
- Exploring Faith: theology for life series Ed: Leslie Francis/Jeff Astley. pub: DLT
- What is the Point of Being a Christian? by Timothy Radcliffe. pub: OP Burns and Oates
- The Wild Gospel by Alison Morgan. pub: Monarch
- Colossians Remixed: Subverting the Empire by Brian J. Walsh, Sylvia Keesmaat. pub: Authentic Media Paperback

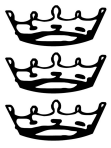
### ***Emerging Church / Emerging Theology***

- A is for abductive: the language of the emerging church by Sweet, McLaren and Haselmayer. pub: Zondervan
- Anything by Philip Yancey but especially: What's so amazing about grace?, The Jesus I never knew, The Bible Jesus read.
- The Vision and the Vow by Pete Greig. pub: Survivor
- Velvet Elvis by Rob Bell. pub: Zondervan
- The Ragamuffin Gospel by Brennan Manning. pub: Authentic
- Christianity Rediscovered by Vincent Donovan. pub: SCM
- After MacDonaldization by John Drane pub DLT
- The Forgotten Ways by Alan Hirsch pub Brazos Press
- How (not) to Speak of God by Peter Rollins. pub: SPCK

### ***Cross Cultural Mission***

- Distinctly welcoming by Richard Sudworth pub Scripture Union
- Grace for Muslims? by Steve Bell pub Authentic Media

Appendix D: Application for Diocesan Discernment Day – Part I



Diocese of Bristol

CONFIDENTIAL

Registration form for the Hearing God's Call programme<sup>9</sup>

1	<b>Candidate's Full Name and Title</b>	
2	<b>Gender</b>	Male/Female
3	<b>Any Previous Name</b>	
4	<b>Address</b>	
5	<b>Telephone</b>	
6	<b>Email address</b>	
7	<b>Parish</b>	
8	<b>Incumbent's name</b>  <b>Is he/she aware of your interest in vocational exploration?</b>	Yes / No
9	<b>Date of Birth:</b>	
10	<b>Date and place of Baptism:</b>	
11	<b>Date and place of Confirmation:</b>	
12	<b>Marital Status</b>  <b>Date of Marriage:</b>	Single/Engaged/Married/Separated/ Divorced/Widowed
13	<b>Have you or your spouse been married previously and your former spouse is still living?</b> <sup>Note 1</sup>	Yes / No
14	<b>Name of Spouse</b>	
15	<b>Academic Qualifications (incl details of theological study undertaken)</b>	
16	<b>Occupation</b>	

<sup>9</sup> Complete Part 1 of this form only if you have not already registered for the Hearing God's Call programme.

17	Do you have a CRB Enhanced Disclosure Certificate obtained through Bristol Diocese?	Yes / No
18	Do you have any disability / health issues that may affect your future ministry?  Have you suffered a significant bereavement or similarly traumatic experience in the last 2 years? <sup>Note 2</sup>	
19	Positions of responsibility held in the church, past and present	
20	Which ministry / ministries are you interested in exploring at this stage?	
21	Signed	
22	Dated	

Please complete and return this form to: : [hannah.barker@bristoldiocese.org](mailto:hannah.barker@bristoldiocese.org) or to Hannah Barker, Church House, 23 Great George Street, BRISTOL, BS1 5QZ

**Note 1: Divorce and remarriage**

Those who feel a call to ordination who have been divorced and remarried (or whose current spouses have been divorced) should be aware that the Church of England requires the Diocese to investigate the circumstances of their previous relationship before attending a BAP. This can be a difficult process for some. In addition, the Archbishop's Office requires that the new marriage be at least 3 years old before attending a BAP. Please contact the ALM if you would like to discuss the implications for you. No such requirement exists for Licensed Lay Ministry.

**Note 2: Bereavement**

Pursuing a vocation can be a costly experience, both emotionally and spiritually. We therefore do not recommend that anyone begins the process of exploration who has, in the last 2 years, undergone a significant bereavement, whether the loss of a close family member or friend or, in some cases, a serious injury, retirement, or redundancy. Please contact the ALM if you would like to discuss your circumstances before applying.



5	<p>Please give details of any theological or pastoral training you have completed with dates. If you have been undertaking the Exploring Christianity course<sup>10</sup>, please indicate which modules you have completed and grades achieved.</p>
6	<p>What experience of leadership do you have inside or outside the church? Include relevant experience from your employment. How would you describe your leadership style?</p>
7	<p>How are you currently involved in your church and what areas have you previously been involved in?</p>
8	<p>What involvement have you had in mission related activities either with your church or outside? Include details of any voluntary work you have undertaken.</p>

---

<sup>10</sup> or EGP course

9	<b>What is at the heart of your faith? What is the Good News? What is your passion?</b>	
10	<b>Please confirm which ministry / ministries you believe you are being called to today?</b> (If you are unsure what these terms mean please refer to Appendix B of the 'Hearing God's Call – Diocesan Discernment Day' document)	<i>Choose one of the following:</i> Ordained Minister with the potential to become an Incumbent Ordained Assistant Minister Ordained Pioneer Ministry Ordained Local Ministry Licensed Lay Ministry
11	<b>Why do you feel called to this ministry? What skills and gifts do you have which make this a realistic ministry to pursue?</b>	
12	<b>Signed</b>	
13	<b>Dated</b>	

Please complete and return the attached form to: : [hannah.barker@bristoldiocese.org](mailto:hannah.barker@bristoldiocese.org) or to Hannah Barker, Church House, 23 Great George Street, BRISTOL, BS1 5QZ



## Application for Diocesan Discernment Day – Part 3 – References

Candidate's Christian Name and Surname:

--

### REFERENCES (Please read these notes carefully)

#### CONFIDENTIAL

Give in BLOCK CAPITALS, with initials and titles, the names and addresses of at least **four** different people to whom reference may be made. These should not be relatives and should include at least one man and one woman. Please ask your referees' permission before using their names since we will write for detailed references.

1. (a) The incumbent of the church you regularly attend.

Address
Post Code
Tel:
E-mail

- (b) If you are presently at university/college or left less than three years ago, please add the name and address of your University or College Chaplain.

Address
Post Code
Tel:
E-mail

2. A lay member of your church or chaplaincy, preferably someone in a position of responsibility in that church.

Address
Post Code
Tel:
E-mail

3. (a) If you are in paid employment, please nominate a referee from your place of work. This should preferably be someone in authority over you who knows you well. If this is inappropriate, a colleague may be named. If either would be difficult, use section (b). You should nominate someone whose primary knowledge of you comes through your employment rather than through church activities.

Address
Post Code

Tel:
E-mail

**OR**

3. (b) If you are not in paid employment, please nominate someone who has known you well in that context or who knows you at present outside the context of your church activities.

Address
Post Code
Tel:
E-mail

4. (a) Your Principal, Tutor or Supervisor (if you are at College or University at present or have left within the last five years).

Address
Post Code
Tel:
E-mail

- (b) If the above does not apply, give the name of someone who is in an informed position to comment on your capacity for further education, preferably someone who has supervised your study in some way.

Address
Post Code
Tel:
E-mail

PLEASE CHECK that you have given the names of at least FOUR different people on this form. If you find that the referees you have given are exclusively female, please add below the name of a man to whom we may write for a further reference about you. If you find that your referees are exclusively male, please add the name of a woman.

Address
Post Code
Tel:
E-mail

If you have any questions about referees please contact Sam Rushton or Ray Brazier. If further references are required, we will ask you for them.

**Application for Diocesan Discernment Day – Part 4 – Data Protection**



---

Name .....

Address .....

.....

.....

.....

In accordance with the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998, I give my express consent to you holding and processing sensitive personal and other data about me on my personal file relating to this employment.

*Using your personal information for Discerning Vocation to, and for Selection for, Ordained or Licensed Lay Ministry in the Church of England*

*The Adviser for Licensed Ministry will use the personal information which he/ she holds about you (supplied by you and your referees) to discern your vocation to ordained or licensed lay ministry in the Church of England; and, where appropriate, to enable you to be assessed by a Bishop’s Advisory Panel; and, if you are recommended for training, to assist in making arrangements for your training and financial support. He/ She will share your information as necessary with your diocesan bishop, sponsoring bishop, members and staff of the Bishops’ Advisory Panel, and with any training institution to which you apply.*

*I agree that the Adviser for Licensed Ministry may use my personal information as described above.*

Signed .....

Date .....

## **Notes for the Confidential Declaration Form**

### **Question 1a and 1b**

Declare all convictions, cautions, warnings or reprimands. Posts where the person is working or coming into contact with children are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 so that all spent convictions must be declared.

Any technical motoring offences dealt with by fine do not need to be declared.

### **Question 1c**

Declare if you are at present under investigation by the police, social services or an employer.

### **Question 1d**

You must declare any finding of fact by a civil court that your actions have significantly harmed a child. Declare any court orders made on this basis.

### **Question 2a**

Make any statement you wish regarding any incident you wish to declare.

### **Question 2b**

Declare any allegations made against you, however long ago, that you have significantly harmed a child or young person. Any allegation must be declared which has been investigated by the police, social services, employer or voluntary body. Checks will be made with the relevant authorities.

### **Question 3**

All these matters will be checked with the relevant authorities.

### **Question 4**

Please declare, in confidence, any health problems that may affect your ability to work with children. This question is primarily intended to help you if you subsequently need to withdraw from work with children, for example because of a recurring health problem.

Some of the information requested on the form will be checked with the Criminal Records Bureau. All information received will be carefully assessed to decide whether it is relevant to the post applied for and will only be used for the purpose of protecting children or vulnerable adults.

## Application for Diocesan Discernment Day – Part 5 – Confidential Declaration



**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Position Applied For:** \_\_\_\_\_

For Beneficed Clergy, those who hold the Bishop's License or Permission to Officiate, Employees, Ordinands, Readers and Volunteers who are likely to be in regular and direct contact with children, young people under eighteen years of age and vulnerable adults.

This form is strictly confidential and, except under compulsion of Law, will be seen only by those responsible for the appointment and, when appropriate, the Diocesan/Bishop's Child Protection Officer. All forms will be kept securely under the terms of the Data Protection Act 1998. **If you answer yes to any question, please give details, on a separate sheet if necessary, giving the number of the question you are answering.**

### Please tick either the YES or NO Box in answer to EVERY QUESTION

**1a Have you ever been convicted of a criminal offence (including any spent convictions under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974)? \***

YES p      NO p

**1b Have you ever been cautioned by the police, given a reprimand or warning or bound over to keep the peace?**

YES p      NO p

**1c Are you at present under investigation?**

YES p      NO p

**1d Have you ever been found by a Court exercising Civil Jurisdiction (including matrimonial or family jurisdiction) to have caused significant harm \*\* to a child or young person under the age of eighteen years, or has any such Court made an order against you on the basis of any finding or allegation that any child or young person was at risk of significant harm from you?**

YES p      NO p

**2a Has your conduct ever caused or been likely to cause significant harm to a child or young person under the age of eighteen, or put a child or young person at risk of significant harm?**

YES p    NO p

**2b Has your conduct ever caused or been likely to cause significant harm to a vulnerable adult, or put a vulnerable adult at risk of significant harm?**

YES p    NO p

**2c To your knowledge, has it ever been alleged that your conduct has resulted in any of those things?**

YES p NO p

If yes, please give details on a separate sheet, including the date(s) and nature of the conduct, or alleged conduct, and whether you were dismissed, disciplined, moved to other work or resigned from any paid or voluntary work as a result.

**3 Has a child in your care or for whom you have or had parental responsibility ever been removed from your care, been placed on the Child Protection Register or been the subject of a Care Order, a Supervision Order, a Child Assessment Order or an Emergency Protection Order under the Children Act 1989, or a similar Order under other legislation?**

YES p NO p

**4 Have you any health problem(s) which might affect your work with children, young people under the age of eighteen or vulnerable adults?**

YES p NO p

**5 Have you ever been known by any name other than that given on this form?**

YES p NO p

**6 Have you, during the past five years, had any home address other than that given below?**

YES p NO p

\* All previous convictions, with the exception of technical motoring offences leading only to a fine, should be disclosed.

\*\* Significant harm involves serious ill-treatment of any kind including neglect, physical, emotional or sexual abuse, or impairment of physical or mental health development.

**Declaration:**

I declare that the above information (and that on the attached sheets \*\*\*) is accurate and complete to the best of my knowledge.

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Full Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date of Birth** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ **Post Code:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Tel No:** \_\_\_\_\_ **e-mail** \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\* Please delete if not applicable.

**Before an appointment can be confirmed, applicants must provide an Enhanced Disclosure from the Criminal Records Bureau.**

*Office use only:*

**Progress to Official CRB Clearance Application: YES/NO**

**Authorising Signature and Date:**

## Application for Diocesan Discernment Day – Part 6 – Ethnic Origin and Disability Monitoring



We are required by Ministry Division to monitor the ethnic diversity of candidates applying for either Ordained Ministry or Licensed Lay Ministry. This information is collected anonymously by Ministry Development and is used only for monitoring purposes; this form will therefore be detached from your application and held separately from your personal file. We would be very grateful if you would complete the required information below:

- 1. What is your ethnic group?** Choose one section (a) to (e), then put **Yes** in the appropriate box to indicate your cultural background
- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>(a) White</b>                         | <input type="checkbox"/> British<br><input type="checkbox"/> Any other White background   |
| <b>(b) Dual Heritage</b>                 | <input type="checkbox"/> White and Black Caribbean<br><input type="checkbox"/> White and Black African<br><input type="checkbox"/> White and Asian<br><input type="checkbox"/> Any other Dual Heritage background |
| <b>(c) Asian or Asian British</b>        | <input type="checkbox"/> Indian<br><input type="checkbox"/> Pakistani<br><input type="checkbox"/> Bangladeshi<br><input type="checkbox"/> Any other Asian background  |
| <b>(d) Black or Black British</b>        | <input type="checkbox"/> Caribbean<br><input type="checkbox"/> African<br><input type="checkbox"/> Any other Black background   |
| <b>(e) Chinese or other ethnic group</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> Chinese<br><input type="checkbox"/> Any other  |

- 2. What is your country of birth** Put **Yes** in the appropriate box
- |   |
|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> UK<br><input type="checkbox"/> Other European country<br><input type="checkbox"/> Africa<br><input type="checkbox"/> Asian<br><input type="checkbox"/> North or South America<br><input type="checkbox"/> Austratlia/New Zealand |
|---|

If outside the UK please also write the present name of the country

**3. Disability**

'A person has a disability if he or she has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day to day activities'

*(Code of practice, Rights of Access - Goods, Facilities, Services and Premises (2002). Issued in relation to the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.)*

On the basis of this definition, **do you have a disability?**

<input type="checkbox"/>	Put <b>Yes</b> or <b>No</b> in the box as appropriate
--------------------------	---

**THANK YOU** for helping us in this way.

## Appendix E:

### Surviving a Diocesan Discernment Day - some 'Top Tips' from 'A Wellwisher'

First of all, thank you for putting yourself through this experience – it requires a great deal of courage to make ourselves vulnerable to God and to our fellow Christians by putting our vocation to the test in this way. The Diocese has tried to make the process as relaxed and friendly as possible given that it is all about testing your call and you may be surprised to find that you really enjoy the day – most people do. Remember above all else – God is in this – trust in Him and you will not be allowed to wander from the path he has set.

The following notes may help you prepare for the Discernment Day – I wrote them based on my own experience of being at a BAP but I think they equally well apply to the Discernment Day. I hope you enjoy reading them.

#### 5 'General' Top Tips

- 1 Remember that God is sovereign over the process. Place yourself humbly in His care and trust in His goodness. There were lots of times when I knew that the words I was saying came from Him and, whilst this is not an excuse for not doing your human best to prepare, it is a comfort to know that God is always there to support you and has your best interests at heart.
2. This is a professional selection exercise comparable with any 'Top 100' company. If this is your background, you will feel completely at home. If it is not, do not despair. There are lots of 'commercial' books which will help you to bring out the best of yourself (the chapter on interviews in 'What Colour is your Parachute?' by Richard Nelson Bolles is good, easy to read and written by a Christian)
3. Unlike commercial interviews this is not a competitive selection exercise, ie there is no need to beat the man or women next to you to get the job. Remember to support each other with kind words, prayer and (where necessary/appropriate!) big hugs. Be a blessing to the group. Apart from being the right thing to do, there are 2 practical effects of this:
  - 1) the Advisers will have evidence of your pastoral abilities and
  - 2) you will be less focussed on yourself and therefore more relaxed.
4. Wear clothes that are smart but not so smart that you feel uncomfortable. Men: ties are not necessary. Ladies: a smart skirt or trousers with a blouse is a good, safe option. Do be aware of your body language: sitting up straight and looking at the person talking to you (not over their shoulder to see if someone more interesting is coming) will communicate itself as you being relaxed yet alert. In conversation, be yourself and be interested in others – you do not need to score points off others to impress. Be aware of yourself in conversations – are you talking too much or do you have aggressive body language? Remember that even when not in an interview or exercise, you are always 'on show'. (I realise this all sounds a bit 'worldly' and obvious, but, believe me, it does make a difference to the impression you create!)
5. Finally, be prepared. Re-read any material you have already prepared – having a pre-prepared answer is both reassuring for you and impressive to the Advisers. Conversely, try not to initiate conversations which you have not prepared, especially if they are on controversial subjects or areas of your life which are painful. For example, do not express a view on, say, children taking Communion which you are unprepared to back up lucidly and fluently, and do not introduce the topic of 'death' if you are still grieving a loved one.

- Keep it short and simple – a clear, concise argument made passionately and fluently cannot be bettered.

## The Structure of the Discernment Day

### 1. Group Exercise

Before attending the Day, you will need to prepare a presentation on a topic that is **directly related to one of the Selection Criteria**. (It often helps the listeners if you tell them in advance which criterion you are addressing.) In your group of 8 candidates, you will each have five minutes to present to the other 7 candidates, observed by the Advisers, and then each person will facilitate a discussion on their topic for 8 minutes, the final two minutes being set aside for summarising by the facilitator.

You are not expected to be an expert on your topic but the Advisers will expect you to know it sufficiently well to provide a strong lead during the discussion and to respond intelligently and interestedly to any contributions from the other candidates – remember that you are facilitating a discussion on a topic of mutual interest, not *teaching* the group. You would be wise to avoid highly controversial topics, choosing instead a topic about which you are passionate and informed and which you might reasonably expect the other members of the group to have some sort of opinion. If you choose too unusual

a topic, you will find it harder to facilitate the discussion. You may use props or support materials eg flipchart, OHP (not laptop-driven Powerpoint) but I would encourage you to keep it simple – if fiddling with your props takes up 4 minutes of your time, you will only have 1 minute to speak. Timing is rigidly observed – you will be warned 30 secs before the end of the presentation and will have to stop talking when 5 minutes are up.

Be enthusiastic – choose to talk about something you love and let your passion show.

Engage the audience – maintain eye-contact as much as possible and don't forget to smile

Humour is good if it's your natural style – awful if it isn't.

Practise beforehand – especially the timing.

Stand still(ish) – in a small room, big movements are very distracting (but don't stand so still that you look frozen)

Relax! – these people are your brothers and sisters in Christ and they want you to do well.

#### Top Tips on Facilitating

Ask open questions – questions to which the answer is 'yes' or 'no' are a dead end.

Be interested in the answers the others give – ask sensible subsidiary questions to show you have heard and understood what they said.

Draw the quiet ones in with a gentle, very open question eg "Sue, have you got anything you'd like to add?" is less frightening than "Sue, what do you think the church should do about rising anti-semitism in the west?"

Summarise the discussion, don't re-hash your ideas from your presentation

After presenting, pause before moving into the discussion. You may sit or stand to facilitate as you feel most comfortable. You will have 8 minutes to discuss your topic and should open the discussion straight away with a question – do not attempt to continue your presentation at this point, you should now be drawing out other people's ideas not continuing to tell them yours. You will be warned 2 minutes before the end of the discussion, giving you time to draw the discussion to a close and summarise the main points raised. You will be cut off if you have not finished your summary at the end of 8 minutes.

**The object of the facilitation exercise is not to come to a decision but to allow each person to be able to express their views and to comment on the views expressed by others.** When it is your turn to lead, look out for those who haven't had an opportunity to speak. Affirm each contribution, summarizing points as you go along for the benefit of the group. Introduce new lines of thought where appropriate by using thoughtful, open-ended

questions which you will be wise to have prepared beforehand eg 'what do you think about the view often expressed that....?'

- Show that you appreciate other traditions, including being able to 'speak their language' – know what a sacrament is and be prepared to use 'priestly' language even if it wouldn't be your natural style

When you are being facilitated, be courteous and encouraging of the facilitator and the other members of the group. Be very aware of body language – it is easy to appear too dominant or too disengaged. Wait for others to finish speaking before jumping in with your thoughts and don't feel that you have to say something on every topic but make sure you do say something substantive in at least half the topics. As always, only be controversial if you are prepared for a more detailed discussion either in this group discussion or later one-to-one with the Advisers. But... don't be afraid to express a strong opinion if you have one – Advisers get easily bored during this exercise and love a constructive debate! Most importantly, allow the facilitator to facilitate – do not try to take control of someone else's topic by asking them questions or questioning other members of the group. Try not to speak after the two minute warning when the facilitator is needing to spend the time summarizing – finish the point you are making gracefully if you are speaking at this point and hand back to the facilitator – do not start a point after the two minute warning has been announced

- Be prepared to speak about your prayer life
- Relate examples of how others have recognized your call

## 2. Pastoral Exercise

A chance for introverts to shine!! A scenario will be presented for which you have to provide a written response of about one side of A4. A printer will be usually be available if you want to do this exercise on a lap top but a handwritten piece is acceptable. Examples of scenarios would be:

- responding to an email from a friend telling you about the death of her mother
- answering a letter from someone confiding a pastoral problem
- preparing notes for an interview with someone who needs advice or support

Read the problem through carefully as it will almost certainly be multi-layered and more complex than it may at first appear. For example, the death may be of a mother who was domineering and with whom the daughter had a stormy relationship; there are hints of things left unsaid or thoughts about which the daughter is ashamed. The Advisers are looking to see that you have identified the complexity of the situation and that your response is pastorally appropriate rather than theologically brilliant.

- Recognise the complexities
- Be empathetic and kind, not judgemental
- Don't try to solve the problem in one sheet of A4!

## 3. Interviews

You will have 2 interviews of about 30 minutes each. Each Adviser will have received your initial papers - your Application Form, your references and possible a Sponsoring note from the ALM if you have been spending some time with them. Good interview technique will include: answer the questions as succinctly as you can – when you have answered the question, stop talking; sit up straight and look at the interviewer when answering, even if they are looking away (they may be writing notes); smile!

Advisers may be either lay or ordained, possible even an Archdeacon or University Professor. Do not be over-awed by their status, especially if you are not used to meeting 'senior' people. (Some people try to imagine people like this in their underwear in order to overcome feelings of awe – if this works for you, why not?!) Advisers may focus on certain criteria or may have a more widely ranging discussion. The nine criteria are often grouped into three sections for ease: Vocational, Pastoral and Educational. The Vocational Criteria include: Ministry within the Church of England; Vocation; and Spirituality. Be aware of the diversity of the CofE. It helps if you have reflected on

different traditions and can appreciate them, even if they are not your particular cup of tea. It is likely that you will be asked about your prayer life. Finally, the Adviser will look to see that your vocation has been supported by people both within the church and also those outside the church who know you well.

The Pastoral Criteria are: Personality and Character, Relationships, and Leadership and

**Tell me about a time when you made a mistake”**

men and women tend to get this question wrong in different ways:

men are often unable to identify (or talk about?) times when they made mistakes. When they do remember one is usually trivial. Often they will slip into ‘we’ language ‘we made a mistake by....’ but often revert to ‘I’ language when talking about putting it right – ‘I solved the problem by...’ They rarely say ‘sorry’.

women often go to the other extreme. They tend to use an example which is the worst possible mistake anyone could make. (Whilst getting marks for honesty, this can be very off-putting for the interviewer – ‘could I let this woman look after a parish if this is the sort of havoc she wreaks??’). Women tend to take full responsibility for the mistake (‘I’) and then share responsibility for the solution (‘we’). However they do say ‘y’.

men: The best answer to this question is to choose an example which is not too trivial but not too bad. Identify the mistake you made eg ‘I forgot to send out the agenda for the PCC meeting on time last month’ Explain how you came to realise that you had made a mistake, eg “The vicar asked me where his copy was. I realised that I had forgotten everybody’s agenda and told the vicar what had happened” Relate how you apologised for the mistake and how you put it right eg “I immediately walked all the agendas round to the PCC members’ houses with a hand-written note saying how sorry I was that it was late” Identify what you learned from this experience eg “I didn’t want it to happen again so I put a note in my diary a week before each meeting to make sure that I didn’t forget again.”

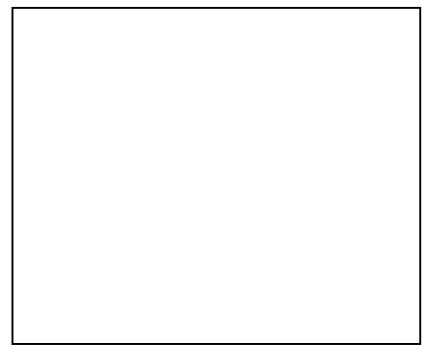
Collaboration. Advisers are looking to see that you are emotionally mature. Examples are important in with these criteria - you will need to talk about specific times when you showed a particular characteristic. For example, a typical question will be: ‘Tell me about a time when you led a team.’ Prepare answers which give evidence on personal characteristics which are likely to come up. Always choose something which shows you in a good light by the end, ie even if you made a mistake, show how you learned from the experience. Never choose an example which you do not want explored further eg. if you do not want to talk about the death of a loved one because it is still too raw. Think about incidents which are relatively innocuous but not too bland or trivial, that show that you have a good sense of humour and that you do not take yourself too seriously (but avoid being flippant). Try also to talk about how you rely on and support others in achieving your aims.

The Advisor will also be interested in your support network and may ask you questions related to your relationship with your spouse, children, other family and friends. They are looking for healthy inter-dependency and an understanding of how power can be used or mis-used in relationships.

The Educational criteria are Faith, Mission and Evangelism and Quality of Mind. Be prepared for your interview to be stretching intellectually. The Adviser may take a controversial opinion in

order to stimulate debate – they may even pretend to have no faith in order to encourage you to

voice yours. Also they may choose to introduce a topic which came up in the Group Exercise! There was the beginning of an interesting divergence of opinion and ask you to elaborate on it. They will perhaps be trying to do this where you did not advance an opinion at all in the Group Exercise. Don’t be tempted to bluff your way through – if you don’t know the answer to something, say so. They are sometimes like to push you to be a full-blown theologian at this stage! With people who have a Mission and Evangelism element of the criteria, you will need to be able to explain the difference between Mission and Evangelism and also the ‘Five Marks of Mission’.



#### 4. Going home

Be prepared for the Day to be quite exhausting – if you're a nervous driver you might prefer to be picked up. And don't plan too much for the following day. Go home and relax! You won't hear for at least 10 days and there is no point fretting about it. (Easy to say.....!) If you can go away for a while afterwards, do so as it will help to take your mind off it all and you'll be away from the daily enquirers 'Have you heard yet....?'. And remember that God loves you very much and honours you for putting yourself to the test in this way. He has your best interests at heart and will not allow you to put your foot wrong if you trust in Him.

#### An example of a Pastoral Exercise

The aim of this exercise is to test your ability to respond in a timely and pastorally appropriate way to a crisis requiring a written response. We will be looking to see that you:

- Have understood the nature of the pastoral crisis;
- Can show pastoral sensitivity;
- Can reflect theologically on the human experience (where pastorally appropriate); and
- Can write in good English using grammar and vocabulary appropriate to the task.

Rosie and Chris are a young couple who have been members of your church since they joined the youth group 12 years ago. Last year they decided to go out as missionary doctors to Africa for one year before starting work in a British hospital. Soon after arriving in Africa, Rosie found that she was pregnant with their first child and so they changed their plans to return six weeks before the baby is due. They are due home next week.

As the Prayer Partner for Overseas Missionaries at your church, you have just received the following email from Chris:

*Please pray for us. Rosie's blood pressure went up alarmingly on Monday and we rushed her into the local clinic. The baby was born by Caesarian section on Tuesday because the doctors were so worried. The baby is okay but a bit small but Rosie is still very ill – they think she might die and there isn't anything they can do to get her blood pressure down. They are all very caring but there just aren't the drugs here to sort it out. Her mother is flying out on Monday to help take care of the baby and to be with Rosie but I'm so scared she may not be in time. What will I do without her? She is my whole life and I have brought her here to die – it's all my fault. Please please pray for us as I can't at the moment. Chris.*

Your task is to write an email in response to this email from Chris. It should be no more than 500 words in length.