

Diocese of Bristol | Ministry Development

Vocation, Discernment and Selection in the Bristol Diocese

Hearing God's Call

A Guide for Enquirers into
Mission and Ministry Opportunities
in the Church of England

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What is Vocation?

Put very simply, vocation is what God is calling you to do with the gifts, skills and experience that he has placed into your hands today. One of the best explanations of vocation comes in a book written by Richard Nelson Bolles: 'What color is your parachute?'. He observes that vocation has three parts:

Firstly, You are called to love God and to accept his love for you

"Your first Mission here on Earth is one that you share with the rest of the human race, but it is no less your individual Mission for the fact that it is shared: and it is, to seek to stand hour by hour in the conscious presence of God, the One from whom your Mission is derived. The Missioner before the Mission, is the rule. In religious language, your Mission here is: to know God, and enjoy Him forever, and to see His hand in all His works."

Secondly, You are called to love your neighbour and to accept their love for you

"Second, once you have begun [loving God] in an earnest way, your second Mission here on Earth is also one that you share with the rest of the human race, but it is no less your individual Mission for the fact that it is shared: and it is, to do what you can, moment by moment, day by day, step by step, to make this world a better place, following the leading and guidance of God's Spirit within you and around you .

Thirdly, You are called to be You

"Third, once you have begun [loving God and loving your neighbour] in a serious way, your third Mission here on Earth is one that is uniquely yours, and that is:

- 1. to exercise that Talent that you particularly came to Earth to use - your greatest gift, which you most delight to use,*
- 2. in the place(s) or setting(s) that God has caused to appeal to you most and*
- 3. for those purposes that God most needs to have done in the world.*

If this is the definition of vocation, then what are the BIG questions you need to ask yourself now?

- How earnest am I in loving God? Have I accepted his love for me?
- How seriously do I take loving my neighbour? Do I allow others to love and to serve me?
- What are the skills and gifts I most delight in?
- Where am I, physically, emotionally, relationally?
- What does God need doing here and now that I would be good at doing?

The purpose of the 'Hearing God's Call' programme is to help you answer these questions for yourself and to enable you to fulfil God's call on your life.

Over the next 1 – 2 years, we will encourage you to travel a pilgrim's path with God and with others who are also journeying towards the goal that God has set for you. May God bless you as you travel and keep your foot safe on the path that he has set for you. And may you, as you travel, end each day coated in the dust from your Rabbi, Jesus' feet.

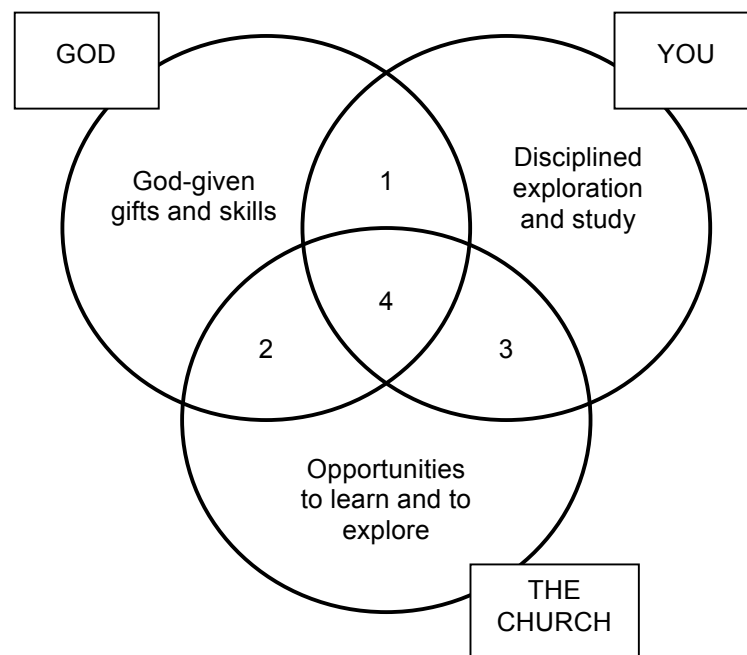
Who is 'Hearing God's Call' for?

This programme is for all those who are seeking to hear God's call on their life and to respond to it, including, amongst others, those called to the following ministries:

- ordained ministry, including stipendiary (SM), self supporting (SSM), pioneer (OPM), and local (OLM) ordained ministries;¹
- licensed lay ministry (LLM) (also known as 'Reader')
- chaplaincy (ordained or lay), either formal or informal (ie workplace ministry)
- home or overseas mission,
- evangelist including Church Army
- pastoral care worker
- mentor or spiritual director
- church leadership (eg church warden, treasurer etc)
- monastic life

How does it work?

The first thing to understand about this programme is that it is *your* journey. There are many people who are here to help you to find your way, to make sure you ask the right questions and to point you to where you might find the answers. But essentially, this is *your* call from God and how you respond to it is *your* responsibility.



- 1: God-given gifts and personal discipline but no opportunity to express them = Frustration
- 2: God-given gifts and opportunity to express them but no personal discipline = Wastefulness
- 3: Personal discipline and opportunity but no God-given gifts in a particular area = Misdirected effort
- 4: God-given gifts and personal discipline and opportunity = a life well-lived, a race well run**

¹ Details of the various authorised ministries supported by the Bristol Diocese are available at Appendix A

What are the essential points about this programme?

A fuller version of the key principles governing this Programme is available on request from either of the Advisers for Licensed Ministry (ALMs). However, here is a summary of the really important bits:

- **Everyone, regardless of gender, sexual orientation, age, race, or disability, is called by God to use the gifts, skills and life experience He has given them to transform the world around them through prayer, proclamation and action.**
- The Church's responsibility is:
 - to release the energy of the people of God by encouraging, enabling and equipping all of Christ's followers to follow God's call on their lives;
 - to identify the needs of the church in undertaking God's mission in the world and to seek out those individuals who we believe may have a particular role in equipping the Church and/or transforming the world;
 - to help each person to discern whether the call they perceive is realistic and affirmed by the local and (in some cases) the wider Church;
 - to publicly recognise and affirm that call through ordination, licensing, accrediting or commissioning those who have been called and recognised.
- The identification and development of leadership skills are a strategic priority in this Diocese as is the need to encourage and model collaboration in all aspects of the programme.
- The vocational process should feel purposeful and dynamic without becoming forceful or prescriptive; Enquirers should feel able to take a step back at any time and feel supported in that decision.
- We emphasise the responsibility of the Enquirer throughout the process – it is *your* journey, *your* call, *your* responsibility to make the most of the opportunities presented and to be honest with yourself about your gifts and your spiritual and emotional maturity.
- We also try to make clear the role of those supporting you in the process. Some of the people you meet will be 'Mentors' – those with a gift of 'critical encouragement' who will support and build you up in your journey. Others have the role of 'Diocesan Vocation Advisers' – these people have a gift of discernment and advise the Bishop and his support staff as to your perceived suitability for the demanding role of a minister in God's Church. It is worth recognising the difference between these two sets of individuals to avoid disappointment – encouragement from a Mentor should not be taken to be approval from the whole Church.

How does the Hearing God's Call programme work?

Essentially the Programme can be divided into three phases:

- Exploration
- Discernment
- Formation

Exploration:

An initial phase lasting from six months to six years depending on your individual circumstances. The *Exploration* phase is common to all Enquirers: those thinking about ordained or lay ministry, those thinking about mission, and those who just want to give over more of their life to God. This period is largely self-directed, however, the Advisers for Licensed Ministry (ALMs), Exploring Christianity² tutors and/or one of our Vocational Mentors will be available to support you with advice and encouragement. You should also seek the advice of your vicar or chaplain at this stage. During this phase we encourage you to explore God's call through deepening your experience and/or understanding in a number of areas:

- **Experience God in Mission**

'Mission before Ministry' is one of the key planks of our vocational strategy. In Mission, Christians place themselves in situations which they cannot face in their own strength and learn what it is to be fully reliant on a God who saves and transforms lives. Effective missionaries and ministers *'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.'*³ We very strongly encourage those who have little or no experience in this area to do something on this list during this exploratory phase:

- Undertake a period in Overseas Mission. Many mission agencies are able to arrange short or medium term placements in mission, from a week to a year, all around the world. Chris Dobson, the Diocesan Ecumenical and Global Partnership Officer, will be happy to talk with you about the possibilities of overseas mission and in particular about opportunities to visit our partner Diocese in Uganda.
- Get involved with a local mission initiative. Street Pastors⁴ is now active in a number of towns in our area, including Swindon. Other local initiatives eg late night drop-in centres, food distribution programmes, homeless projects etc are often keen to accept volunteers; talk to your vicar about what might be possible in your area.
- Organize your own mission activity at church. Lead a group in a weekend mission to another parish in need, set up a café for the elderly in your church hall, or organize your Youth Group to go with you to tidy the grounds of a nearby care home.

- **Spiritual Discipline:**

Effective missionaries and ministers require 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.'*⁵

² A Diocesan course designed to help people deepen their walk with Christ. More details are available from the Ministry Development website or from your Deanery Leadership Team.

³ extract from the Church of England's Ministry Division 'Criteria for Selection' for ordained ministry. For the full list of selection criteria in the Church of England see Appendix B

⁴ For more information contact Paul Rush, the Adviser in Evangelism for the Bristol Diocese

⁵ 'Criteria for Selection' as above

We encourage all Enquirers to undertake one or more of the following to broaden and deepen their spiritual life:

- Adopt a habit of regular (daily) prayer in a style suitable for you. Extroverts, for example, should be looking to attend corporate prayer more regularly; introverts might prefer to set aside time for quiet prayer, guided or unguided as works best for you⁶.
- Consider developing a 'Rule of Life' as part of a dispersed Community. Examples of these communities include:
 - the Community of St Aidan and St Hilda based on Lindisfarne
 - the Northumbria Community
 - the Iona Community
 - Third Order Franciscans, Benedictines or Dominicans
 - The Order of Mission, based at St Thomas Crooks Sheffield
- Seek out a Spiritual Director. If you need help to do this, contact an Adviser for Licensed Ministry (ALM).
- Keep a prayer or spiritual journal, noting down on a daily basis how prayers have been answered (or not) and how God has spoken to you through the Bible, through prayer and through other people.
- Go on a retreat, either guided or as a self-directed exercise. Take time out to be alone or 'intentionally attentive to God' for 24 hours or more. Retreat houses exist in many parts of the country but you could choose just to take yourself away from your normal life to a holiday cottage or even a quiet hotel for a few days. Active types may prefer to be doing something during this time eg you might want to paint or to clean something or to drive somewhere, preferably on your own. Where you are and what you do are less important than your intention to be set apart for God for a short time.
- Be intentional about reading the Bible more regularly, taking time to reflect on what it says and how its wisdom relates to what you are doing each day.

- **Theological Study**

Effective missionaries and ministers '*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.*'⁷

We would encourage all Enquirers to undertake some theological study during this exploratory phase, which might include one or more of the following:

- Exploring Christianity - a two year part time discipleship course for those who want to take more time to explore God's call on their life (and one route for the training of Licensed Lay Ministers). The course is modular; those not intending to go forward for Licensed Lay Ministry may choose to attend just one or more of the modules. The course runs annually starting in September at locations around the Diocese⁸.
- Sign up for a module at a local theological college⁹. Part-time courses / modules are usually available at
 - Trinity or Wesley Colleges (Bristol)
 - Wycliffe or Cuddesdon Colleges (Oxford)
 - St Michael's College, Llandaff (Cardiff)

⁶ see Recommended Books list at Appendix C for some ideas in this and other areas of development

⁷ both quotes from 'Criteria for Selection'

⁸ There is a charge for this course. Current details available from Stella O'Brien at Church House in Bristol (0117 906 0100).

⁹ There would be a fee for these courses which the Diocese is not currently in a position to reimburse

- the West of England Ministry Training Course (WEMTC) (distance learning based in Gloucester)
 - the Southern Theological Education and Training Scheme (STETS) (distance learning based in Salisbury)
 - Undertake a course of guided study with a local Academic Mentor¹⁰.
 - Read some academic theology books and/or Bible commentaries. The Recommended Books list at Appendix C may help or talk to your vicar.
- **Widening your experience of the Church of England**
- This is particularly important for those exploring authorised ministry as an LLM or ordained minister. The Church of England is a wonderfully broad church, stretching liturgically from High Anglican to low, from liturgical to charismatic worship and stretching theologically from very liberal to conservative, both Forward in Faith and Reform. Effective missionaries and ministers *‘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’*.¹¹ However ‘broad’ your home church is, we encourage potential candidates for authorized ministry to explore the following:
- Get involved in the leadership and/or worship of your own church. Talk to your vicar about opportunities to be part of the local leadership team, perhaps as a member of the PCC or ministry team. If appropriate in your local context, seek to be involved in leading worship or preaching or as a leader of a small group.
 - Arrange a placement at a church with a different tradition or context to your own. Spend some time with the local ministry team there exploring the church ‘from the inside’. In particular we would encourage you to open not just your mind but your heart to the new ideas and expressions of faith in this place and learn to appreciate whatever is good, even if it is not to your own taste. Write up your experiences as a written reflection to share with your vicar and with the team you have visited.
 - Attend a range of different churches for Sunday worship and also different services within your own church that you would not normally attend. Find a local ‘Fresh Expression’ and spend some time worshipping there.
 - *For those considering ordained ministry*, interview different kinds of priest and compare and contrast their approach to priesthood¹². Particular questions you might like to ask:
 - what ministry are you called to as a priest?
 - what do the sacraments mean to you?
 - what is your daily routine / the focus of your role?
 - Read books on priesthood and compare/contrast different approaches to the topic¹³.

If you would like some help with organising a placement or interviews with priests, please contact one of the ALMs. Those considering ordained ministry may also like to join our Potential Ordinands’ Fellowship Group during this Exploration phase. The group meets about once a month to share thoughts and concerns and to think through issues specifically related to ordained ministry in a small group setting. Two Fellowship Groups meet, one in Chippenham or Swindon and one in Bristol. Details are available from the ALM.

¹⁰ Details available from the Advisers for Licensed Ministry

¹¹ Criteria for Selection

¹² It usually helps to write a short essay on this topic for sharing with the ALM and/or your local vicar

¹³ Recommended books Appendix C

Discernment:

To help people think through their vocation, the Advisers for Licensed Ministry aim to lead occasional 'Hearing God's Call' Vocation Days. These Vocation Days include:

- worship and/or prayer
- an overview of what we mean by 'vocation'
- short presentations from local people involved in different aspects of mission or ministry
- opportunity for discussion and questions
- an overview of the Diocesan vocation process

Other vocational courses are run by local theological colleges. Information regarding these courses is often to be found on the internet or via the ALM.

At some point during the Exploration phase, Enquirers are encouraged to speak to their vicar, to one of the Advisers for Licensed Ministry or to their Exploring Christianity tutor to determine whether it is appropriate to attend one of our Diocesan Discernment Days. These are held twice a year, once in October and again in March. These days involve candidates for both ordained and licensed lay ministry in three kinds of assessment:

- a group exercise which tests their presentation, facilitation and group discussion skills;
- a pastoral exercise which tests their ability to respond appropriately to pastorally challenging situations; and
- at least one interview with a Diocesan Vocation Adviser.

The day is intended to be challenging but enjoyable and is designed to provide Enquirers with a realistic assessment of their suitability for ministry. You will require various references to have been taken before attending this day, including one from your vicar or chaplain. It is therefore important that you have discussed your vocation with him/her before applying.

Candidates who feel they may be being called to ordained ministry are encouraged to speak to an ALM before applying for a Discernment Day as it may be more appropriate to wait until after attending the 'Am I Called to be Ordained?' course before attending¹⁴.

Formation

Once you have begun to discern the likely direction of your call, we encourage you to become more intentional in your vocational journey. This will involve undertaking a more focussed phase of discovery as you begin to think through the implications of your chosen path.

- potential Licensed Lay Ministers (LLMs) who have completed the Exploring Christianity¹⁵ course will need to complete a further year of vocational training which will include preaching practise, training in pastoral care and a parish placement;
- potential LLMs who have been identified at a Discernment Day and have not started Exploring Christianity or who feel they would benefit from a more academic training pathway may choose to attend a part-time course at Trinity College specifically designed to train Bristol Diocese's Licensed Lay and Ordained Local Ministers. This is a two year course comprising one evening of taught study per week plus the opportunity to attend various weekend and/or summer study days;

¹⁴ see next section: Formation

¹⁵ Or are in the final year of the Equipping God's People course, the course which is being replaced by Exploring Christianity in 2010

- potential ordinands are invited to attend ‘Am I Called to be Ordained?’ - a 4-session, 8-week course based on ‘The Life and Work of a Priest’ by John Pritchard. The course runs in June and July in two centres, Chippenham or Swindon and Bristol. Candidates will not normally attend this course unless they have had at least one meeting with an Adviser for Licensed Ministry. After undertaking this course, candidates will be invited to attend a Diocesan Discernment Day (if they have not already done so) to assess their suitability for attending a national Bishop’s Advisory Panel (BAP). Suitable candidates may attend a BAP during the spring with the aim of starting a suitable training course (either full time at college or part-time on a course) the following September. Training takes between one and three years depending on whether it is full or part time and on the candidate’s age and experience¹⁶.
- other vocational pathways might include:
 - the Evangelism course
 - a Spiritual Direction course
 - a Pastoral Care Course

Details of these and other courses will be made available as they occur on the Diocesan web site or via the Advisers for Licensed Ministry. However, as a general rule, training courses for ministries other than licensed lay or ordained ministry will increasingly be organised and delivered on a Deanery basis and so you might like to contact your local Deanery Leadership Team as a first point of contact.

Next Steps

If you have not already done so, you should talk to your local vicar or chaplain about your sense of call. He/she will then be able to advise you about local opportunities for beginning your exploration. If appropriate, he/she will recommend you to talk with one of the Advisers for Licensed Ministry who will make some suggestions for the exploration phase.

The registration form in the Appendix should be used to register your interest in exploring your call further within the Hearing God’s Call program. We will use the information you give us to keep track of your progress and to contact you if we think there is an opportunity for exploration or formation that you would benefit from.

‘What next?’ is now up to you – remember this is your journey, your call.
If you would like to talk to one of the Advisers for Licensed Ministry please contact us using the information on the front cover.

May God bless you as you travel and bring you triumphantly into his presence when your journey is done.

¹⁶ Further information on likely training routes for ordained candidates may be obtained from the Adviser for Initial Ministerial Education.

Appendices

Appendix A: Summary of Authorised Ministries in the Bristol Diocese

Appendix B: Criteria for Selection for all Authorised Ministries

Appendix C: Recommended Reading for those exploring their vocation

Appendix D: Registration Form for 'Hearing God's Call' Programme

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

OPM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. • Age range at ordination normally 23 – 50 • Normal preparation time prior to starting training: 1 – 2 years • Training period to be undertaken usually whilst maintaining an existing Fresh Expression <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ two years at college if over 33 (three years if under 33), then ○ 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.
OLM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Age range at ordination normally 55 – 70 • Normal preparation time prior to starting training: 1 year • Training period <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ three years part-time at Trinity College (may be reduced if candidates have prior theological learning or lay ministry experience) • three years in a curacy at their sending parish • OLMs must be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ able to satisfy the national criteria for ordained local ministry, judged by a national selection conference ○ settled in their community and unlikely to move to a new parish ○ exercising an existing ministry in their church which is recognised and affirmed by the local church ○ able to define with their parish an ordained role which is likely to be an extension of their existing ministry ○ part of a collaborative mission-oriented ministry team in their local context
LLM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Age range at licensing normally 18 – 70 • Training period <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 2 years part-time on Exploring Christianity plus a further year of vocational training; or ○ 2 years part-time on a specially designed course run by Trinity College • 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. • 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)

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 Selection¹⁷ 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.

¹⁷ 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

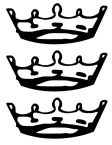
Emerging Church / Emerging Theology

- 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



Diocese of Bristol

CONFIDENTIAL

Registration form for the Hearing God's Call programme

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

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? ^{Note 2}	
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 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.