

What are Readers?

Readers are theologically trained and licensed lay ministers equipped to be a significant resource within the local church and community. Readers are ministers of the Word with a passion for sharing the Gospel.



All sorts of people are called to Reader ministry because disciples of Jesus come from all walks of life.

The Office of Reader is a voluntary lay ministry within the Church of England that is nationally accredited, episcopally licensed and governed by canon law.

There are currently over 9,000 Readers in the Church of England, with men and women represented almost equally. In some Dioceses Readers are known as *Licensed Lay Ministers (LLM)*.

Readers in Canterbury Diocese

There are currently around 165 active Readers in Canterbury Diocese including the Channel Islands where they are known as LLMs. Readers play a vital role in the public ministry of the Church by leading worship, teaching and preaching, as well as out in the wider community by being involved in outreach and pastoral work.

As local lay theologians Readers offer a ministry that is church-focused, community facing, and world-affirming. Readers are well placed to help people both inside and outside the Church to interpret life in the light of the gospel and its values.

Readers work collaboratively in ministry teams alongside ordained and other lay colleagues.

In the Diocese, there are Readers who:

- assist in leading creative mission initiatives and projects
- encourage others in deepening their discipleship and exploring their calling
- run small groups for bible studies, or seasonal courses
- visit people at home and in hospital
- lead Godly Play or Messy Church
- take baptism and confirmation preparation sessions
- take funerals and offer ministry to the bereaved
- and much, much more.



Is God Calling me to this ministry?

Often the first stage of exploring where God is calling you will involve conversations with other members of your local church and your vicar.

The Diocese runs a series of *Explore More* courses throughout the year. These provide an excellent opportunity to help you reflect on where God is calling you; at the end of the course you will be offered a meeting with a vocations adviser.

If you feel you are being called to Reader Ministry, we will ask you to complete an *Explore More* course as well as talk to one of the Diocesan Reader team.

Discernment and Selection

Following attendance at an *Explore More* course you may be invited to attend a **Diocesan Reader Selection Panel** which normally takes place annually in June at Diocesan House. The panel will be looking for:

- discipleship – someone who is an active disciple seeking to grow more Christ-like as they mature in the faith; this will include a commitment to individual bible study and prayer whilst being rooted in a local worshipping community
- calling – someone who clearly feels called by God to serve in the church and wider community as a ‘commissioned’ lay minister; this calling will have been affirmed by the local church
- encourager – someone who encourages others to grow in their discipleship and strives to make new disciples
- potential – someone who has the potential for growth as their discipleship becomes shaped by their calling and formation as a lay minister
- capacity – someone who has the capacity to undertake the academic study and formational training

It is important to note that the Selection Panel isn't looking for the ‘finished article’ at this stage. If recommended for training, the course begins in September.

Reader Training

The initial training course takes 2 years to complete. This involves theological study alongside ministerial development and formation for licensed lay ministry. The course involves a mixture of core teaching sessions (evenings or teaching days), study days and a Residential weekend.

The course leads to a Certificate in Theology and Mission (accredited by the University of Durham); provided by St Augustine's College of Theology based at Malling Abbey.

For more information

Contact the

Diocesan Warden of Readers:

Mr Nigel Collins ncollins@diocant.org

(normal office days: Monday and Wednesday)

and/or visit the Diocesan Reader webpage:

www.canterburydiocese.org/readers

For advice about Vocations

contact the Diocesan Vocations Officer:

Revd Canon Joss Walker jwalker@diocant.org

Diocesan House

Lady Wootton's Green, Canterbury CT1 1NQ

Telephone: (01227) 459401

www.canterburydiocese.org

Reader ministry in the Diocese of Canterbury

*Living faith, building community,
transforming lives*



The office of Reader was revived in 1866 as a lay ministry to reach out beyond church boundaries

Today Readers continue to make a valuable contribution to the life of the church and wider community as Ministers of the Word sharing the Good News of Jesus

www.canterburydiocese.org/readers