

# MINISTRY MATTERS FROM OUR DIOCESE



Welcome to this special edition for Readers, January 2023

## A note from Bishop Hugh...

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

Over the last year, following the conclusion of the Reader Review led by David Fieldsend, a lot has been happening with Reader ministry in this Diocese and, as the new year starts, I want to take the opportunity to share these developments. There's quite a lot to tell you about, so you might want to make a cup of tea and settle in before you go any further!

## THANKYOU!

First, and most importantly, I want to thank you for everything you are, and everything that you do in your ministry; thank you for your prayer, church leadership, preaching, pastoral care, funeral ministry, worship leading, wisdom, support to clergy and lay leaders, teaching, encouragement and faithfulness – much of which goes unnoticed.

I am deeply grateful to you for all of it.

## MINISTRY TEAM

Readers are a crucial to the life of the church in Cornwall. In recognition of this, a very significant change this year has been to bring the administration, support and training of Readers much more fully into the Diocesan Ministry Team. As a result you will have seen more correspondence from Mel Pomery and others in Church House, and you can expect more support from the Diocese in the future (more of which below).

The Warden's Team continues to meet regularly to oversee Reader ministry, and it now includes members of the Diocesan Ministry Team to make sure Readers are always part of the wider thinking and planning that goes on in Church House.

### DR JOHN IEVINS

You will know that Rev Jane Kneebone, who was responsible for Reader training and development, retired last year and we are delighted to have welcomed Dr John Ievins to take up the role.

If you haven't met him yet, I hope you will be able to do so soon. His email is [John.ievins@truro.anglican.org](mailto:John.ievins@truro.anglican.org) if you want to make contact. Like Jane, in addition to supporting Readers in training and being part of the Warden's Team, he teaches at SWMTC.

## VOCATIONAL CONVERSATIONS

There are times when a confidential conversation with a good and godly listener can be helpful in reviewing how God is at work in your ministry. This could be at a time of particular decision, or when a change in direction is happening or when you sense God stirring up something new in your life. We want to make vocational conversations like this available to any Reader for whom it might be helpful. They would be with someone known and trusted by the Diocese, and would be entirely confidential.

If you would like to find out more, or to set this up, please contact **Sally Piper**.

## READERS CHAPLAINS

Another way in which all Readers are offered support is through the Reader Chaplain, Jim Seth.

Jim is always available for pastoral listening and practical help, either one to one, or with groups. Over the last few months we have been discussing how best to extend the chaplaincy provision that he offers, perhaps by developing a small Reader chaplaincy team who could offer support to the Reader community, and we want to ask you for your thoughts.

In particular, we would be interested to know what kind of pastoral support you think would be most useful and how it could be provided in a way that would work for you.

We would also be very pleased to hear from anyone interested in being involved in offering this kind of ministry. Please send your responses to Jim at [readers.chaplain@truro.anglican.org](mailto:readers.chaplain@truro.anglican.org)



# COMMUNITY THEOLOGIANs

As the range of lay ministries has developed over the last decades, it has become more difficult to describe the particular shape of Reader ministry. With this in mind, one of the recommendations of the Reader Review was to work on a clear description of Reader ministry.

**Our conclusion is that Readers are Community theologians who preach, teach and enable everyday faith.**

By this we want to emphasise that Readers, unlike other lay ministries, go through a significant period of training and formation in Scripture and the teachings of the church. This theological education is essential if the church is to be rooted in the deep wisdom of the Christian faith. However, this formation is not simply a matter of academic or book learning, but to ensure the church has ministers who can talk about God, Scripture and 2000 years Christian wisdom and teaching in ways that make sense for the ordinary, everyday life of people in the communities they serve.

## SENS KERNEWEK

One of the outcomes of the work on Deanery planning that has been underway through On the Way and which is now being implemented right across the Diocese, is a changing pattern of ministry and leadership, especially in our many small rural churches. In many Deaneries stipendiary clergy will be moving into new 'Oversight' roles, in which they focus primarily on building teams and supporting and training lay people to lead the mission and ministry of individual local churches.

As part of this, more and more churches are identifying 'Local Ministers' who lead the day to day life of the church community.

A recent article in the Church Times describes the role like this; 'Local ministry means that, instead of a stipendiary priest who attempts to lead several churches at once, each church would have its own local leader who is the focal point of that settlement, and, being embedded within it, helps to preserve the ethos and effectiveness of parish ministry.'

The second part of the definition of Reader ministry further emphasises this. The point of being a Christian is not to go to church for an hour on Sunday, but to be a follower of Jesus Christ every day and in every place. Helping people to live faithfully in this way in their communities, schools, workplaces and families is a key role for Readers, as well as walking with people at times of joy and sorrow.

This is about much more than preaching alone and includes all the ways in which Readers live out their calling – including in leading worship, teaching the faith, sharing the gospel, providing pastoral care and in church leadership. Throughout this year, starting with the Readers Day on 13 May, we will be running sessions on each of the elements of this new definition of Reader ministry. Please look out for more information in due course.

To support this, we set up

**Sens Kernewek** last year.

Sens Kernewek is a learning community led by Bishop Philip and me, which equips participants to work as Local Lay Ministers, leading their church community in mission, worship and service. It went very well and we will be running two further Sens Kernewek cohorts this year, one starting in February and the other in September.

I am aware that a good number of Readers are already doing a role like this, and welcome expressions of interest from anyone wanting to find out more. If that's you, please contact **Melanie Pomery** to find out more.



## WORKING AGREEMENTS

As I hope you know, since last year, the process for relicensing Readers has changed. In response to a clear recommendation in the Readers Review, we have done away with the requirement for Readers to move from a license to PtO when they turn 70, instead offering the same process for all Readers, irrespective of age.

As a result, from now on, licenses for all Readers need to be renewed every 3 years. This is dependent on three things being in place:

1. Up to date Safeguarding training and a DBS check
2. An up to date Working Agreement, which has been agreed with the relevant Incumbent (a template for this can be found [here](#))
3. A clear oversight arrangement, usually with the relevant Incumbent or equivalent

I very strongly encourage all Readers to make sure they have these in place, and to pay particular attention to the Working Agreement. This is partly for the clarity of expectations that it gives both Reader and Incumbent, and also because the conversation that leads to the agreement is often rich and important.

## READERS EMERITUS

A number of Readers have retired over the last year. We are profoundly grateful for their faithful ministry, often over many years. In recognition of their service and the call that God laid on their lives, all retiring Readers will now be invited to take up the title Reader Emeritus and will continue to be invited to the Annual Readers Service.

## READERS HANDBOOK

Finally (and congratulations if you've got this far!), because of all these changes, we are in the process of updating the Readers' Handbook and the Readers page on the Diocesan website. These will be ready later in the Spring and will contain all the information about Reader ministry.

**This comes with my sincere thanks and with my prayers,**

+Hugh