

100 Days of Prayer

Travelling Well Together – Sustaining Ministry

Week 6

Theme for the week: vocations

Our parishes and worshipping communities are faithfully sustained by their clergy, whether they are retired, self-supporting, house for duty, ministers in secular employment or full-time stipendiary clergy. Stipendiary ministry remains the cornerstone of the Church of England, used to measure current and future resource needs. The cost of ministry is directly related to the parish share request with built in support for parishes in areas of deprivation.

Under the national Renewal and Reform programme which started in 2015 the goal was to have created a stable pool of about 7600 full-time clergy by 2035. In September 2024, the Church Times reported that the number of stipendiary clergy in the Church of England will fall to 5400 in 2033, a 40% reduction since the year 2000. The number of people going forward to train for ordained ministry has fallen by 38% since 2020. As we look to sustaining ministry in our diocese and the availability of stipendiary clergy, new models of ministry need to be explored in our different parish communities.

You did not choose me but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last... (John 15: 16)

This week, we **give thanks...**

- for our clergy: retired, self-supporting, working in secular employment or in stipendiary roles
- our Diocesan Vocations Team and our area ordination advisors
- our ordinands and all of those in the discernment process

We **pray** that...

- more people would be called to serve as deacons and priests
- we would be open to reimagining our models of ministry across our diocese

*Almighty God, the giver of all good gifts,
by your Holy Spirit you have appointed
various orders of ministry in the Church:
look with mercy on your servants
called to be deacons and priests;
maintain them in truth and renew them in holiness,
that by word and good example they may faithfully serve you
to the glory of your name and the benefit of your Church;
through the merits of our Saviour Jesus Christ,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. Amen.*