

Focal Ministry in the Diocese of Leicester

Introduction

Focal Ministers offer spiritual leadership to a local church or benefice. In the Diocese of Leicester there are a number of people who currently offer such leadership and this grass-roots ministry offers profound hope for the future flourishing of local churches, it is incarnation leadership offered by those already embedded in their churches and communities. We need to ensure that such ministers are noticed, encouraged and resourced and that suitable processes are in place for their support, growth, accountability and well-being.

As these roles are emergent and highly contextual the specifics will vary considerably but some general themes may be identified.

Themes of focal ministry

A Focal Minister offers spiritual leadership to an individual church or benefice. The key leadership responsibilities of Focal Ministers are:

- Being the public face of the church in its community
- Enabling the worship and prayer of the church
- Encouraging deepening faith
- Helping the church to develop its mission and ministry

Key values of the role include:

- Growing and sharing leadership with others
- Enabling the ministry of all
- Attending to their own spiritual growth and well-being

The specifics of the role will vary depending on the Focal Minister's individual gifts, the gifts of others, personal capacity and the context. These specifics will be described in their Ministry plan.

Who might be a focal minister?

This role could be fulfilled by an existing licensed minister (lay or ordained) but may be anyone in the church who is growing into this role. As this role is primarily about spiritual leadership it would be essential that they have a level of spiritual maturity and are committed to deepening their own discipleship.

Discernment

Focal Ministers are identified, nominated by the PCC and authorised by the Minister Community Ministry Team. The discernment process is shared responsibility of the minister themselves, the Minister Community Ministry Team and the PCC.

The prospective Focal Minister will need to undertake the following as part of the discernment process:

- Leadership Safeguarding training
- Awareness of Domestic Abuse training
- DBS check

A Ministry Plan is agreed in consultation the individual, PCC and a supervisor nominated by the Minister Community Ministry Team. The Ministry Plan will identify:

- A description of the specifics of the role
- the pattern of ministry in terms of hours offered by the minister including time-off
- training needs
- role supervision and support structures
- how expenses are reimbursed
- personal resourcing and support

Initial training

There will not be a requirement for formal training prior to authorisation but engagement will the following resources for support and development:

- CPAS 'The Guide' on-line resource
- Pastoral Reflection Groups
- Access to any relevant Associate Ministry training modules.

Authorisation

Focal Ministers will be authorised locally using the approved liturgy. The term of authorisation is for 3 years and renewed after a process of ministry review and appropriate safeguarding requirements. The contact details of the Focal Minister should be forwarded to Archdeacons' Office.

On-going support and development

- Pastoral Reflection Groups
- Annual MDR
- Learning or training identified in the MDR
- Networking opportunities with Focal Ministers in the diocese and nationally
- Access to additional support such as spiritual direction, pastoral care and coaching.