

Committee for Ministry (CfM) Report on 2016

I will give to the Lord the thanks due to his righteousness, and sing praise to the name of the Lord, the Most High. (Psalm 7:17)

The Committee for Ministry oversees the processes of vocational discernment, selection, and initial training, and in-service training for all licensed ministries, whether lay or ordained. Stated in such formal terms the committee's work might be assumed to be purely about competencies, akin to the training offered in the wider secular world. In fact, Christian formation in terms of worship and mission is the first measure of our entire ministry training and learning. Effective ministry serves the whole people of God as a worshipping community eagerly engaged in God's mission. Consequently the Committee for Ministry takes the lead in producing the termly *Diocesan Cycle of Prayer* which now has a circulation of more than 1500 copies, in addition to internet distribution.

A new Spiritual

Accompaniment course has fed into a reformulated and expanded list of those available for this ministry. Under the auspices of our Prayer and Christian Spirituality Officer and his advisory group, group supervision and continuing training is now in place.

The YBible initiative was launched in September. YBible aims to spur mutual encouragement in the use of the Bible, and its launch booklet, *52 Thoughts: favourite Bible verses* has needed to be reprinted twice.

In 2016 sixteen ordained clergy, eight Readers and five Pastoral Workers were newly admitted to office. Of those currently in training, sixteen are prospective Pastoral Workers, thirty-four are Reader candidates, and fifty are Ordinands. Also provided is continuing practice-based learning in the early years of ministry and programmes were offered tailored to the specifics of the ordained or lay ministry concerned. A significant number of participants continue to use these programmes to complete a higher education qualification.

Serving the whole people of God as a worshipping community eagerly engaged in God's mission.

CfM continued to provide access to in-service learning for experienced ministers. As well as training opportunities offered internally through the work of all the departments in Church House, ministers were supported in programmes offered by appropriate outside providers. The take-up in this area continued at a record level; clearly more of our ministers are engaged in formal practice-based learning than ever before. The second cohort of ministers on our in-house two-year leadership development programme 'Making Headway' was successfully launched by Bishop Peter in the autumn.

We continued to work collaboratively with the Dioceses of Liverpool and Manchester via the part-time ordination courses offered by the All

Saints Centre for Mission and Ministry. The partnership is being expanded to include the Diocese of Blackburn. Recently some fifty percent of our Ordinands have trained at All Saints; others use residential pathways or context-based courses, as appropriate to personal circumstances and learning needs.

The Foundations for Ministry Course

continued to attract participants to its unique blend of vocational discernment coupled with theological education. In 2016, as in 2015, the course ran at full capacity. The long-standing partnership with the University of Chester enables work on Foundations to earn Higher Education credits and means that many of our candidates entering formal ministerial training already have advantageous HE experience.

Priorities for 2017 include the implementation of a renewed scheme for ministerial review (MDR) for clergy; updating the Readers' and Pastoral Workers' courses; review of the Warden of Readers post following the retirement of John Knowles, and consideration of the Archbishops' Council Report *Setting God's People Free*.

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