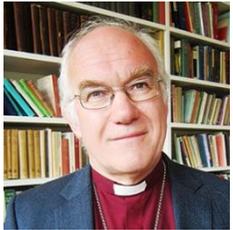


From Bishop Peter



'The Epistle of James calls us all to be 'Doers of the Word'.

The Christian Faith means nothing without love.

While this call extends to all Christians, there is, for all Christians, the call and challenge to make our *particular* contribution to the life and witness of the

Church. We are members of the One Body of Christ, but we exercise our gift and calling in our particular and personal way.

Pastoral Workers provide a focus for the work of pastoral care, within and beyond the Church.

It is a work of great dignity, summed up in Our Lord's own assessment:

'In as much as you did this to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me' (Mt 25 v 40)

I have huge admiration for the ministry of Pastoral Workers in this Diocese, and look forward to its future flourishing'.

Contact

Warden of Pastoral Workers

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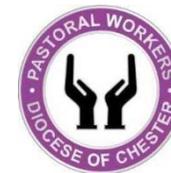
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Pastoral Workers

in the Diocese of
Chester

What is a Pastoral Worker?

Pastoral workers are men and women who have a practical ministry of pastoral care in their local church and often in the wider local community as well. They visit the sick, comfort the bereaved and befriend the lonely. They run luncheon clubs, Messy Churches and prayer groups. They organise baptism preparation sessions, toddler groups and take home communions. All this and much more, comes within the remit of Pastoral Worker ministry.



What kind of people become Pastoral Workers?

Pastoral workers will be people with a compassionate and pastoral heart and sensitive to the needs of others. They will be people of faith and prayer, able to reflect on their experiences. They will be able to work well with others and build healthy relationships. They will also be people who can lead others in the work of giving pastoral care.

Am I being called to be a Pastoral Worker?

If you think God may be calling you to this ministry, pray about it and talk it over with your family and friends. Ask them how they see your gifts. Talk to your Vicar too. The Warden, Assistant Warden and Director of Studies are all happy to talk with you and provide you with more information.

How do I become a Pastoral Worker?

If you and your Vicar both feel that pastoral worker ministry is where God is calling you then your Vicar will need to contact Peter Bacon at Church House for an application pack. There is an application form to fill in and you will also need to obtain three references (one of which will be from your Vicar) and write a short spiritual autobiography. Your PCC will need to approve your application after which you will come for interview usually in May.

The training

Training to be a Pastoral Worker takes three years. The first year is Foundations for Ministry then there are two years of pastoral-worker-specific training looking at different elements of pastoral work. Listening is a key skill. There are weekly sessions during term time, five Saturday ministry days and a residential weekend. Trainees are expected to be computer literate and there are written assignments. The course is accredited by the University of Chester.

When you have satisfactorily completed the training, you will be licensed by the Bishop at a special service in Chester Cathedral.

Post-licensing support

Our Warden and Assistant Warden are there to help and support you in your ongoing ministry. 'We are delighted to be involved in helping to support such a fabulous group of people who do such good work in their churches and communities', they say! Every year there is a training day in the autumn on some aspect of pastoral work and a quiet day in the early summer (both at Foxhill retreat centre). All Licensed Pastoral Workers are invited. A grant is available that you can use for books and retreats or quiet days outside the diocese. You will have a review every three years which is a good opportunity to reflect on your ministry. Some pastoral workers continue to meet with those they have trained with for mutual support, and some like to see a spiritual director.