

Warden of Readers' Report

2018 AGM

Even as I type the title to this document I am aware of how much change this year has contained. Most of the reporting period I have been Warden of Readers, but for the last 3 months that role has expanded into that of Warden of Lay Ministry.

Alongside my own personal change, this year has also contained conversations about change at a number of levels.

Central Readers Council announced last year that they would be carrying out a year of consultations around the nature of Reader ministry and CRC's part in resourcing that ministry. In February, John Marshall and I went to York for our region's event. The outcome of the consultations is that an appointment has been made to a post designed specifically to take the recommendations of the visits and study more deeply the nature of Reader ministry around the country; ultimately implementing the findings and offering relevant, high quality, post-licensing training to Readers.

Three areas of Reader ministry are the focus of the research and the training:
Readers as intentionally missional lay ministers
Readers as teachers of the faith (in every sense of the word – not simply preaching)
Readers as leaders in church and society.

We wait for further information from CRC on how this project and any material will develop. In the meantime please hold Ruth Haldane, the Reader Training Project Manager, in your prayers.

Deliberations about the nature of Reader ministry in our diocese led to an acknowledgment that Areas as hubs of training, pastoral care and governance are no longer universally effective. Thank you to everyone who took part in the survey earlier this year. If you would like a copy of the findings please contact me and I will email you the documents.

Attendance at Area meetings has universally fallen for many reasons. This, combined with the challenge from CRC to think more strategically about our

role now and into the future, has led to a review of the Area structure and, at the same time, of the governance of the Reader body. This review is ongoing and more will be said about it at the AGM and as the process continues.

In my more extended role with all in lay ministry I have been meeting with ALMs to hear their story of vocation and ministry, and with Readers and Clergy who are interested in being part of the teaching and/or mentoring of those in other lay ministry roles. Thank you to those of you who have expressed an interest in this work. If you haven't already done so, but would like to be involved please email me and I will add you to the list.

In times of such wide-ranging change sometimes everything seems exciting and energising and at other times there can be a tendency to hang onto the familiar as a way of finding safety and security.

Our reading at the annual service helps us to focus on the most important thing to hang onto when Paul says to Timothy

“as for you, continue in what you have learned and firmly believed, knowing from whom you have learned it, and how from childhood you have known the sacred writings that are able to instruct you for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus”