**Anna Walker**

Your name, age and original home village, town or city (ie the place where you grew up):

**Answer:** Anna Walker, age 43, from Tampere, Finland.

The church in Blackburn Diocese where you are serving:

**Answer:** St Aidan’s, Bamber Bridge and St Leonard’s, Walton le Dale

Tell us about your family:

**Answer:** My husband and I married 22 years ago and have two children aged 17 and 15.

If applicable, your former job before entering ministry?:

**Answer:** Deacon in the Lutheran Church in Finland and most recently Student Welfare Officer at university in the UK.

What led you to take the steps towards ordination?:

**Answer:** A call to take further steps along the path to serving as priest in the Church of England.

What’s been the best thing about your training?:

**Answer:** In-depth theological study while working at the same time on placement at Lancaster Priory in mixed-mode training with St Mellitus.

Can you say what is the most important thing you have learned during your training?:

**Answer:** Theological reflection: applying my learning in practice and in turn letting the practice inform my theology in an on-going cycle.

Reflecting on the difficult past year, please share a few thoughts about how the pandemic has impacted on ministry at this time (you could reflect how people have adapted to the circumstances in different ways as part of this response) …

**Answer:** The pandemic has forced churches to rethink their priorities and work harder and creatively for reaching those in need. Networking with other agents has become more important than ever and so has pastoral care under very challenging circumstances.

Meanwhile, what are some of your personal reflections on ministry in the post-pandemic period that lies ahead; the challenges and the opportunities?

**Answer:** Hopefully the challenges of pastoral care during the pandemic will mean that churches will keep developing this important area. Once the doors are fully open again, the Church must be visible in every community and keep engaging with society and culture and not withdraw from them.

Tell us something people don’t know about you that might surprise them?:

**Answer:** My husband and I have never driven and getting a car for ministry feels like a big sacrifice.

What do you view as your most significant personal achievement, before or during training?

**Answer:** I am grateful to God for the Christian community which my husband and I have been leading for the past five years.

Your favourite literary quote (it can be from the Bible or elsewhere) and, briefly, why?:

**Answer:**
‘So who will comfort Toffle and remind him that a shell
is nicer when there’s somebody to show it to as well?’
by Tove Janson (the Finnish creator of the Moomins)



I am in awe of creation and want to help others to appreciate the beauty of nature and protect it, although I could quite easily be content having it all to myself.

I love the book *Who Will Comfort Toffle* which is all about learning to live and share your life with others in relationships and being brave to speak out and protect what you love. I grew up with my mother quoting it all the time.

How do you hope to continue to support the Diocesan Vision 2026 at a parish level?

**Answer:** I hope to encourage everyone to offer their gifts in worship, service and leadership and lower the step for more people to come to know and love God through alternative worship, learning opportunities for all ages and involving the church in every aspect of the community.

How would you express your own vision for the church?:

**Answer:** A community where people can learn to love others and themselves and lay their burdens down because the love of God is real and liberating. A place of listening and being heard, with worship which transforms people. This empowers people to live their faith out selflessly to make the kingdom visible.

Finally, when you get the chance, how do you relax?:

**Answer:** Baking, walking or being still in nature … and board games.