**Matthew Robinson**

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

**Answer:** Matthew Robinson, 29, Santon, The Isle of Man

The church in Blackburn Diocese where you are serving:

**Answer:** The Trinity Parish, Blackpool (St Mark’s Layton, St Luke’s Staining and Hope Community Church)

Tell us about your family:

**Answer:** I have a wife called Sarah and a little boy called Elisha who is now 1 year old!

If applicable, your former job before entering ministry?:

**Answer: I** ran a drop in centre for the homeless; worked in a McDonald’s; a call centre and a chippy. I also spent a lot of years as a farmhand for my dad

What led you to take the steps towards ordination?:

**Answer:** In my early 20s I found myself unemployed, broke and miserable and spent a lot of time praying asking God to tell me what I should do with my life. As I prayed, I felt God was calling me to be ordained in the Church of England. As I obeyed, I found that all sorts of doors opened and that my life turned around in amazing ways and I’ve never looked back!

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

**Answer:** The many fantastic people I have come across who are all looking to serve Jesus in their own way.

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

**Answer:** That my role isn’t to fix everyone and everything, it is to be faithful and point people to Jesus. Also, that biblical Greek and Hebrew are both useful and surprisingly fun

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:** I have had to learn all sorts of new skills, especially filming based ones. People have been amazing in our parish at adapting to the constant change and it’s been amazing to see our churches emerge so strongly and ready for a new season of growth and renewal. I have also spent a lot of time chatting to my donkey for all-age videos!

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

**Answer:** I’m really excited for the new season ahead. For me it feels like God has been clearing the ground in our parish ready for a time of growth and renewal and I hope and pray that we will see that repeated across the whole church.

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

**Answer:** I once challenged a friend to see which of us could eat a whole large raw onion quickest (I lost).

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

**Answer:** Surviving the first few weeks of being a dad

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

**Answer:** “It was for this world that Christ had died: the more evil you saw and heard about you, the greater the glory lay around the death; it was too easy to die for what was good or beautiful, for home or children or civilization - it needed a God to die for the half-hearted and the corrupt.” *Graham Greene, The Power and the Glory.* A powerful summary of the gospel from a beautiful and moving little book

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

**Answer:**  I long to see our churches grow and thrive and I hope I can keep playing my part by praying and sharing Jesus wherever and whenever I can.

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

**Answer:** I want to see our churches filled with passionate, broken, spirit-filled disciples living for Jesus.

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

**Answer:** I love reading (mainly long history books that my wife thinks are incredibly boring) running, long walks and cooking.