

Please fill in an answer to each question.

Keep your answers fairly brief, ideally 2/3 sentences maximum.

Your name, your age and your home town/city:

Answer: Tom Woolford, 32. I was brought up in a forces family – so come from everywhere and nowhere! I lived in Salisbury for my teenage years, Cambridge for most of my twenties, but became an adopted Northerner when living in Padiham (next to Burnley) for two years in 2011-2013.

The church you are serving:

Answer: Bispham All Hallows.

Tell us about your family:

Answer: I married Julie in 2008. God has blessed us with three daughters – Talitha (4), Jessica (2) and Hosanna (new born).

Former job before entering ministry?:

Answer: I was in academia, completing a PhD in History at the University of Cambridge.

Why did you decide to get ordained?:

Answer: God has laid on my heart a strong desire to teach people the Gospel and pastor them in Jesus' name. I love both working with people and studying – and God has given me some gifts in these areas (though plenty of improvement still needed!).

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

Answer: I've possibly most enjoyed learning Hebrew so I can read the Old Testament in its original language. That might have been the hardest thing as well!

What's the most important thing you have learned?:

Answer: To study the Scriptures with humility – being prepared to have God disagree with me, and for me to adjust my beliefs and behaviour accordingly.

What is your hope for your future role?:

Answer: I need to learn by imitation and gaining experience particularly how to do the occasional offices (baptisms, weddings, funerals) well, and how to actually run a church – like chairing the PCC and so on. Long-term I hope to be able to combine parish ministry with teaching ordinands in some capacity.

One thing about you people would be surprised about?:

Answer: I have a collection of model tortoises, numbering close to 800! They are not all out on display, however.

Your favourite quote:

Answer: “The only person I should like to know thoroughly is myself; and I see no chance of that at present.” – Lord Darlington, in Oscar Wilde’s *Lady Windermere’s Fan*. It amuses me because I often think some of my friends and family know me better than I know myself!

Unfulfilled ambition?:

Answer: Once upon a time I fancied myself as a bit of a musical theatre star in waiting, and did a few am-dram productions. But to be honest, my singing was (and is) merely OK - nothing special; and my acting was similar. I was hot on dancing though!

How do you hope to support the new Diocesan vision of ‘Healthy Churches Transforming Communities’ at parish level?

Answer: I like to think I could be creative and risk-taking in pioneering fresh expressions of church.

What is your own vision for the church?:

Answer: I hope and pray that the Church of England gets itself into shape for re-evangelising the nation. We’re not in Christendom any more. To do so, I believe we need to return first of all to the faith and vision of the English Reformers.

How do you relax?:

Answer: I play squash and take part in pub quizzes.