

Name: Calum Mullett

Age: 26

Original Home Village, Town or City: Seaford, East Sussex

The Church in Blackburn Diocese where you are serving: St George's, Preston

Church Address: St George's Church, Georges Road
Preston, Lancashire, PR1 2NP

If applicable, what was your former job before entering ministry? I have gone straight into ministry.

Tell us something about your journey towards ordination?

Growing up in a non-religious family, the idea of ordination was far outside my world. Becoming a Christian in my teenage years I wanted to share with others the love of God which had transformed me. Eventually this led to training at Wycliffe Hall in Oxford, before moving to Preston to serve my curacy. Serving as a Deacon this year, and assisting in the ministry of the church in word and sacrament has been the greatest privilege of my life. I am excited for what God has in store next.

What has been a) the most important thing you have learned and b) the most inspiring thing you have experienced during your training? (They can be different!)

Answer for A:

The most important thing I have learned this year serving as a deacon has been to viscerally experience the love of God for his people, the church. Being with all kinds of people in their highs and lows, preaching through the church year, administering the Eucharist Sunday by Sunday I have felt the immensity of God's love for his children. How unworthy I am to get to share in the outworking of his love! I cannot imagine any greater privilege.

Answer for B:

The most inspiring thing I have experienced so far in curacy is the great spiritual hunger there is in our nation right now, especially amongst the young. Week after week we have seen new people turn up unannounced at church. Many have been reading the Bible, or watching videos online and asking what life is all about. From our congregation several new people have come to faith, or seen their faith grow this year, and this was borne out in two confirmations in March this year.

What are some of the personal challenges and opportunities you face in your ministry in the coming year?

I don't know yet- we'll see what God has in store!

Many more parishes have embraced online opportunities to engage with their local communities alongside their existing services; especially since the pandemic. Please indicate ways in which you may have done this already or what plans you may have to explore ways to reach people in the 'digital space' in the future:

I have heard tales of people watching services online before they go in person. If this makes people comfortable enough to go to church this is great. Huge numbers of young people are also watching videos online which point them to faith and lead them to turn up in real life. Christians should engage well with this sphere, and create even more good content to respond to people's longings for truth and love, which is found in Christ. Yet at the same time God took on flesh and called us to gather in the flesh to live out our Christian life sacramentally (that is, through the material). 'Online church' cannot be considered church in any real sense, and therefore we must be on guard against a merging of digital and actual reality which is becoming so common in our culture at large.

Bishop Philip has said: "I am committed to continuing the growth of the church in Lancashire, helping to build joyful Christian communities. I would love to see the Church of England in Lancashire being an ever-stronger voice for justice, especially for the poorest. And I believe children and young people need to be at the very heart of all that we do."

How will you seek to support the Bishop in fulfilling these aims?

The vision of the Diocese of Blackburn is compelling, and meaty. It is all about reaching out and loving people in word and deed in the name of Christ, with particular concern for the young and the deprived. I am fully on board with this vision, and believe that we are living it out at my church in the centre of Preston.

What do you view as your most significant personal achievement? (This may be connected to your ordination training of course or it could be something else from another aspect of your life.)

Cooking (and not incinerating) goose for Christmas dinner has to be up there.

Tell us about your family/ loved ones:

I am married to Grace, who is from Texas and is finishing her PHD in English and Theology as well as teaching online.

What do you do to chill out and relax?

My greatest love outside church is getting out into the countryside and being in nature. Grace and I have loved exploring the Ribble Valley and Lake District since moving to Preston. I also enjoy reading (particularly theology, history and politics) and cooking. Family and friends are very important to Grace and I, and we have been blessed that family and friends have come to visit us a lot even though we have moved away from them to the other side of the country!

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

My dad is from New Zealand and I lived there for a year when I was a child!