

Name: Samantha Nicol

Age: 59

Original Home Village, Town or City: Brindle, Chorley

The Church in Blackburn Diocese where you are serving: Brindle St James

Church Address: Water Street, Brindle
CHORLEY, Lancashire, PR6 8NG

If applicable, what was your former job before entering ministry? I have had a long career in senior roles leading strategic change initiatives.

Tell us something about your journey towards ordination?

I resisted the call to ordained ministry for over 20 years. The journey towards ordination has been exciting and challenging. It has meant giving up some things and refocusing time, talent and energy on what God wants and where God wants. But I have been blessed to continue my training in my home church. The support of my training incumbents, one now retired, has been amazing. I also could not have weathered the storms of the journey without the wisdom and kindness of my spiritual director. This is not a journey that we take alone, but one where every day God reveals a little more of himself and his love for us.

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:

What being obedient to God requires.

Answer for B:

The depth of God's love and the people who journey alongside me.

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

Balancing a new and important salaried officer role with parish ministry.

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:

We continue to have a 'Zoom Chapel' congregation every week. We don't have plans at present to extend our digital offering beyond our existing social media presence.

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 role I am embarking on for the Diocese.

Developing more opportunities for young people in our parish helping to establish a Youth Club.

Continuing and building our parish link with Over Darwen Food Larder.

As a parish we have a significant strategic plan to support these aims, which many of us are contributing towards.

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.)

My most significant achievement is working collaboratively with others to find and implement solutions to challenges, issues or problems and bringing about a positive outcome.

My own significant personal achievement is responding to God.

Tell us about your family/ loved ones:

My mum is an amazing 86 year old, and she has role-modeled strength, compassion, kindness and generosity. She is a good judge of character too.

My sister has allowed me to share in her family, my niece, twin nephews and my three great nieces. All of whom are the joy of my life. I could not be prouder of my niece who achieved a first class honours degree and had two babies while studying. I have a nephew who is a talented builder, the other is an engineer, but on his second sabbatical travelling through Vietnam, Cambodia and Thailand. My great nieces are bright, funny, and full of life.

What do you do to chill out and relax?

I walk my labradoodle, Coco. I read mainly detective novels or psychological thrillers. I enjoy a meal and a glass of wine with friends. I potter in the garden. And I love American police or law series, like Blue Bloods or NCIS.

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

I am an NLP Master Practitioner.