SPOTLIGHT

Julie Bishop

Julie is a Licensed Pastoral Lay Minister and serves as a volunteer prison chaplain at Feltham Prison and Young Offender Institution, where she leads services and Bible studies, providing support to inmates in addition to her parish responsibilities at St John the Evangelist, Kingston.

Toni Mitchell

Toni is a Commissioned Pastoral Lay Minister at St Andrew and St Mark in Surbiton, and is an Associate Chaplain in the Pastoral and Spiritual Support Department at Kingston Hospital. She is also a Vocations Advisor and Ministry Accompanier, and is currently the Vice Chair of the Lay Council.

NEXT STEPS

If you think you might be called to serve God as a Pastoral Lay Minister, talk with your incumbent or chaplain. They will be able to help you discern God's calling. If you would like to have an informal conversation about your sense of call to Pastoral Lay Ministry, please email layministry@southwark.anglican.org and someone from the Discipleship and Ministry Team will contact you. They will tell you more about training and guide you through the discernment process.

Find out more about pastoral ministry in Southwark on our website.

FIND OUT MORE

What is my vocation?

The discernment process

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The Diocese of Southwark

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The Diocese of Southwark

PASTORAL MINISTRY

Are you called to care for others?

Christ Centred

Outward Focused

Pastoral Lay Ministers are at the forefront of practical, Christ-centred pastoral care, seeking to bring wholeness and well-being to the individuals and communities they serve.

Are you someone who:

- enjoys working with people?
- often finds yourself in a caring role with those in need in your family, parish, or community?
- would like to discover how your Christian faith can shape your caring?
- wants to gain more skills in pastoral care?

If the answer is yes, God might be calling you to ministry as a Pastoral Lay Minister.

"The hope we have in God, who is in control and loves us and each person, enables us to stand alongside others and offer support specific for that person even if we never know the results of that interaction." – Hilary Moore, CPLM at St James, Malden

Lay pastoral ministry might include:

- coordinating a bereavement support group
- running a parent and toddler group
- helping to run a pastoral care and visiting team within a parish
- volunteering at a local refugee centre
- reaching out to homeless people
- visiting as part of a hospital or prison chaplaincy team
- serving as a London Fire Service volunteer chaplain.

Becoming a Pastoral Lay Minister gives you:

- affirmation of God's call by the wider Church
- tailored free training and ongoing support
- a learning community
- an opportunity to reflect as you go.

There are three pathways for pastoral ministry:

1. Affirmed Pastoral Lay Ministry

Affirmed Pastoral Lay Visitors or Assistants are part of the pastoral care team in a parish. They provide basic pastoral care including visiting and other forms of pastoral support, and work under the supervision of the incumbent or other staff member or a Commissioned or Licensed Pastoral Lay Minister.

They are selected by the local parish and do introductory training within the parish on pastoral care from a Christian perspective, listening skills, and boundaries and confidentiality.

2. Commissioned Pastoral Lay Ministers (CPLM)

Commissioned Pastoral Lay Ministers work as part of a team in a parish or the wider community. They may co-ordinate pastoral ministry and train other adults involved in Affirmed Pastoral Lay Ministry, and work under the supervision of the incumbent or other staff member, or a supervisor in any agency through which they may minister.

Discernment and selection for Commissioned Pastoral Lay Ministry is coordinated by the Discipleship and Ministry team. There are two components to the training, each of which take a year.

The first is the Bishop's Certificate, Growing in Life and Faith, which is offered both in-person and online by the Diocese. This includes learning about the Bible; what Christians believe; what it means to be Anglican; and how we live out our faith.

The second is a course in pastoral ministry taught by the Diocese. This takes place one evening a week with occasional weekends and Saturday sessions.

Areas covered include:

- reflecting on the foundations for pastoral ministry
- developing skills in listening to, assessing, and responding to the needs of individuals and the wider community
- discerning how to sustain and develop ministry
- practical skills
- observation visits
- and a placement.

3. Licensed Pastoral Lay Ministers

Licensed Pastoral Lay Ministers exercise leadership in a parish or the wider community, working under the supervision of the incumbent or other staff members, or a supervisor in any agency through which they may minister. They may co-ordinate pastoral ministry and train other adults involved in it. The discernment and selection process for Licensed Pastoral Lay Ministry is coordinated by the Vocations Team in collaboration with the Discipleship and Ministry Team.

Training consists of a CertHE (Level 4) course, usually taken part-time over two years, followed by further practical training and reflective practice for 1–2 years (unless a candidate is already a Commissioned Pastoral Lay Minister, in which case only the CertHE is required). The CertHE includes biblical and theological studies; the foundations of pastoral care; Christian faith and ethics; a placement; and reflective practice.

Note that all those discerning a call to Pastoral Lay Ministry will have to undergo a DBS check and safeguarding training.