



THE ARCHBISHOP
OF YORK



Fifteen women and men including a serving firefighter, current and former teachers, a hospital chaplain, and workers in homeless services will be ordained Deacon by the Archbishop of York, Stephen Cottrell, in a service in York Minster on Saturday 26th June beginning at 4.30pm.

The service will be live streamed at: www.yorkminster.org

Deacons are called to work in the community and assist in church; each candidate will serve as Assistant Curate in a parish within the Diocese of York, the Church of England between the Rivers Humber and Tees and between the A1 and the Yorkshire coast.

The fifteen are aged from their twenties to retirement, and will continue their training in service alongside an experienced priest; some will be ordained priest themselves in the future.

Archbishop Stephen said, “I’m looking forward to ordaining this great group of missionary disciples as deacons in God’s church - people with different stories and gifts but united by Christ and by his call to serve. As deacons they will be servants and heralds of the gospel: they will rejoice with those who rejoice; they will mourn with those who mourn; they will hold out hope and teach the church to do the same. I pray that they will be filled with joy as they prepare for this new ministry.”

Kate Brown will serve as Assistant Curate at Cowesby, Felixkirk with Boltby, Kirkby Knowle, Leake with Over and Nether Silton and Kepwick, Osmotherley with Harlsey and Ingleby Arncliffe (near Northallerton).

Her career in Further Education in Middlesbrough focused on the long-term unemployed and the need for re-skilling after the collapse of the shipbuilding, chemical and steel industries. Kate and husband Colin have two children and four grandchildren aged from 3 to 18.

“My vocational journey has been along a ‘long and winding road’ but God has never given up on me! I grew up in a Christian family and church was very important for us all. My calling to priesthood has come much later in life than for most, but then perhaps I come now with more life experience, realism, and certainly a sense of humour.”

Kate has served as a Churchwarden and recently as Lay Dean of Stokesley Deanery. After four years’ training at York School of Ministry to become a Reader in 2018, she spent a further year at St Hild College, Mirfield gaining a Graduate Certificate in Theology, Ministry and Mission.

“It has been hard work but the support of the college community has been amazing. As I approach ordination, my hope is that I can show the light and love of Christ in all that I do and with all whom I meet.”

Paul Burnett will serve as Assistant Curate in the Parish of Whitby, having begun to make sense of his faith and feeling called to service of some kind in Christ after becoming a Christian at the age of 15.

"I spent the next 20 years arguing with God and finding legitimate reasons not to follow my calling; I realised that this is God's time and he wasn't

going to let me go."

Paul joined the Royal Navy at 21 and soon found himself under the charge of Chaplain the Revd Mike Brotherton who was pivotal in his vocation.

Paul moved to the North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service in 2000 and will continue to work as a firefighter in Whitby during his non-stipendiary (unpaid) curacy. He trained for ordination with St Hild College from 2018.

"This has been a wonderful three years, and despite Covid restrictions I have gained a new family along with my two daughters Darcey and Emie, and my wife Kelly. I hope to serve the people of Whitby and the wider Deanery in nurturing new faith and growing discipleship in new ways.

"My journey to ordination has been a long one, but God has walked with me all the way."

Melanie Burnside will serve as Assistant Curate in the Kirkdale Benefice (Nunnington, Harome, Pockley, Kirkdale and Beadlam, near Helmsley).

She has worked for the last fifteen years alongside Ben, her husband, in a small family run company supporting the grain industry. They have three children and enjoy spending free time with them in the beautiful North Yorkshire coast and countryside.

Melanie's faith and calling were nurtured and encouraged by the prayers and loving support of many since her childhood. More recently that's included the "wonderful" students and staff at York School of Ministry and St Hild College, Mirfield where she studied part time for a BA in Theology, Ministry and Mission.

During Melanie's training her enthusiasm for rural ministry and for Christian unity have grown; she says "I'm looking forward to getting to know the people and places of Kirkdale benefice, to find out what God is doing there and joining in."

Caroline Comer-Stone will serve as Assistant Curate at Sherburn-in-Elmet with Saxton, following a career including spells as an NHS Nurse, interior designer, curtain maker and estate agent, and latterly as assistant to the Chairman and the Council of Governors of a large NHS Trust. She and her husband Warwick both retired and moved to Yorkshire in 2015.

Caroline was born into the Roman Catholic Church and was received into the Church of England in 1997 where she found her spiritual home. On joining All Saints Church in Sherburn in Elmet the call to ministry which she says she had been denying for many years finally emerged. She has a son who lives and works in Singapore and two granddaughters.

"I trained at St Hild College, Mirfield which has been a wonderfully affirming experience; I have been supported throughout by tutors and fellow students alike and have treasured the time I have spent there.

"I would like to re-engage with my pub ministry and with people in the industrial estate. I am currently learning the role of Rural Chaplain."

Eileen Connolly will serve as Assistant Curate at St Andrews, Sutton Park in East Hull, working in Bransholme, Wawne, Sutton, and Kingswood.

Following a Roman Catholic childhood in Bolton, in her twenties her faith deepened during many years in a Pentecostal Church.

She has worked in both banking and teaching, latterly as a deputy head at St Barnabas Church of England Primary School, York, and has twin

daughters aged 22 years and a huge Golden Doodle dog named Noah.

Eileen moved to York in 2010 into the parish of St Mary the Virgin, Strensall. “No one was more surprised than me to be considering a call to ordination – I thought surely God doesn’t call divorced single parents?”

She began training part-time at St Hild College, Mirfield while still working and is looking forward to all that God has in store for her and her family.

Nicky Gladstone will serve as Assistant Curate in the York City Centre parishes having previously worked at Carecent, a breakfast centre for people experiencing homelessness and social exclusion in central York.

"Like many people approaching ordination, I had a nagging sense of needing to do 'something' for many years, until I realised God was calling me to ordained ministry.

"I've spent three years training part-time at St Hild College in Mirfield where I've met some wonderful people and learned a huge amount about theology, mission and ministry – and also about myself.

Nicky says she's tremendously grateful for the tireless support of her family and friends throughout her training and into her new ministry.

"I am excited to be staying in York City Centre for curacy and hope that this role will allow me to strengthen the relationships I have made so far, as well as the opportunity to make new ones."

John Hoyland will serve as Assistant Curate in the Parish of Clifton, York, and as the son of a clergyman says he "Really should know better".

Now in his 40s, John first began to wonder though if there might be a call to ordained ministry on his life at about the age of 15. He trained at St Hild College, greatly valuing the mix of traditions and spiritualities he encountered there.

John is married to Natalie; they have two children and a three month-old puppy.

He has worked almost exclusively in the service industry; leading guided tours around York, working in a café, managing a Games Workshop store and, latterly, leading the front of house team at a Museum in York. He has been known to dabble in the world of acting.

"All of this or none of this may have helped to prepare me for a life in ministry!" he says.

James Kenny will serve as Assistant Curate in the parishes of Market Weighton, Goodmanham, Sancton, Londesborough, and Shiptonthorpe.

He came to a personal faith as a teenager and began to sense a call to the priesthood whilst still at school. James moved to York to study Theology at York St John University in 2014, and trained for ordination at Cranmer Hall, Durham, where he was awarded an M.A. in Theology and Ministry.

Rather than experiencing a sudden vocation, he explains, “For me it has been years of patient discernment, following where I have been called to serve the Lord and His people, and that is what has brought me to be on the brink of ordination.”

Peter King will serve as Assistant Curate in Kirkleatham, Redcar. He committed his life to Jesus Christ at a young age but says he never imagined being called to ordained ministry.

After hitting his teen years, Peter left church and went his own ways, which he says led to a challenging time, and a period of ignoring God and any sense of call.

“After a few years of being lost I cried out to God, and said ‘If you want me, do something,’ and he did.”

Peter is married to Laura with a five-year-old son named Harry. He has studied as an ordinand at St Hild College for the last three years and likes cooking, running and sharing his faith journey.

He currently works in a homeless shelter but looks forward to the change and challenge of ordination. “I hope will be able to reach others who feel lost in life, and reach those who are on the margins of society.”

Lisa Opala will serve as Assistant Curate at St Mary the Virgin, Nunthorpe (near Stokesley) where she was a pupil at the local secondary school.

“I was born in Middlesbrough and feel very proud to have grown up in the North East with such a rich cultural heritage surrounded by her ancient monastic communities and Northern Saints. From my earliest years, through loving devotion to Mary, the Mother of God, I developed a deep relationship with Christ. I have always felt that I owe the gift of my vocation to Mary, the first disciple of Christ.”

Lisa lives in Hutton Rudby where her husband Robert serves as a Rector of six parishes. She trained part-time for ordination at Cranmer Hall in Durham whilst working in South Tees NHS Foundation Trust as a hospital chaplain for the last four years.

“I envision my future ministry to be centred upon pastoral care.”

Claire Soderman will serve as Assistant Curate in Northallerton with Kirby Sigston, and comes from a rewarding career teaching in Redcar for 25 years.

Claire began attending St Peter’s Church aged 30, accepted the invitation to follow Jesus and has been nurtured there in seeking to live life in a way that honours him.

Her call to ordination took shape whilst training as a Recognised Parish Assistant: “I came to believe God was calling me to serve him in a new way.”

Claire trained part-time for four years with York School of Ministry and then two years full-time at Cranmer Hall, Durham: “I am thankful for the amazing opportunity to learn and grow in such a rich, diverse and faithful community.”

“I am excited to weave together my heart for growing faith in children with the desire to share the transforming love of Jesus with others, walking alongside people in their journey of faith as so many people have walked alongside me.”

Daniel Thomas will serve as Assistant Curate at Selby Abbey. He came to faith at university and was greatly amused that others discerned a call

to ministry in his life as he continued to teach Mathematics.

Shortly before moving to York, Dan became aware that this could be the “clear sign” he kept telling others he would need from God if he was going to consider enquiring about ordination.

Dan’s move to York led to a break in teaching and the start of the journey to ordination; not only his friends but also the Church recognised a call to ministry of which Dan himself was increasingly aware. He trained contextually for two years in a local parish with St Hild College, and spent far more time on Zoom than anybody thought would be the case.

“I’m looking forward to exploring what it means for the Church to be at the heart of the wider community,” says Dan.

Miriam Thurlow will serve as Assistant Curate at Bridlington Christ Church with Bessingby and Ulrome. She grew up in Bristol in a Christian family where faith was always a part of life; she first felt a calling towards Christian ministry and leadership at York University.

Miriam spent a year working for the Bible Reading Fellowship with the national ‘Messy Church’ team and had a great time meeting lots of local churches, running training sessions and writing materials amongst many other things.

For the last three years she has trained at Cranmer Hall and has enjoyed being a part of the community and learning alongside people from all walks of life.

“I am excited to be moving to Bridlington for curacy and joining the team as they join in with the exciting ways God is moving in their communities. I am looking forward to getting alongside people and encouraging them in their walks with God.”

Huw Waring will serve as Assistant Curate at Filey, and will continue to work in the North Yorkshire Schools ICT service where he believes there will be more opportunities to share his faith as a result of his ordination even though this won't be the main focus of his ministry.

Married to Kimberlee, Huw trained for ordination at St Hild College, describing it as a good experience, although challenging due to the Covid pandemic.

"I am surprised at how quickly the time for ordination has arrived. I'm not sure that one ever feels ready for such an auspicious event. It's been a long journey for me, but I do feel strongly that I am called to this ministry.

"I am excited to engage in opportunities to minister to the local community in Filey. I am looking forward to the challenges and opportunities ahead."

Louise White will serve as Assistant Curate at St Martin’s, Hull, having previously worked as a nurse and midwife. She left the National Health Service to pursue a missionary call with Youth With a Mission (YWAM), where she met and married Richard; they worked with YWAM based in Merseyside for ten years until Richard began training for ordination.

Louise saw her calling as working alongside Richard during his curacy, and then based at Liverpool Cathedral for 12 years. “As our two children

grew older though, I was challenged to consider ordination myself! I was surprised and delighted eventually to sense that this was indeed God’s call, knowing with trepidation that it would mean coming out of hiding behind Richard.”

Her training at Cranmer Hall has been a wonderful time of equipping practically alongside developing her love for theology and the scriptures.

“I’m excited about putting it into practice as I continue to learn with the church community at St Martin’s.”

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