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# Lay Ministry Officer

## Information for Applicants

### June 2025

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# A Message from Bishop David

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Welcome and thank you for your interest in the role of Lay Ministry Officer.

Across the Diocese of Manchester, we want to see a deepening sense of the vocation of all God's people, lay and ordained. In tandem with the Church of England's national vision, we share a commitment that all Christians in Manchester are "envisioned, resourced and released to live as disciples of Jesus Christ in the whole of life, bringing transformation to the church and the world." And we work together to see that "all local churches are supported by the diocese in becoming communities and hubs for initial and ongoing formation."

We are now looking to recruit a new Lay Ministry Officer to take the lead on some of our ongoing work in this area. Working as a member of the Mission and Ministry Team, you'll be part of some fruitful existing lay training programmes, as well as having space to develop new initiatives in a season of new vision.

Our ten-year Transformation Programme, supported by significant funding from the Church Commissioners, is aligned with the Church of England's national strategy. We are therefore well-resourced to take forward a wide range of initiatives to ensure the future missional health of parishes across our diocese, and the lay and ordained leaders who serve there. This support, along with the rich history of and variety in our diocese, makes it a wonderful place to engage in Gospel ministry.

It is important to us that the new Lay Ministry Officer is committed to diversity, inclusion and racial justice. We are also looking for someone who is generous in working with a breadth of traditions and spirituality in the Church of England. In particular, we welcome female candidates and candidates of global majority heritage to help ensure the diversity of our team.

We are very much looking forward to welcoming the new Lay Ministry Officer to the diocese and supporting them in their work.

Yours in Christ,



The Rt Revd Dr David Walker,  
Bishop of Manchester



# About Us

Manchester Diocese serves a vibrant, dynamic and creative community in the North West of England. It covers an area of 416 square miles and has a total population of 2.2 million. The diocese is divided into four archdeaconries, seven deaneries and 33 mission communities. There are more than 300 places of worship and chaplaincies, which are organised into 256 parishes and 175 benefices.

Geographically, the diocese takes in the two cities of Salford and Manchester and the metropolitan boroughs of Oldham, Rochdale, Bury and Bolton. Parts of the metropolitan boroughs of Wigan, Trafford, Stockport, Tameside and Blackburn with Darwen, and most of the borough of Rossendale in Lancashire, are also within the diocese. It has the fourth highest population density of any diocese in the Church of England.

While predominantly urban, a significant portion of the diocese is rural, although less than 3% of the diocese's population resides in these areas. 125 (48%) of our parishes fall within the 10% most deprived areas nationally. Additionally, 25% of the population in the diocese identifies as having a Global Majority Heritage background.

Parishes and chaplaincies across our diocese are supported by the Diocesan Board of Finance, based at St John's House in Bury town centre. This team works with churches and congregations across the diocese to achieve our strategy and our mission goals. It also provides support with clergy stipends and housing, finance, safeguarding and governance.

Across the diocese, 193 Church of England primary and secondary schools educate over 58,000 pupils. These schools are mostly funded by local authorities, with the diocese providing support with religious education and Christian ethos, governance, the recruitment of head teachers, admissions, and building projects. The team which supports these schools is also based at St John's House, as part of the Diocesan Board of Education.



## Our Vision

Our work together grows out of Jesus's Great Commandment which is to 'love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind...and love your neighbour as yourself'. (Matthew 22: 36-40)...

... and out of his Great Commission, 'to go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and the Son and of the Holy Spirit' (Matthew 28:19-20).

Much of what we are doing in Manchester Diocese is already contributing to a culture of hope and an expectation of growth. This includes many forms of inherited as well as fresh expressions of church.

However, we face significant challenges:

- Only 1% of the population attends the Church of England in our diocese – we are in the lowest 25% of dioceses nationally for church attendance.
- Church attendance in our most deprived parishes averages 0.7% of the population.
- Over half of our churches have an average adult weekly attendance of fewer than 35 people.
- We have a large number of church buildings in poor condition and which serve small populations because of demographic changes.

As a diocese, we are completely focused on reversing this decline.

We have made good progress since getting underway with our Transformation Programme, for which we have been awarded over £20m by the Church Commissioners since 2017. Many of us have experienced first-hand how things are changing for the better across the diocese in our parishes, schools and chaplaincies. This is helping us achieve our vision - to be a growing, worshipping transforming Christian presence at the heart of every community - and our mission goals which are to grow our churches, nurture new and existing disciples, and serve the vulnerable, deprived and excluded.

Our achievements include moving to our new deanery structures, the creation of our 33 mission communities, investing in our lay leaders, supporting children's ministry in each deanery, and increasing the practical support for parishes. Most of these changes have focused on new ways of working together which are becoming embedded in the life of our diocese.



Building on these successes, we are shifting to the next level in setting our priorities and working out what we want to achieve next. Given the excellent start that has been made, we now have the opportunity to be even more creative and ambitious with our plans for the future.

Learning from our recent experience with the new projects and programmes that are underway, we are well-placed to develop the overall strategy and plans for our diocese based on the following distinct but interconnected themes:

- Growing younger
- Church planting and revitalisation
- Developing missional leaders – lay and ordained
- Supporting parish renewal.

These priorities align with the Church of England's overall vision which is to create a church of missionary disciples, where mixed ecology is the norm, and whose membership is becoming younger and more diverse.

We have been doing great work in the area of ***growing younger***, trialling new approaches with the Children Changing Places programme in Bolton, and Man Dio Growing Faith in the other deaneries. We are now bringing this experience and learning together to develop a comprehensive approach to engaging with children, young people, and their families across our diocese. Our particular focus is on how best to strengthen the links between our churches and our church schools.

We have had similar successes with ***church planting and revitalisation***. Over the last seven years, we have set up four new resource churches and over ten church plants. We now want to build on this learning, so that churches carrying a DNA of mission are established across our diocese particularly in communities where attendance is low.

***Developing missional leaders*** is a key priority for us. We recognise the importance of investing in our clergy so they are equipped to grow our churches, especially given the number of newly ordained clergy who are being appointed to stipendiary roles. As a diocese we continue to focus on developing our lay people, particularly through our Authorised Lay Ministry, focal ministry and Reader programmes. These developments will inform our future plans for lay ministry to which we remain fully committed. Supporting clergy and lay vocations so we develop a new, diverse generation of church leaders with the calling and skills to grow new faith communities, continues to be important to us.



Providing direct support to ensure **parish renewal** is central to our Transformation Programme. Our Area Deans and Lay Chairs are working closely with our parishes to understand the opportunities and challenges they face and make sure they have access to the support they need. Mission communities are key to this, enabling parishes to work together on mission and ministry. Clergy deployment, parochial reorganisation and supporting our most fragile churches are important strands of this work. We are also strengthening the support we provide to church officers with training, resources and new technology.

Supporting our international congregations is key to achieving **racial justice**, as is ensuring that our clergy and lay leaders represent the diversity of our diocese in their governance roles.

We will continue our work towards the 2030 **net zero carbon** goal set by General Synod, by supporting our churches and schools with measuring their energy use and taking simple, practical steps to reduce their carbon footprint.

We continue to provide a safe environment for all by promoting effective **safeguarding**.

Across our diocese, people hold diverse views and express their faith through **different traditions**, united in a passion for Jesus Christ and his Church. Our bishops honour these differences by inviting church communities from across our diocese to learn together, support one another and listen to God.

We are working to ensure that we are **financially sustainable** over the medium- to long-term as we recover from the challenges of the pandemic and the cost-of-living crisis. This includes talking with parishes about mutual support and the need to pay Parish Share so that the current levels of stipendiary clergy – 175 – can be maintained. We are also paying close attention to the management of the diocese’s assets to ensure optimal investment returns and capital growth.

Our emerging strategy is enabling us to bring together the key areas of opportunity and challenge in our diocese, so that we can support each other in a positive and co-ordinated way. We need to continue to work together to ensure that our Church thrives and grows, supporting even more people in their faith. Developing positive, inspiring and relevant plans for the future mean that we will be well placed to make a bid for significant further funding to the Church Commissioners for this vital work.



# Developing Lay Ministry

Manchester Diocese has a rich history of developing the gifts, skills and ministry of laity and continues to intentionally resource the training and development of lay leadership.

Our **Foundations for Ministry** programme provides an opportunity to explore God's calling to lay, and ordained, ministry through weekly sessions covering topics such as 'Understanding our Identity', 'The Call to Mission' and 'Living and Communicating the Gospel'. Nearly 400 people have completed the eight-month programme and, as well as learning about themselves and their personal faith, many have found the programme enabled and unlocked the next phase of their ministry journey.

In October 2024 we held the first **Deanery Lay Leadership Conference**, which brought together Readers, ALMs, Church Officers, Children and Youth Workers and more for a morning of networking and leadership training. Two further Deanery Lay Leadership Conferences took place in March 2025, with another planned for October 2025. We have seen real value in bringing different lay roles together in this way and for this type of training and we plan to run a lay leadership conference regularly in all seven of our deaneries.

Alongside training and supporting laity in their church-based roles, we recognise the importance of **whole-life discipleship** and encourage this to be active and flourishing through our #MoreThanSunday programme. Laity are called to live out their faith in a wide variety of places during the week and we want to equip all of God's people to be all that he's called them to, wherever he's called them to do this. We are in the process of exploring more intentional discipleship resources to use across the diocese and this post will play a key part in shaping this work.



# Role Description

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## Purpose

Developing Missional Leaders is a key priority for us as a diocese, and we are committed to ensuring that all lay vocations are promoted and supported. The post-holder plays a key role in setting a culture where the vocation of all God's people is celebrated, and lay people in particular are equipped to live out their calling and use their gifts in the church and in the world.

## Key Functions

- To lead, oversee and develop our well-established **Foundations for Ministry** course, an annual programme helping anyone active in church life who feels some sense of vocation or calling to unpack what following Jesus might look like.
- To expand our programme of **lay training conferences** and similar training days, offering leadership development, missional creativity and spiritual depth at deanery and more local levels.
- To be a resource to leaders, parishes and wider networks in **discipleship resources**, championing a culture of whole-life and life-long discipleship which lies at the core of our shared call to follow Jesus.

## Accountability

The Lay Ministry Officer is line managed by the Head of Lay Development.

## Key Relationships

The new post of Lay Ministry Officer will be working alongside the existing Lay Ministry Officer who is responsible for our Authorised Lay Ministry and Focal Ministry programmes, as well as General Pathways and ongoing leadership development. They will each have their own areas of oversight, but seek to work collaboratively and collectively as much as possible. They will both be supported by the Head of Lay Development, the Director of Mission and Ministry, the Director of Vocations, and the wider team to deliver this priority.

Many of the key relationships will be with those across the diocese who are engaging with training, whether regular or one-off. The post holder will also work in close co-operation with those delivering lay training across the diocese, as well as members of the Bishop's Leadership Team, the Area Deans, and colleagues at St John's House.

# Key Responsibilities

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## **1. Foundations for Ministry**

- To direct and manage the Foundations for Ministry course in the diocese.
- To oversee content development, and support tutors and facilitators delivering the course.
- To pastorally support course participants in their discipleship and leadership journeys.
- To work with others in regular reviews of the course and make recommendations for improvement and further development.

## **2. Lay Conferences and training events**

- To develop a coherent annual rhythm of lay conferences, vocations days and other training events with a wide range of themes linking in with our diocesan vision.
- To oversee the planning and delivery of events, including liaising with speakers, venue planning, resource preparation and communication with those attending.

## **3. Discipleship Resources and Diocesan Rule of Life**

- To champion the existing #MoreThanSunday programme, working alongside the Head of Lay Development in gaining further support and ongoing culture change in resourcing whole-life discipleship.
- To explore resources and best practice towards a diocesan "Rhythm of Life", working alongside the wider Mission and Ministry Team and in partnership with other dioceses to deepen the discipleship journey of individuals and churches across the diocese.

## **4. To keep in touch with national vision and best practice on lay development and leadership, and build relationships with key partners outside of the diocese.**

## **5. To undertake such other reasonable duties as may be required.**

***There is an Occupational Requirement for the post holder to be a practising Christian, in accordance with Schedule 9 of the Equality Act 2010.***

# Person Specification

<b>Requirements</b>	
<b>Qualifications</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Diploma or Level 4 certificate or equivalent</li> <li>▪ Degree level theological qualification or equivalent (desirable)</li> </ul>
<b>Experience and Understanding</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Proven experience in teaching courses, especially in supporting adult learners</li> <li>▪ Experience in the development of taught course materials</li> <li>▪ Experience in organising events, including managing a venue, publicity, event logistics and budget</li> <li>▪ Active and ongoing involvement in Christian ministry in the life of a local church</li> </ul>
<b>Knowledge</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Able to critically appraise course content and programmes</li> <li>▪ An understanding and appreciation of lay ministry and collaborative ministry and the changing pressures in the Church of England</li> <li>▪ Knowledge of safeguarding best practice and an advocate for developing a strong and embedded culture of safeguarding throughout the diocese</li> </ul>
<b>Skills and Competencies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ An enabling communicator and an enthusiast</li> <li>▪ Pastoral skills to support those exploring new ministry opportunities</li> <li>▪ People and management skills to work with others, colleagues and volunteers</li> <li>▪ IT Skills to support ongoing work amongst colleagues</li> <li>▪ Committed to mission and collaborative ministry and confident in their own Christian faith</li> <li>▪ Attention to detail, ensuring that deadlines are achieved and resources are managed effectively</li> </ul>
<b>Personal Attributes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Able to inspire and develop others</li> <li>▪ A collaborative leader who is able to work confidently with others</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Self-motivated with the ability to work well both independently and as part of a team</li> <li>▪ In sympathy with the aims and values of the Church of England, and generous in working with a breadth of traditions and spirituality in the Church of England</li> </ul>
<b>Work-related circumstances</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Able to work flexibly including evenings and weekends</li> <li>▪ Willingness and ability to travel to meetings and parishes</li> </ul>

# Summary of Terms and Conditions of Employment

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<b>Employer</b>	Manchester Diocesan Board of Finance
<b>Line Manager</b>	Head of Lay Development
<b>Normal place of work</b>	St John's House, 155-163 The Rock, Bury
<b>Hours</b>	The role is full-time (35 hours per week). Flexible working is required in terms of hours and location. This role requires regular evening and weekend working
<b>Salary</b>	Diocesan Pay Scale: £33,971 – 40,566 [Grade 4.1 to 4.3] (pending July 2025 pay award)
<b>Contract</b>	Permanent
<b>Pension</b>	Auto-enrolment into the Church Workers Pension Fund – Pension Builder Classic Product
<b>Annual Leave</b>	22 days annual leave per year, rising to 25 days after 12 months' service, in addition to Bank Holidays and three church days

# Additional Information

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## Application timetable

The closing date for applications is **Monday, 7 July 2025 at 5:00pm.**

Shortlisted candidates will be informed by **Friday, 18 July 2025.**

The interviews are scheduled for **Tuesday, 29 July 2025** at St John's House, 155-163 The Rock, Bury BL9 0ND. Further details will be provided to shortlisted candidates.

For an informal conversation about this post please contact Kim Morgan-Jones, Head of Lay Development: [KimMorgan-Jones@manchester.anglican.org](mailto:KimMorgan-Jones@manchester.anglican.org)

Queries can be directed to [jobs@manchester.anglican.org](mailto:jobs@manchester.anglican.org)

## Eligibility and pre-employment enquiries

The successful candidate will need to have the right to live and work in the United Kingdom.

They will also be required to undertake an enhanced check with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).