

My Lay Reader Journey



Judith Meehan writes about her ministry as a Reader at St. Laurence Church, and within the wider Benefice.

Reader is an historic title relating to some of the foundations of the office.

“When revived in the Church of England in 1866 it was restricted to men reading services and homilies in mission huts.”

A chap called Justin Martyr, in the first half of the 2nd Century, used the term ‘lector’ to describe someone who could read scripture thoughtfully. By AD 200 lectors are acknowledged as an established body in the Church’s ministry.

Not to be confused with Hannibal Lecter!

I am Judith, a Lay Reader in the Heart of England Benefice. Growing up I went to Sunday school and church with my family. Whilst being educated at a convent school I loved the religious education lessons. I am married, and we have four boys. I've helped at several Sunday schools and enjoy telling the children about God and Jesus.

Back in 2005 a friend asked if I had thought about doing Reader training. Well I had not, and so there my journey began. I spoke to friends and family, and to the vicar. I believe God encouraged me through those I encountered, known and unknown, to explore the idea of becoming a Reader. There followed several interviews before being accepted. These encounters are designed to discover if your sense of calling is genuine, and where you might fit into ministry. In 2007 I began my training.

Every Monday night for two years I joined eleven other hopefuls to listen and learn, discovering what was expected of a Reader in the Church of England. Assignments had to be done, and it was hard not having written an essay for more than forty years!

In September 2009 I was licenced by the Bishop of Coventry in the cathedral. Since then I have ministered in St. Laurence, and now in the Heart of England Benefice.

It was not easy but was deeply rewarding, increasing my knowledge and strengthening my relationship with God and his Son Jesus. The journey continues.



November 20th, 2020