

New Priests Share Their Stories

Jonathan Phillip David Bealey (Jon)

Benefice of Newton Abbot

An Exonian born in Heavitree in 1964, I grew up in the city and attended St James' Church until leaving for university in 1986. Although I first felt a call to ordination in 1990, I found a rewarding form of ministry in teaching—a career that spanned three decades. Following my early retirement, I was finally released to answer that original call.

I have been profoundly blessed by my marriage to Tania and by our children, William and Christianne, who bring such happiness to my life. I am also deeply thankful for the people in my parish and workplace who have made this journey a joy. Having walked past the Cathedral every day on my way to secondary school, returning here to be priested feels like a homecoming. I truly feel as if the whole of my life has been pointing me toward this moment.

Heidi Jayne Budden

Benefice of Littleham cum Exmouth with Lymptone

It has been a privilege to serve the first year of my curacy in the Exmouth Coastal Churches mission community, and I look forward to continuing there after my priesting, with a particular focus in the parish of Lymptone. After a year of engaging with the breadth of all that parish ministry has to offer along the estuary I am looking forward to continuing in pastoral, sacramental, and missional service - whether that be in the churches, schools, care homes, or local café!

I am incredibly grateful for the support of my parishes, friends, family, and partner Sam in this journey towards priesthood. Their love and prayers, along with the grace and love of God, have held me through all the joys and challenges of a rewarding first year of ordained ministry.

Bethany Grace Charman (Beth)

Bay Church, Torbay; A Bishop's Mission Order

I have loved serving my curacy at Bay Church in Torbay, continuing the journey I began there during my ordinand years. Bay Church is a Bishop's Mission Order with a big heart for sharing the love of Jesus with children and young families, and it has been a huge joy to be part of all God is doing across the bay.

This year has brought some wonderful and significant firsts: baptisms, weddings, and funerals, as well as the privilege of meeting so many amazing people through Alpha. Walking with people as they discover how deeply loved they are by God, and seeing the difference faith makes in everyday life, continues to be one of my greatest joys.

I am so excited to be ordained priest today and to continue loving, serving, and cheering on the church in Torbay and beyond.

The joy of the Lord is your strength. Nehemiah 8:10

Joshua James Chesworth (Josh)

Benefice of St Matthew with St Sidwell, Exeter and the Benefice of Saint Andrew, Exwick

I am so thankful to be ordained a priest today. This second ordination takes me another step into an exciting and profound calling to represent Christ in the midst of a society that is often totally unaware of His love and His goodness, and to people who don't realise that Jesus really is the way, the truth and the life. I want to say thank you to my wonderful wife and children for bearing much of the cost of ministry so far, and the incredible team at Co Church for all their support and friendship.

Susanna Jane Coe (Suki)

Benefice of St David, Exeter

I was brought up in a Christian home, where church was part of the rhythm of life. I studied Theology at the School of Mission in Winchester and served as a Licenced Lay Minister before seeking ordination. Today is the first anniversary of my arrival in Exeter Diocese. The past year serving my curacy at St David's Church has been amazing, I have made many new friends, learnt a great deal and thoroughly settled in being a part of the ministry team. As I look forward into my Priestly ministry, I feel a mixture of great excitement and some trepidation, I have felt called by God to a priestly ministry for many years and to have reached this point is such a privilege. I thank all the faithful people who have helped me on my journey and know that while this is a significant moment, my journey of learning, formation and growth continues.

Catherine Frances Harper

Benefice of Georgeham with Croyde

Year 1 of curacy has been a joy. It has also been challenging, humbling, exciting and stretching, and has grown my understanding of what ordained ministry can look like. As a self-supporting minister, I have discovered that my dual roles of curate and village postmaster are actually just one role – I am a servant and representative of Jesus whether I am in church or standing behind the counter, and wearing my clerical collar in both places has opened up many wonderful opportunities for conversations that I would otherwise not have had. As I am ordained Priest, I look forward to deepening

relationships within the community, of making Jesus known through one-to-one encounters, and through invitation to share in the joys of being church together. As ever, I thank my family for their love and support and pray for God's strength to enable me to serve him well each day.

Claire-Michele Hendy

Benefice of Eggbuckland with Estover

I have spent my diaconal year within the Forder Valley Mission Community, sharing in ministry across Eggbuckland, Estover, Derriford, Mainstone, and Leigham. It has been a real joy and privilege, and I am so thankful to have been given the space to continue to grow and find myself within such a supportive and encouraging team. During this time, my sense of calling to serve Christ and his Church has deepened, and my ministry has been shaped by being alongside people in the everyday moments of life. I have come to feel truly rooted and at home in the communities I serve, especially valuing opportunities to journey with individuals and families, support schools ministry, and explore the distinctive call of the diaconate in loving service. As I now look towards priesting, I give thanks for every opportunity and person that has passed my way, and for God's grace that continues to guide and sustain me in all that I do.

Toby Richard Humphreys

Benefice of Cullompton

It has been a joy and privilege to serve God's Church as a Deacon this year and I am both excited and humbled to be called into the Priesthood. I am looking forward to continuing to grow and be formed into the vocation He has placed on my life, and to continue ministering amongst the people of Cullompton. Please pray for me and my family in this new season.

Steven Marc Kastner-Walmsley

Benefice of Colyton, Branscombe, Musbury, Northleigh and Southleigh

I grew up with a rich and varied Christian background, attending a Catholic primary school, then a Methodist secondary boarding school, and later, after moving to Australia, a Church of England school. These experiences across different Christian traditions helped to shape both my faith and my understanding of the wider Church.

Before entering ordained ministry, I worked for many years in the public sector, serving in both the police and local government. I am married with two grown up children.

I have found my curacy deeply rewarding and have especially valued serving at Holyford, where I have been blessed to work among wonderful people and supportive church communities. I have also found my ministry as a police chaplain especially rewarding, valuing the opportunity to offer pastoral support, care, and a compassionate presence to those serving in demanding roles.

Fiona Ross Davidson Lang

Benefice of St Pancras, Pennycross, Plymouth

Growing up in Scotland I felt called to ministry from my teenage years. After university, serving in the Army and various administrative roles, I could no longer ignore the nudge. Training at Spiritus College was a wonderful experience, and my first year of curacy has been an absolute joy. I look forward to continuing to serve and am so grateful for the encouragement of family and friends, as I continue this journey.

James Kingsley Moore

Benefice of Fremington, Instow and Westleigh

Having enjoyed an eclectic career in healthcare, education and overseas adventures, returning to North Devon to serve my curacy has been an absolute joy. Although this change wasn't in my life plan, God had other ideas. I eventually felt my call to ordination was unmistakable, appreciating how God had been preparing me over the last 25-years of my life, and began my training with St. Mellitus College here in the Southwest.

Serving within farming, village, coastal and urban areas bring with it numerous superb challenges, and it is a blessing for my wife Sarah, and our family to be considered part of these communities. Being ordained as a priest today is incredibly humbling, and I look forward to continuing this wonderful and ever-expanding adventure over the coming years.