

Report from Rosemary Walters: Selection and Formation

October 2016

- My main activity this year has been the regular articles in The Reader Magazine on the May 2014 Selection and Formation Criteria.

I have also kept in contact with

- the Sarum Forum on Reader Training
- the ongoing consultations on clergy selection in my capacity as a BAPS Pastoral selector
- the Reform and Renewal programme as a member of General Synod.

The articles in the Reader Magazine will come to the final criteria in the next edition and I would like to begin some kind of similarly short reflections on Renewal and Reform in a Reader context as the next feature. The magazine is a very effective way of reaching as many people as possible. I would value the comments of the Executive on this idea.

It is my understanding that the Reform and Renewal Lay Ministry Working Group and the Lay Leadership Task Group have been in consultation and a Report is going to Ministry Council in November 2016. It seems sensible to wait for this Report in order to discern the next steps in any development for Reader Selection and Formation.

For my own benefit I have extracted the main points from the remit of these two groups and I include this here as it might be a useful precis for others in advance of the final Report. The boundaries of the various groups in the Renewal and Reform programme are rightly very porous and the Renewing Discipleship and Ministry group is also directly related to our purposes.

See <https://www.churchofengland.org/renewal-reform.aspx>

Lay Ministry Working Group

The working group has been established in order to:

- Review current developments in traditional and emerging forms of lay ministry in the light of the Resourcing the Future and Resourcing Ministerial Education diocesan consultations
- Develop a theological understanding of lay ecclesial ministries and the complementarity of lay and ordained ministries
- Investigate what hinders the exercise of lay ministries and propose changes to current practice in order to remove these hindrances
- Propose a framework for lay ministries in the Church of England which respects diversity of expression between dioceses and encourages shared learning, good practice and interconnectedness across the Church of England

- Review the resources currently allocated to lay ministerial education and development and to propose changes

Lay Leadership Task Group

A great opportunity lies before us. It is the same opportunity that has presented itself to the Church in every decade for the last 100 years. Will we determine to empower, liberate, disciple the 98% of God's people who are not ordained for fruitful, faithful mission and ministry, influence, leadership and, most importantly, vibrant relationship with Jesus in all of life? Not only in church-based ministry on a Sunday but in work and school, in gym and shop, in field and factory, Monday to Saturday.

The topic of Lay Leadership is an extremely broad one, touching on universal themes of discipleship, the interface between the Church and wider culture, the nature of authority and relations between clergy and laity. Tackling these themes has proved extremely challenging for the Task group in the time available. The report is therefore an initial attempt to provide a narrative and storyline around how the Church should view and respond to the challenges of recognising and supporting lay leaders in church, community, workplace and wider society.