

Media Questionnaire: Deacons

Your name, age and original home village, town or city (i.e. the place where you grew up):

Answer:

My name is Jordan Bentliff and I'm 28, from Handforth, Stockport. I grew up in a Christian family and I made the decision to follow Jesus when I was 17 years old.

The church in Blackburn Diocese where you are serving:

Answer:

I'm serving at St George's Church and All Saints Church, Chorley.

Tell us about your family:

Answer:

Me and my wife, Becky have been married for 8 years this July. We've known each other since we were 17 and now have a 2 year-old daughter, Maisie. Becky works in publishing and we both share a love of reading.

If applicable, your former job before entering ministry?

Answer:

I followed a call to lay ministry at first, gaining a BA in Theology and serving in several churches in South Yorkshire where I was a youth worker in the Diocese of Sheffield, working across two economically-deprived parishes. I love working with young people and families and seeing them come closer to God.

What led you to take the steps towards ordination?

Answer:

I felt called to ordination for a long while and, after exploring a wider call to leadership through various ministries, felt the call to ordained ministry after much prayer and others recognising that calling in me.

What's been the best thing about your training?

Answer:

I have loved working in a housing estate in Sheffield, seeing people overcome economic boundaries and come to know Jesus.

Can you say what is the most important thing you have learned during your training?

Answer:

I feel like I have learned a lot of practical things about leadership, particularly about encouraging others in their own abilities.

Reflecting on the difficult past year, please share a few thoughts about how the pandemic has impacted on ministry at this time (you could reflect how people have adapted to the circumstances in different ways as part of this response) ...

Answer:

In the Christian food bank I run, we have gone from feeding around 150 people to around 300 people. Whilst this has been very difficult in a practical way and it has been hard not always having enough to go around, but what has been great has been seeing people stepping up to the task; seeing local people joining in prayer with us and volunteering their own time with our food bank.

Meanwhile, what are some of your personal reflections on ministry in the post-pandemic period that lies ahead; the challenges and the opportunities?

Answer:

I feel that ministry is going to have to be increasingly outward focused over the years to come, that we will have to re-engage people in Church by engaging in more evangelism. I think this is both challenge but also a great opportunity, to trust in God and tell others about him.

Tell us something people don't know about you that might surprise them?

Answer:

I once caught a live bear in the US that was attacking our campsite.

What do you view as your most significant personal achievement, before or during training?

Answer:

For me, the little victories sometimes mean more than numerically successful events, seeing somebody who can't read and write start to explore their faith or seeing drug addicts recover and change their lives, have been things to see over the past couple of years. I also loved to see some young families coming to our Christingle service after engaging with tots and toddler groups.

How do you hope to continue to support the Diocesan Vision 2026 at a parish level?

Answer:

I love church planting and focusing on making disciples and transforming communities. One of the great strengths of the Diocesan Vision 2026 is how it is focused on reaching unreached places and committed to planting new churches and congregations, these things

are at the core of what I hope my ministry will be. I have already mentioned my heart for children and young people, it's great to recognise that this is their church too and I will certainly be supporting the diocesan vision in my parish.

How would you express your own vision for the church?

Answer:

I would love to see the church reach more working-class families as well as young people. I think this will require establishing new congregations but will definitely also include loving and nurturing current congregations and encouraging people to step into leadership roles.

Finally, when you get the chance, how do you relax?

Answer:

I love to write and spend time with my family.