

## Media Questionnaire: Deacons

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

**Answer: Sam Dickinson, 37. Born in Exeter, grew up in Calne, Wiltshire. with wonderful Christian parents and three fantastic sisters, for whom I am very grateful. Outdoor exercise has always been a passion, but I did manage to sit still long enough to finish schooling and complete a history degree.**

The church in Blackburn Diocese where you are serving:

**Answer: Christ Church, Blackburn / St Andrew's Livesey.**

Tell us about your family:

**Answer: Married to Emily; children Finn (7), Rory (5), Gus (4), Martha (1)**

If applicable, your former job before entering ministry?

**Answer: Lay Assistant Minister in Westbourne, Bournemouth.**

What led you to take the steps towards ordination?

**Answer: A desire to serve Jesus by seeking the health and growth of his people, most broadly. I am grateful to have heard about God's love for me from a very young age - though I long for this love to be shaping my life more and more. Having served in local church ministry on and off since 2007, I am delighted that the Lord has now opened the door to ordained ministry in Blackburn.**

What's been the best thing about your training?

**Answer: Time to read and reflect.**

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

**Answer: Hard to say. Probably that so much of ministry is about helping people see the riches that we have in Jesus.**

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:**

- 1) The value of 'in-person' meetings – Zoom no substitute!**
- 2) The blessing of being part of a church family.**
- 3) The significance of working as a team to care for others.**

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

**Answer: Challenges: people growing used to minimal church involvement. Opportunities: the chance to rebuild differently, in a way that serves people better than the pre-pandemic status quo.**

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

**Answer: Mild addiction to Ordnance Survey Maps.**

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

**Answer: Marrying Emily!**

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

**Answer: Seeking to help the people of Christ Church, Blackburn and St Andrew's Livesey, to know Jesus better and follow him more gladly.**

How would you express your own vision for the church?

**Answer: A community which loves Jesus, one another and the lost.**

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

**Answer: Cycling, hill walking, reading, wrestling my small children.**