

Media Questionnaire: **Rachel Fielding**

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

Answer: 49. Blackburn

The church and location in Blackburn Diocese where you are serving:

Answer: Primary title - East Lancashire Hospital Trust, Spiritual Care Team.

Secondary title - St. Cuthbert's, Darwen

Tell us a bit about your family:

Answer: Son 23, Daughter 20 and three dogs.

If applicable, what was your former job before entering ministry?

Answer: Chaplain and Therapy Dog Practitioner

Tell us something about your journey towards ordination?

Answer: Following the suggestion that I would make a good deacon, and ignoring it for a couple of years, I was moved to question God's call on my life. During the 9am Mass at the Cathedral, where I was working as a virger, the hymn 'Take my life and let it be consecrated, Lord, to thee' was sung; familiar to me from my Methodist days as a child. I questioned God – thinking I was already where he wanted me – but offered myself to do his will - and asked him to make it obvious.

What has been a) the most important thing you have learned and b) the most inspiring thing you have experienced during your training? (They can be different!)

Answer: I have learnt tolerance and acceptance, patience, and perseverance with those who I train with and those who teach. Most inspiring are the people I train with – we support, encourage, learn, and laugh together.

What are some of the personal challenges and opportunities you face in your ministry in the coming year?

Answer:

Getting to know the parish and people I seek to serve. Learning to be the person God is calling me to be as a Deacon.

What do you view as your most significant personal achievement? (This may be connected to your ordination training of course or it could be something else from another aspect of your life.)

Answer: Finding out I can study after all these years (my tutors may disagree!)

When he was announced recently as the next Bishop of Blackburn, Bishop Philip said: *"I am committed to continuing the growth of the church in Lancashire, helping to build joyful Christian communities. I would love to see the Church of England in Lancashire being an ever-stronger voice for justice, especially for the poorest. And I believe children and young people need to be at the very heart of all that we do."*

How would you seek to support the Bishop in fulfilling these aims?

Answer: Enable and support an environment where all are welcomed and valued for who they are.

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

Answer: I hold a PSV (Passenger Carrying Vehicle) license and enjoy driving classic buses from the 1950s and earlier.

Finally, when you get the chance, what do you do you chill out and relax?

Answer: Walk the dogs, listen to music and eat cake.