

## **Media questionnaire and brief biography: Claire McEnergy**

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

**Answer: 55, Read, Near Burnley.**

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

**Answer: Read St John and Simonstone St. Peter**

Tell us a bit about your family:

**Answer: I have been married to Steve for ten years. He owns a café on Bury market. We live in a farmhouse next door to my mum, Christine. I have a sister Julie who lives with her husband and two boys and is a Professor.**

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

**Answer: Detective in the police force until I retired , and a Safeguarding Consultant.**

Tell us something about your journey towards ordination?

**Answer: I came to active faith in my 50s. I believe it was a conversion experience! I felt compelled to change my life and to follow God's call. I felt compelled to enter a church community and the rest is history!**

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 for a: That God can be quite persistent!**

**Answer for b: That God calls all sorts of people from all walks of life and at all times of life. But what he calls is you. You can only come to the party as yourself, with your gifts, failings, and insecurities. He will do the rest.**

Since the pandemic many more parishes have also embraced online opportunities to engage with their local communities alongside their existing services. Please indicate ways in which you may have done this already or what plans you may have to explore ways to reach people in the 'digital space' in the future ...

**Answer: I run a weekly online service from home on a Wednesday evening.**

**Our church places all our major services online.**

**I have been involved in podcasts and interviews online recently.**

**I would be looking at many and varied ways to reach out to people digitally.**

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

**Answer: Challenges - adjusting to a new public role and living up to expectations, both of God and parishioners. Being able to find quality prayer time.**

**Opportunities - Many! Looking forward to working collaboratively with those in my parish, and my incumbent and her team to seek ways to positively impact people's lives with the Kingdom of God and the love and care He always imparts!**

**In my police career and recently I have worked with those who find themselves on the margins of society for various reasons. It has been rewarding work. I think all churches should embrace missional outreach to assist those in need, or who need help to find a voice.**

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: Heeding a rather persistent call from God and marrying my husband!**

Bishop Philip has 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 will you seek to support the Bishop in fulfilling these aims?

**Answer: I have already expressed a desire to work alongside the poorest in society and my calling will, I am sure, lead me in this direction going forward as it has done in the past. I have had some really great experiences of ministering to the young and know this will continue. We can often forget the 'joy' of being a Christian! I intend to ensure the joy comes through in any youth ministry.**

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

**Answer: I was in the Police force for 30 years and retired at the rank of Detective Superintendent. I once qualified and competed at Wembley Horse of the Year Show on my horse. I am a trained beauty therapist, hairdresser and masseur!**

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

**Answer: I love gardening, long walks with the dogs and up until recently was a keen horse rider. I love cooking and catching up with friends over a meal, and when I'm not studying, I like a good sunny holiday!**