

**Your name, your age and your home village, town or city (where you grew up):**

Answer: I'm Rebecca Feeney, aged 30. I grew up in lots of different places around the country (we moved around a lot!) but the biggest portion of that was spent in Preston, Lancashire.

**The church in Blackburn Diocese where you are serving:**

Answer: I am serving my title at St Wilfrid's Church, Standish, which is just slightly north of Wigan – we're right on the border of the Diocese!

**Tell us about your family:**

Answer: My mother and father, respectively a primary school headteacher and a parish priest, are both based in Wolverhampton; they've taken to babying dogs since their children left the nest. My younger brother is a writer based in Preston, and our younger sister is a GCSE/A Level RE teacher.

**Former job before entering ministry?:**

Answer: I studied music at Cardiff University before working as a Pastoral Assistant for three years, first in Westminster and then in Camden, London.

**Why did you decide to get ordained?:**

Answer: To cut a long story short, I made a number of friends who were instrumental in rekindling my faith while I was at university. I attended the ordination of one of those friends, and it was there I felt God telling me that I was to 'do for others what had been done for me' – to bring people back to him, in the way I had been brought back. In that sense, my decision was simply to do as I was told!

**What's been the best thing about your training?:**

Answer: The opportunity to be immersively formed for the diaconate and priesthood, through all the highs and lows, by living alongside some of the most inspiring and faithful priests, teachers, and priests-to-be I could ever have hoped to know. I couldn't have asked for better, or more, than what God gave me through St Stephen's House.

**What's the most important thing you have learned so far?:**

Answer: That it is good and healthy to ask for help, from God and from others. That's what it means to be part of the church – we aren't created to be self-sufficient!

**Can you name the most influential person in your Christian life to date and, briefly, say why?**

Answer: My mum and dad, who - to paraphrase St Ignatius – give and give without ever counting the cost (in more ways than one). Also, ‘Aunty’ Chris Hull, the best Sunday School teacher in the whole world. I know God is real because I’ve seen him glowing out of her. Sorry, I can’t narrow it down from three...

**What is your hope for your future role?:**

Answer: To take it all in! Ideally, both in these first few years and in the years to come, I’d like to do my bit helping out with whatever God has planned and try not get in the way too much in the process.

**Name one thing about you people would be surprised about?:**

Answer: I used to be two inches taller, until an abrupt introduction to the bottom of a 14ft stairwell. It’s a great story – feel free to ask me about it sometime.

**What would you say was your most significant personal achievement to date?**

Answer: Gail Simone, my favourite comic book writer, followed me on Twitter and I didn’t spontaneously combust. That was quite good. And I achieved my degree in Theology from Oxford despite never believing I was smart enough to attend an Oxbridge college, so I suppose that deserves a mention too.

**Favourite quote (from the Bible or elsewhere). Also state briefly why it is your favourite:**

Answer: ‘I do not like that man. I must get to know him better.’ Abraham Lincoln (quoted by Conard, *Costs of Administering Reparation for Work Injuries in Illinois*, 1952).

**Unfulfilled ambition?:**

Answer: I’ve always wanted to sing the role of Cunegonde in Bernstein’s ‘Candide’, but, ah, t’was not to be... I’ve also wanted to tour Japan since I was about 13. There’s still time for that!



**How do you personally hope to support the ongoing Diocesan Vision 2026 Healthy Churches Transforming Communities at parish level?**

Answer: I have absolutely loved working in the schools in my parish since arriving – ministry to schools is a real opportunity to not only raise up new evangelists, but also to let children know they are loved, and to help sow understanding and tolerance among children of all faiths and none at an age where prejudice hasn't taken root. I think the work churches do in schools is extremely important and I'm thrilled to be a part of it. My background is in Anglo-Catholic expressions of church planting and mission and evangelism, too, so I'm excited to put that experience to use particularly as a priest.

**How would you express your own vision for the church?:**

Answer: That we might find a way to overcome the things that divide us, as Jesus prayed. Long term, I'd like to think that the Church of England can model a way forward for wider church unity; hopefully, we'll be able to show how such a wide spectrum of Christian worship and theological understanding is able to live and serve God together as members of one body with different roles. We'll only really be able to show God's love to the wider world once we've learned how to show it to one another. It isn't easy, but I'd like to think we are on the right path.

**How do you relax?:**

Answer: Video games and a large gin.