

# John Harding

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Submission Date Apr 14, 2026 7:11 PM

Name: John Harding

Age: 49

Original Home Village, Town or City: Normanton, West Yorkshire

The Church in Blackburn Diocese where you are serving: Leyland St John

If applicable, what was your former job before entering ministry? Church Leader, Non-denominational

In one word, how would you describe what ordination means to you? Adventure

Please give some insight (a few sentences) about your ordination decision? It has been, and continues to be a real adventure following the leading of the Holy Spirit into ordination and leadership in the Church of England, and into a church that has such a strong history, diversity and destiny.

What inspired you most during your ordination training? It has been inspiring to connect with others who are hopeful and faith-filled for the future of the church.

What are some of the personal challenges and opportunities you face in your ministry in the coming year? It's going to be hard leaving Liverpool, our home and place of ministry for the past 28 years. The move into the Blackburn Diocese also coincides with becoming empty-nesters, as both our sons will be at University! We are excited to build new relationships both with those in the church and those in the local community where God is placing us.

Share some thoughts (a few sentences for each point) about how you will support the Bishop in achieving these aims, and also how you will encourage others to do the same?

Hearing the Bishop's vision for the diocese has been part of what has inspired us to move into the Blackburn diocese. I believe in the power of the gospel to transform lives. This was the catalyst for change in the relatively poor, single parent family I grew up in. I will support this vision by endeavouring to cultivate gospel-centred communities where all are loved and cared for, and by safe and fun environments for children and young people to encounter Jesus.

Tell us about your family/ loved ones:

I am married to Kirsten, a school teacher. We have 2 sons, Soren (20) 3rd year Mathematics at Uni of York, and Reuben (18) who is currently completing his A-Levels. I have an identical twin brother (he's 10 minutes younger than me), and to make things more confusing, he's a priest and theologian in the church of England. I have 2 retired racing greyhounds, The Duke and Otis.

What do you do in your free time?

I play in a 5-side football team and support LFC. I love walking the dogs, getting to the coast or out into the mountains. I love eating and cooking - and especially experimenting with the Sous Vide or Smoker (briskets and chicken wings).

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

Through lockdown I wrote a book called 'Reflex' that unpacks my learning on discipleship (100 movements publishing), which is something I really proud of.