

Joy Rushton

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Name: Joy Rushton

Age: 61

Original Home Village, Town or City: Preston

The Church in Blackburn Diocese where you are serving: Ribbleton Parish, Preston

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

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

Please give some insight (a few sentences) about your ordination decision? The parable of the lost sheep played a big part in my coming to faith. I love the way Jesus illustrated his mission, through this story, and how he came to seek and save those who are lost. The way he, and the whole of heaven, rejoices over finding someone who is lost is so deeply moving. The biblical metaphor of the good shepherd motivates me in following Jesus and offering myself for ordination.

What inspired you most during your ordination training? I have been inspired by my biblical studies: listening to lecturers open up Bible passages and helping me understand their meaning as well as having time to study the Bible in greater depth.

What are some of the personal challenges and opportunities you face in your ministry in the coming year? I am looking forward to the opportunities for ministry in my local parish. It is so encouraging to see the ways God is working in people's lives and our community.

Ongoing challenges include balancing roles and responsibilities.

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?

I will support this by getting to know and listening to the people in the areas where I live, worship and work. I want to understand more fully the issues that they are facing and respond with compassion. I will support our parish mission team in outreach through our Renew Wellbeing Hub, Parish Pantry, Catalyst Youth team, MPower Hub and any other ways that I can.

Please share some insights about what you personally and/or your church may be doing online; particularly anything innovative and successful you have done that other churches may be able to replicate.

One of our MPower graduates has recently launched Deep Roots an online discipleship group. Every fortnight, she publishes some thoughts on a topic and members of the congregation respond with their thoughts. This is shared on our closed Facebook family group.

Tell us about your family/ loved ones:

My family are all proud northerners. My parents grew up in Oldham and have now retired to Blackpool - a favourite holiday destination for my grandparents during Oldham Wakes. I have two sisters and a brother who all live in the north west.

What do you do in your free time?

I like to walk every day in the local countryside, visit family and friends, spend time in the garden (when the sun shines), listen to audible books and keep fit.

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

I once dressed, with a colleague, as a pantomime horse and walked around my workplace in Westminster collecting money for charity. This included visiting Lambeth Palace.