

Lorraine Innerdale

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Name: Lorraine Innerdale

Age: 55

Original Home Village, Town or City: Blackpool

The Church in Blackburn Diocese where you are serving: St Ambrose Church Leyland, and HMP Preston

If applicable, what was your former job before entering ministry? counsellor and prison chaplain

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

Please give some insight (a few sentences) about your ordination decision? I came to faith in my late 30s, and almost 9 years ago i became an LLM. Yet, even as far back as 8 years ago, i felt called to ordination, but pushed it to one side, for a variety of reasons. Over the years, i continued to feel this calling, and deliberately ignored it, but over time the call got stronger and stronger. So when I went to the Holy Land in April 2023, i prayed really hard for God to give me a huge sign, and if not, then i could put things to rest, thinking the call would go away. However, God was persistent, and whilst in at the healing pool, of Bethesda, i got my answer. So as soon as i got home, i completed the application form, and here i am now.

What inspired you most during your ordination training? I have never felt closer to God than during this time, and i have learnt a lot. I have also felt truly blessed by the people i have met whilst training, as i have felt well and truly supported throughout, especially by some who i have grown close to whilst training.

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

I am not an academic person, and technology is not my friend, or rather i am not a friend of technology, so this i will find difficult. But i do love learning. Which is a good thing, as I will certainly be doing a lot more of that. Time management will be playing a huge part during this time.

One thing that i am really excited about is helping to set up a Deaf church in Preston. It was actually going to a Deaf church that brought me back to faith in my late 30s. Seeing the Word of God through British Sign Language, brought the bible alive to me, right in front of my eyes.

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?

Working in as a prison chaplain, I come into contact with people from all sorts of backgrounds, and one thing i have always believed is that i am not their to judge, it is between them and the courts, and them and God. I am there to support them, and to help them see that there is hope, and lives can be changed.

This can be hard to get across to others, especially if they have been a victim of crime themselves.

Within the prison, i come across the homeless, veterans and previously looked after children, and am aware of the lack of support they receive when in the community. The same goes for the poorer families, and those with mental health issues.

It breaks my heart, seeing the same familiar faces constantly coming back to prison due to the lack of support in the community.

More provision is desperately needed, and churches, organisations and communities must work more together to achieve this.

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.

I am a member of Open Table, and St Ambrose church have a social media presence for this, via Facebook and Instagram, as we are the only church in the Blackburn Diocese that offer Open Table, which is church service for the LGBT+ community and allies. This is however for all Christian denominations, not just Anglican.

Being part of setting up a Deaf Church, an online presence will have to be established, as Deaf people can travel miles to access a church service in their own language of British Sign Language.

Tell us about your family/ loved ones:

I have been married to Chris for 30 years, and have two grown up children, Daniel and Lauren.

What do you do in your free time?

Chris and I love going on holiday, and we are trying our very best to see as much of the world as we possibly can. Plus it is the only way we get to spend every day together, as Chris works during the week, and my work includes both Saturday and Sunday every week.

I started learning the guitar again last year, and I am really enjoying that, although i cant see myself as a future Eric Clapton. It was great to be able to use the guitar i used when i was 14, so it is practically vintage now.

Two years ago i also joined knit and natter, as before i could only knit straight - so baby blankets and scarves. Now i have progressed to hats, and a few other things. But i cant see myself getting to stage of baby clothes and toys. It looks far too complicated. But i am a work in progress, so who knows. Although Chris does get a bit fed up of opening up a cupboard a ball of wool falling out, almost every cupboard. But when wool is on sale, I have to get it whilst it is there. I also enjoy going to the theatre with my daughter. Although she has banned me from singing at musicals, and she holds my arms at times to stop me signing the songs instead.

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

I was in the Territorial Army for 5 years, in the Royal Engineers.

I do like to challenge myself, so i have done a few things in my time. From parachuting, hang gliding, paragliding, free falling, hot air ballooning, flying a plane, being a passenger in a few different helicopters, riding an elephant and a camel - not at the same time. I have swam with dolphins, sting rays, and turtles. I was a zoo keeper for the day at Blackpool Zoo. I have also completed 3 half marathons - very slowly.

I still want to go wing walking, and swim with sharks.

