

## **A few words from the Vicar ....**

Well, I am certainly looking forward to June, not least because Debra will be ordained as a Priest at Manchester Cathedral on Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> June. Obviously, this will be a momentous occasion for Debra (as it was for Elaine and me), something she has been journeying towards since God called her to ordained ministry many years ago. Following years of training and formation, Debra is ready; ready to exercise authority and leadership within the Church as a Priest.

During her ordination, bishops and clergy will lay hands upon her and she will be anointed in the power of the Holy Spirit; empowered for priestly ministry and whatever lies ahead in the years to come.

Then, the very next day, at our 10.30am service, Debra, our newly-minted Priest, will preside at the Lord's Table for the very first time; the first of many occasions.

Debra's ordination is an important milestone in the life of this Church so, please, everyone make a special effort to attend the 10.30am service on 24<sup>th</sup> June to show your support for Debra. If you have arranged to be somewhere else, cancel it! You should be in Church for this special occasion!

Following the service, there will be a bring and share lunch in the Church Hall, during which I will present Debra with a Communion Set as a mark of her new status. Come along to that too!

So, that's Debra. Now a question for you. What might God be calling you to do? I am convinced that there are others within our congregation whom God is calling to ordination or to some form of authorised lay ministry, such as Reader. If you think it might be you, arrange to see me for a chat.

Of course, God does not call everyone to ordination or to become a Reader. One thing is for sure though; all baptised

Christians are called to ministry of one sort or another. God has a ministry tailor-made for each of us and, through the Holy Spirit, gifts us appropriately to exercise it. Maybe you have a calling to pray, to engage in pastoral care, hospitality, to talk about the good news of Jesus Christ with others, or to engage in ministry amongst children or teenagers. Or maybe your gifting is more back office, around administration or in building maintenance or in fund-raising; a ministry that supports the calling of others.

We are all called, the list of possibilities is endless and no one ministry is more important than another. For me, this last point was reinforced by a recent visit to Bletchley Park, the home of the WW2 Enigma cipher breakers. It is estimated that the important work undertaken by these backroom boys and girls, in breaking Axis ciphers and interpreting the results, shortened the war by two years and saved many Allied lives. So, never underestimate the significance of God's call, even if what God is calling you to do is not up front and seems a little mundane.

So, listen out for that whisper in your ear, don't dismiss that tap on your shoulder or that thought that comes to mind during prayer. It might be God calling you to serve him in a new way!

Finally, once again, I turn to our ongoing action to enforce the Churchyard Regulations. I am being guided by an official from the Diocese, and are advised that the next step, where we have contact details, is to write to next of kin requesting they remove prohibited items that have been placed on graves. This is underway and means that there is a further period of grace for removing prohibited items before we are instructed by the Diocese to do so.

Every Blessing

*Dave*