

Focal Ministry

Is it for me?

“Focal Ministry is a key component of the diocesan strategy to release and equip local leadership in churches and equip worshipping communities, in order for them to be effective in making disciples and in seeking to transform our society and God’s world”

Bishop Sophie Jelley

What is Focal Ministry?

Focal Ministers are people called to serve the church in a public-facing role in their parishes. They are authorised by the Bishop, supported by the diocese and rooted to provide a regular presence in a congregation and/or community. They are authorised for a period of three years and usually work as part of a team with other Focal Ministers, but Focal Ministry is not one-size-fits-all. It can take different shapes, depending on the needs of the parish and the Focal Ministers themselves. Focal Ministers may already be a Reader, Churchwarden or other lay minister, others may be ordained. Some may be the obvious choice, others may be new to ministry. Focal Ministry is open to all.

Focal Ministers have 4 main leadership responsibilities;

- To be the public face of the church to their congregation and/or community.
- The Focal Ministry Team take responsibility, with the Oversight Minister and relevant others, for the development and delivery of mission and ministry in a parish.
- As individuals, Focal Ministers may take oversight of a specific aspect of mission or ministry.
- A final responsibility of Focal Ministers is to encourage and support the vocations of everyone, and build teams around their areas of responsibility.

Steps to Focal Ministry

There are 6 simple steps to starting FM in your parish. They are:

- PCC decide to have Focal Ministry in their parish.
- PCC and Oversight Minister formally nominate potential Focal Ministers.
- Focal Ministry Team sends Personal Profiles to the potential Focal Ministers to complete.
- Discernment conversation with the Director of Focal Ministry (Sally Myers).
- Getting Ready for Focal Ministry.
- Authorisation and commissioning service.

The Focal Ministry Team is here to support you every step of the way and so please do get in touch with any questions or if you would like a visit.

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Getting Ready for Focal Ministry

Getting Ready is three facilitated conversations of two hours, which will usually take place in your church. The aim is to establish a sound foundation for the next three years and to help you grow and flourish as individuals, a team and a parish as you move into Focal Ministry.

Getting Ready is for the prospective members of the Focal Ministry team and others with a leadership role in your parish and congregation. This includes the Oversight Minister and where possible some PCC members, Church Wardens and any other authorised ministers in the parish.

The facilitated conversations are learner-centred and tailored around you and your context. They are relaxed and discussion based.

One: Working Together

This conversation explores teamwork and collaborative ministry. It offers the opportunity to think through together how the different people, roles and responsibilities will work out in practice in your context.

Two: Rooted in God

This conversation is about caring for yourself and each other and remaining rooted in God. It looks at growth, development, and learning and keeping a healthy balance and rhythm of life whilst carrying a role of responsibility in the parish.

Three: Flourishing and Growing

This final conversation is about the role of the Focal Minister in nurturing their parish and congregation as they journey with God. It looks at how the Focal Ministers might enable others in the ministry and mission of the church. It also considers what new opportunities for ministry and mission in the wider parish Focal Ministry might open up.

As part of Getting Ready the Focal Minister(s) and their Oversight Minister will complete a Ministry Agreement to help everyone to be clear about roles and expectations. This includes what sort of ministry and how much time Focal Ministers are offering, as well as how legitimate expenses might be claimed.

Ongoing Focal Ministry

A key person is your Oversight Minister who will encourage and equip Focal Ministers in their role. As part of this they should have regular review meetings where the Focal Minister and Oversight Minister look together at what has gone well and not so well. There are also more formal reviews where Focal Ministers have the opportunity to consider what equipping and learning they might need/want. This could be to help their Focal Ministry, or their own development.

Three important sources of learning Focal Ministers can access are:

- Regular Learning and Retreat days
- Resources (both digital and print)
- Focal Ministry weekly blog

Through these different sources of learning we hope that Focal Ministers are able to flourish and grow.

<https://sheffdio.org/focal-ministry>

