

Anglican Connections

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE RIDLEY COMMUNITY / MISSION & MINISTRY COLLEGE

Issue No.

158

SUMMER 2018

Preparing for Anglican Ministry

Anthea McCall looks at what is required of an Anglican minister, and the role of the Ridley Anglican Institute in preparing candidates for ministry.

ANGLICAN MINISTRY

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Recently I received a phone call from a graduate of our Ridley Online program. She is on the Parish Council of her church in a large country town in northern New South Wales.

'Our curate is moving on', she began, 'and we are looking for a replacement. Have you got anyone who might want to come to join a thriving ministry with us for the next two to three years?'

Richard Trist, Dean of the Anglican Institute, and I get these requests from Anglican churches quite regularly. One of the reasons is that the need for good Anglican ministers is great, and so are the opportunities. The other reason is that Ridley has a reputation for providing a high quality Anglican ministry formation program, producing missionally focused evangelical Anglican leaders for parishes, chaplaincies, theological colleges, and dioceses across Australia.

But we can only send curates to churches if churches are identifying the next generation of

ministers in their midst and sending them to us! This is a challenge as the task of ordained ministry today is complex and demanding. Consider this list of responses to the question: 'What do we want our Anglican minister to be like?'

- **Skilled in teaching and preaching the Bible**
Confident in the gospel as 'the power of God for salvation'.
- **Effective in leadership**
Able to build teams and set a creative vision for congregations and chaplaincy ministries.
- **Gifted in leading public worship**
Have an understanding of the role of liturgy in both formal and informal contexts.
- **Mission minded**
Able to create an evangelistic culture in traditional Anglican contexts as well as in fresh expressions of church and church plants.
- **Spiritually disciplined**
Living a life of holiness forged through daily prayer and Bible reading.
- **Strong in interpersonal skills**
Self-aware and able to develop healthy relationships with others.

Who is equal to this task?! No one! It requires God's gifting and enabling, a strong faith, good training, and the encouragement and support of others.

With so much demanded of ordained ministers today, the Anglican Institute at Ridley is designed to raise up and equip future leaders for the Anglican Church. The work of the Institute is focussed mainly on campus students who are candidates or aspirants for ordination in the Diocese of Melbourne, though we also have Defence Force candidates, and candidates from other Dioceses.

In addition to the rigorous program of teaching in Bible, theology and ministry practice, all Anglican Institute students participate in a weekly 'in the field' placement. We gather every Monday for a program of activities and discussions along with regular opportunities to hear from guest speakers who are skilled Anglican practitioners in a variety of ministries. This program is an important time to develop friendships and support networks that will provide a support base for a lifetime of ministry. It also provides a space to work on character and competency for effective mission and ministry in the contemporary church.

The task of Anglican ministry IS challenging. From time to time I find it personally helpful to remind myself of my own tasks and motivations for ordained ministry. These were encapsulated for me very simply in a brief note given to me at my ordination by my then vicar and boss:

'Dear Anthea, Congratulations on your ordination. It is such a great decision! Your love for teaching the Bible, your love for Jesus, and your care of his people are very evident. May God continue to bless your ministry.'

— From Rev Paul and Mrs Michelle Perini, St Hilary's Anglican Church, Kew February, 2002

When it comes down to it, this is really the core of what we want for all our Ridley students, but especially for those who desire the noble task of deacon and priest. 1 Timothy 3:1-13.

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The 5 'P' Motion

Brian Rosner writes about the motion he put forward at this year's **Melbourne Anglican Synod**.



Anglican Institute Snapshot

120

120 Ridley Students have been **ordained** since the Anglican Institute commenced in 2009.

75%

Approximately **75% are serving in church based ministries** (including 10 in new church plants) and **25% are serving** in chaplaincy, theological education, and overseas missionary work.

1/4

Women make up a quarter of **Ridley graduates** being ordained, and the number is growing.



Check the Ridley website for upcoming events www.ridley.edu.au/events or join our events mailing list: j.daw@ridley.edu.au

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FROM THE PRINCIPAL

One of the aims of Ridley College is to supply well-trained gospel workers for the Anglican Church in Melbourne and around Australia. We take this responsibility very seriously and value our partnership with a number of dioceses around the country.

It's not that all of Ridley's students attend Anglican churches. In fact, meeting students over morning tea or lunch reminds me of Forrest Gump's famous line, 'Life is like a box of chocolates; you never know what you're gonna get'. The students come from a wide range of backgrounds and denominations! Without doubt this enriches College life and means that our influence, by God's grace goes far and wide. So it by no means is the whole story, but contributing to the Anglican Church is a big part of what Ridley seeks to do.

Speaking personally, I've been attending Anglican churches for almost twenty years and was ordained in 2012. The Anglican Church is far from perfect. But I love the Bible-soaked and gospel-proclaiming liturgy, the inspiring examples of Anglican church leaders, some of whom, like Nicholas Ridley, paid the ultimate price for their faith, and the shared responsibility and accountability that partnering with other churches brings.



It is therefore likely that as many as two-thirds of our clergy will retire in the next 10 to 15 years.

On that last score, the Synod of the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne took place a few weeks ago. While it's generally a pretty dry affair, the rigour of proper governance is worth the effort and underscores the seriousness of stewarding the church's resources for faithful ministry.

It was my seventh Synod, but the first in which I put a motion forward. Not surprisingly, my motion related to the relationship between the Diocese and Ridley College. Specifically, I urged those present to note the pressing need for well-trained ordained leaders. In 2015 over 62% of clergy in the Melbourne Diocese were over 50 years of age. It is therefore likely that as many as two-thirds of our clergy will retire in the next 10 to 15 years.

My speech was late on the Thursday evening. So to keep things lively I arranged the five points of my motion around the letter, 'P'. Here's a summary:

- **First**, if we believe that the Lord Jesus Christ is the light and hope of the world and that the gospel is the power of God unto salvation then we should **pray** to 'the Lord of the harvest to send out workers in the harvest field' (Matthew. 9:38).
- **Second**, given that the encouragement of others is an essential step in anyone's calling, we should **pinpoint** prospective 'workers' to discern a possible vocation to ordained ministry.
- **Third**, we should **promote** within parishes Diocesan Vocation Days and other events that inspire people to consider gospel ministry.
- **Fourth**, we should **press** suitable men and women to commence theological study to equip themselves for effective service in the church and in the world.
- **And fifth**, we should consider **paying** something to assist students undertaking such study, given the financial sacrifices that this often entails.

Perhaps there is something in these five 'P's that you yourself might consider doing to aid the cause of the gospel and the health of the church through Ridley College.

Partnering with the Tasmanian Diocese

Bishop Richard Condie and Director of Ministry Development, **Stephen Carnaby**, from the Anglican Diocese of Tasmania write about Ridley's collaboration with the Diocese.



INTERSTATE ANGLICAN PARTNERSHIP

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Ridley College has had a strong connection to the Diocese of Tasmania for decades, with many ordinands from Tasmania training at Ridley, and a good two-way flow of church leaders between Melbourne and Tasmania.

Since the Ridley Certificate was developed, there has also been widespread use of this great training resource by individuals and groups in Tasmanian Anglican churches.

The partnership took a big leap forward in 2018 with the launch of the Tasmanian Ridley Cohort. In the second half of 2017 discussions began around a supportive group for Tasmanians studying online at Ridley at degree level. Speculatively we thought, 'Wouldn't it be great if we could find 10 Tasmanians in local Anglican churches who were studying online at Ridley.'

Fast forward to February 2018, and the first meeting of the Tasmanian cohort with Richard Trist by which time the group had grown beyond all expectations to 29 students, coordinated by former Ridley staff member and Tasmanian rector, Bill Stewart! The cohort

has had further visits in 2018 from Ridley faculty Lindsay Wilson, Graham Stanton and Andrew Malone. Each weekend visit has included time with the Ridley cohort, and then a wider public Bible forum for Anglicans in different regions of Tasmania.

The cohort has generated plenty of enthusiasm and conversation around the possibility of theological study, for which Tasmanians previously had to have to move interstate. Leigh shared, 'I have greatly appreciated the learning outcomes of studying through Ridley Online. Having the opportunity to study remotely in a structured, but relatively flexible way has allowed me to balance existing church, family and work commitments along with furthering my biblical understanding. It has been particularly helpful to look at the big picture of the Bible in its cultural and historical setting.'

Anita has been studying online with Ridley on and off since 2011. For her the cohort provides great opportunities to meet and encourage fellow students from different churches around

the state. 'The first introductory day was excellent, I learnt more about essay writing and exegesis that day than ever before! I appreciated the visits from the Ridley lecturers. It helped me feel more connected with Ridley and gave me an opportunity to find out more about some of the units and ask questions about the course and the online aspects of studying,' said Anita.

There are already other Anglicans looking at joining the cohort in 2019. Some cohort members may end up in ordained or other paid ministry roles, but many will continue in their current lay ministries in local churches, having grown and been trained to better serve Jesus.

In addition to the new Tasmanian Ridley Cohort 2018 has also seen a step forward in youth and children's ministry connections. Nine new Youth Trainees began work in the Diocese in 2018, mostly in parishes. As a part of their training some travelled to Melbourne in February for the first Youth Ministry intensive on Ridley campus. This was followed up with a visit by Graham Stanton in April to lead the second two days of the intensive with the trainees in Hobart. The trainees had a wonderful time and learnt a great deal from Graham.

Graham also ran a public seminar for Anglican children's ministry volunteers in Hobart during that visit, with 40 people attending (plus an enthusiastic group video-linking in from Smithton in the far north-west of the State). Graham is already planning a return trip in 2019.

The Diocese of Tasmania is very grateful for the partnership with Ridley College in training men and women to serve Jesus in Tasmania. We look forward to this partnership continuing to grow and support our vision of being a church for Tasmania, making disciples of Jesus.



Owning My Call

Viv Dias is currently studying a MMin at Ridley College, and preparing for ordained ministry.



ANGLICAN INSTITUTE STUDENT

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When I first sensed a call to ordained ministry, I was a minister's wife with two year old twin boys. The pathway to ordination seemed long, complex and daunting. I would need to complete the Year of Discernment, much more study, placements, the selection process and participate in the Anglican Institute at Ridley. Five and a half years have now passed, and I have just one more year ahead of me before completing all the requirements for ordination.

Throughout this journey I have been blessed with the encouragement and inspiration of ordained ministers, mentors, family and friends. This year, my participation in the Ridley Anglican Institute has added to this network of support, providing a community of peers who are in it with me, sharing the journey.

I must confess that before I joined the Anglican Institute this year, I was slightly unsure about how I would 'fit' with the other people preparing for ordained ministry. Being a woman, there was definitely the question of how male dominated the program would be. Would it be intimidating? Would I find friends? I quickly discovered that I was among equals. There were women, men, singles, marrieds, parents and people who have completed careers in other fields, all with different cultural backgrounds and life experiences, and all sharing a passion for Jesus and his kingdom.

As I got to know people, and as I began to experience the mutual inspiration and edification among my peers, I soon realised that I had a valid and legitimate place in this community. Even seeing myself in robes before leading our

Chapel service was a moment of affirmation—'this is me!' And it's not about 'Look out coz here I come...!' (although I love *The Greatest Showman*). Rather it's about my growing ownership of my call to ordination. Where once I hardly dared to imagine I could be worthy of such a call, I now know I have a valid and legitimate place as a woman and a mother called to ordained ministry. I don't have to prove myself, or prove my giftings. I just have to be myself assured as the person God has made me to be and of my place in his church.

Romans 12:1-3 says, '...in view of God's mercy... offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.' Ultimately, our place, whether in ordained ministry or not, is found in worship, worship that transforms us so that we can test, discern and approve God's perfect will, and worship that reveals our true selves. The Anglican Institute is exactly this—a worshipping community of peers spurring each other on as we seek to lay down our lives, and test our callings. It is in the midst of this that we find them being made perfect.

Prepared to Make Christ Known



Reverend **Patrick Senn**, is Assistant Curate at Banyule Anglican Church and graduated with a BTh from Ridley College in 2018. Here he reflects on three ways Ridley's Anglican Institute prepared him for ordained ministry.

ANGLICAN INSTITUTE GRADUATE

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The Anglican Institute is a fantastic aid for those considering ordained ministry. It helped me to develop character, to use and appreciate liturgy, and to navigate the Diocese.

Character / Gregory of Nyssa said 'Any theory presented without a living example ... is like an unbreathing statue.' Until we see someone live out a life of holiness, the idea of holiness will remain abstract, cold, distant and un compelling. As I reflect upon my time in the Anglican Institute, I am grateful that I was provided with plenty of models and 'living examples' of the things that are important in ministry. Richard Trist, Anthea McCall, and the other facilitators who make the Anglican Institute happen (whether in chapel or through the Life and Ministry Groups) are living examples of what lives shaped by the good news of Jesus and called to serve in ordained ministry look like. Throughout my time at Ridley, their presence and input shaped and prepared me for

ministry in significant ways. They offered me living examples of what the Ordinal calls us to become. Now that I am in ministry myself, I often think back to what was modelled to me in the Anglican Institute, and try to emulate it.

Liturgy / I am grateful that the Anglican Institute has helped own and become comfortable with the liturgy of our church. As I work in parish ministry, not a week passes when I do not open our prayer book. I did not grow up attending a liturgical church so this was something new to me. At first it was strange using a book in a worship gathering. But the Anglican Institute has helped me adopt the 'key' of the prayer book, and to worship and pray in its 'tone'. As a result, I have learnt to value and appreciate our church's liturgy, and to regard it as a blessing to worship, rather than as a hindrance. Leading worship at my new church was not a curveball experience, but rather was something I could quickly and comfortably do, thanks to the Anglican Institute.

Navigation / I am thankful to the Anglican Institute for exposing me to the wider Diocese of Melbourne. Studying at Ridley can become a bubble experience. Most of our time is spent either on campus or in our churches so we can forget that there is a whole diocese to which we are called. For me commencing the ordination discernment process was a daunting experience, but the Anglican Institute provided me with plenty of support and encouragement along the way. Deaneries, Synod, and administration related to the Diocesan office can be overwhelming, but the Anglican Institute regularly featured guest speakers and plenary sessions on the kind of challenges to expect in relation to these commitments. This input has been a tremendous help to me so far.

I am certain that the Anglican Institute made my transition into ministry much easier than it would have been without it. I will carry the Anglican Institute's contributions with me far into the future as I seek to make Christ known.