



Throughout the country, over ten thousand chaplains serve in our schools and colleges, hospitals and hospices, prisons, armed forces and police, courts and places of work and leisure. Every day, they are living and sharing the story of God's love and offering unconditional spiritual care to all with sensitivity, generosity and grace.

Chaplains listen to and accompany everyone, whatever their age, profession or status. They offer pastoral, spiritual and religious care to people of all beliefs, spiritualities and cultures. Chaplains seek to be both distinctive in their beliefs and practice and inclusive of everyone. Chaplains come from all faiths and beliefs and from all Christian denominations; and they serve within a huge range of organisations, many of which are beyond the church. Chaplaincy is a network rather than an organisation. The Church of England is a valuable part of that network.

Chaplains are part of the organisations and communities they serve, living within the culture, context, policy and practice. They are embedded, or perhaps incarnate. They are also guest in almost every conversation, in that no one has to engage with a chaplain. Yet because chaplains are present with the 95% who will not regularly visit a place of worship, many people do encounter them and journey with chaplaincy as they explore questions of life and faith.

Chaplaincy is at the heart of the vision and strategy for the Church of England.

Chaplaincy is beautiful.

Chaplaincy is lay and ordained working together in teams, which is an inspiration. We hope that we might be a church where every baptised person understands the part they have to play in God's great mission of love for the world. I see that lived out in chaplaincy in so many contexts.

Chaplaincy is ecumenical, pointing to the church which God longs for us to be. Chaplaincy models some of the very best interfaith relationships.

There is a generous inclusivity in chaplaincy.

Stephen Cottrell

Archbishop of York

Feeling called to become a Chaplain?

God calls the whole church into ministry, both lay and ordained, and some people will be called to chaplaincy. In many chaplaincy contexts, ordained and lay chaplains work alongside one another to offer pastoral and spiritual care.

There are many training pathways to become a chaplain. Training can be offered through your local diocese, sectors (e.g. workplaces, hospitals, prisons), or Theological Education Institutes and universities including [St Padarn's Institute](#), [Waverley Abbey College](#) and [Birmingham Newman University](#). If you believe that you are called explore chaplaincy, speak with your local vicar or chaplain, and with your diocese, to find out what pathways are available.

For ordained chaplains in the Church of England, selection and formation for ordination will need to be undertaken. Selection for ordination training is unlike any normal recruitment process. It is best seen as a time of discernment. As such, it is more like a journey or pilgrimage than an examination.

You may find it possible to begin working as a chaplain before exploring a call to ordained ministry. You may already be an established chaplain, as a lay person, or you may wish to undertake ordination training and then seek a role as a chaplain in the future. Whatever the situation, your starting point is to meet with your own vicar or chaplain, to talk with them about your sense of calling. You should also arrange to [meet with the vocations team in your diocese](#) or [see your diocesan website](#) for the relevant contact details. If you don't know which diocese your church is in, you can find out on [A Church Near You](#).

Sectors of Chaplaincy

Chaplains operate in an ever-greater field of contexts and communities from schools and hospitals, to shopping centres and festivals. With the proper training, planning, and imagination chaplaincy can happen almost anywhere. There are some well-established areas in which chaplains have been serving for a long time.

Learn more about the [types of Chaplaincy and opportunities available](#).

More information

- [Developing Chaplaincy in the Church of England](#) (Diocese of Bath and Wells)
- [The Chaplaincy Chain Podcast](#), where conversation links the depths and breadths of chaplaincy

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