



Calling Far and Wide Project: Assistant Ministers

Interviews

May 2016

Prepared by Dr Keely Jo Frasca, School of Management and Business, King's College London



Executive Summary

1. Assistant Ministers serve alongside other licensed ministers. Those interviewed reported to work as self-supporting ministers. Central to their calling is to serve God; however, the nature of their work is multidimensional and can include pastoral work, building relationships with different communities, supporting organisations, and leading services. In the years following ordination, the interviews revealed that for many ministers, their calling had matured and they have become more comfortable in their ministry work, particularly with regards to day-to-day decision-making.
2. The extent to which Assistant Ministers have autonomy over their daily/weekly activities varied across those interviewed. While certain duties (particularly Sunday services, funerals, and pastoral work) were reported to occur at set times and/or at short notice, the ministers who had positive working relationships with the rector claimed to have a fairly good level of control over the other activities they engage in. Conversely, those who find their rector/incumbent difficult to communicate with reported having less control. There was consensus across the ministers insofar as them prioritising work based on needs and requirements, as opposed to their choice of activities being driven by personal preference.
3. Engaging in spiritual, pastoral, and relationship development activities, as well as leading services (e.g., weddings, baptisms) were reported as particularly satisfying. To a lesser degree, receiving external positive feedback was reported as rewarding.
4. Time constraints, large amounts of “bureaucratic” administration, and church/building maintenance were commonly reported as pressurising aspects of the ministers’ work. A smaller proportion of those interviewed also highlighted difficulties of working with incumbents whom they find challenging to liaise with.
5. Largely, the ministers felt as though they were fulfilling their calling. Engaging in activities that enable them to enhance others’ faith and building bridges with those new to the church (e.g., newly married couples who previously did not attend church), in addition to teaching and pastoral work, were highlighted as pertinent activities contributing to feelings of fulfilment. Enacting their calling outside of church (e.g., with family and in voluntary roles for food banks and for the ambulance service) was also reported as fulfilling. Feelings of frustration and numbness were said to occur when not partaking in such activities important to their calling.
6. Assistant ministers generally feel confident in their calling, with scarce examples of major crises. Albeit some ministers discussed periods when their strength of calling was weaker; these occurred during times when they re-question their vocation and converse with others who hold different religious beliefs.
7. The ministers provided quantitative and qualitative descriptions of role effectiveness. Effectiveness can be measured by the rise/fall in congregation members, albeit faith development and community outreach success are also important indicators.
8. The majority of the ministers claimed to have a positive work-life balance; this is aided by effective forward planning and remaining disciplined in taking time out for rest and recreation. However, some reported making sacrifices (namely financial and missing out on other opportunities) to fulfil their calling as a self-supporting minister.

Introduction

1.1 Background to the Study

The research presented in this report addresses the aim of understanding the experiences of priests who work alongside other licensed ministers. In working towards this objective, 12 interviews were conducted with Assistant Ministers throughout October 2016. The questions within the interview focused upon their calling, with regards to its initial occurrence, enactment, development over time, and crises. The interviews explored which elements of their work ministers find most gratifying, the elements that they find most challenging, and the overall issue of 'effectiveness' in their role. In addition, questions were asked which explored the work-life balance of Assistant Ministers. This report outlines a number of recommendations for the Church of England, based on suggestions received from the ministers about their role.

1.2 Research Questions

The following research questions were addressed in this study:

1. How do Assistant Ministers reflect upon their calling?
2. How do Assistant Ministers enact their calling and what influences their choice of daily/weekly activities?
3. What aspects of their calling do Assistant Ministers find most satisfying?
4. What aspects of their calling do Assistant Ministers find most pressurising and challenging?
5. To what extent do Assistant Ministers feel that they are fulfilling their calling?
6. How do Assistant Ministers consider 'effectiveness' within their role?
7. In what ways do Assistant Ministers believe the Church of England could support them to be more effective?
8. How does the work and non-work (for example, family) aspects of Assistant Ministers' lives impact one another?

1.3 Methodology

This study adopted a qualitative method to address the above research questions, whereby a sample of Assistant Ministers were recruited and interviewed on a one-to-one basis. The recruitment process involved contacting Assistant Ministers who had previously completed an online survey as part of the 'Calling Far & Wide: Ministry on the Edge' research project and had expressed an interest in partaking in a follow-up interview.

The final sample of interviewees comprised of 12 Assistant Ministers (six males, six females), aged between 46 and 72. The ministers were recruited from a mix of urban and rural locations across England (Blackburn, Chelmsford, Derby, Durham, Ely, Exeter, Hereford, Leeds, London, Oxford, and Winchester). All bar one of the Assistant Ministers were married and had children.

The full sample of Assistant Ministers reported to work as a member of team ministry or assist another licensed minister(s), and all reported to work as self-supporting ministers. The length of service, from the date of ordination to present, ranged from five to 28 years; the average was ten years. Prior to ordination, the ministers worked in an array of roles, including acting, healthcare/clinical (i.e., as a dietician, dentist, therapist, child health practitioner), teaching, voluntary roles within the public sector, investment management, military, management roles for local authorities, and information technology. Some of the ministers interviewed in this study have continued to work in these non-ministry posts alongside their ministry service. The number of hours worked during a typical week by the Assistant Ministers interviewed range from five to 50 hours; the average is 24.5 hours. The majority of these ministers claimed that the amount of work carried out often varies substantially on a weekly basis. Moreover, a number of Assistant Ministers claimed that there is often a big difference between what they are supposed to do (i.e., part-time hours) and what they actually do (i.e., more comparable to full-time hours).

All interviews were conducted via telephone using a semi-structured interview protocol; these questions are presented in Appendix I. The interviews lasted on average 50 minutes and were recorded for use in the write-up of this report.

Study Findings

2.1 How do Assistant Ministers reflect upon their calling?

The experiences of the Assistant Ministers interviewed varied with regards to when they initially had a calling. For some, this was as early as their childhood and teenage years, whereas for others this occurred just two years before embarking on the formal training toward ordination. Whether the source of their calling was external or internal also varied across the sample. A commonly reported external source concerned being approached, or prompted by, a Parish Priest or by other family members (spouses or parents/grandparents who were already ordained) to consider ordination. Internal sources reported include the intrinsic interest in engaging in Theology training, the desire to explore a different life path at the time of retirement from secular employment, and internal visions and callings from Christ himself during communions and church services. Some of the ministers interviewed reflected upon barriers that prevented them from formally acting upon their calling (at the time of its first occurrence), namely those that prevented women from becoming ordained (at that time, or in their current country) and a perception that the church was “*not willing to talk to teenagers who had no career experience*”.

With regards to the nature of their calling, it was commonly reported that the Assistant Ministers felt called to serve God and to live out their vocation. Moreover, all of the ministers interviewed discussed multiple dimensions/aspects of their calling. These include: supporting the incumbent of the Church and/or other clergy members; pastoral/counselling work; outreach roles and building relationships (i.e., with schools/children, the elderly, families, youth groups, the general community); teaching; preaching; preparing and leading services and sermons; helping organisations with planning and strategic tasks; advocacy (i.e., “*speaking up for people*” and “*seeking justice*”). It was highlighted throughout the interviews that such dimensions are not distinct elements of the role. For instance, one minister reported: “*I don’t categorise my work in those kinds of frames; they are very interrelated.*” Moreover, another Assistant Minister claimed that their calling is: “*Not just about what you do, but who you are, and that for me applies throughout all those things [the different dimensions]*”.

Many of the Assistant Ministers interviewed claimed that their calling had “matured” over time since ordination, and that they felt “qualified” and more at ease in their role. For example, one minister reported:

“In some ways I have become more comfortable with it... When I was training, my tutor said to me ‘you need to develop a different authority from the authority of a Spiritual Director’; I thought ‘I do not have a clue what you are talking about’. Then all of a sudden [some time post-ordination], one time just before a service, somebody came up to me and asked ‘do you want to do it like this or that?’ and I instantly said ‘like that’. I suddenly thought ‘I do know what I want and I realised what she meant’... I have become firmer in my decision making.”

Further to this, it was reported by one minister that their calling changes over time in response to new/different contexts:

“Every new post that you have, you need to kind of re-orientate the emphasis of the priority of what you are doing... You remain what your call is and who your basic ontological person is, that’s been changed by your own personal relationship with God, but you adapt... especially in terms of decision making.”

It is also important to highlight that not all Assistant Ministers feel this degree of comfort in their role post-ordination; one minister described undergoing a period of uncertainty and exploration:

“When I was going through my calling, I did always feel I was being called towards being a vicar or in primary leadership, and that’s what I was sponsored for and what I was always aiming towards... And then I was a vicar in my own right, but I now find myself no longer in that position. So I would say even now, at the moment, I am still trying to work out where that vocation is different, sort of the working out of it... one time I seemed to feel that that was where I should be – in primary leadership, yet now it is not where I find myself, in a non-stipendiary role.”

2.2 How do Assistant Ministers enact their calling and what influences their choice of daily/weekly activities?

How the Assistant Ministers typically divide up a typical working week into different activities varied across the sample. Whilst particular team meetings, services and sermons take place at set times each week (e.g., each Sunday), other activities were said to vary; it was common for these other activities to differ on a day-to-day and week-to-week basis across those interviewed. Moreover, some of the ministers interviewed were working their ministry roles flexibly around other commitments such as their stipendiary (non-ministry) jobs and caring for relatives.

There was also variation with regards to the degree of control the ministers claimed to have over their daily and weekly activities. For those who have high autonomy over their diaries, this was often attributed to also having positive working relationships with their incumbent and other colleagues (i.e., other Assistant Ministers). One of the ministers made reference to the fact he is “very fortunate [in terms of being able to work ministry roles around other work in a flexible manner]...my employer understands that I am a non-stipendiary, self-supporting minister”.

To the contrary, other ministers reported having limited control and made references to incumbents/rectors who simply delegate responsibilities to the Assistant Ministers and can be difficult to liaise with.

Particular activities that the Assistant Ministers interviewed claimed to have little control over include funerals and pastoral duties, which are delegated to them and/or occur at short notice.

When asked what influences their choice of daily activities, personal preference was not reported as a typically influential factor across any of the ministers interviewed; rather, the ministers reported that their work usually involves responding to needs and requirements. One minister provided the following account in response to this question:

“It’s often not personal preference...it tends to be what I am asked to do rather than something that I am wanting to do. So yes, I would probably say that most of the things I do are activities that I am asked to be involved in [e.g., group/school work]... I am doing it mainly because the ladies that were doing it were no longer able to do it. So it’s still a process where I am still looking for somebody who might do it instead of me, which would then mean that I could do something else.”

2.3 What aspects of their calling do Assistant Ministers find most satisfying?

Responding to their sense of vocation and calling to serve God was reported among some of the Assistant Ministers interviewed as most satisfying. For instance, one minister explained:

“There are two things. One is a sense of doing God’s work – being part of what he is about, and then when there is a sense that I am accepted and appreciated in the roles that I do.”

More specific aspects, or activities, reported across the ministers include: serving people in religious settings; telling bible stories to young children; seeing people come to faith and develop/grow in faith; relationship development; administering services, weddings, funerals, holy communions, baptisms; and preaching.

Furthermore, some of the ministers discussed their pastoral work as being highly satisfying. That is, feeling a sense of “*being of help to people*” in need and assisting others “*come to resolution*” (for instance, being part of the process where they make “*good choices*” and “*come free from bad relationships and addictions*”).

Receiving extrinsic feedback was another aspect that derives gratification among some of the ministers interviewed. For instance, being informed that their service/sermon was enjoyable or witnessing a lively congregation; being told that they have been a source of comfort during difficult times (e.g., bereavement); and receiving thanks and praise in response to their work.

2.4 What aspects of their calling do Assistant Ministers find most pressurising and challenging?

The majority of the Assistant Ministers interviewed claimed that time constraints were a particularly challenging aspect of their calling. One minister reported the concern of “*being able to give enough time to each activity to make sure each is done well*”. This same minister also explained that the expectations of others (namely the incumbent and stipendiary priests) can sometimes be unrealistic, and that this is an issue closely related to the time pressures. Another minister explained that time management is mainly a problem due to “*not having clear boundaries*”, a point echoed by a number of others interviewed. To elaborate, this minister claimed that working as a non-stipendiary minister does allow for some flexibility, which is indeed valued; however, these lack of boundaries “*make it harder to say no*”.

A second common issue in this respect concerned the large amount of administrative input required of the ministers. It was acknowledged that whilst some administrative work is helpful and useful, there is also a substantial degree of bureaucratic administrative work that is considered “*unnecessary*” and leaves one feeling “*tied to the desk*”.

A third source of pressure reported among many of the Assistant Ministers interviewed pertained to practical issues, particularly relating to church/building maintenance and management. For example, one minister provided the following account:

“The challenges come from finance and buildings - dealing with the burden of maintaining a difficult building and that’s hard across most of the churches. So that’s tough... There are two sets of issues that are causing particular strain at the moment for us: [1] the actual building and the repairs it needs, and how we deal with that and funding that; [2] and then we have also got a problem around here because of homelessness and rough sleepers and people around the church – that is very tricky for us and for all of our neighbouring churches, and handling that correctly is very, very difficult.”

A fourth challenge, or element of frustration reported by a number of the ministers interviewed related to the incumbent/rector and bishop. One Assistant Minister discussed the pressure of working with a “difficult” incumbent. Another two ministers reported problems pertaining to having to take a step back from primary leadership and obey the rector (even when in disagreement over certain decisions). A fourth minister highlighted a lack of recognition offered to those who offer a great deal to the church:

“I see people who are incredibly talented and incredibly gifted, and who have proved that in their practical work and who are not recognised. I’m not even talking about myself, but people I know who have done extraordinary work, and there is just an unconscious bias of the church, depending on the Bishop... I find that most frustrating.”

2.5 To what extent do Assistant Ministers feel that they are fulfilling their calling?

All of the ministers interviewed, with the exception of one, claimed that felt they were fulfilling their calling as a priest. Particular activities highlighted as being pertinent in fulfilling their calling include: teaching; pastoring; prayer; leading good worship; working with children; being involved in the processes that enhances/develops others’ faith; relating to people who would not otherwise come to church (until marriage/baptisms); working on the “business side” of church and thus can see it as a “broader unity”.

Such activities were reported as eliciting feelings of fulfilment, happiness, and satisfaction. One minister explained that when engaging in fulfilling work, “it all seems joined up in the sky... When that happens, it is just wonderful”. Another minister described “feeling privileged”.

The ministers were asked how they feel during times when they are not partaking in activities that contribute to the feeling that they are fulfilling their calling. A large number of the ministers interviewed expressed general feelings of frustration and numbness. Other responses were more specific and varied across those interviewed. One minister said that in such circumstances he often views himself as the problem:

“It could be the tiniest little thing...It could be as simple as getting the wrong reading from which you are going to preach and that affects me very badly, because the way I have been taught, and what we try to do and what we are after, if I can put it in this phrase, is ‘spiritual excellence’... If I get that wrong, it does affect me very badly. It doesn’t happen often, but when it does, it can take me 2-3 days to get over it.”

Another minister described the feeling of “missing out on” activities considered important to their calling, such as visiting the elderly (due to time constraints). However, another Assistant Minister claimed that when not engaging in such tasks it enables him to “get some rest, which is nice”.

When asked whether they had ever experienced a crisis in their calling, just one of the ministers claimed to experience this regularly. This particular priest expressed doubting the existence of God and “wonders if it

makes sense”; such feelings were highlighted as more likely during periods when the minister had not taken a service for a while.

The other ministers interviewed claimed that they had not experienced any major crises; however, some reflected upon periods when they experienced no strong sense of calling. For instance, some Assistant Ministers discussed that there are times where you re-question or re-work your vocation and “*where you want to be*”; one sometimes asks himself the following question: “*Have you got the right person here? [to serve God and carry out his work]*”. Another minister discussed that such circumstances occur when interacting with others whose religious views oppose hers, specifically when “*up against people who have no sense of God*”. A third of the sample firmly claimed that they never experience periods where they have no strong sense of calling (or not since becoming ordained); they always feel called and have no self-doubt with regards to their vocation.

The majority of the Assistant Ministers interviewed stated that they would talk with their spiritual leader if they felt they were not fulfilling their calling as a priest. In addition, some of the ministers claimed that they would: spend more time in prayer; take more services; read the Bible; and listen to music, in the hope that such activities would help them “*make sense*” of the situation. Four of the ministers explained that they would perhaps consider becoming inactive if they felt they were no longer fulfilling their calling; two ministers highlighted that this was an advantage of working as a self-supporting minister, whereas the other two ministers discussed that they would have to withdraw from the role in the near future regardless, due to their age (i.e., they are near or already post retirement).

Besides enacting their calling within the church, all of the ministers in this study discussed satisfying ways in which they enact their calling (or experience other callings) elsewhere. The majority of those interviewed highlighted their calling and vocation to serve their family. Interacting with members of the community, either in a face-to-face setting (as they are recognised as a priest and are approached by known and unknown individuals), or via social media, was commonly highlighted as another means via which the ministers enact the calling.

Further to this, one of the ministers, who is also working in paid secular employment, claimed to view his profession as another form of calling. Similarly, two other ministers discussed their voluntary work (as a rapid/first responder for the ambulance service, and for schools and food banks) as a valuable means of enacting their calling outside of church.

2.6 How do Assistant Ministers consider ‘effectiveness’ within their role?

A combination of quantitative/measurable and more qualitative factors were discussed when Assistant Ministers were asked how they deem ‘effectiveness’ in their role. With regards to the former, some ministers highlighted that the number of people coming to faith/church, and also witnessing couples joining the congregation following a church wedding are indicative of effectiveness. In addition, some ministers use feedback on services as a measure of effectiveness.

With regards to the non-measurable elements (in a numerical sense), these pertained to faith development and community outreach. One minister provided the following account, which covered points that were echoed in similar forms by other Assistant Ministers interviewed:

“It is about how people deepen their faith and that is difficult to quantify. Also, it is about: is Jesus known in the community and are we having an affect on the community? So one of the things, as a church, that we have had an affect on is the local primary school – instead of a Halloween disco this year, they are having a light

party, because we have a light party and they were impressed with what we had done. So, it's seeing changes in things like that in the community; that's part of the effectiveness of ministry... It [effectiveness] is also how people feel about themselves. In our Parish we have two estates of people who are socially excluded... and so making those people know that they are of worth and valued – that is effectiveness, because we know everyone is valued in God's eyes."

One other minister provided a somewhat different account of 'effectiveness', drawing attention to his role specifically as an Assistant Minister and vicarious achievements:

"Inevitably I am supporting other ministers, so effectiveness is if what I do enables the mission of that church, that of the vicar/incumbent."

2.7 In what ways do Assistant Ministers believe the Church of England could support them to be more effective?

It was commonly reported throughout the interviews that Assistant Ministers, namely self-supporting ministers, are not recognised and that their needs are often not taken into consideration by the Church of England. In elaborating on this point, the ministers put forth a number of ways in which the Church could support them to be more effective.

Some ministers suggest the need for the Church to indicate value to people in financial ways. Furthermore, it was felt that if they were in receipt of payment, the Church would "take more notice [of them]" in times where they require support (i.e., in periods where they felt they were not fulfilling their calling as a minister and required support to overcome this difficulty).

Providing more opportunities for communication between self-supporting ministers and senior staff was also considered important by a third of those interviewed. As one minister describes:

"If a self-supporting minister has a change in their life, something like retirement or redundancy, or change in job, or moving house – personal circumstances – bereavement, for example, there should be an opportunity to talk to the Bishop... just to have somebody to pray with and to have a two-way conversation about what is going on and what are the implications for the ministry."

Training was also raised as an important issue by a number of the ministers interviewed. A number of aspects pertaining to training were discussed. Firstly, the form of training; it is felt that there needs to be more training and education "that open ways in which people come to faith". Secondly, the training that is offered needs to be advertised more effectively so that the ministers are aware of what is on offer to them; at present such information is difficult for some ministers to attain. In addition, it is felt that the Church needs to offer more flexibility in terms of when they expect self-supporting ministers to participate in compulsory training and conferences, as this currently requires some to take time away from their paid jobs or use part of their holiday quota.

Referring back to the challenges concerning the practical issues (such as building maintenance) and administrative pressures that were noted earlier in this report, some ministers suggest that the Church could provide more assistance and support in these respects so that they are not overburdened with these tasks.

2.8 How does the work and non-work (for example, family) aspects of Assistant Ministers' lives impact one another?

The ministers were asked whether they can ever 'switch off' their calling or its enactment. A third of the ministers interviewed firmly claimed that this was not possible; one described this as a "null question", and another discussed how one always remembers that they are "still a child of God/Priest [even when at home/away from work]" and that "this is a privilege...part of who I am".

Other Assistant Ministers explained that their calling is always there, but they are able to switch off its enactment; for example, when caring for elderly relatives or taking time out for rest and recreation.

The majority of the ministers claimed that their calling does not affect the rest of their life (for example, family) insofar as they balance their priorities and responsibilities. The general consensus across the sample was that they do not experience an imbalance between work and non-work aspects of their life if they engage in forward planning, prioritise responsibilities, and importantly ensure they take regular time off (i.e., at least one day a week and longer holidays at various points in the year to spend with family and friends). That is not to say imbalances never occur; some ministers reported that they are not always "as disciplined as they should be [in ensuring they do not always prioritise work over family]" and that it is a work in progress "to get this balance right". Some ministers explained that during periods of imbalance, they could turn to their spiritual director and the rector for support.

On the whole, the families of the Assistant Ministers interviewed were described as being "accepting" and "supportive". In some instances, the ministers claimed that their family occasionally make it difficult for them to fulfil their calling. This was reported to occur at times when family members believe that the minister is prioritising work before the family. Moreover, two ministers express the difficulties they face with family members and friends (and also members of the community) who do not hold the same religious views. As one minister described:

"It is painful sometimes when members of your family say they do not believe, but they do not reject you as a person and they respect what you do...Also, I think the way non-believing people perceive you...there is an automatic assumption of how I might think because I am a priest."

Many of the ministers interviewed claimed that they have made sacrifices for their career in the ministry, but feel these are "worth it". In particular, working unpaid and working in a role "that often has no boundaries"; these need to be created by the ministers themselves in order to maintain a sustainable work-life balance. Moreover, none of the ministers stated that they wish they had chosen a different life path; the only 'regret' expressed by a number of ministers (with regards to their vocation in the clergy) was that they wish they had embarked on the path to ordination much sooner.

Summary

The overarching aim of this study was to investigate, in their own words, the experiences of Assistant Ministers whom work in different locations and have served the ministry for varying lengths of time. The research identified a number of similarities across the sample with regards to them having a multidimensional calling, and particular activities that they engage in, which strengthens the feeling that they are fulfilling their calling. However, there was heterogeneity concerning levels of autonomy over daily/weekly tasks and what 'effectiveness' in their role means to the ministers. On the whole, the ministers expressed confidence in that they are fulfilling their calling, and had effective measures in place for ensuring they had a sound work-life balance. However, the ministers discussed an array of challenges within their role, including a need for greater recognition by the Church for their extensive and unpaid contributions. A number of suggestions were put forward concerning how the Church can support them to be more effective. These include the need for greater administrative and practical (building maintenance) support, wider and more accessible training, and opportunities for frequent interactions with senior members of the clergy during stressful periods.

APPENDIX I

Interview Schedule for Assistant Ministers Qualitative Study

1. You and your parish setting

- Briefly describe your career history. Did you have a job/jobs before you became a vicar? If so, what was it/were they?
- How old are you? Are you married? Do you have children? How long have you been ordained? How many hours do you work in an average week?

2. The nature of your calling

- Describe your calling in your own words – what aspects of it are there, what does it mean to you?
- Are there different dimensions/aspects of your calling? How do these different dimensions fit together?
- How did you first know that you had a calling? Would you say the source was internal or external?
- Has your calling changed while you have been a priest? If so, in what way and why do you think they have changed?

3. Enacting your calling

- How do you typically divide up a typical week into different activities?
- What control do you have over the activities that you engage in? To what extent are you able to plan your daily activities? If not, why not?
- What influences your choice of daily activities? What role does personal preference play in this choice?

- What are the greatest sources of satisfaction in your role? Examples
- What are the greatest sources of pressure in your role? The most challenging aspects? Examples?

4. Fulfilment of your calling

- Do you feel that you are fulfilling your calling as a priest? If so:
- What activities that you engage in as part of your daily work contribute to you feeling that you are fulfilling your calling?
- How does it feel when you do/don't engage in activities that contribute to you feeling that you are fulfilling your calling?
- Have you ever experienced a crisis in your calling? Why and how? What were the circumstances?
- Have you ever been through periods when you had no strong sense of calling? Why and how? What were the circumstances?
- What would you do if you felt you were not fulfilling your calling as a priest?
- Are there ways in which you enact your calling outside of church? Do you have other callings?

5. Commitments and Effectiveness

- What does 'effectiveness' in your role look like?
- Are there any ways that the Church of England can support you or help you be more effective?

6. The calling and the rest of your life

- Can you ever 'switch off' your calling or its enactment?
- How does your calling affect the rest of your life (e.g. family)?
- Does the rest of your life (e.g. family) ever make it hard for you to fulfil your calling?
- Do you ever experience an imbalance between work and the rest of your life? If so, what can you/do you do about it?
- Do you feel like you have had to make sacrifices for your career? Have you ever contemplated leaving this role?
- Do you ever wish you had chosen a different life path? If you could turn back the clock, would you still choose a life in the clergy again?