

# FOUNDATIONS IN MINISTRY

Formerly the Deepening Discipleship Project

## COURSE GUIDE

*Including Guidance  
for Mentors*

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*Sowerby*



The Foundations in Ministry course is for anyone exploring their call to ministry or simply wanting to get more involved in their local churches. The course includes face to face and online resourcing sessions to help you reflect on your development as a disciple of Christ and a minister in the church. Supported by an accompanied learning community and your local mentor you will grow in confidence in exercising your ministry in your local context or church setting.

This learning community is the first step for those who are interested in developing their ministry and would like to explore their calling to either authorised or licensed ministry. At the end of the course and on completion of your safeguarding training you will be eligible to become an Authorised Lay Minister (ALM). For those who feel a call to licensed ministry there will be additional support preparing for the relevant discernment process.

### **What can I expect?**

The course runs for 10 months and includes a mix of local gathered days and online sessions. See the course dates in this leaflet. You can expect an informal and relaxed learning environment that aims to build up the confidence of all participants and affirm them in their ministry development.

### **Are there written assignments?**

There are no formal academic assignments on this course as it is not accredited. There will be a variety of preparatory tasks each month which will help you to engage fully in the gathered and online sessions. There will be tasks set to assist you in reflecting on your own ministry and self development. Participants will keep a simple journal that will form part of their final learning portfolio.

### **How much will it cost?**

There is no cost to the participant for the course, however we hope that your PCC will support you in your formation journey. This may include:

- Providing an appropriate mentor - see the Guidance for Mentors section.
- Funding your travel to the gathered sessions.
- Providing you with a budget for your practical tasks.
- Providing you with access to IT and internet.
- Praying for you as you explore God's call on your life.

### **How do I apply?**

If you feel that this course may be suitable for you please do get in touch with the Lifelong Learning team via email [layministry@yorkdiocese.org](mailto:layministry@yorkdiocese.org) or download the application form from the Diocese of York website.





**Practical Ministry Experience**

The key focus of this course is supporting each individual in their unique ministry journey, enabling them to grow in confidence. Using reflective practice, we hope that you will be able to discover your strengths and find areas that you can develop. We encourage your context to be permission-giving and allow you to 'have a go'. This will hopefully give you the opportunity to explore what God is calling to you in a safe environment.



**Gathered Days**

The gathered days are designed to equip you with the tools you need in your ministry. There will be input from experienced tutors, practical group work, community worship and space for fellowship.

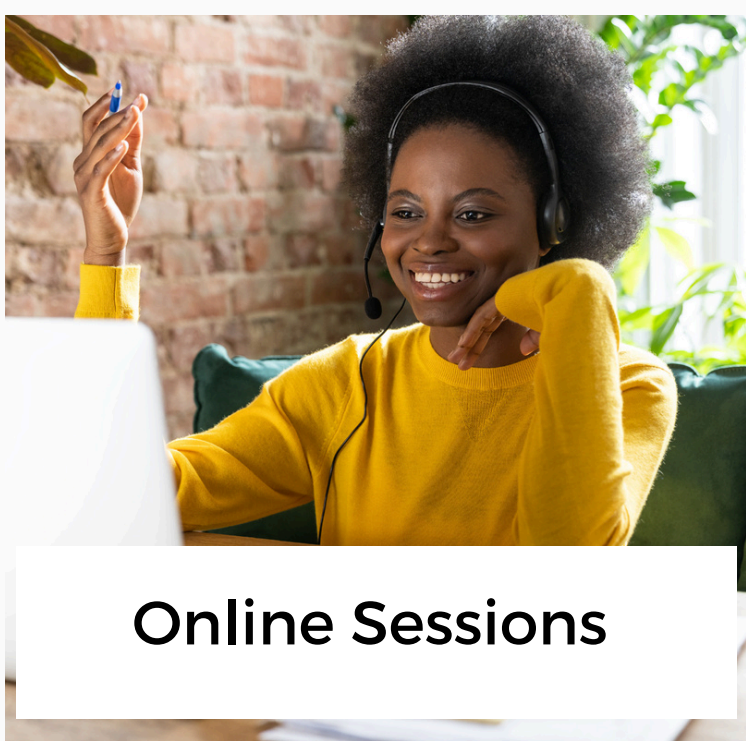
These days are based in different locations for different cohorts across the Diocese to ensure that we are offering local and accessible training.



**Mentor in Context**

Your mentor will be someone who has ministry experience, understands your own church context and holds a current license. They will walk alongside you and be a key part of your formation.

We can help you to identify a suitable mentor. Mentors will be resourced and equipped to support you in a meaningful and helpful way. Please see the section about/for mentors later in this Course Guide for more details.



**Online Sessions**

The online sessions are designed to provide the opportunity to engage with relevant topics whilst gathering the whole cohort together to reflect on your practical experience so far and to learn from each other.

You will also have access to a variety of resources on the Diocese of York Learning Hub including online lessons, chat forums and other interactive tasks to help you in your learning.



**10 months  
Space to explore  
your calling and gifts**

# KEY DATES

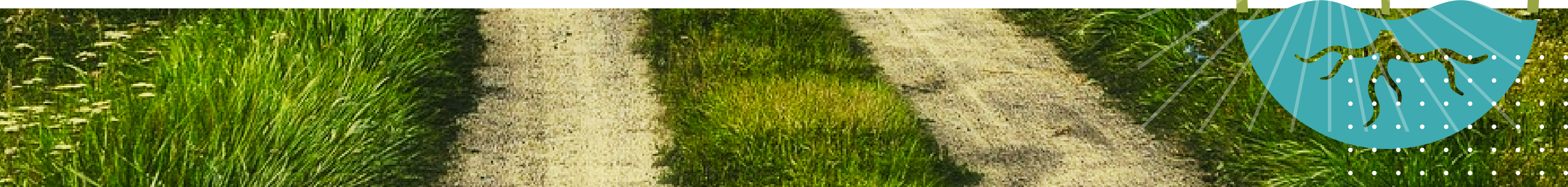


Dates and Times		Sessions
Tuesday, 11th February	7.00pm - 8.30pm Online	Session 1 - Lay Ministry Today
Friday, 28th February	12.30pm-1.30pm Online	Mentor Forum (Mentors only)
Saturday, 1st March	9.30am - 4.00pm Gathered Day	Session 2 - How Do We Read the Bible? Session 3 - Discipleship and Reflective Practice
Tuesday, 1st April	7.00pm - 8.30pm Online	Session 4 - The Kingdom of God and 5 Marks of Mission
Tuesday, 22nd April	7.00pm - 8.30pm Online	Session 5 - Trustworthiness and Applied Safeguarding
Tuesday, 13th May	7.00pm - 8.30pm Online	Session 6 - The Story of the Bible
Saturday, 21st June	9.30am - 4.00pm Gathered Day	Session 7 - Listening to God, Self and Others Session 8 - Gathered Worship and Everyday Faith
Friday 27th June 2025	12.30pm-1.30pm Online	Mentor Forum (Mentors Only)
Tuesday, 15th July	7.00pm - 8.30pm Online	Session 9 - Children & Families
Tuesday, 9th September	7.00pm - 8.30pm Online	Session 10 - Diversity and Inclusion
Tuesday, 7th October	7.00pm - 8.30pm Online	Session 11 - Sharing Our Faith with Others
Tuesday, 4th November	7.00pm - 8.30pm Online	Session 12 - Self Reflection & Ministry Development
Saturday, 6th December	9.30am - 4.00pm Gathered Day	Session 13 - Jesus of History and the Christ of Faith Session 14 - Faith, Creation and Ecology

## Annual Celebration of Lay Ministry Service

There will be a Celebration of Lay Ministries Service in Autumn 2026 in which all new ALMs will be recognised along with other lay ministers, including Licensed Lay Ministers and Church Army Evangelists. We encourage mentors and incumbents to support their ALMs and LLMs at this service.

The date will be published in due course.



# Guidance for Mentors

Mentoring is all about building a trusting relationship which will enhance learning on the course. As a mentor, you will walk alongside your mentee in their church context and be a key part of their formation as they reflect on what they are learning and explore what God is calling them to. It is an intentional, prayerful, and supportive relationship with regular contact for the duration of the course.

The mentor is there to help the person on the course to see what God is doing in their life and encourage them to step into that in practical ways.



## Core tasks for the Mentor:

- Praying for the person you are mentoring.
- Connecting well with the person, building an open and trusting relationship.
- Developing the mentoring relationship by meeting regularly.
- Evaluating with the person you are mentoring and adjusting support as you go.
- Providing feedback on their development during the course.

## Key results – we hope that the person you are mentoring:

- Grows in their faith, becoming more Christlike.
- Applies what they have been learning and grow in skills and experience.
- Gains confidence in themselves and their ministry.

## Mentoring process with expected time commitment:

- Attending resourcing and training at the start of the course.
- Meeting regularly with your mentee. This will be by negotiation and agreement with them, but we would hope this would be 6 times across the 10 months.
- Observing your mentee in their ministry context ideally once per half term in order for you to have a conversation with them on their progress and growth in confidence and competence.
- Access to the online Diocese of York Learning Hub where you will be able to review the group's previous learning before you meet with your mentee.
- A review meeting at the end of the course with the Start of Lay Ministry Advisor and your mentee to reflect together on how they have developed over the duration of the course.
- We would love it if all mentors can attend the Celebration of Lay Ministries Service which will take place in the September after completion of the course.

