

**SWMTC Reader Training
Reader Development Module I**

**The role of the Reader in the Church of England
(1000 words – hand-in: **October 15th 2010**)**

At the start of your Reader Training we would like you to think and write carefully about your understanding of Reader ministry. For some of you it may well be your first written assignment in a long time. Below are a few suggestions about how to structure an essay and the content you should include.

1. **INTRODUCTION** – every essay should have one. This should be no more than a brief paragraph telling the reader what you intend to do in the essay by highlighting the main points of discussion. This will help both writer and reader through the essay – providing that the points are adhered to! (100 words)
2. **FACTS** - Outline the role of a Reader in the Church of England as it has been prescribed. Show that you understand what a Reader is licensed to do. This will allow you to confidently reflect upon the role of a Reader with authority. (500 words)
3. **DEVELOPMENT** – Develop your essay by providing theologically attuned reflection, opinion and observation upon one of the following ministerial issues. You should be guided by ONE of the examples. (300 words)

Either:

A Reader is an authorised minister. What does this authority mean to you as you reflect upon your own preparation for ministry? Should this have an impact upon your formation? For example, who gives authority and why? If challenged, how would or could you claim authority? What is your understanding of Christian authority – are there issues of power and powerlessness when proclaiming the word of Christ, as a Reader is called to do? What is the possible impact of authorised ministries (negative & positive) upon the organisation of the church?

Or:

Readers are called to be teachers of the faith. You will be starting a course of academic study shortly and you will soon be in possession of more knowledge about the background to the biblical texts and the doctrines of the church than most people in the pews. Does this give you an advantage over other Christians or more problems than you need? How should you use and share this knowledge? How do you (or should you) make a judgement about what people need to know? What responsibilities do you have towards your own continuing education?

4. **CONCLUSION** - draw together the main points and offer a concluding reflection that strengthens your discussion. (100 words)

Some titles you might find helpful:

Church of England (2004) *Mission-Shaped Church*, London: Church House

Church of England (2000), *Reader ministry and training: 2000 and beyond*, London: Church House

Kuhrt, G and Nappin, P (eds.) (2002) *Bridging the Gap: Reader Ministry Today*, London: Church House

Rowling, C and Gooder, P., (2009) *Reader Ministry Explored*, London: SPCK

Sykes, S and Booty, J (eds.) (1988) *The Study of Anglicanism*, London: SPCK

Some general points for essay writing:

For every RDM essay you write, i.e. essays which are set through the Reader Training Team, please produce a **coversheet** including the following information:

SWMTC Reader Training

RDM year 1/2/3

title of the essay/assignment/report

hand-in deadline

total word count

name and address.

Please could you also include **page numbers** in your piece of work and use the font **Arial 12** and **double line spacing**.

Every essay/assignment/report needs a **bibliography**, i.e. the **books** from which you might want to quote or from which you might want to paraphrase an idea or thought, books you have consulted in wider reading of the subject matter, **websites** or **newspaper articles** you have used.

Please do not forget to reference **'The Bible'** (and the **version** you have used) and **your journal**, where appropriate.

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The Preachment assignment

The journey of preparing a sermon

1. **Anchor yourself:** Where are we in the seasons of the year, in the Church's calendar?
2. **The situation 1:** What type of service is it (Eucharist, Morning Worship, Family Service, Mattins, Evensong etc)? How long?
3. **Read the text(s)** (Are you following the lectionary, do you use all three readings in the service, e.g. consecutive or related OT reading during green season etc.?) Write down your first impressions, the themes and issues that come to mind. What challenges you, what affirms you, is it a favourite subject, an area you find difficult, do you connect with the text, do you struggle? Can you see an overarching connection? Pray!
4. **The situation 2:** What is going on in the wider Church, in the world that might relate to my sermon? (e.g. Christian Aid Week, VE Day, Week of Prayer for Christian Unity etc.; an anniversary, a disaster, a celebration etc.)
5. **Background:** Who am I preaching to? Adults-children, age group, social background, city/town/rural? Are there local issues I should take on board? What are the expectations?
6. **Working with the Scriptures.** Look at different bible translations, any differences? Is there an intriguing word, look it up in a dictionary or concordance. Read commentaries on the passage, hardcopy or on-line, for historical, social and religious background knowledge. What is the context of the passage in scripture itself?
7. **Connections:** An experience, a story, a newspaper article, a poem, a song, a hymn, a film, a soap might spring to mind, can it be used? Beware of hobby-horses.
8. **The sermon:** A structure, less is often more! 'The Sermon Idea'? The message in a nutshell! Write
9. **Preach**
10. **Reflect**

Remember: you have many years of preaching ahead of you. NO need to squeeze it all into one sermon! Throughout your preparations, listen to God, pray, be NUTS: Never Underestimate The Spirit!

The Preachment essay
(2 500 words – April 15th 2011)

Essay: Describe and comment on the process of preparing, preaching and reflecting on a sermon you have preached this year. (2 500 words)

1. **Introduction.** Briefly introduce the reader to the steps you intend to take in the essay. (200-350)
2. **Process.** Describe the process of preparing a sermon. Engage with the eight steps from 'anchoring' to writing the sermon. Give particular attention to your use of Scripture; relate it to your Biblical Studies course at the university. Reflect on that process, what was helpful, what distracting? (1 000-1 300)
3. **Reflect** on your own experience of the preachment. What was your initial reaction? How did it go? How did it fit into the other parts of the liturgy? Were there points of difficulty? Were reactions different from what you expected? Reflect on the reactions of others. What feedback did you get? How did you react to this? Would you go back and change some things? What have you learnt about the use of the bible, its context and background and the responsibility of the preacher? With what are you happy/unhappy? (700-900)
4. **Conclusion.** Write a brief summary drawing out what you have learnt through the process of preparing, preaching, analysing and reflecting on your sermon: yourself; others; the use of Scripture & Biblical Studies in preaching; and God. (150-250)

Please append the text of the sermon you preached.
Use the set of feedback forms provided (incumbent-congregation-self assessment) and append them. These are also available on the website.

Some literature:

Day, D (1998): *A preaching workbook*, London: Lynx.

Day, D et al (eds) (2005): *A Reader on Preaching. Making Connections.* Aldershot/Burlington: Ashgate.

Wright, S et al (eds) (2004): *A Preacher's Companion: Essays from the College of Preachers*, London: Bible Reading Fellowship.

Also: **The Bible, Commentaries** and **secondary literature**

Please remember the general points for essay writing – coversheet; page numbers; font Arial 12; double line spacing.

Also remember your **bibliography**, i.e. the **books or commentaries on biblical passages** from which you might want to quote or from which you might want to paraphrase an idea or thought, books you have consulted in wider reading on the subject matter, **websites** or **newspaper articles** you have used.

Please do not forget to reference '**The Bible**' (and the **version** you have used) and **your journal**, where appropriate.

*PREACHING - feedback form
for incumbents*

Place of Service

Type of Service

Date:

Student Name

Minister's Name

PRESENTATION

How long was the sermon?

Please comment on the delivery, audibility and general manner of the preacher – did they believe what they were saying?

STRUCTURE

Did the sermon have a clear structure?

How could the structure have been improved?

What point(s) do you think the preacher was trying to make?

In one sentence, what was the theme or message of the sermon?

Were illustrations effective and well used?

CONTENT

Please comment on the preacher's use of the Bible

How did the sermon relate to the rest of the service?

What effect did the sermon produce in you?

Was there anything you wanted to do as a result of the sermon?

Was the sermon gospel?

Can you suggest ways in which the sermon could have been improved?

*PREACHING - Congregation
members' feedback form*

Thank you for being willing to help in my training. Please help me by answering as clearly as you can the following questions. I hope that after the service you will give

me feed back on the sermon and its part in the worship. Please be open and honest in your responses. We all learn about ourselves and our skills when others reflect with us. Thank you

Place of Service

Date

THEME

Write down in a sentence the message of the sermon, what point do you think the preacher was trying to make?

PRESENTATION

Could you hear?

Was the preacher pleasing to listen to?

Did the preacher seem to believe in what he/she was saying?

Did the preacher have any distracting mannerisms?

Was the sermon too long? Too short? About right?

CONTENT

Was the sermon clear and understandable?

Were illustrations helpful?

What was most memorable in the sermon?

What effect did the sermon produce in you?

Was there anything you wanted to do as a result of listening to the sermon?

Can you suggest ways in which the sermon could have been improved?

Thank you for your help

*PREACHING - Student self-
assessment form*

Date

Name

Place of Service

Name of student

Biblical readings:

Write down in not more than 50 words the message or main point(s) of the sermon.

PRESENTATION

How long was the sermon?

How do you think the congregation received it?

Were you aware of any problems with your delivery, audibility or manner?

STRUCTURE

Did the sermon have a structure? Do you think this was clear?

What illustrations did you use? Do you think they were effective?

What do you think was of greatest help to the congregation?

CONTENT

Why did you preach on the subject you did and in relation to the texts you used?

Did the sermon say what you wanted? If not, why not?

Did the sermon depart significantly from the one you had planned? If so, in what way and why?

How was the sermon gospel?

Was there anything you wanted people to do as a result of the sermon? If so, what?

How did the sermon relate to the rest of the service?

SWMTC Reader Training Reader Development Module I

A protocol for the observation placement

**Observation 20th March 2011 – 29th May 2011
Observation Report hand in – June 30th 2011**

Introduction

The observation placement builds upon the Preachment assignment and provides an opportunity for the Reader in Training (RiT) to learn from a church context that is different from their own. By comparing the placement church with their home church the RiT will be invited to develop and broaden their understanding of the wider church. They will have the opportunity to compare the character and ethos of the placement church and how it understands itself. They will observe and reflect upon the preaching, considering the delivery-style and the theological foundations that underpin it. This will take into account the teaching, mission and out-reach of the church.

The Director of Reader Training (The Revd James Theodosius readertraining@swmtc.org.uk) will invite suggestions from the candidate about what placement might stretch his/her experience. He will then propose an appropriate location (to be fixed at the latest by 5th February 2011), and the candidate will negotiate the precise timing and detail of the placement to take place ideally between 20th March and 29th May leaving themselves time to write up the report by 30th June. To meet the requirements of the placement the RiT will attend two main acts of Sunday worship at which a substantial sermon is preached.

Aims:

- to enable candidates in the first year of Reader Training to experience an unfamiliar church context
- to explore the place and role of the sermon within the worship and compare these experiences with their home church.

Objectives:

- to compare the placement church with the home church in terms of size, expression, character and community
- to reflect in particular on the role and place of the sermon within the observed worship with reference to liturgy, ecclesiology, mission, theological perspective

Learning Outcomes:

The report will be assessed with regard to the following criteria:

- Has the candidate observed with insight, going beyond the superficial
- Is the candidate able to explore the different contexts and styles of preaching and the part preaching can play in the teaching, mission and

- out-reach of the church
- Is the candidate able to compare different ecclesial and social contexts

EXPECTATIONS OF THE PLACEMENT MINISTER

To make the Reader in Training welcome in the placement situation and enable him/her to

- a) Observe two main acts of Sunday worship at which a substantial sermon is being preached
- b) Talk informally with the placement minister about the experience of being in a church of a different context with regards to churchmanship, denomination or social context
- c) Talk informally with members of the congregation

EXPECTATIONS OF THE READER IN TRAINING ON THE OBSERVATION PLACEMENT

1 To observe two main acts of Sunday worship at which a substantial sermon is being preached; and to talk informally with the parish priest/minister and members of the congregation.

2. To keep a log (**not for assessment**) of services attended, observations made, and any initial connections made with their prior learning. This will form the basis of the report discussed below.

3. To draft a 1,000-word report on the placement which indicates which services have been attended, and indicates what has been learned.

Proforma for reporting on the observation placement

The report on the placement will be 1,000 words, which will form part of the portfolio for the Reader Development Module in Year 1, and must be passed for the module to be passed as a whole. Unless there is a good reason for an extension, the report will be handed in to the Director of Reader Training by the dead-line indicated above.

Outline

1. Briefly indicate how the placement church resembles and differs from your

- a) location
- b) size and character of community
- c) denomination, size and age-range of congregation, and delivery & understanding of worship. (200-300 words)

2. Indicate what particularly struck you, from comments made at/after services, about the church's self-understanding (as to its identity, vision and mission, and/or as to challenges it faces). Where this differs markedly from your home church, comment on this, and on whether

you see lessons to be learned for one church community or the other.
(400-500 words)

3. Reflect on the sermons you heard being preached at the Sunday worship. (What place does the sermon take in the worship of the Church, who was the preacher? Length, structure, style, message, contemporary relevance, use of illustrations, its part in the teaching, mission and out-reach of the church etc.) Again, draw a comparison with your home church if you feel lessons could be learned on either side. (300-400 words)

Attach a log of observations carried out (**not for assessment**).

It may be helpful to discuss elements of the report with your journal tutor before reaching the version that will be handed in to the Director of Reader Training.

Some general points for essay writing:

For every RDM essay you write, i.e. essays which are set through the Reader Training Team, please produce a coversheet including the following information:

SWMTC Reader Training
RDM year 1/2/3
title of the essay/assignment/report
hand-in deadline
total word count
name and address.

Please include page numbers and use Arial 12 and double line spacing.

Every essay/assignment/report needs a **bibliography**, i.e. the books from which you might want to quote or from which you might want to paraphrase an idea or thought, and books you have consulted in wider reading of the subject matter. Please do not forget to reference 'The Bible' (and the version you have used) and your journal, where appropriate.