

## **SOUTH WEST MINISTRY TRAINING COURSE: READER TRAINING**

### **A protocol for the observation placement**

#### **Introduction**

The observation placement provides an opportunity for the Reader in Training, as part of the preaching strand, to learn from a church context very different from their own. The placement seeks to develop their understanding of church by making comparisons with the home church as to overall character and self-understanding, and as to the way the preaching of the Word of God is understood and part of the teaching, mission and out-reach of the church.

A facilitator (The Revd Sue Sheppard, [suesheppard@supanet.com](mailto:suesheppard@supanet.com)) or the Reader Training Co-ordinator (The Revd James Theodosius, [readertraining@swmtc.org.uk](mailto:readertraining@swmtc.org.uk)) will invite suggestions from the candidate as to what placement might stretch his/her experience. They will then propose an appropriate location, and the candidate will negotiate the precise timing and detail of the placement within a set 'window of dates'. The placement will consist of two Sunday contacts at the main Sunday worship of the placement church at which a substantial sermon is preached.

**Primary Aim of the observation placement:** 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 of their placement church and compare their experiences and explorations with the one of their home church.

Objectives: by the end of the placement candidates will be able:

- to compare the placement church with the home church in terms of size, character and 'story'
- to reflect in particular on the role and place of the sermon within the observed worship — again, by comparison with the home church.

**Learning Outcomes:** the candidate's assessed work will permit assessment of the degree to which:

- the candidate has observed with insight, going beyond the superficial
- the candidate is 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
- the candidate is able to compare different ecclesial and social contexts

#### **Reporting on the 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 Reader Training coordinator within four weeks of the completion of the placement, or to the dead-line indicated on the outline of the year's assignment package.

## 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 talking 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 initial connections made with prior learning, this to 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 in the following categories of assessed learning outcome:

- ❑ the candidate has observed with insight, going beyond the superficial
- ❑ the candidate is 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
- ❑ the candidate is able to compare different ecclesial and social contexts

### Proforma for reporting on the observation placement

1. Briefly indicate how the placement church resembles and differs from your home church in terms of a) location b) size and character of community c) denomination, size and age-range of congregation, and idiom 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, by whom is it preached? 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 Reader Training Coordinator.

## **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

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