



I have been seriously exploring a calling to ordained ministry for the past three years and was looking for a way that I could not only gain a deeper knowledge of the day to day workings of the Church of England but also deepen my own faith and feed me spiritually.

I stumbled upon the web page for a ministry experience scheme in Hatfield. The thing that caught my attention was the dual aspect of exploration of ministry. Here I work as both a Pastoral Assistant at St Etheldreda with St Luke's Church in Hatfield and also as a Chaplaincy Assistant at The University of Hertfordshire.

My Parish Work is formed by the liturgical year. I have the opportunity to work through the Church calendar with all its magnificent seasons. This means I've been able to play an active role in our major festivals including reading at our All Saints and All Souls services

and doing some more obscure work such as acting as Mary for our Farm Nativity! As well as the more unusual roles I also work in other ways to facilitate more regular worship such as leading morning prayer and compline services.

A major part of my ministry is also working for the community. This means regular visits to the local schools, visiting a day centre for the elderly (which involved tea and biscuits!) but also through more explicit Church work such as Baptisms, Weddings and Funerals.

The University side of my year here has enlightened me to a whole new way of ministry. Working as a Christian in a multi faith setting is a unique opportunity. We are to offer support to both staff and students of the university who are of all faiths and none. We have services, which we frequently lead, which are broadly Christian. But then other work aspects include creating a safe and comfortable worshipping environment for all twenty-four thousand students we have here! We also have a great amount of fun holding events such as international café, a place for people to sit, start conversations and enjoy some cake.

My time here has been formational in showing me the diverse role of Priests in very different forms of ministry while guiding me spiritually and practically to discerning my own personal vocation.

Natasha Quin-Thomas

Hi, my name is Jason. I'm a pastoral assistant in the Hatfield Ministry Experience Scheme



and I'm actually in my second year there. As last year was my first experience of University the first half was mostly spent learning how the university works. This year I have been able to get on with organising things as I knew who to go to. The best thing about this scheme of course is the fact that you get ministerial experience in two different contexts, chaplaincy within a university and parish church. This split of commitment is a challenge but invaluable for developing the ability to manage time and diaries.

My time in parish has also changed this year as I am working with a different member of the Bishops Hatfield team. I have gone from working in a parish containing two churches, one in a small village and one in a housing estate, to a slightly more rural

setting, giving a feel for how different churches can be, even in such close proximity. Staying for a second year has also meant that the dynamics of the house have changed as I have two completely different housemates to the previous year, but the fact I get on with them hasn't changed. There have also been opportunities that I didn't expect like taking part in the St Alban's Easter Monday pilgrimage and spending a week in the Taizé community, France. That week in Taizé was a truly moving experience and has helped me develop my own spirituality. I have been given the chance to and successfully pulled off Taizé style worship in both chaplaincy and parish this year. The support you receive from the entire team here is great and I have found it very helpful as I work towards my Bishops Advisory Panel.

Jason Wratten