**Foundations in Christian Ministry (FiCM) Course – My journey so far……**

Why am I doing this? Do I want to be a vicar? No, I don’t! But I do want to deepen my faith and explore where God could be calling me. My husband Steve did the course last year and thoroughly enjoyed it – so he has encouraged me to give it a go.

The course consists of seven Saturdays spread across the year. In between each study day is a tutor group zoom meeting, where we offer support and encouragement to each other.

Each study day comprises an opening worship, tutor group discussions, theology, bible study, vocations and exploring different types of spirituality, finishing with a closing worship. Tutor groups are invited to present the opening worship and spiritual feedback each time, or just provide yummy cakes!

After feeling a little out of my depth on the first day, I soon realised that each of the thirty students are at different places on their journey with God. I began to relax and am particularly enjoying listening to the theological sessions – learning about the different eras of the church. I have recently completed reading the bible in one year, which is useful for the bible study sessions that take this deeper. I have learnt to look for Jesus in each of the scriptures, studied Creation and how this can be explained to outsiders and realised that we must see Jesus in everybody, especially those who are marginalised. **GOD LOVES US ALL.**

We are given spiritual exercises to practice at home – for example, seeing God in nature. This involves taking time to be still – I like to do this when out dog-walking, stopping for ten minutes, listening to sounds around me or the silence, seeing the beautiful scenery and colours, smelling the flowers and countryside smells, and asking God to be with me. I feel full in my heart, bubbling over with love that I need to share with others. I try to notice when God is speaking to me and have started to consider where I am being called and how I can help others who are most in need.

I am excited about where this course will lead me and how my relationship with God will develop. So, I encourage any of you who are a little curious to give the course a try this year. I am happy to talk with you, or Gary can give you further information.

**The FiCM Community Prayer**

Heavenly Father, please unite us as pilgrims in your presence.

Holy Spirit, give us the courage to explore and discover.

Christ Jesus, ensure that every step we take draws us closer to you.

Amen.