

PASTORAL SUPERVISION

DENISE OWEN



Role and Clergy Background

Hello everyone. I'm a vicar in Oldham. I've been here for five years, and before that I was a curate in Rochdale and previously I've taught in primary schools in Manchester for many years. I have been a training incumbent and I'm currently an ILG tutor. This year I've been co-ordinating the Pastoral Care elective of the ALM course and I'm the diocesan link with the Diocese of Tampere.

My Supervision

I was delighted when I was appointed to train as a Pastoral Supervisor in the diocese despite knowing next to nothing about what it meant! I've learnt and am still learning a lot and I've personally found being involved in supervision very helpful. It has given me the opportunity to reflect on specific events and situations in my ministry - some of them quite challenging - and to think through how to respond or deal with them. I particularly value the way supervision isn't about receiving advice from other people, but about me looking at my own experience and being encouraged to think about things in a new light and in new ways. Pastoral Supervision has given me the time and space to think more deeply about what I do day-to-day.

My Approach

Pastoral Supervision sessions have been described as a 'courageous space'. This means that Pastoral Supervision is a time when openness, honesty and a willingness to share are needed, but, at the same time, supervision can also be great fun. As the supervisor I can use a number of approaches to explore an issue that the supervisee brings to the session. I particularly like using everyday objects as focuses for seeing and noticing, but photos, words, poems and any number of other things can be used to elicit reflection. Everyone in a group supervision has the opportunity to reflect on their own situation, even if they are not the focus of the exploration, allowing the participants to dig deep and discover their own inner wisdom.

Other Interests

Outside of ministry I enjoy walking, and being in Oldham. I'm fortunate to live close to some wonderful walking country. I also love trips to the theatre and cinema and visiting local places of interest, especially National Trust properties.