



The Very Rev'd James Hodson, Dean of Bathurst & Bishop's Commissary

The Bishop's Registry
11 Church Street (PO Box 23)
Bathurst NSW 2795

Sunday 24 March 2024

Appointment of Lay Stipendiary Minister for the Narromine Parish

Thanks be to God that today in the parish of Narromine it is being announced that Mr Luke Merriman is to commence there during May 2024 as Lay Stipendiary Minister. This appointment is on a part-time basis, meaning Luke will undertake these parish leadership responsibilities with other work in the local community.

Luke previously worked in the newspaper industry as a journalist, sub-editor, and managing editor before retraining for vocational ministry while working in property maintenance. Lauren & Luke met while both working at the local newspaper in Parkes and have now been married 13 years with three young children. Luke and Lauren are excited about the gospel opportunities in the Parish of Narromine and look forward to the future God is already preparing in the hearts and minds of those they are called to love and serve in the area.

Luke first approached Bishop Mark in the second half of 2023, encouraged by the descriptions and needs of vocational ministry in our diocese as outlined by Mark in his many social and other media posts and advertisements.

Following several ensuing conversations, the Merriman family met with the Narromine parish nominators late last year and together with diocesan nominators, confirmed a clear and united sense of call to this ministry.

Concurrent to this process, Luke and Lauren have recently attended an initial meeting with the diocesan ordination discernment panel, who have subsequently unanimously recommended that Luke formally commence the process of discernment to Anglican orders with our diocese.

Luke is a humble, considered and experienced Pastor, with a sound understanding of rural ministry and a strong desire for people to grasp and respond to the gospel of grace, growing in their love and knowledge of Jesus. He will get alongside people – inside and outside the parish – and through these relationships, point them to Jesus and the life He provides.



Please be in prayer for the Merriman family as they finish up their responsibilities in Nowra, take some well-earned holidays, and relocate to Narromine to commence during the month of May; that they would finish well; would know God's comfort as they farewell friends; for a refreshing break; and that the move would be smooth and hassle-free.

Please also commit the Parish of Narromine to the Lord in prayer: that God would be preparing their hearts to welcome and accept the Merrimans with grace and love; and that this new season of ministry in the town and community would see more people respond to God's gracious offer of salvation by trusting in Jesus for life.

May we all be encouraged to continue to pray that the Lord of the harvest would raise up suitable ministry workers for the many needs across our diocese: still 11 of 28 parishes without clergy.

Every blessing,

The Very Rev'd James Hodson
Dean of Bathurst
Bishop's Commissary