

Come follow Christ



DIOCESE OF
LICHFIELD

in the footsteps of St Chad



Curacy in the Diocese
of Lichfield



Title post in the
Parish of
St Martin's, Bradley



Urban estates

charismatic/evangelical



Welcome to Lichfield Diocese

Cradled at the intersection of the Midlands and the North, and the interface between England and Wales, the Diocese of Lichfield is the ancient centre of Christianity in what was the Kingdom of Mercia.

We are rightfully grateful for the inheritance we have from St Chad that leads us to focus on Discipleship, Vocation and Evangelism as we live and serve among the communities of Staffordshire, northern Shropshire and the Black Country.

Wherever in the Diocese you may be placed, you will benefit from being part of a wider family, mixing with people serving in a wide variety of contexts – from the grittiest inner-city neighbourhoods of Stoke and the Black Country, to the leafiest rural parishes of Staffordshire and Shropshire, to the sparsest upland communities of the Staffordshire

As we follow Christ in the footsteps of St Chad, we pray that the two million people in our diocese encounter a Church that is confident in the gospel, knows and loves its communities, and is excited to find God already at work in the world. We pray for a church that reflects the richness and variety of those communities. We pray for a Church that partners with others in seeking the common good, working for justice as a people of hope.

(Diocesan Vision Statement)

Moorlands and Welsh Borders.

And we embrace the widest spectrum of church traditions – evangelical and catholic, liberal and conservative, choral and charismatic, as we journey together – as a colleague recently put it, it is our goal to be a ‘spacious and gracious diocese’.

‘...a spacious and gracious diocese

It is my determination and that of my episcopal colleagues that your calling to a title post will be a time of encouragement, ongoing formation, challenge and (while rarely unbridled) joy. Our colleagues among the diocesan staff keenly bring their various specialisms both spiritual and practical to serve our parishes, fresh expressions, schools and chaplaincies.



+ Rt Revd Dr Michael Ipgrave
Bishop of Lichfield

A caring diocese

Lichfield Diocese is one of the largest in the country, covering an area of 1744 square miles and serving a population of more than 2 million.

The diocese consists of three episcopal areas with three Area Bishops (of Wolverhampton, Stafford and Shrewsbury) ministering alongside the Diocesan Bishop, each overseeing a different geographic area. This indicates the diocese’s commitment to its different contexts, and to the pastoral care of our clergy.

Homes and schools

We aim to provide high quality housing for our clergy with a continuous programme of improvements to houses and responsive, specialist contractors for emergencies.

As well as the 208 Church of England schools in the Diocese, there are many good schools and colleges that will welcome clergy’ children, and a

number of higher education centres can be found in Stoke, Keele, Stafford, Shrewsbury, Telford, Wolverhampton and Walsall.

Vocation and mission of all

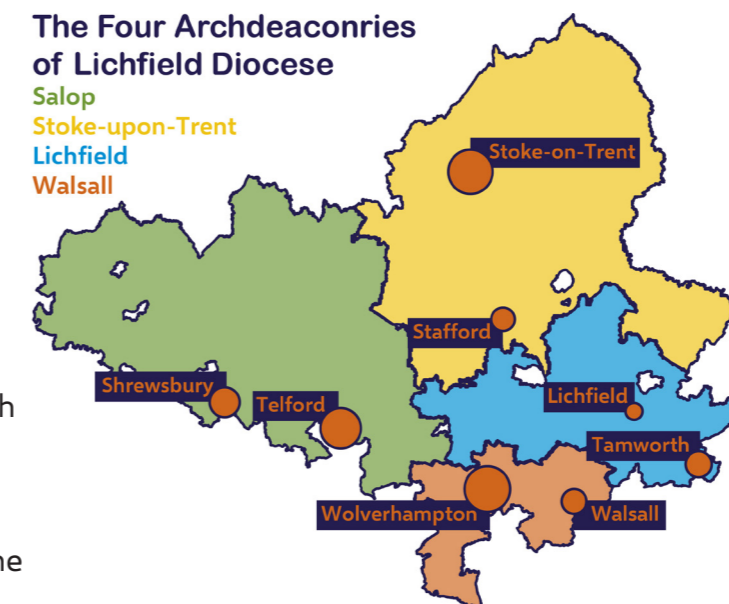
Our vision for the diocese is that all people, lay and ordained alike, will grow ever more deeply into their vocation as disciples of Christ. We hope to become a Church where all our members are equipped to know they are called by God to worship and to be the eyes, hands, feet and mouth of Christ in their own contexts.

To further these aims, and to develop creative patterns of ministry, we ask all training parishes to offer ‘sixth-day’ opportunities for curates – which might be a chaplaincy attachment (school, hospital, prison or hospice), involvement with local gardening ventures, night-shelter involvement – to mention just a few possibilities.



“Our time as a family in my curacy in rural Shropshire has been one of the best of our lives. I’ve learned that the priestly role is vital in the community. I’m particularly enjoying working with seniors, and enabling the giftings of others which resulted in a successful Messy Church starting in one of the villages. I give thanks to God for this special time, and for everyone who’s been there for me and supported me throughout.”

Revd Jassica Castillo-Burley



Everything but the sea



David Rayner (Wikipedia) / Stoke-on-Trent Bottle Kiln / CC BY-SA 2.0BY-SA 4.0

Staffordshire prides itself on being ‘the Creative County’: Shropshire is the birthplace of the Industrial Revolution and the Black Country is renowned for its industry and all have significant opportunities for spouses who wish to develop careers in any sphere.

For those days off when you need space away from the parish, the area has everything you could wish for – except the sea: wild landscapes, cultured museums and stately homes. Sports of many kinds (including Premiership football) and at least two theme parks

Shrewsbury Flax Mill – the prototype skyscraper / Tk420 (Wikipedia) / CC BY-SA 4.0



Opening of the Lighthouse Project at Kingsland CE Academy, Bucknall



Road and rail links



For those with family and friends in other parts of the country, the Diocese has great transport links: the M6/M6Toll bisects the centre of the Diocese north-south, and the M5 originates at our southern tip. Heading west, the A5/M54 give easy access to north and mid Wales, while the A50, A5 and M6Toll give swift access to the M1, M42 and A38 for the East Midlands and the south-east.

Rail links are also good with all major towns having direct services to London and Birmingham and four major airports surround our borders – Birmingham, East Midlands, Manchester and Liverpool.



Dovedale (location of one of the Diocese’s two residential retreat centres) / Shaun Dunmall (wikipedia) / CC BY-SA 2.0 4.0

Leisure and pleasure

Lichfield Diocese has everything but the sea. For walkers and climbers, there’s an extensive network of canals, Cannock Chase, The Roaches, and the Shropshire—Welsh borders (for example). If you’re into more organised fun, Alton Towers and Drayton Manor Theme Park

Wightwick Manor nr Wolverhampton / Tony Hisgett (Wikipedia) / CC BY-SA 4.0



can provide it. And then there’s many museums including Walsall’s New Art Gallery and the RAF museum at Cosford; not to mention excellent sporting options for both watching and participating – from premiership football to the Tamworth Snowdome. Along with Wedgwood, theatres and cinemas, restaurants and superb tea shops just begging to be discovered...



Apedale Valley Light Railway near Stoke with the adjacent country park and Heritage Centre is one of many transport and leisure museums in the Diocese / Simon Jones

If shopping is your thing, there is a range of options, from the chic boutiques at Barton Marina, and Shrewsbury to large malls in or near the urban centres. We’re fortunate in being the home of many fine ales and beers brewed in Burton on Trent (the museum is well worth a visit), and Staffordshire oatcakes are a unique local delicacy to be discovered.



Wulfrun Centre in Wolverhampton is one of many shopping destinations in the region © Roger Kidd -/ geograph.org.uk/p/1171894/ CC BY 2.0

Alton Towers near Uttoxeter / Jeremy Thompson/Flickr / CC BY 2.0



The Parish of St Martin's Bradley



The parish of St Martin's is located within Bradley, a suburb of Bilston within the City of Wolverhampton and part of the wider West Midlands conurbation. Bradley developed rapidly in the post-war boom years as a cluster of housing estates around large industrial sites. With decline of manufacturing in the 20th century, the parish is predominantly residential and the regeneration of the former industrial sites is bringing new homes, new green spaces and facilities and attracting professionals and a more diverse socio-economic mix although the parish remains among the 6% most deprived in the country.



Within the parish there are three primary schools (one of which is our affiliated church school) all rated 'good' by Ofsted and just beyond the parish boundaries are several secondary schools; in addition, there are many excellent schools in the further Wolverhampton area, just a short commute from Bradley.

Bradley is dotted with shopping parades with convenience stores, a post office, take-away food outlets, hairdressers, cafés and pharmacies.

However, the town of Bilston is a short journey – on foot or bike on a traffic free boulevard, a 5-minute drive or shorter tram ride away on the Midland Metro, which connects to Wolverhampton city centre in 15 minutes or Birmingham city centre in 30 minutes. Employment land use in the local area is based on light manufacturing and warehousing, with a great diversity of employment opportunities within easy reach in the wider conurbation.



We serve a population of 5,403 homes but this is increasing with further developments. Ranked 737 out of 12,382 based on the latest Church Urban Fund data; child, working age and pensioner poverty are significant issues within the parish.

Bilston offers plenty of leisure and social opportunities. There are markets, supermarkets and a wide range of shops and amenities, with the Bert Williams Leisure Centre just a short walk away. Further afield, Bradley offers easy access to Birmingham, Telford and other large towns and cities within the West Midlands through the strategic road and transport links in the area.

There are lots of green spaces including parks and children's play areas within walking distance and Bradley is blessed with its own canal arm which curves through the parish; a beautiful green corridor lined with trees, wildlife, well-maintained towpaths and linking to the extensive Birmingham and Black Country Canal Navigation network – great for walking and cycling. And the Staffordshire and Shropshire countryside is just a short drive away.



Worship at St Martin's Church:

St Martin's is a single church benefice. We're a warm welcoming fellowship with a heart to share the Good News of Jesus as we experience God's love ourselves and seek to follow Jesus in our lives.

Sundays

We gather at 10.15am on Sunday mornings for worship and our monthly pattern includes Services of the Word, Holy Communion and All-Age. Our style is contemporary and reverently informal; music is either band-led or worship videos. There is an opportunity to receive prayer ministry after the service.



The Parish of St Martin’s Bradley



There is provision for children each Sunday, in age-appropriate groups. We usually have 10-15 children attending (toddlers to teens) and 35-45 adults, aged 30-80+ and our electoral roll is just under 70. People regularly connect through the livestream too.

Refreshments follow the gathered worship in our café space, just off the main worship area, our coffee machine has a Diocese-wide reputation! Once a month we have a Sunday roast dinner together after the service. Food is very important to St Martin’s and features at many events!



We have strong links to our local C of E primary school and are delighted that Covid restrictions are enabling us to welcome them back into the church building once again for visits and worship at festivals and other special occasions.

1st Sunday	10.15am All age worship
2nd	10.15am Morning Worship with Holy Communion
3rd	10.15am Morning Worship
4th	10.15am Morning Worship with Holy Communion

Buildings / Community

We are blessed to have a versatile and flexible building that is used by the wider community too.

The former Victorian-era St Martin’s School (built in 1866) was consecrated as St Martin’s Church in 1983. The building has undergone several improvements over the years and boasts a flexible space that can be utilised in many different ways.

The facilities include: main hall | chapel | lower hall & kitchenette | office | conference room | lower lounge | computer suite | coffee bar | catering kitchen

We have a large bank of solar panels fitted on the roof and modern smart heating throughout to better manage our gas usage thus decreasing bills and helping the environment.

We have lots going on during the week in the Church Centre. Regular weekly activities include a mid-week lunch club which attracts the older generation, craft and art groups, a weekly community café, a busy Stay-and-Play toddler group and a Friday evening children and youth group, Ignite 5:14.

We’ve forged an exciting partnership with a new local community collaboration. Through this

partnership, St Martin’s has co-hosted several free events and activities bringing hundreds of people from our local community together in the church centre. We see this and the other community points of contact as first steps in sharing faith as we partner our community to build community cohesion, grow relationships and, where appropriate, open doors for supporting those who find themselves in particular need.



We make good use of technology with many rooms equipped with interactive whiteboards, a modern sound and AV system in the main hall as well as high-speed wireless internet throughout the building.

We don’t have a church yard/burial grounds but we do have a beautiful church garden, maintained by volunteers from the church and used for outdoor events. We would like to explore greater community involvement in the gardens.



The Parish of St Martin's Bradley



Ignite 5:14 is a group for children and teenagers which mixes games, crafts, fun, friendship and faith and the majority of the 40 regular members are drawn from non-church families. An annual highlight is the group's trip to an outdoor activities centre in Brixham, which deepens the bonds between the group and importantly faith in Jesus.



Your Training Incumbent

Revd Kate Watson

St Martin's Vicarage, 7 King Street
Bradley, Bilston WV14 8PQ

- **Trained:** Trinity College, Bristol
- **Ordained:** 2017, Lichfield
- **Curacy:** St Matthew's Tipton
- **Vicar since** 2020

Kate and Andy Watson moved the grand total of 1.9 miles from Kate's curacy in Tipton to incumbency at St Martin's Bradley, having a strong sense of calling to remain in Black Country urban parish ministry and for Andy to continue as a Christians Against Poverty debt centre manager.

Kate came to ordained ministry with plenty of prior life experience which included lay church ministry in a wide range of areas and a professional career as a chartered landscape architect with experience of team management and mentoring colleagues. She is a supervisor for ordinands attached to St Martin's for short and long term placements.

Kate is a 'people person' and being licensed to the parish at the height of the Covid-19 pandemic was something of a frustration

but she is in her element now there are opportunities to engage with people again. Kate believes in Word and Spirit ministry and that encounters with the Holy Spirit bring faith to life and life to faith. She recognises the 21st century challenges of reaching people with the gospel and is committed to the importance of relationship building and being alert to Spirit-inspired opportunities to be bold in sharing the good news of Jesus, in word and action and leading others to grow in faith and courage to do the same.



The Parish of St Martin’s Bradley

Kate is an active participant in the local New Wine Leadership Network, Churches Together Bilston and Bradley, a member of the Diocesan Evangelical Fellowship, a supporter of the Love Black Country network of churches and a Diocesan Vocations Advisor. She’s part of the deanery’s Shaping for Mission Team, established to discern Deanery vision and mission.

Bradley is a rich mission field with many opportunities for an energetic and visionary curate to explore Kingdom-building in the 21st Century, alongside Kate and a committed family-focussed congregation which has a desire to reach out, to grow and be present for our community.

Kate would be a training incumbent who values a curate as a ministry colleague, in whose training she would share, not a junior assistant to ease her workload. The prior life

experience the curate brings in the exercise of her/his ministry would be valued and the curate would be able to explore areas for growth and development as appropriate to her/his stage of curacy and interests. Kate would welcome a curate who is willing to take risks and the curate would be supported in success as well as failure. The curate will be encouraged to develop in ‘being’ as well as ‘doing’, with time given to retreat and reflection as well as a full allowance of rest days and annual leave.



The Congregations in numbers:

Figures from 2021	
Electoral Roll	69
Usual Sunday Attendance	
Adults	35
Children	12
Baptisms	4 (inc 1 adult by immersion)
Marriages	0
Funerals	22

Context

In the minds of locals, Bradley is distinct to neighbouring Bilston and although the parish lacks a central focal point, there is a sense of identity which is further divided between upper and lower Bradley, defined by being north or south of Bradley Lane.

Historically an area of major industry and part of one of the heartlands of the Black Country, Bradley is undergoing welcome regeneration. A new Urban Village (part of the Bilston Urban Village) is nearing completion and a large proportion of this falls within our Parish boundaries. This is exciting for us as a church as we explore the mission and evangelism opportunities that this development provides.

The local community in the older housing estates, which date from the post-war era, tend to be ‘Bradley born and bred’ and it is a settled, fairly close-knit community; they have often lived in the same street with the same neighbours for decades. People tend not to move far from their family of origin and family ties are often stronger than friendships. The post-war estates were originally all council housing and are a mix of semi-detached properties, maisonettes and blocks of 4-storey flats. There is little ethnic diversity, the population comprises 85% White British. It’s a

relatively young population with 86% under 65 years old and lone parent families account for 31%. A significant proportion of the population (41%) have no qualifications. The newer estates are predominantly detached and semi-detached houses, aimed at the owner-occupied market. Across the parish, social rented housing accounts for 39% of housing tenure.

The schools are all rated ‘good’ by recent Ofsted inspections and are caring and compassionate towards their pupils and their families. St Martin’s liaises with the all the schools’ family and pastoral support staff and we are able to help out when families fall between other provision eg a family has exhausted food bank vouchers yet is still without a benefit payment to put food on the table.

Whilst socio-economic factors place Bradley among the most disadvantaged parishes, the quality of the living environment is much higher, reflecting the plentiful green spaces and the accessibility and quality of the canal environment. All in all, it’s a great place to live and to have the privilege of being in ministry!



“We’re really grateful for all the support we got from the Diocese, starting with the DDO, who went out of her way to help in finding a good match, and to work out practical matters.

“My vicar has been very supportive, through planning carefully together and weekly supervisions, where we reflect on different areas of ministry. I have been given new challenges progressively, all done sensitively and fitted to the stage I was at. Our churches have been so welcoming to the whole family, and very supportive of my ministry, even when this involves less regular ideas, like planting a tree during a sermon (only in a pot, I regret to say!).”

Revd John Beswick Pallister

The Parish of St Martin's Bradley

The ministry

Our Vision and Mission

We experience God's love and seek to follow Jesus.

We are a Christian Family young and old offering hope and friendship to all, pointing people to Jesus Christ.

Our Vision is:

'Growing in the love of Jesus.'

Our vision is to grow new Christians, grow in our faith as disciples and grow in the use of the gifts the Holy Spirit has given us.

Our Mission statement is:

'St Martin's is a vibrant family growing in the love of Jesus. Anchored in Biblical truth and inspired by the Holy Spirit, we are committed to celebrating and sharing the Good News of Jesus, reaching out and welcoming people of all ages and backgrounds.'

We are an evangelical church that believes we need to stand under the authority of Scripture. As a family we are committed to living out the Good News of Jesus Christ and proclaiming His saving grace.



If you come to St Martin's to serve your title post, you will find there is a diversity of opportunities for your curacy within this parish, from pioneering community-focussed ministry alongside church-focussed worship and sacramental ministry to an established congregation. The following offers a snapshot of some of the areas of ministry of St Martin's, however there are no particular focal areas already defined for you, these would be developed in consultation with you and us and would vary as your curacy progresses with greater responsibilities and opportunities to lead. Kate will pay close attention to the range of knowledge and experience that you will need to prepare you for incumbency - the upfront and the desk-based - and together you will plan your short and long term goals and priorities.

Our Mission Action Plan includes the aspiration to establish fresh expressions of church on estates within the parish where we currently have limited presence/contacts - we have both new build and older communities, offering quite different challenges. The older estates in particular experience socio-economic difficulties, which we encounter regularly through our community connections. Activities which take place during the week in St Martin's Church Centre attract people who don't come to church and through building relationships, we are able to build trust, friendships and offer support/signposting as appropriate. Recent months have seen a growth in our visible presence



within the community, through joint events/initiatives with local community groups and making contacts beyond 'church-focussed' activities. If you have heart for reaching out and pioneering new missional opportunities, you will find plenty of scope and challenge here to become a leader in mission, backed by encouragement and collaboration from Kate to explore creative ways of developing and resourcing this. We have used

Alpha as an evangelism resource but wonder whether this context needs something 'pre-Alpha' – we'd love to know your experience and thoughts!

The church's parish profile when recruiting for a new vicar expressed a desire to become more open to the ministry of the Holy Spirit and so one of Kate's mandates as the new(-ish) minister here is to lead the church into charismatic renewal. This is new territory for the congregation and you will find it valuable experience if you wish to minister in similar spiritual growth or already have experience to offer. Discipleship and corporate prayer are also linked to this journey



The Parish of St Martin's Bradley



and we will be exploring a number of ways of engaging people. You will lead and preach regularly in worship services and we're looking forward to welcoming a curate who has a passion for the Bible as God's Word for us today and is open to the leading and renewal of the Holy Spirit. There will also be opportunities to experience leading worship in different church traditions in other parishes in the deanery.

Most of the adults have been part of St Martin's for decades although we're delighted to have been joined by 7 new regulars since the easing of Covid-19 restrictions. St Martin's recognises the need to grow in numbers and we have spent recent months appraising our 'health' as a local church and asking ourselves what shape God wants us to be in for the next season of ministry. This may involve some bumps on the road as St Martin's journeys through change. This is a great opportunity for you to be part of leading renewal and growth.

Although the incumbent Kate is the only paid staff member, St Martin's has one licensed lay reader and a significant proportion of the congregation volunteer in many different capacities. St Martin's truly values all member ministry; from the very youngest to the oldest, a real strength of our church is the congregation's willingness to be involved.



You will be able to contribute to the life of our local schools, who are open to input from St Martin's regarding collective worship, curriculum areas and governance, in particular at the C of E primary. Within the church's Ignite 5:14 children and young people's group, the challenge is to grow these youngsters as Jesus' disciples and to reach out to their parents. Supporting the volunteer leaders to link life and faith - particularly for the teens - may be an area that you're interested in.

Occasional Offices: We average 2-3 funerals a month, occasional baptisms (we'd like to build our baptism ministry) but few weddings, not being a 'traditional' looking church so we'd link to other local churches for you to gain the appropriate experience you need for your curacy portfolio.

Offering pastoral support and care and the



importance of establishing boundaries and self-awareness will be a thread throughout your curacy and you will also gain a deeper experience of paying attention to your own personal spiritual journey and the challenges of balancing that with the competing demands of a busy church and parish.

The Diocese encourages 'sixth-day' enrichment for curates to experience ministry over and above the usual parish ministries. There is wide scope locally for this, for example hospital or work-place chaplaincy, food banks, schools, sports and third sector voluntary groups and if you'd like to do so, we will help you find a placement in your area of interest.

Kate taps into several networks for fellowship, support and training from fellow church leaders (in addition to Diocesan resources) and the you would be warmly welcomed to those.

Housing and Accommodation

The Diocese of Lichfield either has a curate's house in the benefice or a 'strategic' house for curates in close proximity of the benefice. These are good houses, mainly with three to four bedrooms. If there is no curate's house in the benefice and where such a strategic property exists within easy reach of the proposed training parish this will be the preferred curate's house. If there is no strategic housing available nearby the diocese is committed to providing appropriate accommodation for all those entering ministry. We generally do not offer rented accommodation except as an emergency short term measure. Our curates can be confident that their home will be of a consistently high standard. If you wish to know further details about the house, the BDO will be able to provide you with more information.



Curacy in Lichfield Diocese

Supporting learning and formation

Curate learning, formation and development is strongly valued and affirmed in Lichfield Diocese. Curates receive ongoing supervision and reflection on ministry in the parish, complemented by our curate-training programme in which you share with your year-group of peers. The aim of the training programme is to enable each person to flourish in their ministry and inhabit more deeply their vocation as deacons and priests. This programme supports learning and formation through a partnership between the Diocese and The Queen's Foundation. And it takes place in the context of parish supervision and reflection on ministry.

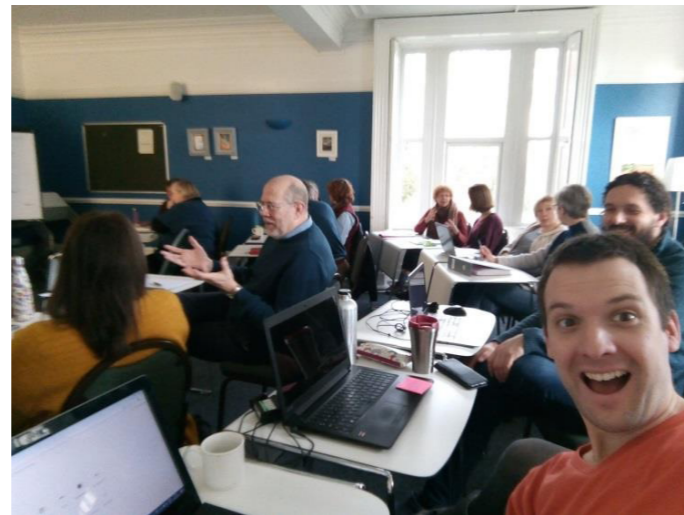
The programme provides space and an environment beyond the parish context in which curates come together with skilled tutors to learn with and from each other's shared experience, so that they can better integrate their practice and reflection, develop their personal qualities, spiritual, ministerial and professional gifts and skills, and deepen their desire to learn.

The curacy experience is very much a collective one, often gathering at Lichfield Diocese's centrally-located Shallowford House for study, prayer, retreat and de-stressing with peers (pandemic permitting): as such, it's a much less scary venue during IME2 than as a base for a BAP!

Pattern of training

The programme focuses on grounded and situated learning and prioritises the Diocese's focus on Discipleship, Vocation and Evangelism:

- In Year 1 establishing you in your new ministerial context and practice, and supporting your preparation for ordination as priest.
- In Year 2, deepening your practice and understanding of mission and ministry with the theological tools and skills you need to contextualise this.
- In Year 3 helping you prepare for life-long ministry and to take up a post of responsibility to be entered into with skill and confidence.



IME2 to equip for ministry

At the heart of the programme are residential events which bring together a year-group of curates. They reflect the diversity of the Church, while the different ministry contexts reflect the diversity of the Diocese. This cohort is the primary context for the essential learning and formation to develop your ministries, focusing on ministerial formation, and on the development of relationships which enable mutual flourishing for all.

Opportunities for academic awards

Alongside the IME2 training you may wish to continue studying on an accredited pathway with Common Awards. Curates who already have a Diploma award from IME1 may register for a BA in Theology, Ministry and Mission. Others who already have a degree or higher award or are recognised as potential theological educators have opportunities to further their studies alongside their curate programme.

"We have had amazing support from the diocese over the 6 years through both of our curacies and that's not always been straightforward- particularly when 'life' sometimes gets in the way!

"But the support, through thick and thin has been fantastic, particularly discerning Adam's call to pioneering ministry and curacy under 'pioneer' supervision."

Revds Adam & Charlotte Gompertz



Care for curates and families

The wellbeing of clergy and their families is very important to us. In addition to the supervisory aspects to curacy, we have a free, confidential counselling service (the Listening Ear scheme) for all clergy, diocesan staff and their families.

More info

– contact the BDO (details on back cover) or visit lichfield.anglican.org/curacy



Curacy in Lichfield Diocese

For further information

In the first instance, please contact:

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Find us on:

ACChurchNearYou:
achurchnearyou.com/church/4177/

Website:
stmartinsbradley.co.uk/

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facebook.com/stmartinsbradley

St Martin's Bradley

A charismatic evangelical church in
the heart of the Black Country



St Martin's Church
Bradley

St Martin's is a vibrant family growing in the love of Jesus. Anchored in Biblical truth and inspired by the Holy Spirit, we are committed to celebrating and sharing the Good News of Jesus, reaching out and welcoming people of all ages and backgrounds. Our heart is to see people's lives and the community of Bradley transformed by the love of Jesus.