

Spotlight

Jul/Aug 2019

Deacons 2019

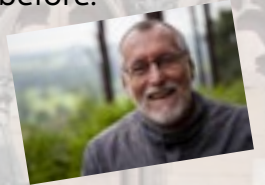
A hydrogeologist, a physiotherapist and a barrister are among 18 new deacons to be ordained at Lichfield Cathedral this weekend.

Nine men and nine women a range of places and backgrounds will now be curates after completing either two or three years of training.

Following their ordination as deacons by Bishop Michael at services on the last Saturday and Sunday in June, they will start parish ministry in a variety of churches across the diocese including several in non-stipendiary (self-supporting) roles.

This year's intake of curates follows the ordination of 18 new curates in 2018, all of whom went on to be 'priested' at services across the diocese the weekend before.

Hydrogeologist William Small was born in Northern Rhodesia (now Zambia) and has lived in South Africa, Sweden, Israel, France and Burundi since. The father-of-four has worked to bring clean water and the gospel of Jesus Christ wherever he has gone. He will serve as a self-supporting minister in Harlescott, Shrewsbury. "I felt a calling to start looking into ministry. I grew up a Roman Catholic, I've



continues on p3 ->



DIOCESE OF
LICHFIELD



The Church of England around Staffordshire, northern Shropshire and the Black Country

A tall (ship) story

People from St Michael's Church in Colwich, near Rugeley, found their sea legs and made memories on their maiden sea voyage together. Church member Wesley Till tells us more:

"At the end of our new Alternative Worship service last November, Steve (Deall – curate) showed a slide of a sailing ship and asked if anyone fancied an adventure..."

"Eight would-be sailors (mainly from St Michael's) signed up for a trip onboard the tall ship Morning Star of Revelation (MST trust). MST is a Christian organisation specialising in working with young people from all backgrounds whether they have a faith or not. Their website states that they are about: 'Changing young people's lives through youth work at sea. We want to see all people live life to the full no matter where they have come from or where they are going. Jesus came so that he may give us life and give it to the full'.

"MST's main work is with young people but they welcome other Christian groups on their voyages. Although the majority of us couldn't be described in any way young in fact (our ages ranged from 17 to 73), we all found a place and a position as the ship's crew for the voyage.



"We sailed from Chatham in Kent, to Ramsgate, then across the channel to Bologna (dodging tankers on the way!) before returning overnight to Brighton.

"Steve summed it up: 'The whole experience was fantastic, living together as community was a real embodiment of what it means to be a Christian family, no matter what age. We learned from each other; the young crew teaching us oldies how to sail and us oldies giving them a little bit of our life experience. When I reflected on our setting off on the night sail across the Channel leaving the safe harbour, it struck me that it was really poignant that as a group we were setting off into the darkness, perhaps a good metaphor for how we live our Christian lives; setting off with the light of Christ into the darkness of the world trusting each other and ultimately trusting in God to keep us safe.'

"Our voyage certainly left us with very fond memories about what had been an exciting and inspirational experience. The title on MST website is: 'Be Inspired. Live Life to the Full.' and the MST states: 'We believe that every person who sails with us has the right to live life to the full. We do this through our: Love, Care and hospitality. Our group all agreed that this was certainly true of our experience on 'The Morning Star of Revelation'.

For further details of The Morning Star Trust visit <https://www.mst.org.uk>



#NewRevs 2019



<- continued from p1

been through Pentecostal Church and now I'm in the Church of England! The scary part is being willing to say 'yes'."



Treena Larkin (pictured top left) from Wolverhampton worked for 25 years as a physiotherapist.



She started her Christian journey ten years ago via the Alpha course and will serve as a curate in Penn Fields. "Almost six years ago



I lost my mum suddenly. It was a time when the church really showed me their love. Through that time I had a sense of where God was calling me. I want people to know the love of Christ and I'm passionate about walking alongside people."



Chris Lane (bottom left) grew up in Walsall where he still lives. After being a barrister for 15 years, he is swapping the court room for church planting, working in 'pioneer ministry' at St Peter's in inner Walsall. "I practised in asylum and immigration law for the latter part of my career. I felt God was calling me to work among people who were on the fringes of society. I would represent people and then say 'goodbye' to them, so you were there for very short periods of their lives. As a minister, I will be in people's lives long-term and have the opportunity to walk with them through the issues they face."

Other new deacons have backgrounds in social care, teaching, children's and youth work, driving instruction, voluntary works, biomedical science and as a fettleer at a pottery factory.



Diocesan Director of Vocations Lindsey Hall said: "It is great to have such a range of gifts and personalities in this year's new curates. We need people who can share the Good News of Jesus in their communities, workplaces and local churches in fresh ways. If you'd like to explore how God may be calling you please get in touch with angela.bruno@lichfield.anglican.org"

More - including videos of William, Treena and Chris and information on new deacons (and last year's deacons who have just become priests) ordinands and photos from both services can be found at lichfield.anglican.org/NewRevs2019

BioBlitz in churchyard

All creatures mostly small were found during an intensive 24-hour study of a churchyard in central Lichfield last month.



The BioBlitz at St Michael's was one of six events around the diocese as part of Love Your Burial Ground week organised by the charity Caring For God's Acre. Bats, woodlice, wood mice, slugs, birds, insects, trees and flowers were all identified in a joint operation by children, adults and experts.

Ray Allen organised the event for St Michael's: "I think it's so important nowadays when we're losing so many species in this country. We've sown a new wildflower meadow for example to try and increase the flowers and insects that we get. This is what churches should be doing, for after all it is God's creation and we want to make sure God's creation continues for many, millions, of years."

"One of the things that's exciting me is that now everybody's getting excited about wildlife, asking 'Could we have a little patch of long grass and see what wildflowers are in it', 'Isn't it exciting that we've got a veteran yew'.

"Sometimes a churchyard can feel like a bit of a burden to the people that manage it as volunteers, but perhaps the tables are turning a little and the general public's getting more interested and I think it's a moment when, if people reach out to the public, they'll find a lot of interest there and possibly a bit of help as well."



The other Lichfield Diocese churches taking part were St Martin's Preston Gubbals near Shrewsbury; Clifton Campville; St Editha's Church Eaton and St Peter's Stonnall.

We have a short video with more about the BioBlitz at lichfield.anglican.org/news/2019/06/19/bioblitz/



"There's room for quiet contemplation. And there's room for the children running about, excited about finding the wildlife."

"We think that if you added them all together, [burial grounds] would cover an area about the size as Exmoor National Park," said CfGA director Harriet Carty.



From Russia with love

Fifteen pilgrims from across the Diocese, led by Bishop Michael journeyed to Moscow to explore the faith and practice of Russian Christianity.

Deborah Walton and John Binns recall: "The purpose of the ten-day pilgrimage was to gain new experiences and faith and form new relationships: a faith journey as well as a physical journey. Each day had a theme with a visit to a place as a focus for faith-reflection including:

- Familiarisation with the city and culture of Moscow including a visit to the Lutheran Cathedral of St Peter and St Paul where its Dean Lena Bondarenko welcomed us and told us about its ministry.
- The Anglican community – sharing in the eucharist and a delicious shared lunch at St Andrew's Church in Moscow. The chaplain, Revd Canon Malcolm Rogers, was very welcoming and invited Bishop Michael to celebrate and preach.
- A Christian society - the vision of early Russian Orthodoxy for church and



government to work together in building society on Christian principles with visits to Vladimir and Suzdal.

- The suffering church – a visit to the new martyrs' memorial at Butovo Polygon.
- Renewal in the church – an afternoon visit to St Tikhon's Orthodox Humanities University, where we met students. Some of us visited the mausoleum of Lenin and then the most interesting Metro stations as it rained! In

the evening we went to the Bolshoi Theatre.

- The holy men and women – a visit to Sergiev Posad with the shrine of St Sergius of Radonezh.
- Beauty and icons – with a visit to the Tretyakov Gallery, and also the Marfo Marinsky monastery.
- Reflection – with a tour of the Kremlin and further Moscow sights.
- Liturgy and worship – sharing the eucharist with a Russian congregation at Saints Cosmas and Damian Church. We shared lunch with members of the Metropolitan Anthony of Sourozh Foundation before a river cruise and enjoying the sun-soaked sights of Moscow."



Other pilgrims said:

"Experiencing how the Orthodox church connects with all generations in a Sunday service has left me challenged and wondering how the church here might do things differently to encourage intergenerational worship."

"Lilac was everywhere with its wonderful smell and also the beautiful tulips. The ballet was also very much a highlight for me. We were also fortunate to see the 'changing of the guard' at the Kremlin."

"We received such a warm welcome. I was deeply moved by the trip to Butovo and the icons of the modern martyrs in the Cathedral there. The traditional home-cooked lunch was delicious."

Bishop Michael invites people to join him and others on 21 October at Bishop's House at 7pm for supper, to explore what may be next in our ongoing relationship with the Russian churches. RSVP to diana.hill@lichfield.anglican.org with dietary requirements by 4 October.

Learning space for pupils

Almost 1,800 students made the journey to Lichfield Cathedral for an inspirational educational experience.

Reflecting the cathedral's theme of 'Journeys – Space, Light and Time' on the 50th anniversary of the first moon landing, Inspire 2019 saw students engage with 'The Ultimate Journey' at the 1,300-year-old worship site.

Inspire is a three-week educational programme run by the Diocesan Board of Education and Cathedral Education Team which, this year, welcomed pupils and staff from 42 schools across the region.



The workshops included a journey around an inflatable planetarium reflecting space (below), an exploration of the science of music focusing on sound (above), a pilgrimage through time around the cathedral, plus journey across the continents through activities based on faith and climate change challenges.



Diocesan Director of Education Claire Shaw said: "Inspire is an amazing opportunity for mission and education to engage with pupils and staff from across the diocese. Each day pupils were engaged in four workshops, each run by professionals, supported by a bank of wonderful volunteers."



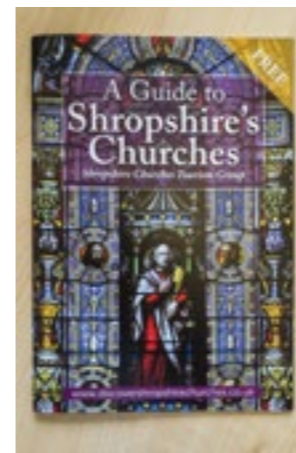
The cathedral's Schools and Learning Manager Alex Nicholson-Ward said: "2019 has certainly been our best year for Inspire. The feedback from students and staff has been universally positive, and it shows how fantastic the Inspire team have been in planning and delivering learning activities which are fun, engaging and profound."

A series of services, concerts and special events mark the moon-landing anniversary at the cathedral this summer. From July to September, 'One Small Step' created by the cathedral's Artist-in-Residence Peter Walker will transform its floor into a lunar landscape giving people the opportunity to walk on the moon and watch galaxies emerge. Meanwhile, 2019's Great Exhibition in August will focus on 'Space: God, the Universe and Everything' featuring stunning sound, light and art installations. Find out more at www.lichfield-cathedral.org

Discover Shropshire

Dozens of Shropshire churches in our diocese are promoting their amazing buildings packed with architecture, music, history, heritage, monuments, carvings and stories of real people.

They are among 100 of the county's churches featured in the Shropshire Churches Tourism Group (SCTG) latest free 24-page brochure, which boasts the impressive stained glass of St Alkmunds, Whitchurch, on its cover.



Nearly a third are in our diocese; all promising a warm welcome to visitors to their historic and beautiful buildings.

Bishop Michael, speaking at the recent SCTG annual general meeting, said the brochure played an important role in helping churches tell our stories.

He added: "As a parish priest for 40 years it was good for the spiritual health of the parish to welcome visitors to our churches."

Thirty-thousand leaflets are being distributed across the county to visitor information centres, member churches and other tourism attractions. The booklet has a map, directions and information about each church for visitors to Shropshire.

SCTG is working to increase visitor numbers to the county's most significant historic buildings. "Shropshire's landscape is littered with

stunning buildings, some of them 1,000-years-old, and our countryside would be very different if it wasn't dotted with towers and spires," said Anne Pilsbury, Chair of SCTG, and an active member of St Oswald's in Oswestry.



The churches featured can be found all over the county, from Llanyblodwel in the north-west corner on the Welsh border to Highley in the south east, Adderley in the north east to Bucknell in the south west, and lots of places in between. Mainly Anglican, the 100 includes also include Roman Catholic, Greek Orthodox, Unitarian and United Reformed churches.

"Inclusion in the brochure guarantees a warm welcome for visitors, not just from far away, but for Salopians and others who have not yet stepped through their local church door. Pick up the brochure or go to our website and see if you can find one you fancy having a look at."



Download the brochure and find out more at www.discovershropshirechurches.co.uk or on Facebook @ [discovershropshirechurches](https://www.facebook.com/discovershropshirechurches)



Amazing churches highlighted in Shropshire include St Oswald's Oswestry (left), Astley (right), Clive (above) and Welsh Frankton (top),



50 years of women Readers

This year marks the 50th anniversary since women were first licensed as Readers and the 40th anniversary of the licensing of one of the longest-serving Readers in the Diocese.

Readers are lay people who have been selected, trained and licensed by the Bishop to preach, teach and lead worship in their local parish or as chaplains. The role of Reader has had a mixed understanding over the years - some mistakenly seeing it as a second-best to clergy, but Bishop Michael is forceful in insisting that it is a distinct and special role:

"Readers are a very important part of the ministry [of the Church] in their own right - they're not just a stop-gap for when we can't get enough clergy," he says. "And I would see Readers in every way enjoying a parity of esteem with clergy. They both serve with the Bishop's Licence and they both represent the ministry of the whole church."



That may not be the experience of older Readers, especially those who are women. Margaret Crowther (right) was licensed forty years ago and recalls trepidation from some clergy at the time:

"I found in the local Methodist churches that it was quite acceptable because they already had women as lay preachers but in the Anglican churches they were still a little wary of a woman taking a leadership role and certainly of preaching. And one or two of the clergy wanted to know exactly what I was going to be saying and whether it fitted with their doctrine as they believed!"

Yet the ministry of a Reader is actually the 'best of both worlds' according to Diocesan Director

of Reader Training, the Revd Dr Jeanette Hartwell: "The advantage of being a Reader is that you are not encumbered with the running of a church. A Reader is free to be able to have a focus to look outwards, to read the pulse of a community in a way perhaps that those whose focus may be inside the church and church building are not able to do. That's one of the great advantages of being a lay theologian."

Bishop Michael agrees: "People sometimes say the word Reader is a bit old-fashioned, but I think it's actually a great word because it's about reading the scriptures but it's also about reading the world we're in."

The full video also hear's from Emma Cardinal (below-right), currently the youngest Reader in the Diocese, and Jean Ainsworth who has just finished her training and will be licensed in Lichfield Cathedral in September.

Although the rules changed in 1969, the first woman to take on the role in Lichfield Diocese was Maureen Kettle who was licensed on 20 May 1973 to the parish of Meole Brace. The Lichfield Diocese Magazine of the time noted that she (unlike any of the men licensed at the same time) had a degree in theology.

Degrees have never been a requirement: while training does involve an amount of study and writing, a passion to reach people and explain scripture in church and to the wider world are more important according to Jeanette.

Find out more about Reader ministry and training at www.lichfield.anglican.org/readers

Putting the house in order

Shallowford House is the diocese's retreat and conference centre set in rolling countryside in the heart of Staffordshire. Set in nine acres of gardens, woodlands and meadows, green-fingered volunteers play a key role in maintaining its grounds.

Annie Sowerbutts, who works at Shallowford and is part of Castle Church in Stafford, explains how monasticism and llamas all play a part:



"Each year Shallowford House hosts a total of three garden working parties in the spring, summer and autumn, recruiting keen gardeners to work together to help improve the grounds and gardens around the house. In

April, 14 volunteers joined together to take on six different projects covering over 400 hours of work between them. The work included weeding flower beds, hanging and painting field gates and creating a wheelchair accessible footpath.

"The workers are encouraged to work as a team with a monastic approach to a daily routine. Along with working together, the group don't only focus on the tasks at hand; they eat, worship and pray together giving a sense of fellowship and being united in faith to gain a feeling of achievement at the finished projects.

"Along with the resident chickens and peacocks



kept and looked after at Shallowford, two alpacas named Bruce and Evan were recently adopted and the Garden Working Party helped to create a new and comfortable environment for them to be welcomed into. These additions, along with our labyrinth and wander path, enable guests to enjoy and embrace the outdoor space as well as the house, as they enjoy being surrounded by, and reminded of, God's creation.

"Anybody who wishes to volunteer any of their time for any forthcoming Garden Working Party events, please contact us at Shallowford House. You are more than welcome to join us, with the chance to meet new people and contribute to such an important and rewarding event."



Find more about Shallowford House and the Diocese's other retreat centre, Dovedale House, at www.lichfield.anglican.org/StChadsRetreatCentres/

Sue and Clare in new roles

Archdeacon of Walsall Sue Weller is taking on a new missions role which will also provide a key link between the diocese and Lichfield Cathedral.



Sue will become Archdeacon Missioner in September – a Lichfield-based post combining the responsibilities of Archdeacon of Lichfield with a Missioner role across the diocese and an attachment at the cathedral.

Sue's new role will provide a link between the missional work of the cathedral and the diocese. As well as teaching, preaching and leading worship at the cathedral she will be part of the diocese's new Mission Team.

Bishop Michael said: "This new, exciting role will be crucial in aligning further the joint mission of the diocese and the cathedral, recognising the enrichment that they bring to each other. It will also bring additional strategic thinking to the Mission Team in our Discipleship, Vocation and Evangelism Department. Sue is absolutely the right person to take on this new role, with her proven experience and commitment to mission and teaching ministry."

After being ordained in 1996, Sue began her ministry as a curate in Caverswall, Weston Coyney and Dilhorne in North Staffordshire, and then served in Wilnecote before serving alongside her husband David who was Chaplain at Christ Church, Rio De Janeiro, Brazil, from 2005-11. She returned to serve in Wednesfield, Darlaston and Moxley before becoming

Archdeacon of Walsall in January 2015.

Sue said: "Working more closely with the cathedral and mission team to explore how we can grow in mission, will be an exciting opportunity to mutually learn from, share and grow in the diocesan vision."

Reflecting on her time in Walsall, she added: "I have had the pleasure of sharing in ministry across all the parishes, in a range of different ways. Seeing God at work when we unite to make His kingdom our priority is truly a blessing. I give my sincere thanks to all I have worked with."

The Dean of Lichfield, the Very Revd Adrian Dorber, said: "It's good to have Archdeacon Sue more closely involved in the life of the cathedral and we're looking forward to building new relationships with the Diocesan Mission Team."

Sue succeeds Simon Baker as Archdeacon of Lichfield after he gave up the role to devote his time to parish ministry. The Archdeacon of Walsall vacancy has been advertised.

Meanwhile, Claire Shaw has been appointed as the new Diocesan Director of Education. Sir Geoff Hampton will take on the role of the Bishop's Strategic Advisor for Education from September.



Bishop Michael said: "These new appointments will strengthen our Diocesan Board of Education. Claire has the opportunity to shape the direction of the Education team and its staffing structure. Sir Geoff has extensive experience as an educationalist and an expert understanding of current issues including academisation."

Brave and ambitious

The new Bishop of Shrewsbury, Sarah Bullock, looks forward to discovering Lichfield Diocese.

When I read the Bible I hear the voices of God's people and their stories of faith. These are not always straightforward or easy, but God is faithful and his heart is for all people to come to know him. In the New Testament we encounter God in his son, Jesus, and the Good News he brings is a message of love and justice for all people.

As Christians we are called to live out this message of love and justice in our relationships as we share in God's transformational work among his people and build communities of hope. Together we need to be open to the transforming message of God's love for us.

As Bishop of Shrewsbury I will be taking every opportunity to connect with people as we journey together



as 'pilgrims on the road', discovering this message of hope for ourselves, our families, friends and communities, through conversation, relationship, worship, prayer and encounter. I believe that God has gifted me with a loving heart and a passion to walk

with others as together we discover our place in God's story and our home in God's heart.

The gospel message is also a call to dynamic living - stimulating progress, hopeful in attitude and encouraging of others as we live the Good News. We need to be brave and ambitious, creative and entrepreneurial if we are to be truly outward-facing believers, engaged with the world.

I am really looking forward to our journey together!

+Sarah Bullock, Bishop of Shrewsbury



From the Editor

Welcome to the summer edition of Spotlight. And welcome to the 18 new curates who we feature on the front page. Good leadership, whether

sporting a dog collar or a blue or white collar in everyday workplaces, schools, colleges and communities, is a key way of modelling Jesus's loving service. Don't forget to encourage the leaders you know – it's not an easy job! Have a great summer.



Come follow Christ
in the footsteps of St Chad

DIARY

Walk with Me

Weekend conference for anyone with BAME heritage to explore lay or ordained ministry. Yarnfield Conference Centre, Stone, 8-10 November. More info at churchofengland.org/ministry-events

Life Events Diary

A day for administrators and clergy to discover more about this new, free online tool for managing pastoral offices. Includes training and free resources. Led by members of the national CoFE team

Thursday 3 October, 10am-3pm. Beacon Centre, Stafford. More at lichfield.anglican.org/LED

Church School Partnership

An information evening about CPAS School Ventures for Yrs 4-5. Learn about these two-night residential adventures supported by CPAS and parish volunteers together.

Wed 17 July 12.30-1.45pm, Trinity Centre, Meole Brace, Shrewsbury. Contact phil.cansdale@trinitychurches.org for details and to book.

For a full listing of events in the Diocese, visit lichfield.anglican.org/events
Let us know about your events by email to comms@lichfield.anglican.org