



DIOCESE OF
LICHFIELD



The Church of England

around Staffordshire, northern
Shropshire and the Black Country



Curacy in the Diocese of Lichfield



Title post in the
parishes of
St Chad, Burton and
St Mary, Stretton



urban | open evangelical

a diverse population and a challenging
economic setting.

suburban | open evangelical

a growing parish that remembers its
days as a village.

Welcome to Lichfield Diocese



**Come follow Christ
in the footsteps of St Chad**

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 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 fellow-bishops 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

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)

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

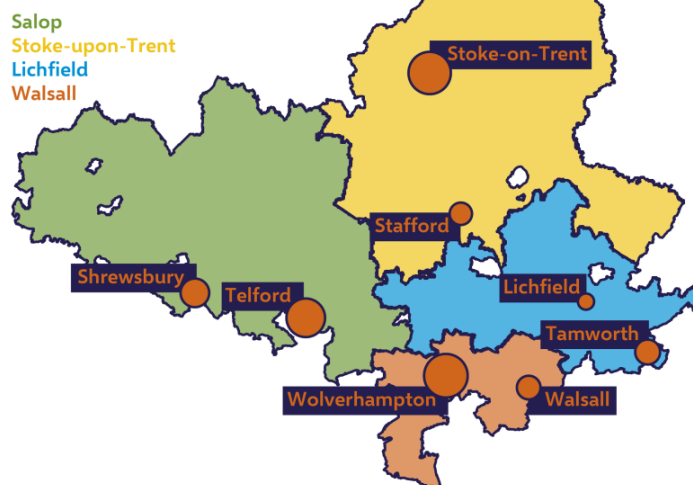
hospice), involvement with local gardening ventures, night-shelter involvement – to mention just a few possibilities.



"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

The Archdeaconries of Lichfield Diocese



Everything but the sea



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

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

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 can provide it. And then there's

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



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 nr Stoke 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 Parishes of St Chad and St Mary



Though the two parishes neighbour each other they are very different, although the church traditions are similar. Burton lies half way between Derby to the north and Lichfield to the south.

Burton remains principally a brewing town, Coors and Marstons still dominate the landscape, though transportation and distribution hubs are now major employers. Stretton is a suburb to the north of Burton from which most working people commute. Toyota is at nearby Burnaston and is the biggest local employer.

St Chad's parish has a population of approximately 7,000. It is an urban priority area amongst the 8% most deprived parishes in England (933rd out of 12382). It is ethnically mixed, 32% of the population identify as not white British. St Mary's by contrast is a comfortable suburb and is identified by Church Urban Fund as amongst the least deprived in the country (10599th out of 12382).

Stretton, where the curate will live, has an excellent primary school (part of a Co-operative Learning Trust) with strong connections with the church and the secondary school is on the edge of the parish.

Both churches have a strong tradition of all member ministry expressed through *Helping Hands* which provides help to individuals in Stretton, lunch clubs, drop-in centre and involvement in the YMCA foodbank and Burton Street Angels. There has been a strong focus on understanding and being active Christians on our 'front lines'.



The Parishes of St Chad and St Mary

Services in the churches:

Worship at both churches is predominantly Eucharistic, lay involvement up front is a feature of each service. Clergy normally wear cassock and surplice.

At St Mary's there is a worship band (guitars, cello, violin, occasional brass and keyboard) the musicians normally choose the hymns and songs in consultation with the preacher of the day. Words of the services are projected. At St Chad music is provided by MP3, hymns books and service booklets are provided, though projection is available. Both churches use predominantly Common Worship, but other styles and liturgies are used from time to time. There are good organs at both churches, but not good organists to play them. They are used for weddings and funerals.

Both churches have kitchen facilities for use after the services and other events at the churches.

St Mary's is used a great deal by local schools (primary and special needs) at Christmas and Harvest.

Sundays in St Chad

1 st	8am Said CW communion 10am Holy Communion
2 nd	8am Said CW communion 10am Holy communion
3 rd	8am Said CW communion 10.30am Souper Sunday Informal and interactive service, different styles welcomed and risks taken. Followed by home-made soup and bread.
4 th	8am Said CW communion 10.00am Holy Communion
5 th	8am Said CW communion 10am Holy Communion
Baptisms	Sunday afternoons

Sundays in St Mary's

1 st	10am Baptism service (Communion when no baptisms)
All other Sundays	10am Holy Communion

The Parishes of St Chad and St Mary

St Chad's church building is Gothic revival, dedicated in 1910. It is a grade 1 listed building, the architect was G F Bodley and the building was paid for by Michael Bass (the brewer) 1st Lord Burton. John Betjamen described it as 'a cathedral on a mean street' and Nicholas Pevsner called it the finest building in Burton. It has a tower with eight bells which are rung each Sunday.

Next to the church is the Community Centre, formally the old mission church before St Chad became a parish of its own. It has been remodelled for community use, on average there are 80 bookings in the centre each month ranging from parents and toddlers to Darby and Joan. Guides, PHAB, the Sikh community, and the NHS use the facilities and the church uses them for a monthly lunch club and weekly drop-in and a youth club as well as other activities.

St Mary's is grade 2* Arts and Crafts church with some particularly fine stained glass. We are part way through a project to remodel the kitchen at the back of the church. There is a ring of six bells, used mainly for weddings in the church tower.

The church hall is used by community groups with approximately 50 bookings a week: scouts,

Slimming World, U3A and other groups, plus a monthly church-run lunch club and Family Church.

The Context

As you will have gathered from the brief introduction above, the two parishes, though neighbouring are very different from each other, though sharing a similar church tradition. The parishes worked together before sharing a single vicar and went into the partnership willingly as a response to the pressures the C of E finds itself in. Working in both parishes means developing good cross-cultural skills. Learning how to work and worship more closely together is still very much a work in progress.

St Chad's parish is a wonderful but impoverished working class parish. The people are genuine, you see what you get and they are straight-talking. They like the area and have a positive relationship to it: people like living here, but if they do well they move away. The population is ethnically mixed and we have a high proportion of people of East European heritage as well. For those who are in work the main type of employment is in distribution, production-line work and brewing, though this last is a declining employer. The quality of housing is quite good, traditional brick terraces

with long gardens, well-maintained social housing and a growing number of small new-build estates on former industrial sites.

Some key statistics:

Child poverty	23%
Pensioner poverty	23%
Working age poverty	14%
No qualifications	29%
Social housing	18%
Lone parenthood	27%
People living on their own	35%
Older population	10%
Ethnic diversity	33%

St Mary's parish is a typical suburb. There has been a vast growth of the parish since the 1960's so that what was a village is now part of the general sprawl of Burton, you have to be a local to know where Stretton begins and Burton ends. There is still an identifiable centre to the parish where the old village was and at the centre the imposing church in its churchyard. The nearby Toyota works is a major employer and many people commute to Birmingham and Derby.

Appearances can be deceptive, there are a number of social housing developments: there are sheltered housing units and a significant group of homes provided by social housing providers for people with addiction and other problems.

The same key statistics for Stretton:

Child poverty	6%
Pensioner poverty	7%
Working age poverty	5%
No qualifications	22%
Social housing	6%
Lone parenthood	19%
People living on their own	26%
Older population	19%
Ethnic diversity	5%

The Ministry

Below we give an outline of some of the things that happen at St Chad and St Mary. When you read it bear in mind that sometimes things work better than at other times. There is the odd misunderstanding or disagreement and what appears on paper may make it sound much better planned than it is in reality. Whatever we do, we try to do it with love.

The curate will work equally across both parishes and take a full part in the church and parish activities. In addition to the Sunday services there is a mid-week Communion at St Mary's which alternates with a prayer meeting and at St Chad a mid-week prayer meeting in the church.

The Parishes of St Chad and St Mary

There are 8 house groups which meet in Stretton on a weekly basis, either during the day or in the evening, which are led by members of the church and a fortnightly evening house group in St Chad's. We are blessed with 3 active Readers and a retired clergy person plus others who take an active part in the worship and service of the church. Clergy and Readers meet regularly as a leadership team in which we reflect on how ministry is going, lessons to learn, both good and bad, and to make plans for the coming period.

Both parishes have adapted the idea promoted by the London Institute of Contemporary Christianity of Frontline Discipleship; the essence of which is to enable us to be faithful Christians in our daily lives



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

and to see the context in which we spend most of our lives, be it at work, at home, or in clubs and pubs as being our vocation in which we are called to be faithful to Jesus. It sounds like a grand idea, most people understand it, but we know we are still very much a work in progress.

It was mentioned above how much the community centre and church hall focus as a centre from which to operate during the week and from which to serve the communities in which we live. In Stretton we also run *Helping Hands* which provides practical assistance to members of the community, such as gardening, decorating, collecting prescriptions etc.

Members of the church are active with the YMCA foodbank, are volunteers with Burton Street Angels and Christians Against Poverty. We are active members of the ecumenical town-wide equivalent of Christians Together. The incumbent is chair of Street Angels and on the Board of Reference for Burton Youth for Christ.

There are five schools in the parishes, none of which are church schools: three primary, one secondary and one special needs for all ages. We have particularly good links with the Stretton primary school, William Shrewsbury, and the special needs school. Both make good use of the church facilities

The Parishes of St Chad and St Mary

for festivals and celebrations. Clergy are frequently in William Shrewsbury for lessons whenever requested. In particular each year we take part in sessions with each of the Year 5 classes talking about death and dying – an initiative started by the school which has been particularly beneficial for the students. The incumbent is a Trustee of the Central Co-operative Learning Trust of which the school is a member.

The average Sunday attendance for St Chad is 33 and 68 for St Mary, the comparative worshipping communities are 68 and 158. During 2019 the two churches had 26 baptisms, 8 weddings and 33 funerals. There is a team of baptism visitors at St Mary, who will visit each family who are having a child baptised and the churches jointly hold a weddings day each year on the Saturday as close to St Valentine's day that we can manage.

The PCCs at both churches are good PCCs. The meetings can be rigorous, but never rancorous. You will have the opportunity to be part of the meetings and in due course chair them as well.

There is a part time administrator based at St Mary's church office, who makes sure that everything that should happen does actually happen.

Both churches want to learn and to become better as disciples of Jesus and servants in our communities. We want to model Jesus as best we can. As a curate we hope you will come with new ideas and a keenly observing eye. We will want to learn new things from you and for you to have ideas that we can adopt in order to do our ministry better. We are open to change.

The Parishes of St Chad and St Mary

Your Training Incumbent



Revd Dr George Crossley

113 Hunter Street, Burton upon Trent, DE14 2SS

- Trained: Northern Ordination Course
- Ordained: 1994
- Curacy: St Mary, Balderstone, Rochdale
- Vicar at St Chad since 2009 and St Mary since 2016

I studied at Bradford and completed a PhD there in 1984. Following a brief spell as a BBC researcher I became Nuclear Free Zones officer for Leeds City Council. Following my curacy in Rochdale I became vicar of Branston and Tatenhill on the outskirts of Burton. I then spent a number of years specialising as Paediatric Chaplain at Queen's Hospital. I have been a training incumbent since 2013.

I am married and we have 5 grown up children and 4 grandchildren, with another on the way. Personal interests include brewing and bread making (and consuming the same) and I have a love for Early and Middle English literature.

In approaching a curacy I appreciate it is a really exciting and challenging time. My hope and intent

is to make it enjoyable and formative. It should be a time in which new things are tried, risks taken and lessons learned. I also expect to learn a lot from a curate as well as offering experience and I hope wisdom, from my continued learning. A curate should be more fully her or himself as a minister after curacy and not a clone of their training incumbent.

A curate comes to a parish with a wide range of skills and experiences – these will be built on and fully acknowledged. I see my role as helping a curate to explore his or her calling in a safe and supportive environment, allowing them to explore and develop the gifts they already have and to help and guide them in working through things outside their experience or comfort zone. We are safe to fail and to rejoice in our successes. It is an opportunity to develop spirituality which sustains in parish life, explore theological understanding and the practices of the Church of England. There will be plenty of opportunity to encourage, challenge and to discover new skills and to hone many that are already developing.

The curate will be fully supported in the time required to complete IME tasks and will be required to take their full complement of holidays and days off.

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 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 DDO 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: 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.



Many second year curates have the opportunity to grow through visits to our link dioceses in Canada, Africa, or Germany– this group enjoying a day on safari.

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 DDO (details on back cover) or visit Lichfield.anglican.org/curacy

“We have had amazing support from the diocese over the past 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



Curacy in Lichfield Diocese

For further information

In the first instance, please contact:

The Revd Romita Shrisunder,

Bishops' Director of Ordinands

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07949 033091 [M]

E-mail: romita.shrisunder@lichfield.anglican.org

Find us on:

ACHurchNearYou:

achurchnearyou.com/church/4194/ (St Chad)

achurchnearyou.com/church/4527/ (St Mary)

Website:

www.stchadstmary.org.uk/

Facebook:

facebook.com/Strettonchurch

Twitter:

[@vicargeorge](https://twitter.com/vicargeorge)

YouTube:

youtube.com/channel/UCgknwCxLPiYbegWIWhFiB8A

St Chad and St Mary

Enter to worship, to receive, to serve the church.

Leave to worship, to give, to serve the community.

Mission is the action of God and as a church we are called to identify what he is doing locally and join in. Our main focus is on developing whole-life disciples in which the church as individuals and corporately are equipped to be missionaries on their frontline: to bring the needs of the world into the church and the church into the needs of the world.

Burton upon Trent is in the centre of England and renowned for its brewing industry. It is a lively compact town with easy access to the countryside or the cities of Derby and Birmingham and just 12 miles from Lichfield.

The two parishes, whilst sharing a single church tradition, could not be more diverse. We have everything to offer from town centre to quiet suburb. The two parishes offer the chance for cross-cultural engagement, active involvement in meeting the social, spiritual and physical needs of the people who live here. The parishes cover the range from multi-cultural urban setting to well-to-do commuter belt with their more disguised needs.

You will find yourself in a supportive setting in which you will be free to experiment, learn and teach. We know that you will come already gifted and with skills which we will want to learn from and build upon so that you are as fully equipped as possible to take your calling on a further stage.