

Come follow Christ



DIOCESE OF  
LICHFIELD

in the footsteps of St Chad



Curacy in the Diocese  
of Lichfield

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Title post in the  
Parish of  
Chell



Two sub/urban churches

open 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

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.

*+Michael Lich:*  
**+ 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

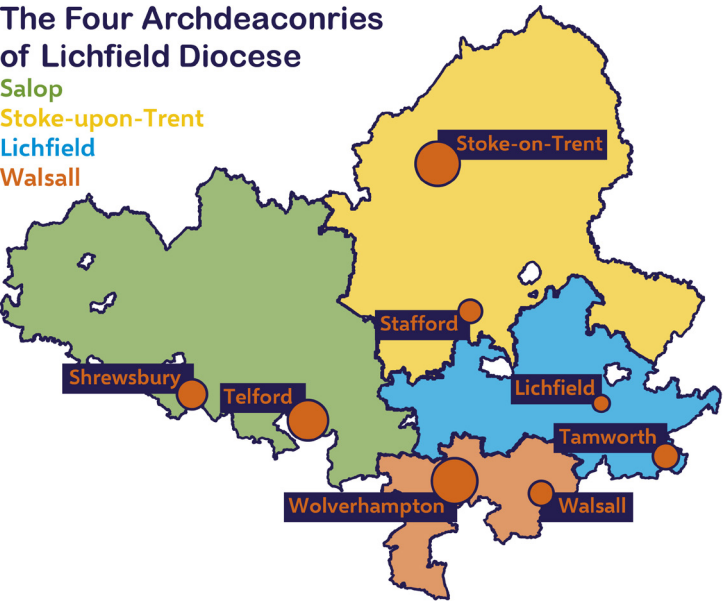
Our vision for the diocese is that all people, lay and ordained alike, will grow ever more deeply into their vocation as disciples of Christ. We hope to become a Church where all our members are equipped to know they are called by God to worship and to be the eyes, hands, feet and mouth of Christ in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





# 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 Chell



The Parish of Chell is in the northern most part of the Potteries conurbation. On one side it faces Tunstall and the city of Stoke on Trent, on the other side is open countryside leading quickly to the distinctive rugged horizon of the Staffordshire Moorlands.

There are three primary and junior schools, one special school and one secondary school – all local authority controlled, plus one Roman Catholic secondary school.

There are two care/nursing homes; one sheltered housing home and one retirement complex.



Chell Parish is a combination of two former parishes: Great Chell and Chell Heath and there are still two churches in this single benefice. The parish is a former mining community, covering the area of Chell, Chell Heath, Fegg Hayes and Wedgwood Farm estate. It has a current population of around 15,000 residents.

There is a small supermarket, post office, hairdresser, working men’s club, petrol station and chemist nearby in Chell.

The city centre provides all the main town centre shops along with a modern shopping mall, within 5 miles of the parish.

The Parish of Chell consists of a number of distinctive communities, of which Chell Heath is the largest, with a population of approximately 4,500, and is an Urban Priority Area. Chell Heath has its own small collection of shops and a small café. It is the 16th most socially deprived area in the UK.

The parish is overwhelmingly residential with houses of all types (private and social housing) and conditions; the area does not fit the usual profile of a suburb. In many ways the variety makes it more interesting.

There are three areas of the parish which are officially recognised as areas of deprivation:

Chell Heath, Fegg Hayes and Mill Hill.

Chell Area Family Action Group, (CAFAG), is supported by the church, with three members being trustees and one member being employed by them. This group is based in Fegg Hayes, at the Whitfield Valley Centre, and has various community facilities and was previously the venue for our Messy Angels (Messy Church for Chell Parish).

Parts of the parish carry reminders of its industrial past with its mining and ceramic industry and owing to the geography of the area; there are always views of the hills.

There is a ministry team of the Incumbent, an SSM Associate Minister (former curate), a priest with PTO, three Occasional Leaders, one Occasional Preacher and a family worker who is also a Locally Commissioned Lay Minister. These are supported by two parish wardens, two pistrict wardens and a part time parish administrator.



## Services in the churches

In both churches there is a mix of traditional, modern and contemporary hymns and songs used in the Sunday Morning services, whether it is Morning Worship or a Service of Holy Communion.

Choir dress and stole is the agreed norm for St Michaels for the clergy with smart casual (jacket and trousers/suit) at Church of the Saviour, except for occasional offices when it is choir dress and stole.

Our Evening services are reserved for special services such as our Living with Loss and Carols by Candlelight – there are proposals to extend these to include Healing and Outreach services.

Music is played by our very capable keyboard player and organist, with the potential for a music group.





# The Parish of Chell



Liturgy uses Common Worship supplemented by (permissible) alternate worship liturgy.

There is a weekly service of said Holy Communion on a Thursday morning. We have occasional evening services such as ‘Living with Loss’ and Carols by Candlelight with others planned (see our Vision Sermon online)

We have a healthy number of Baptisms which mainly take place at 12.45pm on a Sunday and these are very family friendly and we do get families returning because of the positive impact of these Baptism services.

Historically both churches have had a steady number of funerals throughout the year, which in themselves offer the opportunity to minister to our community.

We have seen a growth in the number of Weddings with six already booked for 2022 and two booked for 2023.

We have five schools in the parish with very close links with one of them where we are involved with monthly Bible Storytime; term time assemblies and asked to teach once a year on the events of Easter; with Messy Church held in school once a term (attendance 150-180, children and parents).



# The Parish of Chell

I served my title in St James’s Church, Lower Darwen, Lancs. (Blackburn Diocese) where I was also Minister in Secular Employment (MSE) at Cornerstone Practice, Shadsworth Surgery, Blackburn, Lancs. where I was employed part time as the Facilities and Operations Manager; hence I was part time in both the parish and lay employment, until I had ‘change of status’ in 2016 and moved to my present stipendiary post.

Prior to my employment in the NHS, I worked for Paper Mills in the UK for 30 years in Sales and Business Development travelling throughout much of the country during that time.

My wife and I are both Friends and Companions of Scargill Movement, Kettlewell, North Yorkshire (York Diocese) and follow their [rule of life](#);

We have three adult children and six grandchildren. I enjoy walking, photography, music (I play various different guitars and a mandolin), cooking, caravanning, reading and gardening.

My leadership style is collaborative.

Given my experience as a SSM/MSE as well as a stipendiary minister I feel that I have something to offer either a SSM or stipendiary curate and in that with a curate of either status, there would be empathy and understanding of their work life balance.

## The ministry

The [Vision Sermon](#) ([chellparish.org.uk/sermons/vision-sermon-2022-3-4-2022/](#)) from April 2022 is probably a good place to start to understand the ministry in Chell parish:

The church one line mission statement is ‘A Church in the Community, a Church for the Community’

Hospitality runs through all that we do in Chell Parish; hospitality to all within our church activities and likewise in every outreach activity.

Ecclesiastical tradition: Open Evangelical (both churches)

## The Congregations in numbers:

Figures from 2021	
Electoral Roll	50
Average Sunday Attendance Adults	45
Average Sunday Attendance Children	5
Baptisms	8
Marriages	1
Funerals	38

Ministry is varied within the parish; there is a weekly Bible Study led by our Reader Emeritus (who is also the parish administrator); M Tots – our weekly group for pre-school age children and their Carers; Grapevine Community Café every Wednesday; services in local care homes; there are activities and services in Burnwood Community School. There is the community pantry that runs each week from Church of the Saviour and is a lifeline for that sector of our



community; it’s a key time to make connections with people and families who are finding life tough. There are currently 130 households who



are members of our Chell Parish Pantry. There are also seasonal Bible Studies which are held in the rectory.

There is also a mens group which meets once a quarter.

The two churches also run summer & Christmas Fayres; again these are times for face to face interaction with our community.

We run a Christmas Tree Festival each year where we erect a total of 37 trees (with lights) across both churches and different church groups, local community groups and businesses are invited to come and decorate a tree in a style that reflects who they are – this is a





## The Parish of Chell



fantastic opportunity for outreach as the festival runs from Advent until the New Year.

We work on a team approach in the different areas of ministry in both churches. Thus for anyone coming as a curate into our parish, the 'chemistry' has to be right; the dynamic is important, other skills can be learned, after all that is why a curacy is a time of training.

A simple test of the success of the collaborative approach is that our PCCs only have to be held once a quarter and they typically last no more than 1.5 hours.

Looking to the specific ministry of the curate; potentially after a period of supervision the curate may be given (supervised) specific responsibility for Church of the Saviour (the smaller church in the benefice) as a precursor



"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

to them moving on to their first post of sole responsibility. There would be the distinct possibility the curate being given (supervised) responsibility for the school's link and work with one the five schools in the parish

Further to the task centred roles and areas of responsibility outlined above, the curate would have personal responsibility for their Christian integrity. This will embrace both conduct (courtesy, honesty, financial probity) and personal and professional relationships. That he/she should take;

- **a day off each week (plus 2 days together once a month)**
- **their annual holiday entitlement for stipendiaries which is six weeks, including 6 Sundays.**
- **There should be time: for family and friends, for reading and academic work, for other interests.**
- **A clear understanding as to the involvement of the curate's household and their attitude towards how/if their home is used for any parish activities.**

Chell Parish as a whole is committed as a training parish and embraces the understanding that it takes a parish to train a curate; and Chell parish is very willing and able.



In conclusion; how do the churches in the relevant parish see themselves?

"We will reflect God's love through our worship and our life together so that others will experience the fellowship of Father, Son and Holy Spirit in their lives."

## 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.

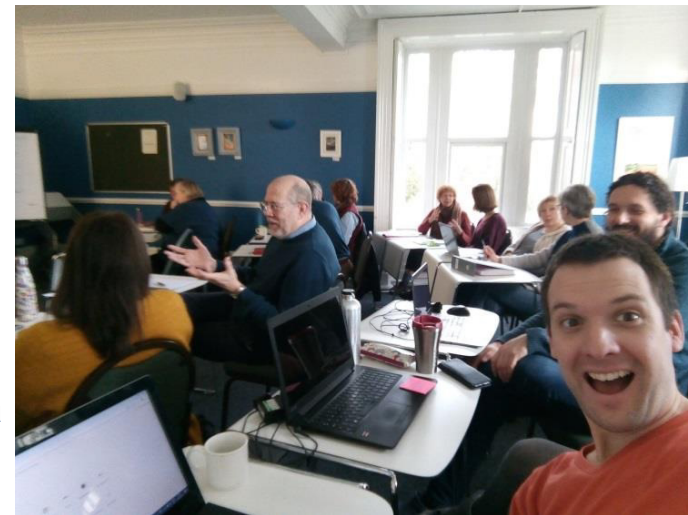
The programme provides space and an environment beyond the parish context in which curates come together with skilled tutors to learn with and from each other's shared experience, so that they can better integrate their practice and reflection, develop their personal qualities, spiritual, ministerial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



## 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](http://lichfield.anglican.org/curacy)

"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





# Curacy in Lichfield Diocese

## For further information

In the first instance, please contact:

**The Revd Romita Shrisunder,**

Bishops' Director of Ordinands

[M] 07949 033091

[E] [romita.shrisunder@lichfield.anglican.org](mailto:romita.shrisunder@lichfield.anglican.org)

## Find us on:

ACChurchNearYou:

**St. Michael & All Angels:**

[achurchnearyou.com/church/4220/](http://achurchnearyou.com/church/4220/)

**Church of the Saviour:**

[achurchnearyou.com/church/4221/](http://achurchnearyou.com/church/4221/)

Website:

[www.chellparish.org.uk](http://www.chellparish.org.uk)

Facebook:

[facebook.com/profile.php?id=100086997462329](https://facebook.com/profile.php?id=100086997462329)

## The Parish of Chell

between the city of  
Stoke-on-Trent and  
the beauty of the  
Peak District

“We will reflect God’s love through  
our worship and our life together  
so that others will experience the  
fellowship of Father, Son and Holy  
Spirit in their lives.”

It takes a parish to train a curate;  
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