

Come follow Christ



DIOCESE OF
LICHFIELD

in the footsteps of St Chad



Curacy in the Diocese
of Lichfield



Title post in the
Parishes of
St Michael and St Mary,
Lichfield and
St John, Wall



Two suburban churches
on the edge of an ancient
cathedral city.
catholic/eucharistic

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

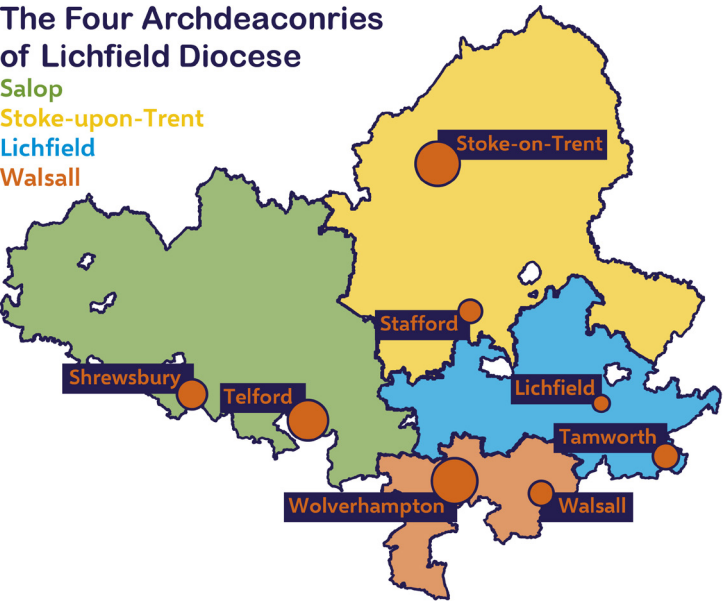
Our vision for the diocese is that all people, lay and ordained alike, will grow ever more deeply into their vocation as disciples of Christ. We hope to become a Church where all our members are equipped to know they are called by God to worship and to be the eyes, hands, feet and mouth of Christ in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



The Parish of St Michael and St Mary takes up about a third of Lichfield city centre, along with the residential areas to the East of the city. Lichfield is a beautiful city with a typical cathedral city feel and lots of historical places of interest. There is plenty for all ages to do, including the shops, cafes and bars of the city centre and the parks and surrounding countryside. There are several schools in the Parish, both primary and secondary, a GP surgery and a community hospital. Cannock Chase is within easy reach, as is Birmingham, via car or train. Traditionally Lichfield has been a popular place to retire to, with a demographic shifted towards older adults but this has changed in recent years with lots of new housing in the area bringing more diversity to the city, and younger age groups. St Michael's is a friendly, lively Church set on top of a hill to the East of the city centre.

Wall Parish consists of a small village to the south of Lichfield with its surrounding farmland, but now takes in some of the new housing developments in the South of the city, which also include a newly built primary school. The Church at Wall has a friendly but traditional feel and sits just next to the Wall Roman Site. Both parishes are a wonderful place to live and work, and the congregations and communities are a joy to minister with.



St John's is a middle-of-the-road traditional Anglican Church and St Michael's is a little more catholic. Both Churches have a variety of theological viewpoints represented within them and celebrate this. Both congregations are welcoming and affirming of LGBTQ+ people. St Michael's Church is working towards a Silver Eco Church Award and becoming an inclusive Church.



and St John, Wall

Services in the churches:

The worship at both Churches centres around the Eucharist and ministers wear vestments. At St Michael's servers assist us in our Eucharistic worship, and at both Churches lay people lead the readings and intercessions. Preaching varies in style and often focuses on issues of justice. At St Michael's our music is led by either the organ and the choir or our music group at family praise. We enjoy a mixture of traditional and contemporary styles. We have a new Junior Choir as well who often sing at family praise and special services. At St John's we worship with traditional hymns accompanied by the organ. Both Churches have a calendar of special services throughout the year, including Holy week and Easter, Advent and Epiphany Carol services, Christingle and "Hymns and Pimms".



Buildings / Community

Both St Michael's and St John's are attractive historical buildings with large Churchyards which are open to burials. St Michael's Churchyard is of great historical interest, being one of the 5 ancient burial grounds and is also one of the largest Churchyard's in the country at 9 acres. It is a beautiful gift and we are committed to making it available for the whole community to benefit from, as well as nurturing the wildlife who inhabit it which



Service time

	St Michael's & All Angels	St John's
1st	8am Holy Communion (BCP) 10am Family Praise	Sundays 10am Holy Communion (CW traditional language)
2nd	8am Holy Communion (BCP) 10am Holy Communion (CW) 4.30pm Messy Church	Sundays 10am Holy Communion (CW traditional language)
3rd	8am Holy Communion (BCP) 10am Holy Communion (CW) 6pm Evensong	Sundays 10am Holy Communion (CW traditional language)
4th	8am Holy Communion (BCP) 10am Holy Communion (CW)	Sundays 10am Holy Communion (CW traditional language)
5th	8am Holy Communion (BCP) 10am Holy Communion (CW)	Sundays 10am Holy Communion (CW traditional language)

St Michael's also opens on Wednesday for 9.30am Holy Communion and Thursdays for 9.30am Morning Prayer

The Parishes of St Michael and St Mary, Lichfield

includes many species of tree, wildflower and fungus, small mammals, foxes and insects. We have a herb garden, tree nursery, meadows and conservation areas.

At St Michael’s we are in the middle of a building project, and we hope soon to have a ‘parish rooms’ building next to the Church, giving us a large meeting room and office space as well as kitchen facilities.

Your Training Incumbent

Revd Dr Abbie Walsh

St Michael’s Rectory, St Michael Road, Lichfield, WS136SN / rev.abbie.walsh@gmail.com / 07395 500745

- **Trained:** Queen’s Foundation
- **Ordained:** 2018 Lichfield
- **Curacy:** St Peter’s Wolverhampton
- **Vicar since** 2022

I was ordained deacon in 2018 and priest in 2019 in the diocese of Lichfield. I trained part-time at The Queen’s Foundation and before ordination I was a GP in Manchester. My curacy was in the parish of Central Wolverhampton, based at St Peter’s Collegiate Church. I have been the rector of St Michael’s and St John’s since 2022 and also assistant rural dean since 2022. I am a member of diocesan synod and the diocesan ‘Green Team’. I have loved working in Lichfield with the congregations I minister with, and I hope you would too!

My passions are transformative worship centred around the Eucharist, schools ministry, care for creation and bringing a sense of joy and humour to all that I do. My leadership style is collaborative and informal and I believe that any challenge must be matched by support. I



St John’s Church is kept open in the day as much as possible and often attracts passing walkers or visitors to the Roman site. The Church itself and Churchyard are peaceful and attractive.



and St John, Wall

care deeply about the wellbeing of those I work with and I hope to support them in taking the rest they need as well as giving them space to pursue their own passions and callings.



The Congregations in numbers:

Figures from 2019	St Michael’s Lichfield	St John’s Wall
Electoral Roll	149	33
Average Sunday Attendance Adults	78	12
Average Sunday Attendance Children	7	0
Baptisms	23	6
Marriages	4	2
Funerals	21	5

Context

The two parishes offer contrasting contexts - of urban/suburban and rural, but share one thing in common- the large housing estates being built in both parishes, which represent a challenge for the city but also a huge mission opportunity. Although the areas appear affluent, poverty exists here but is often hidden and people are sometimes reluctant to access help.

St Michael’s parish has within it 6 schools, including our own Church of England Primary school, a secondary school and a school for children with special needs. St John’s parish has the exciting opportunity of a new school being built in the parish with the first intake in September 2023.

We have a ministry team of 11 people, both lay and ordained, who work across both parishes and offer a diversity of experience, style and wisdom. Along with our excellent wardens, efficient parish administrator and gifted musicians, and many others they make up a team who support one another and work well together. There are good relationships between different denominations in the city, and we frequently meet to pray together. Much of the schools work across the city is ecumenical and we worship together on Good Friday and other occasions through the year.



The Parishes of St Michael and St Mary, Lichfield

The ministry

A curacy at St Michael's and St John's would offer a varied experience of two contrasting parish contexts, with lots to do and get involved in. We have diverse worship, a busy calendar of social events and lots of weddings, baptisms and funerals. You would have plenty of opportunities to preach and to plan and lead worship, but a large ministry team means you wouldn't be overburdened with rota commitments. The team will be great to learn from - they are kind, supportive and all have unique styles and interests!

We are a community that believes in making the love of God known to the people in our parishes and we work hard to serve the community. We have family film clubs in the holidays with free lunches, services in nursing homes, a homework



"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

club for vulnerable children and offer free churchyard nature days, among many other activities. The congregations and PCCs are engaged and supportive and we have good relationships with the local community. The congregations are genuinely welcoming and bring cake to everything. We hope you would enjoy being part of all that!

You would have experience of working with a wonderful Church school and the opportunity to get involved with our children's work, including Messy Church and Junior Choir. We have several other schools in the parish and would love to develop our relationships with them. There are loads of opportunities for ministry to adults and older people as well.

A building project and open graveyards would give you a chance to get to grips with the legalities and pastoral complexities of churchyards, faculties etc, while being fully supported with this.

Whilst learning the rhythm of life as a priest, and developing confidence in leading services, occasional offices and caring pastorally for our community, you would also have the freedom to develop your own interests in ministry and would be fully supported with this. We would love a curate to bring their own ideas

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and passions so that we can learn from each other. We have significant challenges ahead in growing our congregations, finding ways to serve our community and seek justice in the world, and in reaching out to those who do not yet know Jesus and we hope that we could work together on this.

You would be encouraged to take your days off and to take advantages of opportunities for study and experience outside the parish alongside your parish commitments.



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.

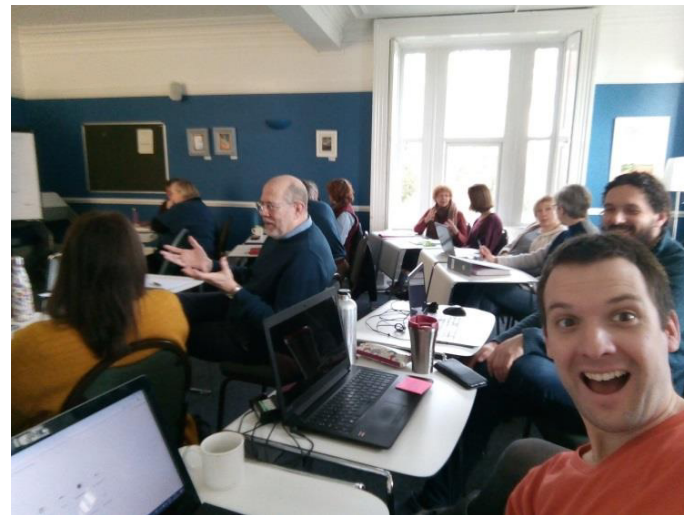
The programme provides space and an environment beyond the parish context in which curates come together with skilled tutors to learn with and from each other's shared experience, so that they can better integrate their practice and reflection, develop their personal qualities, spiritual, ministerial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

"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 Preb Romita Shrisunder,
Bishops' Director of Ordinands
[M] 07949 033091
[E] romita.shrisunder@lichfield.anglican.org

Find us on:

ACChurchNearYou:

St Michael's:
achurchnearyou.com/church/4362/

St John's:
achurchnearyou.com/church/4364/

Website:
stmichaelmaryjohn.org.uk

Facebook:
facebook.com/profile.php?id=100070662314469

Twitter:
[@st_michaels_lic](https://twitter.com/st_michaels_lic)

As we follow Christ in the footsteps of St Chad, we pray that the people in our parish encounter a church that is confident in the gospel, knows and loves the community, and is excited to find God already at work in the world.

We pray for a church that:

- reflects the richness and variety of our community and is intentionally inclusive.
- partners with others, especially St Michael's School, in seeking the common good and working for a more just world.
- recognises and responds to God's call to be good stewards of creation.
- offers opportunities for everyone to grow in faith and active discipleship.