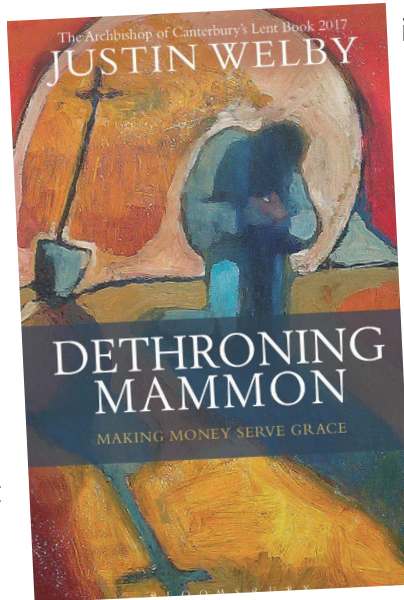


Spotlight

Jan/Feb 2017

This year's Lent Book is 'Dethroning Mammon: Making Money Serve Grace' just published by the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby.

"I was really encouraged to hear there was a great uptake of the 2016 Lent Book across the Diocese," says Bishop Michael. "And there's a real benefit in focusing on particular themes for a season.



in 2017's Bishop's Lent Appeal, [see page 3] raising funds to support refugees and asylum seekers, people forced out of stable societies and still left financially excluded when they reach a place of safety."

Following the Gospels towards Easter, Dethroning Mammon reflects on the impact of our attitudes, and of the pressures that surround us, on how we handle the power of money. Who will be on the throne of our lives? Who will direct our actions and attitudes? Is it Jesus Christ, who brings truth, hope and freedom? Or is it Mammon, so attractive, so clear, but leading us into

Grace and Money



Andy Walton from the Centre for Theology & Community led the Selwyn Study Day last autumn at which over 200 people also had the chance to learn about the support and resources available around the diocese to help churches serve their communities.

"So the 2017 Lent book follows on from last autumn's Selwyn Lecture in looking at our attitudes to money and the effects it has on us and society around us. It is also a theme we will pick up

paths that tangle, trip and deceive? Archbishop Justin encourages us to use Lent as a time of learning to trust in the abundance and grace of God.

Dethroning Mammon features study questions suitable for small groups. In addition, the Diocese is producing study materials for young people. It is available for order until 27 January 2017 from the Diocese at a substantial discount of £6 per copy.



There will be a number of collection points across the diocese (see <https://www.lichfield.anglican.org/2017-lent-book/>) for books, which must be paid for in advance and can be ordered in single or multiple copies. Alternatively, they can be posted at an added cost. For details see www.lichfield.anglican.org/2017-lent-book/



DIOCESE OF
LICHFIELD



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

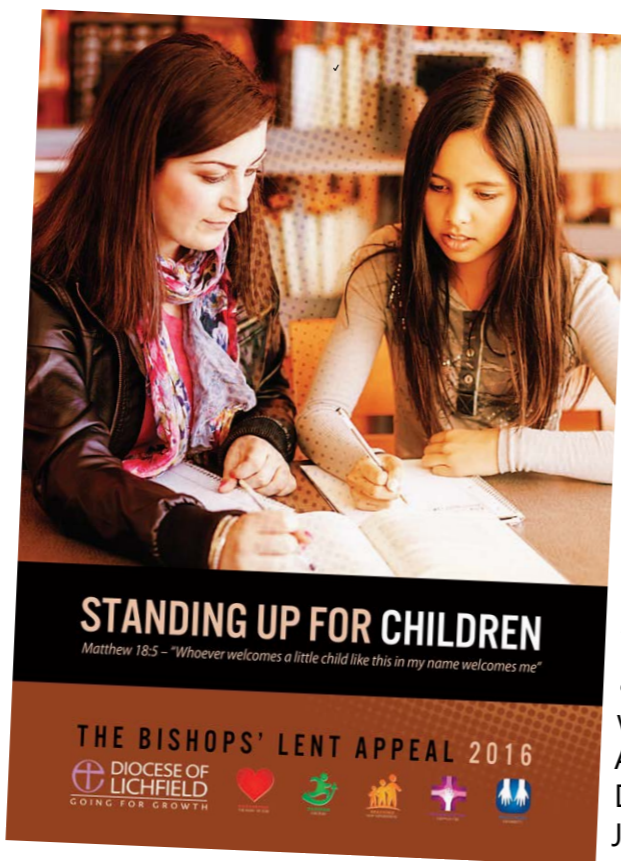
The Bishop's Lent Appeal

I was a stranger...

Looking back at 2016

Gifts to the 2016 Bishop's Lent Appeal were split between two charities, The Church of England's Children's Society and Friends of the Holy Land (FHL).

Sarah Shelton, the Children's Society's Diocesan Representative, said: "I would like to express my heartfelt thanks for all the Diocese has done to support our work. 2016 was yet again another amazing year for us - to be chosen as a charity to benefit from the Bishop's Lent Appeal was incredible. I have been fortunate to visit many churches to give updates on our work. Thanks for all your prayers, campaign actions and generous donations. Including the Lent Appeal, more than £130,000 has been given, raised from Christingle services, house boxes, coffee mornings to our committees hosting local events.



of Christians has reduced to less than two per cent as people are forced to emigrate for a better life for their children elsewhere.

"FHL works closely with all Christian denominations in the region and especially with the Anglican Diocese of Jerusalem. The Diocese

"Sadly, it is a painful fact that many children and young people suffer extreme hardship, abuse and neglect. Too often their problems are ignored and their voices unheard. We are proud of our historic and strong relationship with the Church, who plays a vital role in our work. We want to work with every church in the Diocese so together, we can change the lives of many, more children."

manages 34 different educational and medical institutions, despite a congregation of only 7,000. The project to fund school fees for the poorest Christian students in ten families at Christ Church Episcopal School in Nazareth from the generous donations across Lichfield Diocese is bringing benefit to both the Diocese and the families.



"I visited the school in November and met the Director, The Venerable Samuel Barhoum, and many teachers and students. Eighty per cent of the 1,100 students are Muslim. As Archdeacon Samuel told me, 'they fight to have their children educated here!'"

Contact FHL's Diocesan Coordinator, the Very Revd Adrian Dorber (adrian.dorber@lichfield-cathedral.org) or find out more at www.friendsoftheholylan.org.uk

If you're interested in having Sarah speak at your church or want to know about becoming a volunteer speaker for the charity email sarah.shelton@childrenssociety

Peter Rand, FHL Chairman, said: "FHL were delighted to be a beneficiary of last year's Lent Appeal. Over 90 per cent of our grants directly help the most needy Christians in the community. Achieving a good education is essential to secure employment and maintain a Christian presence in the West Bank, Gaza and Israel where the number

Looking forward to 2017

This year's Bishop's Lent Appeal will follow the theme of supporting asylum seekers and refugees both at home and abroad.

We have all been shocked and appalled by the images of refugees in the media in recent years - fleeing Syria, risking and losing life crossing the Mediterranean looking for safety in Europe. And we meet those seeking asylum from other oppressive and murderous regimes in Africa and the Middle East. The lucky ones may be safe, but even once in the relative safety of Europe are often left destitute as while due process assesses their claim, they have no right to shelter, food or the dignity of using their skills to work and contribute to society.



Through USPG, we will support the immediate plight of refugees arriving in Greece.

And working with our own Transforming Communities Together partnership, we will support projects working with asylum seekers in our own region.

Around 62,000 refugees and migrants are currently stranded in Greece. While a third are in apartments, hotels or with host families, 40,000 remain in pre-fabricated containers and canvas tents which provide little



protection from cold weather and which weren't designed for long-term accommodation.



Meanwhile, refugees continue to arrive each week and this puts further pressure on an already stretched system in Greece. For example, on the island of Samos, a centre designed to host 850 people is currently hosting almost 2,500 people in lightweight tents intended for summer camping.

There are many local projects run in churches and communities around the diocese that count asylum seekers and refugees as their clients. So the 'home' portion of this year's appeal will assist a variety of those programmes.



This year's Lent Appeal helps to tackle both urgent and ongoing needs.

Do you support any local project that in part helps asylum-seekers and refugees?
To nominate it as a beneficiary, use the form on the website www.lichfield.anglican.org/lent-appeal or email tc@lichfield.anglican.org before Easter with the name of your church and details of that project. Allocations will be made in July, and we will then be providing additional resources in support of this ministry.

Faith Under Fire

“We found so many Christians who daily risk their lives to minister in Jesus’ name.”



Helen Gilbert, Warden at Aldridge Parish Church, recently visited the Diocese of Jos in Nigeria. She tells us more here:

“I was privileged to walk in the shoes of Christian believers in Jos, Nigeria. As Chair of Trustees of HART (Humanitarian Aid Relief Trust), I was the guest of Bishop Benjamin Kwashi, together with Caroline (Baroness) Cox and members of our staff.

“Early missionaries settling in Jos left a strong Christian heritage, a heritage that has been under attack since the late 1990s. The 2014 abduction of Chibok schoolgirls raised global awareness of Boko Haram’s militancy but the abduction of thousands more women and girls remains unreported. We talked to bishops, clergy, parliamentarians, human rights activists and a military officer engaged in active combat against both Boko Haram and other radical insurgent groups. We saw the shells of churches burned and where suicide bombers have taken the lives of countless worshippers. Travelling to rural areas, we saw the ruins of pastors’ homes, destroyed villages and heard personal accounts

of women and girls raped or abducted and communities displaced, driven off their land. Children told of seeing their parents massacred, in some cases beheaded. Some children bear the scars of machete attacks; all are deeply traumatised.



“Yet, we found so many Christians who daily risk their lives to minister in Jesus’ name. One pastor who had remained in his village despite an anticipated attack told us, ‘I am a pastor, the shepherd does not leave his sheep.’ Bishop Ben reminds his people, ‘If our faith is worth living for, it is a faith that is worth dying for.’

Reaching New Generations

The start of 2017 sees the Diocese’s RNG team, which supports parishes in their work with children and young people, return to full strength. Jon White describes how influential key adults can be on young disciples.



“My wife and I were chatting to a former young person of ours a while back. We kept in touch when she outgrew the youth club, and still meet with her occasionally now we’ve moved to Lichfield.

“She was telling us how much life has changed for her: she moved in with her best friend, learned loads about living independently (heating costs loads when a flat is damp, food shopping is cheaper when you have a list – who knew!) and is thriving in a business administration apprenticeship. Looking back over the years we have known her (six for my wife, three for me), there have been ups and downs (making good decisions is difficult sometimes), but we love that we’re a part of her life, and that she knows that we’re in her corner despite living far away.

“Some of you recognise this story from your own church – you’re making it happen yourself: the young parents that came five years ago to get their baby baptised and found an extended family; the child at Sunday Club that never spoke at all six months ago, but has found her voice today; the lad that was kicked out of the other youth groups, but thrives at yours. Others of you recognise this experience because you were that child or young person some years back. Still others of you may read this and think ‘I want some of that for my church, but I have no idea where to begin.’



“Whichever group you belong to, the Reaching New Generations Team (RNG) – myself (11s-18s), Laura Edwards (0-5s Enabler) and Libby Leech (5-11s and Schools Enabler) - would love to work with you. We exist to inspire, equip and support work with 0-18s across the Diocese of Lichfield. To see what we do, visit lichfield.anglican.org/rng. Alternatively, email us at rng@lichfield.anglican.org.”



The RNG team: Jon, Libby (left) and Laura (above).



“It was deeply humbling to walk alongside Christians suffering relentless persecution yet who demonstrate such great joy and determination, not just holding fast to their faith, but reaching out in love to bring Christian and Muslim communities together in reconciliation. As we broke bread together we experienced the exuberant joy in their worship but we also shared in their pain and sorrow. In the words of the Hebrew letter these are people, ‘of whom the world is not worthy.’ We must not neglect to tell their story, learn from them and hold them in our prayers.”

Thy Kingdom Come

Christians across the Diocese are being invited to play their part in Thy Kingdom Come 2017.

Thy Kingdom Come is a global prayer movement which the Archbishop of Canterbury is asking people around the world to join. He is calling on Christians to pray that others might know Jesus Christ, during a focused time between Pentecost and Ascension from 25 May and 4 June 2017.

The hope is that as Christians pray together they will:

- be transformed through prayer
- be given new confidence and encouragement by the Holy Spirit
- be effective witnesses to Jesus Christ.



You can view a short video where Archbishop Justin explains more at <https://vimeo.com/181913904>



Bishop Mark said: "As well as hosting larger-scale Beacon events, which are currently being planned in the Diocese, this is very much a grass-roots movement where we'll be encouraging people to take the initiative, using or building on prayer groups and events that already exist.

"This isn't about creating more work but praying as you can, wherever you can, when you can so that others might know Jesus Christ!"

"It happens during half-term and we'd invite local networks, such as churches together groups, to take the lead locally as prayer takes place across church denominations."



DISCOVERING THE HEART OF GOD

There will be helpful resources available and more details about opportunities across the Diocese in the near future. In the meantime, visit www.thykingdom.co.uk to find out more.

Please help us to spread the word about Thy Kingdom Come 2017 locally. We'd love to hear about any events or initiatives that are planned in your area – you can email Pauline Mack (pauline@yellowribbonuk.org.uk) with these.

Warrior for forgiveness



People across the Diocese and beyond have been remembering Jill Saward who died on 5 January, aged 51, following a subarachnoid haemorrhage.

Jill was the wife of Gavin Drake who was the Director of Communications for Lichfield Diocese between 2002 and 2011. They lived in Hednesford with their three sons Myles, Rory and Fergus.

Jill became known nationally as a campaigner and supporter of victims of rape and sexual violence after she was raped in 1986 during a burglary at Ealing Vicarage.

In 1990, she was the first rape victim in the UK to waive her right to anonymity and her braveness in speaking out helped change the law – including making rape in marriage a crime.

Jill's ordeal led to a change in attitudes towards victims and ensured they get better support. She helped create a much more victim-centred approach from police, criminal justice system and other agencies.

Her decision to speak out for forgiveness also left a lasting impression. "Forgiveness gives you freedom," she said.

Julie Jones, Chief Executive Officer for the Diocese, said: "Jill was a remarkable woman who fought so hard for victims of sexual violence. She will be remembered as a warrior for forgiveness.

"She was someone who turned her own suffering into a force for good, speaking up for the voiceless.

"Jill will be greatly missed by all of those who knew her. Our sympathies and prayers are with Gavin and their family at this tragic time."

Hundreds of people from across the country were expected to attend Jill's funeral which took place at Lichfield Cathedral on 17 January. Donations at the funeral were made for three charities close to Jill's heart: Cambrian Coast Evangelical Mission (Nefyn Beach Mission), Ehlers-Danlos Support UK and Rape And Sexual Abuse Centre (Merseyside).

From the Editor



Happy New Year and welcome to the latest edition of Spotlight! There's plenty coming up in 2017 – including opportunities for generosity, through the Bishop's Lent Appeal, and reflection,

using this year's Lent Book from the Archbishop of Canterbury. Don't forget to keep us posted about what's going on in your area using the details below.

Pete Bate, Director of Communications.

Spotlight is published by the Lichfield Diocesan Board of Finance, St Marys House, Lichfield WS13 7LD. t: 01543 306292, e: comms@lichfield.anglican.org



DIocese of LICHFIELD



Mutual flourishing

Bishop Michael, will be appointing the Right Revd Rod Thomas, Bishop of Maidstone, as an Assistant Bishop in the Diocese of Lichfield.

Following the passing of legislation in July 2014 to enable women to be consecrated as bishops, the House of Bishops agreed Five Guiding Principles as the basis for mutual flourishing.

These include an unequivocal commitment to "ministry being open equally to all without reference to gender" alongside making provision for those within the Church of England who, on grounds of theological conviction, are unable to receive the ministry of women bishops or priests. This seeks to order our life together under God in a way that maintains the highest possible degree of communion and contributes to mutual flourishing across the whole Church.

In accordance with these principles, Bishop Rod has been asked by the diocesan bishop to offer extended pastoral and sacramental care to those who stand in the conservative evangelical tradition and cannot receive the full ministry of women bishops and priests. Like the Rt Revd Jonathan Goodall, Bishop of Ebbsfleet, who has for several years been offering extended care to traditional Catholics in the Church of England, Bishop Rod will work closely with Bishop Michael and with the Area Bishops Clive, Mark and Geoff.



Bishop Michael said: "I have worked closely with Rod before, and I greatly value his commitment to evangelism and to partnership with other Anglicans. I am sure that his skills and energy will encourage and enrich our unity. This appointment is about providing additional support to enable mutual flourishing across our diverse diocese."

Bishop Rod, who already serves as an assistant bishop in several dioceses across the country, will be commissioned by Bishop Michael in Lichfield on the Feast of St Chad, 2 March 2017.

Find out more about the Five Guiding Principles and mutual flourishing at <http://bit.ly/2inejze>

Clergy honoured

Three clergy were recently honoured for their work in the Diocese by being nominated to fill vacant Prebendary stalls in Lichfield Cathedral.

Revd Sarah Schofield, Team Vicar of All Saints Wolverhampton and member of Archbishops' Council was installed to the Prebend of Weeford; Revd Simon Thorburn, Vicar of Oswestry and Rector of Rhydygroesau, to the Prebend of Stotfold; and Revd Michael Freeman, Vicar of Horninglow and Rural Dean of Tutbury, to the Prebend of Freeford.

The award of a Prebendary stall is an honour in Lichfield Diocese, recognising the contribution and service of the recipient to the life of the Diocese. In times past, it was also associated with rights and income from a parcel of land after which the Prebend is named.

All three were nominated by Bishop Clive in one of his final acts as Acting Diocesan Bishop and installed at an evensong service at Lichfield Cathedral.

Sarah said: "I was delighted to be asked, both All Saints and I felt it was an affirmation of the ministry we have amongst sex workers. This work has attracted some criticism in the past and it was good to see the Cathedral happy to be associated with us."

Simon said: "I received the invitation to become Prebend of the Cathedral just before going on holiday last summer. It was a lovely and unexpected surprise and it was great to enjoy sharing the news with my family while away. I feel this is an affirmation, not only for me but also the ministry and mission of the churches in Oswestry for which I am parish priest and they have been greatly encouraged by it."

Michael added: "I remember my mother (may she rest in peace) speaking in hushed tones of a former vicar of a church in Burton: 'You know, he's a Prebendary!'. I might have been 15 at the time. Little did we expect...but I'm conscious of and grateful for the huge support of family, friends and congregation."



Fighting slavery together

Churches are getting involved in the fight against modern slavery across Wolverhampton and the Black Country.

Modern slavery – or human trafficking – is the movement of a person from one place to another into conditions of exploitation, using deception, coercion, abuse of power or the abuse of the person’s vulnerability. It can involve forced labour, domestic servitude, sexual exploitation and child abuse and affects women and men, girls and boys, UK nationals and people trafficked from overseas.

Transforming Communities Together, the Diocese’s joint venture with Church Urban Fund (CUF), is a core member of the Wolverhampton Anti-Slavery Partnership (WASP) which brings agencies together to raise awareness, support victims and share intelligence.

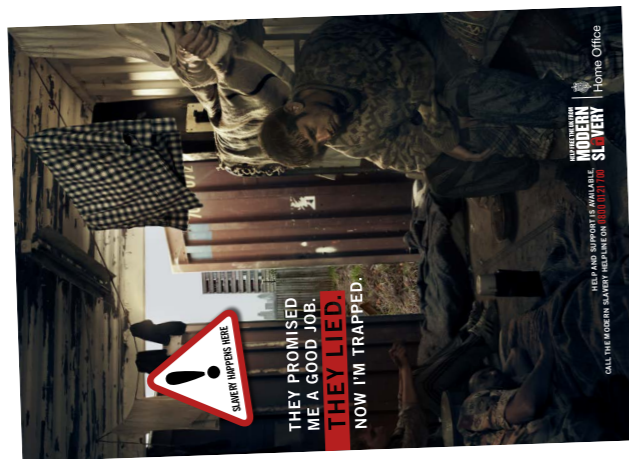
As part of this work, several Anglican churches in the Wolverhampton area have been on standby as reception centres for any victims



rescued in multi-agency housing visits.

Revd Preb David Wright, from St Peter’s in Wolverhampton, said: “We have a church which is central, open each day with volunteers on hand and always kept warm so we are delighted to be on standby to receive people if needed.”

WASP Chair Linda Boyle added: “Local faith groups have played a key role in the development of WASP and a training awareness package. Places of Worship and drop-in centres



can offer important support to victims of Modern Slavery albeit many may not realise that they are doing so. Many of the victims that I have rescued had some contact with a local centre or church and some that have remained in local areas would’ve benefited from the support that local faith

groups can provide.”

TCT has secured a Together Grant from CUF for local Christian charity Gateway To Freedom to run awareness training in churches and schools.

James Henderson, TCT development worker, said: “To tackle such a complex and growing issue we must work together. By raising the awareness of foodbank and drop-in volunteers, victims of trafficking have already been rescued by our partners. Churches can be the vital link in identifying victims and getting them the help they deserve to end this harrowing and evil crime.”

Find out more at <https://www.cuf.org.uk/tct-modern-slavery>



A Church Urban Fund Joint Venture in the Black Country

Telling tales

According to the compilers of the Oxford Dictionary the word of the year in 2016 was ‘Post-Truth’. It is a word that has often been linked over the last year with phrases such as ‘Post -Truth politics’ or even a ‘Post-Truth world’.

Often it has been used to help explain the success of both the Brexit and Trump campaigns. Not because their campaigns were necessarily less truthful than their opponents, but because they depended to a greater degree on appeals to emotion and personal opinion rather than factual arguments.

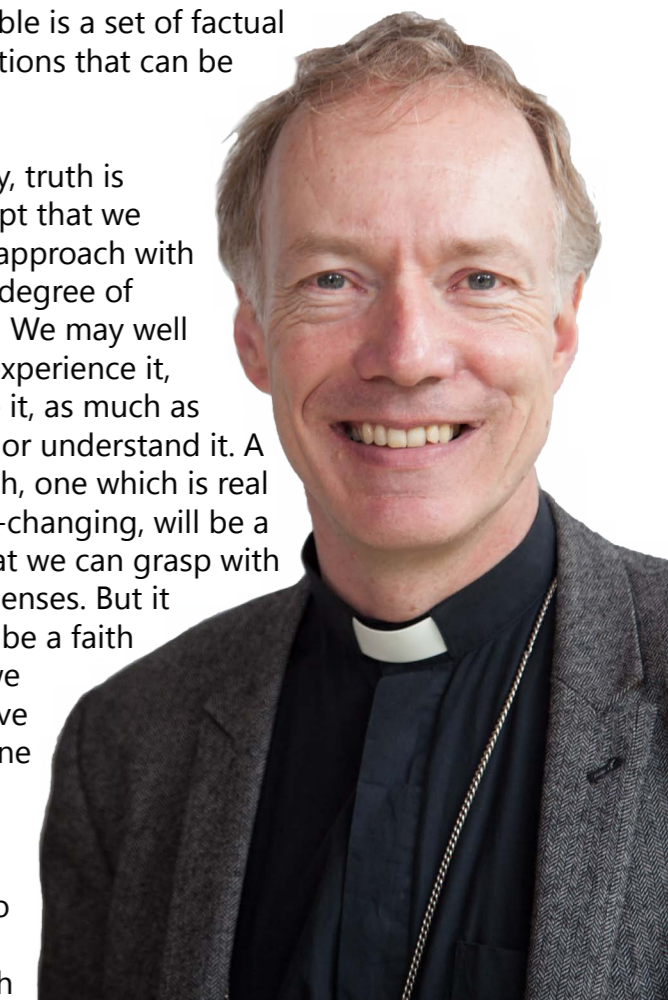
Hence Michael Gove famously downplaying the importance of ‘expert’ opinions in the Referendum debate. And much of the analysis of why people voted as they did in the Referendum suggests that it was indeed how people felt about Europe and felt about their place in modern British society that led them to vote as they did.

Post-Truth may sound very alarming and we should rightly be very vigilant for those occasions when people in public life or those who air their views on social media play fast and loose with facts for their own advantage or gratification.

if the Bible is a set of factual propositions that can be proven.

In reality, truth is a concept that we should approach with a great degree of caution. We may well feel it, experience it, glimpse it, as much as know it or understand it. A true faith, one which is real and life-changing, will be a faith that we can grasp with all our senses. But it will not be a faith which we can prove to anyone else.

Jesus chose to reveal the truth about God and his coming Kingdom, principally through telling stories.



Jesus chose to reveal the truth ... principally through telling stories.

But there is an equal danger, that people may claim possession of ‘The Truth’ when they are in no position to make that claim. That was probably what lay behind Michael Gove’s comments i.e that experts were lining up to predict the dire consequences of a vote for Brexit when they could not be sure of the truth of their predictions. In some Christian circles it is fashionable to speak of ‘Biblical Truth’ as

In a Post-Truth world, where appeals to feelings and emotions seem to have the greatest traction, perhaps, following Jesus’ example, it’s personal

testimony and story-telling which are the most powerful means of bearing witness to the faith which, we believe, ultimately, will lead us into all truth.



+Clive Wulfrun **DISCOVERING THE HEART OF GOD**



**DIOCESE OF
LICHFIELD**



DISCOVERING
the world of God



GROWING
in faith



TEACHING
the scriptures



TRANSFORMING
our lives



PRACTISING
our faith

The Church of England

around Staffordshire, northern
Shropshire and the Black Country

**Safeguarding Training
C3 Module for Readers, Lay Ministers and
Clergy**

30 January 9.30 -4.30: St Mary's House, Lichfield

DIARY

Community of St Chad
Annual Service

Saturday 4 March 11.00am:
St Chad's Church Lichfield



Please send details of your events to
comms@lichfield.anglican.org

Love your churchyard

Saturday 11 February 10am-3.30pm, at Blymhill (TF11
8LJ). Topics To register for the day and for further
information contact tc@lichfield.anglican.org.

Join others from across the Diocese for a churchyard
conference on topics including mission, environmental
projects, archaeology, trees, churchyard awards, faculties,
community involvement, and grants.