



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



Curacy in the Diocese of Lichfield



**Title post in
the parishes of
Lilleshall and
Muxton**



rural commuter village

traditional & evangelical

suburban

Evangelical & Charismatic

Outward looking, active youth and
children's ministry, community focus,
seeking to be generous

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 Benefice of Lilleshall & Muxton

Some of the St John's Muxton congregation pose for our mission partners!



Lilleshall Abbey (English Heritage)



The parishes lie on the north-east edge of Telford – under 15 minutes from the town centre, 50 minutes from Birmingham's Bull Ring and two hours from Snowdon. They are a mix of growing suburban Muxton (pop 7,000) and the village of Lilleshall (pop 950).

Muxton is a large, growing suburban area within Telford. It is separated from Lilleshall by a narrow area of green belt. Although over three quarters of homes are owner-occupied, there is a small element of social housing. The population is a mixture of families and those who are retired which is becoming more ethnically diverse. The main employers are in Telford, Newport, Wolverhampton and Birmingham. Amenities within the parish include a doctor's surgery, shops, vets, pubs, take-away and golf course as well as pre and primary schools. The church has strong links with Muxton Primary School. The local secondary school attended by most young people in Muxton is Burton Borough School in Newport, with other options being Haberdashers' Adams Grammar and the Girls High School in Newport, Telford Priory School and Thomas Telford School, near Telford Town Centre. 22 years ago St John's moved to a new building which is host to many community

groups during the week as well as a popular venue for social events.

Lilleshall parish is rural with Lilleshall village itself only a small portion of the whole area. A few residents work in the surrounding farms but generally people commute to work outside the village. The people of Lilleshall look mainly to Newport, a neighbouring market town with a full range of facilities. The village is home to a range of people and a significant number of them are retired. The parish is served by Lilleshall pre-school and Lilleshall county primary school, which has an 'outstanding' OFSTED report. Both establishments are well-connected to the church. The secondary school attended by most young people in Lilleshall is Burton Borough School in Newport, with other options being Haberdashers Adams Grammar and the Girls High School in Newport. The village enjoys facilities such as the Memorial Hall and youth centre, cricket club, tennis courts, and a golf club. A full range of Guiding and Scouting Groups are hosted in the Youth Centre, accommodating all ages from 5–14 within these groups and involving leaders from our churches. There are many country walks and cycle paths too. Housing is mainly owner occupied with some social housing and a retirement home for former newsagents or Council nominees.

Services in the churches:

There is a mix of worship style in the parishes:

St Michael's, Lilleshall is a mixture of traditional and more contemporary. Organ/piano/guitar/flute accompany the worship and the service leader is robed at some services. In the evening there is a pattern of contemporary, common worship and BCP services each month. Some of the key services here are the Carol Service, Remembrance Day, Harvest and the Easter Dawn Service on Lilleshall Hill.

Sundays in Lilleshall

1 st	9.30 am CW Communion 6.30 pm Contemporary Worship
2 nd	9.30 am Morning Worship 6.30 pm CW Communion
3 rd	9.30 am CW Communion 6.30 pm BCP Evening Prayer
4 th	9.30 am Morning Worship 6.30 pm CW Communion
5 th	9.30 am CW Communion 6.30 pm Reflective Evening Worship
Twice Termly	5.00 pm Messy Church (On Thursdays)

St Johns, Muxton is contemporary and informal with a worship group. There are groups for children and young people from 0-14 years during the morning service. There is an evening healing service every term. At 8.15 am there is a breakfast event with conversation, newspapers, prayer, reflection but no singing! Once a month we have our popular Church Prize service for families.

Sundays in Muxton

1 st	8:15 am "Good Morning Sunday" 11.00 am Morning Worship
2 nd	8:15 am "Good Morning Sunday" 9:30 am CW Communion 11.00 am Church Prize
3 rd	8:15 am "Good Morning Sunday" 11.00 am Morning Worship
4 th	8:15 am "Good Morning Sunday" 11.00 am CW Communion
5 th	11.00 am CW Communion
Termly	6.30 pm Healing Service

The Benefice of Lilleshall & Muxton

St Michael's, Lilleshall is a grade 1 listed building set in grounds which include an open churchyard.

There is much of historical interest in the building which, while maintaining its sense of history, also has a "lived in" feel as the building has adapted to the needs of God's mission today. There are pews and a rood screen alongside flexible seating, a kitchen and up to date AV equipment.

St John's Muxton is a modern, multi-purpose and versatile community building which is used every day of the week by community and church groups and for private hires. There is a well-equipped kitchen with separate rooms for small groups and a secure, grassed area for outdoor activities.

Your Training Incumbent

Revd Matthew Lefroy

25, Church Road, Lilleshall, NEWPORT, TF10 9HE

- Trained: St John's, Nottingham
- Ordained: 2002 in Winchester
- Curacy: Highfield Church, Southampton
- Vicar: from 2013

After a spell in the transport industry and 10 years as a secondary school teacher, he was

ordained at the age of 39. He served his curacy at a suburban, evangelical and charismatic church with a large youth and student ministry. He was then team vicar in a team ministry which covered large housing estates with significant deprivation on the southern edge of Telford. He has been a Rural Dean and trained two curates. He has a heart for helping people to connect with God, come to faith, grow as followers of Jesus, follow the leading of the Holy Spirit and relate their faith to life around them.

As Training Incumbent he will work with the curate to prepare them for life after curacy by enabling the curate to settle into ministry and master its essentials; by setting the framework in which the curate will be trained and minister; by clarifying the expectations of the curate with regular supervision and review; and by sharing in a pattern of prayer, worship, Bible study and meetings.

His interests include all kinds of sports, (particularly cricket and football,) outdoor pursuits including walking and cycling, music, reading, good coffee and wine-making. His Myers Briggs personality type, when he last checked, was INFP.



The Context

Muxton is a village which has been subsumed into Telford in the last 25 years and has a significant amount of new housing with more planned. Lilleshall is a village with outlying houses and farms. In the past Lilleshall was the mother church for Muxton but now attracts smaller congregations. It still retains a 'village church feel' whereas the congregation in Muxton comes from all over the Telford area. Local heavy industry has all but disappeared and major local employers (the MOD base at Donnington, Muller and Lyreco) are all outside the parish. Both areas are seen locally as desirable places in which to live.

The Ministry

If you want to gain experience of ministry in a range of settings then Muxton and Lilleshall offer much. There is more traditional liturgical worship as well as the opportunity to lead contemporary innovative and experimental worship. You will have the chance to minister in both local primary schools and work with children and young people across the age range in both parishes. Through Telford Christians Together you could work with local ecumenical initiatives including the Engage project for

secondary schools. Muxton is a partner church for the Telford Christians Against Poverty Debt Centre if you wish to experience ministry to those struggling with debt and related issues. In both parishes there are regular social and evangelistic events and a willingness to experiment as we seek to connect with the local community. We have on average 20 funerals, 8 weddings and 10 baptisms each year and you will be expected to be involved in these ministries from an early stage in your curacy. There is ministry to the very young, the elderly and well-resourced youth and children's work. Each year our children's activity days attract over 100 local primary school aged children. Members of our church family attend Keswick, New Wine, Spring Harvest and Contagious.

We employ a part-time administrator, and there are 9 licensed lay ministers and one Ordained Local Minister operating in the parish. Other lay members lead and speak in services on occasion.

At Lilleshall our vision is '*to be a welcoming worshipping vibrant community following Christ,*' and at Muxton we '*want to be passionate for God by visibly developing trust in Jesus, readily taking risks, generously serving our community and unashamedly praying.*'

The Benefice of Lilleshall & Muxton

The Congregation in numbers:

Figures from 2019	Lilleshall	Muxton
Electoral Roll	79	87
ASA	56 Adults 2 Children	79 Adults 15 Children
Marriages	7	0
Funerals	12	8
Baptisms	6	6
Messy Church	10 Adults 20 Children	



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

Initially the curate will get to grips with the basics of ministry and over the first year you will gain a broad experience of ministry. After this time there will be a range of choices for focused ministry which will be explored nearer the time. These will take account your gifts and abilities and the situation of the churches.

Housing and Accommodation

There is a modern detached house in a quiet estate location with 2 reception rooms, 4 Bedrooms (1 currently used as study,) a garage and small garden. The house is situated in Muxton and about 1.5 miles from Lilleshall. The M54 is about 10 minutes away and there is a nearby bus route to both Telford and Stafford stations. The house is within walking distance of St John's, the local primary school and local shops. ASDA and ALDI are a short drive while Telford is 6 miles away with larger shops, cinemas and restaurants.

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:

- 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

This programme is accredited within Common Awards. Many curates who already have a Diploma award from IME1 are registered for a BA in Theology, Ministry and Mission. Others who already have a degree or higher award can be registered for a Graduate Diploma. Those who are recognised as potential theological educators have opportunities to further their studies alongside their curate programme

Care for curates and families

"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



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.

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



Curacy in Lichfield Diocese

For further information

In the first instance, please contact:

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Find us on:

AChurchNearYou:

Lilleshall <https://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/4365/>
(Lilleshall)
<https://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/4366/> (Muxton)

Website:

<http://www.stjohnsmuxton.org.uk/>
<http://www.stmichaelslilleshall.org.uk/>

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/stjohnsmuxton/>

St Michael's, Lilleshall

"We want to be a welcoming, vibrant, worshipping community following Christ.."

St John's Muxton

"We want to be passionate for God... by visibly developing trust in Jesus, readily taking risks, generously serving our community and unashamedly praying."

Begin your ordained ministry in parishes which offer great opportunity, support, variety, life and all in a beautiful part of the country.