



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



## Curacy in the Diocese of Lichfield

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**Title post in the  
benefice of St John  
the Baptist Littleworth  
and Tixall with St  
Mary the Virgin  
Ingestre**



**A suburban and two rural  
churches | evangelical**

town church with ministry to all ages  
and a Fresh Expression

village churches with community focus,  
BCP worship and plenty of occasional  
offices

# 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

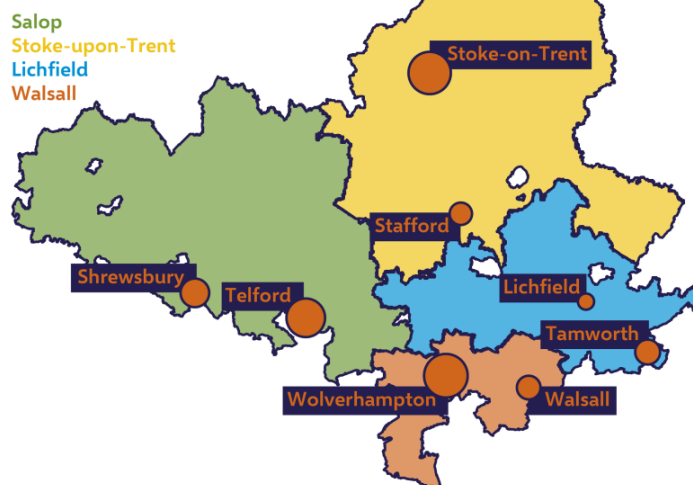
hospice), involvement with local gardening ventures, night-shelter involvement – to mention just a few possibilities.



"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/](http://geograph.org.uk/p/1171894/) CC BY 2.0*

*Alton Towers near Uttoxeter Jeremy Thompson/Flickr / CC BY 2.0*





# The Benefice of St John the Baptist Littleworth

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Stafford town centre



- Stafford is the county town, and the benefice extends from the edge of the town centre to the east of Stafford.
- There is a mixture of growing suburban housing through to the rural farming context.
- The population across the benefice is in the region of 12,500; with ongoing housing developments this will continue to increase as the estates continue to be built and families move into the new estates. There is a breadth of ethnic backgrounds in the town, hospital staff are drawn from around the world and the Ministry of Defence site is served by Gurkha regiments. A significant number of military families have chosen to make Stafford their permanent home, with serving personnel commuting to family and retiring from the armed forces to civilian life here.
- There is a church primary academy which we have close links with and a second primary academy in the benefice. We also have links with the secondary school.
- County Hospital and Katharine House Hospice are within the benefice and provide significant employment alongside Perkins engines, General Electric, Staffordshire Police Headquarters and the County Council.
- The benefice consists of suburban and rural districts and is well served by road and rail links. The town and local area provide numerous supermarkets, retail outlets and out of town shopping. A newly opened multiplex cinema, sports centre, local theatre, restaurants and public houses offer leisure opportunities.
- Cannock Chase and the National Trust property at Shugborough are within easy reach of the benefice, with the Peak District a little further afield.
- There is a supportive culture of care and concern. Across the benefice we express the importance of the Bible, Holy Communion, and prayer. There are fresh expressions of church still developing, and we welcome the Holy Spirit in worship. We are seeking Kingdom growth in each parish of the benefice and working with different strategies.

# and Tixall with St Mary the Virgin Ingestre

## Services in the churches:

The worship in Littleworth is gently charismatic led by guitar and piano. Robes are no longer a necessary part of worship here although they are appropriate for our Book of Common Prayer (BCP) services in the benefice and for occasional offices.

Littleworth has an AV and projector system to assist worship, with the hall and kitchen facilities integrated into the building. This enables our fresh expression church@four congregation and Messy Church. We have regular lunchtime prayer meetings during the week.

There are pipe organs in the villages and the acoustics at Ingestre provide an excellent concert venue. Both villages draw a large proportion of their community together week by week and even greater numbers for seasonal celebrations.

Littleworth has a strong midweek congregation with the church school having a service in church termly and church led worship in school weekly.

## Sundays in Littleworth

|                 |  |
|-----------------|--|
| 1 <sup>st</sup> | 9.30 am Family Worship<br>4.00 pm Messy Church |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> | 9.30 am Holy Communion<br>4.00 pm Church@four  |
| 3 <sup>rd</sup> | 9.30 am Holy Communion<br>4.00 pm Church@four  |
| 4 <sup>th</sup> | 9.30 am Holy Communion<br>4.00 pm Church@four  |
| 5 <sup>th</sup> | 9.30 am Holy Communion<br>4.00 pm Church@four  |

## Tixall and Ingestre

|                 |   |
|-----------------|---|
| 1 <sup>st</sup> | Tixall – 11.15 am<br>BCP Holy Communion   |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> | Ingestre – 11.15 am<br>BCP Morning Prayer |
| 3 <sup>rd</sup> | Tixall – 11.15 am<br>BCP Morning Prayer   |
| 4 <sup>th</sup> | Ingestre – 11.15am<br>BCP Holy Communion  |
| 5 <sup>th</sup> | No service                                |



*St John the Baptist Littleworth*



*Messy Church fun and summer benefice picnic*



# The Benefice of St John the Baptist Littleworth



*St John the Baptist, Littleworth*



*St Mary the Virgin Ingestre*

As a benefice we offer an excellent opportunity for sharing the gospel in a suburban and rural context. The individual churches do this with differing community engagement strategies. We look to use the gifts of the individual to bless the whole. At St John's in Littleworth there are activities for all ages; with a heart to reach the community. The modern building with flexible space enables modern worship and opportunities for courses and social activities.

Tixall offers a rural village church that brings an intimate feel to worship. This is a traditional congregation that expresses a heart for its village providing a community coffee morning and a monthly produce sale. There are open graveyards at both Tixall and Ingestre.

As the only church attributed to Sir Christopher Wren outside London, Ingestre is a beautiful setting for weddings alongside Ingestre Hall and the newly refurbished Orangery. The church is a grade I listed building, has outstanding acoustics as a concert venue, and is an integral part of the community.

## Your Training Incumbent

### Revd Dr Carl Rudd

The Rectory, Westhead Avenue, Stafford, ST16 3RP

- Trained: Trinity Theological College
- Ordained: 2006, Canterbury
- Curacy: Whitstable Team Ministry
- Rector: since 2018

Initially trained as a research chemist, he worked in the pharmaceutical industry making drugs (the approved kind). A skier, motorcyclist, and outdoor enthusiast, he has a passion to meet people where their life is today, whilst seeking for where God would lead them tomorrow. He expresses a pastoral heart to see individuals grow as God has gifted them and will ensure the curate has the necessary and appropriate opportunities to become a confident and competent priest. He is an experienced trainer and has the qualities to give encouragement and support to enable a curate to succeed in this benefice.





# and Tixall with St Mary the Virgin Ingestre

## The Context

The benefice is a real mixture of opportunities; suburban housing on the edge of Stafford, farming communities and village contexts where there have been ancient rivalries back to the Roundheads and the Cavaliers. Yet at the heart of everything going on today there is a deep desire to work together. Joint benefice wide activities, away day mission planning and social activities are showing a bright future.

Concern about the future HS2 project exists in one parish and yet optimism to press on with God, we have started a good number of homegroups with over 40 members and many have joined a daily Bible reading program SACRED (Simply A Chapter Read Every Day).

## The Ministry

Opportunities are plentiful to work with all ages. Our work with children starts with the very youngest at 'Sunbeams' to Sunday groups. As children transition to senior school there is 'Zone' and beyond this 'TNT' Tuesday Night Teens. Homegroups for adults, the singing group, and Mary & Martha, a ladies craft group. Places of Welcome offers a friendly welcome to anyone passing who wants a hot drink and a chat.

There are prayer ministry opportunities in services and outside church with prayer meetings and lunchtime prayer. We have a part-time children and families worker and benefice administrator. There are retired clergy in the area we can call upon when the need arises.

Our Messy Church group serves the benefice, we lead weekly worship in school, and have the opportunity to take assemblies in our local senior school. One of our local academies is a church school and offers the possibility to be a local academy committee member alongside the rector.

Baptisms and weddings happen in different contexts and the open graveyards mean there are opportunities for gaining good experience with occasional offices. Sector ministry experience can be gained at County Hospital, a hospice and a prison.



### The Congregation in numbers:

| Figures from 2018 | Littleworth              | Tixall              | Ingestre            |
|-------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Electoral Roll    | 136                      | 21                  | 32                  |
| ASA               | 62 Adult<br>14 Children  | 13 Adult<br>1 Child | 27 Adult<br>1 Child |
| Marriages         | 0                        | 1                   | 3                   |
| Funerals          | 19                       | 0                   | 1                   |
| Baptisms          | 7                        | 3                   | 2                   |
| Messy Church      | 12 Adults<br>14 Children |                     |                     |

# The Benefice of St John the Baptist Littleworth

We strongly believe in every member ministry and have the belief everyone has a calling from God to be exercised. You will come with gifts from God, we look forward to getting to know you as well as your gifts. As lifelong learners we all need time to learn, reflect and retreat in order to flourish. This means we can learn from each other. We expect you to take your holiday and days off, so as you care for yourself, you are able to care for others.

There is a strategy group in Littleworth and mission action planning (MAP) focuses ministry. This is less developed in the villages. The Stafford MAP is focused around Discipleship – personal, in groups, Sundays and growing leaders. Vocation – our own spiritual gifts from God, and exercising these to



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

serve the mission of God. Evangelism – prayer into the community and seeking Gods harvest.

Alongside these sits care and development of the building and its use to grow Gods kingdom. We are part of the wider ecumenical group 'Love Stafford'.

We take communion to residents in a day care centre and care home. The Christmas midweek carol service saw local choir 'STARS' come and take part, people from the day care centre and an afternoon tea celebration. There are local choirs, and music concerts that come to our village churches. A MOD barracks on the benefice boundary and the prison in town both offer chaplaincy opportunities. The pastoral team visit the housebound and sick across the benefice.

This year we have been encouraged by God with growth numerically and in depth.

'Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or discouraged for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.' *Joshua 1:9*



## Housing and Accommodation

The Diocese of Lichfield either has a curate's house in the benefice or a "strategic" house for curates in close proximity of the benefice. These are good houses, mainly with four bedrooms. If there is no curate's house in the benefice and where such a strategic property exists within easy reach of the proposed training parish this will be the preferred curate's house. If there is no strategic housing available nearby the diocese is committed to providing appropriate accommodation for all those entering ministry. We generally do not offer rented accommodation except as an emergency short term measure. Our curates can be confident that their home will be of a consistently high standard. If you wish to know further details about the house, the DDO will be able to provide you with more information.





# Curacy in Lichfield Diocese

## Supporting learning and formation

Curate learning, formation and development is strongly valued and affirmed in Lichfield Diocese. Curates receive ongoing supervision and reflection on ministry in the parish, complemented by our curate-training programme in which you share with your year-group of peers. The aim of the training programme is to enable each person to flourish in their ministry and inhabit more deeply their vocation as deacons and priests. This programme supports learning and formation through a partnership between the Diocese and The Queen's Foundation. And it takes place in the context of parish supervision and reflection on ministry.

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



*The curacy experience is very much a collective one, often gathering at Lichfield Diocese's centrally-located Shallowford House for study, prayer, retreat and de-stressing with peers: as such, it's a much less scary venue during IME2 than as a base for a BAP!*

## Pattern of training

The programme focuses on grounded and situated learning and prioritises the Diocese's focus on Discipleship, Vocation and Evangelism:

- In Year 1 establishing you in your new ministerial context and practice, and supporting your preparation for ordination as priest.
- In Year 2, deepening your practice and understanding of mission and ministry with the theological tools and skills you need to contextualise this.
- In Year 3 helping you prepare for life-long ministry and to take up a post of responsibility to be entered into with skill and confidence.



# IME2 to equip for ministry

At the heart of the programme are residential events which bring together a year-group of curates. They reflect the diversity of the Church, while the different ministry contexts reflect the diversity of the Diocese. This cohort is the primary context for the essential learning and formation to develop your ministries, focusing on ministerial formation, and on the development of relationships which enable mutual flourishing for all.

## Opportunities for academic awards

Alongside the IME2 training you may wish to continue studying on an accredited pathway with Common Awards. Curates who already have a Diploma award from IME1 may register for a BA in Theology, Ministry and Mission. Others who already have a degree or higher award or are recognised as potential theological educators have opportunities to further their studies alongside their curate programme.



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

## Care for curates and families

The wellbeing of clergy and their families is very important to us. In addition to the supervisory aspects to curacy, we have a free, confidential counselling service (*the Listening Ear* scheme) for all clergy, diocesan staff and their families.

## More info

– contact the DDO (details on back cover) or visit [Lichfield.anglican.org/curacy](http://Lichfield.anglican.org/curacy)

"We have had amazing support from the diocese over the past 6 years through both of our curacies and that's not always been straightforward- particularly when 'life' sometimes gets in the way!

"But the support, through thick and thin has been fantastic, particularly discerning Adam's call to pioneering ministry and curacy under 'pioneer' supervision."

Revds Adam & Charlotte Gompertz



# Curacy in Lichfield Diocese

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## For further information

In the first instance, please contact:

**The Revd Romita Shrisunder,**

Bishops' Director of Ordinands

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

## Find us on:

### Website:

[www.stjohnsstafford.org](http://www.stjohnsstafford.org)

[www.stmaryschurch-ingestre.co.uk](http://www.stmaryschurch-ingestre.co.uk)

### ACChurchNearYou:

[www.achurchnearyou.com/church/4503/](http://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/4503/)

[www.achurchnearyou.com/church/4505/](http://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/4505/)

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**St John the Baptist Littleworth**

*With God all things are possible*

**St John the Baptist Tixall,**

**and**

**St Mary the Virgin Ingestre**

**We are a growing benefice with  
opportunities that will give you a  
breadth of experience in your curacy,  
we plan for you to succeed.**

**Based in Stafford you will have access  
to both the amenities of an expanding  
town and beautiful countryside.**