

Come follow Christ



in the footsteps of St Chad



Curacy in the Diocese of Lichfield



Title post in the Parish of Bushbury



Three urban churches
evangelical / charismatic

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.



+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.

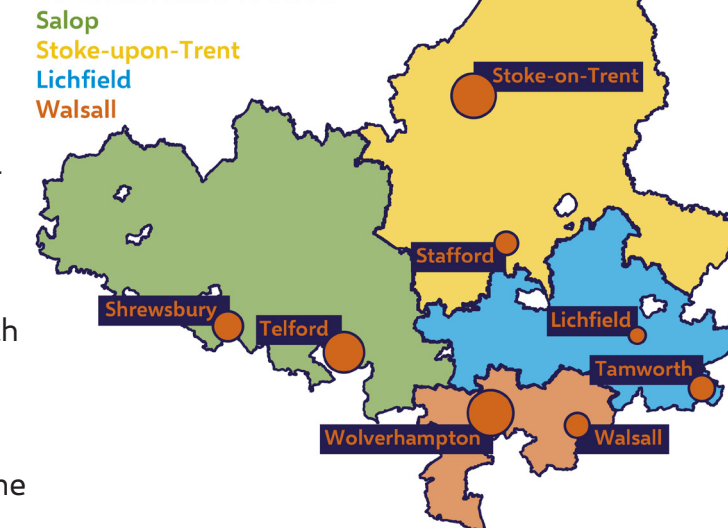
To further these aims, and to develop creative patterns of ministry, we ask all training parishes to offer ‘sixth-day’ opportunities for curates – which might be a chaplaincy attachment (school, hospital, prison or hospice), involvement with local gardening ventures, night-shelter involvement – to mention 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 Four Archdeaconries of Lichfield Diocese



Everything but the sea



David Rayner (Wikipedia) / Stoke-on-Trent Bottle Kiln / CC BY-SA 2.0 BY-SA 4.0

Staffordshire prides itself on being ‘the Creative County’: Shropshire is the birthplace of the Industrial Revolution and the Black Country is renowned for its industry and all have significant opportunities for spouses who wish to develop careers in any sphere.

For those days off when you need space away from the parish, the area has everything you could wish for – except the sea: wild landscapes, cultured museums and stately homes. Sports of many kinds (including Premiership football) and at least two theme parks

Shrewsbury Flax Mill – the prototype skyscraper / Tk420 (Wikipedia) / CC BY-SA 4.0



Opening of the Lighthouse Project at Kingsland CE Academy, Bucknall



Road and rail links



For those with family and friends in other parts of the country, the Diocese has great transport links: the M6/M6Toll bisects the centre of the Diocese north-south, and the M5 originates at our southern tip. Heading west, the A5/M54 give easy access to north and mid Wales, while the A50, A5 and M6Toll give swift access to the M1, M42 and A38 for the East Midlands and the south-east.

Rail links are also good with all major towns having direct services to London and Birmingham and four major airports surround our borders – Birmingham, East Midlands, Manchester and Liverpool.



Dovedale (location of one of the Diocese’s two residential retreat centres) / Shaun Dunmall (wikipedia) / CC BY-SA 2.0 4.0

Leisure and pleasure

Lichfield Diocese has everything but the sea. For walkers and climbers, there’s an extensive network of canals, Cannock Chase, The Roaches, and the Shropshire—Welsh borders (for example). If you’re into more organised fun, Alton Towers and Drayton Manor Theme Park

Wightwick Manor nr Wolverhampton / Tony Hisgett (Wikipedia) / CC BY-SA 4.0



can provide it. And then there’s many museums including Walsall’s New Art Gallery and the RAF museum at Cosford; not to mention excellent sporting options for both watching and participating – from Premiership football to the Tamworth Snowdome. Along with Wedgwood, theatres and cinemas, restaurants and superb tea shops just begging to be discovered...



Apedale Valley Light Railway near Stoke with the adjacent country park and Heritage Centre is one of many transport and leisure museums in the Diocese / Simon Jones

If shopping is your thing, there is a range of options, from the chic boutiques at Barton Marina, and Shrewsbury to large malls in or near the urban centres. We’re fortunate in being the home of many fine ales and beers brewed in Burton on Trent (the museum is well worth a visit), and Staffordshire oatcakes are a unique local delicacy to be discovered.



Wulfrun Centre in Wolverhampton is one of many shopping destinations in the region © Roger Kidd -/ geograph.org.uk/p/1171894/ CC BY 2.0

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



The Parish of Bushbury



Bushbury Parish is situated in northeast Wolverhampton and serves a population of 27,000. The total population of Wolverhampton is almost 260,000; 35% are from BAME communities, with over 88 languages spoken in the city and 16% of the population born outside of the UK. Wolverhampton has a younger population than the English average.

Overall, Bushbury can be described as urban, but there is a notable leafy conservation area within the parish. It has an above average population of those under 30 years of age, largely white British ethnicity and more than 50% identifying as Christian. One third of the population live in council or rented accommodation.

In 2021, the Wolverhampton unemployment rate was 6.6% (national 4.8%) and had the highest unemployment rate for 18–24-year-olds in the UK. The City Council is investing £3 million to boost youth employment. Almost 60% of people employed in the city work in manufacturing, retail, education and health and social care roles.

There are five primary schools and one secondary school in the parish, all rated good or outstanding. There are several GP practices and community pharmacies, plus an optician. The area is well served by a Co-op supermarket and

several groups of local independently owned shops.

There are three churches in the parish: St Mary's Church, the parish church; St James' Church and The Church of the Good Shepherd. Each church places a high value on scripture and the work of the Holy Spirit and aspire to be missionally focused.



Services in the churches:

St Mary's Church is the main Parish Church and has two Sunday services: a 9.00am Common Worship communion service where the minister would usually be robed. Worship is led by a singer with guitar; this congregation is usually 6-12 people. At 10.30am there is a more contemporary service (The Gathering) which is attended by a wide range of ages, including families and children. Four out of five weeks there is a Sunday school for those in year 11 and below. A group of four leads worship and a modern AV system is used at 10.30am. The church has a well-maintained organ that is used at weddings and funerals. Refreshments are served from the church kitchen after the 10.30am service and we hope soon to return to sharing food as a congregation once a month



after the service. At Christmas and Easter, the two local schools arrange a large school service which several parishioners, including the clergy, attend.

St James' Church worships on Sundays at 9.45am and has an organised informal approach to its worship. There is a regular Sunday school and there is a communion service once a month. Modern digital worship music is used with a modern AV system. The church has a fully functional kitchen and refreshments are served after the service.

The Church of The Good Shepherd worships on Sundays at 11.00am and has a more relaxed informal approach to its worship. There is a communion service once a month. There is a worship team of two and at each service a modern AV system is used. Refreshments are served after the service.

As a parish we post a 10-minute sermon video on both our parish website and on Facebook. We are considering doing live online worship in the medium future. We host a weekly prayer meeting at each of the churches, plus the Church of the Good Shepherd hosts an ecumenical parish prayer meeting each Saturday morning.





Buildings / Community

St James' church, built in the 1960's, is a low maintenance and very functional building, with a kitchen and meeting rooms. The church building is used by various church and community groups every week.

There has been a church on the site of the Church of the Good Shepherd since 1929. The current church building is on two levels, which includes significant office space on the first floor that is rented out to local businesses and community groups.

Services in the churches:

Sundays in Bushbury	The Church of the Good Shepherd	St James' Church	St Mary's Church
1st	11am service	9.45am service	9am Holy Communion 10.30am The Gathering
2nd	11am service	9.45am Holy Communion	9am Holy Communion 10.30am The Gathering
3rd	11am service	9.45am service	9am Holy Communion 10.30am The Gathering (Holy Communion)
4th	11am Holy Communion	9.45am service	9am Holy Communion 10.30am The Gathering
5th	11am service	9.45am service	9am Holy Communion 10.30am The Gathering

St Mary's is a grade 2* listed building part of which dates to the mid 14th century. There are the remains of a Saxon preaching cross outside the south door. St Mary's has a large multifunctional church hall used by various church and community groups. It has a fitted kitchen and stage area, as well as housing the church office. The church hall has recently been modernised.

Your Training Incumbent

Revd Dr Ian Poole

The Rectory, 382 Bushbury Lane, Bushbury, Wolverhampton WV10 8JP

- **Trained:** St John's College Nottingham
- **Ordained:** 2002, Lichfield
- **Curacy:** Holy Trinity Church, Short Heath, Walsall
- **Rector:** since 2017

Ian has been in licensed ministry for 16 years; he was team vicar at St James' Church in Bushbury parish before becoming acting rector and then rector of the parish. He was appointed rural dean in 2022 and is enjoying the challenges of his new role.

Ian is married to Mary; they have four children and three grandchildren and love to spend time with their family. Ian enjoys sport, especially cricket, and keeping active. He enjoys kayaking, walking in the countryside and classical music.

Before ordination Ian worked for 10 years as a GP in a deprived area of Walsall. He sees his

role as being an active presence within the community, building relationships and inviting people to know Jesus for themselves. Ian is passionate to see God's word shared in the power of the Spirit and sees prayer and worship as key to community transformation.

Ian would seek to enable a curate to thrive in their ministry development whilst giving them a wise and thoughtful steer where necessary.

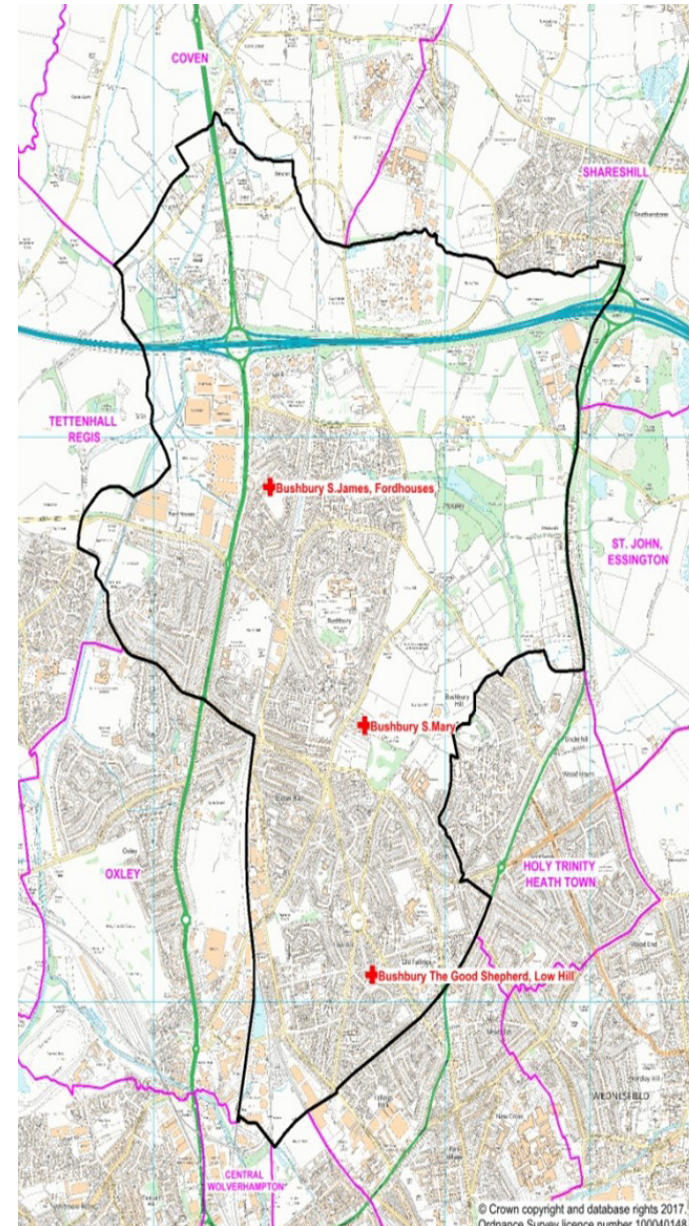


Context

There is a marked contrast in prosperity as you track from the relative wealth of the north of the parish (St James' district), southwards to the St Mary's district which is below national average income, to the south of the parish (The Church of the Good Shepherd district) which is amongst the most deprived areas in England. Across the whole parish there are housing estates with significant pockets of deprivation, in which life expectancy is seven years less than the England average. In one local primary school, 25% of the children are on the at-risk register.

The closure of Goodyear's Tyre factory in 2015 was a major blow to employment within the parish; many now travel outside of the city for work. Parts of the parish have a historic reliance on a benefits culture. Despite the excellent work of the local schools, there is a sense of significant underachievement and lack of aspiration among some of the children. Many adults tend to live day to day and find it difficult to plan long-term.

There is however quite a strong sense of community. While not attending church, many still consider themselves to be Christian and there is respect for the Christian Church.



The ministry

The curate is likely to be based initially at St Mary's Church. This is the largest of the three churches and some years ago was well known as a charismatic evangelical church with many coming to faith and a strong healing ministry. Around 20 years ago the church went through a sharp decline in numbers attending. In the last ten years there has been some stabilisation of the congregation numbers and some growth in spiritual depth as well as a number of folk coming to faith. There remains a strong emphasis and commitment to prayer and worship with an

Our mission statement

Ordinary people discovering together the love of Jesus, spreading hope into our community and sowing and growing God's seeds of faith in people's hearts by His Spirit.

expectation of a 'move of the Spirit'. This general characterisation is repeated in the Church of the Good Shepherd and to a lesser extent in St James' Church.

In terms of governance, each of the three churches has a District Church Council (DCC), plus there is an overarching Parochial Church Council (PCC). St. James and St Mary's each have a leadership team in addition to their DCC, which focus on the mission and ministry within their area. There is one Reader and a Reader in training, but in addition there are three lay preachers, and the plan is to increase this further in order to support the ministry across

the parish. There is a very good administrator who works 16 hours per week. St Mary's plan to recruit a worship leader (15 hours per week) to help move us forwards in worship.

There are five Life Groups meeting mid-week; plus, a men's group which meets monthly and a women's group that meets twice a month.

The Congregations in numbers:

Figures from 2019	St James'	St Mary's	Good Shepherd
Electoral Roll	51	77	40
Average Sunday Attendance Adults	23	50	23
Average Sunday Attendance Children	2	7	3
Baptisms	-	0	-
Marriages	-	5	-
Funerals	-	52	-



There are two challenges that we face across the parish. First, the reality is that most of our leaders are in their late 50s to early 70s; so, there is a need to hand on the baton of leadership and vision. Second, we need to develop the mission opportunities through requests for baptism, plus our good working relationships with the primary schools in the parish.

A mother and toddlers group runs weekly term time at both St James' and St Mary's. Brownies meet in St Mary's church hall and Scouts meet in a purpose-built building on St Mary's grounds. Bushbury Nursery is also sited on St. Mary's grounds.



"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



As a curate, Bushbury Parish offers you:

- **Working in an environment that is rich in prayer and worship and is always looking out for the Lord to do the miraculous.**
- **Experience of working with local schools, providing support for the teaching programme including the use of church buildings.**
- **Experience of working in less privileged areas across the Parish, gaining an understanding of how deprivation can impact physical and mental health, and the journey to faith.**
- **Experience of occasional offices. Across the Parish, there is also a strong funeral ministry with up to 90 funerals per year and usually around 10 weddings per year.**

Regarding a particular responsibility that an incoming curate might take on there is a need to build on our work amongst young people and families. At St Mary's up to 20 children attend Sunday school and there is also a Parish youth group with a few attending, but it would be wonderful to outreach to the unchurched in the locality both in terms of young people, but also families.



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.

"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



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



Curacy in Lichfield Diocese

For further information

In the first instance, please contact:

The Revd Romita Shrisunder,

Bishops' Director of Ordinands

[M] 07949 033091

[E] romita.shrisunder@lichfield.anglican.org

Find us on:

ACChurchNearYou:

St. James'

achurchnearyou.com/church/4198

St Mary's

achurchnearyou.com/church/4197/

Church of the Good Shepherd

achurchnearyou.com/church/4199/

Website:

bushburyparishchurch.co.uk

Facebook:

facebook.com/CHURCH.COGS/

facebook.com/stjamesfordhouses/

facebook.com/stmaryschurch.bushbury/

The Parish of Bushbury

Three churches on the
northern edge of the city of
Wolverhampton

Ordinary people discovering
together the love of Jesus,
spreading hope into our community
and sowing and growing God's
seeds of faith in people's hearts by
His Spirit