



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



Curacy in the Diocese of Lichfield



**Title post
in the
parish of
Castle
Church
Stafford**



**Suburban | conservative
evangelical**

A steadily growing caring church
family of all ages, with expository bible
teaching and discipleship at its heart.

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



Castle Church, Stafford



Castle Church is a Conservative Evangelical Anglican Church on the western side of Stafford, the county town of Staffordshire. Although a reasonably small town (population 65,000), Stafford is surrounded by three major cities; Stoke-On-Trent, 18 miles to the north, Wolverhampton 14 miles to the south west and Birmingham 25 miles to the south east. New housing developments (including a significant number in Castle Church Parish) will bring the population up to 90,000 by 2030.

Stafford is on the edge of the Peak District to the east and Cannock Chase to the South. The famous Shugborough Hall, home of Lord Lichfield is on the outskirts of Stafford.

Stafford town Centre is full of character containing some very old buildings including the ancient High House and the Shire Hall. There is also a brand new shopping centre, opened in 2017.

Stafford has a major railway station on the West Coast Line and London Euston is 1 hour and 20 minutes away by train.

The Castle Church Parish sits on the Western side of Stafford and is broadly a suburban population. As the name suggests, Stafford Castle is very close by and the old church building sits within the ancient motte and bailey. The castle hollow way and marl

pit are within the curtelidge of the church yard. Stafford Castle is not a major tourist destination, however many events are held within the grounds each year including a popular outdoor Shakespeare Festival which attracts top name professional actors. A great deal of money has been ploughed into the re-generation of the castle grounds including woodland walks and a small visitors centre telling the history of the Castle.



Stafford Castle

Shops on the Highfields Estate



Ancient High House

What is Castle Church parish like?

Castle Church parish has an extremely broad and diverse parish demographic, based around 4 areas.

Highfields Estate

Highfields is the largest area of the parish and contains a large number of social housing homes including 2 major sheltered accommodation complexes. It is generally regarded as an area that has significant social problems. There is a small number of shops. 3 of our 4 schools are on Highfields.

Highfields is also home to Stafford's sports arena with excellent athletics, tennis, football etc facilities.

Rowley Park

Rowley Park is a small gated private estate. It contains large detached properties owned by wealthy professionals or retired professionals. It also contains two care homes where we have regular services.

Castlefields & Western Downs

Castlefields & Western Downs are both suburban housing estates comprising of a small number of larger homes and a greater number of starter homes. Western Downs also contains a large sheltered accommodation complex, Oxleathers Court. Castlefields is also home to a health centre and a McCarthy Stone Complex.

A518

On the eastern side of the parish is the A518, one of the main artery roads into Stafford and out towards Telford. The church buildings and Castle are on this road and it contains significant housing, ranging from large expensive houses through to smaller houses on tiny housing estates.

Burleyfields Development

Work is about to begin on a new 3000 home estate in the parish which will take the parish population up to around 24-25,000. Castle Church, in partnership with Lichfield Diocese have been preparing for this building work since 2009.

The Castle Church Family has members from each of these four areas and a significant number who commute in.

Future Plans

Because we are outgrowing our facilities and so much new housing development is planned in our parish, Castle Church has recently launched "The King & Castle" Project aiming to build a new multi-purpose church building on the site of our present hall.



Rowley Sports Stadium



Artists impression of new Burleyfields Development

The **King & Castle**
Looking beyond the castle walls

Castle Church, Stafford

Services at Castle Church

At Castle Church, we are very clear that we all meet to engage with God. Our aim is to encounter the living God together, through his Son Jesus Christ, and to discover in our daily lives the difference that a relationship with heaven makes to the way we live. Each Sunday we meet four times, each with these same aims, but with distinctly different styles. All services use systematic expository preaching.

10:30am Main Family Service – Church Hall

This is a modern and informal service using power point technology and with music led by a band. It attracts people aged 0-100, though is predominantly made up of young families. Every week, after around 20 minutes the children leave us for their own activities in the form of a Sunday School next door in the Barn, a toddler Sunday School and a early teen Bible study during the sermon. The youngsters study the same passage of the bible as the adults in the main service. The service also has a much wider reach through live streaming on the internet.

Attendance: 75-85 Adults 25-35 Children/Teens

9am Traditional Service – Old Church Building

For those who find the modern style of worship slightly less comfortable, we have a traditional morning service. The service is in the old church building and attracts mainly elderly people. Those who attend this service join those arriving for the 10.30 for coffee after the service. Cassock, surplice,

preaching scarf and hood are normally worn by clergy at this service.

Attendance: 10-20 Adults

9:45am Highfields

Highfields Hall is an informal setting for this warm and friendly service in our other church hall. The service is usually lay led and has a team of people who undertake this ministry. This service attracts more elderly people.

Attendance: 10-15 Adults

6pm Evening Worship – Church Hall

The last service of the day combines modern and traditional music as we come together in this quieter more reflective time together, with an opportunity to spend more time in God's word. There is a mixture of ages and a significant number attending for the second time on a Sunday.

Attendance: 20-30 Adults

A curate would be involved in planning, preparing, leading and preaching at all different kinds of services, sharing the teaching ministry with the incumbant and staff team. Much planning, and preparation is done collaboratively and there will be a lot of opportunity for a curate to exercise any particular gifting they may have. The curate will also be involved in enabling laity to be involved in the services.



Service Pattern at Castle Church

1 st	9.00am	Morning Prayer
	9.45am	Highfields Worship
	10.30am	Main Family Service
	6pm	Evening Communion Service
2 nd	9.00am	Communion Service
	9.45am	Highfields Communion Service
	10.30am	Main Family Service
	6pm	Evening Worship
3 rd	9.00am	Morning Prayer
	9.45am	Highfields Service
	10.30am	Main Family Service <i>(with Communion)</i>
	6pm	Evening Worship
4 th	9.00am	Communion Service
	9.45am	Highfields Service
	10.30am	Main Family Service
	6pm	Evening Worship
5 th	9.00am	BCP Communion
	9.45am	Highfields Worship
	10.30am	Main Family Service
	6pm	Evening Worship

There is a BCP service of Holy Communion in the old church building on alternate Tuesdays followed by Coffee.

The Congregation in numbers:

Figures from 2019	Castle Church
Electoral Roll	132
ASA	115 Adult 35 Children
Marriages	3
Funerals	4
Baptism	5

Castle Church, Stafford

Your Training Incumbent

Revd Philip Sowerbutts

Castle Church Vicarage, 18 Castle Bank,
Stafford ST16 1DJ

01785 607150

vicar@castlechurch.org.uk

- Trained: Oak Hill Theological College
- Ordained: 2003 York
- Curacy: St Andrew's, Kirk Ella
- Vicar since 2007



Philip is married to Claire and they have two children, Jamie (22) and Annie (18). Before ordination, Philip did a variety of jobs in primary education and teacher training. He was also a trainer for Blackburn Diocesan Sunday School Teachers association and won a national award for the education project he set up in Blackburn Cathedral.

He trained for the ministry at Oak Hill Theological College in London where he has also taught about

music in church and a smaller amount of teaching on the Spirituality module specialising in 19th and 20th Century holiness movements. Before coming to Stafford he was the Acting Vicar of St Luke's, Willerby in the East Riding of Yorkshire after serving a curacy at St Andrew's Kirk Ella with President of Oak Hill, Jonathan Jukes. Philip has occasionally helped out teaching on the Lichfield Diocesan CME Training team leading sessions on church music, preaching and church leadership. Philip also serves on the Lichfield Diocese working party for new housing developments and has led training on the subject for churches within the Lichfield Diocese and in Hereford Diocese.

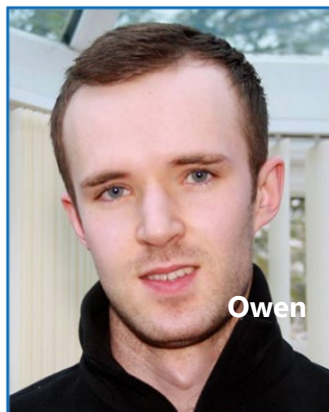
Philip is regarded widely as an expert on the history of The Keswick Convention and serves as an advisor to Keswick Ministries dealing with academic research requests for the Convention. He is also their Honorary Archivist. Until 2019, Philip co-ordinated the large Lichfield Diocesan ReNew group. Philip has, on several occasions, served as a musician at Word Alive and at both the London and Northern Men's Conventions. Philip's hobbies are collecting vinyl records for his beloved Rowe AMI Juke Box, supporting Blackburn Rovers FC and Telford Tigers Ice Hockey Team as well as writing and recording music.

Who else is on the staff team?

Mr Owen Cornford

Youth, Children & Families Worker

Owen is married to Dani and they have two children. Owen trained on the Y&C Course at Oak Hill. He leads a team of volunteers at Castle Church and serves as the Safeguarding Officer. Owen is a qualified cricket coach and is involved in the ministry of Gaines Manor Christian Activity Centre.



Revd Roy Ball

PtO Rtd

Roy is married to Joke (pronounced Yoka) who is Dutch. Before retirement Roy led churches across the world including Holland and Lithuania. He now helps with the teaching ministry and leads the largest home group with Joke. He often disappears over to Europe to help out Anglican churches in interregnum in the Diocese of Europe.

Revd Christine Sykes

NSM - Pastoral care amongst the elderly

Christine is married to Ian and they have an adult daughter. Chris and Ian met whilst working in the coal industry. Christine looks after ministry to the housebound and regularly leads services.

Revd Dr Alan Hodson

Teaching & Mentoring

Alan is married to Jan (an expert in ancient languages!) He is a retired Baptist Pastor but is still very much involved in the world of academic theology. His PhD is on the subject of the Holy Spirit in the book of Hebrews.

Dr Ros Clarke

Women's Work & Theology

Ros works as Associate Director of Church Society. She is also on the faculty of Union Theological College. Before that she had a variety of jobs including teaching biblical languages at Westminster Theological Seminary in the USA, working for Tyndale House in Cambridge and was the Church of England's very first 'Online Pastor.' Her PhD is on 'speech act theory' in the Song of Songs. At Castle Church Ros leads the women's bible study group and teaches some theology!



Castle Church, Stafford

Other retired clergy who help out occasionally:

Rev Paul Carter

Rev Tony Ashton



Colin & Emma

Dr Emma Price

Pre-school Co-ordinator

Emma is married to (Churchwarden) Colin. She works for Staffordshire University but spends one day each week running the Parent and Toddler Group. Her PhD is on the influence of faith, in the life and writing of Victorian novelist Elizabeth Gaskell.

Different aspects of ministry

The church family at Castle Church are involved in most aspects of the life and ministry of the church. The church operates an Ephesians 4 model of ministry where the ministers equip the saints for works of ministry. This is reflected in participation in studies, youth and children's work, in looking after a large number of buildings and grounds etc. There is also an excellent spirit of 'church family' where people care for each other.

Small Groups

Rather than have a 'one size fits all' approach to small groups we take a 'toolbox' approach using a variety of styles and resources, understanding that

everyone is different and learns in different ways. So, for example....

A number of Home Groups study the Sunday teaching passages.

There is also both a young men's and young women's bible study group, held at different times of the week to allow parents with young children to both attend regular bible study.

Christianity Explored, Life Explored and 'Tales of the Unexpected' courses are run for seekers.

Several members of the church family (including teens) read the bible one to one with a more experienced Christian in the church family.

We would expect a curate to be involved in this ministry in some way, according to need and their own particular gifting.

Youth & Children's Work

At Castle Church, we believe that the primary responsibility of bringing children up within the covenant church family is with parents. Therefore a significant amount of Owen's work is to equip parents in that task, providing advice, resources and regular communication.



On a Sunday:

After around 20 mins of a Sunday Service Children ages 0-9 leave for their groups.

All pre-school children have a bible story and linked craft activity.

School-aged children have their own Sunday School

lesson based on the same passage of the bible as is being taught to the adults in church. Parents are then given a weekly bookmark with what the children have learned and how this can be taken forward at home.

9-14 Year Olds leave for a bible study on the same passage in the song before the sermon.

We also run midweek groups for young people:

FUSE – Friday Night Youth Group (Yr7-11)

Fun, games and bible study!

Explorers – Wednesday
Children's Group (Yr3-6)



Fun, games
and bible
study

Camps

Throughout the year our young



people go to different camps at Gaines Manor:
New Year Youth Houseparty,
May Bank Holiday MGP Children's Camp
Camp XL Youth Camp in Summer

School Ministry

Although we have five schools in the parish, we only have significant input into one. Castlechurch Primary School (despite its name) is a County School on the Highfields Estate. Relationships are excellent and we have regular input into lessons, assemblies etc. The school come into the old church building three times during the year:

- Harvest, when we have a joint school/church collection for the local foodbank.
- Christmas, when we put on a big gospel multi-media 'extravaganza' on the last day of term.
- Easter, when the children hear the good news of Jesus through the Easter Story.

On other occasions we have done the whole of the Good

Book Company series; The King the Snake & the Promise and Meet the King as assemblies.



A curate would not be expected to run youth or children's work but would be expected to take their part in teaching and leading occasionally. For example, once each term Philip (and former curates) have taught Sunday School. We see this as an important part of the minister being responsible for the discipleship of all the church family.

Castle Church, Stafford



Stuff we do together!

Social Activities

We do lots of social things together as men, women and families, including meals out, quiz nights and much more!



Pray

We have Church Family Prayer Meeting on the 1st Tuesday of every month. It meets twice in that day at 2pm and 7.30pm. Each meeting is identical in content. This allows older people to come out during the day and working adults in the evening. Some young mums come to the 2pm meeting prior

to the 'school run.' Around a third of the adults in the church attend prayer meeting, which we are told is possibly slightly above average however we would delight in seeing more. We see the prayer meetings as the 'engine room' of our church family.



Beyond Castle Church

Castle Church is involved in supporting the mission of the church beyond Stafford.

Missionary Support

Castle Church supports the work of OMF in the Far East through prayer and finance with our link Missionary Sarah Hoskins

We also support the work of Prebendary Sarah Morris the Bishop of Lichfield's advisor in Prison work and managing chaplain of Eccleshall Women's Prison. Sarah joins ministry teams made up of bible teachers and medics working in slum prisons in the Philippines. Sarah runs Christianity Explored groups through interpreters. Our money goes to providing teaching materials and supplies which the teams take into prisons for prisoners who are in desperate need.



Shallowford House

As a church, we support the ministry of the Diocesan Conference and Retreat Centre Shallowford House. The Director, Simon Hudson is a member of the church family and is on the PCC.

Philip's wife, Claire is the assistant manager and several members of the church family work there part time or in a voluntary capacity. We commit to praying for them and the work of the house.

Church Society

Several members of the church family are members of Church Society and the Associate Director Ros is a member of our church family. We commit to regularly praying for her and supporting her in whatever way possible.

Compassion

To give our young people a wider understanding of Christianity beyond their immediate orbit, and to get them into the habit of regular giving, the children of the church sponsor a child in Nigeria, Jessica. As well as paying for her welfare and education, they write to her and receive letters from her.

Christ Church, Heiloo NL

We are informally linked with Christ Church, Heiloo, an Anglican Church outside Amsterdam. Occasionally some of our clergy visit the Netherlands to preach there.



Jessica

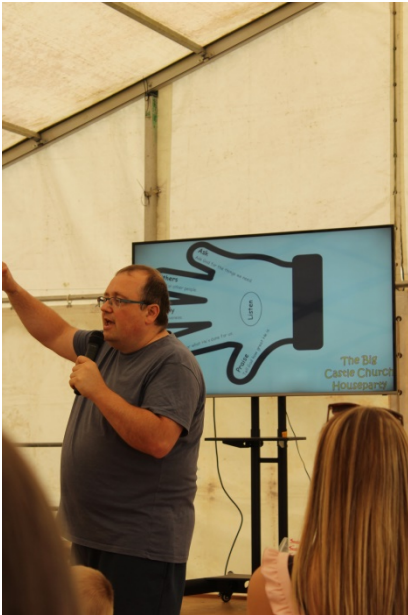


Castle Church, Stafford

Time Away!

Midweek Break

Every September Castle Church runs a Midweek Mini-Break for retired members of the church family. We go to Shallowford House, have lots of time relaxing, enjoying fellowship and good food together. We have a visiting speaker who teaches us the bible. This is a very precious time for many.



Midweek Break Group Photo



A Curate would be expected to be residential on both the Midweek Break and the Big Houseparty and help to plan and lead the time away.

Big Houseparty Fun



The Big Houseparty

We run a weekend away at Shallowford house every 2 years in July, just before the schools break up for the summer. This is NOT an intense teaching weekend, in fact we only have two meetings all weekend, both family services. The aim is to simply 'be a church family' together and have loads of fun (which we do!) We take over the whole house whilst some camp or take caravans.



Working Together

As a staff team we work together well and share the joys and sorrows of ministry. As a staff team we laugh an enormous amount and our Christmas parties are the stuff of legend!

Staff Meeting

Each Monday afternoon the Staff Team meet. This is NOT primarily a business meeting.

1. Bible Study

The first thing we do is spend a considerable time studying the bible together, usually the main teaching text for the following Sunday. Each member of the team will normally have spent some time in the morning looking at the text themselves. This is an encouraging time when we give a real 'leg up' to the preacher and to Owen as he prepares teaching materials for the children. We then pray through the passage and pray for those who will teach it.

A Curate would be expected to be at all Staff Meetings. When the curate is the preacher at the main service the following week, the expectation would be that they lead the staff study. There would also be the opportunity to suggest theology books for us all to read.

2. Theology Book

The next item on the agenda is our 'book.' As a staff team we rotate by choosing a theology book to read. We would normally read a chapter or two before the meeting then discuss it together asking questions of how it impacts our church family and ministry.

3. People & Prayer

Finally we will discuss any church business and plan anything that needs planning, all in the context of prayer.

Time Off

Philip closely monitors all time off and expects all staff to take 'at least' 24 hours continuous break each week. There is the firm belief that we are not being obedient to God if we do not take rest from work. If a curate is married, Philip will insist on the curate having quality time with wife and family. There is a strong belief that the leadership should model godly family life to the rest of the church family. Philip himself is monitored by one of the church wardens. There will also be adequate time set aside for CME Study with reduced workload when assignments are due in.



Weekly supervision for the Curate will take place before the staff meeting each Monday afternoon. A chance to reflect, talk, plan and learn.



Castle Church, Stafford

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.

Mutual Flourishing

Castle Church has passed the resolution with regard to women bishops and, alongside our local bishops, with whom we have an excellent relationship, we also look to the Bishop of Maidstone (an assistant Bishop in Lichfield Diocese). We are committed to the guiding principles of 'Mutual Flourishing.'



As can be seen from this profile, there is a female NSM at Castle Church. We neither see or experience any conflict in this area. There is huge respect from those who would consider themselves 'Complimentarian' and those who would consider themselves 'Egalitarian.' This is possible because both hold their positions with respect of their interpretation of scripture on the matter. When the resolution was voted on, there was a unanimous decision taken.

For the sake of Complimentarians, Christine graciously agrees not to preach at the main service though may often lead. All the Castle Church family have a deep appreciation for her ministry. The clergy take full part in Deanery and Diocesan activity and are on excellent terms with all their chapter. Should a female bishop ever be appointed locally, we would be determined to be on the very best of terms with her.

A former Ministry Trainee writes:

"The position here offers a great opportunity to love, learn and serve. If you're serious about serving in a Christian community and want to grow both spiritually and in ability to minister, check it out... it's a great, and most importantly real place to serve."

Revd David Hazell – Curate in Canterbury Diocese

Our previous curate writes:

"Chloe and I have regularly been struck, throughout our time at Castle Church, just how much of a family this church family really is. Warm, welcoming and easy going, all four congregations will be grateful for and appreciative of your ministry - opportunities for which are many and varied. Philip is a generous training incumbent, willing to share ministry and supportive of whatever particular ventures and initiatives you might have a passion for. He will guard your day off at least as vigorously as you, and ensure that you and your family are well cared for throughout your time on staff. We commend Castle Church as a curacy opportunity for anyone."

*Revd Phil Mullins - Senior Associate Minister
St James Muswell Hill, London*

Why Consider Castle Church?

We don't *do* Messy Church... we *are* messy church!

We are a group of God's people from lots of different backgrounds, some carrying enormous



burdens and baggage, but who are learning to follow Jesus and cast those burdens on Him.

There is an enormous amount of love and warmth within the church family. People genuinely care for each other and the staff team always feel appreciated and valued.

It is a very mixed parish in terms of people, but also a very mixed church in terms of worship style. There will be lots of opportunities to learn and have a go in a very supporting and 'forgiving environment



A former Ministry Trainee writes:

"Castle Church is a superb place to serve God. The congregation model what it is to form a true church family around God's Word. What I learned during my time there will stay with me many years into my future ministry."

Michael Hayden - Curate of St Andrew's, Norwich

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

"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

For further information

In the first instance, please contact:

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**Stafford... a place that everyone's
heard of, but no one knows where it is!**

Find out and come to serve with us!

**We're a happy, loving caring church
family that wants to know and love
Jesus more, tell people about Him.**