

Chester Diocesan News

#EverydayFaith across the Diocese of Chester



THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND
Diocese of Chester

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Find out how you can attend the Lay Conference 2020



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What is God's plan for you today?

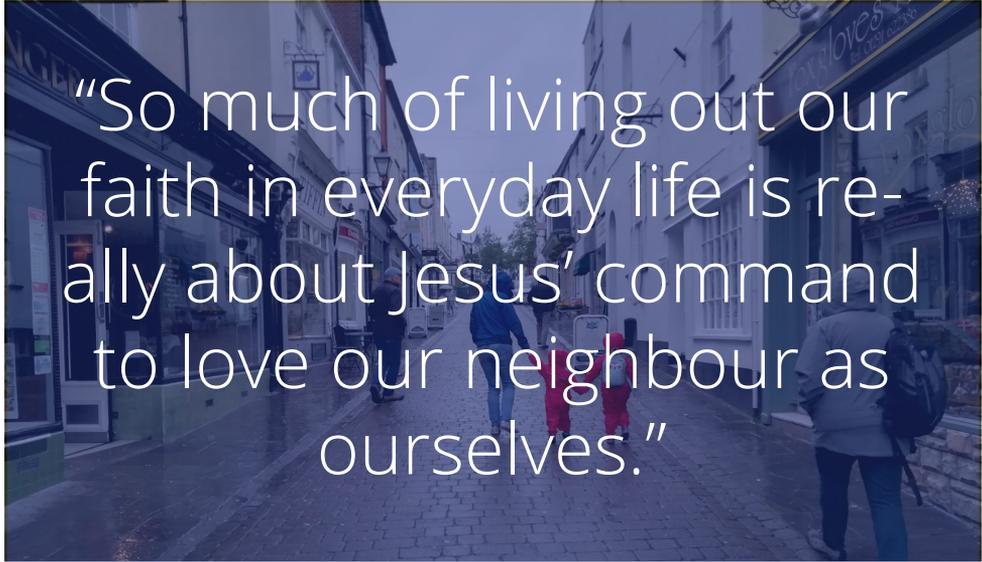
The Archdeacon of Chester, Mike Gilbertson, reflects on the importance of living out our faith everyday of the week.

How many people do you encounter each day? People who live in your home, work in your workplace, shop where you shop, or pass you in the street. We are often so pre-occupied that we often just ignore others, intent on our own business. Yet Jesus said 'Love your neighbour as yourself.' Part of our vocation as followers of Jesus is to try to see people as he sees them – as people God loves and cares for.

"One of the real joys for me over the last few months has been working on something called



Archdeacon Mike Gilbertson



"So much of living out our faith in everyday life is really about Jesus' command to love our neighbour as ourselves."

'Setting God's People Free', or 'Everyday Faith.' This is an initiative to encourage all of us to develop a clearer sense of Christian identity in everyday life, and increased confidence to express our faith in everyday life. So far, we've been working with a group of around twenty pilot parishes and over the next few months we will be looking to encourage as many other parishes as possible to join in. The Lay Conference in May, 'Not Just Sunday', is all about this. Please do sign up, and watch out for more about 'Everyday Faith' very soon.

"So much of living out our faith in everyday life is really about Jesus'

command to love our neighbour as ourselves. I was struck by the way that one of those twenty pilot parishes, St John's Great Meols, had found that focusing on everyday faith had led to what they called 'deeper kindness.' Relationships within the church became deeper, and the congregation found new ways to show the love and grace of God to the local community, for example in caring for refugees. Elsewhere

in this CDN you can read inspiring accounts from two Christians in the diocese, Jenny McKay and Chris Jarvis, about how God has used them in everyday life to reach others with his love and really make a difference.

"I wonder what ways God has in mind for you to live out your faith in everyday life. Why not ask him what that might look like?"

Archdeacon Mike Gilbertson



Not Just Sunday: #EverydayFaith

The diocesan Lay Conference is held every three years, but it's not just for people in licensed lay ministry, all lay members of our churches are encouraged to attend as a parish representative.

Sunday morning is a time to draw closer to God, and to reflect on the week gone by and the week to come. Many of us leave church with a spring in our step; the fellowship and joy we can experience at church often fill us with the hope and encouragement we need to live and share our faith confidently with others.

However, harnessing that confidence so that it sustains us and guides our words and actions and identity through the whole week, doesn't come easy to everyone all of the time.

"This was my first conference, but it won't be my last. Very well organised." Attendee of the Lay Conference 2017

*The Hayes Conference Centre,
Swanwick.*





At the Lay Conference 2020, we will explore how we can encourage each other to live out our faith confidently every day of the week, *Not Just Sunday*.

The aim is that everyone who attends, feels encouraged and equipped, and leaves with:

- a clearer sense of their Christian identity in everyday life, individually and collectively;
- an increased confidence to express their everyday faith; and
- an idea of how the gathered church can resource everyday faith.

John Mason, Chair of the House of Laity in the Diocese of Chester, says: "Join us as we address these ideas and explore together the ways in which we can rise to the missional challenge before us and lead the Church into growth.

"We sincerely hope your parish can be represented at what will be an uplifting occasion. At the Lay Conference in 2017 around 100 parishes attended, we'd love that figure to be closer to 200 parish representatives this time around."

What is it?

The Lay Conference is what it says on the tin and is held every three years. This year it will have a focus on encouraging and equipping us to live out our faith confidently every day of the week, *Not Just Sunday*.

Who is it for?

It's for any lay church members. Those with a formal lay ministry do attend, but we would encourage anyone to come along as their parish representative. It is a time to learn, have fun and share with others from all walks of life.

When and where is it?

It will be held over the weekend of the 15 to 17 May 2020 at The Hayes Conference Centre in Swanwick, Derbyshire.

Next steps



The diocese has agreed to meet the cost of one room per parish, including full board. Speak to your PCC Secretary and let them know you'd like to attend on behalf of your parish.



The Revd Dr Jenny McKay, Great Budworth

How do you live out your faith day to day?

As Christians, we are called to live out our faith through our words, deeds and actions. This might be in how we respond to a difficult conversation at work, the way in which we engage with a stranger in the street, or choosing to say nothing at just the right moment. Two people in the Diocese of Chester share their thoughts on how they live out their faith day to day.

The Revd Dr Jenny McKay, Great Budworth

Jenny is a self-supporting minister in a secular setting: her workplace.

She heads up a team of 12 veterinary pathologists working in a lab and sharing all of the normal ups and downs a workplace brings.

Jenny says: "People know I've trained to be a priest and they do tend to ask about pastoral things. I'll have conversations in the coffee room and I'll ask them about their weekend. It

opens up the opportunity for deeper conversations.

"It's important that as Christians we're confident and bold enough to share our faith every day of the week. I would encourage all Christians to look for those opportunities to share what

Jenny greeting tourists outside the Cathedral at her ordination.



you believe. You can bring it into conversations quite casually by simply telling someone you went to church on Sunday – sometimes that's all people need for them to ask questions and start a conversation."

"It's important that as Christians we're confident and bold enough to share our faith every day of the week."



Chris Jarvis, Youth Worker,
Bebington

Chris Jarvis, Youth Worker, Bebington

Chris Jarvis is a Youth Worker in Bebington and leads a Christian union group at a local school. It's an opportunity to eat together, play games and use some of the lunch hour to discuss a topic from a Christian perspective.

Chris says relationship and patience is important to his ministry.

One student with no connection with the church, came along to the lunchtime gathering with some Christian

friends. After a period of months getting to know her and building up a friendship, Chris gently invited her to attend a prayer group. She didn't come, initially.

To Chris, the social stigma attached to being a young Christian in school can be a barrier. He says: "To take you up on an invitation to explore prayer and God for the first time, a young person has to trust you and know it's going to be a safe place. They have to know that accepting an invitation

is worth the risk."

Chris' care and patience eventually led to the student attending the prayer group and nearly two years after she first appeared at the door of the lunchtime Christian union, she was baptised.

"To take you up on an invitation to explore prayer and God for the first time, a young person has to trust you and know it's going to be a safe place."

Our events

Book via Eventbrite, or go to: chester.anglican.org/events



A Rocha/Eco Church insight day

05 February 2020 - Foxhill, Frodsham

Are you passionate about helping churches to engage with Eco Church and A Rocha UK's wider work of getting individuals and churches to care for God's earth?



Safeguarding Training

28 February 2020 - Church House, Daresbury

Leadership Module - Compulsory training for clergy, licenced lay workers, parish safeguarding officers, Churchwardens and local missional leaders.



Praying for the diocese

12 March 2020 - St Michael's, Macclesfield

A meeting to pray for the diocese, the Crown Nominations Commission, and the person God is calling to be the next Bishop of Chester.



New approaches to Bible reading

30 April 2020 - Runcorn

Telling and retelling the story. This is a day to help those who would like to develop the skills to facilitate new approaches to reading the Bible with others. Led by Sue Richardson.



Lay Conference 2020

15 to 17 May 2020 - Swanwick

Exploring how we can all confidently live out our faith every day of the week, not just Sundays. For more information, go to: chester.anglican.org/lay-conference-2020