

# Chester Diocesan News

#EverydayFaith across the Diocese of Chester | June 2021



THE CHURCH  
OF ENGLAND  
Diocese of Chester

## Ready to serve



**Introducing:** The  
next Bishops of  
Birkenhead and  
Stockport

# The next Bishops of Birkenhead and Stockport

**O**N 27 May, it was announced that The Venerable Julie Conalty, currently Archdeacon of Tonbridge, will be the next Bishop of Birkenhead, and the Revd Canon Sam Corley, currently Rector of Leeds Minster, will be the next Bishop of Stockport.

Bishop-designate Julie said of her appointment: "Being nominated to be the next Bishop of Birkenhead is a huge privilege. I am both honoured and daunted to have been appointed. I have a strong sense of calling to this role and to serve the people of Chester Diocese but that doesn't stop me feeling unworthy and slightly terrified.

"I am assured that I will receive a warm welcome and I really look forward to getting to know my new colleagues and community. Please pray for me as I prepare, just as I will pray for you."

Bishop-designate Sam Corley said of his appointment: "It is humbling and so very exciting to have been nominated as the next Bishop of Stockport.

"Any act of discernment is as demanding as it is energising, but I have had a strong sense of God's leading throughout the appointment process and I am eager to begin getting to know people across the diocese and to learning about the different communities we serve. And what a gift to be able to join a new episcopal team at such a key time in the life of the diocese. I am so excited about working together with Bishop Mark and Julie as we strive to enable the discipleship and ministry of the whole people of God to flourish and as we support churches, schools and chaplaincies across the diocese in proclaiming the good news of Jesus Christ.

"I know I have much to learn. But I come ready to listen and look forward so much to meeting you all and to all that is to come."

Bishop Mark said: "I am delighted to welcome Julie and Sam to the Diocese of Chester and thank God for calling them to the roles and for all those people involved in the discernment process.





*The Venerable Julie Conalty*



*Revd Canon Sam Corley*

# Julie and Sam take a whistle-stop tour

**O**n the day of the announcement of the two new bishops-designate, Julie and Sam began a two day trip around the diocese of Chester. It started with a trip to Sir Thomas Boteler Church of England High School, where they were treated to some excellent musical performances from the students, who sang some contemporary songs and also played drums. You can view them on video below.



Tranmere Rovers Football Club who do some great work supporting people in danger of isolation was their next stop. Julie Conalty is an avid watcher of the game and a supporter of Charlton Athletic, but maybe there might be a place in her heart for Tranmere once she's been in the diocese a while.

The Mayor of Wirral joined them for a visit to Birkenhead citizen supermarket before travelling on to a Cheshire car dealership owned and run by local Christian businessman and former High Sheriff of Cheshire, Mark Mitchell. The two Bishops-designate finished the day with Evensong at Chester Cathedral led by the Dean of Chester.

On the second day of their journey, Friday 28 May, the two Bishops-designate went to the eastern side of the diocese and spend time at a thriving rural church, meet local farmers in Knutsford and join the new Mayor of Stockport to visit a family-run brewery in Stockport before rounding off the day with prayers at St George's Church, Stockport.

Bishop-designate Julie succeeds Bishop Keith Sinclair who retired in March, and Bishop-designate Sam succeeds Bishop Libby Lane who left the diocese in 2019.





*Tranmere Rovers Football Club*



*Birkenhead citizen supermarket*



*The bishops-designate visit a car dealership in Ellesmere Port*



*Time for some refreshment in a Stockport brewery*



# Who is

The Revd Canon Sam Corley,  
Rector of Leeds and bishop-  
designate of Stockport?

**T**he Revd Canon Sam Corley was licensed as Rector of Leeds in 2015. He is the former Precentor of Bradford Cathedral, a role he took up in 2011. He was also Senior Chaplain to the University of Bradford and Faith Advisor to the Lord Mayor of Bradford.

Sam read theology at the University of Durham and taught history in Surrey before training for the ministry at St John's College Nottingham.

In 2004 he was ordained in the Diocese of Blackburn, where he became a parish priest and Assistant Diocesan Missioner. Sam says he's comfortable in a wide range of worship contexts - including leading worship for 2000 scouts in a cowshed at the Great Yorkshire Showground.

Since 2009 Sam has been a Bishops' Advisor and Panel Secretary for Bishops' Advisory Panels - the national process by which candidates are selected for ordination. More recently he has been an Executive Member and Director of the Association of English Cathedrals and has delivered training in governance for clergy and laypeople who are new to their roles in leading Cathedrals.

Sam is married to Claire, who is herself in ordained ministry within the Church of England, and they have three children.

Having spent much of his childhood working on a farm, Sam also has a deep love of the countryside and nature.



# Who is

**The Venerable Julie Conalty, Archdeacon of Tonbridge and bishop-designate of Birkenhead?**



**T**he Venerable Julie Conalty studied for a Biblical Studies degree in Sheffield. Upon her graduation, women couldn't train to become priests so Julie found work running a homeless shelter, trained as a social worker and began a career in the Probation Service. Eventually, she was accepted for ordination training and was ordained deacon in 1999 and priest in 2000. Her training parish was in Southwark Diocese and she was initially a self-supporting minister while continuing her secular work.

Subsequently, she worked for the Youth Justice Board before becoming the national manager of a resettlement project and then a Local Authority manager for Specialist Youth Services. She also founded

a consultancy partnership and somewhere amidst all of that found the time to study Applied Theology.

In 2010, Julie transferred to Stipendiary Ministry and in 2012 she became vicar of Christ Church, Erith in the Diocese of Rochester. She also served as the Bishop's Advisor for the Ministry of Ordained Women was made an Honorary Canon of Rochester Cathedral in 2016. Julie was appointed as Archdeacon of Tonbridge in September 2017.

Julie is married to Simon and they have two grown-up sons. Julie likes a beer and a takeaway curry on a Friday night and the whole family support Charlton Athletic.

During the lockdown Julie and Simon have been playing Settlers of Catan and Ticket to Ride "seemingly ad infinitum".

# Events



## Open Churches

30 June 2021 - Online

Discover how to safely open buildings safely along with time for Q&A, followed by two shorter presentations about missional opportunities. [More](#)



## Dyslexics in Ministry

07 March 2021 - Online

This will be a conversation to explore our common ground and some of the challenges and opportunities to develop a network for mutual support. [More](#)



## Training for new Churchwardens

20 July 2021 - Online

The aim of this session is for new Churchwardens to leave feeling confident in how to fulfil their role and who to turn to when difficulties arise. [More](#)



## Training for all Churchwardens

02 October 2021 - Online

The aim is to update Churchwardens with latest information on a number of topics to help them with the smooth running of the parish. [More](#)



## Fundraising in a Box

20 October 2021 - Online

Find out about the new fundraising resource for Ecclesiastical Insurance customers that can help churches with their fundraising. [More](#)