

## Curacy Reimagined in Runcorn

- Are you committed to collaborative learning and working?
- Do you have the boldness and agility to serve your curacy as part of a cluster of town centre parishes?
- Can you minister imaginatively and creatively while remaining rooted in inherited models of church?
- Do you feel called to minister to the “forgotten corners” of God’s world?

The Bishop of Chester is seeking to appoint an ordinand to a different style of curacy.

The successful candidate will be licensed to two parishes in the town of Runcorn, Cheshire, but with a commitment to serve alongside a wider team of clergy across the town.

They will bring energy, flexibility and a deep commitment to team working. They will also have areas of special interest that they would be keen to develop during their curacy.

Alongside the wider team they will have some responsibility for nurturing new forms of church ministry alongside traditional parish ministry.

This is a full time, stipendiary curacy suitable for those sponsored for Incumbent ministry. Housing will be provided.

### Parishes in the cluster:

Holy Trinity	Revd Karen Andrews
All Saints	Revd Karen Andrews
St Michael and All Angels	Revd George Roach
St Andrews	Revd Emma Speake
St Mary’s	Revd Simon Skidmore
Hallwood Parish	Revd Karen Gardiner
St. Berteline and St. Christopher	Revd Danny Sedano
St John the Evangelist	Vacant

**Scan the QR code for more information.**

**For an informal conversation about this or other curacy opportunities in the Diocese of Chester please contact:**

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## Ministry Profile

### Collaborative Ministry across Anglican Churches in Runcorn

There is a dynamic clergy team ministering across Runcorn. We meet each week to pray and support each other, and we have started to build solid relationships based in Christian friendship and unity. Each minister serves their own congregation but also gives some of their ministry time and energy to building the wider Kingdom of God across the town. This pioneering way of working is new and exciting and best of all, is working!



We're just about to hold

our second youth event, there is now a joint prayer breakfast each month praying for youth ministry in Runcorn, we held a series of events during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. A couple of us have started a youth group in a local school and it is clear to see that we are supporting one other out of love for our colleagues and our town.

A good example of this would be during the week leading up to Christmas: one church had volunteers drop out of their 'Experience Christmas' event for local primary schools so two colleagues stepped in to help so it could go ahead. There is a definite feel of 'team' and a desire that team should grow.

### Opportunity for mission

There is a feeling of hopelessness across much of our town, mental and physical health is low, physical hunger, debt and poverty is at an all-time high. Many people feel on the edge and long to find a place to be accepted and belong. There is also a deep spiritual hunger in Runcorn, which sadly has not always been a hunger nourished by the church. Over the past few years, there has been an explosion of spiritualist, occult and new age groups and events which appear to be the first port of call for many spiritual seekers.

This sadly reflects the trend nationally of 'apathy' towards the church, but since the end of the lockdown many clergy report a newfound interest in the church especially amongst younger people. This is good news! Halton is thought to have the fewest number of people under 19 in church on a Sunday: lower than anywhere else in the UK. Unsurprisingly, ministry amongst children and young people has become a priority for ministry between the collaborating clergy team. The Vicar at Windmill Hill is also part time youth co-ordinator for the town.

There is a wealth of missional opportunity in Runcorn; this is a unique context and an exciting time to be here and to see how God is working in so many new and creative ways. It is also a great opportunity for learning together, journeying alongside a supportive and collaborative ministry team. Those with a heart for pioneering new initiatives and revitalising existing ministries, and those with



a desire to see inward and outward growth in terms of Church, Kingdom and discipleship amongst all age groups would particularly benefit from being placed here.

### **Invitation**

We would invite any interested candidates to 'come and see' as this is a truly unique context and opportunity. Come and visit us and see the town, meet the team and hear how we see God working amongst us.



## Appendix 1: Working Together in Runcorn



The Anglican church in Runcorn is at an exciting time in its journey. Runcorn currently has one of the lowest church attendance figures in England. But at the moment there is a significant number of current or imminent vacancies among parochial posts in the town. This provides a unique opportunity to imagine a different approach to ministry.

The approach we are following combines the pastoral strength of local ministry with the missional potential of cross-parish activity.

In outline, parish clergy will continue to be licensed in the usual way to their parishes, and remain responsible for their own churches and congregations. But there will also be an expectation that they will use a proportion of their time (between half a day to a day per week on average) to help support all eight parishes in Runcorn in delivering a particular area of ministry. This expectation will be

written into clergy job descriptions, and will require all clergy to be willing to work positively across the different traditions represented by the churches in Runcorn.

When applying for a role as an incumbent or priest-in-charge in the town, applicants will be invited to indicate the area of ministry in which they would be willing to offer this wider support to the Runcorn parishes. As new priests have been arriving over the last few months, we have already been building up these offers of ministry. Areas in which people have already expressed an interest include:

1. Children and primary schools
  2. Young people and secondary schools
  3. New ways of being church
  4. Asylum seekers and refugees
  5. Online presence
- Other possibilities yet to be covered include:
6. Caring for older people
  7. Engaging with local government bodies and other agencies
  8. Working in deprived/marginalised communities



But we are open to other possibilities as well. You may have other skills to bring, and we would welcome anything that enhances the mission and ministry of the churches across Runcorn. While some parishes may more naturally 'fit' with some skills, this is about facilitating ministry across the whole of Runcorn, so we are not linking

particular parishes with particular skills. We are not averse to having several people with similar skills across Runcorn either, as long as people can work creatively together.



Being able to support the wider ministry to Runcorn is a requirement of this post. To help facilitate this, it is likely that a Bishop's Mission Order will be created in the near future to which all clergy and licensed ministers will be licensed. This will provide a more formal structure to encourage the mission of the churches across the whole of Runcorn, and also give the diocese some mechanism for supporting the project.

The churches across Runcorn are looking forward to this next chapter in their life together with hope and enthusiasm, and we are confident that this collaborative approach will bear fruit as churches work together for the good of God's mission across the town.