

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

For Richer, For Poorer

Transformative church partnerships

Across Lichfield Diocese 2013-17



**Ruth Clay
Partnerships Worker**

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Do you seriously want us to partner with them?

“There is no way to being a Christian without being in the neighbourhood of other Christians. Bad news for many, because Christians can be so difficult! But that is what the New Testament tells us very uncompromisingly: to be with Jesus is to be where human suffering and pain are found and it is also to be with other human beings who are invited to be with Jesus. And that...is a gift as well as sometimes a struggle and an embarrassment.”

Dr Rowan Williams

Not just another initiative!

“What you are doing is fantastic and... something which the church is uniquely placed to do. In the context of inequality and potentially widening gaps between communities it is vital that connections are made which hold groups together.”

Bill Mash

*Diocesan Officer for Mission in the Economy &
Team Leader,
Black Country Urban Industrial Mission*

Which churches have partners?

We continue to work with churches including ones in Tividale, Kinver, Stoke, Barlaston, Wednesfield, Wolverhampton, Penn, and East Staffordshire.

We are in conversation with many other churches at various stages of developing partnerships in Telford, Hodnet, Newcastle, Walsall, Pelsall, Aldridge, Stoke, Bentley, Wolverhampton, Stafford, Shrewsbury, Willenhall, Cannock...and beyond!

Great partnerships take time to establish and become owned by their churches and so we take as long as is necessary to make sure that partnerships are grounded and authentic.

A warm welcome to new partners...Essington, St John the Evangelist and Emmanuel, Bentley.



The importance of these partnerships

*The Dean of Lichfield
The Very Reverend Adrian Dorber.*

“Church partnerships bring home the primary truth of being the Christian church: we belong to one another in the body of Christ. The way we care for each other, support one another, pray for one another and share our talents, stories and sorrows, our weaknesses and our strengths, is the very essence of Christian life. Too often our Church becomes tribal or it gets pinned down by its context. Committing to partnership lifts our heads beyond what is familiar and opens us up to living the Gospel in new and creative ways. I have found listening to the stories of these developing partnerships a tremendously moving and heartening experience. It is the work of the Holy Spirit and I rejoice that it is happening.”

Synod Stories

It has been great to speak at the various Deanery Synods and share the good news of what has been happening in the partnerships, including with: **Cheadle, Stoke, Stone, Telford, Trysull and Wolverhampton**. We are also looking forward to visiting Synods at: **Ellesmere, Leek and Tutbury**. If you would like Ruth to speak at your local Synod, please get in touch! ruth.clay@lichfield.anglican.org



**For more information about
the partnerships initiative...**

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