

# Chester

## Diocesan News

July 2018

News, features, jobs...  
[chester.anglican.org](http://chester.anglican.org)

Growing stronger parishes

# Slow down for God

Earlier this summer Bishop Libby and I walked about 60 miles across the Macclesfield Archdeaconry praying 'Thy Kingdom Come'. It was a fascinating experience and a chance to see up close the extraordinary diversity of our Diocese and a great opportunity to spend time with folk who generously shared their time, their prayers and their stories.

I drive big distances through increasingly impossible traffic but rarely do I slow down and really see what's

around and discern the Spirit at work in our world. So to walk and hear people's stories, see the astonishing beauty of the Cheshire countryside and experience a different pace of life made me realise again the importance of taking time to re-fill the spiritual tank. Sociologist Roy Baumeister talks about 'ego-depletion' to describe the impact upon us of constant stress and pressure.

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## Slow down for God cont... from p1

To be in such a state leaves us tired and vulnerable to temptations, less able to maintain our own self-discipline and less likely to recognise the presence and guidance of God. The Bible was, of course, written in a time when you walked everywhere and noticed more and maybe we are now living in a time of such rush that we increasingly miss the God moments.

It's hard to know how to slow down in a world that just wants to speed up. But perhaps worth noting that in Luke 11, whilst amongst a big bustling crowd, Jesus twice tells his followers to reflect on the world around them. Amidst the stress and pressure he said, 'consider the Ravens' (v24) 'consider the wild flowers' (v27). There are lessons here to be learned in the ordinary things of creation and so this summer I do hope you get some space to walk and reflect and pray and re-fill your spiritual tank.

**The Venerable Ian Bishop**

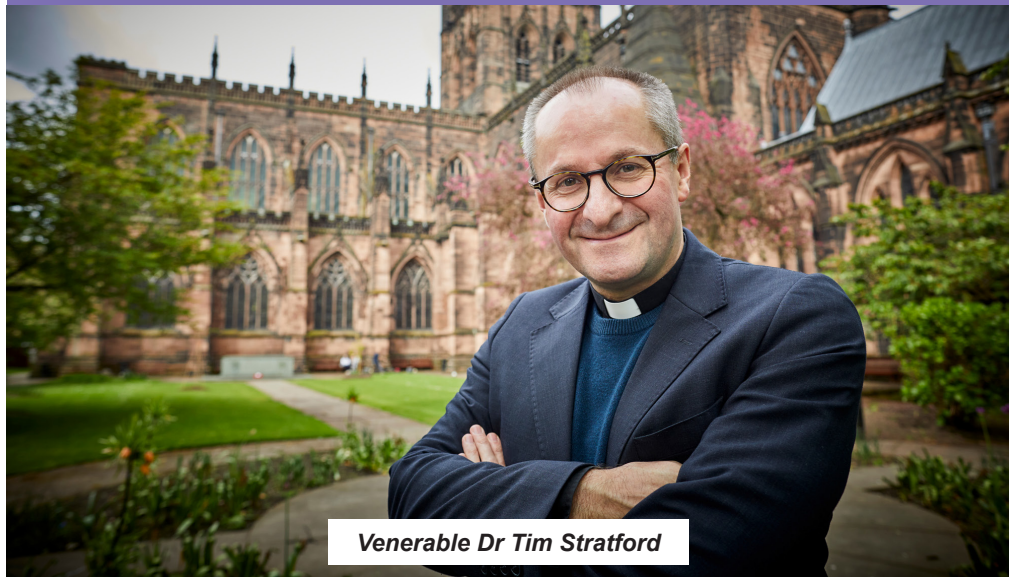




*Pupils from All Saints RC School Ashton upon Mersey presented Bishop Libby with an olive wood heart as a symbol of our shared ministry of love across both our Diocese and the RC Diocese of Shrewsbury.*



# New Dean of Chester Cathedral



*Venerable Dr Tim Stratford*

**The new Dean of Chester is to be the Venerable Dr Tim Stratford, a highly experienced and respected priest, who is a published author and has strong connections to the North West.**

Tim is currently the Archdeacon of Leicester. He grew up in Liverpool and started his working life as a qualified electronic engineer for Lucas CAV in its Research and Development section. He studied theology at Oxford and was ordained in 1986. He has significant experience of city and cathedral ministry from his time in Liverpool Diocese and through his work as Bishop David Sheppard's Personal Chaplain. He has worked on some of Liverpool's largest estates during his time as Rector of Kirkby and as a vicar in Norris Green. He has significant experience of urban and rural communities, diverse cultures and faith traditions gained while working in the Diocese of Leicester.

Tim said: "I am delighted to be joining

the Cathedral and Diocese as Dean of Chester. When I was growing up in Liverpool, Chester was the historic city "over the water" where we could go for a treat and a day out. The opportunity to get to know the City and the County of Cheshire from the inside and to make a difference will be a privilege.

"The cathedral is a beautiful and historic building in the centre of the city that draws people to visit. But it is more than that too. It is a place where people can encounter the presence of God and get a sense of the things that ultimately matter beyond the here and now. I hope that over the years I serve as Dean, the cathedral will grow strong as a sign of our spiritual futures and heritage."

The Bishop of Chester, Dr Peter Forster, said: "Archdeacon Tim Stratford has had an outstanding ministry in a variety of posts. He will receive a warm welcome as he returns to the North West. The post of Dean will draw together his evident gifts in leadership, worship, pastoral care

and administration. This is an exciting opportunity both for Tim, and for Chester Cathedral.”

Canon Jane Brooke, Acting Dean, said: “Speaking on behalf of the cathedral I want to say how delighted we are that Tim will be the next Dean of Chester. Tim brings considerable knowledge and experience to the post and the cathedral clergy are looking forward very much to working with him.”

Tim will take up his new role and be installed as the Dean of Chester on 8th September.

### **Biographical details**

Tim Stratford grew up in Huyton on the edge of Liverpool leaving to gain a BSc from the University of York in Electronics. He worked briefly for Lucas CAV as a Research & Development Engineer before studying Theology at Wycliffe Hall in Oxford.

Ordained in Liverpool Cathedral as a deacon in 1986 and a priest in 1987, Tim completed curacies at Mossley Hill Parish Church and St Helens Parish Church. He served Bishop David Sheppard as his Personal Chaplain during the years when David was very active as a national leader and was deepening partnerships

with sister churches through his friendship with Derek Worlock and John Newton.

Tim served as incumbent in two outer city estate parishes on the north-eastern edge of Liverpool, spending ten years at the Church of the Good Shepherd in Norris Green and ten years as Rector of Kirkby. These parishes, characterised by multiple deprivation, left a deep impression on him not least in being full of people with spirit and ability despite the adverse conditions.

For six years since 2012, Tim has been the Archdeacon of Leicester serving a socially diverse diocese with urban and rural communities, both rich and poor and people of many cultures and faith traditions.

He has served the national church as a member of General Synod for fifteen years and the Liturgical Commission for ten years.

He has written and edited a number of books and booklets focussing mainly on contextually dependent worship and mission. He was awarded a Biblical Studies PhD by Sheffield University in 2009 for his study of the mid-Victorian Slum Priest Ritualists.

Tim is married to Jen and they have three adult children and one grandson.



*L-R: Revd Canon Jane Brooke, Cllr Razia Daniels – Lord Mayor of Chester, Revd Canon Barry Wilson, Jen Stratford, Venerable Tim Stratford, Revd Canon Jeremy Dussek, Revd Denise Williams*

# Disability insights

***It is estimated that over 13,500 people in the UK have Stoma surgery each year. In this occasional series of disability insight articles the Revd Mark Turner, a Curate at St Mary's Eastham, shares his experiences of living with a stoma and colostomy bag.***

"I have a number of medical issues but I want to focus on my life at church while living with my stoma. I am 37 and after 7 years of bowel problems, bringing about chronic pain, my consultant agreed to give me a stoma.

Returning to church after the surgery, with a colostomy bag fitted, I have had to learn to adapt.

With other priests there is an expectation that when leading worship you are able to stay put, but I need people who work with me to know that sometimes I have to be excused to 'see to myself'. Generally, I can manage it enough so the congregation don't notice what's going on. I am very keen that as a leader of worship people should only be focused on God, not what the curate is doing.

I am thankful that our church has two toilets. I tend to use the disabled toilets, which, outside of my parish, can get some looks especially when wearing a clerical collar. I constantly eat, as my body gets malnourished quickly and I can lose steam and therefore get very tired. I think that the ladies who do the tea and coffee after church must just think I am greedy for biscuits but it's the quick release of sugar I need.

Then it comes to lifting things in church. I can't, you see. As younger person there is an expectation for me to assist with things that need doing such as lifting chairs and

I feel awful for not being able to help as much as I would like to. Thankfully, my wife Sarah and son James will do my bit as I find it difficult to say no.

I have the worry of noise, smell or the bag detaching playing at the back of my mind all the time and that's what takes away my confidence to be in social situations. You will always see me carrying a bag so I can manage any issues, and I have a car boot full of spare clothes.

Many in my congregation wouldn't really know I had a stoma as I don't really talk about it much; this is my hidden disability. It embarrasses me as it's a toileting issue, and, let's face it, society seems to think we shouldn't have toilet issues after the age of about 3! I call it a disability because it is a long term condition and together with everything else, which I have not written about, does affect my life.

I am a busy husband and dad, I do keep a full time job as a teacher, as well as a Minister in Secular Employment. Life, albeit difficult at times, is good, rich with love, support and fun within God's family."

## Chester Diocesan News

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# Foxhill

House and Woodlands

## September courses

**The Harvest of our Lives 7th September 4pm – 2pm 9th September £165**

Led by Canon Veronica Hydon. A creative weekend using a variety of art and craft materials to explore and celebrate different skills each of us have discovered, practised and developed during our lifetimes in a range of work and leisure contexts, and sharing how God has blessed and encouraged us

along the way. This weekend will be contemplative as well as companionable. A time for greater appreciation of our own achievements as labourers in God's harvest.

**Celtic Treasures - Light from the past to inspire and illumine 21st September 4 pm - 23rd September 2 pm £165**

Led by the Revd Roy Searle. Celtic Christian spirituality was forged on the anvil of a changing world. Roy will explore treasures from the stories and traditions of the past that can bring hope, inspiration and light to our life and faith journeys in our changing contemporary church and world.

For booking forms please contact:  
[foxhill@chester.anglican.org](mailto:foxhill@chester.anglican.org)

## Noah's Ark

Knitted life size characters, from the story of Noah's Ark, are set to appear

all over Church Lawton from 23rd to the 29th July. The church will be open 10-4pm with activities for young people, displays of artwork, cakes and refreshments, and of course a guest appearance by Noah himself. For details see [www.allsaintschurchlawton.co.uk](http://www.allsaintschurchlawton.co.uk)



*Revd Steve Clapham with Church Warden Bev Boulton*

# From stage to pulpit

Revd Lawrie Adam has just published his autobiography.

The son of a Scottish coal miner, Lawrie worked as a salesman in a drapery store until his ability with his accordion resulted in him winning an appearance on a national TV talent show.

He went on to broadcast on BBC Radio, presented TV programmes for ITV and directed more than 200 programmes. He toured Canada and the U.S.A. appearing at the famous Carnegie Hall, New York.

In 1976, whilst appearing with comedian Ken Dodd, Lawrie Adam experienced a religious conversion. He was ordained, in 1982, into the Church of England. In 2000, he was voted finalist in "Preacher of the Year."

Lawrie said: "Sir Ken Dodd and I had the same theatrical agent until I left show

business after 25 years, to answer my calling to the ministry. However, we kept in touch and he said 'Lawrie, your story must be told, write a book.' He intended writing the forward but sadly, became too ill. He telephoned me from his hospital bed and we had a sad farewell chat and a prayer.

The book tells of my life in a culture which has now vanished and explains my conversion experience. I am now retired (but still busy filling in for clergy vacancies etc.) I am a member of St. Cuthbert's Church and live in Cheadle."

His book, *From Stage to Pulpit*, is on sale now. A percentage of the profits are going to 'Children and Cancer' charity. Should anyone want a signed copy they can contact [wendybyrd62@gmail.com](mailto:wendybyrd62@gmail.com)

