



the Country Music Festivals of Whitebottom Farm in Stockport.

Every year the number of people attending the Sunday service increases – from just 30 people five years ago, it is now attended by more than 300 – as Lynn continues to inspire festival goers each year with the Christian message.

When the Buckle and Boots Country Music Festival was launched five years ago, Revd Lynn Boyle was appointed as festival chaplain by founder Karl Hancock, after he met her at his uncle's funeral, where she officiated. Today, the festivals at Whitebottom Farm have grown to be internationally recognised – attracting more than 35,000 people of all ages.

At each festival, Lynn talks with people about the Christian faith and invites festival goers to seek her out to talk and for prayer at any stage during the music festival weekend.

“One of the reasons I chose to work behind the bar is it provides a way to break down barriers, it's a great starting point,” Lynn explained.

“The challenge is that people tend to have preconceived ideas about clergy.

“Some of my greatest conversations have begun as I've been pouring a pint and then progressed from there.

“So many times, I've been asked the question ‘does God love me?’ or ‘how can God love me?’

“For me, each encounter is a precious opportunity to reach out, to share and to affirm.”

Lynn has also shared stories of traumas in her own life to illustrate her faith, which she believes has given her “extraordinary strength”. Many of those who attend her Sunday service at the music festivals had never been to church before.

“I always hope that sharing my own experiences would help others realise that they are not alone in what they are facing,” she said.

“We have a God who will hold us in our pain and provide what we need and will never desert us.”

Jacqui Noble, who attended the Sunday service for the first time in 2021, said:

“I was not in any way religious, but I was very moved, and left reflecting and thinking”

Sarah Ziggi Ward, who had not been to church since childhood added:

“I didn't know what to expect from the Sunday service, I decided to give it a go despite my apprehension.

“I left with hope and a deep sense of gratitude.”

Another festival goer, Claire Charlton, who described herself as “not particularly religious” said:

“The Sunday service at Buckle and Boots is one of my favourite parts of the weekend, I come away feeling grounded and in a better place mentally.”

Bishop of Chester, Mark Tanner, has said he is “absolutely delighted” with Lynn’s work.

Although Lynn retires as Vicar of St Paul’s, Compstall on 31st December, after more than a decade in parish ministry, she is “definitely not stepping back” from her chaplaincy work at the Country Music Festivals of Whitebottom Farm.

She added: “I will be ready and waiting to meet with next year’s 35,000 people!”

## Who can be a Chaplain?

- All sorts of people from all backgrounds and walks of life are called by God to be chaplains. Chaplaincy can be a full time or a part-time role. It can be paid or voluntary and can be fulfilled by lay and ordained alike.

## How do I become a Chaplain?

- First take time to pray and talk with people you know and trust in your local faith community. If you believe God is calling you to a chaplaincy role, or if you are considering setting up a chaplaincy in your school, workplace, organisation, or community [contact your Diocese for more information](#).

### More information:

- The Church of England's [Vision and Strategy for the 2020s](#) is helping us to be a Church which proclaims and lives out the Good News of Jesus Christ afresh in every generation.

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