

CIRENCESTER

THREE CHURCHES

ONE VISION!

TO GROW THE KINGDOM OF GOD



The Parish of Cirencester with Watermoor and St Lawrence Chesterton

Diocese of Gloucester.

Bishop of Gloucester: Rt Rev'd Rachel Treweek

Archdeacon of Cheltenham: Ven Phil Andrew

Vicar of Cirencester: Canon Graham Morris

Why should you consider a Curacy in Cirencester?

Our Parish is

Committed to working out the Diocesan **LIFE** vision

Leadership: is set in the context of a traditional Cotswold market town that is expanding with the development of 2300 new homes in the next ten years.

Imagination: share in the delivery of ministry at the 'coal face' to this diverse community.

Faith: join us as we step out in faith seeking to discover new ways of being church to this fast growing town

Engagement: by rolling up your sleeves and getting stuck into parish life, you will have a fabulous opportunity to develop your ministry alongside a collegial team who have considerable experience in the field of Parish Ministry.

What can we offer?

One Parish

Three worship centres offering a breadth of liturgical experience

A team of lay and ordained colleagues committed to working collaboratively.

So many opportunities providing a very wide range of experience. Schools, University, New Town Development, Hospital Chaplaincy, Street Pastors & Fresh Expression.

Canon Graham as parish priest has a long history in the training of Curates, working in the Dioceses of Lichfield, Portsmouth and now Gloucester. Graham is committed to working collaboratively and shares this role with his colleagues thereby offering a wide range of experience at all levels of Christian Ministry. As a curate under his supervision you can expect total loyalty, encouragement, and a collegial style that will encourage you to explore the boundaries of ministry that this Parish and the Diocese of Gloucester will make available to you. John 10.10 is our vision, indeed a curacy in this parish will inspire LIFE in all of its fullness.

The following pages will set the context for what could be your Curacy.

Welcome.

The Cirencester Parish is rooted in the Diocesan Life Initiative and we are uniquely placed to serve the growing and diverse needs of this expanding Market Town. The hallmarks of collaboration built around the values expressed in 1 Corinthians 12 help to define our mission focus. Committed to the Healthy Churches programme, we are looking for a colleague who is willing to work across the traditions of the Church of England, comfortable in their own skin, able to work happily within a team environment and someone who has an appreciation of people-focused ministry. Much of what we do is at the 'coal face' of ministry so we seek a colleague who is not afraid of hard work, whilst also being able to reflect pastorally, theologically and spiritually.



We are able to offer flexibility in terms of exploring and expanding the multifaceted approaches to ministry. Working alongside the Bishop's Mission Order established in the town, we seek a colleague who will be willing to work across boundaries and explore new ways of being church. A significant amount of new build housing is planned for the town providing the opportunity for exploring new and refreshing approaches to outreach.

I am looking for a colleague who will be a team player, but also someone who is able to work on their own initiative mindful of the context of our team ethos. Your Curacy will be set in a rich context of ministerial experience through our colleagues all of whom are willing to share their experience. Our youth team and choral tradition form an important part of the outreach work currently being developed. The opportunity for you to be part of this will build upon the skills that you bring.

The Parish is rich in diversity and offers a fantastic opportunity for someone who is open to exploring the fullness of what the Church of England can offer. At the Parish Church of St John Baptist we blend the new with the old in terms of forms of worship and take seriously our commitment in providing the backdrop as the Civic Church of the Town. Cirencester is an exciting place for honing one's ministry, and a fabulous place to explore one's Curacy. I am at heart a natural collaborator and will seek to walk with you on your journey, discovering where ministerial opportunities lead you. For me this is the real privilege to be able to offer solid support in a constructive interfering way. Together we will walk the road to Emmaus.

If the above excites you, then perhaps God is nudging you to take a closer look at what this Parish can offer. We hope the profile we present will help to capture something of the imaginative opportunities that working here presents whilst at the same time feeding your curiosity and causing you to look deeper. "I have come that you may have life, and have it in all of its fullness." John 10.10

Canon Graham Morris Vicar of Cirencester

About Canon Graham...

Born: Bromyard, Herefordshire 1960

1976 – 1977 Hereford College of Agriculture

1977 – 1978 Shropshire Farm Institute

1976 – 1981 Farm Labourer, Head Cowman, Dairy Herd Manager

1981 – 1983 Own Business: Farm Relief Services

1981 – 1983 Aston Training Scheme Open University Foundation

1983 – 1986 Salisbury & Wells Theological College

1986 – 1990 Assistant Curate, Ironbridge, Coalbrookdale with Little Wenlock

1990 – 1999 Team Vicar Bilston Team Ministry, Diocese of Lichfield

1998 – 1999 Acting Team Rector Bilston Team Ministry, Diocese of Lichfield

1999 – 2005 Rector of Northwood, Vicar of Gurnard, Isle of Wight

1999 – 2005 Rural Officer Isle of Wight, Diocese of Portsmouth

2005 – 2012 Vicar of St Catherine & Holy Trinity Ventnor, Rector of Bonchurch, Isle of Wight

2005 – 2011 Area Dean of East Wight, Diocese of Portsmouth

2007 – 2018 Surrogate for Marriages Isle of Wight, Diocese of Portsmouth

2011 – Present Honorary Canon Tamale Cathedral Diocese of Tamale, West Africa

2011 – 2018 Honorary Canon of Portsmouth Cathedral

2012 – 2018 Priest in Charge of All Saints' Ryde with St Michael & All Angels, Swanmore, Isle of Wight

2012 – 2018 Chairman of Inter Diocesan West Africa Link, Diocese of Portsmouth

2018 – Present Vicar of Cirencester with Watermoor and St Lawrence Chesterton

My leadership style is collaborative, I prefer to work with colleagues developing a team ethos and encourage my colleagues to work at their strengths whilst developing their own particular areas of interest. I enjoy the rich breadth and depth of the Anglican traditions. I am most at home in a more Catholic style of liturgy, but embrace and enjoy a less formalised approach particularly when it involves an All Age Service. I love singing the settings at the Eucharist and particularly enjoy Choral evensong.

I am passionate about developing individual's experiences of working in Teams. I have a deep affection for Ghana and value my links with the Diocese of Tamale in Northern Ghana. I try to keep an active interest in Rural Ministry and value the links I have with the Royal Agricultural University and Royal Agricultural Benevolent Institution. I am a keen Caravanner and enjoy my time touring the UK. I enjoy gardening and I have a small N Gauge railway which I am continuing to build. I am married to Angela and have two grown up children. I delight in my two grandchildren who keep me on my toes.

Our Community

A market town with Roman origins (it was the second largest city in Roman Britannia), Cirencester prospered from the wool trade in the Middle Ages, and the parish church of St John Baptist reflects that prosperity. Markets are still held (up to three times each week) in the recently re-ordered market place outside the parish church, and the town remains an important shopping and tourist centre. Much of the economy is now reliant on commercial, service and professional businesses based in the town and on trading estates. There is a hospital (with a minor injuries unit) and an increasing number of retirement home complexes. There are two Church of England Primary schools, (plus two others) and two comprehensive schools which enjoy an excellent reputation. The Sixth Form College takes students from a wide area and The Royal Agricultural University is an important part of the town.



Despite the scenic charm of much of the town, and its undoubted prosperity, it can also be socially and economically polarised with significant pockets of deprivation; many families are living in poverty and regularly using the locally based foodbank. There are significant opportunities for our churches to work in partnership with others to serve these groups.

Relations with other denominations in the town are certainly good: '*Churches Together in Cirencester*' is active and has several shared projects, such as Holocaust Memorial Day, World Café, a Christmas day lunch and work with GARAS to house Syrian refugees. We held a united service at the Parish Church on Pentecost, squeezing 650 people into the building.

The three Anglican churches lie respectively in the mediaeval, 19th century and immediate post-war parts of the town. As a parish we are exploring the opportunity to burst out of the church buildings to take our faith into the wider community. The population is over 20,000 and is currently growing with extensive development on the East, and further development (over 2,300 homes) planned on the West. This development will include a primary school, a neighbourhood centre, community facilities, and a surgery. The expanding town has and will have substantial suburbs out of the sphere of influence of our current church buildings, offering a challenging but exciting opportunity.

Our Challenges and Vision

We face a number of challenges which we need to meet if we are to fulfil the Diocesan vision to *“To go out and share the transforming Gospel of Jesus Christ so that people may know life in all its fullness”*:

- Developing a common parish vision to which all can aspire within the diversity of our different congregations, and finding strategies to meet that vision.
- Developing the pastoral care within the parish, to ensure a warm welcome to all those who attend our services or visit our buildings and a sense of care and belonging for those who have a particular need or are no longer able to attend church.
- Reviewing worship patterns (including age and attendance profiles) across the three churches in order to develop styles of worship and liturgy that will widen choice (including reaching out to the un-churched) and enrich the whole community.
- Ensuring that we are welcoming and relevant to people of all ages and ready to engage with the rapidly growing population of the town.
- Using and developing our properties to make our churches and facilities more user-friendly for worshippers, local people and visitors.
- Increasing stewardship and avoiding running a deficit on revenue expenditure.
- Growing and nurturing the choral tradition.
- Nurturing, maintaining and growing our team of volunteers to support the work of the parish – including outreach and mission.



Our three church buildings

St Lawrence Chesterton The most modern of the three churches, St Lawrence was built in 1951 in the midst of a new housing estate on (what was then) the edge of town. It is a dual-purpose building, with parking, used by the community during the

week; on Sundays the East end is opened up to reveal the altar and sanctuary for a Common Worship Eucharist at 10:30am. There is a quiet Communion service at 10.30am on the first Wednesday of the month. St Lawrence is a community church with a loyal and supportive congregation



Holy Trinity Built in 1851 (at a time when the town was expanding to the South) to designs by Sir George Gilbert Scott, the church building is open daily. It is an inclusive and welcoming church and is full of young families every week. Worship is led by a music group on the first Sunday of the month. There is also a quieter and more contemplative Eucharist on Sundays at 8am and on Wednesday evenings. There is a children's corner for pre-schoolers who go for 'story time' during the sermon and intercessions and a Sunday school, but it is always a delight when Trinity Kids burst back in for communion. The congregation is growing together in faith and understanding. Coffee after the service and informal gatherings during the week give an opportunity to discuss the sermon and socialise. There is a lively house-group which is open to all and which encourages much prayer and debate about the text being studied. There is also a good prayer-chain based around the house-group and a monthly prayer group.



Saint John Baptist

Known as the Parish Church. It is the largest parish church in Gloucestershire, and is open, and usually buzzing with activity, every day of the year. We welcome thousands of tourists and aim to give a warm welcome to everyone who comes through the doors. The nave pews can also be moved as necessary: this has meant that secular use of the nave and aisles has been possible – including dinners, film



shows, dances, and wedding receptions, in addition to a very full programme of concerts. The church is also an integral part of such occasions as Remembrance Sunday and the opening of the town's Advent festivities.

Fresh Expression of church – ‘The Upper Room’

‘The Upper Room’ is an Anglican fresh expression of church and the subject of a Bishop’s Mission Order made in 2013. It makes use of rented rooms in the Market Place and is open for Drop in sessions twice a week where people come to find support, friendship and advocacy. We share a service of Holy Communion once a month, followed by lunch. We go on trips together, visit Gloucester Cathedral for Evensong, run the play scheme based at St Lawrence, every summer, and journey through life together. We are a new kind of church seeking to reach and serve people who wouldn't normally feel comfortable to come to church. As a parish we are exploring working together more actively. www.freshexpressions.org.uk



People:

Although there are three churches there is one large, but active PCC which meets bi-monthly. It has a number of sub-committees including the *Standing Committee* (which meets alternate months to the full PCC),



The parish is presently exploring the appointment of a 'new' Organist and Choirmaster. Currently the post is being held by the Assistant Organist. They are based at the Parish Church, and with a part time organist, they also cover Holy Trinity.

Included in the provision of music is a small music group who play at Holy Trinity for the monthly All Age service. At St Lawrence using an electric piano we have a number of committed people who play for the services, including two of our Priests! A full-time youth and children's worker and a part-time children's worker work collaboratively across the Parish currently based at the Parish Church and Holy Trinity. Administration is centred in the office located in the Parish Centre. There is a part time parish administrator (who also does the book keeping), with one part time assistant. They are supported by volunteers dealing with considerable clerical and other work.



The two vergers (who work six days a week as a job-share) are based at the Parish Church. The church shop in St John Baptist trades as a limited company, and employs a part time manager and assistant manager.

We have a wonderful team of volunteers who support all aspects of parish life: nurturing, maintaining and increasing these teams of volunteers is vital in enabling us to increase our outreach and mission.

Youth and Children's Work

In 2014, the parish took the decision to fund youth and children's workers (although we have also been supported by a number of charities) who encourage young people to play an active role in parish life, whether that be in reading, serving, singing or volunteering. Through school assemblies and a range of activities, they come into contact with over 200 children a week. They help the clergy to prepare children for their first Eucharist and with running spirituality courses for parents.

In addition, specially focused events and groups include:

- *Sparklers* is the Parish Church Sunday school group while *Trinity Kids* is based at Holy Trinity. Both groups are open to children of all ages and meet during the 10.00 service. Both churches also have a children's area equipped with toys and books.
- *Little Angels*, is a special service of singing, prayer, stories and fun for our pre-school children and their families, supported by members of the Mothers Union and led by the clergy and laity. It is held at the Parish Church on Thursday afternoons.
- *Messy Mass* used to take place every two months at St John Baptist. The opportunity to re-think this is part of our on-going commitment to our church families. It is envisaged that this will be re-ignited and developed further in terms of our commitment to providing liturgy appropriate for all ages.
- *Blaze*, our group for 14-18-year olds, has been running for about 12 months.
- There is also a very successful children's choir '*Sing It!*' They participate in services at both St John Baptist and Holy Trinity.
- There is the opportunity to participate in the worship at all three churches but especially at John Baptist and Holy Trinity at the monthly All Age services.



Schools and University

Our two Church of England primary schools are an important part of parish life. Powell's School is a Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School which has two classes per year group. Watermoor School is a Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School which currently has 160 pupils on roll, but expects to grow over the next few years due to its recent relocation closer to the new developments on the east of the town. The Associate Priest with responsibility for Holy Trinity is a governor. The school has active links with Holy Trinity the clergy and the children's worker based at Holy Trinity take regular assemblies at the school.



We also have links with Chesterton Primary, Cirencester Primary and Paternoster Special School. Within the Parish we have two senior schools, Deer Park and Kingshill, both providing opportunities for an extensive schools ministry.

The parish takes a full part in the life of the chaplaincy team at the Royal Agricultural University. There is considerable potential for ministry with these students who will go out to manage farms and estates all over the country – including many areas where the rural church struggles. The university holds its convocation ceremonies in the Parish Church each year.

Outreach

We are working towards developing a common parish vision to which all can aspire within the diversity of our different congregations. This partly involves a review of our worship patterns across the three churches to develop styles of worship and liturgy that will widen choice and enrich the whole community. We are also reviewing how we administer the parish and reflecting upon best practice as we seek to realign our property in light of our mission outreach focus.



We are proud to have one of the largest Mothers' Union branches in the diocese. It is extremely lively and active, meeting monthly in the Parish Hall with a variety of speakers. There are three informal house groups, prayer meetings and Bible study groups, while a men's group and women's group meet monthly.

In 2017, we were very involved in the celebration of the 900th anniversary of the founding of Cirencester Abbey. We house the Lego reconstruction of the abbey which brings many families into the church.



We have recently launched a new pastoral care scheme to support our parishioners, visitors and local residents through prayer ministry, as we develop the pastoral care within the parish.

The parish is also a lead player in the chaplaincy at Cirencester Hospital. Regular monthly services are held in three main care homes, and in three sheltered housing complexes. We work with and support the 'Street Pastors' team and we are involved with several 'Open the Book' teams. We take seriously our role in providing chaplaincy resources at the Royal Agricultural University.

Statistics:

Parish Population: 20,000

Church Electoral Roll: 239

ASA:-

John Baptist: 130

Holy Trinity: 115

St Lawrence: 15

Baptisms 2018: 36

Weddings 2019: 15

Funerals 2018: 60

Parish Share 2019: £170,160



The Curacy house is a compact four bedroom house with conservatory and small garden located on the Chesterton Estate

54 Alexandra Gardens, Chesterton
Cirencester GL7 1UH

Personal invitation:-

If any of what we have shared excites you, and you would like to have an informal chat about the possibility of your Curacy taking place in this parish. Canon Graham will be delighted to hear from you.

Canon Graham Morris

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