



THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND
DIOCESE OF
WORCESTER



Title Parishes 2025
Parish of Halas, Churches of St Margaret of Antioch Hasbury
and St Peter, Cradley
Parish Profile



Bishop Martin Gorick, Acting Bishop of Worcester and Bishop of Dudley:

“Thank you for your interest in coming to the Diocese of Worcester. It’s a friendly diocese in the heart of England, where we seek to grow as in love for God and neighbour. I wish you well as you seek to discern where God is calling you to serve.”

In 2022:

- 8,600 people attended a church service on an average week. 6,900 attended a church service on an average Sunday.
- There were 14,400 on the electoral roll of our churches. 11,000 people attended Easter Services.
- 23,800 people attended Christmas services
- 1,630 children and adults were baptised in our churches

It is exciting because...

- we are developing creative new patterns of ministry in these changing times: though there are fewer stipendiary clergy than in the recent past there are now more people offering licensed and authorised lay ministry than ever before;
- we are implementing, after much reflection and consultation, an imaginative ‘Kingdom People’ vision which seeks to envision our people in their core task of proclaiming the Kingdom;
- differences in ‘churchmanship’ are not divisive in a diocese which has a genuine ‘family feel’ to it;
- we have a dynamic and mission minded Bishop’s Staff team committed to working with lay and ordained colleagues throughout the Diocese to join in God’s mission;

About the Diocese of Worcester

- The Diocese of Worcester is one of 41 (42 including the Diocese in Europe) that make up the Church of England.
- The Diocese of Worcester also forms part of the Province of Canterbury.
- The diocese covers an area of 670 square miles and includes the County of Worcestershire, the Metropolitan Borough of Dudley, and a few parishes in northern Gloucestershire, south east Wolverhampton and Sandwell - so we are not short on variety (it’s a great place to serve a curacy, because we have nearly every context you could imagine!)
- From the urban north, with its impressive history and cultural mix, to the agricultural south where the rich colours of rural life flavour many people's day to day experience, the diocese has much to offer to visitor, resident and worshipper alike.
- The diocese was founded in around 679 by St Theodore of Canterbury for the tribe of the Hwicce. The diocese covers a population of 909,000.

We have:

- 92 benefices
- 169 parishes
- 267 churches



Growing as Kingdom People

As the body of Christ, we join together to worship God, make disciples, share hope, and transform communities.



Kingdom People
love · compassion · justice · freedom

Our diocesan vision is to grow as Kingdom People, sharing the good news of Jesus' love in Worcestershire and Dudley through churches that are growing in health and sustainability.

Priorities 2023 – 2030

Over the next few years, we aim to:

- **Double** the number of children and young people worshipping in our churches.
- Create **100 new worshipping communities** offering a range of ways for people to come to faith and worship God. (eg Forest Church / Café Church / Walking Church).
- **Invest in the renewal** of around a dozen churches to ensure that each major area of population has at least one church with 150 people attending weekly, enabling them to support other local churches.
- Underpin these by investing in our clergy and lay leaders, providing **training and development** opportunities to enable them to grow and feel supported and equipped for mission.

Help and support available

As we continue to grow as Kingdom People, there are a number of ways in which your parish can get involved in the journey and access help and support.

Every church is different we want to encourage and resource you in your own context, strengthening local churches as you worship God, make disciples, share hope, and transform communities. For further information on 'Growing as Kingdom People', please visit [Growing as Kingdom People - Diocese of Worcester](#)

Ministry

There is a broad range of Churchmanship within the Diocese of Worcester. The Diocese has around 90 full-time stipendiary clergy, plus around 60 non-stipendiary and ministers in secular employment. We are also blessed with a large number of retired clergy, who continue to provide ministry to parishes across our diocese.

There is an extensive lay ministry in the diocese with 121 Licensed Lay Ministers (Readers) and a large number of Authorised Lay Ministers, who have completed a year's training course in areas such as worship, children's and youth work, evangelism and parish administration.



Mission Accompaniers

Already 50 churches are working with a mission accompanier, and the feedback is really positive. A Mission Accompanier will walk alongside the incumbent and a small group of people from your parish, helping to establish priorities and develop plans that work where you are. [Find out more.](#)



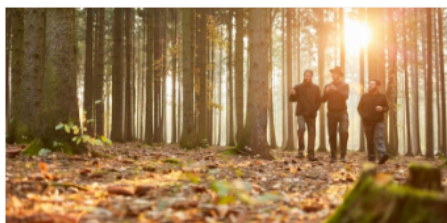
Healthier Churches Fund

There are grants available to help you. Once you've drawn up a health and sustainability plan and have an idea of what will help, there is the prospect of a grant. Any parish is able to apply for up to £10,000. [Find out more.](#)



Kingdom People Fund

Smaller grants of £1000 can be made available very quickly. Recent applications have asked for improved signage to welcome people into church, to start offering hospitality after-school to parents gathering at the school gate and technical equipment to help with a new toddler music group. [Find out more.](#)



New Worshipping Communities

There is training, advice and support available to help you set up and run opportunities for your community to worship God in different ways – and also the opportunity to apply for additional funds to help meet set up costs. [Find out more on NWCs.](#)



Ministry with children, young people and families

If you've already got a few children / young people, are passionate to see that number grow then why not have a conversation with Simon Hill about how we can support you. [Find out more.](#)



Training, Support and Coaching

Equipping all our ministers for mission, whether lay or ordained, is of vital importance for us to grow as a healthy and sustainable church. Coaching is used in a whole variety of fields to enable people to grow and develop. Talk to us about the difference this could make and find other training opportunities.

Title Parish General Information

Parish:

Halas Parish, Churches of St Margaret of Antioch Hasbury and St Peter, Cradley.

Training Incumbent



Mthr Victoria Barlow
St Margaret's Vicarage
55 Quarry Lane
Halesowen, B63 4PD
07585 264050 (text only please)
mthrvictoria@yahoo.com

Date of ordination:

June 2019

Length of time in present role:

2 years

Other responsibilities and duties:

Mothers' Union Chaplain North Archdeaconry

Personal information, previous posts and experience:

Having previously worked as a self-employed church musician, working mainly in the Midlands area, I was ordained in 2019. I served my curacy in the Christ the King benefice in Redditch, Worcester Diocese.

Training and helping with formation is a great blessing and I am currently acting as mentor to a curate in the Christ the King benefice, whom I helped to prepare for ordination, and now to negotiate early curacy years. I am also currently mentor and interim TI, to both of the Auxiliary Pathway self supporting curates in the wider parish here in Halas.



Nature of post:

Stipendiary Training post for deacon who expects to be ordained priest.

The context & churches:

The Halas Team Ministry covers an area in the south east side of the Greater Dudley Deanery in the Diocese of Worcester, partly in the Black Country and partly in the beautiful Clent Hills. It includes urban, suburban, industrial and rural areas in and around the town of Halesowen and includes some areas of significant deprivation.

- The population is around 10,000 in the Cradley Parish, 10,000 in the Hasbury Parish and 48,000 in the whole of the Halas Parish.
- The Halas Parish is mainly suburban with several large parks and some areas of countryside. The parish varies, however, from Worcestershire village Romsley with its tiny ancient church nestled in the hills, to the ex-industrial Cradley church with much industrial heritage, and heavily dense population
- The geographical size of Cradley Parish is 4 square km, Hasbury Parish is 4 square km and Halas Parish is 30 square km.
- The population live in a mixture of self-owned private housing, local authority, private landlord housing and specialist accommodation.

- There are local shopping areas in Cradley and Hasbury and a larger one in Halesowen.
- Beyond the Parish the shopping centres at Birmingham, Kidderminster and Merry Hill are about 10 km away.
- There are several large supermarkets in the Halas Parish.
- The Halas Parish bounds the Diocese of Birmingham to the north.



St Peter's and St Margaret's recent confirmation service.

Transport Networks:

Transport links are good. The nearest railway stations are at Cradley Heath and Rowley Regis about 2 to 3 km away with direct trains to Birmingham, Worcester and one to London. There are excellent bus connections to Birmingham, Halesowen, Kidderminster, Bromsgrove and Stourbridge. The M5 junction 3 is 3km away, providing motorway access to

the whole country. The local road structure is good. Cradley and Hasbury districts join and are accessible by foot although the terrain is hilly. The remaining Halas districts are accessible by public transport.

What is the social demographic of the area:

- The predominant age group is 40 to 70 and the predominant ethnic grouping is white British, although there are a growing number of refugees settling in the area.
- There is a Muslim group in Halesowen town, and other faith Centres in Dudley and Birmingham.
- There are several other places of worship in Cradley and Hasbury and we enjoy good links particularly through Churches Together Halesowen, of which St Margaret's is a member.
- In the Halas Parish there are 9 other denominational churches.
- There are some social issues.
- Principal industry locally is engineering. 59% of the working population is higher and intermediate managerial / administrative / professional with levels of unemployment being low.
- Generally the area is very settled. There is a good mix of first time buyer housing and more expensive houses with rental opportunities as well.
- Originally rural, today Halas is broadly composed of housing estates built between the wars, comprising privately owned,

council houses and flats, some of which are under private ownership.

Key institutions:

- The Churches have links with several nursing homes in the Halas Parish.
- There are 3 primary schools in the Cradley District. The Cradley Church of England Primary (185 pupils) has strong Church links to and Governorship responsibilities.
- There are 3 primary schools in the Hasbury District. Hasbury Church of England Primary (185 pupils) has links to St Margaret and Governorship responsibilities.
- Within the whole Halas Team Ministry there are 14 primary schools, 3 high schools and a large post-16 College. Four primary schools are Church of England; Halesowen Aided, Hasbury Controlled, Romsley Controlled and Cradley Controlled.



Churches within the Halas Team

This is a United Parish of Five Churches. (Five Churches with one PCC, and five District Church Councils). Within the parish there are three incumbents, two with special responsibility for two churches each, and one with responsibility for a Renewal Church in the Town Centre.

The whole parish is signed up to Inclusive Church.

Within the parish, structure functions with one PCC, but smaller decisions are made at local level. Incumbents generally remain in the churches for which we have special responsibility, but there is cover, and support and many courses and events are also shared. There are periodic team worship occasions.

No resolution under the House of Bishops Declaration on the Ministry of Bishops and Priests has been passed in Halas.

St Margaret of Antioch, Hasbury

Grounded in Anglo-Catholic liturgy.

All Masses are Common Worship. Sunday Holy Communion is Common Worship with robed clergy (chasuble / dalmatic), organ and hymns with servers, bells and incense. 79 on electoral roll.

St Margaret's also has a flourishing involvement with local charity to support refugees in the area, a flourishing and growing bi-weekly coffee morning for outreach and welcome, and a small quilters group. We are

just beginning a 'craft and chat' morning for the local community.

St Margaret's has a strong connection to the Churches Together in Halas.

Most major feasts are kept on the appropriate days.

Around six funerals and baptisms per year, one or two weddings.

Various bible study groups throughout the year.



St Margaret's is just beginning a new worshipping community with pre-school children. There is opportunity to continue to build on that foundation. There is a desire to re-introduce some form of evening prayer, which may lead to growing in musical directions with Taizé or a children's choir.

Clergy: Mthr Victoria. One Lay Reader.

Sunday 11.15am

Sung Mass with hymns and incense – usual attendance 45 – 55 adults, very few children.

Sunday 6.30pm (Once every other month)
Voices in the vestry - an informal lay led act of worship.

Sunday 6.30pm (Once every other month)
Healing and wholeness.

Tuesday alternate weeks 7.30am
Said Mass.

Wednesday 7pm
Said Mass.

Thursday 3pm
Lay led Evening Prayer.

Fridays 2pm
Story Time for preschoolers and carers.
This New Worshipping Community is just beginning.

Daily prayer
Said by the incumbent alone at the present time.

St Peter's, Cradley

Traditional Broad Catholic Liturgy
Common worship. 53 on electoral roll.

Sunday Holy Communion is Common Worship, robed clergy (chasuble/dalmatic), organ and hymns.

St Peter's has a very well attended and supported Moms and Tots group which meets weekly in term time and a very loved and well-supported concert series throughout the year for the local community. St Peter's has a growing tower and hand bell ringers group attached to the church, and a strong, if aging, Mothers' Union who involve themselves in welcome, prayer and acts of social justice. We have many well attended social events which happen in the local community centre, and bi-annual fayres.

Around 15 - 20 funerals and 15 baptisms per year, three or four weddings.

Clergy: Mthr Victoria. Two Lay Readers. One Children's worker ALM , two pastoral ALM

In both St Margaret's and St Peter's we have a strong link with our local church schools, and are developing links with local baby loss awareness charity *Aching Arms*.

St Peter's is set in a strong community and is a well-loved church. There are opportunities for the development of further children's work, growing from the termly children's outreach work. There is a strong desire from the school to create a youth group/prayer group/ faith explore group.



Sunday 9.30am

Sung Mass with hymns.
Usual attendance 35 - 45 adults, 6 - 12 children. Once a month we use the high altar and robed servers. Once a month the service is a little more informal. The other two Sundays we have no robed servers, but a straight common worship eucharist. There is a Sunday school which meets every week, but on the first Sunday there is allocated lay support to lead a more defined time of study and worship with the children.

Sunday 6.30pm (Once every month)

Praise and prayer - an informal lay led act of worship.

Sunday 6.30pm (Once every other month)

Healing and wholeness.

Tuesday alternate weeks 7.30am

Said Mass.

Daily prayer

Said by the incumbent alone at the present time.

Large 'messy church' style family worship events (Once a term)

Lay led, but clergy supported.

Bible study group (Monthly)

Lay led.

St John's, Halesowen

Broad middle of the road.
Common worship

St Peter's, Lapal

Middle traditional.
Common worship.

St Kenelm's, Romsley

Traditional, BCP evensong, Common worship
holy communion.





What is its vision of mission?

To share the love of God in the local community, and to draw others into the circle of that love, especially re-connecting with younger people, and the isolated elderly in our area.

St Peter's.

We are a vibrant, community focussed, family church with people from all ages worshipping together. Our roots are in our community and we are proud to serve them. Cradley is an area with some deprivation and a strong sense of shared community and we are glad to be known and loved in the local area.

Our mission and outreach is founded entirely on our worship – the deep beating heart of our being. We believe in Incarnational Ministry – we love Jesus, share in Holy Communion together and live out our faith. We are a mainly Eucharistic community, although we enjoy exploring other styles and traditions of worship. We have strong links with our wider church family, including those who worship at home, and the wider community. We would say our foundations are traditional, but we live, move and breathe in the modern world; welcoming to all, and with our feet firmly on the ground.

What are the incumbent's and DCC's vision and priorities?

The incumbent and DCC work closely together, seeking to listen and pray and be guided by the Spirit as we discern our way forward. We hope to continue to build on the firm foundations we have, as a loving Eucharistic community, sharing love and joy into a community that faces many challenges, and continuing to build on ways to serve and support them, and to glorify and worship God. We have seen growth over the last two years and want to continue to build on that excitement of faith, sharing the Good News with more and more of our community, delving the scriptures, breaking the bread, and sharing the love.

St Margaret's

We are a warm, and welcoming, church, with a strong and stable church family, mostly of retired years, with one or two younger families. We seek to serve our community in welcome and in loving prayer. Our outreach is growing as we consider new ways of connecting with young families and children in the area through work in schools and new social and worship events designed to open our doors to the local community. We are proud the church is unlocked throughout the day as a place of prayer and comfort.

St Margaret's worships in the Anglo Catholic tradition with robed servers and use of incense and bells, and we love to party – there is a great emphasis on the sharing of food and welcome. Worship is at the heart of our being, sustaining us in hope and strength, and challenging us to keep reaching out in new ways to draw others into the love of God. Our community is a busy, mostly middle class community where families are busy and committed and there is not so much latent Christianity – so building trust and making connections is vital to us.

Our main priority at St Margaret's is to continue to diversify our church family, making connections with younger people, and the full diversity of the area in which we are set.



How does the incumbent understand the role of training?

Uncovering together the God given talents unique to each person, and building confidence with which to live into these talents for the glory of God in the growth of the person, and the blessing of the church family and community.

Teaching and sharing the doctrine of the faith where helpful, and explaining and unfolding the traditions of the Church from an inclusive Catholic position. Also broadening that explanation to include other traditions and perspectives, encouraging others to ask the question *why* and to learn their own answers in tradition, faith and personal development. Creating together a broad portfolio of experience within the mainstream of the

Church of England in order to facilitate future growth.

Sharing in the joy of the gospel, being available to support the trainee and to enable them in growth.

Discussing together the nuts and bolts elements of practical skills needed – from knowledge of liturgy resources to how to manage and enable a church council meeting. Facilitating and encouraging further study and deepening knowledge.

Giving opportunity, and challenge, but with careful support.

The likely role of the curate in future plans and areas of particular responsibility for curate in training

To grow and flourish themselves as God's minister across the full spectrum of their calling, and to bless the community in which they are set.

To involve themselves fully in presiding, officiating, and preaching.

To support and enable continued growth in children's work and faith development currently established or beginning.

To be given opportunity to develop sustainable outreach and growth in mission in areas of their own talent.

Accommodation

Suitable accommodation in line with the diocesan specification will be provided.



Who should be contacted in the first instance?

Diocesan Director of Ordinands and Vocation

Revd. Dr John Fitzmaurice

16 Lowesmoor Wharf

Worcester

WR1 2RS

01905 732814

fitzmaurice@cofe-worcester.org.uk

The process of formation, training and assessment in the Diocese of Worcester

Curacy is, first and foremost, a period of formation and training undertaken for future ministry. Although a curacy is an opportunity for ministry in its own right, it is undertaken with a view to preparation for the future – regardless of whether the curate is non-stipendiary or stipendiary. This training is the shared responsibility of the curate, the training incumbent, and the IME 2 Officer. Primary resources for the successful outcome of this training are:

1. The curate – who brings experience, professional life, Christian faith and recent training from theological course or college to the new ministry. He or she needs to be allowed and encouraged to bring all of this into ministry and continued training – alongside a willingness to learn.

2. The training incumbent – who brings their own experience and needs to be able to share this, with vulnerability and responsibility, to help the curate find his or her own patterns of sustainable ministry.

3. The parish – which should have its own sense of vocation to train and develop the ministry of the whole people of God, and will provide the primary context for feedback in the curate's early ministry.

4. The Formation Qualities and Assessment – which are national guidelines setting out the aims for the curacy, for all partners in the training relationship to work towards.

The Diocesan IME programme

The primary training context is the parish (in the case of MSE curates, additionally, in the workplace). However, the diocese provides additional training for all curates. This is generally held on seven Saturdays in the year, with a residential weekend in February.

All curates, stipendiary and non-stipendiary are expected to attend the IME days. There is also one additional evening session for new deacons, an additional evening session for new

priests and a full day for curates in the third year looking to a post of responsibility beyond the curacy. It has proved a good idea to invite training incumbents to one IME session, and this happens from time to time.

The Training Programme

The Diocesan element of IME Phase 2 is based on a three-year rolling programme of study days, taught across year groups. The themes of these study days are closely related to the Formation Qualities and seek to amplify and add depth to the curates' experience in their ministerial context. There is an annual residential weekend as well as a Quiet Day. All curates are assigned to a Theological Reflection small group that meets monthly. It is expected that Diocesan IME Study Days take precedence over parish commitments on the same day.

Stipendiary curates undertake two short placements while self-supporting curates undertake one. Curates are encouraged to undertake these placements in contexts which their training parish are unable to provide.

EKM Exchange

The Diocese of Worcester has a partnership link with the Evangelische Kirche in Mitteldeutschland and as part of their curacy Worcester curates both to visit newly-ordained pastors in Germany and to learn something of the challenges of ministry there and to host them in Worcester.