

August 2022

The Venerable Phil Andrew
Archdeacon of Cheltenham
Archdeacons' Office
2 College Green, Gloucester, GL1 2LR
archdchelt@glosdioc.org.uk
Mobile: 07498 052045
Tel: 01452 835594

Dear Candidate

**House for Duty Associate Priest in the Parishes of Avening and Cherington
A Fixed Term 'Interim Ministry' Appointment (with the possibility of extension).**

Thank you for making enquiries about this vacancy – I hope you find this letter and accompanying documents helpful in considering your application.

There is much to celebrate and significant further potential in these two rural parishes, set in the South Cotswolds, close to the popular towns of Stroud, Cirencester, Minchinhampton and Tetbury. The Parishes are in good heart with some solid foundations to build upon as well as plenty of opportunities to try new approaches to reaching out into the wider community (including with the school and many young families) with the love of Christ.

Previously linked with the Tetbury Benefice, the two parishes have been operating as a small 2-parish benefice for the past 6 years or so under the care and direction of a House for Duty Priest in Charge who has recently retired. Looking to the future as part of our strategic review of deaneries, we are in the process of exploring the probability of the Benefice being incorporated into the larger and adjacent Minchinhampton Benefice. The Bishops and I share the view that this link, something proposed by the previous Priest in Charge and growing out of an already existing relationship, will place the parishes on a firmer sustainable footing for the long term as part of a wider collaborative team. With this in mind, and in order to resource the period of exploration and transition well, the Rector of the Benefice of Minchinhampton with Box and Amberley (The Revd Howard Gilbert) has recently been licensed as Priest in Charge of Avening & Cherington. In addition, the Diocesan Mission and Pastoral Group have agreed to the appointment of an interim minister on a 'transitional basis', initially for 3 years (with the possibility of extension), hence this post. Whoever is appointed will have day to day pastoral responsibility for the parishes of Avening and Cherington as well as the element of a 'project' in bringing the benefices together. In this they will have the strong support of the Priest in Charge, excellent churchwardens and congregations with a 'can do' attitude, as well as the Area Deans and Archdeacons (the benefices currently being in separate Deaneries and Archdeaconries). In addition they will find support in the collegiality of a small but growing interim ministry network within the Diocese headed up by the Revd Ali Mepham, our Senior Interim Minister.

We are looking for someone who will enjoy and immerse themselves in village life, supporting the worshipping communities (including through interaction with the school in Avening) in their mission throughout the week as well as enjoying the collegiality of other leaders, both lay and ordained. As a 'House for Duty' post (with a usual commitment expected to be two days a week plus Sunday mornings) there is a need for someone who is good at managing their time and boundaries and who is able to negotiate their commitments in conjunction with others.

Continued/-

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Should you be appointed you will find good support in the deanery and wider diocese and will have plenty of opportunity to engage in our common life, centred around our 'LIFE' vision process which itself is focused around Jesus' offer of 'life to the full', rooted in John 10:10. <http://www.gloucester.anglican.org/about-us/our-vision/>. The accompanying document gives a little more detail about how this vision translates into the culture and values we are seeking to see grow amongst all those licensed to minister across the Diocese.

As part of this LIFE vision, and as already alluded to, we are in the process of undertaking some Deanery Strategic Planning with the aim, over a number of years, of reshaping and refocussing the mission and ministry of each of our 9 deaneries to be more focussed on their shared mission priorities whilst at the same time reducing our dependence on stipendiary ordained ministry to a level that is sustainable for the long term, all set within the wider context of the Church of England's emerging 'Vision for the CofE in the 2020s' which include the virtues of becoming Bolder, Simpler and Humbler.

As a Diocese we are committed to the wellbeing of all our clergy. We are small enough to know each other well, to care across our traditions and rejoice in each other's gifts. We are large enough to be well resourced and you will find good support for your ministry from a dedicated team. The Bishops and Archdeacons seek to know and be known by our clergy and place a high value on engaging with communities across the Diocese and building positive networks of relationship. We are a pilot diocese for Setting God's People Free and are committed to developing a culture of confidence in faith in all our people. This includes a particular emphasis on keeping the nurturing of faith in children, families and households always in our sight.

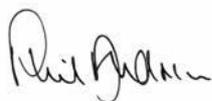
In summary, for this ministry you will need to be a priest who is:

- Mission minded and able to facilitate the further development of outward-looking worshipping communities.
- Skilled at, and experienced in, taking others on a journey of change and growth.
- A natural team player whose focus is on developing the ministry of others; skilled at identifying, encouraging and releasing the gifts of others to build up the ministry of the whole church.
- Committed to rural ministry and ready to try new ways – and inspire others in trying new ways - of ministering in a multi parish benefice.
- Pastorally aware, engaging and willing to build positive relationships with all in church and community, and with other local clergy and ecumenical colleagues.
- Rooted in prayer, worship and engagement with the scriptures.
- Able to value and develop a variety of worship traditions, encouraging the exploration of new models to reach out more fully to the benefice and its younger families.
- Committed to making use of the good relationships with the local school and building on these.
- Able to encourage the worshipping communities to grow more deeply as Disciples of Christ throughout the week.

I hope very much that, having seen the profile and read so far, you will feel encouraged to apply and I look forward to receiving an application from you.

If you have any questions or want to know more please do not hesitate to contact me for a conversation on 07498 052045.

With my very best wishes



The Venerable Phil Andrew
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