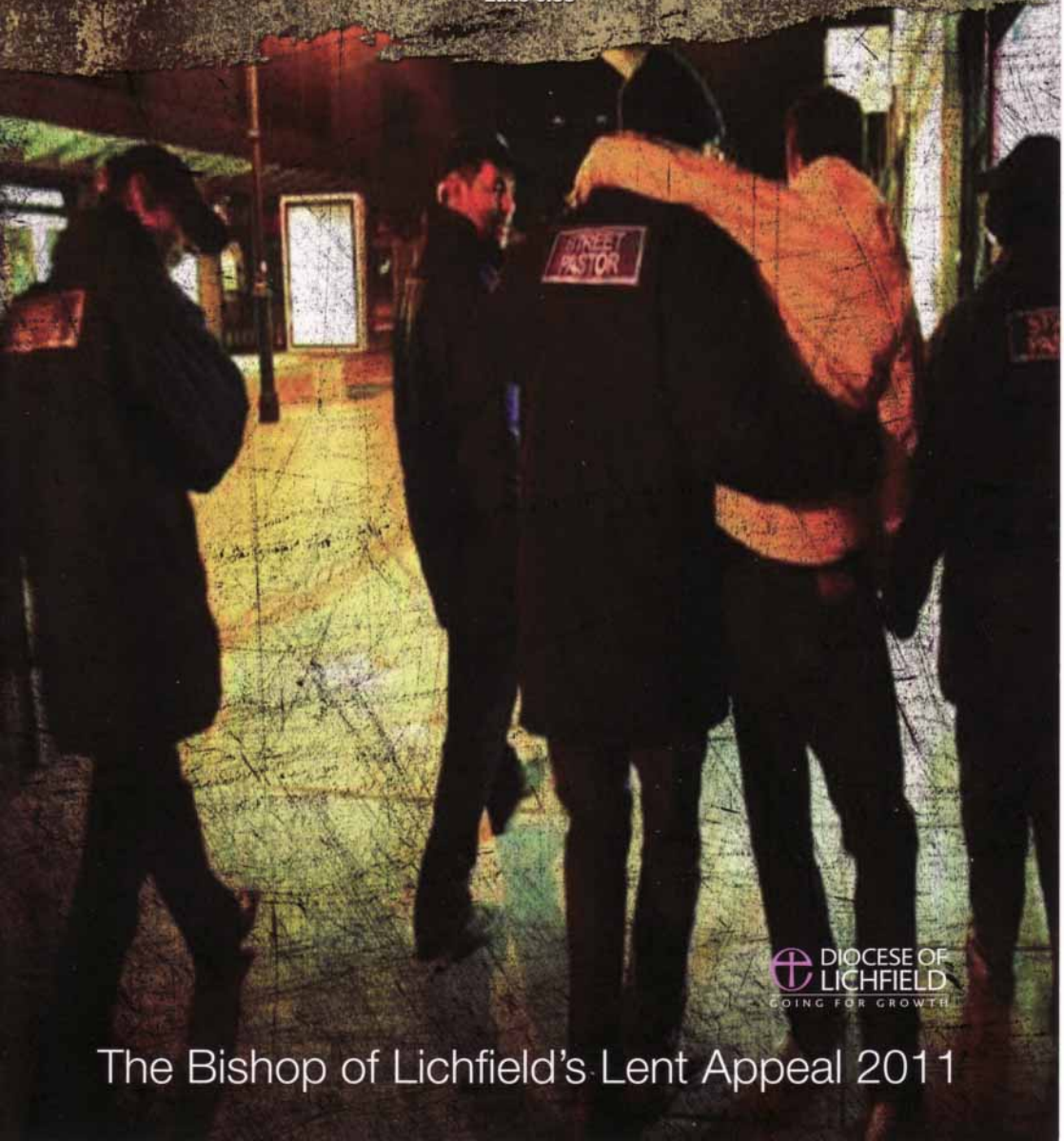


TRANSFORMING COMMUNITIES

Jesus said, "Give and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap; for the measure you give will be the measure you get back."

Luke 6:38



 DIOCESE OF
LICHFIELD
GOING FOR GROWTH

The Bishop of Lichfield's Lent Appeal 2011

TRANSFORMING COMMUNITIES

Dear Friends,

We live in uncertain times; times when many of us – and our neighbours – are concerned about the state of the economy, the fragility of our job security, rising taxes and government cuts.

Yet through the doom and gloom of the current economic situation there are signs of hope. One of these is that the churches of our diocese have kept steady and paid over 96% of last year's parish share.

Another of these signs is the Big Society – the coalition's vision of everybody pulling together to do their bit to serve their neighbour.

Christians have believed in the Big Society for two millennia. But rather than "Big Society" we know it better by the phrase "the Kingdom of God". In God's Kingdom the Good Samaritan is the model for all Christians, doing acts of mercy across all the usual barriers.

STREET PASTORS

One new and exciting way this care for others is being provided right here in the streets of our diocese is through the Street Pastors scheme which is rapidly expanding. Ordinary Christians are putting denominational differences aside to work together from late at night to the early hours of the morning to provide a caring presence on the streets of our towns and cities. Street Pastors are operating or being planned in areas as diverse as Walsall, Stoke on Trent, Wolverhampton, Shrewsbury, Leek and Lichfield.

Street Pastors are a visible and accessible Christian pastoral presence, ministering mainly to young people who are vulnerable, lonely and, quite often, frightened.

The work of Street Pastors is welcomed by our local police. Assistant Chief Constable Jane Sawyers of Staffordshire Police says: "We thoroughly endorse Street Pastors in Staffordshire. They add an extra dimension to ensuring our town and city centres are safe places to visit and socialise in. The volunteers are local people who offer a friendly, approachable presence and can give practical advice or a listening ear."

West Mercia Police licensing officer Tony Mantle, talking about plans for a Street Pastors scheme in Shrewsbury, says: "We have been investigating the

possible introduction of Street Pastors for some time. Recent tragedies in the River Severn, some of which have been alcohol-related, have given us the incentive to take matters forward. The contribution of Street Pastors to assisting us patrol the night-time economy is expected to be immense."

Street Pastors is a church response to urban problems, engaging with people on the streets to care and listen. The scheme has seen some remarkable results since it was pioneered on the streets of London in 2003, including drops in crime in areas where teams have been working. There are now over 100 teams around the United Kingdom and increasing numbers here in the area covered by our diocese.

The Street Pastors scheme is one way that churches are working to transform communities; and for my Lent Appeal this year I want to provide the funds to help create and sustain teams working in this vitally important area.





HIV/AIDS TRAINING IN MATLOSANE

It's not just here in our country that churches are working to transform communities. Being a 'Good Samaritan', is a vision for Christians all across the world. But many schemes delivering real community transformation are at risk from lack of funds.

Our companion diocese of Matlosane in South Africa trained three young people as peer educators to teach young people about sexual behaviour and how to minimise the spread of HIV/Aids. The initiative, Siyafundisa, was a very powerful and meaningful ministry to the young people of Matlosane. Bishop Steve Diseko told me recently that a lack of funds forced the initiative to close. Through this year's Lent Appeal I hope we can raise the necessary funds to restart this exciting work. Just £5,000 would be enough to re-start the programme for one year; and if we could raise double that amount we could keep it running for a second year too.

TEACHERS OF ENGLISH IN SOUTH EAST ASIA

Our partners in the Province of South East Asia are committed to "Growing the Kingdom" in Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Nepal, Thailand and Vietnam. Our companion diocese of Singapore has already planted mission deaneries to serve these countries and their work continues to develop six new dioceses.

Archbishop John Chew tells me the Province needs teachers of English who can use their skills to play a key role in helping to fulfil their vision and be engaged in this deeply transformative programme.

RECONCILIATION IN CANADA

And in Canada, our partners in the diocese of Qu'Appelle are working on community transformation with First Nations ("Cree Indian") Canadians. The relationship between Western Canadians and the indigenous First Nations people hasn't always been good – and the church has played its part in this darker side of Canada's history.

In Saskatchewan, the residential schools set up by the Anglican Church caused huge heartache as children as young as eight were taken from families in order to "Westernise them."

Those dark days are now past and the elders of the Daystar First Nation Reserve have invited the Revd Vicky Young of the Diocese of Qu'Appelle to run a full time Christian ministry and programme of reconciliation. Her work is limited by a lack of financial resources to repair the existing church building and provide teaching materials for young and old alike.

All around the world Christians are working to transform communities and I pray that you will give generously this Lent to help this vitally important work.

+ Jonathan Lichfield



How can you support the Appeal:

- GIVE** generously – by Gift Aid if you can – to increase the value of your donation at no cost to yourself. You can donate through your local parish church, using the form below, or online at lichfield.anglican.org/lentappeal
- PRAY** for all Christians working to transform their communities; for the work of Street Pastors, for those suffering from the effect of HIV/Aids in South Africa, for the mission work of the Province of South East Asia, and for the work of reconciliation in Canada.
- ACT** by volunteering your time with a Street Pastor scheme in your town or city; or by going to teach English in South East Asia.

For more information about what you can do, or to invite speakers to churches, house groups, or youth fellowships, contact:

The Revd Philip Swan, Director of World Mission.

T: 07857 703303 E: philip.swan@lichfield.anglican.org

The Revd David Primrose, Director of Transforming Communities.

T: 07975 644044 E: david.primrose@lichfield.anglican.org

lichfield.anglican.org/lentappeal

Please return this form with your donation to:

The Bishop's Lent Appeal, Bishop's House, 22 The Close, Lichfield, WS13 7LG.

Title:Christian Name(s):

Surname:

Full Home Address:

.....Postcode:

SignedDate

Please notify the charity if you: (A) Change your name or address while the declaration is still in force
(B) Wish to cancel this declaration (C) No longer pay sufficient tax on your income and/or capital gains.

DATA PROTECTION ACT:

Data Protection Act: We will not pass your details to any third party except for the purposes of processing your donation (for example, to HMRC if your donation is Gift Aided). We may store your details and use them to keep you informed about how the funds raised by the Lent Appeal have been spent and to update you about future Lent Appeals and the work of the Bishop and Diocese of Lichfield. If you do not wish to receive such details please tick this box

Please make your cheque payable to "Bishop of Lichfield's Lent Appeal"

To reduce administrative costs and ensure more of your donation is used to help the important work being supported by the Lent Appeal, receipts will not normally be issued. If you would like a receipt please enclose a stamped self-addressed envelope.

The Bishop of Lichfield's Lent Appeal is administered by the Lichfield Diocesan Board of Finance Inc (registered charity 1107827).

If the Bishop of Lichfield's Lent Appeal is unable to make a donation to the charities specified, for example if they cease to operate, the monies raised by this appeal may be donated to other charities at the discretion of the Bishop of Lichfield.