

Demands of Parish Life

Parishioners are usually wonderful people but their expectations of us - and our families are sometimes unrealistic! Do share your concerns with people that you can trust. You are not the only one feeling this way and there is always someone who can help. Please just ask.

Family problems including health, disability, children, marital pressures.

No family is without its challenges. For health issues you may want to ask your GP to refer you to St Luke's Healthcare who provide free healthcare for clergy and their families:

www.stlukeshealthcare.org.uk/contact/

You can also look at the Diocesan website for information on well-being:

www.hereford.anglican.org/wellbeing/

Take care of your mental health as well as your physical health; build appropriate boundaries into your life, to protect your personal time and space and make sure you use your day off and take holidays!

Investing in your relationship

Ministry brings huge pressures and it is important to protect your family. There are resources designed to help e.g. clergy marriage retreats, marriage courses and access to qualified relationship counsellors. You can ask for (free) guidance to find the right help for you.

www.hereford.anglican.org/diocesan-counselling/

Children

They are your children and you can choose how you wish to bring them up. No doubt, you will have much advice from the parish; but do feel free to ignore it!

However, if issues arise please don't feel your role in the parish prevents you from seeking help from an appropriate source. This could include: your GP, the school, Diocesan Pastoral Care Officer, youth worker, health visitor, the police, a social worker, probation officer, solicitor or the Citizen's Advice Bureau (CAB)

Financial pressures

There is good advice available from several sources: the CAB, Christians Against Poverty (CAP), or you can talk to your Archdeacon who can advise on grants etc.

www.citizensadvice.org.uk

www.capuk.org

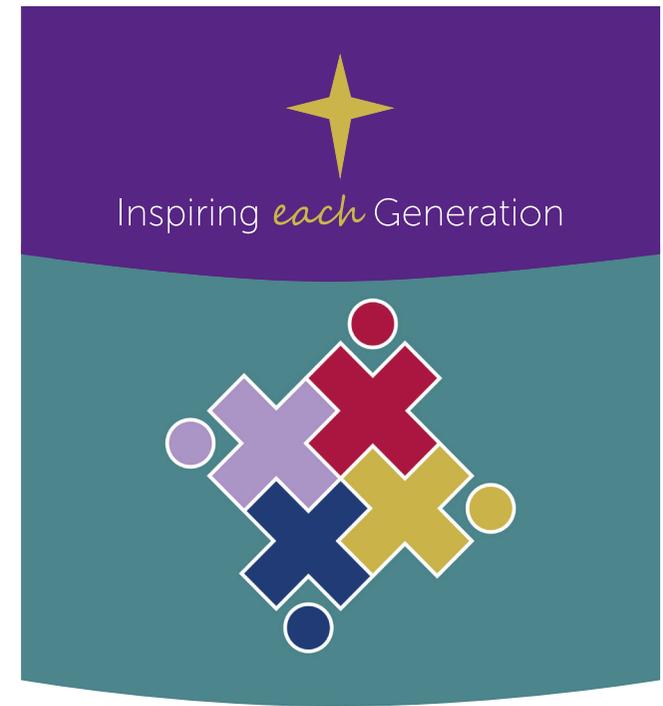
www.hereford.anglican.org/bishops-and-archdeacons

Bereavement

Although none of us wants to contemplate the death of a loved one, those who have experienced such loss would advise thinking the unthinkable. The Diocesan policy is to support each person and family according to their individual needs, but you will have to leave the vicarage after a while and this will be in consultation with the Archdeacon. You may also need to think how to support yourself and your family financially.

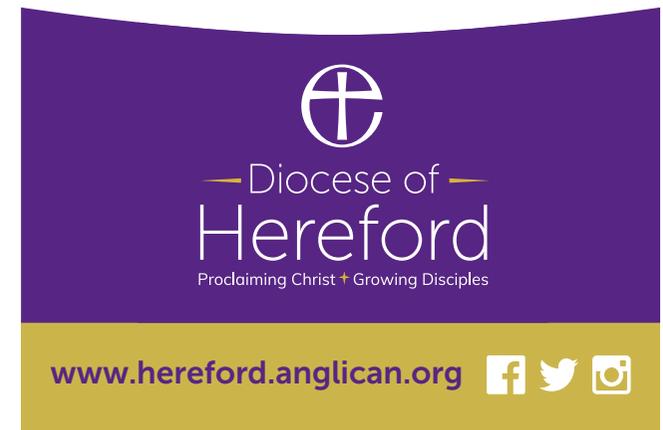
Making big decisions in a time of grief is never easy. Some prior thought and planning may enable you to think more clearly in a dreadful situation.

We do hope that you do not need to refer to this section again but please remember that there is help and support available.



Connect 4

Sharing in the highs and lows of life in ministry, Connect 4 aims to be a supportive network where we hope you will make friends and have fun. Welcome to Connect 4, Hereford Diocese support network for clergy spouses, civil partners and their families.



Caroline Welby, wife of the Archbishop of Canterbury, asked the question:

"How do you prepare to be a Bishop's spouse?"

We know that there are no training sessions, instruction manuals nor even job descriptions. You become one without applying or putting your name forward. Although you may not feel equipped, others will have expectations of what you ought to do and those expectations will vary from place to place.

You may identify with this, as it applies equally to clergy spouses and their families too.

We very much hope and pray that you will feel free to be the clergy spouse and family God has called you to be. Connect 4 sees its role as helping you do this by Caring, Connecting and Championing clergy families across Hereford Diocese.

"Nothing in God's economy is wasted – personality, temperament, life experience, training, family background. For each one of us, wherever and whoever we are, this is the most important thing: to know God loves us for ourselves.

"It is when we are fully aware of God's love for and confidence in us that we stop comparing ourselves with others, worrying about status or striving to be what we are not, and instead be the people He has called us to be. No more. No less."

Caroline Welby

This information aims to give you a flavour of the events and resources we provide to make life in the vicarage 'goldfish bowl' more manageable and enjoyable. Please contact us directly, if we can be of further help:

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Married to +Richard, Bishop of Hereford

Stay connected

The screenshot shows a website with a purple header. On the left is a navigation menu with links: Finance, Mission Resources for Parishes, PCC Information, Annual Meeting Forms, Church Representation Rules, Clergy Commission Form or Individual Voluntary Arrangements (IVA) and PCC Membership, General Data Protection Regulation, Directory, Electoral Roll, Remitting the Benefice, Prayer Study, Hereford Diocesan Counselling Service, Ordained Ministry Development, Pastoral Reorganisation, School for Ministry, Local Ministry. On the right is a large teal box with the 'connect4' logo (a colorful geometric design) and the text 'information, inspiration and fellowship'. Below the logo is a welcome message: 'Welcome to Connect 4. Hereford Diocese support network for clergy spouses, civil partners and their families. Sharing in the highs and lows of life in ministry, Connect 4 aims to be a supportive network where we hope you will make friends and have fun. Our Facebook Group offers a safe space for spouses & C.P.s of Hereford diocese clergy to share information & ideas and offer mutual support during times of change & challenge. Search 'Connect 4 Hereford Diocese' and join to join.'

It can be reassuring to meet other clergy families, and we provide a variety of events that enable everyone to get together.

- Walks with afternoon tea
- Quiet days (with afternoon tea!)
- Coffee mornings (with tea!)
- Social gatherings in pubs, garden centres, restaurant and the Bishop's Palace
- Zoom meetups

We would love to be able to update you with news of events. Please make sure that we have your contact details. You can do that by filling in this data consent form found on our dedicated page on the Diocesan website:

www.hereford.anglican.org/connect4/

You can also join our closed Facebook page – search Connect 4 Hereford Diocese and ask to join.

On the Facebook page, you can share ideas, problems and successes as well as see news of forthcoming events.



www.hereford.anglican.org

Supporting you



Welcome to your new home; and even though it is a diocesan property, it is your home! If you have any queries, problems or requests relating to your house then your first port of call is your Clergy Housing Handbook.

However, if this does not answer your question then please do phone the Properties Department at the Diocesan Office, Hereford (01432 373300) who will be happy to help, or alternatively use these links:

- www.hereford.anglican.org/parsonages/
- www.hereford.anglican.org/clergy-housing/

Seeking help when you need it

It shouldn't happen but it does. Clergy families suffer personal pressures like anyone else. You may have problems with money, relationships or the demands of the parish. Parish life has many blessings and privileges, but its very public status can be stressful and isolating. We may not always be able to solve your problems, but hopefully we can point you in the right direction for some support and guidance.

Your first contact could be our Counselling service. The team have a wealth of experience across many areas of counselling (marriage, relationships, children, trauma, bereavement...). They are independent and, of course, work confidentially.

www.hereford.anglican.org/diocesan-counselling/

Officer for Pastoral Care and Counselling

Fiona Quayle - 01584 841840

fionaquayle@btinternet.com