

Interfaith Adviser

Background and Information Paper

There has been very little formal interfaith work in the Diocese of Chester in recent years. Prior to the appointment of the previous post-holder, the task was not properly co-ordinated and tended to be reactive, whereas in recent years there has been some proactive energy, as time permitted – but there is scope for more. Locally Churches are often in contact with interfaith colleagues.

The past ten years have seen the growth of the already existing Jewish community in Hale Barns, Hale and Bowdon, and significant growth in the Muslim communities in Cheadle/Gatley/Heald Green and especially in Hale Barns/Hale (thus Hale Barns: population = c6000 of whom 1500+ are Muslim or Jewish – two Synagogues and a Mosque). There are also smaller Muslim communities in, for example, Chester, Macclesfield, Birkenhead, Crewe and Northwich (with Mosques/Prayer Rooms in all these places). Other faith groups are much smaller and more dispersed, but they are growing. There are also local pockets of different faiths, such as Bahai in Macclesfield.

The Church of England “**Presence and Engagement**” Project (www.presenceandengagement.org.uk) identifies 10 parishes in the Diocese as having 10% or more of the population who identify with a faith other than Christianity (from most recent census data). In descending order they are:

Hyde St George (37%)	Hale St Peter (13%)
Hale Barns All Saints (25%+)	Bowdon St Mary (13%)
Gatley St James (20%)	Cheadle St Mary (10%)
Hyde St Thomas (18%)	Dunham Massey St Margaret (10%)
Heald Green St Catherine (16%)	Cheadle Hulme St Andrew (10%)

The role of Interfaith Adviser will be located within the Outreach Department of the diocese of Chester, be responsible to the Director of Outreach and report through the Race and Ethnicity Forum with an annual report to the Diocesan Bishop.

This is a voluntary post, envisaged to require a time commitment of 0.5 to 1 day per week. The role is open to ordained and lay applicants and is a Bishop’s appointment, initially for a term of x years.

The suitable candidate will have a demonstrable interest in interfaith matters and be able to evidence relevant experience. They should be able to express and defend a belief in the uniqueness of Christ and a willingness to explore and learn from shared interfaith values and objectives. They will have an understanding of the safeguarding policies of the diocese of Chester.

The ability to handle confidential information is essential.

As a voluntary position, there is no remuneration for the role but travelling, training and other expenses incurred in carrying out the role would be reimbursed.

Applications should be made by returning the completed application form to Liz Geddes, liz.geddes@chester.anglican.org by 5pm on 29th September 2021.

Informal conversations with Venerable Ian Bishop are welcomed:
ian.bishop@chester.anglican.org

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