

Job Description

Chaplain to the Bishop of Blackburn

Employer:	The Church Commissioners on behalf of the Bishop of Blackburn
Job Title:	Chaplain to the Bishop of Blackburn
Job Requirement:	This is a post on the Vision and Strategy Team for a person in priest's orders, who is episcopally ordained in the Church of England or a Church in full Communion with it. This post has attached to it an Occupational Requirement under the 2010 Equality Act, Part 1, Schedule 9, and it carries the stipend of a Residentiary Canon.
Location:	Bishop's House, Ribchester Road, Blackburn, BB1 9EF
Responsible to:	The Bishop of Blackburn
Responsible for:	Support to the Bishop in his leadership of the Diocese
Key Relationships:	The Bishop of Blackburn, the Bishop's Staff at Bishop's House, the members of the Vision and Strategy Team, the Pas to the other Bishops, the DSA, the Diocesan Secretary, the Registrar and relevant staff of the NCI.

Context and Purpose

The Bishop of Blackburn is seeking to appoint an experienced priest who is passionate in their faith in the Gospel, persistent in prayer and administratively efficient to serve as Bishop's Chaplain.

The Diocese of Blackburn is committed to making new and deeper followers of Jesus Christ and to the renewal of Parish life. This is articulated in Vision 2026 and will be re-articulated in the new Vision statement which is currently being discerned. The Bishop's Chaplain plays a critical role in supporting the Bishop in advancing this agenda.

The Diocese is also strongly collegial and places a great emphasis on the relationship amongst senior leaders and between senior clergy and the parishes. The Chaplain is a key figure in enabling this, ensuring that different bodies and individuals relate to each other and supporting the Bishop in his pastoral work.

The Role

Prayer and Spiritual Life

- To have a disciplined life of prayer and a strong and well-articulated faith in the saving work of God in Jesus Christ
- To be a competent preacher, able both to preach and to advise the Bishop in this ministry
- To have an enquiring theological mind and the capacity to relate the Gospel to contemporary social and political issues

Relationship with the Bishop of Blackburn

- To have a close, day to day relationship with the Bishop of Blackburn and serve as confidant, adviser and truth-teller.
- To enable the Bishop to filter out clamour and remain focused on the strategic priorities of the Diocese.
- To offer challenge and be ready to ask the difficult questions
- To perform liturgical duties as Chaplain at major events such as Ordinations
- To be available to represent the Bishop at events

Bishop's House

- To play a full part the prayer life of Bishop's House
- To play a part in ensuring that the House is a place of warm hospitality and the Household for the Diocese, a place where all are greeted as if they were Christ
- To line manage the Office Manager and ensure that systems, processes and structures are being efficiently and smoothly run.
- To have the presence of mind necessary to manage the Bishop's mother and extended family

Diocese

- To organise and set the agenda for meeting of the Vision and Strategy Team and, in collaboration with the clergy appointment officer, set the agenda Bishop's Appointment Team
- To be a member of the Strategic Programme Board, the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisory Panel and other bodies as required.
- To be the point of connection in ensuring that the work of these different bodies is coherent and focused on the delivery of the Diocesan Vision
- To maintain close and trusting relationships with the Archdeacons, suffragan bishops and Dean and ensure coherence and a shared direction
- To maintain a close relationship with the Diocesan Secretary and to be a point of contact with the staff teams at Clayton House
- To support the Bishop's work as pastor, particularly to clergy and clergy families
- To assist the Bishop in the administration of grants to clergy and their families
- To be the point of contact with Blackburn Cathedral, especially around major services such as the Ordination and Chrism Eucharist

Legal and Safeguarding

- To be the point of contact between Bishop's House and the registry,
- To oversee administration of the Clergy Disciplinary measure and, in due course, the Clergy Conduct Measure
- To be the point of contact between Bishop's House and the Diocesan Safeguarding Team
- To conduct Blue File checks on clergy coming into the Diocese and advise the Bishop on the content of CCSLs
- To be the Designated Responsible Person for safer recruitment, working with the Clergy Appointments Officer
- To attend Core Groups as required
- To act as the Bishop's Data Protection Compliance Officer for ensuring that the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998 are followed; this includes processing subject access requests, maintaining clergy files, and providing advice to the Bishop as necessary.

Communications

- To be the point of contact with the Diocesan Communications team
- To advise the Bishop on messaging and support him with interview preparation
- To ensure that Bishop's House and the Bishop's social media messaging is coherent and appropriate
- On occasions, to liaise directly with the media

Wider Church

- To conduct research and advise the Bishop in his work with the House of Bishops and General Synod
- To be the point of contact with the NCIs and build and foster key relationships
- To network with other Bishop's Chaplains and draw on their wisdom and experience

National work

- To support the Bishop in developing his voice in the public square, especially through research
- To liaise with external bodies such as local government, Lancashire leaders, public sector bodies, charities and pressure groups in developing the Bishop's voice for justice
- In due course to act as administrator and researcher for the Bishop's parliamentary work

Person Specification:

The Bishop's Chaplain will:

- work to the Bishop, his agenda and priorities, focused on assisting his ministry, with wisdom, good humour, and steadfast hope.
- be emotionally intelligent and theologically alert, with a strong ability for reading people and situations, relating well across a diverse range of ages, personalities, cultures and theological convictions.
- be flexible and adaptable, able to work to tight deadlines, to prioritise, to cope with complex and competing demands, and to assemble resources on a wide variety of subjects.
- enjoy working as part of a small team, with the spontaneity and natural generosity which interdependence requires.
- provide pastoral support to the Bishop's Staff, with a proven capacity to work calmly and effectively through more stressful seasons of ministry.
- be computer literate, and able to draft texts, letters, memos and other documents to a high standard and with attention to detail.
- work to the highest levels of confidentiality and loyalty, yet ready to challenge the Bishop and hold him to the highest standards of integrity and Christian ministry;
- to provide the Bishop with a sense of perspective and to help him focus on what matters most
- be familiar and creative with traditional and contemporary liturgies, able to lead effectively diverse forms of worship.
- have a passion for evangelism, growing disciples and the growth of the church.
- quickly be able to develop a working knowledge of the vacancy processes of the Church of England and an ability to liaise with the Archdeacons, Area Deans and Patrons.
- be confident and assured in following due process in supporting the bishop in all matters relating to safeguarding and clergy discipline.
- have a full driving licence.

Terms and Conditions of Service and Other Notes

The post holder will be episcopally ordained in the Church of England. That is, an Anglican priest who can conduct worship on behalf of the Bishop and administer all sacraments appropriate within the Church of England. This post has attached to it an occupational requirement under the 2010 Equality Act, Part 1, Schedule 9.

Place of Work: The Chaplain's main place of work is the Bishop's Office at Bishop's House.

Remuneration: Salary equivalent to that of a Residentiary Canon, which is £32,888 per annum.

Accommodation: A house will be provided to enable the Chaplain to carry out his/her duties. The current house is in Langho but the location is negotiable to any place within reasonable commuting distance.

Working expenses will be reimbursed on a monthly basis from the Bishop's Office on behalf of the Church Commissioners. Car mileage will be reimbursed at the prevailing Church Commissioners' rate.

Working Hours: The expectation is of a similar time commitment as a parish priest. As a general rule the Chaplain will be expected to share in morning worship outside office hours, and to keep office hours of 9.00 am to 5.00 pm with a break for lunch. There is an expectation of some work, and ministry being exercised, outside office hours. There will be some evening commitments. The rest day is generally Saturday, although there are occasional Saturday duties when another day off may be taken in lieu. There is no payment for overtime.

Sundays: On Sundays, the Chaplain will often be available to take services and preach where needed. However this needs to be balanced with the pastoral importance of having a 'home' church of which the Chaplain (and their family) can feel fully a part.

Holidays: 30 weekdays + Bank Holidays. Holiday dates have to take into account the Bishop's own holiday dates and that of his Secretary to ensure adequate cover in the Bishop's Office.

Spiritual and Professional Growth: The Chaplain is encouraged to have a Spiritual Director, to make an annual retreat, to attend CME and the annual Bishops' Chaplains Consultation.

Other Commitments: In order to facilitate the maintenance of a healthy and balanced ministry and life style, it is recognised that the Chaplain will wish to undertake responsibilities within the life of the Diocese and local community that are outside this job description. These should be agreed with the Bishop before being accepted, and, in any conflict of time or interests, commitment to supporting the work of the Bishop will be expected to take priority.

Licence: The appointee will be given the Bishop's General Licence under seal.

Reviews: There will be an Annual Conversation with the Bishop; and regular interim reviews.

Notice: During the probationary period the employment may be terminated by one month's written notice on either side or by pay in lieu of notice by your employer. Once your appointment is confirmed the notice period will be extended to three months on either side or by pay in lieu of notice by your employer. Should you be summarily dismissed on the grounds of gross misconduct, your employment will be terminated without notice.

Probationary period: There will be a probationary period of six months.

General Conditions

Diversity

We understand the benefits of employing individuals from a range of backgrounds, with diverse cultures and talents. We aim to create a workforce that:

- values difference in others and respects the dignity and worth of each individual
- reflects the diversity of the nation that the Church of England exists to serve
- fosters a climate of creativity, tolerance and diversity that will help all staff to develop to their full potential.

We are committed to being an equal opportunities employer and ensuring that all employees, job applicants, customers and other persons with whom we deal are treated fairly and are not subjected to discrimination. We want to ensure that we not only observe the relevant legislation but also do whatever is necessary to provide genuine equality of opportunity. We expect all of our employees to be treated and to treat others with respect. Our aim is to provide a working environment free from harassment, intimidation, or discrimination in any form which may affect the dignity of the individual.

Equal treatment amongst differing people from diverse backgrounds is one of the central precepts of the Church of England's mission and theology. The Church of England values the richness which this equal treatment brings to the workplace. The Diocese of Blackburn is therefore concerned to avoid discriminating against any person.

Standards of Behaviour and Conduct

Staff are expected to act at all times with due consideration for others and in a manner befitting their position as employees of the Church and as professionals, whatever their job.

Health and Safety Responsibilities

All staff are required to ensure that they understand and accept the legal duties placed on them by the Health and Safety at Work Act not endanger themselves or others by any act or omission on their part and by the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations to co-operate with colleagues and management in the control of health and safety at work. Therefore, staff are required to:

- o Read, understand and abide by the Board of Finance Health and Safety Policy;
- o make themselves familiar with accident and emergency procedures for their site;
- o inform their manager immediately of any health or safety deficiencies or dangerous situations or near misses;
- o set a good personal example in respect of health and safety

Confidentiality

The Chaplain must not pass on to unauthorised persons any information obtained in the course of his/her duties without the permission of the Bishop.

Process for Application

Please submit your CV along with a two-page letter detailing the gifts and experience that you will bring to this role, if appointed. Please submit your CV and cover letter via the Pathways vacancy.

- Closing Date for receipt of applications: Tuesday 10th June 2025
- Interviews: Friday 20th June 2025