



New Rural Chaplains

Eight new chaplains have been licensed to Borderlands Rural Chaplaincy our ecumenical partnership with the Shropshire and Marches Methodist Circuit.

The service on Saturday 22nd April was led by Honorary Assistant Bishop to the Diocese of Hereford, the Rt Revd Michael Bourke and Wolverhampton and Shrewsbury Methodist District Chair Revd Rachel Parkinson at Church Stretton Methodist Church.

More than 250 farming families were supported by the existing five chaplains in 2016, with issues such as farm succession, delays or problems with the Basic Payment Scheme (formerly the Single Payment Scheme or Single Farm Payment), Bovine TB and Herefordshire Council's decision to sell off its 45 smallholdings.

Borderlands Rural Chaplaincy is there to meet the needs of all in the farming or land based communities within Herefordshire and south Shropshire, which accounts for almost 10% of employment on 6,000 registered agricultural

holdings.



Chaplain, Revd Nick Read said: "The new chaplains will considerably enhance our ability to cover the north of the diocese.

"The majority of the new post holders live in Shropshire whereas four out of the five first cohort lived in Herefordshire.

"An increase in the number of female chaplains is also encouraging and will help us to deal with gender-sensitive issues and supporting the whole of farming families.

"It's a great to belong to something that is growing importance, ecumenical and clearly demonstrates the commitment of both churches to the farming community."

The new voluntary chaplains are: Revd Bob Bates, Revd Frances Bisceker, Sarah Campbell, Revd John Chesworth, Revd Virginia Clements, Kathryn Cunliffe, Revd John Fowler and Revd Mike Kinna.

They join stipendiary chaplain and team leader, David Gwatkin and the four existing voluntary chaplains: David Dutton, Mike Jones, Revd Nick Read and Sue Williams.

[Find out more](#)

