

# Choosing the right chaplain



Photo: Chris Oldham

Left: With Sharman Birtles MBE JP (Vice Lord-Lieutenant), Donna Ludford (Lord Mayor Manchester), and Diane Hawkins JP (Lord-Lieutenant) by Emmeline Pankhurst Statute Manchester



Photo: Chris Oldham

Right: With Stephen Watson QPM (Chief Constable Greater Manchester) at the official opening of the High Sheriff's Garden Room

## Lorraine Worsley-Carter MBE DL

High Sheriff of Greater Manchester 2022-23

One of the many honours bestowed upon us as incumbent High Sheriffs is to choose our chaplain/s.

I instantly knew who I would choose for the role. My first call was to Revd Michael Roberts, whom I had met at a Remembrance Sunday service some months before, and I had been moved by his prayers. Mike is the Rail Industry and British Transport Police Chaplain for North West England and, as my father had worked 'on the railways' for most of his adult life, I knew Mike was the perfect person for the role.

We were still in lockdown, so our meeting was almost clandestine – not from a health and safety point of view, but because of the requirement to keep the request a secret. In 2020, we stood eight feet apart on Manchester Oxford Road where I invited Mike to be my chaplain, endeavouring not to shout too loudly over the noise of the city traffic. Once Mike had accepted, I then advised him that he couldn't tell anyone until March 2022!

During my first six months as High Sheriff, Mike and I shared much together; we laughed, prayed and cried. Indeed, who would not shed a tear at one of the most poignant moments, when Mike

led the prayers at Manchester Victoria Station, commemorating five years since the bombing at Manchester Arena when 22 people lost their life? Days later I stood with the now Their Highnesses The Prince and Princess of Wales, alongside the Dean of Manchester and the bereaved families as the Glade of Light was officially opened at Manchester Cathedral.

My second but equally revered chaplain is my dear friend, Elizabeth (Liz) Whimpany. About 20 years ago, Liz, a nurse, was told that one of her patients, 18-year-old Adam, was being moved to a nursing home for the elderly due to his complex health needs and disabilities. Liz applied for a mortgage and opened a young people's home – and Adam was her first resident. Now with three sites, Liz is taking her Ministry in the Making studies.

In addition to me having the opportunity to thank hundreds of volunteers and to meet school pupils as well as community groups of many cultures and faiths, we were fortunate to have had a visit from His Majesty King Charles here in Greater Manchester. It was a privilege to be introduced to him by the Lord-Lieutenant and to offer my welcome.

In what has been, at times, a joyful and landmark civic year, it seemed appropriate that the four women in civic office – the Lord-Lieutenant, Vice Lord-

Lieutenant, High Sheriff and Lord Mayor of Manchester – be photographed together with Emmeline Pankhurst's statue. This was a double honour for me, as I am an ambassador of the Pankhurst Trust.

My final week included a visit to a family centre, to a hospice and to a prison, as well as joining and celebrating at an Iftar. Within hours of completing my role, I was honoured not only to receive an award from the Chief Constable in recognition of my 'outstanding public services' duties during my year, but also to be invited to officially open the 'High Sheriff's Garden Room' within the beautiful Grade II listed building at Greater Manchester Police Sedgley Park. This is a first for the Shrievalty of Greater Manchester and a legacy for all future High Sheriffs.



Photo: Clive Lawrence

With my chaplains at my 'Hanging'