

PRESS RELEASE

**For immediate release
June 2023**



NEW PROGRAMME OF FREE CLERGY WELLBEING WORKSHOPS LAUNCHED

A series of Wellbeing Workshops for clergy has been announced to support Anglican ministers in the UK and Ireland. The launch is in direct response to clergy households asking for more support with mental health, and for safe spaces to reflect on their own wellbeing.

Clergy Support Trust, the largest and oldest charity supporting Anglican clergy households in times of need, is offering the workshops to clergy for free. It comes after separate research* from the Church of England earlier this year reported a drop in clergy wellbeing since the pandemic.

The Reverend Ben Cahill-Nicholls, Chief Executive of Clergy Support Trust, said: "In 2022, the Trust walked alongside almost a fifth of all Church of England clergy. That startlingly high number, and the conversations we're privileged to have with applicants, reveals a great need for more wellbeing support across the Churches whose clergy we serve.

"Our prayer is that these new Wellbeing Workshops, which we've developed in partnership with specialist providers, will play a pivotal role in ensuring clergy feel better prepared not only to look after their own mental health and wellbeing, but also for those they minister to.

"We know how tight some diocesan finances are right now, which is why we have made the Wellbeing Workshops completely free. The Workshops are a pivotal step for the Trust as it seeks to increase the preventative nature of its vital work - serving those who do so much in service of others."

Clergy Support Trust, an independent charity, worked with five support providers to develop five courses to fill the gaps identified by a survey of people supported by the Trust**, and following consultation and pilots with dozens of clergy and diocesan leaders.

Through the Wellbeing Workshops initiative, clergy can receive mental health first aid training to equip them with practical frameworks to support people experiencing mental health difficulties. There is also a course on trauma-informed ministry to explore the emotional and psychological impact of the pandemic on clergy and their congregations. Another workshop concentrates on building a healthy team and dealing with conflict, in the specific context of ministry. A fourth focusses on stress and resilience, to prevent the pressures of ministry from having a detrimental impact on health in the first place. There is also training for emerging and established leaders, and the option to work with St Luke's Wellbeing in establishing reflective practice groups for clergy.

Dr Claire Walker, Chief Executive of St Luke's, commented, "St Luke's for Clergy Wellbeing is delighted to be participating in this initiative and welcomes the opportunity to help dioceses to establish or further develop reflective practice groups (RPGs)."

The Revd Stu Wright, who has designed the leadership content for the initial programme, added, "GiANT London are delighted to partner with Clergy Support Trust to deliver leadership training within this excellent range of wellbeing courses. We look forward to working with dioceses throughout the country and strengthening the substantial support that Clergy Support Trust are already offering."

Booking for the Wellbeing Workshops is now live, and diocesan wellbeing leads can book these courses for their clergy with Clergy Support Trust covering the cost. To find out more about the Wellbeing Workshops programme, visit this the Clergy Support Trust [website](#).

ENDS

Clergy Support Trust Chief Executive, The Reverend Ben Cahill-Nicholls, is available for interview. For media enquiries, including interview and image requests, please contact Laura Nelson at e: laura@jerseyroadpr.com t: +44 (0) 7557 260600 or Priscilla Obilana at e: priscilla@jerseyroadpr.com t: +44 (0) 7562607385

NOTES FOR EDITORS

*Living Ministry report, Covenant, Calling and Crisis: Autonomy, Accountability and Wellbeing among Church of England Clergy, Church of England (Jan 2023)

**Clergy Support Trust Impact Survey 2020 (completed in 2021)

Clergy Support Trust is the oldest and largest charity focused on the wellbeing of clergy and their families. The independent charity, originally founded in 1655, helps Anglican clergy and their families across the UK, Ireland, Isle of Man, and Diocese in Europe.

www.clergysupport.org.uk