

## THE BISHOP OF MANCHESTER

*The Rt Revd Dr David Walker*



Dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

I am writing to draw your attention to the apology issued today concerning the Church of England's role in historical adoption practices. Alongside this, a newly published research report, personal testimonies and information about sources of support are available at this link [www.churchofengland.org/adoption](http://www.churchofengland.org/adoption)

You may be aware that, between 1949 and 1976, a number of mother and baby homes were overseen by diocesan moral welfare councils as part of the wider support offered to unmarried mothers and their children. In recent years, we have come to understand more clearly the experiences of those who were affected by these homes, and the lasting impact on families.

Although guidance at the time encouraged keeping mothers and babies together wherever possible, we know that this was not always what happened in practice in every setting. While some homes offered care and compassion, the research has found evidence of harsh and unkind treatment while staying in homes affiliated to the Church of England. Mothers have shared that they were not given a real or meaningful choice about whether to keep their child. We know that this history is not simply in the past and continues to affect lives today.

This apology marks an important and meaningful step towards recognising, validating, and giving voice to the lived experiences of those affected. I have expressed my support in welcoming the apology here [www.manchester.anglican.org/adoption](http://www.manchester.anglican.org/adoption)

There may be people in your congregations and communities who have been affected by the news today. Some may wish to share their stories with you and I know that you will listen to them with care. Others may need more specialist support. I would encourage you to direct people, where appropriate, to the support services listed [on our webpage](#), or to our diocesan safeguarding team at [safeguarding@manchester.anglican.org](mailto:safeguarding@manchester.anglican.org)

All media enquiries should be directed to [gemma.gardiner@manchester.anglican.org](mailto:gemma.gardiner@manchester.anglican.org)

If you would like to access personal support, please contact the Revd Canon Anne Edwards at [bishopsschaplain@manchester.anglican.org](mailto:bishopsschaplain@manchester.anglican.org)

Yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Manchester".

+ David Manchester