



'Connecting People with God'

23 January 2023

Dear Friends

I do hope that you had a good Christmas and that this New Year has started well for you. If you were struck down with a cold/the flu/Covid, my commiserations and I hope that you are now feeling much better.

As a team, all three of our Local Missional Leaders have been recommissioned by Archdeacon Simon since I last wrote two months ago; Marise Seville at St.Paul's, Paul Smalley at St.James', and June Dunning at St.Philip's. It's good to have them continuing to serve in our churches and if you would be interested in finding out more about what they do, please have a word with them or one of the clergy or look at the diocesan website [Being a Local Missional Leader is a real privilege - Diocese of Liverpool \(anglican.org\)](https://www.liverpool.anglican.org/being-a-local-missional-leader-is-a-real-privilege).

I'm pleased to report that St.Mary's and St.Paul's have finally been successful in their desire to appoint a youthworker, in conjunction with Youth for Christ, who will work in local high schools and in our churches. The person appointed is due to begin in mid-March, subject to references and a DBS check, and I hope to be able to share more details in my next letter.

One other significant development that has recently taken place in the Church of England concerns the proposals issued by the bishops following the end of the Living in Love and faith (LLF) process. You may recall that we ran three study groups across the team back in the autumn of 2021 to look at the important issues of identity, sexuality, relationships and marriage which LLF addresses. The proposals are to introduce prayers of thanksgiving, dedication and blessing for same sex couples. The bishops also reaffirmed the Church's traditional belief in marriage being between one man and one woman, and hence same sex marriages are not being proposed.

The proposals come before the General Synod at its meeting in London from 6-9 February. Please do pray for wisdom for our bishops, clergy and lay people who will discuss these and make decisions about them. I am very conscious that within our team churches there will be those who support these proposals, as well as those who do not, and perhaps some who are currently unsure what they make of them. Whichever group you find yourself in, I do hope that we can respect one another's viewpoints, even if you disagree strongly with someone else. Archbishop Justin has spoken about the need for us to learn how to 'disagree well' with each other within the Anglican Communion, and I want to suggest that it is possible for us to do that if we listen, love and respect each other, just as we tried to do through the study groups back in 2021.

With my prayers and best wishes.

Jeremy Tear
Pioneer Team Rector