

introducing ...

Living God's Love

Living God's Love is a journey.

It's an invitation to the Diocese of St Albans to discover new things about God, ourselves and the world. It's an invitation to look with fresh eyes and explore new ways. It's an invitation to journey together as God's people.

Bishop Alan together with Bishop Richard and Bishop Paul and the diocesan synod are inviting the people, parishes, schools and chaplaincies, deaneries and boards of the diocese to build on Vision for Action and all the good things already happening by:

- ◆ journeying **deeper into God**, in prayer, worship and commitment,
- ◆ going out in partnership to bring **transformation to communities**, local and global, and
- ◆ walking alongside others on their journeys as we seek to **make new disciples**.

This is a journey not a stroll. It will take time for us to discern the road ahead as we pray, as we look and listen and as we learn together. It will take time for us to walk the road. But it is a journey worth making. As we discover more of God in our own lives, as we see God at work in our communities and as others discover new life in Christ, may we find much delight and joy in *Living God's Love*.



Food for the Journey

If *Living God's Love* is going to be more than just another initiative it will need to be sustained in prayer, reflection and creativity. We need food for the journey.



Advent

In Advent there is an opportunity to receive a daily bible verse by email or text and take time to **stop, reflect** and **pray**. The verses, which take you through from creation to the nativity, enable reflection and prayer about our relationship with



stop, reflect and pray in Advent
www.livinggodslove.org
Diocese of St Albans

God, with one another and with the world. It's a great way to prepare for the launch of *Living God's Love*.

Sign up now on www.livinggodslove.org. You will also be able to download the verses on weekly sheets which can then be printed off and distributed.

Lent

A Bishops' Lent Course for groups has been written and will be available shortly to download from www.livinggodslove.org. Over six weeks the course explores the three themes of *Going Deeper into God*, *Transforming Communities* and *Making New Disciples*.

Alongside the Bishops' Course there will also be a Lent Challenge.

Resources

Resources to help our thinking and our prayer will be made available on the *Living God's Love* website. In particular, there are three presentations of images and music which reflect on the three themes.

More resources for worship, for discussion and prayer will be developed and shared as we continue on this journey together. A DVD of resources will be distributed in December.

Discovering the Road



Central to *Living God's Love* is the task of discernment; discovering the road God is calling us to walk.

Mission Action Planning

Parishes are therefore invited to undertake a process of Mission Action Planning. Looking, listening, reflection and prayer leading into planning and prioritising; seeking, with the Spirit's guidance, to discern a vision and a course of action. Typically that course of action might have a five year dimension and yearly priorities.

This process will be given content and focus by the three themes,

- ◆ These will help explore vision: What might things be like if we were to go deeper into God, if we were to step out and play our part in transforming communities around us and across the world, if we were to walk alongside others on their journey to discipleship?
- ◆ These will help develop action: What practically can we do to go forward in these areas (and what might we need to stop doing)? What are the next steps on the journey?

Mission Accompaniers

In order to help parishes travel this journey Bishop Alan will commission some 70 Mission Accompaniers at the Launch Service on 15th January. Their role will be, 'as it says on the tin', to accompany parishes as they, in their different ways, seek to discern and take steps which lead more deeply into the mission of God in the world and in our lives. Parishes and Mission Accompaniers will be matched carefully, developing relationships which will be creative, supportive and fruitful.



First steps

Living God's Love is a journey. It begins as we take some first steps.

Begin now

Let's begin now by praying, by thinking imaginatively, by looking and listening in our communities and exploring what *Living God's Love* means in our own lives. You might want to start by signing up for the Advent challenge or by writing your own prayer.



Launch Service

On Saturday 15th January 2011 at 4.00pm in the Cathedral there will be a special service to launch *Living God's Love*. Parishes, schools and chaplaincies are invited to send representatives to the service. The congregation will be invited to renew their baptism vows and to recommit themselves to the mission of God in the world. Parishes, schools and chaplaincies will be commissioned in their continuing mission and ministry and the Mission Accompaniers commissioned for their new role.

Bishop Alan's sermon at the service will be made available to parishes on a DVD (to be distributed in December) in both video and audio format. Parishes are requested to use this at services on Sunday 16th January.

Website

In addition to the Advent challenge the *Living God's Love* website has some useful resources on it. These will be developed further. Please visit it regularly to keep in touch with developments. It's the first point of call for information.

www.livinggodslove.org

For more information

If you have questions, please email John Kiddle on john.kiddle@stalbans.anglican.org.

Living God's Love

Going deeper into God • Transforming Communities • Making New Disciples