



## Pioneering Parishes in Lichfield Diocese

### What is Pioneering Parishes?

*Pioneering Parishes* is a CofE programme to support dioceses to develop their mixed ecology of mission and ministry. It provides tools to help parishes become more outward looking, enabling clergy and their churches to extend the care of souls into all the parish.

*Pioneering Parishes* is already working with Carlisle, Bath and Wells, and Portsmouth as part of a three-year programme to work collaboratively with nine dioceses, funded by the CofE's Innovation Fund. This programme will include Lichfield Diocese for 12-18 months from April 2024 and will be launched at the Clergy Conference.

The partnership with Pioneering Parishes will support Lichfield Diocese in developing training and processes that encourage and enhance mixed ecology culture and practice.

### How does Pioneering Parishes work?

*Pioneering Parishes* aims to help people in parishes engage with contextual mission, often called pioneering. *Contextual mission* is mission that is sensitive to its context – i.e. not 'one size fits all'.

The Pioneering Parishes programme helps lay and ordained people to take on suitable roles in contextual mission, and to enable the whole congregation to look outwards. Some are indeed called to 'pioneering'; but many more are contributors, enablers, pray-ers, allies, even administrators of the things that God calls us towards. There is no expectation that anyone should fit a particular role: the body of Christ benefits from diversity in mission as it does in all things. Pioneering Parishes

encourages people to work in partnership and to discern what is right for their time and place.

The programme will be an open offer, available to anyone, lay as well as ordained in the diocese. Most content is delivered online, by Church Mission Society (CMS), who lead the programme. There is a nominal attendance fee for webinars.

A broad invitation to parishes could also include key staff in schools, chaplaincies and central sector colleagues. Individuals from parishes can sign up independently, or parishes can organise groups/teams if they wish to be more intentional.

The programme already has experience of working across church traditions.

## Pioneering Parishes programme

Founded on the belief that pioneering is integral to parish life, the following webinar courses and gatherings enable churches to shift energy out into the parish:-

- **Pioneering Parishes *First Steps***: a webinar series held four times fortnightly for 90 minutes, at a total of 6 learning hours plus a small amount of pre-work. It enables learners to grasp the concept of pioneering and explore roles in contextual mission.
- **Pioneering Parishes *Culture Change in Practice***: a webinar series held four times fortnightly for 90 minutes at a total of 6 learning hours plus a small amount of pre-work. *Culture Change in Practice* looks at organisational change models from systems thinking that can be shared with PCCs and incorporates interviews with leaders to offer real life examples of how parishes have shifted their energy outwards.
- **A learning community** (or community of practice) – quarterly half-day events to embed learning and maintain momentum providing a network of people offering time and expertise to enable local initiatives to take root and develop in context.