

# Inclusive Church Newsletter



## Inclusive Church newsletter February 2026

The Inclusive Church Newsletter is a digital publication produced every month. It aims to provide supporters and members with the latest news and information from the life of Inclusive Church and our partner organisations.



### "We are Known" From the National Coordinator

This past month has felt like a season of recalibration in our household, rites of passage, celebrations, realisations. As spring begins to show itself and the light lingers a little longer, there's space to pause. To breathe.

At Candlemas, we baptised Aelyn. She is four and a half, fiercely herself, and has always known her own mind. Baptism was no exception. She chose the music. She chose her godparents. She chose an "everything unicorns" outfit. We provided kazooes.

It was gloriously ecumenical: Church of England liturgy (adapted, of course), a Methodist preach, URC-led prayers, Roman Catholic and mostly Anglican godparents. Live music and recorded. Rainbows, laughter, grace.

During the service I was introduced to a line from the Methodist baptism liturgy: "Before ever you were known..."

Before achievement.  
Before opinion.  
Before argument.  
Before baptism. Before church.

The following week I sat through the pastoral paradox that is General Synod. Five days of debates and conversations that were at times faithful, at times frustratingly disconnected, at times deeply uncomfortable. And beneath it all that baptismal truth kept echoing.

We are known.  
Completely.  
Public and private selves.  
Courage and compromise.  
Conviction and confusion.

And loved, not because of what we do, say or believe correctly, but because we belong to God.

Lent often invites us into reflection. Many of us are holding complex feelings about the Church right now. About leadership. About justice. About whether we still recognise the institution we serve or worship within.

But before ever we were known by committees or congregations... before ever we were labelled conservative or progressive, ally or agitator, straight or queer, insider or outsider... we were known by God.

And loved.

That is the ground beneath our feet.  
That is the foundation that no vote can undo, no lack of courageous leadership can derail.

As we move into this season, may we rest there.  
May we act from there.  
May we speak from there.

You are so very loved.  
Before ever you were known.

May we not have to wait till our lives are nearly over, to see the love in every eye\*. I commend this really short, yet incredibly powerful, final video from James Van Der Beek, who died last week. Many have been remembering him not simply for fame, but for the way he carried his identity with integrity and spoken allyship, gracious and courageous to the end. A reminder that being known by God and others in truth is a gift we're called to reflect. A faithful ally and advocate for LGBTQ+ equality, this is him reflecting on his own journey of adjustment, acceptance and recalibration as he encounters his mortality and internalised ableism.

\*Yes, I've paraphrased the song most connected to Dawson's Creek <https://youtube.com/shorts/KY33c5WUFA?si=W-NCy0R5ZXE05YCU>



[Donate to Inclusive Church](#)

## Resources new, old and next...



**Her-story being made**  
In January Sarah Mullaly was officially confirmed to the See of Canterbury and DLT have collated a book to mark the occasion, which is now available to buy.

There are 10 chapters from a range of Anglican writers, including Chantal Noppen, IC National Coordinator on **Mission** and Emily Richardson, an Inclusive Church Trustee, on **Inclusion of Disabled People**.

Do please read and share it with others. We hope to share a review of the book soon but in the meantime you can buy a copy from all good book stores! Published by Darton, Longman & Todd Ltd.

[Order here](#)

## Inclusive Church News & Updates

**Inclusive Church**  
An ecumenical network of churches working together towards a shared vision

We believe in **inclusive church** - a church which celebrates and affirms every person and does not discriminate. We will continue to challenge the Church where it contributes to discriminate against people on grounds of **disability, economic power, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, learning disability, mental health, neurodiversity or sexuality**.

A Church which welcomes and serves all people in the name of Jesus Christ, which is **wholly faithful**, which seeks to proclaim the Gospel **afresh** for each generation, and which, in the power of the Holy Spirit, shows **all people** to grow how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Jesus Christ

Visit [www.inclusive-church.org](http://www.inclusive-church.org) to join in & find out more

Here we include, invite, involve, invest in everyone

Registered Charity 1102076

**Member Resources**

There are new poster and banner designs available for everyone on the website. The new logo and branding guidelines are also there.

We also have a **Core Poster** for all our member churches to display. You can download it via the button.

We have been developing an area for 'member resources' on the website to offer you further suggestions, resources and ideas that we hope will help you as you live out what it means to be an inclusive church.

All member churches will receive the link to this area soon.

[Link to poster](#)

Alongside this we are introducing some visual icons that we hope will complement and broaden the accessibility of our material. Each icon has a positive symbol connected with an area of diversity and inclusion, and has a main colour assigned to it. Some will be instantly recognisable; others may be new, and that's okay. Over time, these icons will help people quickly find the materials most relevant to them.

We recognise that colour-coding and images are not helpful for some people, but we hope that by offering these alongside our written and audio resources, more people will be able to engage with our work. Part of equitable inclusion is being able to provide options that fit the diversity of needs. Everything doesn't work for everyone, and that's okay! This is an expansive, not restrictive process that we expect will evolve over time. More info will be available soon, but here is a preview:

## Regional updates

We are very grateful to our **Regional Ambassadors** who support the work of Inclusive Church in their local area. More info on them and the regions is on the IC website.

Last month I was able to join a zoom with **London** regional ambassadors, and I have a number of visits lined up soon in the North-East and God's own country (which is Yorkshire, obviously).

Gwilym Stone is in the process of organising a get together for those in the South-East, do get in touch with him if you'd like to be included. Email: [gwilym@grstone.me](mailto:gwilym@grstone.me)

**THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND**

**Election Year**

For members of the CoFE this is a big year as there are elections for **General Synod** this Autumn. Increasing the representation of inclusive voices is of real importance if we want to ensure the progress we long for has a chance to happen.

[Infographics](#)

Inclusive Church and Together for the Church of England are combining forces to try and enable this to happen. There is more info available through these links and on our websites.

For anyone who followed last week's debates it is completely understandable to feel disappointed and frustrated. I do too! But, as someone who was there, I do believe that the negative spin being shared by the mainstream media is not the full picture. There is a lot more positive progress and ground being gained in reality. There has also been some enormous shifts in understanding, even during just this last 5 years, across various areas of inclusion including mental health, disability, neurodiversity, gender equity and working class positions.

## Good News stories to celebrate

**Regularly Blessing...**

St Bridget's, West Kirby (Diocese of Chester), are starting a monthly service at which the Prayers of Love and Faith may be used. They are advertising it as a "regular" service on **A Church Near You Events - St Bridget - A Church Near You**. They are not the only church to take this pragmatic yet creative step to the current restrictions on blessing same-sex couples in the CoFE. I encourage other churches to do likewise!

The link below takes you to a short video to help you update your ACNY page stating your provision of PLF.

[Video tutorial](#)

**Love and Liberation**

To celebrate the installation of a new access door into our hall we were blessed by Jonathan Brough, coming to share some of his skills and story. Jonathan is paralysed from the neck down and is on a ventilator 24/7. Despite this, he is a prolific creator of films, poetry, music and songs.

We're already looking forward to Jonathan's band doing a gig once the pews have been removed and further renovations have happened. We are now at least watertight!

**Rodborough URC**

We attended Stroud Pride in 2024 and 2025 to help show and share that our church is happy to perform same-sex weddings.

We were pleased to say we have our first one booked in for this June and the local press are hoping to be there too.

*Thanks to Kim Baker, Church Development Leader at Rodborough Tab URC for sharing these updates!*

## Events + Training opportunities

**GENEROUS FAITH TUNED OUT**  
Prophetic Voice and Living  
7 March 2026  
St John's Waterloo

**Turning up the Tuned Out**

Next month is the second Generous Faith Day conference at **St John's Waterloo**.

We've a great line-up of speakers and workshop leaders, do join us!

**March 7th.** More info and tickets available here:

[Eventbrite link](#)

To make a financial contribution to IC, please click the link below.

*Thank you!*

**Account Name**  
The Inclusive Church Network

**Sort Code**  
40-52-40

**Account number**  
0001-3299

Or send a **cheque** to: Mike Bishop, 3 Sadlers Close, Guildford GU47DA

You can do this via BACS, cheque, Just Giving or through our Shop page.

Please make sure you provide a reference so we can record it correctly!

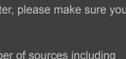
You can now also nominate the Inclusive Church Network as your charity to support on Easy Fundraising.

[Donate to IC](#)

[office@inclusive-church.org](mailto:office@inclusive-church.org) (admin)

[natco@inclusive-church.org](mailto:natco@inclusive-church.org) (Chantal, National Coordinator)

07375 392285 (Dan)



To ensure that you continue to receive this newsletter, please make sure you let us know if you change your email address.

The content of the newsletter is drawn from a number of sources including individuals and partner organisations. The views expressed here do not necessarily reflect a 'formal viewpoint' of the Inclusive Church trustees, individual members of Inclusive Church or registered inclusive churches.

You can see an online version of this newsletter and previous newsletters by going to the [newsletters](#) page of the IC website.

To [unsubscribe from this mailing](#) at any time.