PCC Briefing: Mandate for Radical Inclusivity

The Call: "Thank You... More Than Manners"

Following the AAW talk on the Samaritan leper, we gathered **27 powerful responses** on what it means to be an Inclusive Church. The feedback is clear and unified: our mandate is to fully embody **Christ's deep and unifying love**, built on the truth that **"God embraces all people."**

The **congregation** voices a strong desire for the church to be a **safe place** and a setting where **"Everyone is accepted for who we truly are."**

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1. The Core Mandate: Acceptance Without Exception

The **congregation** overwhelmingly affirms that acceptance must be absolute, where we **"celebrate the difference in everyone"** and **"value diversity in a world where there are so many fractures."**

- **Acceptance of Identity:** An explicit welcome, **irrespective of:** age, race, disability, sexuality, gender, wealth, and social status.
- **Explicitly Welcome:** People from the **LGBTQ+ community, neurodiverse individuals,** and those of different **social backgrounds.**

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2. The Future Vision: Breaking Boundaries

The **congregation** provided a clear list of actions for the PCC to pursue, moving the church beyond its comfort zone:

Focus Area	**Key Congregational Feedback**
Commitment & Pastoral Care	A strong desire for **"All weddings to be celebrated and blessed."** This was noted as an issue that currently **causes division**, signalling a critical need for PCC-led **pastoral sensitivity and leadership** in supporting all committed couples.
Congregation Outreach	New social initiatives like **walks** and **café/breakfast events** to build family bonds and organizing **visits to local pubs/schools/residential care** (eg carols).
Learning & Welcome	Improving the **"meet and greet"** system and dedicating time to **visiting other inclusive churches** to gain knowledge and ideas.

Acknowledging the Challenge (The Test of True Grace)

We acknowledge the honest feedback received that reminds us that true inclusivity is a journey, not a destination. The reflective example—the "hypocrisy check"—invites us to consider that embracing **unconditional love requires deep humility and constant self-examination** from all of us. This is the constant balance of faith: being called to **open our hearts to all people**, regardless of their past, while simultaneously upholding our commitment to **ensuring the safety and care of everyone** in our **congregation**.

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3. Our Current Strengths

We celebrate that inclusivity is already being lived out by our dedicated teams:

- **Women in Leadership:** Proven by our previous Vicar, **Anne, who is now a Canon** and sits on the ordination panel.
- **Congregation Support:** Dedicated **Pastoral Team** (helping Seal) and **School Team,** building local bridges.
- **The Welcome:** Our **Sidespeople Team** provides the essential first contact of welcome.

Proposed Next Steps for PCC Discussion

The All Age Worship team proposes these immediate, actionable steps to turn our desire for inclusivity into sustained action:

Focus Area	Proposed Action	Timeline
Sustained Commitment	**Mandate "The Inclusive Church" as a standing item** on the bi-monthly **PCC agenda** to ensure ongoing review and progress tracking.	Immediate / Ongoing
Pastoral Leadership	**Address the issue of division** by exploring ways to offer **profound pastoral support and prayerful care** to all committed couples, in line with current diocesan guidelines.	Ongoing
Deepen Knowledge & Resources	**Schedule a visit or speaker** from another established inclusive church, and **source reading materials** (e.g., Inclusive Church materials,	Q1 2026

Focus Area	Proposed Action	Timeline
	relevant books/leaflets) for PCC and ministry congregation education.	
Launch Social Outreach	Form a team to organize the first new social activity: **Church walk or café morning.**	December 2025/January 2026
Safeguarding Review	Review current welcoming and safeguarding policies to ensure they meet the needs of those with **neurodiversity and diverse abilities.**	Q1 2026

Recommendation: We propose to create a short-term **"Inclusivity Action Group" (IAG)** to drive these first four initiatives and begin preparing the resources for the first quarterly PCC review.