



The Church of England
Diocese of Ely

The Bishop of Ely

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Dear Friends,

You will be aware that [Living in Love and Faith](#) has now been published. You can download podcasts, films and a five-week study course. We commend the book and study guide to you. The book is substantial but written to be accessible. Don't be put off by its size.

We are invited to engage in a year of reflection, study and discussion about what is our Christian vision and understanding of human identity and flourishing, made for relationship with God and with one another. A wide range of theologians, scientists and social anthropologists have contributed to the book. The book and resources also take seriously the testimonies of people with very different lived experience with regard to identity, gender and sexuality: it is important that we are all aware that we are not talking about abstract issues but people – each one of us with our own story with its joys and hurts.

The book is very clear in its description of differing points of view and passionately held conviction; but it avoids taking sides. There are no covert messages to be read into the text. The book treats its readers as adult and sincere disciples who have to steer their own course to faithfulness according to Scripture, Tradition and Reason.

We are likely to find parts of the book better than others depending upon our own convictions. The book is not designed to make us all agree. It does have the intention to draw us together so that we can listen to one another without the pressure of confrontation and votes, and can hear voices beyond simply those who agree with us. We ask that everyone involved in discussion looks to the safety and dignity of everyone taking part, and takes note of the [Pastoral Principles](#) developed by the Pastoral Advisory Group.

The materials have gone through a long gestation, with updates to the House of Bishops and General Synod. There has been a great deal of consultation and conversation already. What we are about in all of this is not to bend people to one view but to encourage the whole Church to be at prayer, conversation and, we hope, profound and patient encounter one with another.

There will be discussions in the Diocesan Synod and in Deanery Synods over the next twelve months. We hope that it will be discussed in parishes, chaplaincies and all our networks. We are currently appointing LLF Advocates to encourage engagement across the Diocese. Licensed clergy

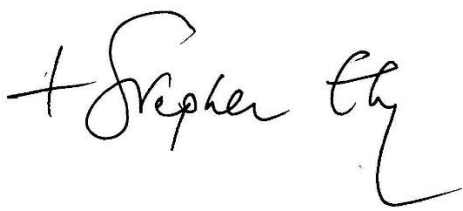
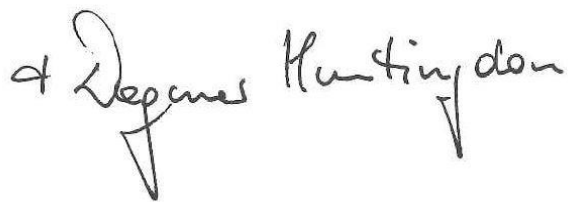
We pray to be generous and visible people of Jesus Christ

who purchase the book to read and share with colleagues can claim a £10 rebate from the Bishop's Office on presentation of the receipt.

There will be a Bishops' Study Day about **Living in Love and Faith** on Wednesday 3rd March, 2021. You will be alerted about the venue and programme in good time. The study day will be led by Dr Eeva John, with other contributors. Eeva is the Enabling Officer of the whole LLF project. She also lives and worships in the Diocese.

We exhort you to pray and live in the grace and love of Christ as we live this year of reflection.

Yours ever in Christ

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stephen". The letters are cursive and fluid, with a long, sweeping tail on the final letter.A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Debra Huntington". The signature is written in a cursive style, with the first name "Debra" and the surname "Huntington" clearly legible.