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Diocese of Ely

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Dear Friends,

The season of Epiphany is upon us – a season that reaffirms the love of God for his Son and for the whole of creation. At Jesus' baptism God delights in what he sees: "This is my beloved Son." With Jesus, the church receives these words of affirmation of hope and love, and rejoices in a new beginning as Jesus emerges from the waters of baptism to begin his public ministry. And God saw that it was good.

The start of any New Year is an opportunity for a new beginning; a time to reflect on what has gone before and what lies ahead and to determine what we want to take forward into the New Year and what we wish to leave behind.

At the start of this New Year, I commend to you the Reach Ely Audit. It is both an aid to reflection and a diocesan-wide stocktake. Together we want to discover what God is calling us to do and to be as we emerge from the troubled waters of Covid-19; and we want to do this systematically and thoughtfully.

This is the start of a longer process in which your voice needs to be heard, whether you are a big city church or a small congregation in a tiny hamlet. At the start of this New Year we ask ourselves, when God looks upon us now, what does he see? Hopefully, God will see among us signs of the new creation, and bless it; but as always, God calls us to be realistic and honest, to be self-reflective rather than complacent, as we seek to be faithful in the hope that, by God's grace, we may also be fruitful.

REACH Ely will give us in one place data that can be shared and used by us as we embark this year on further round of Deanery Planning. We will be asking questions about your church buildings, financial concerns, the strength of your leadership team and many more things. All this will help us as we live, post pandemic, the Ely 2025 strategy so we can Engage, Grow, Deepen as the generous and visible people of Jesus Christ we pray to be in the years to come.

Thank you for your willingness to participate.

*We pray to be generous and visible people of Jesus Christ*