

ALIVE 2023 – THE VISION

The vision for Alive 2023 is to re-connect our CofE schools with their parish, recommitting to the CofE DNA to hold the cure of souls for every person within the parish and to commit to each one hearing the good news of Christ and becoming a disciple. Children and families have become disconnected to Church over the last two decades and in many cases the only remaining contact with children and families for the Church is the CofE school.

I firmly believe that the original vision of the Victorian Church to plant schools to work in partnership with their Parishes to educate children within a Christian community and to teach them to read the Bible is as relevant to us today as it was then. The Victorians could see young families becoming disconnected from their parish church and community as they moved from villages to towns for work and invested in schools to maintain that relationship. To enable children and their families to be known by the parish as they had been previously in small rural communities where the Church was at the heart of the community.

As I talk to clergy there are two main responses to the loss of children and the importance of schools work. Some lament that inviting the children into the Church for festivals during the school week, and involving themselves in collective worship in school, does not translate to families in the pews on Sundays. Others rejoice in their time spent in school citing the school community as their largest, youngest and most diverse congregation of the week. For them there is a desire to plant Church back into school, without the expectation that this will necessarily affect Sunday congregations.

Alive 23 was conceived as a huge memory making one off event, where children can experience worshipping together in a group of 3,000 people and feel the presence of God through the Holy Spirit. God, as always, has expanded our thinking and Alive 23 will give birth to more than that. Through partnership with i-sing-pop we will begin to draw the schools together in January, using Classroom Worship from i-sing-pop to introduce the songs of the event and build excitement. At the event we will send each child home with a book Next Steps to Following Jesus — Joanne Gilchrist to encourage them to continue their journey and to share this with their family. Each member of the Clergy with a CofE school will receive a pop box <https://www.isingpop.org/thepopbox> to help them work with their school and congregation to develop intergenerational worship using familiar songs from the event. We have commissioned i-sing-pop to host an online CPD event to support Clergy in using this resource effectively and to consider how they might create after school discipleship clubs or worshipping communities giving children agency to develop their faith in a space and time where they can be present without requiring busy parents to get them there! We will continue to resource schools with Classroom worship until December 2023. We will be working with Imagine ministries and at least one Deanery to develop the concept of Alive Sundays where the Deanery will come together to host a gathering for children and families to model intergenerational worship and to some extent mirror the Alive summer event. The first Deanery event will happen in the autumn of 2023.

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[Alive 2023 Promo Video - Clergy - YouTube](#)