



## **Churches to offer a special themed service on Sunday 14th February**

St Valentine's Day is just around the corner and this year churches can offer a special themed Valentine service on Sunday 14th February, as the Archbishops' Council's Weddings Project has responded to parishes' requests for liturgical resources – now available at

<http://www.cofe.anglican.org/info/socialpublic/marriagefamily/marriageanddivorce/celebrationofmarriage.pdf>.

National Worship Development Officer, Revd Peter Moger, has compiled suggestions for a Special Service of Celebration for use with A Service of the Word (that can also be used to celebrate marriage at any time); and also suggests that the regular Sunday Worship on 14th February 2010 might adopt a marriage/love theme.

These resources are recommended by the Bishop of Wakefield, the Rt Revd Stephen Platten, chair of the Liturgical Commission. He said: "Valentine's Day falling on a Sunday is an excellent opportunity for churches up and down the country to focus on all the married couples around them. I'd like to encourage churches to seize the opportunity to do something special this year using these new resources to show communities their support for marriage."

Liturgical resources (designed for use with either A Service of the Word or Holy Communion Order One) include Greetings, Calls to Worship, Kyrie, Confession, Collects and Intercessions.

There is a choice of themed readings too, as within the suggestions the Revd Peter Moger notes: "Although many churches will wish to use the Lectionary readings for their main services on this day, the Sunday Next before Lent falls outside the period when readings from an authorised lectionary must be used. There is therefore scope to use themed readings on 14 February 2010."

Recommended readings include: Psalm 145:1-8, I Corinthians 13, and John 15:9-17.

Revd Rhiannon Jones of Ely Diocese is one vicar who has organised some themed services in the past: "Valentine's Day 2010 provides an excellent opportunity for churches to focus on supporting marriage. One of the things we've done before is to invite all those who were married in the church for the last 20 years. We sent beautiful personal invitations and encouraged couples to bring friends and family. The church was almost full. One woman iced a wedding cake for us, another brought champagne. We sang popular wedding favourites and the bell ringers came to help us celebrate. We gave everyone who came a chance to give thanks for their

marriage in a short service surrounded by family and friends and many renewed their vows. It was a beautiful celebration.”

Revd Adrian Miller of Norwich Diocese is another vicar keen to use the resources. He wrote, in November 2009: “Here we are thinking about inviting couples we’ve married in the past couple of years back to a ‘celebration of marriage’ service on 14th Feb 2010, which happens to be a Sunday... Just wondering if you have any advice or could point to resources that we should be looking at for such an occasion?”

The Weddings Project would like to hear from churches planning to use the new liturgical resources so it can learn more about the type of services being offered; churches can email [howard.dobson@c-of-e.org.uk](mailto:howard.dobson@c-of-e.org.uk).

Valentine’s Day falls at the end of Marriage Week UK, which takes place on 8th-14th February 2010. For other ideas, including suggestions for a Movie Night, and the MWUK Logo, see <http://www.marriage-week.org.uk>.

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