*Transcript to video https://youtu.be/lh4uUbs8ILs*

**Who is the Life Events Team?**

For generations, the Church of England has been meeting people and supporting them at life's big moments. The arrival of a child, when a marriage begins and, of course, the loss of someone they know and love. For some, coming to church is part of their everyday life. When they want a ceremony or a service there's no other place they would choose. But for many, many others coming to church at those life's big moments is actually the first or perhaps the only contacts they will have with the good news of God's love and, of course, with God's people in a local context.

For the last decade, the Archbishop's Council has been investing in and supporting work around this ministry through the Life Events team. And underpinning all the work that we have been doing has been research that listens to the voices of those who actually come to the church, trying to hear what it is that people really experience, really think and really feel at these special times.

There's also been a great deal of Biblical reflection as well and out of that has come three core principles: attract, build, care. What we might call the ABC of mission through Life Events. Attracting people is not just about attracting them to come to church for a service or a ceremony at one of these moments. It's about doing things that attract them to the good news of God's love revealed in Jesus Christ, and maybe just draws them onward in their lifetime journey of faith. And in a culture where people no longer know what a church building is for or what's on offer there, working to attract them is really important.

Secondly, it's about building understanding. It's about building understanding in two ways. Firstly, yes, it is about building understanding with those who come to us at life's big moments. You see, we're not living in a culture that's one or two generations post-church, but we're living in a culture that might be five or six generations post-church, with no idea of what we do or what happens in our buildings. Church buildings can often look very closed to those who are unfamiliar with them until they step over the threshold. So part of our task is to build understanding with those who come to us. But even more importantly perhaps is building understanding within the church. The Church of England is gifted at many things, but sometimes it seems we have an extraordinary gift for knowing what people think without ever asking them. This work is built on research that listens to the real thoughts, the real feelings, the real questions that people have and builds our understanding of what's going on for people at these big moments, so that we can build bridges and connect to them.

Thirdly, we talk about caring about what we do, which is simply doing what we do as well as we possibly can so that people go away having had a good experience, with a positive memory. And perhaps also it's about developing consistent good practice, so that whether they've come to a wedding in your church or dropped in at a messy church miles away, the experience of welcome that they have, the experience of God's presence and God's people that they have, is the same in each and every place.

Attract. Build. Care. These are the principles in which we reach out and meet those who come to us at their special moments in life.