**PRESS RELEASE**

**Tuesday 10th May 2022**

**Civic & faith leaders unite with LGBT+ community to show “Liverpool Loves You”**

An inclusive event at Liverpool Parish Church this **Saturday 14th May (2pm - 7:30pm)** will celebrate the Liverpool City Region’s LGBT+ community and mark the International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia (IDAHOTB)\*.

Local councillors, faith and civic leaders will join members of the LGBT+ community and its allies for *Liverpool Loves You,* an event that will open at 2pm with speeches from faith leaders, local LGBT+ organisations and other guests, before the Mayor of Liverpool, Joanne Anderson, raises the new Progress Pride Flag and addresses attendees.

After the opening ceremony, the Choir With No Name Liverpool will start the celebrations by performing an uplifting selection of pop songs reflecting the event’s inclusive and positive message. Other performances throughout the afternoon will include Liverpool’s favourite Drag cabaret performer, Miss Filla Crack, as well as an open mic slot where community writers and artists will showcase their work.

Inside the church will be an exhibition of the works of Liverpool-based artist [Tony O’Connell](http://www.modernreligiousart.com/#/tony-oconnel/4532905984), who takes photos of saintly moments among ordinary LGBT+ people and records his own pilgrimages to LGBT+ historical sites, documenting the sacred side of queer people and places. The pieces exhibited will include [*Triptych for the 49*](http://thewildreed.blogspot.com/2017/06/on-first-anniversary-of-pulse-gay.html)- his tribute to those lost in the shooting at Pulse, a gay nightclub in Orlando, USA in 2016.

Visitors to the drop-in event will be able to enjoy some food and drink, and browse stalls hosted by community organisations including Sahir House, Michael Causer Foundation, Open Table Network, Mission in the Economy, Liverpool Hope University and Savera UK, and also enjoy views of Liverpool’s iconic waterfront from the tranquillity of the gardens of Liverpool Parish Church.

Throughout the afternoon (2pm - 6pm) chaplains from Mission in the Economy will be on hand to welcome and listen to guests, before supporting the LGBT+ affirming Christian service in the church, starting at 6pm.

The event will conclude with an anti-hate crime vigil starting at 7pm with speeches from one of the organisers of last year’s March Against Homophobia, arranged in response to a spike in hate crimes against the LGBT+ community. The Bishop of Warrington, The Right Reverend Beverley Mason, will also read a statement against homophobia from the Presidents of Churches Together In Merseyside.

The focal point of the vigil will be a world map laid on the floor. The names of 70 countries where same-sex love is criminalised and 40 countries where Trans people are known to have died due to transphobia will be read out and LED candles placed on the map for each country, in an act of remembrance.

Delivered in partnership by Liverpool Parish Church, LCR Pride Foundation, Homotopia, Michael Causer Foundation, Open Table Network, Mission in the Economy, YPAS Liverpool, Liverpool BID Company and Liverpool City Council, *Liverpool Loves You* intends to showcase the Liverpool City Region as a safe, friendly and welcoming place for LGBT+ people of all faiths and none.

**The Revd Canon Dr Crispin Pailing, Rector of Liverpool, said:** “This celebratory event tells us something about Liverpool, and something about the Christian Church within Liverpool. This is an inclusive and affirming place where everyone is welcome, and I’m delighted that we can use Liverpool Parish Church to promote this message to those within our city and also to the thousands who visit Liverpool every week.”

For more information about the event, visit [www.liverpoollovesyou.lgbt](http://www.liverpoollovesyou.lgbt)

*\* International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia (IDAHOTB) takes place annually on 17th May - https://may17.org/*

**ENDS**

For further information or to request interviews, please contact Nikki Croft-Girvan on 078 3407 2989 or email nikki.girvan@lcrpride.co.uk

**NOTES TO EDITOR**

**LISTING INFORMATION**

**Event Name:** “Liverpool Loves You”

**Event Summary:** Community celebration, service and vigil welcoming and celebrating LGBT+ people living in and visiting the Liverpool City Region

**Date:** Saturday 14th May 2022

**Times:** Community celebration starts at 2pm, Service starts at 6pm, vigil against hate crime starts at 7pm. Event concludes at 7:30pm

**Tickets:** Free, walk-in

**Restrictions:** None, family event

**Website:** [www.liverpoollovesyou.lgbt](http://www.liverpoollovesyou.lgbt)

**Contact:** info@lcrpride.co.uk