

# Together4Fromeside Local Covenant

## a Churches Together in England Local Ecumenical Partnership

In obedience to the call of Christ, we:

- a. *All Saints, Winterbourne Down*
- b. *Bethesda Methodist, Winterbourne Down*
- c. *Salem Methodist Church, Watley's End*
- d. *St James', Iron Acton*
- e. *St Michael's, Winterbourne*
- f. *St Peter's, Frampton Cotterell*
- g. *St Saviour's, Coalpit Heath*
- h. *Zion United Church (Methodist/URC), Frampton Cotterell*

who have increasingly shared our Christian life in a variety of ways over recent years, now feel a need to show our love for God and for one another by a more formal commitment to grow together in doing His will.

We confess our Faith in One God,  
the Father, Son and Holy Spirit,  
who guides The Church, the Body of Christ, into all truth.

We repent of all that is sinful in our past histories and present attitudes.  
We rejoice in the riches of the traditions we have inherited and seek to share them more fully with one another in the unity which is the will and gift of God.

We seek a deepening of our communion with Christ and with one another.

We covenant to seek visible unity, even though in our pilgrimage together we cannot foresee the form it will eventually take.

We therefore make this commitment to God and to each other:

- a. To move through co-operation to clear commitment to each other, in search of the unity for which Christ prayed and in common evangelism and service in the world.
- b. To engage in worship, prayer and study so that we may know and value each other and seek God's will for His people.
- c. To work together as servants of Christ to further God's mission within our community.
- d. To publicise and promote our Church life and worship by joint means wherever possible.

- e. To maintain the Ecumenical Ministry Team, who will meet for regular prayer, study, consultation and appropriate action.
- f. To co-ordinate decision-making and use of resources through a Partnership Council, comprising the Ecumenical Ministry Team and two lay representatives appointed by and from each participating congregation.
- g. To ensure that each ordained or lay appointment to the Ecumenical Ministry Team, although made by the appropriate denomination, is made with such consultation with the Ecumenical Ministry Team as is reasonably possible, and is in line with denominational procedures.
- h. To recognise the ministry of the whole people of God, including welcoming ordained ministers or priests who are part of the Ecumenical Ministry Team to preside at holy communion within the partnership.

This agreement replaces the following existing agreements:

- a. *Salem-Winterbourne LEP*
- b. *Frampton Coalpit Heath LEP*
- c. *The Informal Ecumenical relationships in Winterbourne Down.*

However not the following:

- d. *Zion United Church (single congregation LEP)*

SIGNED by the Ecumenical Ministry Team and one representative of each local Church.

Ecumenical Ministry Team

All Saints    Bethesda    Salem    St. James'    St. Michael's    St. Peter's    St. Saviour's    Zion

COUNTERSIGNED by official denominational representatives serving on the Sponsoring Body.

Church of England

Methodist

United Reformed Church

Date: 28<sup>th</sup> November 2021

# Constitution

## 1. Practicalities

The Local Ecumenical Partnership will be known as Together4Fromeside, and will be made up of:

- a. *All Saints, Winterbourne Down*
- b. *Bethesda Methodist, Winterbourne Down*
- c. *Salem Methodist Church, Watley's End*
- d. *St James', Iron Acton*
- e. *St Michael's, Winterbourne*
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- h. *Zion United Church (Methodist/URC), Frampton Cotterell*
- i.

The Partnership looks for support, encouragement, advice and overview to Churches Together in Greater Bristol, known as Together4Bristol.

## 2. Christian Initiation and Growth

Partner churches shall continue to follow their own practice with regard to baptism, confirmation and church membership.

We shall support and encourage each other in our on-going growth and development as disciples.

## 3. Ministry

We recognise the ministry of the whole people of God in all its diversity, including:

- pastoral care
- serving in the community
- worship and teaching
- administration
- working with schools (e.g. Assembly Teams)
- supporting partners in mission (e.g. Christian Aid)

Denominational procedures shall be followed in the appointment of Ministers. Those responsible for the appointment of ministers shall seek to select persons who will respect, support and develop the Partnership and the ecumenical nature of the appointment shall be clearly indicated in any 'job description'.

When a ministerial vacancy occurs, or a new ministerial appointment is in view, there shall be ecumenical consultation. It shall be the aim of those responsible for the appointment of ministers that the ecumenical consultation shall include:

- the involvement of representatives of Together4Fromeside in the procedures of the appointing denomination as far as is possible and permitted;
- the opportunity for existing ministers to meet with prospective candidates as appropriate during the appointment process.

Ministers shall be subject to the normal discipline of the denomination to which each belongs.

- The Council is able to approve members to join the Ecumenical Ministry Team who are recognised by a partner church as exercising leadership. (e.g. a retired minister; lay preacher etc.) To be appointed annually, normally at the AGM.

#### **4. Worship**

The partner churches shall continue to follow their own practice with regard to worship. The members and ministers of all of the partner churches shall be welcome to attend worship in all of the partner churches and shall be encouraged to take part in worship in all of the ways permitted by the parent denominations.

There shall be regular opportunities for joint prayer and worship.

#### **5. Decision-Making and Communication**

The partner churches shall continue to follow their own practice with regard to decision-making processes.

To facilitate joint decision making as part of this agreement, we will constitute a Together4Fromeside council. This council will be made up as follows:

- Two elected representatives from each of the partner churches.
- All members of the Ecumenical Ministry Team
- Ex-officio members as deemed necessary by the council

The council will meet at least four times a year, one of these meetings being an annual general meeting where accounts shall be presented. The annual general meeting shall elect the chair person, treasurer, secretary and any other officers as required, these persons forming an executive.

The council will facilitate communication between partner churches.

#### **6. Premises**

The partner churches shall continue to use, maintain and develop the buildings for which they already have responsibility.

Any partner church considering a change of use of its buildings or the construction of new buildings, shall, before putting the work in hand, share its proposals with the other partner churches.

Every effort shall be made to share the use of premises and to enter into agreements, formal or informal, to do so.

## **7. Ongoing Development**

The constitution may be amended by the Together4Fromeside council, as long as each member church is in agreement.

## **8. Ending the agreement**

The Partnership may only be terminated with the approval of the Sponsoring Body and the appropriate denominational authorities.