

**CHRIST CHURCH  
MORETON HALL**

**DECLARATION**

**OF**

**ECUMENICAL WELCOME AND  
COMMITMENT**

**October 2018**

## INTRODUCTION

In September 1992 a Declaration of Ecumenical Commitment was signed by the Bishop of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich, the Provost of St Edmundsbury Cathedral and the Vicar of St Mary's, Bury St Edmunds. It was replaced in 1996 by a second Declaration of Ecumenical Commitment that brought to completion the ecumenical and local processes outlined in the former declaration. It was signed by the General Superintendent of the Eastern Area of the Baptist Union, the Bishop of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich, the Chairman of the East Anglia District of the Methodist Church, Divisional Commander of the Eastern Area of the Salvation Army and the Moderator of the Eastern Province of the United Reformed Church. It was stated that the "agreement will be reviewed on or before seven years from the date of signing (i.e. on or before 31<sup>st</sup> December 2003)".

This new Declaration of Ecumenical Welcome and Commitment is the outcome of the review in 2004 and subsequent reviews. It is based on the Declaration agreed by the House of Bishops "when the Anglican Church is the only Church in the village".

## **DECLARATION OF ECUMENICAL WELCOME AND COMMITMENT BY A CHURCH OF ENGLAND PARISH**

We, the Minister and people of Christ Church Moreton Hall invite all the Christians of Moreton Hall to be as fully a part of our life and fellowship as they are able.

We invite those of all Christian traditions who believe in the doctrine of the Trinity in so far as their own church allows:

- To share in the ministry and mission of the church in this community
- To worship and, if baptized and communicant members of other churches, to receive Holy Communion at Christ Church
- To be part of the decision-making of the church and to contribute to a common fund for the mission and ministry of the wider church in so far as their continued giving to another church will allow

We undertake:

- To give pastoral care to everyone within the parish who desires it
- To invite ministers of other churches whose tradition permits to take part in leading worship
- To incorporate the riches of worship of other traditions as appropriate
- To share with neighbouring churches concerning the mission of the church on Moreton Hall
- To include this ecumenical declaration as an integral part of the parish profile

**Following the decision made by Churches Together in Suffolk that such declarations may be made in the area which they serve, we have sought and followed their advice as to which churches should first be consulted, and those mentioned below have given us their blessing and encouragement.**

**Date: 11 October 2018**

***For Christ Church Moreton Hall:***

**The Minister**

**Churchwardens**

## **REVIEW**

**This agreement and its annexes will be reviewed on or before seven years from the date of signing - October 2025**

*For Churches Together in Suffolk*

**The Bishop of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich**

**Regional Minister of the Eastern Baptist Association**

**Chair of the East Anglia District of the Methodist Church**

**Divisional Commander of the Eastern Area of the Salvation Army**

**Moderator of the Eastern Synod of the United Reformed Church**

**The Roman Catholic Bishop of East Anglia**

**Moderator of Churches Together in Suffolk**

*For Local Churches in Bury St Edmunds*

**Rural Dean of Thingoe**

**Minister of Garland Street Baptist Church**

**Superintendent Minister of Bury St Edmunds Methodist Circuit**

**Commanding Officer, Bury St Edmunds Corps of the Salvation Army**

**Minister of Bury St Edmunds United Reformed Church**

**Parish Priest of St Edmunds Roman Catholic Church**

**Chair of Churches Together in Bury St Edmunds and District**

**Chair of Christ Church Moreton Hall Support Group**

## ANNEX 1 – HISTORY

The history of Christ Church, Moreton Hall, has been one of gradual development. Many factors have affected this development but there are six of over-riding importance which, if ignored, might damage the unique nature of this Church. They are as follows:-

- 1 Christ Church, Moreton Hall, was planted by a single group of Christians from different denominations at the instigation of the Council of Churches for Bury St Edmunds, with the consent of the vicar of St Mary's. Separate groups of Christians did not gather together to form a new Church. It has always been envisaged that Christ Church, Moreton Hall, would be a single body working ecumenically in the clearly defined mission area of Moreton Hall estate.
- 2 Moreton Hall estate was designated a mission area by both Diocese and Churches Together in Bury St Edmunds and District and recognised as such by Churches Together in Suffolk. The local geography of the A14 bypass and the railway line make it a separate area from the rest of Bury St. Edmunds. The Borough has designated Moreton Hall to be a new community and continues to develop resources here. The concept of being a new mission Church is a powerful and unifying feature in the character and self understanding of the Church members.
- 3 The Church began in October 1983. A Church Army captain was appointed in 1987. A Conventional District was created in September 1990 and Revd. Jonathan Alderton Ford was appointed as Minister in Charge. A new building was completed in 1993 and dedicated on 17<sup>th</sup> April 1994.
- 4 On 1<sup>st</sup> July 1994, the Parish of Christ Church, Moreton Hall, was created from the parishes of St James's, St Mary's, Holy Innocents Great Barton, and St Mary's, Rougham, with Revd. Jonathan Alderton Ford as the first incumbent.
- 5 St Edmundsbury Borough Council made land available on generous terms on the understanding that the building erected could be used by every Christian on the estate and that Anglican rites of passage will be performed there.
- 6 Following the construction of the Church, a church hall was added in 1997.

## **ANNEX 2 – PROPERTY**

In 2009 the Borough terminated the lease for the land on which Christ Church Moreton Hall stands when they sold that land to the Parochial Church Council (PCC). This means the PCC are Executive Trustees for both the building and the land with the Diocese as Custodial Trustees.

## **ANNEX 3 – ECUMENICAL COMMITMENT**

Churches Together in Bury St Edmunds and District, Churches Together in Suffolk and the Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich seek to ensure that the ecumenical work of Christ Church will not be diminished. To that end the following structures and pattern of ministry have been developed to establish a parish which is fully ecumenical in its work and witness. The Minister and Church Council aim to make members of other denominations feel part of the Christian community here in as far as their denomination's rules permit, and as the Church of England's Representation Rules allow.

The church, while remaining subject to the jurisdiction of the Church of England and guardian of its tradition, has a commitment towards those of other denominations which enables their insights, strengths, gifts and graces to be incorporated into the whole life of the congregation. That life will include worship, mission and service, as well as the administrative and decision-making process.

## **ANNEX 4 – WORSHIP**

Christ Church Moreton Hall is especially aware of its responsibility to be broad, flexible and open, and to affirm a diversity of religious experience and expression. Breadth and openness is affirmed through:

- Choice of hymns, tunes and hymn books
- Prayers for other churches and their leaders
- Invitations to ministers of other traditions to participate in leading worship or preaching
- Occasional use of other denominations' liturgies

Infants may be Baptised or Dedicated as required. Adults may receive Believer's Baptism or Renewal of Baptismal Vows by immersion. Confirmation will be offered as legislation allows. All in good standing with their own denomination are welcomed into fellowship and may receive Holy Communion.

## **ANNEX 5 – MISSION AND SERVICE**

Pastoral care is available for all who desire it and live in the parish whether members of the church or not.

The Church seeks to take the Good News of Jesus Christ to everyone who lives in the parish and joins with all churches of all denominations and other organisations in furthering the work of the Kingdom of God locally and worldwide.

## **ANNEX 6 – MISSION STATEMENT**

Christ Church, Moreton Hall is a Christian Church that welcomes all people.

Knowing the love and compassion of Jesus Christ, we want to serve our community. We respond to God by learning to love Him through:

- Relevant worship
- Meaningful ministry
- Genuine fellowship
- Biblical teaching
- Effective evangelism

## **ANNEX 7 – REPRESENTATION**

The rules governing Electoral Rolls enable all baptised persons who are members in good standing of churches not in communion with the Church of England, which subscribe to the Doctrine of the Holy Trinity, to be enrolled on the electoral roll. Having been so enrolled they are entitled to serve if elected, or co-opted, on the Church Council\*. They can serve on any sub-committees the Church Council forms. However, sensitivity will be shown to the requirements and disciplines of each denomination.

Two Churchwardens and the Church Council members are elected at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting. The size of the Church Council is determined by existing legislation and local needs. In addition to the annual meeting there may be two other extra-ordinary meetings when all who attend the church can be consulted about any issues.

\*Church Council always refers to the Parochial Church Council.



## **ANNEX 8 – LOCAL ECUMENICAL & PASTORAL SUPPORT**

Local ecumenical and pastoral support will be provided by the Support Group. The Support Group will meet not less than twice a year. This group exists to make the ecumenical nature of the church visible and to give local support to it.

### **ROLE AND FUNCTION OF THE SUPPORT GROUP**

- (a) To monitor the general development of Christ Church, Moreton Hall, with particular reference to the ecumenical dimension.
- (b) To monitor the ecumenical relationship of Christ Church, Moreton Hall, with:
  - (i) the other main denominations and their structures
  - (ii) the local Churches
- (c) To ensure there is adequate pastoral support for the Minister
- (d) Composition:

Chair person who is nominated by the Chair of Churches Together in Bury St Edmunds and District in consultation with the Minister.

The Minister of Christ Church, Moreton Hall

The two Churchwardens of Christ Church, Moreton Hall

A Representative from Churches Together in Suffolk

A Minutes Secretary

Representatives\* from the Baptist, Methodist, Roman Catholic and United Reformed Churches, the Salvation Army and Southgate Church.

\*Representatives to be selected from each of the participating denominations of Churches Together in Suffolk.

The Support Group's present form and role will be reviewed every seven years. The next review will be by 31<sup>st</sup> December 2021 by the Church Council and in consultation with Churches Together in Bury St Edmunds and District. The Support Group aims to work with Churches Together in Suffolk to ensure that proper pastoral support and oversight at local, Diocesan and County levels take place.

## **ANNEX 9 – APPOINTMENT OF INCUMBENT**

- 1 The appointment is in the hands of the Board of Patrons: they are the Diocesan Bishop, the Dean of St Edmundsbury and the Vicar of St Mary's. By canon, the Patrons are required to consult fully with their ecumenical partners. This should include the Support Group and Churches Together in Suffolk. A selection process should be agreed which allows consultation with the Support Group and with Churches Together in Suffolk.
- 2 Under Canon Law the Church Council appoints two representatives to interview the candidates whom the Patrons suggest. The Church Council will ensure that representation will reflect the ecumenical nature of this church. They have the right to refuse the appointment of any candidate the Patrons offer if they consider the candidate unsuitable. The successful candidate will need to have the unanimous recommendation of both these representatives.
- 3 This document and its successors will always be part of the parish profile.
- 4 It is hoped that representatives of Churches Together in Suffolk will attend the licensing and institution of all future staff.
- 5 Given the size of the estate and nature of the Church, it is hoped that other denominations will continue to provide stipendiary personnel, ordained or lay.