

# WEST SWINDON AND THE LYDIARDS CHURCH PARTNERSHIP

**“Covenanted together for mission”**

## **CONSTITUTION 2009**

*‘We exist in order to BE the People of God  
and EXTEND the Kingdom of God  
throughout West Swindon and The Lydiards’*

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# West Swindon & The Lydiards Church Partnership

Baptist · Church of England · Methodist · United Reformed Church

'We, the members of the West Swindon & The Lydiards Church Partnership, reflecting the traditions of the Anglican, Baptist, Methodist and United Reformed Churches, agree to the following Covenant :

We affirm our common faith in God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, according to the Old and New Testaments, and as expressed in the Apostles and Nicene Creeds. We rejoice in the wide variety of our Christian heritage, and thank God for the opportunities He gives us to grow together. Believing we are called by God to serve Him in the world, we commit ourselves to that calling - to 'BE the People of God and EXTEND the Kingdom of God throughout West Swindon & The Lydiards.'

We specifically commit ourselves prayerfully :

*to seek to understand more clearly the Vision of God and His calling to grow His kingdom here*

*to discover more from the Scriptures about the theological basis for our unity-in-mission, and its practical consequences*

*to conform ourselves to the values of Jesus, as enshrined in his teaching on discipleship and our 'Declaration of Intent'*

*to share together in missionary outreach to the people that God leads us into contact with through our daily lives*

*to serve all the people of West Swindon & The Lydiards with the same unconditional covenantal love that God has for them.*

Signed Ed Poole  
on behalf of All Saints,  
Lydiard Millicent

Signed [Signature]  
on behalf of Westlea Church

Signed [Signature]  
on behalf of Upper Thames  
Methodist Circuit

Signed [Signature]  
on behalf of St Mary's,  
Lydiard Tregoze

Signed Gordon Hindmarch  
on behalf of West of England  
Baptist Association

Signed [Signature]  
on behalf of the ECC

Signed [Signature]  
on behalf of Holy Trinity  
Shaw

Signed [Signature]  
on behalf of United Reformed  
Church

Signed Tudor Roberts  
Reverend Tudor Roberts

Signed [Signature]  
on behalf of Toothill Church,

Signed [Signature]  
on behalf of Bristol Diocese

Signed Anne Carter  
Reverend Anne Carter

Signed [Signature]  
Reverend Dick Gray

D1. 'The Covenant'

'We, the members of the West Swindon & The Lydiards Church Partnership, reflecting the traditions of the Anglican, Baptist, Methodist and United Reformed Churches, agree to the following Covenant :

We affirm our common faith in God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, according to the Old and New Testaments, and as expressed in the Apostles and Nicene Creeds. We rejoice in the wide variety of our Christian heritage, and thank God for the opportunities He gives us to grow together. Believing we are called by God to serve Him in the world, we commit ourselves to that calling - to 'BE the People of God and EXTEND the Kingdom of God throughout West Swindon & The Lydiards.'

We specifically commit ourselves prayerfully :

- ♦ *to seek to understand more clearly the Vision of God and His calling to grow His kingdom here*
- ♦ *to discover more from the Scriptures about the theological basis for our unity-in-mission, and its practical consequences*
- ♦ *to conform ourselves to the values of Jesus, as enshrined in his teaching on discipleship and our 'Declaration of Intent'*
- ♦ *to share together in missionary outreach to the people that God leads us into contact with through our daily lives*
- ♦ *to serve all the people of West Swindon & The Lydiards with the same unconditional covenantal love that God has for them.*

This Covenant will be reviewed every 7 years, as determined by the Sponsoring Body.

The Covenanted Local Churches are :

All Saints Lydiard Millicent,  
St. Mary's Lydiard Tregoze  
Holy Trinity Shaw  
Toothill Church and  
Westlea Church.

D2. Our  
Shared  
Vision

Our Partnership needs Vision – a shared sense of what God is calling us to become, and where His Spirit is inspiring us to journey together. Some key themes have emerged from our shared deliberations, which have been especially inspired by the Old Testament prophets (especially from Isaiah 6)

- ♦ *God's holiness – and our need for repentance from past attitudes*
- ♦ *God's glory – that we are called to reflect in our church life*
- ♦ *God's kindness – leading us through times of wilderness into the 'Promised Land'*
- ♦ *God's vitality – creating new life and growth bubbling up into us*
- ♦ *God's call – leading us into practical action for His Kingdom*

In sequence the process is : Vision of God – Repentance – Call by God – Action – Growth for God.

Through this process we believe that God is revealing Himself and calling us to a Vision of Growth, summed up as :

*'We exist in order to BE the People of God and EXTEND the Kingdom of God throughout West Swindon and The Lydiards'.*

Like the combined heat of five burning coals, we can grow together, to be more than the sum of our individual parts!

**D3. Our  
Theological  
Basis**

*John 17. 20, 21. Jesus said: 'I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me.'*

Jesus Christ, on the night before his arrest, prayed for the unity of all believers in him. He prayed that all Christians would be one, just as he and his Father were one.

The purpose of that unity was to be a witness to the world, that they may believe in Jesus Christ too. We declare that we wish to regard these words of Jesus as the theological basis for the unity of our Partnership.

Doctrinally we begin with a Trinitarian understanding of God, a dynamic unity-in-diversity of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. This Trinitarian life of God will be the guiding model for our own unity. The inherent unity of all God's People is to become a passionate priority for all our activities – just as it was in the mind and heart of Jesus. The major purpose of our unity is to be a testimony of Jesus' reality and love towards those who are not yet within the Kingdom of God.

**D4. Our Core Values**

We want to affirm a number of distinctive values which we hold as being of particular importance for our Local Ecumenical Partnership (LEP) :

- ◆ *We accept the Lordship of the risen Jesus Christ – alive still today*
- ◆ *We are Bible-based – accepting Scripture's inspiration and authority*
- ◆ *We are evangelical – in doctrine and its application to contemporary life*
- ◆ *We believe that Jesus Christ is the ground of our salvation and model of our mission, inspiring us in service to a materially and spiritually needy world*
- ◆ *We depend upon the dynamic power of the Holy Spirit – to renew us and impart charismatic gifts for healing, deliverance and other ministries*
- ◆ *We are committed to a collaborative style of ministry – with all God's People*

There will be further expression of our Values as they relate to specific policy areas in subsequent sections of this Constitution.



**D5. The  
Mission  
we share**

Because the unity of God's People was at the centre of Jesus' passion, we wish to work and pray towards achieving this unity in partnership too. This spirit of unity is a gift from God that we intend to celebrate in worship and fellowship, to the glory of God (Rom 15:5). But above all, we desire that this unity will enable more effective Mission amongst the people of West Swindon and The Lydiards.

We pray that God's Spirit will pour out upon us this spirit of love and unity, and empower us as we strive to make it visible to all (Eph 4:3). We will seek not only the best interests of all of the five partnership churches, but also try to build God's Kingdom in a selfless manner with the other churches of our district (Phil 2:4). We commit ourselves to all play our part in this mission, as equal members of the 'priesthood of all believers'.

We affirm, together with Churches Together in England, that our understanding of the practical outworking of our shared Mission is

- ◆ *to proclaim the good news of the Kingdom;*
- ◆ *to teach, baptise and nurture new believers;*
- ◆ *to respond to human need by loving service;*
- ◆ *to seek to transform unjust structures of society; and*
- ◆ *to strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth.*

We will translate these ideals into an Annual Action Plan, which will set forward achievable objectives for each Year. These will be formulated at our Partnership Annual General Meeting, and will be rigorously reviewed there.

**D6. Our  
Covenant**

We intend that our growing unity of vision, values, theology and mission be expressed in a Covenant, which we will make between ourselves and God. Our Local Covenant will express our 'significant mutual commitment under God for our mutually discerned and agreed purposes' (CTE)

The Scriptures narrate a series of Covenants through the Old Testament, notably with Noah (Genesis 9), Abraham (Genesis 15 and 17), Moses (Exodus 19-24) and David (2 Samuel 5). These Covenants reach their final fulfilment in the New Covenant inaugurated through the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ. We are called to be mediators of this New Covenant, sealed through the Spirit and expressed in the Lord's Supper.

During 2003 Anglicans and Methodists signed a national covenant - 'a major commitment to work together, at every level of church life, in all ways that now become appropriate, and strive to overcome all remaining obstacles to further and fuller forms of visible unity' (Preface to Covenant p.vi). We wish to include all four of our denominational traditions in our covenantal process.

In addition we wish to include as part of this Covenant a commitment to all the peoples of West Swindon & The Lydiards. This will recognise that God has made unconditional Covenants with his creation (Genesis 9 & 15, Numbers 25, 2 Samuel 7, Jeremiah 31), and so we must follow that model in our dealings with others.

We wish this Covenant to be signed by our Partnership Leaders, and also by our Denominational Leaders at a special Covenant Service. We will then celebrate the Covenant at an Annual Covenant Renewal Service - looking back to achievements, and forward to challenges in the future to which we specifically commit ourselves.

1. Name | 1.1 The **Local Ecumenical Partnership** shall be known as West Swindon and the Lydiards Church Partnership, with additional subtext 'Covenanted together for mission.' It shall be constituted as a **Single Congregation Local Ecumenical Partnership** within the guidelines of **Churches Together in England**.

The Local Churches are listed in the Declaration of Intent above (D1 The Covenant).

1.2 As Churches within the Local Ecumenical Partnership, the **Denominations** and **Parent Bodies** recognise each of the Local Churches as

- a United Reformed Church
- a Methodist Church
- a Baptist Church
- an Anglican Church

1.3 Each of the Local Churches in the Partnership functions as an Ecumenical Church, supporting worship practices of the four **Denominations**. Each of the Churches operates with its own local governance and subsidiary financial roles, although **Parent Body** costs are met centrally.

For staff appointments and other matters of liaison with **Parent Bodies**, the Partnership acts as a single entity.

## 2. Area

2.1 The **Church Partnership** shall encompass the North Wiltshire District Council parishes of Lydiard Millicent and Lydiard Tregoze, and three Swindon Borough Council wards of Freshbrook and Grange Park; Shaw and Nine Elms; and Toothill and Westlea.

3.  
Sponsorship

3.1 The **Parent Bodies** of the **Church Partnership** shall be:

- ◆ The Baptist Union of Great Britain, represented by The West of England Baptist Association
- ◆ The Church of England represented by the Diocese of Bristol
- ◆ The Methodist Church represented by the Upper Thames Circuit of the Bristol District
- ◆ The United Reformed Church represented by the [text deleted] South Western Synod

4. Sponsoring Body	4.1 The <b>Church Partnership</b> shall look to the <b>Swindon Churches Together Sponsoring Body</b> for guidance, support and oversight.
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5.1 **Baptism** in the name of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit shall be administered according to the rites and practice of any of the **Denominations**, or according to a rite authorised by the **Sponsoring Body**. In normal circumstances Baptism shall be set within an act of congregational worship.

5.2 Since **Baptism** is an important step, any persons involved (candidates or parents of infants) should proceed with the full knowledge of the options which are available to them. Infant **Dedication** and **Thanksgiving for the Birth of a Child** shall be among such options, as shall be a service for the re-affirmation of baptismal faith.

5.3 For those who have already received baptism in terms that the non-Baptist churches recognise, and who wish to receive Believer's Baptism, the procedure shall be as follows:

- The candidate shall be offered the opportunity to **renew his/her baptismal faith**.
- If the candidate maintains a conviction about being **baptised** as a believer, this shall be offered after a full pastoral consultation between the candidate, the minister, and the appropriate denominational minister(s) from the partner denominations.
- Upon this **baptism** such a person shall be eligible to be placed on the **Register of Members** as a Baptist only.

Where a person requesting Believer's Baptism has previously made a personal or public profession of faith in Confirmation, the request shall not be granted.

5.4 The legal requirement to keep a **Register of Baptisms** in each of the **Local Churches** shall be met, and this shall be regarded as a joint register. A **Register** of Infant **Dedications** and **Thanksgivings** shall similarly be kept, also as a joint register.

5.5 A joint service of **Confirmation** and/or **Believers' Baptism** shall be the accepted rites of adult public profession of faith, according to rites authorised by the **Sponsoring Body**. Representatives of all four **Parent Bodies** shall take part in the **Confirmation**.

During the joint preparation of candidates for **Confirmation** or **Baptism**, attention shall be given to teaching about the shared and distinctive beliefs of the **Denominations**.

Those received into **membership** in either of these ways shall normally become members of all the four **Denominations** and **multiple members** of the **Partnership**.

5.6 **Membership** of the **Partnership** shall be open to all those over the age of 16 years

- who have been baptised; and
- who worship regularly with one of the **local churches**; and
- who love and seek to follow Christ; and who are prepared to confess this publicly.

**Membership** is exercised primarily in one of the **local churches**.



5.7 Arrangements for transfer of membership into the Partnership shall reflect the member's previous church affiliation as follows :

- Where a member wishes to transfer from any one of the four **denominations** which comprise the Partnership, they may choose to continue in that membership, or request **extended membership** of all four denominations. Requests for **extended membership** shall be considered
  - for Methodist members - by the Local Church Council
  - for Baptist and United Reformed Church members – by the Members Meeting
  - for Anglican members – by the Partnership Council
- Where a member wishes to transfer from another denomination holding a Trinitarian basis of faith (but not being one of the Partnership's four denominations) they may request either membership of one of the four denominations or **extended membership**, using one of the routes listed above.
- Where a member wishes to transfer from another Local Ecumenical Partnership their membership options shall also be as above.

We encourage all transferring **members** to worship with one of the **Local Churches**; to love and seek to follow Christ; and to confess this publicly. Each transfer shall be recognized in a public act of worship.

5.8 There shall be a common **Register of Members**, including those on **Denomination** rolls, multiple **members** by virtue of joint **confirmation**, and those members of the Anglican, Methodist, Baptist, or United Reformed Churches who have sought **Extended Membership**. A separate list of **members** shall also be kept for each **Denomination**, **multiple members** and **extended members** being indicated on each list.

5.9 There shall be a separate **Electoral Roll** for the purpose of Church of England pastoral provision, for example where needed as qualification for Marriage in one of the churches of the Partnership. Any lay person shall be entitled to have his/her name entered on the **Electoral Roll** of the Partnership if he or she:

- is baptised;
- is age 16 years or upwards; and
- is a member of the Church of England (or of a Church in communion with the Church of England); resident in the parish, or if not resident has habitually attended public worship in the parish during the 6 months prior to enrolment; or
- is a member in good standing of a Church (not in communion with the Church of England) which subscribes to the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, and also declares him/herself to be a member of the Church of England and has habitually attended public worship in the parish during the 6 months prior to enrolment; and
- has signed the official form of application for enrolment.

5.10 Membership Discipline shall be a matter for each denomination following its own procedures. In any particular case, multiple members shall be subject to any denomination's discipline as agreed by the **Sponsoring Body** and the appropriate authorities in each **Denomination**, on the proposal of the Partnership Council. The standing of any **multiple member** with each **Denomination** shall be reviewed in the light of the outcome of any disciplinary process initiated under this provision.

6. Worship  
and  
Communion

6.1 Worship and **Communion** shall be celebrated in forms that reflect the rites, practices, traditions and developing traditions of the participating **Denominations**, or those approved by the Sponsoring Body.

6.2 All those who are baptised and recognised as communicants by their **Denomination** may receive the sacrament of Holy Communion at any such service, as their conscience allows.

6.3 Ordained ministers or other duly authorised persons shall preside at **Communion**, as permitted by **Denominational** legislation.

7.1 **The Staff Team** shall consist of the Ordained Clergy, Lay Ministers, Local Preachers and any others whom the **Partnership Council** may wish to appoint to the team, following reference to the **Sponsoring Body**. Current members of the **Staff Team** are listed in the Appendices to this **Constitution**.

7.2 Denominational procedures will be followed in the appointment of members of the **Staff Team**. The 'Guidelines for the Appointment of Clergy to **Local Ecumenical Partnerships**' agreed by the **Sponsoring Body** should also be followed.

7.3 Pastoral care of church members, regular church attendees and the wider community shall be the concern of the **Staff Team** and the **Local Churches**. They shall share this responsibility collaboratively, through locally appointed pastoral care teams.

7.4 **Local Church** members may be appointed to share with the **Staff Team** in leadership, either within **Local Churches** or within the **Partnership**. They shall be commissioned for their leadership role through prayer and laying of hands in the context of public worship.

7.5 Each **Local Church** shall have a named **Minister**, being a member of the **Staff Team** and designated by the **Partnership Council**.

7.6 **Staffing Consultative Group**. In accordance with CTE Constitution Guidelines the Group shall be consulted on the appointment of Ordained Clergy to the **Staff Team**. It shall also be consulted on other strategic staffing issues for the **Partnership**. The Group shall comprise :

- ◆ representatives of the **Church Partnership**; and
- ◆ representatives of the **Parent Bodies**; and
- ◆ representatives of the **Sponsoring Body**

Further details of representation and functions of this group are contained in the Standing Orders.

7.7 Ordained members of the **Staff Team** shall normally be appointed for an initial period of up to 7 years, depending on normal **Parent Body** practice. In the case of a Methodist Minister the initial period of appointment shall be 5 years.

Where a staff member has asked for a renewal and extension, there shall be a review process led by the relevant **Parent Body**, commencing 18 months before the scheduled end of the appointment.

7.8 Ordained members of the **Staff Team** shall be subject to the normal discipline of their ordaining **Denomination**. Non ordained members shall be referred to an appropriate discipline process through the **Sponsoring Body** (Sect 5.10 above).

7.9 All Staff shall be authorised for ministry by all four **Parent Bodies** of the **Partnership**, according to their normal procedures. In that context :

- The Methodist Circuit and District shall welcome a non-Methodist Minister, and shall seek Authorised Status from the Methodist Conference ;
- The United Reformed Church shall welcome a non-URC Minister in the Partnership as a member of the URC South Western Synod;
- The West of England Baptist Association shall recognise any Minister appointed or called to the Partnership as a Minister in the Partnership ;
- The Church of England Diocese of Bristol shall allow other Ministers to perform ministry in the Partnership according to the provisions of the **Canons of the Church of England** Section B43 'Of relations with other Churches' and B44 'Of Local Ecumenical Projects'.

7.10 Newly appointed members of the **Staff Team** shall be inducted and welcomed at a Service at which they, with other members of the **Staff Team**, members of the local churches and representatives of the **Sponsoring Body**, shall affirm / reaffirm the **Declaration of Intent** of the **Partnership**.

8. Joint  
Decision  
Making

8.1 Decision making for the **Partnership** shall be organised through the **Local Churches** within their normal practice, as defined by their **Standing Orders**. The principal **Partnership** body for joint decision-making shall be the **Partnership Council** (also known as the **Council**). The **Council** shall meet at least four times per year and shall be open for all members to attend.

For the purposes of the **United Reformed Church**, lay members of the **Partnership Council** shall be considered as the equivalent of **Elders**.

For the purposes of the **Methodist Church**, the **Partnership Council** shall be considered as the equivalent of the Church Council.

The **Council** shall comprise the **Staff Team** and appointed/elected lay people from each **Local Church** in the **Partnership**. Further details are in Appendix 3 Standing Orders. Those appointed or elected shall normally be or become members of the decision-making body of their **Local Churches**. In addition to other members the Methodist Circuit shall appoint a Circuit Steward to be a member of the Council, in accordance with Methodist Standing Order 611.

8.2 The **Council** shall appoint a Secretary and an honorary Treasurer at the **Partnership Annual General Meeting**. Where those appointed are **members** of the **Partnership**, they shall retain full voting rights at meetings of the **Council**.

8.3 The **Council** shall elect from its number a Chairperson and Vice Chair.

8.4 The **Council** may set up such committees and working groups as it may from time to time consider necessary. The current structure is shown in the Appendices to this **Constitution**, but does not form part of it.

8.5 In addition to ordinary **Council** meetings there shall be a **Partnership Annual General Meeting**, at which a report shall be given by the Chairperson or Secretary of the **Partnership Council**, and **Partnership** accounts be presented.

8.6 Other **Special General Meetings** may be held as required, according to the **Standing Orders**.

A **Special General Meeting** may be called at any time to discuss any substantial and significant issue, at the request of any one of the following :

- **The Partnership Council**
- A **Local Church** within the **Partnership**
- The **Sponsoring Body**
- A **Parent Body**

All members of the **Church Partnership** shall be eligible to attend and vote on any motions put to the meeting.

Non-members may also attend meetings and may speak by invitation of the Chair, but may not vote.

## 9. Premises

9.1 The **Partnership** shall oversee the buildings of the **Partnership** through the **Local Churches**. The buildings comprise :

All Saints Lydiard Millicent (Church of England)  
St Mary's Lydiard Tregoze (Church of England)  
St Mary's Stable Room (Church of England)  
Holy Trinity Shaw (**Shared building**)  
Toothill Church (**Shared building**)

9.2 Where a building is shared, arrangements for maintenance are governed by the relevant **Sharing Agreement**. In this context the Joint Council, as defined in the Sharing Agreement, may delegate its day to day management functions to the Partnership Council. In each case this shall be by formal decision, not by default. The Joint Council shall meet when new capital money is to be raised, or proposals to buy or sell land or property are considered.

Primary responsibility for care and maintenance of all church buildings shall lie with the **Local Church**. Regular inspection of shared and non shared buildings shall be governed by the procedures of the owning **Parent Body**.

Where there is any perceived conflict between the terms of this Constitution and a Sharing Agreement, the Sharing Agreement shall take precedence.

9.3 The Toothill Manse is a **shared building** owned by the United Reformed Church, and covered by a legal **Sharing Agreement**. Maintenance and upkeep is the responsibility of the **Joint Council**, which may delegate this function to the **Partnership Council** (9.2 above).

9.4 The **Local Church** at Westlea has no premises and normally meets in Westlea School. It has an external storage facility located at Westlea School. Care and maintenance is the responsibility of Westlea Church.



9.5 Any structural changes to any church building, or related capital expenditure, shall be subject to prior approval of the owning **Parent Body**, as required by the **Sharing Agreement**.

10. Finance	<p>10.1 Each of the <b>Local Churches</b> of the <b>Partnership</b> shall operate separate financial accounts managed under the authority of the <b>Local Church Committee</b>. They shall support the <b>Partnership</b> to meet its obligations to <b>Parent Bodies</b> and common expenses.</p> <p>10.2 Other organisations within the <b>Partnership</b> may also operate separate accounts, approved by <b>Local Church Committees</b> or by the <b>Partnership Council</b>.</p> <p>10.3 The <b>Partnership</b> shall operate a central financial account managed by the Treasurer under the authority of the <b>Council</b>. This shall be used to meet common expenses, ministry costs, and denominational fees and costs.</p> <p>10.4 The <b>Council</b> and <b>Local Church Committees</b> shall ensure that all accounts are managed according to the provisions of current charities legislation.</p> <p>10.5 In consultation with local church Treasurers, the Partnership Treasurer shall determine the share of common costs to be met by each <b>Local Church</b>, which is then approved by the <b>Partnership Council</b>. In the case of any disagreement or dispute between the Partnership Council and any Parent Body concerning the amounts due to central funds, either party may seek guidance from the Sponsoring Body.</p> <p>10.6 Both the <b>Partnership</b> accounts and consolidated <b>Local Church</b> accounts shall be presented to the <b>Partnership Annual General Meeting</b> for approval, following independent examination or audit as appropriate.</p>
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11.1 The **Local Churches** shall elect and nominate to the **Partnership Council**, members to serve on the representative bodies of the **Parent Bodies**. The **Partnership Council** (or **Parochial Church Council** in the case of the Anglican membership) shall hold ultimate authority for endorsing the nominations.

11.2 **Partnership Council** meetings shall be open to all members and held at least 4 times a year (as in 8.1 above).

11.3 The **Council** shall receive reports on the transactions of the **Parent Bodies**, and shall discuss and approve any resolutions that **Council** members wish to be presented to the **Parent Bodies**.

11.4 As required by Church of England Canon Law, the **Parochial Church Council (PCC)** shall comprise the Anglican members of the Partnership Council. In addition, membership of the PCC shall include other members of the Staff Team licensed by the Diocese of Bristol, and any Church Wardens, Deanery or Diocesan Synod representatives who are not otherwise members of the **Partnership Council**. Its special duties are outlined in 'The Synodical Government Measure 1969'.

11.5 The **Parochial Church Council** shall delegate all of its responsibilities to the **Partnership Council**, except those precluded under the Canons of the Church of England. These responsibilities in particular relate to:

- ◆ The application to the Chancellor of the Diocese of Bristol for Faculties for any alteration to any buildings owned by the Church of England in the Partnership.
- ◆ Until such time as a Sharing Agreement has been entered into on any church buildings owned by the Church of England in the Partnership, the responsibilities for Weddings in those churches shall rest with the PCC, according to Canon Laws B30-36.
- ◆ The responsibilities in law of the Parochial Church Council, with regard to the appointment of clergy, shall be exercised by the Partnership Council.

11.6 Each **Local Church** shall hold an open church meeting (members' meeting) at least four times in each year.

11.7 The **Council** shall elect one representative to serve on the **Swindon Churches Together Ecumenical Council**.

11.8 Other churches within the area may be invited at any time to apply for admission to membership of the **Church Partnership**. Applications shall be scrutinised and shall require approval by both the **Partnership Council** and the **Sponsoring Body**.

12. Review | 12.1 The **Sponsoring Body** shall ensure that the **Partnership** be evaluated with reference to its objectives set out in the **Declaration of Intent** and the **Constitution**. The interval between these Reviews shall not normally exceed 7 years.

13.  
Continuity

13.1 The **Partnership** may be terminated only with the approval of the appropriate **Parent Bodies** in consultation with the **Partnership Council**, the **Local Churches** and the **Sponsoring Body**.

In the case of the Methodist Church the body consulted shall be the Committee for Local Ecumenical Development.

14. Amend-  
ments

14.1 The **Constitution** of the West Swindon and The Lydiards **Church Partnership** may be amended by agreement of the **Partnership Council**, and of either the **Partnership Annual General Meeting**, or a Special General Meeting (of those qualified to vote at AGMs) called for that purpose. Such proposed amendments shall also require the approval of the appropriate **Parent Body committees** and the **Sponsoring Body**.

14.2 The Appendices to the **Constitution** may be amended by agreement of the **Partnership Annual General Meeting**, or a **Special General Meeting** (of those qualified to vote at AGMs) called for the purpose. These amendments shall not require the approval of the **Parent Bodies** or the **Sponsoring Body**.

<b>Affirmation of Baptismal Faith</b>	An affirmation in a public act of worship by someone, already baptised and/or confirmed, of their commitment to follow Jesus Christ and walk in the life of the Spirit.
<b>Annual Action Plan</b>	A plan agreed by the <b>Partnership Council</b> , setting out key activities and priorities for the coming year
<b>Baptism; baptised</b>	<p>The rite, or part of a rite, of entry into the wider Church of Christ. We recognise several styles of such celebration.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will offer baptism to those who wish to make their own profession of faith</li> <li>We will offer baptism to the children whose parents have been adequately prepared, and affirm Christian faith and commitment.</li> </ol> <p><b>Confirmation</b> forms the other part of the rite of entry into the wider Church. (See also <b>Confirmation, Dedication, Infant Thanksgiving</b>)</p>
<b>Baptist Union of Great Britain</b>	The Union of independent Baptist Churches
<b>Canons of the Church of England, Canon Law</b>	The body of rules or laws developed by the <b>Church of England</b> as promulgated by the General Synod, and applied to matters of internal organisation, discipline and belief
<b>Church Council</b>	The term used by the <b>Methodist Church</b> for a meeting of all local church members, being the principal representative and decision making body of the church
<b>Church Meeting</b>	The term used by the <b>Baptist and United Reformed Churches</b> for a meeting of all local church members, being the principal representative and decision making body of the church
<b>Church of England Church Partnership</b>	The established church in England
<b>Churches Together in England (CTE)</b>	See <b>Partnership</b>
<b>Churches Together in England (CTE)</b>	Churches Together in England is a national body in England. It is a visible sign of the Churches' commitment as they seek a deepening of their communion with Christ and with one another, and proclaim the Gospel together by common witness and service. Its strength comes from people from different traditions finding new ways to work and worship together
<b>Communion, Holy Communion</b>	The celebratory meal where we re-enact and re-live the last supper of Jesus with his disciples. Also known as The Lord's Supper, Eucharist, and Holy Communion
<b>Confirmation</b>	A rite of entry into the wider Church of Christ where an infant <b>baptism</b> has already taken place



<b>Constitution</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Sections 1 to 14 of this document, where the term is used within this document; and/or</li> <li>b. The complete document (<b>Declaration of Intent</b>, Constitution and Appendices), as used more widely within the <b>Partnership</b></li> </ul>
<b>Council</b>	See <b>Partnership Council</b>
<b>Covenant</b>	As defined in the <b>Declaration of Intent</b> D6 para 1, a document to be signed by our <b>Parent Bodies'</b> church leaders and representatives of our <b>Partnership</b> . It is renewed at the Annual Covenant Service.
<b>Declaration of Intent</b>	Explanation of the background and justification to the <b>Constitution</b> . Our Covenant between our churches and with the people of our area
<b>Dedication</b>	A celebration of the life of a child and a commitment by their parents to raise the child into the Christian faith, with a special prayer of dedication and blessing offered for the child, such that he/she will wish to make his/her own profession of faith at a later date.
<b>Denomination</b>	One of the four <b>Denominational Bodies</b> , namely <b>Church of England, Methodist Church, United Reformed Church and Baptist Union of Great Britain</b> , who are the parties involved in the <b>Partnership</b> .
<b>Denominational Body/Authority</b>	Any one of the <b>Parent Bodies</b> which oversee the Partnership, and which provide <b>Staff</b> and buildings for the <b>Partnership</b>
<b>Elder</b>	Within the <b>Baptist</b> and <b>United Reformed Church</b> traditions, the church officers who have collective authority and oversight of church members
<b>Electoral Roll</b>	The list of baptised <b>Church of England</b> members aged 16 or over, resident in the Parish (or regularly attending worship in the Parish), and who have made an application for enrolment, accepted by the <b>Local Church Committee</b> and the <b>Annual General Meeting</b>
<b>Extended Membership</b>	<p>Individual membership of one of the participating <b>denominations</b>, where recognised as membership of each of the other participating <b>denominations</b>.</p> <p>Extended membership continues for as long as the member remains within the <b>Partnership</b>.</p>
<b>Faculty</b>	Faculty jurisdiction is the planning procedure which protects <b>Church of England</b> churches, their contents and churchyards. Faculty Petitions for alterations, repairs and extensions etc are approved by the Diocesan Chancellor.
<b>Holy Communion</b>	See Communion
<b>Infant Thanksgiving</b>	A celebration of the life of a child, and where the <b>Local Church</b> promises to support the parents in raising the child. Where the parents specifically request, this may be followed by <b>Baptism</b>

<b>Joint Council</b>	A council established through a <b>Sharing Agreement</b> to consider matters relating to its practical operation
<b>Lay Minister (previously known as Lay Reader)</b>	In <b>The Church of England</b> , a person nominated by a <b>Minister</b> and the <b>PCC</b> , accepted, trained and licensed by the Diocese of Bristol. A Lay Minister undertakes a range of duties in acts of worship and elsewhere in church life
<b>Lay Preacher</b>	In the <b>United Reformed Church</b> a person authorised to conduct worship and preach at services. May be accredited either locally or nationally
<b>Lay Reader</b>	See <b>Lay Minister</b>
<b>Local Preacher</b>	In the <b>Methodist Church</b> a person authorised to conduct worship and preach at services
<b>Local Church</b>	One of the communities within the <b>Partnership</b> - which holds regular worship services; has its own structure of authority and responsibility; and maintains a <b>register of members</b>
<b>Local Church Annual Meeting (LCAM)</b>	The meeting of a <b>Local Church</b> where accounts and reports as required by the <b>Partnership</b> are presented and approved
<b>Local Church Committee (LCC)</b>	The local leadership team, which guides and oversees the activities of a <b>Local Church</b> . The Committee is responsible for the activities delegated to it by the <b>Partnership Council</b> , including financial administration, upkeep of buildings, and other legislative commitments.
<b>Local Ecumenical Partnership (LEP)</b>	A partnership of Churches, where there is a formal written agreement affecting the ministry, congregational life, buildings and/or mission projects; and a recognition of that agreement by the <b>Sponsoring Body</b> and the appropriate <b>denominational authorities</b> (See also <b>Single Congregation LEP</b> )
<b>Member, Membership</b>	All those who meet the requirements for <b>membership</b> and who are listed as <b>members</b> of one of the <b>Local Churches</b> (see also <b>Multiple Member</b> ).
<b>Methodist Church</b>	The central body that represents the majority of Methodist Churches in England
<b>Minister in Pastoral Charge</b>	The person (ordained or lay) who is appointed by the <b>Council</b> in consultation with the <b>Sponsoring Body</b> to exercise leadership of a <b>Local Church</b> , in collaboration with the <b>Local Church Committee</b> .
<b>Multiple Member</b>	A member of the <b>Partnership</b> who has been baptised and/or confirmed in a joint service by representatives of all the <b>Parent Bodies</b> . That person is regarded within the <b>Partnership</b> as a member of all <b>Parent Bodies</b> .
<b>Parent Body</b>	One of the <b>Denominational Bodies</b> under whose auspices the <b>Partnership</b> operates

<b>Parochial Church Council (PCC)</b>	The <b>Parochial Church Council</b> exercises governance where actions are required by Anglican Canon Law
<b>Partnership</b>	The <b>Local Ecumenical Partnership</b> defined in this <b>Constitution</b>
<b>Partnership Annual General Meeting (PAGM)</b>	The open meeting of the <b>Partnership</b> where accounts and reports as required by <b>Parent Bodies</b> and other legislation are approved
<b>Partnership Council (PC)</b>	The body which oversees the activities of the <b>Partnership</b> ; it may delegate some of its responsibilities to committees and <b>Local Churches</b>
<b>Reader</b>	See <b>Lay Minister</b>
<b>Register of Members</b>	The list of current members of the <b>Partnership</b> , a composite list of <b>members</b> of each of the <b>Local Churches</b>
<b>Register of Baptisms</b>	The list of those baptised, both of children and those professing faith for themselves, a composite of those lists from each of the <b>Local Churches</b>
<b>Register of Dedications</b>	The list of dedicated children, a composite of those lists from each of the <b>Local Churches</b>
<b>Register of Thanksgivings</b>	The list of children for whom thanksgiving services have been held, a composite of those lists from each of the <b>Local Churches</b>
<b>Renewal of baptismal faith</b>	See Affirmation of Baptismal Faith
<b>Sharing Agreement</b>	A legal agreement entered into under The Sharing of Church Buildings Act 1969, which defines shared ownership and responsibilities for a building which is used within a <b>Local Ecumenical Partnership</b> for the benefit of more than one <b>Parent Body</b> or <b>Denominational Body</b> . See also <b>Joint Council</b> .
<b>Shared Building</b>	A building which is owned by one or more of the <b>Denominational Bodies</b> or their relevant Trusts, and which is subject to a <b>Sharing Agreement</b>
<b>Single Congregation Partnership</b>	A category of <b>Local Ecumenical Partnership</b> where there is a formal written agreement affecting the ministry, congregational life, buildings and/or mission projects of more than one denomination; and a recognition of that agreement by the <b>Sponsoring Body</b> and the appropriate <b>denominational authorities</b> . This form of Partnership recognises one joint congregation with shared sacramental ministry and a common purse, but may include more than one worship centre and a variety of styles of worship.
<b>Special General Meeting</b>	A special open meeting (or extraordinary meeting) of all members of the Partnership, held between <b>Annual General Meetings</b> to transact specific business. Further details are found in the <b>Standing Orders</b> .
<b>Sponsoring Body</b>	The local Ecumenical Body responsible for oversight of all <b>Local Ecumenical Partnerships</b> within a geographical area. In the case of this <b>Partnership</b> it is the <b>Swindon Churches Together</b> Sponsoring Body

<b>Staff, Staff Team</b>	Those who are duly approved by or recognised by the <b>Parent Bodies</b> for ministry within and beyond the <b>Partnership</b> ; and those who are appointed by the <b>Partnership Council</b> to serve only within the <b>Partnership</b>
<b>Staffing Consultative Group</b>	A group appointed as required, to undertake a local consultative role with the <b>Parent Bodies</b> , concerning the appointment of new ordained <b>Staff</b> , taking account of ecumenical balance; and to oversee reviews of <b>Staff</b>
<b>Standing Orders</b>	The protocols which set out how the <b>Constitution</b> is implemented in practical terms; and which can be amended by the <b>Partnership Council</b> without explicit approval of the <b>Parent Bodies</b>
<b>Swindon Churches Together</b>	The intermediate body of <b>Churches Together in England</b> , which coordinates inter-church and ecumenical activities in the Swindon Area
<b>Thanksgiving</b>	See <b>Infant Thanksgiving</b>
<b>Trinitarian</b>	The basis of Christian understanding of the inner nature of the Godhead – as Father, Son and Holy Spirit
<b>United Reformed Church</b>	The body that oversees all United Reformed Churches in England, Wales and Scotland.

<b>Team Vicar</b>	Revd Tudor Roberts
<b>Free Church Ministers</b>	Revd Anne Carter Revd Dick Gray
<b>Wider Staff Team</b>	Di Benbow Revd Mike Dilly Mark Dowling Rachel Dowling Gordon Partridge Revd Patricia Roberts

To be defined.

To be compiled