

Cardiff East Ecumenical Mission Partnership

In preparation for the conversation about the future of CEEMP and the Covenant signed in 2005, the following is a brief summary of CEEMP looking at -

- Where we are now
- How we got here
- Why this conversation is needed

The Covenant itself is printed below.

Where we are now

From its inauguration in 2005 until September 2016 the eleven churches of CEEMP remained a single partnership endeavouring to do what it could together. The Commission Review of 2013 had recognised this was no longer in the best interests of the churches and had recommended working as three clusters under the CEEMP umbrella. Initially the Council rejected this suggestion but eventually came to the view that sustaining relationships and shared engagement in mission over such large and diverse geographical area was untenable. As a result the Council proposal of two clusters, north and south, was agreed by both the churches and the Sponsoring Body.

Since early 2017 the North Cluster has met regularly and there is recognisable energy and enthusiasm. The South Cluster is yet to meet though it also has ecumenical relationships through a local Cytûn Group which, though not currently strong, is long standing.

There is now some strength of feeling that a conversation is needed between all CEEMP churches to consider what our future vision and mission is and, crucially, whether the current 2005 Covenant best serves this.

A particular development and challenge to ministry here are the new housing developments which need time, energy and resources if we wish to engage and be involved as a Christian community in a meaningful way.

We should also bear in mind that Cardiff East has been seen as a role model for ecumenical good practice not only throughout Wales but, along with the 1975 Covenant, to our national and international ecumenical partners.

How we got here

In the mid 1960s the then new housing in Llanedeyrn became the impetus for Albany Road Baptist Church planting a united church to engage with new people settling in the area. In 1967 Graham Davies was called as minister. Initially, the congregation that became Christchurch worshipped in a multipurpose hall.

In 1975 the Covenant committing to seeking to become a United Church for all of Wales was signed. Ecumenical cooperation on the south side of the A48 and River Rumney led to the fully ecumenical Church of the Resurrection in St Mellons.

In 1984 a Council of Churches known as Cyncoed, Pentwyn and Llanedeyrn (CPL) was inaugurated and in the same year John Woodward, also committed to an ecumenical expression of the church's life, became rector of Cyncoed. With Graham Davies, John Woodward and also Methodist minister Tom Davies strong working relationships and personal friendships were forged. Ministers across the area began meeting weekly for prayer and envisioning the future for the churches. In 1991 the benefice proposed an ecumenical community church which resulted in Pontprennau Community Church opening in 1993. CPL was extended to CPLP to include Pontprennau and in February 2002 Churches Together in CPLP. renewed their Covenant.

As this was happening Enfys / The Commission of Covenanted Churches were developing a strategy for pioneering the ministry of Ecumenical Bishop and Cardiff East was put forward as the pilot area for this. When this did not come to fruition the two ecumenical

partnerships on either side of the road and river discussed their future and, with encouragement from church leaders, proposed a new Cardiff East LEP which would replace both the existing LEPs in the area whilst welcoming in several new partners, namely Rumney Methodist Church, St Dyfrig's (Llanrumney) and St. Mellon's Parish Church. As a result, on 5 June 2005 the Constitution for the Cardiff East Ecumenical Mission Partnership was signed and celebrated in a joint service.

It is a requirement that all LEPs have a Sponsoring Body, representatives of each denomination in the partnership whose role is to advise and support and ensure any issues requiring attention are promptly dealt with by the appropriate denomination(s).

In the case of CEEMP the original one floundered and it was only as a result of the 2013 Review that a Sponsoring Body of senior church representatives was formed. This now meets regularly.

Why this conversation is needed

It should be noted that the original strength and success of ecumenical cooperation going back to the 1960s but particularly from 1984 has always been the committed relationships and friendships of those involved. Over the years personalities have changed. Clergy have come and gone and the congregations who so strongly supported this at the onset have changed considerably. Naturally, many have since died and those new to our churches do not know the story and so can hardly be expected to engage in the same way.

In the Council for Christian Unity's publication 'Telling the Story' (The Origin and Development of Local Ecumenical Partnerships(LEPS)' Dame Mary Tanner wrote

"It is important to pass on stories of how and why we got to where we are if we are to understand ourselves and find direction for the future."

We need a vision and future that is right for our context and communities today. Faithful discipleship is a journey and never static. It does not follow that what worked for one generation will for the next.

It was the good relationships, rooted in prayer and vision that began the original CLP and it is by forging such relationships appropriate for today on which our future flourishing depends.

The 17 May meeting is an open conversation in which all are encouraged to engage

Churches Together in Cardiff East
Declaration of Intent for Congregations in Covenanted Partnership

In obedience to the call of Christ we, the ministers and people of -

All Saints Church, Cyncoed
All Saints Church, Llanedeyrn
Christchurch United Church, Llanedeyrn
The Church of the Resurrection, St Mellons
Cyncoed Methodist Church, Cyncoed
Pontprennau Community Church, Pontprennau
Rumney Methodist Church, Rumney
St David's Ecumenical Church, Pentwyn
St Dyfrig's Church, Llanrumney
St Edeyrn's Church, Llanedeyrn Village
St Mellons Church, St Mellons

- 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, Creator
the Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour,
the Holy Spirit,
guiding His 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.

We commit ourselves and our churches -

- a. To move through co-operation to clear commitment to each other, in search for the unity for which Christ prayed and in common evangelism and service to the world
- b. To engage in joint 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 in pastoral, social and evangelistic outreach into our community.
- d. To publicise and promote our Church life and worship by joint means wherever possible.
- e. To sustain an Ecumenical Ministry Team for regular prayer, study, consultation and appropriate action.
- f. To co-ordinate decision making and use of resources through the Cardiff East Ecumenical Mission Council
- g. To ensure that each ordained or lay appointment to the Ecumenical Ministry Team is made with such consultation with the Ecumenical Ministry Team as is reasonably possible, consonant with denominational procedures.
- h. To seek to further our work with other local churches.
- i. To set specific targets under each of the above headings and review progress biennially and to express our achievements and aspirations in a united act of worship and rededication marking the anniversary of the signing of this covenant.