



CHURCHES TOGETHER *in* ENGLAND

Themes for our pilgrimage together to promote thought, action and prayer

(see notes overleaf)

Towards a vision for Local Ecumenical Living (in Local Ecumenical Partnerships and more generally)

Communities of Christian Disciples
drawing on all the riches of different Christian spiritualities,
releasing God's transforming power for the healing of humanity
as individuals and in their relationships with each other and with God



The Spirituality of Sacrifice

Working out prayerfully what is meant, in the practical experience of Christian discipleship, by *'radical hospitality'*

Working out how *'self-denial'* might play out as a Christian virtue in the context of our church structures

Working out cost of *'self-giving'* when sharing in *'ecumenical team working'* and our calling to be at one with the whole of humankind



A deeper understanding of team working

In *'ecumenical teams'* (as between accredited ministers)

In *'collaborative ministry'* (as between ordained and lay)

And in the relating of the whole church community, led by the Spirit in mission

In learning through prayer and daily living what it means to be a Gospel people, able to communicate within today's complex cultures



A theology of diversity in our unity

Drawing on the diverse working of the Holy Spirit,

our provisional perception of God's truth,

the way in which context and vocation shape church life,

our insight into *'complementarity'*, what we give and what we receive,

the necessity for porous boundaries (not impermeable barriers) for healthy living, coherent relationships and common purpose – thus facilitating interplay,

recognizing that people's expectations and experiences of church may differ from our own,

experiencing a living dialogue leading to transformation and renewal.

TOWARDS A VISION

Where's this come from?

- From the 2002 National Consultation on Local Ecumenical Partnerships – and a lot of conversations before and after.
- From the 2003 Churches Together in England Forum – when we were challenged to be a Church open to others: 'radical hospitality'.
- From the Churches' Group for Local Unity – which has worked to distil issues, both detailed and general, from the LEP Consultation.

Who's it for?

- Churches Together groups and LEPs, County Ecumenical bodies and their equivalents, Chaplaincy Partnerships – as we seek ideas and themes to refresh our work.
- Church Leaders and Representatives – as we seek threads to hold together our formal and informal work for unity.
- Anybody seeking to catch – and sustain – a vision for ecumenical living beyond the details of agendas and meetings.

How might it be helpful?

- Food for thought?
- Springboard for prayer?
- Prompt for a review of what we're doing:
 - where do we show sacrifice?
 - where is our team-working?
 - how do we handle diversity?
- Framework for planning? – promoting these themes in a practical way.

In developing these themes, we're working with threads which fellow Christians on the way to unity have begun to explore.