



Membership Policy

1. Introduction

The “members” of Churches Together in Milton Keynes (CTMK) will be individual congregations who choose to covenant together for mission and mutual support.

We believe that the emphasis should be on what member congregations have to contribute as Christian communities - in terms of their own unique gifting, heritage and call. We will therefore encourage congregations to see CTMK as a means of serving God and answering the call of Christ.

CTMK is not a “service provider” with a membership fee.

We will aim to value others and celebrate their unique contributions. This applies particularly to smaller congregations who may not see themselves as valuable. We want to celebrate what God is doing in and through them. We believe that it is important for well-resourced congregations to support less wealthy congregations in terms of any financial contributions needed.

We recognise that this will require discussions and conversations with potential member churches and may take more time, but we believe that this is the right way to build the network. We will need to do this work slowly and steadily.

Membership is a problematic issue, since denominations have a range of different ecclesiologies and concepts of belonging. Some denominations have creeds or statements of faith, while others are inherently opposed to creedal statements. Some congregations would also find the Five Marks of Mission difficult, because of the reference to sacraments.

CTE has advised us to have a simple covenant that all member congregations can sign up to. We can still use things like creeds, Bible passages or the Five Marks in our strategy documents, but should not make them a requirement for membership.

2. Policies

In order to achieve these aims, we will observe the following policies:

- a. We will have a written “Membership Covenant” that sets out the basic commitment made by member congregations.
- b. We will aim for a trustee to meet the appropriate congregational decision-making body before the covenant is signed. This could be the leadership team, trustees, council or congregational meeting.
- c. Some congregations will join as part of a group, eg, a circuit, cluster, or ecumenical partnership. In these instances the discussion will be held with the decision-making body for the group as a whole.

- d. The covenant will include a financial commitment that will be agreed with the member congregation(s) in question. We will aim to be both flexible and informative in our discussions. In other words, we will let members know how much money is needed to fund our work together, but recognise that congregations have local pressures which can make giving difficult.
- e. Member churches will be listed on our website and invited to member-only meetings which focus on strategic issues. There may be other benefits for members as things develop.
- f. There will be a review date for each membership covenant. The covenant could be agreed for a number of years. A new covenant will need to be negotiated at this point.

3. Membership Covenant

<p>Churches Together in Milton Keynes Membership Covenant</p> <p>Congregation:</p> <p>As a member of Churches Together in Milton Keynes, we will work with other Christian congregations in this area to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Show God's love to the Borough and City of Milton Keynes ● Support each other as followers of Christ <p>We pledge a gift of each year to fund the work of Churches Together in Milton Keynes Trust for the next year(s).</p> <p>We will ensure that there is a named person for communication with Churches Together in Milton Keynes and other member churches.</p> <p>This covenant will be reviewed in</p> <p>Signed on behalf of</p> <p>Date:</p>
