



THE EDENBRIDGE CHURCHES IN COVENANT

How the churches in our area work together



Some of you have probably never heard of the **Churches in Covenant!**
This leaflet is designed to put that right.

Since World War II especially, there have been increasing efforts prompted by the Holy Spirit and led by Church leaders around the world, to bring the churches closer together and to heal some of the hurts inflicted on each other over our common history. It has been recognised that unity is absolutely key to our life and work and that we all have a duty to take on board Christ's words when he prayed that, *they all be one.*

As a tiny part of this world-wide movement the Churches in Edenbridge have been looking for ways to live and work together ever more closely since the 1970s, and in 1982 the Local Covenant was signed by the Baptist, Anglican, Roman Catholic and URC Churches at a ceremony in the then Middle School (now Edenbridge Primary School). In the fullness of time The Parish Church of the Holy Trinity in Crockham Hill and Grace Community Church also joined.

Together we have sought the will of the Holy Spirit in seeking ways both to express and further our common life in Christ, and to that end ...

we have held many **joint acts of worship**;

we have run Lent Study Groups and put on **Lent Lectures**;

we have sponsored the **Eden Christian Trust**, which looks after youth work on behalf of all the churches in our town and employs Anthony Shipwright our **ecumenical Youth Worker**;



we set up **BRIDGES**, which for many years now, based in a converted chapel in the High Street, has sought to bring people in our town together and has run all manner of projects in its own right under the leadership of Mary Perrett and her predecessors;



we have shared together in **joint activities for Holy Week** and for many years organised something called **Carols for Everyone** at the Leisure Centre;

we have promoted **God's Hands** which seeks to bring help to those in need and the **Parish Nurse** (Julie Barry) who ministers to individuals and families in all sorts of difficulties. This also incorporates a food bank to help the most needy in our community.



All this time the clergy of the town have met regularly and informally to share hopes and fears, bright ideas and sometimes not so bright ideas!

As a result of all this common endeavour, Christians from our different churches have got to know each other at a personal level and people have at least begun to learn about and appreciate the different styles of worship, the traditions and disciplines of our different churches. Some of us feel equally at home in all or any of our churches.

In a world where fragmentation is an all too common experience and relationships between people are under terrible stresses and strains, it is our hope and prayer that the churches of our town may strive together to witness to one common life in Christ. So we pray:

Lord, bless our churches and the town we serve.

May we so grow together in our Covenant that we may know you better and make you better known. Amen.

Fr Stephen Mitchell,

Chairman of the Edenbridge Churches in Covenant and Vicar of Edenbridge

