

**Mission Statement for the Rochester links with  
Estonia, Harare (Zimbabwe) and Kondoa and  
Mpwapwa (Tanzania)**

**and**

**Aims for the Partner Diocese Steering Group**

## **MISSION STATEMENT FOR THE LINK**

The Rochester - Estonia - Mpwapwa – Kondo - Harare Link is a partnership between our five dioceses. Recognising that we are Christian people from different cultures who share a common heritage of faith and worship, we:

1. Seek to support and encourage each other in God's mission
2. Commit ourselves to learning about each other's history, tradition and partnership
3. Seek first to share our spiritual resources and secondly our material ones
4. Wish to build strong and lasting friendships in order to advance the Kingdom of God within our dioceses.

### **How do we do this?**

1. Prayer for each other – in public worship and private intercession
2. The exchange of groups and individuals
3. The sharing of each other's celebrations and festivals
4. By fostering links at all levels in the dioceses
5. By encouraging those who have visited to share their experiences

## **AIMS OF THE Partner Diocese Steering Group**

The Rochester Partner Diocese Steering Group is a voluntary body responsible to Rochester Diocesan Synod and the Bishop of Rochester whose function is to:

1. Sustain and support existing link relationships
2. Foster and develop new link relationships
3. Actively publicise the work of the link within the Diocese
4. Use responsibly the money entrusted for the development of the link
5. Plan for the future and review past experience
6. Prayerfully advise the Bishop and Synod over link related matters
7. Work closely with the Partner Diocese Steering Groups in our companion dioceses

## **GUIDELINES FOR EVALUATING REQUESTS FOR FINANCIAL HELP**

While we recognise that on occasion we may need to be flexible in the way in which we respond to needs, in general we should observe the following principles:

1. Requests must be in accordance with our stated aims and objectives
2. Priority will normally be given to groups or projects rather than individuals
3. The Chairman and Bishop's Link Adviser may make grants up to £500 at their discretion
4. All requests to be put to the committee before any commitments or promises are made, unless dealt with under guideline 3.
5. Funding should normally involve giving from all parties to enable our shared mission
6. All financial decisions should be transparent and accountable

## **SOME PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS**

As the means of fulfilling the Vision, Mission and Aims set out above the Partner Diocese Steering Group commends the following ideas for development in our Church communities.

What follows is by no means a comprehensive list.

### **Communications**

- §☒ Regular, informed and specific prayer for each other
- §☒ An exchange of regular information which will circulate to and from parish level
- §☒ The opening up of communication between Diocesan based organisations and groups should be encouraged

### **Education**

- §☒ Links to be encouraged between schools, colleges and universities, paying particular regard to chaplaincies, and Anglican and other Christian societies within those communities
- §☒ Exchanges of theological ideas and personnel

### **Church Groups and Parishes**

- §☒ Links between Church groups and Parishes to be encouraged
- §☒ Individual and group visits in both directions to be commended
- §☒ Medium and long term work placements of clergy and laypeople in church related posts in all Dioceses to be explored and made possible

### **Projects**

- §☒ Support for local initiatives which enable the good news of the gospel to be announced to those who are in material need and to those who are spiritually poor. Projects which seek to alleviate poverty and provide care support and healing for those who are ill are to be encouraged

### **Young People**

- §☒ Links between young people of all Dioceses to be encouraged, leading to reciprocal visits

### **Events**

- §☒ A Companion Links Annual Celebration in all Dioceses on an agreed weekend

### **Wider Partnerships**

- §☒ We particularly commend the principle of the Ecumenical dimension in all that is planned
- §☒ Noting the UK Government's desire to promote development, reduce poverty, and support health programmes (particularly related to HIV/AIDS) in Africa, the Diocesan Supportive Structures will explore how partnerships between the Dioceses, and the UK and African Governments can be used to sustain and initiate Church-run programmes in Africa which fulfil the necessary criteria
- §☒ We expect to work with other church or para-church organisations active in the area
- §☒ We can foresee that on occasion it may be necessary to adopt the role of advocate

### **Practicalities**

This agreement to be:

- §☒ Amended and agreed by all parties as we develop the partnership

§☒ Agreed by the Bishops, as representatives of their dioceses

§☒ Reviewed every five years

### **IMPORTANT NOTES**

Because we are aware of the differences in the cost of living between the UK, Estonia, and Africa we urge that it should be taken into account in all future arrangements for inter-change of people.

This factor is particularly significant for those travelling from Africa to Europe. The supportive structures will remain open at all times to further suggestions and initiatives.

## **CONTACTS**

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Bishop of Rochester

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