**Report to the Spring Synod from the Northampton District Ecumenical Team**

During the course of the previous year the Ecumenical Team has met several times, both in person and via Zoom. The meetings have covered the wide range of concerns brought to the attention of the Ecumenical Officers team.

The four Ecumenical Officers cover the following areas:

The Revd Ian Suttie – Northamptonshire, Peterborough and Rutland.

The Revd Andrew Farrington – Leicestershire

The Revd John Anderson – Oxfordshire

The Revd Edson Dube – Milton Keynes

Administratively, the Revd John Anderson has created an online storage system for Local Ecumenical Partnership documents, constitutions and other related materials. This new archive will be a valuable resource both for the Ecumenical Officers and for local churches or circuits seeking information about ecumenical matters. We are most grateful to John for all the work required to create this resource.

The team was delighted to note the creation of a new LEP within the District. The Kingsthorpe Community LEP was inaugurated on Sunday 16th March 2025. The sermon at the inauguration service was preached by the Revd Sonia Hicks, and Holy Communion was celebrated by the Revd Nathan Toseland, one of the Central Baptist Association’s Regional Ministers. We send our congratulations to the Methodist and Baptist members of the Church on reaching this milestone on their journey, and thank the Northampton Methodist Circuit and Paul Greenaway, the Baptist Interim Moderator, for all their hard work to bring this LEP to fulfilment.

Individually, members of the team have been involved in ecumenical matters in their particular areas working creatively with our ecumenical partners at both local and county levels. An area of concern has been the cutting back of financial support for county bodies by some of our partner denominations and consequent decisions not to replace County Ecumenical Development Officers on their retirement in some parts of our District. The Ecumenical Officers concerned will be monitoring the outcomes of these decisions.

The Ecumenical Officers team is anxious to be of service to local churches and circuits within the District and welcomes enquiries and requests to help out where they can. The team remains committed to encouraging local churches and circuits to continue on the ecumenical path by remaining faithful to Jesus’ prayer for his disciples that they may be one, and be living signs of what can happen when God’s people are committed to one another in worship and service.

The Revd Ian Suttie