



Churches Together in Otley- Mission Statement 2023

***'One in Christ Jesus, engaged in God's mission,
empowered by the Spirit***

We meet together to support and encourage one another as Christians in Otley
We pray for one another and the needs of the town
We are active in local concerns to help the community
We have regular meetings to decide our actions, how we communicate and how to plan

We will hold a balance between being Churches Together in Otley and being open to all Christians in the town – Christians Together.

Events, networking and activities currently include people from:

- Churches that traditionally have been supporters of, and participants in, joint events and have over many years shaped ideas such as the Chevin Cross, Prayer Breakfasts, Christian Unity, seasonal services and charity (particularly Christian Aid)
- Members from other churches:
 - in Otley who prefer not to formally become part of CTO in a constitutional sense.
 - who live in Otley or nearby and are members of churches out of town.

We will hold fast to praying for one another and the needs of the town.

For this to work we will need communication methods and means that encourage mutual participation relevant to modern life.

We will be of service to the town wherever this is appropriate. For this, we will seek to keep informed and active in local concerns. Whenever possible we will identify and highlight issues and needs which come to our attention for people of the town. A historic example is the development of the Foodbank and support for a Faith in Schools Worker at Prince Henry's Grammar School. More recently members of churches have become involved in community projects in Otley such as Homes for Ukraine, Otley 2030 and Warm Spaces

We will not regard our town boundaries as limits but gateways; connectivity to nearby rural areas, towns and villages. As being part of Leeds administratively, and by Christian connections, we will encourage listening to City concerns and projects to broaden our horizons.

For communication, strategy and planning there will be quarterly CTO meetings which will include:

- Representatives of the churches in the town. Ideally, for each church, one of such representatives will be the key person who is a regular attender and will be responsible to report back to their church.
- Church ministers will routinely be invited. If unable to be present, they will be kept updated and encouraged to pass on information to their congregations.
- Meetings will also be open to those who are not official representatives but are committed to 'Christian Unity, Service and Mission' in Otley.
- The Annual General Meeting each year will include election of a Chairperson, a Vice Chairperson, a Secretary and a Treasurer.

Historically, we have had a formal constitutional connection to Churches Together in England. This is expressed in the words of the statement: *'One in Christ Jesus, engaged in God's mission, empowered by the Spirit'*. In Otley our relationship with each other will be a 'Partnership Agreement' wherein 'offices' and meetings will continue for relationship, unity and utility. We will recognise and respect that our local associates may have affiliation to other Christian organisations and networks.