

Kent Estuary Mission Community
**‘Notes’ from the gathering of members of church councils
with Canon Benjamin Carter on Tuesday 21st July 2026**

Following the Gathering, Benjamin Carter provided the following notes from the discussion, picking up three main themes:

Prayer

- There was a real openness to prayer and for prayer to be the bedrock of the coming season, with a recognition that that has already been the case.
- It was interesting to note the openness to a simple and “snappy” shared prayer/collect.
- Also to note the existence of regular pockets of prayer which could be linked and promoted more. Perhaps some sort of “Prayer Audit” might help share and communicate this.
- There was also an openness to exploring patterns of prayer to feed those gathered, but to underpin the coming process.
- *Beyond this there was a desire for “discernment” in the prayer which I feel could be rushed and so some doing and pacing of activity might allow a shared vision and identity to grow.*

Ministry

- There were well articulated views of the need for ministry to be shared amongst all, but a few questions about what this might look like and how to encourage and support this.
- There were also questions about the form and model of leadership. I think that might be something for this group to reflect on both in the short term – eg regular reinforcing of the language of an endorsed direction of travel – and also an openness to the discerning nature of this coming season.
- Frustrations about the perceived lack of presence and support from the “centre” were voiced. It might be that some targeted presence and support from the centre might make it feel like there is more support than is currently perceived.
- There was also a desire to celebrate the variety of ministry and worship and also things which already work like the quarterly KEMC gatherings.
- *Beyond this there were anxieties about future deployment which are not for us now.*
- *Also questions of the nature and depth of Ecumenical working which again is I think downstream from our current thinking.*

Buildings (Resources)

- Although I led this thought I think there was an openness to assessing what gifts you already have in buildings and resources already.
- There might also be some value in running this against a community audit – for instance in my old parish there was a surfeit of community space which limited our options when considering how to develop the Church.
- I think there would be value in assessing what external resources there might be to be found. For instance, you could form a resources working group which does fact finding, not for specific projects, but just to know the lay of the land for this sort of thing.
- It might also be that an assessment of what resources there are within the Mission Community might assist in greater understanding between the communities.
- *Beyond these understandable concerns about the viability of the existing stock of buildings was noted. I would counsel that a good audit – as outlined above – can help arrest as certain fatalism which some think about buildings.*

Other

- Attendees stated the desire to have a fuller sense of inter faith relations where possible.
- There was also a good point made about the reality of spiritual hunger present in the wider community even if this is not articulated in explicitly Christian terms. We reflected on the existing resource of the Kent Estuary Pilgrim Way and how that could be used.
- The future involves culture change and that will come with a mix of emotions: fear/excitement/joy/grief.