

Foreword

by the Bishop of St Albans

One of the characteristics of our Christian faith is that we always look towards the future with hope; not because we are unwilling to face present realities but because God is always calling us forward towards Himself. If God is in the future, and indeed, surrounds and contains the future, then, through faith, we can trust in his boundless beauty and energy to recreate us, and renew us.

This review of the mission and work of the Church of England in Luton draws carefully on lessons from the past, acknowledges the facts of the present, but asks us gently but firmly to face the future with hope – because that future is God's.

The text presents us with some highly imaginative and creative new ways of working; it calls on us all to trust each other and to work in loving co-operation one with another. It comes out of careful study and prayer, and out of the courteous and loving hard work of the Review group. We owe them a great debt of gratitude.

The Review is now ours to ponder, to pray about and to implement where we believe such implementation is necessary. I use the word "ours" with special care – because this really is a common effort, not limited simply to one parish or another, nor indeed limited only to Luton, but it is part of our diocesan thinking. We are bound up in Christ as brothers and sisters, one family in Him. It is my prayer that by God's grace we shall move forward into the future with trust and love, renewing our commitment to Christ and pledging ourselves to proclaim His kingdom.

The Rt Revd Christopher Herbert
The Bishop of St Albans