

THE CHURCH IN WALES DIOCESE OF SWANSEA & BRECON

JOHN by Divine Permission **BISHOP of SWANSEA & BRECON TO ALL THE FAITHFUL IN CHRIST GREETING** in the name of Our Lord Jesus Christ

WHEREAS We in fulfilment of Our duty as Chief Pastor of the Diocese of Swansea & Brecon are desirous of ensuring better and more efficient spiritual provision and care for the parishioners of the Parishes listed in Column 1 of the Schedule hereto and the Ministry Area and listed in Column 2 of the said Schedule hereto and situated within Our Diocese

AND WHEREAS by Section 2 of Chapter IVD of the Constitution of the Church in Wales (hereinafter referred to as “the Constitution”) it is provided that any Diocesan Bishop with the consent of his/her Diocesan Conference or, if duly delegated to it, its Standing Committee, may make any change in the existing territorial arrangements of his/her Diocese as he/she may think fit

AND WHEREAS by Section 3 of Chapter IVD of the Constitution it is provided that the Diocesan Conference or its Standing Committee if so empowered by the Conference shall subject to Section 2 of Chapter IVD of the Constitution co-operate with the Bishop (inter alia) in uniting any two or more Benefices or Parishes or parts of Benefices or Parishes under one Incumbent to be known as a Parish

AND WHEREAS by Section 4(1) of Chapter IVD of the Constitution it is provided that any such uniting made under the powers contained in the said Section 34 shall be carried out by a Decree (hereinafter called “a Diocesan Decree”) signed by the Bishop and deposited in the Diocesan Registry

AND WHEREAS by Section 4(2)(f) of Chapter IVD of the Constitution it is required that a Diocesan Decree shall make provision for certain matters specified and contain certain directions and in default of such provision and directions the Decree shall not be valid

AND WHEREAS in order to effect better pastoral oversight in the Diocese it is essential that certain Parishes in the Diocese shall be united

AND WHEREAS at a meeting held on the 22nd day of September 2022 the Standing Committee of Our Diocesan Conference duly empowered under Section 33 of Chapter IVD of the Constitution consented to Our uniting such Parishes as aforesaid under one Ministry Area Team (as hereinafter defined) and resolved to co-operate with Us therein

AND WHEREAS by a resolution of the Governing Body of the Church in Wales passed on 17th day of April 1969 it was provided that for the purpose of the then Chapter VII (now Chapter VI) of the Constitution the first term of Nomination hereafter to the said United Parishes shall belong to and be exercised by the Bishop for the time being of the Diocese and that the remaining turns in the cycle of Nomination should follow the order as provided by Section 5(2) of Chapter VII of the Constitution

NOW THEREFORE until further Diocesan Decree is made affecting the said parishes **WE JOHN DO HEREBY DECREE** as follows:-

1. **THAT** in accordance with the Schedule hereto the Parishes listed in Column 1 of the said Schedule shall be united and the new Parish thereby created shall henceforth be known as the Benefice and Ministry Area (hereinafter called “the Ministry Area”) named in Column 2 of the said Schedule
2. **AFTER** consultation we direct that the parsonage of the Ministry Area shall be such parsonage in the Ministry Area as the Bishop shall from time to time direct

MINISTRY AREA TEAM

- 3.1 **THAT** the ordained priests in the parishes listed in Column 1 of the said Schedule together with all Lay Ministers holding the Bishop’s Licence serving in the Ministry Area shall become and be the Shared Ministry Area Team of the Ministry Area listed in Column 2
- 3.2 the Shared Ministry Area Team shall have and shall share the Cure of Souls with Us and Our Successors Bishops of Swansea & Brecon
- 3.3 the fees to be received in respect of the Publication of Banns and the Solemnisation of Marriage and Burials in the Ministry Area shall henceforth belong to the member of the Shared Ministry Team conducting such publication solemnisation or burial or as otherwise agreed between the Shared Ministry Team
- 3.4 despite being part of the Shared Ministry Team for the Ministry Area Priests in Ministry Area may be given particular care of such churches as may be decided by the Ministry Area Conference and nothing in this Decree will otherwise affect the provisions with the location of the vicarages or rectories for the former parishes listed in Column 1 of the said Schedule
- 3.5 despite being part of the Shared Ministry Team for the Ministry Area Priests in the Ministry Area shall be permitted to continue to use the customary titles for and of any particular churches within the Ministry Area for which they have particular care in accordance with the foregoing provisions of this Decree.
- 3.6 We and our successors Bishops of Swansea and Brecon shall licence one

- member of the Shared Ministry Team to act as Ministry Area Leader who shall carry out the functions and duties of Area Dean and if necessary incumbent as set out in the Constitution such a licence shall be for a fixed period of 3 years and at the end of each 3 year period we (or our successors Bishops of Swansea and Brecon) shall licence or re-licence (as appropriate) a member of the Ministry Area Team as having the powers and obligations of a Ministry Area Leader as set out in this Decree
- 3.7 the Shared Ministry Team shall meet as required and as arranged by the Ministry Area Leader and the members of the Shared Ministry Team

THE MINISTRY AREA

- 4.1 **THAT** henceforth all persons resident in the Ministry Area shall for all purposes be resident in and parishioners of the Ministry Area
- 4.2 **THAT** for all purposes ecclesiastical and canon law and the Constitution of the Church in Wales and the Constitution of the Swansea & Brecon Diocesan Conference and the regulations therein contained the parish churches of the parishes listed in Column 1 of the said schedule hereto shall be the parish churches of the Ministry Area in manner herein provided (hereinafter referred to as “the Ministry Area Churches”)
- 4.3 **THAT** the right of user of the Ministry Area Churches shall be that of a parish church in one and the same parish
- 4.4 **THAT** it shall be lawful to publish banns solemnize marriages and perform other ecclesiastical offices in the Ministry Area Churches as hitherto practised and enjoyed and authorized by law
- 4.5 **THAT** the Ministry Area Churches shall be the churches wherein shall take place the marriage of residents within the Ministry Area as authorized by law
- 4.6 **THAT** where a resident in the Ministry Area is to be married in one of the Ministry Area Churches the banns shall be read according to law in the Ministry Area Church wherein the marriage is to be solemnized and in the church in the district in which either of the parties to the marriage intended to be solemnized shall be residing
- 4.7 **THAT** baptisms shall be held and take place in any of the Ministry Area Churches
- 4.8 **THAT** for the purposes of baptism marriage and burial persons resident in the Ministry Area shall henceforth be parishioners of and in the Ministry Area in accordance with the canons and regulations of the Church in Wales

MINISTRY AREA CONFERENCE

4.9 **THAT** as soon as possible after the signing of this decree there shall be convened a vestry meeting for the Ministry Area in the manner provided by the Constitution of the Church in Wales at which shall be elected churchwardens and sidesmen in accordance with the Constitution of the Church in Wales and a Ministry Area Conference (hereinafter called “the MAC”)

4.10 **THAT** such churchwardens shall be elected from any of the churches in the Ministry Area provided that in any event such churchwardens shall also be a sub-warden of the church in which they worship

4.11 **THAT** the MAC shall be constituted as follows –

4.11.1 **Ex-officio members:-**

4.11.1.1 The clerics, stipendiary and non-stipendiary

4.11.1.2 The Churchwardens of the Ministry Area and

4.11.1.3 Full time stipendiary or salaried lay workers

4.11.2 **Elected Members**

Such number of other persons who shall be elected in accordance with the Constitution of the Church in Wales and the Constitution of the Swansea & Brecon Diocesan Conference provided always that each of the Ministry Area Churches shall have reasonable representation and in the event of any dispute in this matter the decision of the Archdeacon of the Archdeaconry shall be final and conclusive

4.12 **THAT** as soon as possible after the election of the MAC for the Ministry Area as hereinbefore provided the MAC shall meet to elect the following –

4.12.1 Two representatives of the Ministry Area to the Diocesan Board of Nomination and the supplementals therefor in accordance with the Constitution

4.12.2 The number of lay representatives to the Deanery Conference in accordance with the Constitution and the Constitution of the Swansea & Brecon Diocesan Conference provided always that each of the Ministry Area Churches shall have reasonable representation and in the event of any dispute in this matter the decision of the aforesaid Archdeacon shall be final and conclusive

4.12.3 a Financial sub-committee which shall be responsible for all financial matters concerning the Ministry Area such sub-committee to include (inter alia) the appointed treasurers of the individual churches within the Ministry Area so as to better inform both the Ministry Area and their respective churches of any and all financial decisions made which affect the Ministry Area as a whole and the individual churches within

- it. The Ministry Share for the Ministry Area shall be calculated in accordance with the Diocesan formula but the MAC may agree a different apportionment within the Ministry Area
- 4.12.4 the MAC shall set up a Buildings and Property sub-committee responsible for all matters concerning the buildings and property in the Ministry Area (including applications for faculties)
- 4.12.5 the MAC shall appoint a Ministry Area Executive under the leadership of the Ministry Area Leader and the Ministry Area Wardens who shall meet as often as required to discuss matters of importance to the Ministry Area as authorised by the MAC. The Ministry Area Executive shall have day to day responsibility for the Ministry Area
- 4.13 **THAT** an Annual Vestry Meeting and other meetings shall be held in the Ministry Area in accordance with the Canons and Regulations of the Church in Wales and of the Constitution and shall be the responsibility of the MAC

MINISTRY AREA CHURCH COMMITTEES

- 4.14 **THAT** as soon as possible after the signing of this decree for the better ecclesiastical administration of the Ministry Area there shall be formed in respect of each of the Ministry Area Churches a Church Committee which shall report to the Ministry Area and the MAC and each such committee shall comprise the following clergy and lay members:-
- 4.14.1 The clerics whether stipendiary or non-stipendiary exercising ministry in the Ministry Area
- 4.14.2 Such lay members as required from time to time
- 4.15 **THAT** a copy of any reports from each Church Committee meeting shall be delivered to the Ministry Area Leader within seven days after each meeting
- 4.16 **THAT** subject as hereinbefore provided the Ministry Area and the individual members of the Ministry Area Team shall for all ecclesiastical purposes possess the same rights and privileges and be affected by the same liabilities as are incident or belong or attach to an Ministry Area and the priests thereof for ecclesiastical purposes
- 4.17 **THAT** the authority of and the offices duties and services to be performed by a cleric or a duly authorized lay-person within the Ministry Area shall be as authorized in and by licence or commission granted by the Bishop or during a Vacancy in See by the duly appointed Commissary

MISCELLANEOUS

- 4.18 **AND IT IS HEREBY FURTHER DECREED** that all such steps as may be necessary to give effect to these presents shall be taken as soon as possible hereafter **PROVIDED THAT** nothing herein contained shall prevent Us from making any other decree or order relating to the matters aforesaid or any of them in conformity with the provisions of the Constitution or of any other power or authority Us enabling in that behalf
- 4.19 **AND IT IS HEREBY FURTHER DECREED** that the assets and liabilities of each Church as at the date of this Decree shall be retained by each individual Church Committee until such time as the MAC shall otherwise agree
- 4.20 **AND IT IS HEREBY FURTHER DECREED** that where there is a Church in Wales School within the Ministry Area the appointment of foundation governors and all other matters relating to the governance of the said Church in Wales School shall be overseen by the MAC who will also be responsible for fostering and maintaining relationships with all schools within the Ministry Area whether Church in Wales Schools or not
5. **THIS** Decree shall take effect on and from the date of these presents and shall forthwith be deposited in Our Diocesan Registry

SCHEDULE hereinbefore referred to

Column 1 (the parishes to be united)

Column 2 (the new Ministry Area)

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GIVEN under our Episcopal Seal this day of in the year of Our Lord
Two Thousand and Twenty-Three of our Consecration the First

