

MUTUAL

The Link with India is especially relevant here in Leicestershire. There is much to share culturally, but we hope to learn from each other too, particularly about the Church and its mission today.

We hope to enrich our spirituality and deepen our ecumenical relations through the witness of the Church of South India.

Celebrations and struggles can be shared and learned from as each of us faces the different challenges of our own context.



The Link committee is actively involved in encouraging individuals and groups to visit each other.

Those who have been to Trichy from Leicestershire have found the trip to be exciting, challenging and enlivening. It has often deepened their faith. Individuals and groups have visited with a range of interests.

Some visits have been educational, teaching in the C.S.I. schools and C.S.I. managed university. Other visits have had a medical focus and spent time in Trichy's hospitals and nurses training colleges, whilst other visits have been part of theological training, or an exploration of how Christians can work to improve social justice for the poor and marginalised.

Whatever the focus or reason for going each person has returned richer for the experience and keen to share that with others.

EXPERIENCE

LINK

Following the creation of the Link some churches or Churches Together groups have built particular links with places or projects in Trichy.

These are a vital part of our calling as Christians with sisters and brothers world-wide. Why? Because it has the potential to give us the opportunities to:

- * Deepen the sense of being part of the Body of Christ which transcends culture, nationality, ethnicity and geography.
- * Mutually support one another in mission and ministry – through friendship, encouragement, solidarity, reflection and prayer
- * Learn from one another – What is it in your understanding of Christ that is missing from our understanding and from which we need to learn?
- * Be challenged by one another on our cultural, economic, social and intellectual assumptions and discern together ever more carefully, what is genuinely of the kingdom and the gospel and what is not.
- * Develop bonds of trust and respect that enable us when appropriate, to speak prophetically to one another and hear one another attentively in Christ.

The Link seeks to encourage churches in Leicestershire and in the Diocese of Trichy-Tanjore to pray for one another.

This prayer support is seen as a vital part of the life of the Link. Below is our link prayer which we encourage churches to use:

God of love,
you created such abundant diversity of people and cultures, yet you call us together as one family.

Give us humility to receive from others and generosity to share of ourselves that our churches and our peoples may serve in partnership and grow together in your love, to the honour and glory of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER

SUPPORT

Prayer is the key element of support which churches in Leicestershire and the Diocese of Trichy-Tanjore offer to each other, however there are times when particular projects are in need of funding and so churches in Leicestershire have been able to assist in this very practical way.

On other occasions what has been needed is knowledge and experience. The Rev'd Suresh Kumar, previously treasurer of the Diocese of Trichy-Tanjore, now serving as a priest in the Diocese of Leicester, brings his insights and skills in ministry and theological training to those he works with and supports in Leicestershire.



Support and engagement between Leicestershire and Trichy-Tanjore means that we are able to reflect on issues with each other and raise awareness of them with each other and with those in our communities.

Such issues might include work with HIV orphans in Trichy-Tanjore diocese or the difficulties faced by asylum seekers in Leicestershire, the extreme poverty and difficult working conditions of the tea pickers in Trichy-Tanjore diocese or the difficulty of attracting and keeping young people as part of the church community in Leicestershire.

These difficulties and issues can be tackled by prayer and practical actions, such as raising the awareness of Fair Trade and its importance or praying for workers who are able to communicate with young people effectively.

This is vital to the life of the Link.

AWARENESS