

Developing a Twinning agreement

You have begun the Twinning process and you have identified a congregation that you feel you can learn from and grow together, so what's next? You could continue as you are, visiting each other, communicating with each other on an informal basis or you could formally acknowledge your Twinning with a Twinning Agreement.



A Twinning Agreement can help to affirm the relationship by encouraging both congregations to take ownership of their Twinning, helping them make the most of the relationship. Your agreement is exactly that, it's YOURS and it is important that you work together to create the best Agreement for you and your twin.

An Agreement can help to strengthen the bonds and friendships that have already been built in the initial stages of twinning, by promising to walk alongside each other as you learn from each other and develop your faith together.

Where to start?

Discuss, Share and Pray

Start by talking to each other: discuss with one another what your hopes for the relationship are, what can you give, what would you like to get from it? A lot of this information will have been shared in your Profile form that was completed at the start of your Twinning journey, but discuss these hopes further, how are you going to achieve these, who will make this possible?

Visits with your Twinning are a great opportunity to discuss your agreement, to sit together and discuss the formalities and to make the process real. However technology allows us to be in contact with the rest of the world just as easily. Why not use the phone, text messaging, email or Skype to talk through your expectations with each other?

Pull together your Draft agreement

So what would you like to include in your Agreement, how should it be structured? Again this very much depends on how much you, as a Twinning, would like to include. A suggested structure is outlined below; please feel free to amend this to suit your needs.

Opening Statement	Why not start your agreement with a declaration to each other: for example, we agree to walk together, or we the congregations of.....and..... started a journey of friendship and fellowship on
Vision and Goals	This is the main body of your agreement and will state the reasons for beginning and developing your Twinning. You could identify what both congregations want to achieve from your relationship. Helpful Hint: Make sure that the objectives set are SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and timely).
Commitment	How are you going to commit to achieving and working towards these objectives? Will you commit to visiting each other and praying for each other? How will you keep your twinning updated with what is happening in your congregation? Will you Skype, phone, text, email, set up a social media group or page?
Who is going to drive your Twinning?	You could identify who in each congregation will be your designated coordinator; will you have a Twinning Committee? What will their purpose be? They might plan activities, ensure communications and/or organise visits.
Evaluation	Like any new venture, it is good to take time to reflect on what's working and what's not working. We would recommend that you put some sort of evaluation timeframe into your agreement in order to ensure that your twinning continues to be a meaningful and successful relationship. This reflection may identify a need to shift the focus of your twinning or it might identify that you are right on track.

Once you have created your draft Agreement together, make sure that both congregations are happy with it. Remember, this is a commitment you are making together so it should be mutually agreed.

Signing

The signing of your Agreement is an important milestone in your Twinning and you might choose to celebrate this. There are lots of ways which you could mark the occasion including:

- Each congregation holds a special service on the same Sunday including messages from each other; you could even Skype or call each other.
- You may have the opportunity to sign your agreement in the same place with representatives from each congregation present.
- You could agree to sing the same hymns or have songs from each country played, exchange a special gift or have a common reading or theme.

The possibilities are endless, but the most important aspect to remember is that it is a special occasion for your Twinning, and it can be however you want it to be.