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Join the Association of Interchurch Families'  
weekend conference **online**  
14 - 15 October 2023

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## Interchurch Families – Beacons of Receptive Ecumenism

*An invitation to participate in the Association of Interchurch Families (AIF) weekend conference by joining all the main events via Zoom.*

Receptive Ecumenism is sometimes defined as ‘... both a way of thinking and a process that enables unity to be built by receiving gifts from others. It challenges us to think not of what others might benefit from receiving from us, but to recognise our needs and to put ourselves in the place of being a recipient.’ Put simply, our church traditions should not be asking themselves “What do they need to learn from us?” but rather, “What do we need to learn from them?”. The hope is that if all our church traditions were to ask themselves this question and act upon it, we might all draw closer together in Christ’s family, while also deepening our own identity.

To married couples this sounds very familiar, for it is in the nature of marriage that couples should aim to learn from each other to help them grow together. For interchurch couples, learning about each other’s denomination helps us to develop a local sacramental practice of domestic church that is part of that growing together. During this two-day event we will explore how the experience and practice of interchurch families might offer our churches a lived example of Receptive Ecumenism in action.

We will be guided throughout the weekend by three speakers:

- **Revd. Diane Ryan** is an Anglican parish priest in the Diocese of Durham. Her essay “Interchurch Families and Receptive Ecumenism” published in the volume mentioned below, is based partly on her personal experience of being married to Greg, a Roman Catholic.
- **Dr Gregory Ryan** is Assistant Professor of Ecclesiology and Receptive Ecumenism (Research) in the Centre for Catholic Studies at Durham University and delivers formation programmes for lay and ordained ministry in the north of England; he was formerly Director of Formation for the Catholic Diocese of Hallam. Together with Professor Paul Murray, founding Director of the Centre for Catholic Studies he recently edited “*Receptive Ecumenism as Transformative Ecclesial Learning*” (2022), a collection of essays, all of which Dr Rowan Williams described in the Foreword as “challenging, erudite and imaginative”. Greg is married to Diane.
- **Fr Dominic Robinson SJ** is the parish priest of the Church of the Immaculate Conception, Farm Street in London, and involved in Churches Together in Westminster.

**To attend online** – please register your interest (by 8 October) by following this link to the AIF website [Upcoming Events \(interchurchfamilies.org.uk\)](https://interchurchfamilies.org.uk) and take care to click on the button titled “**Online via Zoom**”. You will be sent log-in details once you have registered.

**Cost** – there is no charge for this event, but you will be offered an opportunity to make a donation to offset costs if you so wish.

**Programme** – all the main components of the weekend will be available online ie the four speaker-led sessions and the two services of worship, details of which are shown below. Online attendees will be able to join online discussions groups when the in-person attendees convene in small groups, and they will also be able to attend the online services. Booking to participate does not commit you to attending all the sessions - you can simply log-in for those which interest you. The full programme can be seen on the website at the link above.

**SATURDAY 14 OCTOBER**

<b>1400</b>	<b>Introductory session - Welcome / Practicalities etc</b>
<b>1425-1525</b>	<b>Session 1 – Introducing Receptive Ecumenism</b> Greg - An introduction to the theme of the weekend: what is Receptive Ecumenism and beginning our discussion on how we might make use of it in our church and spiritual lives.
<b>1620-1800</b>	<b>Session 2 – Biblical reasoning</b> Diane & Greg will pick up on discussion points raised during Session 1 and lead us into a scriptural reflection in small groups.
<b>1945</b>	<b>Anglican Eucharist – Rev. Diane Ryan</b>

**SUNDAY 15 OCTOBER**

<b>0935-1045</b>	<b>Session 3 – Not problems but pioneers</b> Diane will show how Receptive Ecumenism is particularly relevant to an interchurch family context.
<b>1120-1245</b>	<b>Session 4 – Interchurch Families in a synodal church</b> Greg will build on the previous session and explore new horizons for interchurch families and Receptive Ecumenism in a church where synodality is the ' <i>ordinary way of living and working</i> ' (Pope Francis). This will be a particularly relevant discussion given that today will be the 11th day of the Synod on Synodality in the Vatican.
<b>1455-1545</b>	<b>RC Mass – Fr. Dominic</b>