

Mission Action Plan 2019

Come follow Christ  in the footsteps of St Chad
Know the Story *Share* the Story *Live* the Story

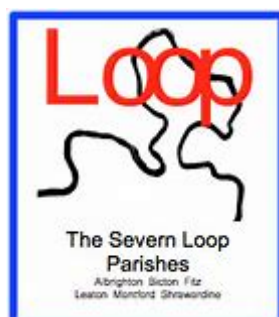
Our sense of collective identity at Severn Loop Parishes continues to grow, and we are positively looking to work together more effectively and strategically in key areas of mission. Our MAP is designed to reflect this aspect of our common life together, but we do take mission seriously in all our communities, recognising the uniqueness and distinctiveness of each. Therefore, the first part of our plan focuses on group-wide priorities and strategy, and the second part takes a particular look at individual churches and their needs, challenges and opportunities.

The decision to focus on the general first is deliberate- it is a reflection of the call of the Church to recognise that we are always part of something bigger, within which we each play our role in joining in the mission of God. Working together well and judiciously has the potential to enable individual churches to spend time developing their own unique expressions, as part of the body of Christ. As Romans 12: 4-6 reminds us:

'For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us.'

Our MAP is structured in terms of the diocesan priorities of *Discipleship, Vocation and Evangelism*. In Severn Loop we have translated this into our own strap-line- Know the Story, Share the Story, Live the Story.

We will review/ reflect on our MAP in both PCC and Severn Loop Forum meetings, at least annually.



Discipleship- how we Live the Story across Severn Loop

Now- Celebrate with us that....

The introduction of the Severn Loop Forum (occasional meetings with Church Wardens and the Ministry Team from across the group) has helped us continue to work better together, as do events that we share within the rhythm of the year.

We enjoy worshipping together on 5th Sundays.

We have had the blessing of annual coach trips to Cathedral cities, including Choral Evensong.

We have two well-established modes of communication- the monthly 'Loop' and our website.

We have a monthly prayer meeting for the whole Loop.

The coming year- pray for our immediate plans to....

Make better use of our rural setting in engaging with God, through guided walks with prayer stations, and outdoor services.

Consider the occasional film club with discussion- linking other people's stories with the Christian message.

Introduce a prayer diary- a four weekly cycle covering people and issues around Severn Loop, so we can better support each other in prayer.

In the years ahead- dream with us as we....

Continue to consider how our environment speaks into our spiritual journey- especially with respect to the river- whose meandering loop links us together (e.g. entering the Dragon Boat race or finding out if we can hire the Sabrina boat).

Explore the possibility of a parish-wide weekend away, to include families who have become part of our *Messy Churches*.

Continue our commitment to engaging people of all ages, particularly young adults.

Think about how to introduce more worship services targeted at different demographic groups.

Vocation- how we Know the Story across Severn Loop

Now- Celebrate with us that....

Rotas are filled- people offer gifts sacrificially in so many ways to sustain the life and ministry of our churches, whether it be through cleaning, gardening, providing refreshments, reading, welcoming, decorating the church, maintaining the building, or any number of hidden acts of service.

We have spent a day with George Fisher, the Diocesan Director of Mission, exploring the gifts that God has given us.

Through our work in schools, we are learning from each other, being awakened to the work of God in our lives and deepening our knowledge of who God has created us to be.

Through the work co-ordinated by our Pastoral Care Minister we are committed to showing those vulnerable members of our community that they are loved by God and by us.

Our *Remembering with Love* service is well-established and demonstrates our response to God's love by showing love to those who grieve.

Our sense of Christian heritage is expressed through a tradition of pilgrimage, and through some of our ancient buildings- our annual Choral Evensong service at Battlefields is an example of this.

Diana Barnett is to be ordained- we are so grateful to her for her service, particularly as the person who organises our annual coach trips.

We are continuing to develop our approach to baptism by gathering groups of families together where possible and making the focus more intentionally about what we do and why- using the Sandra Millar material to structure it and facilitate discussion.

The coming year- pray for our immediate plans to....

Discern, encourage and equip new Lay Worship Leaders to share in this ministry.

Develop *Messy Church* further by encouraging those who attend to have a role on the team.

Continue to have fun! Recognising the joy of the gospel by continuing to do social things together- a tennis tournament has been suggested!

Reintroduce/ introduce some specific, themed worship services that may attract those who do not find the mainstream appealing- for example, Blue Christmas, Healing services, Pet Services.

Continue our commitment to helping those living with dementia and those who care for them feel welcome in our church services, so they can be valued as people with unique gifts, created for worship. All churches in Severn Loop hold a *Dementia Friendly Certificate* from the diocese.

Develop regular Quiet Days as opportunities to deepen our understanding of who God has created us to be.

In the years ahead- dream with us as we....

Think about how to extend our corporate gift of hospitality, as a means of inviting more people to recognise and offer the gifts God has given them- maybe by hosting a coffee and cake stall in various locations, or including a nearly-new sale. We hope this will enable people to help in ways that feel possible, whilst also opening up the opportunity for more.

Evangelism- how we Share the Story across Severn Loop

Now- Celebrate with us that....

In 2018, two *Messy Churches* have been established at either end of Severn Loop. These are well-supported and strategically designed to be open to all, but located in our two biggest population centres, which is also where our schools are.

We have strong relationships with our two primary schools (Bomere and Bicton) through *Open the Book* and church members serving on the governing body.

24/7 prayer happens termly and is open to all as an invitation to explore faith.

Posada (a travelling knitted Nativity set) has been introduced in our two local primary schools, as a way of helping families to understand the heart of the Christmas story and to encourage faith in the home.

We have a prayer-shawl ministry and a tradition of giving Christmas cards to those who receive Home Communion and regular visits, to help them feel connected to us, and to our Christian hope.

We enjoy regular opportunities to share the gospel through baptisms, confirmations and weddings.

We are regular contributors to parish magazines, which gives us the opportunity to share our story in a local context.

Our many open churchyards are a place of peace and comfort to our community- they are well-loved, well-tended and speak of God's enduring love to those who walk the path of grief.

The coming year- pray for our immediate plans to....

Offer the *Talking Jesus* course.

Use the *daisy-chain* principle (always giving people information about 'the next event' when they come to a church-run activity) to be more strategic about general publicity.

Further develop *Posada* to include more people- for example our wider communities and older children.

Consider the possibilities for developing 24/7 prayer so that it reaches more people- possibly by extending it or having it move around the villages.

Consider how we develop our approach to *Messy Church* so that we better publicise it and create as many opportunities as possible to engage all-ages.

Broaden our pastoral support by providing points of regular contact throughout the year.

In the years ahead- dream with us as we...

Think about who might replace Diana as a trip organiser and think about running a coach trip that is completely open to the community, that helps us to get to know others, and them us, and includes an element of spirituality.

Explore the possibility of starting a children's holiday club during the summer.

Consider running a seeker course for the community followed by lunch in a pub.

Consider how to speak the message of hope in a culture that struggles to deal with death- possibly by running *Gravetalk* and discerning an appropriate venue.

Our Churches

Albrighton

Our friends say:

- We are very welcoming and friendly.
- We have provided an excellent car park!
- We are good at making connections with the hotels.
- The church is an intimate space for worship and is stunningly beautiful.



Celebrate with us:

- that we regularly advertise our services in the local hotels and this has drawn people in, particularly at Christmas.

Pray for our immediate plans:

- to focus on reinvigorating the Harvest Supper and advertising it well.

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Bicton

Our friends say:

- We are a friendly church, welcoming and inclusive.
- We are very flexible and easy-going.
- They appreciate our *Messy Church*.
- They enjoy our Pet Service and the Teddy Bear Parachute Drop.
- We have strong links with children through the school *Open the Book* assemblies.



Celebrate with us:

- that our monthly coffee mornings are a place of welcome and encouragement.
- that we have a local home group.

Pray for our immediate plans:

- to introduce a Messy Sports Day to *Messy Church* this summer.
- to consider beginning an informal worship service- possibly *Bread Church*.

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Fitz

Our friends say:

- The church is peaceful.
- We are visitor-friendly, welcoming and warm!
- We provide lovely hospitality and good food.
- We have a great village hall.
- We are happily unique.

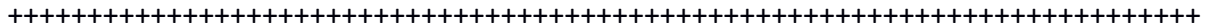


Celebrate with us:

- that we have had some really encouraging family and seasonal services.
- our social events are well-attended.

Pray for our immediate plans:

- to introduce Forest/ Wild/ Mossy Church for local families.
- to look at formally introducing an Ecumenical Welcome.



Leaton (with Bomere Heath Mission Church)

Our friends say:

- They enjoy the *Remembering with Love* service.
- We are welcoming and stay in touch with people.
- They appreciate anniversary cards for baptism families.
- They appreciate *Open the Book* and links with the school.
- We are good at inviting people in.
- We care for the bereaved.
- We have established *Messy Church*.



Celebrate with us:

- that we have established *Messy Church*.
- our *Stepping Out Cafe* is a place of warmth and welcome.
- we have a local home group.
- our social events are well-supported.

Pray for our immediate plans:

- to begin a *Knit and Natter, Sew and Chatter* group.
- to build on our *Messy Church* contacts in creative ways.

- to explore beginning a daytime home group.
- to consider introducing a Pet Service and Forest Church in local woodland.
- In the longer term, we'd also like to think about how to meet the pastoral needs of our community more creatively- possibly through a regular, cafe-style, drop-in.

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Montford

Our friends say:

- We have a real country church atmosphere.
- We have a relaxed ethos and are welcoming.
- We practise good hospitality – with lots of cake!
- Our seasonal dioramas are lovely.
- We get involved in the community- with entertainment, events, and the panto.
- We do well to convene a Choir at Christmas!



Celebrate with us:

- that our dioramas are a creative way of sharing our Christian story.
- that our seasonal services are really well-supported by the community.

Pray for our immediate plans:

- to introduce a church coffee morning in the parish hall that's free, welcoming and includes some *Messy Church* crafts.

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Shrawardine

Our friends say:

- We have a stunning location and a beautiful church.
- We are friendly people who always provide a warm welcome.
- Jane's window is very special.
- The Easter sunrise worship is well-loved.
- 'The Space' has a tranquil atmosphere and we have run some good Quiet Days.
- Our community involvement is appreciated- coffee mornings, craft activities and the panto.



Celebrate with us:

- that we are committed to being involved in the wider life of the community as a means of sharing our story.

Pray for our immediate plans:

- to introduce Wild/ Forest/ Mossy Church for local families.
- to look at formally introducing an Ecumenical Welcome.