

Two Valleys Mission Action Plan (2013 - 2016)

Introduction and Context

The Mission Action Plan (MAP) reflects what we already do and what we intend to do in the next few years in the parishes of Cartmel Fell, Crosthwaite & Lyth, Winster and Witherslack. It is based on the views of church members as to how we can best carry out the mission of the Diocese.

The Diocesan Mission is: **By God's grace, to grow God's kingdom in Cumbria;**

and its Vision Statement is: **To see our churches growing Disciples of all ages.**

As this Vision unfolds over the next few years, we expect to see many signs of what we believe to be the 'Five Marks of Discipleship':

- **Maturity in faith** that leads to
- **Prayer and worship** that is expectant and lively;
- **Community service and engagement** - looking outwards;
- **Evangelism** - telling others about Jesus and difference He can make to their lives;
- **Quality of relationships** - clear and visible, characterised by love, acceptance and openness.

Developing the MAP

Open Meetings for our four congregations were held on 12th January and 9th March 2013. Over 50 people attended the first meeting, which generated over 100 ideas. These ideas were distilled down into seven Key themes that were presented to the second meeting in order to identify the focus for our Mission Action Plan. The seven principal themes on which our churches wish to focus their efforts are:

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| 1. House Groups | 5. Outreach and giving |
| 2. Services and worship | 6. Teaching |
| 3. Youth and children | 7. Pastoral care |
| 4. Linking our churches with our local communities | |

In our 2013-2016 MAP, while not losing any of the above, we shall initially focus our efforts on the first three themes.

1. House Groups

We want to establish across the Two Valleys a network of house groups that meet regularly:

- to complement formal worship;
- to provide opportunities for their members to worship informally, study and apply Christian teaching to real life situations;
- to provide mutual care and encouragement and promote the growth of discipleship.

A House Group Development Team will be established to develop a framework and guidelines for the groups, provide materials, encourage membership and provide training for House Group Coordinators. House Groups will get underway in January 2014 and will be evaluated in Jan 2015. The goal is for 30 people from the Two Valley churches to be meeting regularly in a network of House Groups across the area by Jan 2016.

We believe that these actions will result in greater maturity of faith and confidence amongst church members, support for evangelism and will contribute to the achievement of the Five Marks of Discipleship.

2. Services and Worship

The styles of our corporate worship should encourage the congregation to worship in a way that is meaningful and that engages our hearts and spirits as well as our minds, and helps us to grow individually in our faith. In order to broaden the styles of worship in the different churches, while being mindful of the different 'flavours' of each, we intend to:

- set up a regular informal 'Praise and Worship' gathering to explore different ways of worshipping;

- hold periodic 'special' services in all the churches that will be user-friendly;
- develop a range of appropriate styles of Sunday worship for each of the four churches;
- increase the involvement of lay people to read, lead intercessions and preach;
- continue the regular monthly prayer times for the Two Valleys churches.

We believe that through making our regular services more accessible, involving more lay people and holding periodic services that employ a range of resources and styles to which friends and neighbours can be invited, our congregations will grow in numbers, vibrancy and maturity of faith.

3. Youth and Children

Our long-term aim as a Two Valleys Team has been to establish a young Christian community for young people aged 7 and over that meets regularly to discuss the Bible, share faith, eat together and pray, in order to nurture faith and friendships at a level appropriate for children and young people. Our aim is to enable them to develop a mature and lasting faith, allowing space for questions and exploration so that they become mature disciples.

The principal objectives are to:

- establish an Adventurers group for children in school Year 3-4 [to complement Pathfinders (Year 5-7) and Trailblazers (Year 8+)];
- recruit new leaders for Pathfinders and Adventurers;
- build in opportunities for involvement and leadership within the provision of services and worship, including (by 2014) an annual youth service in church led by the young people;
- encourage young people to join the rota for reading at the Family services;
- develop the Family services at Witherslack and Crosthwaite, strengthening links with the schools;
- put in place (by 2015) a long-term teaching plan for Adventurers and Pathfinders using available course materials.

In order to work effectively there is an immediate need to:

- develop a rota to provide a monthly hot meal;
- secure provision of transport for the young people.

Short-term developments of other Themes

Linking our churches with our local communities

We would like the church to be seen as a welcoming integral part of the community whose members seek to care pastorally for all and thus demonstrate true Christian love and service.

To this end we will:

- maintain a Church Directory for each parish;
- improve links with the Parish councils by sharing an annual report of church life with the Parish Councils;
- review the content and style of the parish magazine, develop a communication strategy and work to increase readership.

Outreach and Giving

We need to avoid becoming narrow-minded and insular, so that instead we become generous churches that support all kinds of Christian mission and enable us to engage in appropriate outreach to our wider communities. To this end the Charitable Giving policies within all four churches will be reviewed and the policy for church giving will be revised in consultation with each congregation.

Ongoing activities for future development

Teaching: we will continue to offer a variety of opportunities for members of all our congregations, and others in our community, to learn about Christian faith. This will enable us to be constantly growing and maturing.

Pastoral care: this key element in church life will be continued and developed, ensuring that we love one another and demonstrate appropriate care and concern.

Evaluation and Review: The development and implementation of our MAP will be evaluated and reviewed on an annual basis and further wider consultation will take place as and when necessary.