

# Summary of benefice planning against the Shared Priorities

Year: 2023/24

Benefice: Ludlow

Agreed on: September 2023

at: PCC Away Day

Contact name and details: Revd Kelvin Price

<p><b>Our mission context:</b> the area, people, places we serve</p> <p>Town 12,500 is increasing with the development of new housing estates in and around Ludlow. Diverse socially and spiritually, but has a lack of ethnic diversity. Areas of affluence and of deprivation. Sandpits estate built post-war approx. 3000 people in social housing. Issues: Foodbank usage has increased continually year on year. Drug-related issues increasing. Single parents under pressure. Multiple generation unemployment. Mental Health issues increasing, especially since the Covid lockdown of 2020. Behaviour in schools is a continued concern which is linked to all of the above.</p> <p>Two Primary Schools – St Laurence (CofE) and Ludlow Primary (State). Ludlow Secondary (CofE) in St Laurence’s parish. Sixth Form College (State).</p> <p>Ecumenical relationships and partnership are strong – Elim; Baptist; Methodist; Anglican.</p> <p>Care Homes in the benefice – Alexandra; Hagley Place, Hendra House, Four Rivers and Churchill House. Hospital with an ecumenical chaplaincy team.</p> <p>Above average proportion of retired people and growing.</p> <p>Attractive tourist town.</p> <p>Two churches in the benefice St Laurence’s (60 - 80,000 + visitors per year) and St John’s.</p> <p>CTAL (though not a full representation by all churches)</p>	<p><b>Now? Changes anticipated over the next five years?</b></p>
<p><b>Where we see signs of God at work locally</b></p> <p>What we can learn / build on /develop</p> <p>Feeling that there are living disciples of Christ.</p> <p>Small pastoral team, inc. retired clergy, readers and lay people with ecumenical teams within care homes</p> <p>The courage of the congregation in persisting – their tenacity to get through difficult times specially in relation to the buildings.</p> <p>Life events and special events are still important to local people, Baptisms now taking place in services &amp; privately</p> <p>Vision for mission and community.</p> <p>Incredibly generous giving, St Laurence’s joined the Parish Giving Scheme in 2021.</p> <p>Mums and Tots –re-launched.</p> <p>Ecumenical leaders working together, though with changes as some ministers have retired (to build relationships with new leaders)</p> <p>Alpha courses and bible groups.</p> <p>Key benefactors to help fund mission to those in and around our town.</p> <p>Live streaming of StL services.</p> <p>Co-operation and involvement in work with other churches (e.g. 4 Square Theatre, open the book, living nativity, CTAL.)</p>	<p><b>Where we see growth / encouragements</b></p>

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Sermons on StL website provided by Andrew Body



**Our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats as we see them as a parish/benefice:**

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Faith and commitment of our congregations.</li> <li>• Sunday congregations have been growing, albeit slowly.</li> <li>• Majority know that reinvention of both churches to enable mission.</li> <li>• Pioneer curate.</li> <li>• Growing ecumenical partnership with local leaders. (new leaders to include)</li> <li>• Financial generosity.</li> <li>• Generous giving towards changes within both Churches.</li> <li>• Open the Book (OTB) teams.</li> <li>• Pioneer curate working in the High School.</li> <li>• Greater links with parents within the community.</li> <li>• Church tradition.</li> <li>• Continued community events at both churches.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The age profile of the Sunday congregation – currently leadership and giving core – know the need to grow younger congregation.</li> <li>• Prayer and frequency.</li> <li>• The cost of maintaining buildings, whilst looking to adapt churches for more community usage.</li> <li>• Current Sunday worship works for current demographic – need for new forms and styles of worship for people of all ages and backgrounds, need for willingness to move this forward.</li> <li>• Sound system in StL look at head mics and sound desk</li> <li>• Holding to the past, not moving with the times.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The versatility of our buildings – for community activity and variety of worship in the future.</li> <li>• Prayer.</li> <li>• Building up and building on Life Events (Weddings, Funerals and Baptisms) – it is still their tradition.</li> <li>• Build on Mums and Tots. Journeying with those attending, steps in a relationship with Christ.</li> <li>• New style worship services.</li> <li>• Current opportunities within schools, high school and college.</li> <li>• Alpha.</li> <li>• Bible courses.</li> <li>• Life groups, practising the way.</li> <li>• New worshipping communities.</li> <li>• Ecumenical partnerships.</li> <li>• Bread wine, brew and chat.</li> <li>• Sermon series (ecumenical and local).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Town increase of issues growing there, from poverty, drug issues, mental health, struggling parents and single mothers. We need a greater sense of care and outreach there beyond the Pioneer Curate.</li> <li>• Youth and younger youth within our town. We have services that care for young children and the introduction of the living room, but how do we engage our older youth?</li> <li>• Good ecumenical relations now – but important for future personnel that this continues and maintains excellent working relationships.</li> <li>• Growing aged population within the town, our core teams are all of a certain age. They are valued and loved, though also recognised the increased pressure of looking after our churches on them.</li> </ul>

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our volunteers.</li> <li>• Church and coffee shops (St Laurence).</li> <li>• Re-ordered church space.</li> <li>• Key benefactors for mission.</li> <li>• Wisdom and experience of our older members.</li> <li>• Launch of new services.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demographic separation from the people of the town, particularly in St John’s Parish.</li> <li>• Too reliant on key benefactors for both time and money.</li> <li>• Future proofing, succession planning.</li> <li>• Teaching elements (prayer, sermon series)</li> <li>• Communication (services advertised when not on)</li> <li>• Buildings can be inspiring but also imposing for some.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prayer and healing training and pastoral care.</li> <li>• Digital engagement.</li> <li>• Full time clergy.</li> <li>• Stephen’s house.</li> <li>• Retired age population, skills, time and energy.</li> <li>• Skills training ISO’s (Shipping containers for workshops).</li> <li>• Bereavement style café get together.</li> <li>• Opportunities in local media and other organisations such as U3A to present talks and discussions or have representation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of mission training and on-going work for the young and families within the town.</li> <li>• Future proofing, succession planning.</li> <li>• Caleb &amp; Peter stream.</li> <li>• Town perception, Castle &amp; old buildings. Town can be geared towards tourism.</li> <li>• St Laurence’s can be seen from outside of the town, sometimes hard to find when in the town itself.</li> </ul>
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**People and Resources: Now? Anticipated?** *Think about clergy and lay ministers, parish officers, new ministries, vocations, opportunities/needs for deployment etc*  
 Rector and 1 curate. 2 x PTO. Lay leadership. Pioneer curate.  
 Parish Administrator x 1  
**Full set of parish officers – 2 Wardens, 1 treasurer and secretary.**  
**Full quota of PCC members. Can you get this updated please Kelvin.**

**Our discernment of our way forward together as a parish/benefice**      **Our current vision for this parish/benefice in 5 years’ time**  
 To see the love of Christ constantly displayed by our congregations throughout our town and their front lines. To grow both churches to serve current and future generations in and around Ludlow. Our Buildings to become living hubs that expresses God’s love, so that individuals, families and community lives are encouraged to become part of Gods family, seeing new generations of Christians living out the gospel of Christ.

<b>Looking back - What we achieved 2022</b>	<b>Action planned for 2023 +</b>	<b>Our goals and “measures of success”</b>
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**Shared Priority 1: Growing disciples of all ages and backgrounds – spiritually and numerically**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Buildings have both been through transformations to allow them to serve our community better.</li> <li>• Continued break-through in the local High School.</li> <li>• Alpha courses run x 3</li> <li>• Strong ecumenical links.</li> <li>• Links within families and communities within our town.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alpha courses to continue.</li> <li>• New style services.</li> <li>• Practising the way.</li> <li>• Pilgrimage.</li> <li>• Life Events training through lay &amp; clergy.</li> <li>• A range of services to be run for communities within the area.</li> <li>• Youth Alpha to launch.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commitment to wider participation in the church.</li> <li>• The growth cycle.</li> <li>• Creating wells not fences and becoming wells through the Good News.</li> </ul>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A number of miraculous healings.</li> <li>• Ongoing building projects.</li> <li>• New shop and coffee shop.</li> <li>• Mission to the marginalised assisted by key benefactors.</li> <li>• Live streaming.</li> <li>• Mission outreach in and around our town.</li> <li>• Revamped website, electronic newsletter and Parish magazine.</li> <li>• Tea &amp; toast set up.</li> <li>• Toddlers re-launched.</li> <li>• The Living room service setup.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Reaching non-Christians</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conversations about faith and identity at school with Chaplain.</li> <li>• The Journey of Faith tour in church (enter as a visitor, leave as a Pilgrim).</li> <li>• Generosity review.</li> <li>• Coffee shop / Cafe Church, mission function for church, financially and pastorally.</li> <li>• On-going building transformations.</li> <li>• Prayer boiler room.</li> <li>• Toddlers.</li> <li>• Mentoring/ skills workshop.</li> <li>• Tea, toast, bread &amp; wine to build on.</li> <li>• Meeting new arrivals into parish.</li> <li>• Congregational involvement in local social mission projects (HTL, Food Bank etc.)</li> <li>• Schools using church for events. Educational events. Education resource.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Shared Priority 2: Serving the common good – transforming lives and communities</b></p>		
<p>Courses Clergy Finances and hardship fund.</p>	<p>Crossing the road to meet people we might have avoided through growing confidence and the example of our pioneer curate! Widening our reach extraordinarily.</p>	<p>Wells not fences. 24/7 not 2hrs per Sunday – place of worship charging our pursuit of Christ. Whole life disciples and practising the way.</p>
<p><b>Shared Priority 3: Sharing, developing and reimagining ministry for mission in the 21<sup>st</sup> century</b></p>		
<p><i>Growing the imagination of our current congregations about what could be possible and growing vision for all.</i></p>	<p>Stabilised and grown in confidence. Alpha courses to continue running alongside other discipleship courses to develop confidence to lead. Orthodoxy, pace of life linked through the rhythm of prayer in all things. Links with other Ludlow Churches</p>	<p>Being available/ present in church and town more and a much as possible. Doing life/ meals together. Stephen House.</p>

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	Mindfulness group. Breathing, attracting a younger audience. Day Pilgrimages walking.	
<b>Shared Commitment: to focusing our resources – money, buildings, time, people etc - where there is greatest mission need and opportunity</b>		
<i>Outrageous generosity from individuals and the congregation to enable sustainable financial streams for the church, the parish offer, utilities and mission. Parish giving scheme.</i>	Generosity review, teaching and sermon series. St Laurence and St Johns building evaluation for sustainability ref mission.  Parish Giving Scheme, St John’s Church.	That people of all ages and backgrounds and those with and without financial strength are able to contribute and feel valued, growth cycle progression. Use of building increase. Level of giving increase.