



# LEADING EVANGELISM LEARNING HUB



## MISSION, EVANGELISM AND WITNESS

**Mission** comes from a Latin word meaning 'sent'. It therefore describes everything the Church is called into the world to do as we participate in God's mission to the world, captured well in the Anglican [Five Marks of Mission](#). We are a sent people (John 20:21), sent to continue the mission and ministry of Christ on earth as his body, to do what Jesus did when he was on earth. It involves working to preserve the planet, alleviating poverty, fighting injustice, speaking of Jesus, and helping people grow as disciples of Christ, amongst many other things.

**Evangelism** is a subset of mission, the specific verbal communication of the good news about Jesus, or, as the Archbishop of Canterbury likes to explain it, 'Evangelism is the setting forth of the good news of Jesus so that all can hear and respond'. It is one of the Five Marks. Evangelism is primarily about the speaking of good news, but it depends on both the lived out example of the Christian life, and servant-hearted engagement with contemporary needs and issues within a parish and beyond.

All Christians are **witnesses**. In Acts 1:8 it is a noun describing who we are rather than a verb telling what we might do. The question is not whether we choose to be witnesses, the question is whether we are faithful witnesses or not. We witness in both word and deed, testifying to the reality of what we have personally experienced by sharing our experience in words and showing the difference it makes in our lives by deeds.

## GOSPEL

The word gospel means good news. Matthew, Mark, Luke and John are called the 'Gospels' because they are telling the story of the good news about Jesus. Mark's gospel starts with 'The beginning of the good news about Jesus, the Messiah, the Son of God' (Mark 1:1). So for Christians this good news is focused on Jesus: who he was, what he said and did, why he died, and the reality of his resurrection.

It is good news, because Jesus shows us God's incredible love for all human kind, and his desire for us to live knowing him, made possible through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus.

Knowing God in this way brings freedom, meaning, and purpose to our lives, which is why Justin Welby says 'The most important decision any person can ever make is to become a disciple of Jesus Christ. It's the best thing anyone can do.' (Find out more at [www.churchofengland.org/our-faith/what-we-believe](http://www.churchofengland.org/our-faith/what-we-believe) or [www.christianity.org.uk](http://www.christianity.org.uk).)

"The most basic meaning of the word evangelism is the sharing of good news."  
Stephen Cottrell,  
Archbishop of York

When you hear people talk about 'sharing the gospel', it simply means talking about why Jesus is good news.

## SHOWING AND SHARING THE FAITH

This phrase is used to describe how we live out our Christian faith in our daily lives.

We **'show'** the faith in kindness and generosity towards others – by helping people in difficult times, supporting local community action projects, caring for colleagues, speaking well of others, being a good neighbour and so on.

We **'share'** the faith when we talk about how we came to be a part of a church, or the changes being a Christian has made in our lives or why Jesus is good news.

Ideally, loving acts (or 'good works') and helpful words go together, so that when we speak about our faith people have

seen it demonstrated in the way we behave.

### GATHERED/SCATTERED

A church isn't primarily a building, it is a description of a group of people who gather together to be built up in their faith (gathered) so that they might better live it out in their everyday lives (scattered).

We are the 'church' or 'the people of God' or 'the body of Christ' both when we gather together and when we are scattered around our communities in our homes, places of work, schools, and places of leisure. The Church of England currently talks about this scattered aspect of our church life as 'everyday faith', and you can find out more at [www.churchofengland.org/our-faith/everyday-faith](http://www.churchofengland.org/our-faith/everyday-faith)

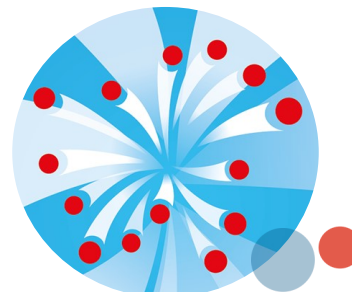
### DISCIPLE

The word disciple means 'learner'. Jesus called people to follow him (Mark 1:16-18), and those who followed Jesus in first century Palestine learnt how to live life a different way. Indeed, Jesus described himself as 'the way, the truth and the life' (John 14:6), and the early Christians were called 'followers of the Way' (Acts 22:4, 24:14). Quite quickly these disciples of Jesus came to be called Christians (Acts 11:26), followers of Christ.

To be a disciple, therefore, involves learning more about who Jesus is, what he did and how he wants us to live. In this sense we are apprentices of Jesus, learning to live life the Jesus way.

The Bishop of Guildford describes this as each Christian having an 'L' plate attached to them, indicating to the world

that we are learners, always looking to learn better what it means to be a disciple of Jesus in the world we find ourselves in today. We do that through gathering with other Christians to worship God, be nourished through the Bible and sacraments, and to share the ups and downs of living the Christian life with one another. We do it through spending personal time with God in prayer, reading the Bible, and a range of other 'spiritual disciplines' that help us to live life the Jesus way.



### FRONTLINE

This is a term LICC (London Institute for Contemporary Christianity) coined. It refers to where people spend the majority of their time: home, work place, community groups, school, neighbourhoods, places of leisure. On average, church goers may spend up to five hours a week engaged in gathered church activities, which means the remaining 115 waking hours a week are spent on their frontline. This is where we are called to live out our faith. Find out how God uses [Anne on her frontline](#) and other frontline resources [here](#).

