

MISSION WORKSHOP

An SCM Workshop

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

This SCM workshop aims to explore different understandings of mission. It is meant as a starting point to stimulate conversation and bring out different viewpoints from within your group.

You will need big sheets of paper and thick pens. You should also think about having some tea and cake (the ultimate ice breaker) and a big smile—enjoy!

INTRODUCTION (5 MINUTES)

A gentle way to introduce everyone is to sit in a circle and have each member of the group introduce themselves and say why they came and/or what they would like from the workshop.

It's good to get everyone up and moving while they learn about each other. Ask participants to create a human map indicating their home towns and/or the furthest place they've travelled. Indicate North, East, South & West, then allow participants to position themselves to create a map.

Ask the person who is the furthest north/south what their name is and where they come from. Proceed to ask each major cluster where they come from. In this process, participants may refine or improve their map.

ASK THE QUESTION(S) (20 MINUTES)

The workshop leader/leaders should introduce the question "What is mission?" explaining that this will be the focus on the workshop. Split the participants into small groups and invite them to reflect on the following statements. Ask them to arrange the statements on a sliding scale according to which they agree most and least with. Have each group read their top and bottom statements to the whole group.

Mission is walking in Jesus' shoes.

Mission is preaching the Gospel.

Mission is the prompting of the Holy Spirit to decision and action.

Mission means discerning where Christ is already present, though in a 'hidden' way, in all cultures and religions.

Mission is bringing people into life with Christ – Life in all its fullness.

Mission includes teaching and nurturing new believers.

Mission is proclaiming the good news of Jesus' life, death and resurrection.

*Mission is the participation of Christians in the liberating mission of Jesus.
Mission is offering ourselves to others in deed and not just words.*

Mission is finding Christ in others.

Mission is providing food when there is disaster, flood, famine and helping fight the causes of such disasters.

Mission is people responding to the needs of others whether they be living in luxury or starving in squalor.

Mission is helping people to be self-supporting.

Mission is discovering the existing presence of God in the World.

Mission is growing the Church.

Mission is being along side the poor in campaigning for political change.

Mission is the means by which God is revealed to all people.

Mission is about caring for the earth.

Mission is not preaching Christianity but offering Christ.

EXPLORE THE ISSUE(S) (20 MINUTES)

Look at following different definitions / reflections on mission given by some church denominations. In groups discuss these descriptions – what do you think about them? Are they too general/narrow? Are they old fashioned? Do they fit with your own ideas about mission? Ask participants to “cut and paste” the definitions into a “super definition” adding their own words too if they want to. Do this by giving out each definition on a piece of A4 paper and giving groups some scissors, glue and a blank piece of paper to construct their new definition.

Anglican

As Christians we follow Jesus who said “As the Father has sent me, so I send you.” (John 20.21). We are called to serve God's mission by living and proclaiming the good news.

Baptist

By ‘mission’ we mean reaching out to people in the name of Jesus through word and action. This may involve evangelism and church planting, community projects, youth,

children's, family, third and fourth age (senior) ministries and mission and much more.

Evangelical Alliance

Four dimensional mission:

*Mercy: demonstrating God's compassion to the poor
Influence: being salt and light in the public life of the community
Life Discipleship: equipping Christians for missional living as workers & neighbours
Evangelism: faithful and relevant communication of the gospel*
The heart of integral mission is not so much about balancing in our lives a particular list of activities, it is about being the people of God in the midst of a world in need.

Roman Catholicism

The Mission is a question of love

It is therefore an urgent duty for everyone to proclaim Christ and his saving message. St Paul said, "Woe to me if I do not preach it [the Gospel]!" (1 Cor 9: 16). On the way to Damascus he had experienced and understood that the redemption and the mission are the work of God and his love. Love of Christ led him to travel over the roads of the Roman Empire as a herald, an apostle, a preacher and a teacher of the Gospel of which he declared himself to be an "ambassador in chains" (Eph 6: 20). Divine charity made him "all things to all, to save at least some" (1 Cor 9: 22). By looking at St Paul's experience, we understand that missionary activity is a response to the love with which God loves us.

Quaker

Are you alert to practices here and throughout the world which discriminate against people on the basis of who or what they are or because of their beliefs? Bear witness to the humanity of all people, including those who break society's conventions or its laws. Try to discern new growing points in social and economic life. Seek to understand the causes of injustice, social unrest and fear. Are you working to bring about a just and compassionate society which allows everyone to develop their capacities and fosters the desire to serve?

Advices and Queries

Methodist

To proclaim and affirm its conviction of God's love in Christ, for us and for all the world; and renew confidence in God's presence and action in the world and in the Church.

- 1. Underpinning everything we do with God-centred worship and prayer*
- 2. Supporting community development and action for justice, especially among the most deprived and poor - in Britain and worldwide*
- 3. Developing confidence in evangelism and in the capacity to speak of God and faith in ways that make sense to all involved*
- 4. Encouraging fresh ways of being Church*
- 5. Nurturing a culture in the Church which is people-centred and flexible*

Whenever and wherever the Church participates in these Priorities, it is engaging in the mission of God.

INVITE THE RESPONSE (10 MINUTES)

In the same groups, using the "super definitions", participants will create a new mission using a

scenario given to them. For example, it could be to a community on a run down council estate, to high school kids, to an old people's home, to asylum seekers in their city. The group should come up with 3 main objectives and 3 activities for a mission to carry out in their area.

Ask each group to share their super definition and, if there is time, their mission models.

CLOSING THE SESSION (5 MINUTES)

To end the workshop have a reflection on where we as individuals fit into God's mission. On their own or in pairs, ask participants to reflect on what it means to them to be a missionary. What could they do to live this out in their lives and local areas? You can do this with some gentle music in the background or with a worksheet to prompt ideas.

Do a "go-round" asking each member to give one word to describe mission and one thing they can do to live it out.

FUTURE DISCUSSIONS AND MORE RESOURCES

If your group is interested in exploring this theme further, then you could try some of these topics for further discussions or invite a speaker. Get in touch with the SCM office if you need any help or resources (scm@movement.org.uk).

- *Participating in God's mission*
- *Mission and Evangelism – one and the same?*
- *Invite someone from USPG or another mission agency to speak*

- *www.rethinkingmission.org.uk Good selection of articles on mission*
- *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of mission by David J. Bosch*
- *From the abundance of the heart: Catholic Evangelism for all Christians by Stephen Cottrell*
- *What does the Lord require? A new anthology of prayers and songs for Worship and Mission by Francis Brienen*
- *The Church of England's Mission-shaped church*
- *Ambiguous Evangelism by Bob Mayo et al*
- *Journeying out by Ann Morisy*