



Mission



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MISSION

The words "Mission" and "Missionary" often trigger an image of a Victorian explorer type dressed in Khaki, wearing a pith helmet and carrying a large black bible through some impenetrable African jungle in search of long lost tribes. Or, more recently, it may be linked to the idea of a mission statement found in a place of work. Neither idea is particularly helpful!

Given that "Mission" is a word that will be heard almost every week in Thornbury Baptist Church it is surprising that the word is not found in the bible. The term comes from the Latin word meaning "to send" and is taken from Matthew 28 verse 16 to 20 when Jesus sent His disciples into the world with these words:

"All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I will be with you always, to the very end of the age"

This "sending" of His disciples by Jesus is known as 'the great commission'. It is a timeless commission that passes down from the small band of disciples of Jesus then, to each one of us now. **We are all sent on a Mission.**

WHO SENT TO?

A common misconception is that Mission is an activity carried out in a foreign country, but Jesus said to His disciples that they were to make disciples "of all nations" and in Acts 2 vs 8 Jesus said to His disciples:

"..you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

Mission knows no geographical boundaries, we are sent to the town and country in which live just as much as to some far-flung corner of the earth. **We are all sent on a Mission to all.**

WHY GO?

As well as simple obedience to the words of Jesus in Matthew 28 we accept this Mission because the heart of God is that everyone should know and love Him, and we are His voice in this world.

- For us Mission is a heart response to the mission of God. If God were not a God of Mission He would not have sent Jesus in the way that He did. God loves us and our response is to share that love with others.
- God has done a great thing for us and calls us to love the world, so we want to share God with others because we want the best for them.
- As well as Mission being a love response to what God has done for us and a love response towards others, our faith grows and strengthens as we step out in faith and share God with the world.

MISSION IN THORNBURY BAPTIST CHURCH

Given that we are sent to the whole world the opportunities for Mission are almost limitless. Within Thornbury Baptist Church there is a small team of people, known as 'The Mission Strategy Group', who meet, under the direction of the Leadership Team, to seek God's guidance and will over how the Church should be engaged in Mission.

The current Mission Strategy operated at TBC is as follows:

- Support, train and send out those in the Church who are called to a specific Mission opportunity.
- Support local outreach initiatives in and around Thornbury.
- Support organisations that train their indigenous population in Christian leadership.
- Develop European links in Romania and France.

- Support reaching out with the gospel of Jesus to Jews.
- Explore and encourage the spread of the gospel of Jesus to Muslims.
- Encourage individuals to continue to support their own existing and future Mission links.
- Consider ways in which we can support outreach in local prisons.
- Regularly set aside monies for Mission.

Before any other call is made on Church finances, we set aside 20% of all non-specific giving for Mission. When giving towards specific Mission is taken into account some 30% of all giving to the Church is spent directly on Mission.

HOW CAN I BE INVOLVED?

There are many ways in which each person in the Church can be involved in Mission:

- If you give financially you are automatically involved.
- Each week there is a focus on Mission in the newsletter and often in the services to guide your praying.
- There are always events taking place within the Church, and town, such as Alpha, summer events such as 'Thornbury Together' or children's clubs. There are events to bring friends along to, sporting activities like 'Fit to Live'. There is a publication called 'Voicemail' that is given to every home in the town. Small Groups often have evenings to bring friends along to, there is the Men's breakfast ... and much much more. Even if you do not feel able to play a direct part in these there is always a need for practical support, such as helping with the projection, making meals and refreshments etc.
- There are regular short term Mission trips to our link Church in Romania and a new link is developing in France.
- If you feel called to embark upon Mission, or have a specific project you would like the church to consider being involved with, then share this with the Mission Strategy Group. The Group will consider this against the current strategy and either propose to support it or not to the Leadership Team and feed back to individuals concerned. As well as support for individuals from TBC involved in long term Mission we often support others involved in Mission projects that last from a week to months.

Above all Mission is inclusive of all in the Church, and we seek to ensure that this is borne out in practice. **It is not the Church of God that has a Mission in this world it is the God of Mission who has a Church in this world.**