



MAP for Derby Diocese

five marks of mission

introduction

In 1984 the Anglican Consultative Council (www.anglicancommunion.org) began to develop a "mission statement" for the worldwide Anglican Communion, and the bishops of the Lambeth Conference adopted these "Five Marks Of Mission" in 1988. They were then adopted by the General Synod of the Church of England in 1996. In 2012, the fourth mark was revised to reflect the need for the Church to challenge violence and work for peace.

These five marks have been widely adopted by dioceses across the whole Anglican Communion as a working definition of mission to help churches consider their own mission priorities. They can help us to reflect on our own mission, challenging and encouraging us and helping us to consider whether there are areas of mission we have yet to fully engage with.

This leaflet explains the five marks and offers some ways in which they can be used within the parish. As well as this resource, you might also like to look at the resource '**What Is Mission?**', available for download from the MAP for Derby Diocese web pages.

when to use this resource

This resource is most appropriate for use during stage one of MAP for Derby Diocese, to help the church to explore the purpose and character of the Church God is calling them to be. It is particularly helpful whilst considering the following questions in that stage:

- What is the purpose of God's church?

the five marks defined

Here are the five marks of mission, as revised in 2012:

mark 1 – tell

To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom

mark 2 – teach

To teach, baptise and nurture new believers

mark 3 – tend

To respond to human need by loving service

mark 4 – transform

To seek to transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and to pursue peace and reconciliation

mark 5 – treasure

To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth

the five marks in detail

five marks, one ‘mission of God’

Although the five marks are distinct and numbered, this doesn’t mean that they are separate or imply any kind of priority. Mission concerns revealing the Kingdom of God in the world and offering God’s invitation into it. In order to do that effectively, the Church needs to be active in all five of these aspects of mission.

Neither do the five marks limit God’s mission to the world. Mission is set in an infinite number of contexts and situations – there are not simply five ways to do mission!

Finally, it is His mission, not ours:

"Mission goes out from God. Mission is God's way of loving and saving the world... So mission is never our invention or choice."

Lambeth Conference 1998, Section II p121

Being the Church of mission

The Anglican Consultative Council (ACC) writes:

“The Five Marks stress the doing of mission. Faithful action is the measure of our response to Christ (cf. Matt. 25:31-46; James 2:14-26). However, the challenge facing us is not just to do mission but to be a people of mission. That is, we are learning to allow every dimension of church life to be shaped and directed by our identity as a sign, foretaste and instrument of God's reign in Christ. Our understanding of mission needs to make that clear.”

Anglican Communion website, Mission - The Five Marks of Mission

So, our mission involves our ecclesial formation – who we are becoming as the Church of Christ.

mark 1 – tell

To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom

The first mark is a summary of what all mission is about, based as it is on Jesus’ own summary of His mission (Matt 4:17, Mk 1:14-15, Lk 4:18, Lk 7:22; cf. Jn 3:14-17).

This mark also challenges us to see the importance of sharing the good news of Jesus in words. Jesus commands his disciples to use both words and action in proclaiming the good news (Matt 10:7, Lk 10:8-9). Paul and Peter, in their letters, remind us of the need to share the good news in word as well as action (Rom 10:13-14, 1 Pet 3:15-16). The majority of those who come to faith today come through a relationship with a Christian friend who shares their story of faith and Jesus with them.

'Evangelism' is a word that sometimes makes people feel uncomfortable, because it conjures up pictures of pushy evangelists on TVs, street corners and doorsteps, or of a particular style or tradition. But evangelism simply means 'being a messenger of good news'; exactly what Jesus asked us to be.

mark 2 – teach

To teach, baptise and nurture new believers

Mission doesn't stop when someone becomes a Christian – Jesus commissioned us to make disciples, not converts, and to baptise and teach (Matt 28:19-20). The Christian faith is a pilgrim journey, growing in faith, and in love of God and others. A part of our mission is to help people to become mature Christians, able to live a fully integrated Christian life and make a Christian response in and to the world (Col 1:28).

mark 3 – tend

To respond to human need by loving service

Of course, our words are not enough. We can't just tell people about the love of God. That love needs to be demonstrated through action (Jas 2:15-16). This is the incarnational ministry of Jesus Christ that we are called to imitate, to walk alongside others and serve them. It has been well said that the leading edge of mission is service, for it is in showing the love of God through service and compassion that we gain the authenticity that allows us to speak of Jesus.

mark 4 – transform

To seek to transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and to pursue peace and reconciliation

Jesus walked alongside others and proclaimed the Kingdom of God, but he also demonstrated that the Kingdom of God was one of justice by challenging injustice when he saw it. He calls us to do the same. Particularly in our world, this might mean standing up for peace and reconciliation in a world where might, violence and revenge are often prevalent. Jesus' announcement of his own mission in the synagogue encompassed this (Lk 4:18-19).

mark 5 – treasure

To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth

If we believe that 'the earth is the Lord's and all that is in it' (Ps 24:1), then we must take seriously the stewardship of the earth's resources as a part of our mission. This too is a part of our revelation of God's Kingdom in the world, a glimpse and foretaste of the new heaven and new earth we await (Isa 65:17, 2 Pet 3:13).

learning together

If you want to reflect further on the five marks of mission, here are some questions you could use in small groups, or in a PCC, synod or as a congregation. For each mark, consider prayerfully together:

- How do we feel about this mark of mission? What excites and concerns us about it?

- What would it look like to see this mark of mission expressed in our common life together?
- How is this mark already expressed in the worship, life and mission of our church?
- How are we carrying out this aspect of mission in our Mission Action Plan?
- What more could we do to live out this mark in our mission and ministry?
- Who else is in our community and within our partnerships is working in this area of mission? How could we join with and support them?

If you have a large group with enough time, one way to use these questions would be to form five separate groups, each one looking at one mark. Then come together and share what you have learned and discovered.

If you are a group that meets regularly, say a PCC or home group, why not take some time at each meeting to look at one mark, covering all the marks in some detail over a period of time?

These marks can also form the basis for a preaching series on mission, perhaps alongside the material in the resource, 'What Is Mission?' (available for download from the MAP for Derby Diocese web pages).

bible reflection

Here are some suggestions of Bible passages that may help you to reflect on the five marks of mission, or that could be used in a teaching series:

Mark	Old Testament	New Testament
1	Exodus 3; Isaiah 61:1-3	Mark 1:1-8; Luke 9:1-6; John 13:1-17; Acts 8:25-40
2	Deuteronomy 6:1-9; Nehemiah 8:1-18	Titus 2; Acts 19:1-10; John 3:1-15; Luke 24:13-35
3	2 Kings 5:1-14; Job 2:11-13	Hebrews 13:1-6; 1 Peter 5:1-7; Matthew 25:31-46; John 4:1-30
4	Exodus 23:1-13; Amos 2:4-16	James 2:14-26; Matthew 23:23-36; Mark 10:13-27; Luke 19:1-10
5	Deuteronomy 26; Psalm 65	Romans 8:18-25; Revelation 22:1-5; Matthew 6:25-31; Mark 6:30-52