



Why Mission Needs More Than Just a Training Day

ANDY FROST

Andy Frost shares 5 lessons about how mission can truly transform a church

The old way was simple.

As a charity (Share Jesus International), a local church would invite us in for a day of training on mission and evangelism. We'd show up, deliver solid content, receive a thank-you, maybe a gift towards our work, and then move on. Job done.

But something wasn't sticking.

When I returned to those churches months later, I noticed a pattern. The enthusiasm had faded. The ideas we had shared hadn't taken root. Mission and evangelism had remained concepts rather than a lived-out reality.

So in 2022, we changed course. Instead of one-off training days, we committed to journeying alongside churches over two years – helping them not only think missionally but embed it into their culture.

Every church is unique, with different ministries, leadership structures, resources, and community contexts. Yet, two years in, we're witnessing something powerful: lasting impact.

We call this initiative The Emmaus Project, and through it, we've learned five key lessons about how mission can truly transform a church.

1. ASKING 'WHAT'S NEXT?'

Too often, churches haven't mapped out a clear journey for those exploring faith. A Christmas carol service might be inspiring, but what happens next? Without an intentional next step, people rarely continue exploring.

Through Emmaus, we've been embedding this crucial question into church life: What's next for this person? We need pathways, not just events. When churches make these steps explicit, the entire congregation can play a role in welcoming and discipling newcomers.

2. MISSION MUST STAY ON THE AGENDA

Church life is relentless—safeguarding policies, building maintenance, pastoral care, website updates ... the list goes on! In the midst of this, mission can feel important, but not urgent.

By journeying with churches, we help keep mission front and centre. Some churches have created mission teams that speak directly into leadership, ensuring evangelism doesn't get lost in the busyness. The goal? Systems and structures that sustain a long-term culture of sharing Jesus.

3. PEOPLE ARE THE GREATEST RESOURCE

Many churches we've partnered with had done no evangelism training for years – yet, the world is constantly changing. The way we share our faith must evolve too.

We've found that Christians often need help putting their faith into words and looking for everyday opportunities to share the gospel. Without regular encouragement, mission loses momentum.

4. CULTURE CHANGE IS KEY

Quick 'wins' – like a new event or outreach initiative – can be great. But lasting transformation happens when mission becomes part of a church's DNA.

One simple yet profound tool we've introduced is Prompt Cards. Each Sunday, someone picks a card with a mission-focused question like: Who can I bless this week? Who can I share my favourite Bible story with?

The congregation then actively looks for opportunities to live out their faith. The following Sunday, they share their experiences. This small habit has begun to reshape church culture from the inside out.

5. MISSION IS GOD'S WORK – WE JUST JOIN IN

Ultimately, evangelism is not just something we do – it's something God does in us and through us. As we journey with churches, seeing people come to faith, one truth stands out: prayer is central.

Churches are often great at praying for global issues and internal needs (which are important), but we also need to pray for people by name – that they might encounter Jesus. This is essential to fulfilling the Great Commission.

The old way of doing things was easier. A quick visit. A training day. Then moving on.

The new way? It's more complex. It's time-consuming. But as we see churches come alive and people encounter Jesus – every moment of investment is worth it.

Quotes from churches who have engaged with the Emmaus Project

"As a church we have been inspired and encouraged by the Emmaus programme. We are seeing the first fruits of people coming to faith through the Emmaus programme in our church and we know it will serve us well for years to come."

Blackhorse Road Baptist Church

"We have found the new Emmaus initiative highly relevant. Church members recognise the need and are excited about it and it is flexible in the use of its material."

Cheddar Valley Community Church Leadership Team

“Working with Andy and the SJI team on the Emmaus project is having a wonderful impact in our church: We are becoming more confident in sharing Jesus, more naturally and with greater ease. Every week we are hearing stories of how the Holy Spirit has prompted people to share Jesus with others, and the fruit of this is so encouraging. We deeply appreciate how they are encouraging and guiding us in our journey to being more intentional and effective in reaching out to our communities and making disciples.”

Community Church Tadley

ANDY FROST

Andy Frost is Director of Share Jesus International. At the heart of all that he does, he wants to help people follow Jesus. He presently heads up the London Mission Collective; works with Care for the Family on the Kitchen Table Project and Gather on church unity and mission. He is married to Jo and has two daughters.



PRAYER FOCUS

THE SJI EMMAUS PROJECT: The work of SJI, and the vision to help local churches engage in evangelism; continued inspiration, wisdom and discernment going forward; the necessary resources to continue the work; for a recognition across the Connexion of the need for this kind of initiative and hunger to reach out into local communities. (Matthew 28:19; Ephesians 6:18).

FOCUS ON THE CHURCH: Children and young people: For youth and children's workers across the nation as they seek to teach children of God's love; for pure Biblical teaching; protection from erroneous ideologies and philosophies; for all who go into schools to bring the Christian message of hope. (Matthew 19:14; Mark 9:42).

Cliff College: For Rev. Ashley Cooper having stepped down as Principal and for Rev. Andrew Stobart as he takes up the role; uptake of students for the new academic year; continuity for both staff and students in a new 'phase' of the college; suitable placements for students to reach out to communities. (James 1: 22-25; Mark 16:15-18).

FOCUS ON NATIONAL ISSUES: Violence and Knife Crime: For our young people who are involved in gang culture and all it entails; for Christian youth workers to reach out to these lost youngsters with a better pathway; that they will find their hope in Jesus and find purpose in their lives; a realisation of the fruitlessness of violence; breaking up of county lines; the police as they attempt to combat the violence across our land. (Psalm 145:17-20; Psalm 107:13-16).

Economy: The continuing economic crisis; the Budget; councils under pressure to meet the financial demands placed upon them; local authorities to seek the wisdom of God in the financial pressures the country faces. (Luke 12:15; Matthew 6:33).

FOCUS ON WORLD ISSUES: Ukraine/Russia: For President Volodymyr Zelenskyy in the volatile situation he faces; for Ukraine to receive the necessary resources they need; for God to intervene in the war, bringing about a fair peace deal acceptable to Ukraine. For Ukrainian Christians in Russian occupied territory who are being persecuted. For President Vladimir Putin to change his heart or be removed from power; for the Russian people to hear the truth about the war rather than lies; for Christians in Russia to have wisdom and discernment on how to act in the repressive Regime under which they live and for protection. (Proverbs 3:7; Psalm 145:18)

Prayer Focus is compiled by Roz Addington. If you would like to contact Roz feel free to email: prayer@metrevive.uk