

SLOUGH BAPTIST CHURCH POLICY	Witness Policy
POLICY NUMBER: SBCP-26	



Primary Responsibility:	Pastor
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DISTRIBUTION

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1. Policy

The Purpose Statement of the church does not differentiate between overseas mission and personal evangelism, neither is there a differentiation between the proclamation and the demonstration of the good news of the gospel. They are all the same task. We recognise that Slough is multi-racial and delight that the church has a wide racial mix. The Slough population is also very mobile both inwards and outwards. This means we are in a unique position to be part of the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20¹) and Acts 1:8².

We offer a *Welcome* to the Whole World
 We want to *Witness* to the Whole World
 We bring *Worship* from the Whole World

The way we want to engage in mission is to:

...encourage every believer to Know, Live and Share our faith.

(See Appendix 1 for further details)

Because we see our involvement in a variety of ways: Proclamation & Demonstration as well as Local, National and International, we will seek to make sure that each area has some representation but the balance across the areas will vary from year to year.

	Proclaim	Demonstrate
Local	✓	✓
National	✓	✓
International	✓	✓

¹ Matthew 28:19-20 *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, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely, I am with you always, to the very end of the age.*

² Acts 1:8 *But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.*

2. Strategy – Local

We aim to have a range of more formal opportunities for witness during the year, these go alongside our continual personal witness:

- Special Events – Easter, Harvest and Christmas: we will aim to make our services evangelistic on these occasions. We will aim to offer further resources or opportunities to those who want to know more e.g. an Alpha course, some literature or an opportunity to talk or pray with someone.
- Other Special Services – e.g. Baptisms, Dedications, Parade and all-age services,
- Easter Cracked and Christmas Unwrapped – 2 specific weeks set aside to engage with local year 6 pupils
- Uniform organisations and toddler groups are all part of our demonstration and proclamation locally.
- Ladies Recharge demonstrates care for ladies and gives an opportunity to proclaim what we believe.
- Christianity Explored / Alpha – We aim to run a basic Christianity course each year.
- Courses/Events – we run ad hoc courses to help those in the community such as Hope in Depression.
- Community Engagement:
 - Foodbank
 - Winter Night Shelter
 - Encouraging members and friends to be involved in local organisations.
- Christian Connections in Schools – We support Wayne Dixon, a local schools' worker
- PIN Fund – We seek to provide for People in Need (PIN) with small gifts or loans
- Working with other churches where possible such as the town centre march of witness

3. Strategy – National & International

We usually support National and International mission work in conjunction with partners. We aim to pray for and fund a variety of initiatives. This work is coordinated for us by the Mission Links Team. Their task is to:

- Administer and make recommendations to the Trustees and the members meeting regarding our Grants Policy
- Encourage information and prayer regarding our partners.
- Encourage members and friends on short or long term missions.

Appendix 1

The way we want to engage in local mission is to:

...encourage every believer to Know, Live and Share our faith.

<u>Know</u>	<u>Live</u>	<u>Share</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Have a basic understanding of the gospel for ourselves• Know how and where to get help for questions or issues when we don't understand.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Have a lifestyle that is consistent with what we believe.• Allow time and space for us to build genuine relationships with others.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Have access to ideas and resources for sharing my faith.• Be equipped through prayer and church backed initiatives.• Be encouraged with feedback and sometimes finance.

Know Our Faith

To know our faith is not merely head knowledge, it must include heart knowledge. We are not seeking to pass on only facts but rather a living faith. However, we don't actually need to know much!³ Historically, we believe the bible teaches that God exists, He created the universe, Human beings have rebelled against God, but God has rescued us through Jesus who will return to wrap up history.

We seek to teach these teachings through a variety of ways including:

- Alpha – a Christian basics course
- Regular attendance at worship services – where there is teaching
- Regular attendance at a Small Group
- Ad hoc special courses – e.g. Specially prepared internal courses or Walk thru the bible etc.

We know we don't know it all. We are happy to share when we don't have answers and are willing to seek them.

Live Our Faith

We need to live lives that are consistent with the good news we want to share. This does not mean we are all perfect, rather the reverse. We acknowledge we have all sinned and fall short of the glory of God⁴. However, although we recognise what we have been, we delight that we are now washed, sanctified and justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God⁵.

It is easy to fill our time with church activities so that we have too little time for anything else. We want to encourage ourselves to be involved in the community, clubs, societies, serving as school governor, etc. This allows acquaintances to be made, friendships to be built and for faith to be shared.

We recognise that most people come to faith as part of a process⁶.

³ John 9:25 *He replied, "Whether he is a sinner or not, I don't know. One thing I do know. I was blind but now I see!"*

⁴ Romans 3:23

⁵ 1 Corinthians 6:11

⁶ L Singlehurst's book "Sowing Reaping Keeping" has helped guide and inform us in this.

Share Our Faith

As we seek to share our faith, we recognise that we are engaging in spiritual warfare. We may present the gospel clearly, but it is God that opens eyes blinded by the enemy⁷. However, we want to know that as we start the process we are:

Resourced	Equipped	Encouraged
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Resources

The physical resources are usually prepared or ordered by the church office.

Occasional Missions – we have sought to partner with other groups and organisations to have occasional periods of mission activity.

Equipped

Prayer – this is the backbone of any faith sharing and so any and all activities would need to be plugged into the Prayer Strategy.

Church backed initiatives:

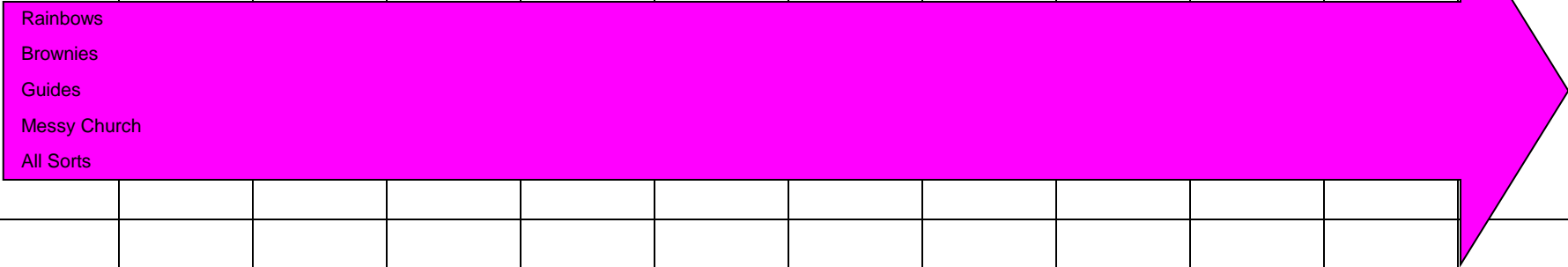
- Ad hoc events
- Alpha - Christian basics course - involves food, a talk and small group sessions.
- Christmas Unwrapped Week – presenting the Christmas message to local schools. Aimed at year 6 (10/11 year olds)
- Easter Cracked Week –presenting the Easter message to local schools. Aimed at year 6 (10/11 year olds)
- Guides – Activities for girls aged 11-16.
- Brownies – Activities for girls for aged 8-10.
- Rainbows – Activities for girls aged 5-8 years.
- All Sorts – Activities for families
- Holiday Club – for 5-11 year olds, for one week in the summer holidays.
- It's Your Move – resource for year 6 pupils offered to primary schools in Slough in the summer term
- Men's Group – annual trip to Christian Vision for Men weekend and ad hoc meals
- Sunday Club – 0-14 in small groups during part of Sunday morning services.
- Special Services – e.g. Carol Service, Parades, Baptisms etc.
- Messy Church – A monthly alternative way of meeting as church for all ages together
- Coffee Pot – First contact for new Mums and Dads
- Tuesday Break – 45 minutes break for parents with a message from a Christian speaker
- Y@S – 14-18 year olds youth group to explore the Christian faith
- Ladies Recharge – Morning or afternoon activities a few times a year to encourage women and share a message.

Encouraged

- Testimony
- Baptism
- Membership
- Financial support

⁷ 2 Corinthians 4:4 *The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.*

Appendix 2: A Typical Year of our Mission Activities

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Regular Festivals			★						★			★
School's Week			★								★	
Holiday Club							★					
Alpha				→								
Regular Activities	<div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-right: 10px;"> Rainbows Brownies Guides Messy Church All Sorts </div>  </div>											
Ad Hoc Events												