

Engaging with our Mission



The EBA is putting together a series of thoughts that we will send out in order to help us to think through how we can engage with mission and evangelism. Each month you will receive a parable to introduce a theme and there will also be some questions to consider. We hope you will share these materials with your leadership team and church perhaps in a meeting, homegroup, service or in some other way and we look forward to hearing your thoughts as well as any general feedback you have about the materials.

*Last month we thought about the **Places** that we are and this month we are going to think about the **Opportunities** that we have. These are the first two of five areas that our mission strategy is focusing on.*

David was so happy as he finally had the opportunity to fly his toy plane. He had had to be patient as the plane needed lots of room to fly in and so they had to travel to a large open space before it could be flown safely.

As it flew into the air, it soared and swooped and zoomed and,,, suddenly was caught by a gust of wind and was last seen heading over a river and beyond some trees. David was heartbroken.

A few weeks later, David's dad was telling this story to another parent at the school gate. As he finished the story they asked if the plane was black and they then went on to describe the plane that they had seen in a local second hand shop. David's dad rushed to the shop and bought the plane back,

Later that day, David was reunited with his precious plane and he was so happy. He remembered how he felt when he saw it soaring and swooping and zooming. David took his plane and put it in a cupboard where it was safe. He never took it out of the cupboard because he was too afraid to fly it again in case he lost it.

Questions to consider

Take some time to think about and to discuss this parable. If the plane represents opportunities that we have to share the good news of Jesus, what things put us off taking those opportunities that we have in the communities around us?

Think about the communities around your church and think about the opportunities that there are to engage with people in those communities. Make a list of these opportunities and don't be limited by what you feel that you can accomplish.

Encourage people in your church family to think about places they are every day and to consider the opportunities that there are to engage with people in those places. Make a list of these opportunities and don't be limited by what you feel that you can accomplish. Think about how it feels when someone responds positively when we take those opportunities – soaring, swooping, zooming?

As a church or in smaller groups, prayerfully consider the lists and to ask God what is on his heart. Apply common sense and look for match ups between the resources and people that you have and these opportunities but also be ready for God to stretch you. Jesus once asked his followers to feed a crowd of thousands, but the only way they could do it was to give what they had to Jesus and to let him make it enough.

We would love to hear from you (e-mail orchardbaptistchurch@gmail.com)

Please do let us know any thoughts that you have had or any ways that you are engaging creatively with your community. What opportunities have you identified and how are you making the most of them? *We will be sharing some of your stories next month.*

Next month we will consider the **Inspiration** (*that's where your stories come in*) that we need to engage in the **Opportunities** that we have in the **Places** that we are.