



Community Church Sheppey

Our Purpose

The Community Church Sheppey is made up of people who have experienced God's love through Jesus. Biblical faith and shared vision shapes our understanding of what it means to be a local expression of Christ's Church on the Isle of Sheppey.

Our purpose is to bring people to Jesus, help them to grow as members of His family, encourage them to fulfil their destiny and inspire in them a passion to worship God.

The Bible tells us that the early followers of Jesus "devoted themselves to the apostles teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer". (Acts 2: 42 NIV)

The account of the New Testament Church found in the Bible portrays a community of believers who experienced God's power and consequently shared a message with the world that was worth listening to.

The Community Church Sheppey is keen to follow their example and so our church life reflects the things that we read in the Bible about the early Christians. Lets see how:

THE FIRST CHRISTIANS WERE DEVOTED TO 'THE APOSTLES TEACHING

This is the simple yet powerful gospel message about Jesus that is found in the Bible. The word 'gospel' means 'good news' and was handed down by Jesus himself to the apostles. This is why it is also called the 'apostles teaching'.

The apostles teaching centres around what Jesus has done for us on the cross, how he died to carry our sin and rose again on the third day to be our Saviour.

The apostle Paul wrote, "For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures". (1 Corinthians 15:3-4 NASB)

Sin is a word used in the Bible to describe those thoughts and actions that revolve around our selfish desires. These things keep us at a distance from God. According to the Bible, the outcome of sin is death and separation from God. But the teaching of the apostles assures us that God loves us and sent Jesus into the world to be our Saviour.

The Community Church Sheppey holds to the apostolic teaching that Christ was miraculously conceived and born of the Virgin Mary. In the incarnation, God took upon Himself human flesh. The apostles were convinced that they witnessed the glory of God in the life of Jesus.

In the New Testament the apostles speak about the perfect and obedient life that the Son of God lived on earth. The sinless One suffered on the cross to carry the weight of our sin and shortcomings to reconcile us to God.

In the Community Church Sheppey, we are very conscious of the new life that we have found in Christ. Faith in Christ as Saviour has changed our lives and given us an exciting purpose for living!

The Bible says that when the apostle Peter preached to a huge crowd in Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost, they asked him to explain what they should do in response to the death and resurrection of Jesus. He replied "Repent and be baptised, everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit". (Acts 2:38 NIV)

The Community Church is a 'full gospel church'. This means:

1. We call people to repentance, to make a 'U' turn from the old way of life to follow the Lord Jesus Christ. We believe that when a person has experienced conviction of sin and takes these steps of faith, they become a child of God. They are born again of the Spirit.
2. We baptise believers by total immersion. This signifies the death and burial of our old life and resurrection to a new start where Jesus is in charge.
3. We believe in the baptism and power of the Holy Spirit available to every person who has accepted Jesus as Lord. The Holy Spirit brings about changes in the life of the believer and imparts gifts for ministry and witness.

Every Sunday we meet to worship and to consider the teaching of the Bible. There are also midweek meetings for Bible study and prayer. From time to time believers are publicly baptised to express their personal commitment and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Every new believer is encouraged to read his or her Bible. This is because it is the 'makers instructions', God's manual for life. Paul the apostle writes, " All Scripture is given by inspiration by God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work". (2 Timothy 3: 16 – 17 NKJV)

The Bible says 'Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path'.

(Psalm 119:105 NIV)

THE FIRST CHRISTIANS WERE DEVOTED TO 'FELLOWSHIP'

This means they were enthusiastic about being a part of the Church family. They shared a vision for the Kingdom of God, expressed in their relationships together.

The Community Church Sheppey shares the same vision and is committed to a biblical lifestyle that can be seen in the way we worship and live out our Christian faith together.

The word fellowship emphasises the community aspect of the Christian faith. Our faith in the Lord Jesus draws us together in unity as members of His family, the Church. The Bible tells us that the early followers of Jesus were 'one in heart and mind'.

(Acts 4:32 NIV)

We encourage folks to support and love one another, learning from the example of the first followers of Jesus Christ. Meeting together and sharing in fellowship is a tremendous opportunity for Christians to grow in the faith.

'And let us consider how we may spur one another on towards love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another – and all the more as you see the Day approaching'.

(Hebrews 10: 24-25 NIV)

In the fellowship of the Community Church Sheppey, individuals are encouraged to discover their area of ministry and fulfil their God given destiny. As believers and Disciples of Christ, our faith is strengthened through our heart to heart friendships, shared vision and praying together with our Christian friends.

'From him (Christ) the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work'

(Ephesians 4:16 NIV)

We believe the Christian community is called to mission. The Community Church Sheppey encourages believers to represent Jesus in the world, following His command to "go therefore and make disciples".

(Matthew 28: 19)

The pursuit of mission and faithfulness in witness is exemplified in the example of the apostles in the New Testament.

As well as engaging in mission in the local area, the Community Church Sheppey is involved in supporting Christian ministries specifically in Uganda and India. We regularly send teams abroad to serve churches in committed relationship with us.

THE FIRST CHRISTIANS WERE DEVOTED TO BREAKING BREAD

When Jesus shared the bread and wine with His disciples at the last supper He said, "Do this in remembrance of Me". (Luke 22:19)

The first believers met regularly to share the Christian family meal, obeying the Christ's command to share communion together.

As a family brought together by Christ's sacrificial love we remember in the bread how His body was broken and in the wine we recall the shedding of His blood.

The apostle Paul wrote, "For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes".

(1 Corinthians 11:26 NIV)

The communion table is open to everyone who has accepted Jesus Christ as Saviour, seeking to live in obedience to God's word. But the breaking of bread is also an expression of the shared life of the congregation through the sacrifice of Jesus.

THE FIRST CHRISTIANS WERE DEVOTED TO PRAYER

The early believers were keen to pray together. As the New Testament Church prayed, miracles took place. In an environment of prayer, believers were filled with the Holy Spirit and they were empowered to witness for Christ. In obedience to God's word, prayer is an important feature of our church life. In the Community Church Sheppey people are free to pray in the main meetings. Many of our midweek activities, include times of prayer.

Prayer is about talking with God. This involves listening to what He has to say as well as talking to Him. As a church we see the importance of praying with purpose, that is, being specific about how we pray and expecting God to answer. Every member is encouraged to have a daily quiet time to both pray and read the Bible.

Jesus said that when we pray we should say 'Your Kingdom come, Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven'. (Matthew 6:10 NKJV)

We are people who want to be genuine followers of Jesus and we long to impact our locality for the Kingdom of God. In prayer we bend to the will of the Father, becoming sensitive to His heartbeat and purposes to reach others with the Gospel. A people who pray enjoy a closeness and intimacy with God.

In the life of the Community Church Sheppey we seek to inspire in people a passion to worship God. We have a team of musicians who lead us in live worship and praise.

“But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvellous light” (1 Peter 2:9 NKJV)

“ Praise Him with the sound of the trumpet; Praise Him with the lute and harp! Praise Him with the timbrel and dance; Praise Him with strings instruments and flutes! Praise Him with loud cymbals; Praise Him with clashing cymbals”. (Psalm 150:3-5 NKJV)

“Lift up your hands in the sanctuary and praise the LORD”.

(Psalm 134:2 NIV)

“Clap your hand all you nations, shout to God with cries of joy”.

(Psalm 47:1 NIV)

“Sing praises to God, sing praises, sing praises to our King, sing praises”.

(Psalm 47: 6 NIV)

In the Old Testament we are told that David pitched a tent in Jerusalem in which God was continually worshipped and praised by dedicated singers and musicians. Many of the psalms in the Bible were sung within this tent. In New Testament times, the apostles believed that the Church, the community of faith, was evidence that God was restoring David’s tent of worship. James the apostle and brother of Jesus quoting the prophecy of Amos said “ ‘after this I will return and rebuild David’s fallen tent. Its ruins I will rebuild and I will restore it, that the remnant of men may seek the Lord, and all the Gentiles who bear my name, says the Lord, who does these things that have been known for ages’ ”. (Acts 15:16-18 NIV)

The restoration of David’s tent is not about stitching together canvas or pitching a huge marquee. We believe that it is about the coming together of a community with a passion to worship God because of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. This was the expectation of the early Church and in the Community Church Sheppey we aim to run with this vision.

Our church has a busy programme of activities, please see our church activities web page or download a copy of our latest Whats On guide.

BECOMING A MEMBER OF THE COMMUNITY CHURCH SHEPPEY

Being a Christian makes you part of God’s family. However, we all need to put down our roots within a specific fellowship and make up our minds about where God has called us to be.

Church membership is not a casual thing. It is a serious commitment that we make to others in the church family, as we decide to serve the Lord alongside them. In local church membership we say, “You can count me in!”

Those considering membership of this church are asked to work through a 6 week Bible study course covering the following topics:

1. Created in God's image
2. Jesus the Son of the Father
3. Starting as a Christian
4. The Baptism and Gifts of the Holy Spirit
5. The Church
6. Christ the Coming King

Other courses are available to help and support believers in their faith. These include 'Spiritual Warfare', 'Prayer' and studies on the book of Galatians.