

ACCESS Course

Session 2. Access CCE Story

***Aim of this session;** Building on the principle of our centre in Trinity through Jesus from last time, here we describe the story of who we are and what our distinctives are; where our roots lie and how we do church together.*

We are Community Church Edinburgh

(since 2001, previously Edinburgh City Fellowship since 1979)

- **Community** because we are a community for the wider community.
- **Church** - part of the people of Jesus across time and planet.
- **Edinburgh** – because we are called to make a difference for Jesus in this city.

What Do We Believe?

- **The Creed** in common with other believers in Jesus
- That everyone needs a **personal encounter** with God's forgiveness and love and ongoing relationship with God through Jesus Christ; everyone needs to be constantly filled up with God's life by being immersed in the Holy Spirit, to make us more like Jesus.
- God put us together as **family** in His church, a belonging together that joins us in heart with each other.
- The **Scriptures** as authority for what we teach and believe, interpreted by the Holy Spirit.
- **God speaks to us as a church** through individuals who share what He is saying to them through the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

How is the Church Organised?

- CCE is a Scottish charity, administered by **trustees**.
- The leadership of the church the **Community of Leaders** called and appointed by existing leaders, endorsed by the church, led by a team leader who calls them together brings direction.
- We don't reserve certain tasks for certain people in the church; **any Spirit-anointed believer can take part**. So we don't have clergy, but experienced and gifted leaders who bring guidance and equip and train others.
- We don't have a written membership, people **join us in heart**, and then are **faithful** to God's joining.

- Most people are part of a **small group** that meets in the midweek. Church is relationship and life, best expressed in small groups.

How Are We Connected to the Wider Church Out There?

- We are **independent** in government.
- But we work with **Scottish Network Churches** = a relational, organic linking.
- And connected to UK Network **Pioneer**; as part of Pioneer we run for the Scottish Network Churches a discipleship and leadership course called **Ignite**.
- Locally, with **Newington Churches Together**. (Basics Bank)
- We worship and work with **all churches who love Jesus**, new or traditional, nationally and internationally.
- heart-links **overseas** in Poland, Slovakia, Africa (Chad, Uganda), France, Germany and other places.

Where Does the Money Come From?

- All finances are **raised in house**, plus gift aid.
- people **give generously**, using a tenth as a guideline.
- Key is **love and faithfulness** of the community that God provides and resources what He calls us to do.
- We also **hire King's Hall** out, helping us balance the books.

Where Did We Come From?

- Spiritual Grandads and Grandmas = those who wanted to
- **take the Bible seriously**
- **disconnect the Church from state control**
- **baptise just those who had repented and believed (= radically reformed or baptistic)**
- **be filled with the Holy Spirit, with His gifts (pentecostal or charismatic churches.)**
- **plural leadership structure for church, male and female**
- **meet in small groups. (house churches or new churches.)**

This is what we **export and share** to others as our contribution to the building up of Jesus' family across the world, what we 'bring to the party'.

Things to Consider

- What drew you to CCE in the first place?
- What has been new to you or even hard for you?
- If you have a previous church story, in what ways is CCE different?
- From what you have heard, what questions do you have? From tonight, could you explain to a friend or visitor what CCE is about?