

Here are a few simple things to remember about us
as Countess Free Church

Useful things to have in mind when talking with people
about our faith, our church and what we are all about.



Things about Us!

Who are we? / Why do we exist?

WE ARE A CHURCH IN MISSION ACROSS THE CITY

What do we want?

WE WANT TO SEE KINGDOM LIFE ACROSS THE CITY

*That means people & situations changed by Jesus,
e.g. forgiveness, healing, transformation, rebuilding ...*

And looking out further ... we have a 100 year vision:

that in 100 years time - stemming from our own witness - there
might be 1,000s of disciples who are
radically *following Jesus!*

Our motto is simple:

SEEKING TO WORSHIP, SEEKING TO SERVE

This is about living the whole of our lives in **worship** of God. When we do that we cannot help but **serve** people around us. But to keep serving we need spiritual resources – which brings us back to worship. So for us worship & serving are inter-connected, we can't do one without the other.

When we simply talk it through like this with people who don't yet believe, they can understand it. Our desire to follow God and help those around starts to make sense for them.

At Countess Free Church this is what we mean by
'Whole Life Discipleship'

We pay attention to Up, In & Out:

- **UP:** Personal discipleship - our own rhythms and spiritual practices
- **IN:** Caring for each other - in various groups big & small
- **OUT:** Developing in 3 aspects of Missional Life - expanded below
 1. **Occupation** - Bring God's Kingdom to where you spend a significant amount of your life (this might be Family, Volunteering, Study, Workplace, Places of Ministry ...)
 2. **Home & Play** - Opportunity for micro-initiatives - seeking to be an active witness among neighbours and people you come alongside. [Practical tip: use the simple "Pray, Listen, Act ..." in this aspect]
 3. **Corporate Church** - bless and resource the whole body, by investing and serving in the life of the overall church (we can achieve more through collaboration and working together!)

GOOD HABITS FOR DISCIPLES

The bed-rock habits for followers of Jesus are prayer and reading the Bible, joining with the church family and reaching out.

We also talk of 4 habits for growth – living in contrast to the cultures of today:

1. **The Discipline of OFF** – intentionally having down-time, rest, and recuperation
2. **Share the Walk** – intentionally walking with others (have a prayer partner, be in a group, join with the whole church)
3. **Ever Closer to Jesus** – always seeking to be closer to Jesus: the desire to finish today that bit closer and like Jesus than you finished yesterday
4. **Margin for Jesus** – intentionally leaving room in your schedule and programmes for Jesus to fill & direct as He chooses

TWO MORE SIMPLE THINGS TO REMEMBER!

1) *Take people to Jesus!*

First and foremost our task is to lead people to Jesus – that probably means starting *where they are* before simply trying to invite them to some big church gathering. That's why we talk of '**Lifeboats**' – small informal settings to help people explore and learn about following Jesus.

2) *Pray, Listen ... Act*

We encourage everyone to take initiative with local neighbours, friends or colleagues. That might be something small and simple (we call them 'micro-initiatives'). Getting started is easy: with some people in mind first **P**ray, then **L**isten for what God might be saying, and then when you get an inkling **A**ct on it.

PRAY, LISTEN ... ACT

Community Ministers

Community Ministers intentionally follow God's calling and spend (typically voluntarily) at least the equivalent of 1 day of a working week in Christian community activity that links with the work of the church. We look for the following characteristics that we believe mark out a community minister:

- **Jesus-Rooted:** their ministry flows from their relationship with Jesus
- **Intentional:** they make space and time for ministry and are intentional about the activities they get involved in
- **Discipleship:** they are committed to their own ongoing learning and desire to inspire and mentor others
- **Accountability:** they create links which hold them accountable – e.g. with the church, a sponsoring organisation, a mentor or support group etc.

and finally ...

3 'BIG THINGS' FOR US A COUNTLESS FREE CHURCH

1. Church is people (it is not the building, it's the people)
2. It is people who follow Jesus (our faith is important to us)
3. Engaging with the community (we are here for the local community - Seeking to Worship, Seeking to Serve!)

www.countessely.co.uk