



**GET ON  
BOARD**

An Introduction  
to Fenlands  
Church:

What we believe  
and how you can  
be happy and  
effective for the  
Lord in being  
part of this  
fellowship

# Get On Board

*People get ready, there's a train a-comin'*

*Don't need no ticket, you just "Get On Board!"*

This booklet is about Fenlands Church. What makes us tick! How we organise ourselves. What we expect of people who want to belong.

We will try in a few pages to answer questions you might have. The best way to get to know us is by getting to know us! A few weeks might give you a picture—a few months would make the picture clearer.

We are an open and trusting church. We welcome you and all that you are in Christ.

We are an inclusive church. We want everyone to be and feel included and grow in their service for Jesus Christ.

We are a family church. We believe that everyone has a part to play whether young or old, male, or female, single or married.

We are a Holy Spirit led church. We want everyone to be open to His leading.

We are a Christ-centred Church and want to be sure that everything is directed towards his praise and glory.

*At the time of writing, we are two fellowships: one in Thorney, and one in Tydd Gote*

The booklet is based on five "ships"

*Fellowship, Membership, Leadership, Discipleship,  
Worship, ....*

## Before We Begin ...

We believe that Christians should be “church” where we live. We aim to spread the Good News through prayer groups and outreach. So, we want to equip believers so that each one can serve the Lord and some become suitable leaders for these neighbourhood groups.

We love genuine fellowship—first through friendships; then through meetings that welcome friends and neighbours.

We want to maintain a strong identity in our main Sunday Morning Service where everyone is welcome, and everyone is encouraged to attend.

We want to be a church that is:

- PRAYING
- LEARNING
- WORSHIPPING
- CARING
- WITNESSING

This involves times (seasons) where we might emphasise only one or two of these, but our broad aims always include all of them – all of the time.

We believe that Christians grow through their obligation to be spiritual priests. That is—everyone has the amazing privilege of meeting with and serving God as Father. We emphasise this personal relationship with God in our meetings. The Lord will build his Church through fellowship, prayer, and employment of spiritual gifts.

***Acts 2:41-42 Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them. 42 And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.***

Our Teaching and Preaching has a strong element of “Go and do likewise....” We want to model, for all ages, the kind of lifestyle and worship that is good and acceptable to the Lord.

The Bible is the Word of God, we keep it central to all we do. We make sure that we are in harmony with the authority of the Holy Spirit and, therefore, with Jesus Christ: the Head of the Church.

We serve God in a rural area so, we have maintained a relationship with Rural Ministries—a charity committed to developing church life in rural areas.

*RURAL MINISTRIES IS AN EVANGELICAL MISSION AGENCY COMMITTED TO PLANTING AND GROWING RURAL CHURCHES*

<https://www.ruralministries.org.uk/about-us>



# FELLOWSHIP

It is God's purpose that redeemed people should be in fellowship with Him and with each other.



***1 John 1:3 NIV We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ.***

When you became a Christian, you were added to the Church of Christ. This Church is not seen in Christian denominations or organisations but in the simple fact that every believer who has ever lived, or is yet to live, is included on the Spiritual Body called the Church of Christ. We belong to God as his children, chosen to be like Jesus. This brings to birth a new nature that wants fellowship with God and with His children. This is demonstrated by a local fellowship of Christians.

A local church can have many different expressions. But all should demonstrate who Christ is and what his Kingdom is like. A local church is a body of people in a relationship based on the same faith in the same Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. As individuals we aim to show this by our life choices. A local church shows both the fruit and the power of the Holy Spirit by the way we live and show love for one another.

"Fellowship" means we are more than friends; we are brothers and sisters. The Bible Word is KOINOINIA, meaning a community, a partnership. We do far more than just meet on a Sunday morning. We meet as often as we can—at least in small groups. We do not just sing, pray, and listen to God's Word together. We eat and drink, laugh and play, weep and mourn, suffer, and succeed—TOGETHER.

So, we demonstrate a relationship that is real—everyday. We honour relationships with all Christians.

Spiritual relationships begin at the Door (or the Gate).

***John 10:9 I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved. He will come in and go out, and find pasture.***

Belonging to a church starts with faith in Jesus Christ. A Christian believes in and trusts in the teaching and finished work of Jesus Christ. This faith comes through revelation—not religion! God reveals who Jesus is to those who are seeking (looking hard). This brings an amazing change in our lives.

Faith in Jesus Christ includes:

- Confession of sin (I am not good enough to earn or merit heaven).
- Believing that Jesus is Lord: Who died for our sins and is risen from the dead.
- Receiving, through the Holy Spirit, a new birth, a new beginning.
- Being baptised into and filled with the Holy Spirit
- Being baptised in water to demonstrate what God has done

Fellowship with God makes possible fellowship with Christians in a local church.

***Acts 2:42 NIV They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.***

# MEMBERSHIP

We do not have a formal membership. Belonging is a matter of mutual choice and responsibility.



Being a member of Fenlands Church is like being part of a body—a leg, arm, eye, or finger—a “member” of a body.

***1Co 12:26-27 If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honoured, every part rejoices with it. Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.***

We do not have a contract, a paper to sign, or an “oath of allegiance!”. We do encourage everyone to make it obvious that they want to belong. This usually becomes obvious by your choices and involvement with us. We usually recognise your belonging by laying on of hands (identifying with one another as belonging together). Also, we encourage believers to be baptised in the Name of the Lord Jesus through the obedience of being completely immersed in water.

Generally, church membership is complicated in the 21st century. There are all kinds of Christian Groups you may have belonged to before us. We understand that these differences can be confusing. However, Scripture teaches that believers should belong in a local church. This does not cut you off from other groups, your belonging with us merely states the obvious: a politician can belong to only one party—children cannot properly belong to several groups of parents.

Belonging to Fenlands Church includes four main things:

1. Choice
2. Commitment
3. Being loved and included
4. Accepting elders and leaders

The time taken to belong and varies enormously. Most show that they belong by their regular involvement, love and service.

As we have no formal membership, leaving works much the same as joining. Usually, leaving arises from moving away from the district. Sometimes, someone, might want to move on to a different church. If so, we try to help with this in a way that honours God and everyone concerned. It is good to avoid arguments and divisions.

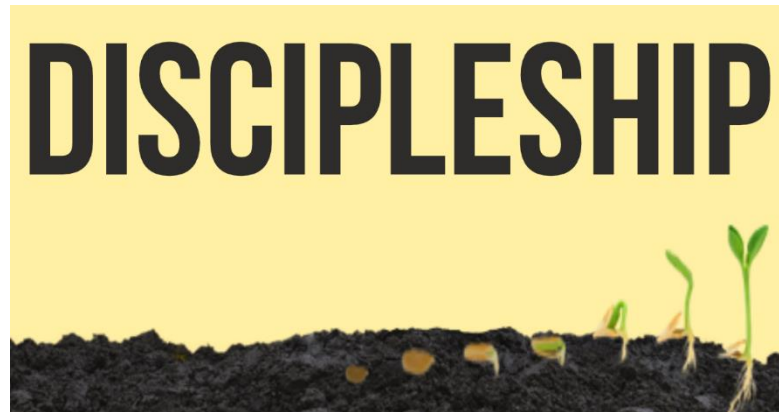
The decision to belong will include examination of our teaching and meetings. We aim to be Biblical and Spiritual in everything. We want to honour the Lord and love His Word. We believe in the priesthood of every believer and the leading of the Holy Spirit. We exalt Jesus Christ as Lord of all. We believe that the whole Bible is about him and the whole Universe belongs to Him.

***Colossians 1:15-19 He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy. For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him***



# DISCIPLESHIP

Believing in Jesus Christ means following Him. This is discipleship.



This aspect of Christian life is about to our personal walk with the Lord. Fellowship together, learning together, praying together, witnessing together, worshipping together. These are essential but can become mere religious exercises if there is no personal, spiritual discipline.

Personal discipline includes:

- Knowing God [Father, Son, Spirit]– through the Word and Prayer
- Being Filled with the Holy Spirit
- Having Fellowship with other believers as often as possible
- Becoming like Jesus Christ
- Living out and telling out the Good News to all

Being a disciple involves imitating the one you are following.

***1Thessalonians 1:6 You became imitators of us and of the Lord; in spite of severe suffering, you welcomed the message with the joy given by the Holy Spirit.***

We learn from each other and follow each other. The Holy Spirit teaches us how to be more like Jesus Christ. We may not get everything “right”, but we ought to have a visible unity about serving God, worshipping Him, praying and behaving.

***1Corinthians 1:10 I appeal to you, brothers, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree with one another so that there may be no divisions among you and that you may be perfectly united in mind and thought.***

Unity does not mean uniformity—we celebrate the variety and beauty that can live in the Body of Christ. However, the variety needs to be graceful, beautiful— not a chaos of people all doing their own thing!

Discipleship means allowing discipline. So, we allow the Holy Spirit to teach and guide us—submitting to God’s will. Sometimes this might mean submitting to the decisions of leadership. Not an easy thing in our modern world but an important aspect of church life, where authority and obedience are expected of the believer. Christians love Jesus Christ and, because of this, they keep his commands. Obedience is a matter of love—not fear.

***John 14:15 "If you love me, you will obey what I command.***

# LEADERSHIP

Local churches are described as “households” where some have more responsibility than others. Where there are “Stewards and Keyholders”.



Every believer is a “priest” and has the privilege of serving God. The priests of the Old Testament had different responsibilities and different roles. Some had more responsibility and authority than others. Everything was designed for unity and harmony.

In Fenlands Church, leadership is more about serving than having a “position”. We avoid the ideas of management or superiority. However, God has ordained that there should be elders and deacons appointed for leading a local church. An elder is an important work. It involves authority but not superiority. The word EPISKOPE means being “over” a church in the sense of watching over everyone. It carries ideas of shepherding and parenting and requires maturity and experience.

***1Peter 5:1-4 To the elders among you, I appeal as a fellow elder, a witness of Christ's sufferings and one who also will share in the glory to be revealed: Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, serving as overseers—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away.***

The process of appointing a new elder begins with evidence in a man’s life in the church and in the community. The church will be asked to consider a man as a suitable elder. Subject to prayer and church response the

appointment will be made. This is usually, ratified by an external authority like Rural Ministries.

In the modern world an emphasis on male eldership is difficult to maintain. After all, the qualities demanded for eldership are not exclusive to men! Christians have many arguments for and against female leadership. We have women and men in pastoral and leadership roles. We understand from the Bible that some leadership duties are to be fulfilled by suitable gifted men.

A distinctive feature of Fenlands Church leadership is in the way we try to establish local church where our people live—Church in the House! This requires willing and gifted people. House groups can be an extremely useful tool in church growth and be the catalyst to establishing a new church community.

Our have oversight of all the work and activities of our congregations while people in the leadership serve in specific areas—like Worship, Pastoral Care, Mission, Prayer Groups and Youth and Children’s Work.

The responsibilities of leadership are challenging. If a leader is not respected, he or she will find life tough!

***Hebrews 13:17 Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account. Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you.***

# WORSHIP

Worshipping God is a whole life-style, not just singing praises to Him but living to His praise and glory.



Worship is far-reaching. We should not think of it as limited to a time of singing songs of praise and worship. The Lord Jesus worshipped his Father through every second of his life. Serving, teaching, healing, praying, walking and talking—all was worship.

***Romans 12:1-2 Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.***

So, worship is about discipleship, it is about our fellowship with God and each other. People who are worshipping God in their personal lives will be worship God in the church gatherings. They will be ready with spiritual words, songs and gifts. When we live a daily walk with God, we will always aware of his amazing grace towards us and will overflow with praise and thanksgiving for all that Christ has done and all that he is.

The grace and love of God in justifying guilty sinners and placing them in Christ— safe for ever—should bring to birth lives that are giving and unselfish. God baptises and fills us with his Spirit. We are given power to serve and power to live the way God has purposed.

***Galatians 5:22-24 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires.***

Worshipping believers will want to serve God and their fellow believers. They will want to put the Lord first in everything. This means that the plans of each day, week, month or year are made with God in mind. We will set apart time each day to meet with him and time each week to meet with our fellow believers in church gatherings. We will set apart some of our income and give it to the Lord through the church. We will set apart our gifts and abilities to benefit the local church.

### ***On Giving***

You will note that we do not take offerings in our meetings. There is a box for gifts at the back of the hall. We do, occasionally, ask for special giving to help our friends in missionary work. We hope that you will see the needs and costs of keeping things led well, warm, in good repair, and the kitchens stocked with good things. Usually, regular givers arrange a direct debit from their bank. Government kindly gives us back the tax you paid. You know how it works?

In a world that encourages self-fulfilment this might seem “unusual”? However, putting God first is not expected to arise from rules or laws—it all arises out of love for the Lord. We do not legislate on giving—but we do look for evidence of the fruit of Christ in each of us.

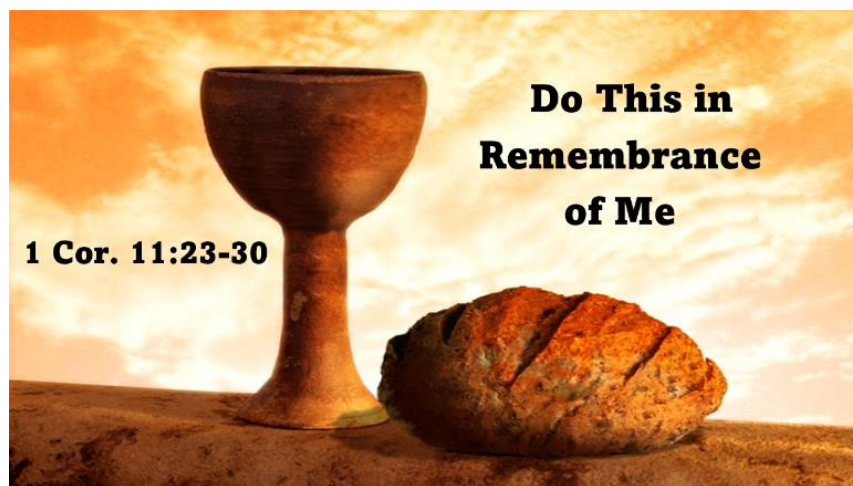
***Matthew 6:33 But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.***

Setting apart some of our income, our time, our talents in worship of God ends up with us being blessed. There is a remarkable spiritual blessing and joy in being holy (set apart) for God.

## **Communion**

When we gather to worship the Lord, we include the Bread and Wine, the Lord's Supper. This is something Jesus told us to do as a way of remembering him. We remember that we are saved by his death and made alive by his resurrection and are serving him until he returns for us from heaven. Sharing the same bread and wine speaks of his body and blood and our unity in Him. We share the Lord's Supper at the heart of our worship. This is not a mere ritual but a t

ime to revisit why we are Christians and what we ought to be getting on with for the kingdom of Christ. It is a time to get to know the Lord better.



# Statement of Faith

Our beliefs are those taught in the Bible - ***"not in words taught by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, expressing spiritual truths in spiritual words."*** 1 Corinthians 2:13

*Put as simply as possible those beliefs are:*

- Repentance from sin
- Faith in Christ Jesus alone for forgiveness and eternal life
- Trust in Christ's finished work accomplished through His life, death, resurrection, and ascension into Heaven.
- Hope concerning Christ's promised return.
- Belief that God is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
- Belief that the Person of the Holy Spirit indwells the true believer providing evidence of salvation.
- Acceptance that the Bible is God's complete revelation to humanity.
- Love for God and willingness to serve Him
- Love for all people and concern for their true happiness in spirit, soul, and body.
- Fellowship with believers of like mind in worship, prayer, and service.

We hope these pages have given you a fair idea of what we are as a local church. Also, maybe, we have answered a few of the questions you may have had?

You can contact us by 'phone or email—or arrange to meet with one or more of the leaders.



## **Fenlands Family Church Thorney**

Meeting at the Duke of Bedford School Sundays from 10.30am

Play'n'Chat (Mum's and Toddlers' Group) meeting at Bedford Hall on Wednesdays from 10am.

Home Group on Tuesdays

contact: 01733 271377 / 07908 644946 / 07908 643798

email: fenlandsfamilychurch@gmail.com

## **Fenlands Church Tydd Gote**

phone: 01945 420297

email: fenlandschurch@gmail.com

Church Centre

Main Road

Tydd Gote

PE13 5QA

Sundays at 11am

Prayer Groups on Tuesday and Thursday

BEYOND Youth Group – Thursday at 7pm



*find out more about us on our web site:*

**[www.fenlandschurch.co.uk](http://www.fenlandschurch.co.uk)**