

- Read from Acts 16:11-40 (bookends) and Philippians 1:1-6
- the founding of a new church community...

What is Church?

- Overview of what we are about: what is church?
 - partly from the driver of the turmoil in the CofS
 - partly from my involvement in emerging church within the CofS
 - partly from reading on what kind of church will actually connect with and reach the **whole** of any given community...
- Wanting us to **think**, not just sit passive
 - so while I may preach in a conventional pattern sometimes in these evening services, my intention is to engage in other ways quite a lot too - **no passengers in this journey!**

Exercise 1: church is...

- Take seven pieces of paper each
 - one word on each bit of paper
 - **write down one aspect of what church is or is about on each piece of paper**
 - this exercise you need to do yourself, not just copying what others are writing
 - this is not an exam - point is not to get "right" answers - but to make us learn what we already have in our heads about church, so we can explore it...
 - don't need to do all seven, but do need to write at least 4 or 5....
- *(give time for that, 5 minutes?)*

Tea break

- (keep your bits of paper!)

Exercise 2: what's important is...

- Taking your bits of paper, decide which three are **essential/non-negotiable**
 - couldn't have church without....

Exercise 3: a collective picture...

- Clear space in the middle, with a masking tape line across it:
 - invite a brave person to put their three essentials above the line....
 - and their others below the line...
 - then start to take others, slowly at first, developing themes/areas of common priority...

Closing reflection

- Where have those elements/themes/ideas come from?
 - Scripture? where...?
 - cultural translation?
 - history, tradition, culture?
- What happens if I begin to think an essential is missing from our church life?
- Or if something we see are essential is really not - or worse a hindrance - according to Scripture?