



# *vision & values*

**An introduction to**

**Light & Life**

Free Methodist Church

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## **Light & Life Free Methodist Church**

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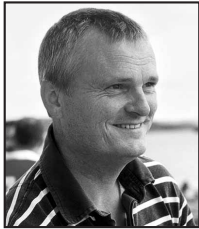
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# Pastoral Team

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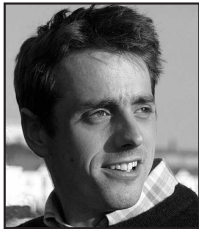
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# Welcome

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If you have just moved into the area or are new to the '*Light & Life*' church, we hope you feel at home with us.

In this short introductory booklet you will be able to discover more about who we **are**, what we are **doing** and where we are **going**.

Do take time to familiarise yourself with what follows and also the enclosed DVD. If you would like to find out more about the Church or Christianity in general, a member of the pastoral team would love to chat with you.

# Who we are

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'Light & Life' Free Methodist Church is a community of Bible believing Christians who have a passion for Jesus Christ. Together we are being disciplined and equipped to live out our faith, sharing the life-giving message of Jesus Christ in relevant ways.

Spread throughout west Cornwall, we are a part of an international family of Churches known as Free Methodism (*see the Free Methodist handbook for more information on what Free Methodism is*).

Where have we come from? The Free Methodist Conference in the North of England had a burden to start a church in the West country. The Rev Ken Leech came down to Helston and a Church was established in 1985 with nine founding members. Since then the work has expanded under the leadership of Pastor John Townley and has led to churches being planted in Penzance and Truro.

# What we stand for

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*"If you stand for nothing you fall for anything"*

## Our Beliefs

'Light & Life' is a family of churches that takes God's word (the Bible) very seriously. We believe it to be uniquely inspired by the Holy Spirit and without error. A fuller doctrinal statement, which is based on John Wesley's adaptation of the 39 Articles of the Anglican Church, can be found in the Free Methodist handbook.

## Our Mission

*To be disciples and to make disciples*

## Our Values

- 1 We value **community** life, understanding the church as a family to which people belong, not just a place to which people go. It is founded on unconditional love and acceptance, and an appreciation of the immense value of every person.
- 2 We value **prayer** as our priority, recognising we are powerless to affect positive change outside of God's power and mercy and will.
- 3 We value the **Bible** as the Word of God, allowing what it says to govern what we believe and how we live.
- 4 We value the presence of the **Holy Spirit**, relying on Him for the daily empowerment and transformation of our lives.
- 5 We value the **worship** of God as daily life and sacrifice, not just as weekly corporate gatherings. It is our heartfelt response to his grace and in a corporate setting may include singing, prayer, preaching and the sacraments.
- 6 We value the **family** unit, seeking to strengthen both marriage and home life. We view children not only as the leaders of tomorrow but also as the church of today.

- 7 We value those who are **poor** and disenfranchised, seeking to minister to both, whether locally or abroad.
- 8 We value those who are **not yet Christians**, endeavouring to share the good news of Christ with them through both word and deed.
- 9 We value **financial** stewardship as the responsibility of every member through the regular giving of tithes and offerings.
- 10 We value **servant leadership**, where God appointed leaders enable the Church to be released for ministry, with the attitude 'your success is my honour.'

### **Our Non-Negotiables**

We may not live in violation of:

- The Holy Scriptures (Old and New Testaments)
- The Free Methodist doctrine, mission and membership covenant

# Getting connected

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At *Light & Life* we are passionate about the local church. It's central to God's purpose and the only hope for a broken, disconnected world.

*"There is nothing like the local church when it's working right. Its beauty is indescribable. Its power is breathtaking. Its potential is unlimited."*

**Bill Hybels (Senior Pastor at Willow Creek Community Church)**

Due to the huge potential of the local church there are many forces of evil that will withstand it. One example is an independent spirit. We encourage you not to allow it any place in your life. Instead allow the Spirit of adoption (Rom 8:15) to connect you firmly to God - knowing the embrace of the Father, and into His Family - the Church.

We find identity in being part of a family where we are named and find a place of belonging. You cannot find identity and fulfilment by being an independent Christian, but you will find it in the local church as you grow alongside others.

In the New Testament, to be a Christian meant being a part of a local church. On the day of Pentecost thousands of people heard the Apostle Peter's message. But Luke counted those who respond to the Gospel as the number who were 'added' to the local church. It is vital to be committed to a local church so we can be counted upon. The New Testament letters are written to Christians in local churches. They call us to join a local expression of the body of Christ and to submit to the leadership God has placed over it. The writer of Hebrews puts it this way: ch.13 v.17 "Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you." It is in this context that a Christian is safe to grow and is released to serve Christ through His Church.

As you become connected, you will find a number of wonderful things begin to happen:

- You are nourished and equipped.
- You discover your identity as you find your place in relation to the rest of the Church.
- You find a safe and secure place in which to grow in your faith
- You experience a sense of belonging, sharing both the good and the bad times.

There are a number of ways in which you can learn more about connecting to *Light & Life*. A good place to start is to go to a **new comer's lunch**. However for those who can't wait please read on to discover more about where we are going and what we are doing.

# The big picture

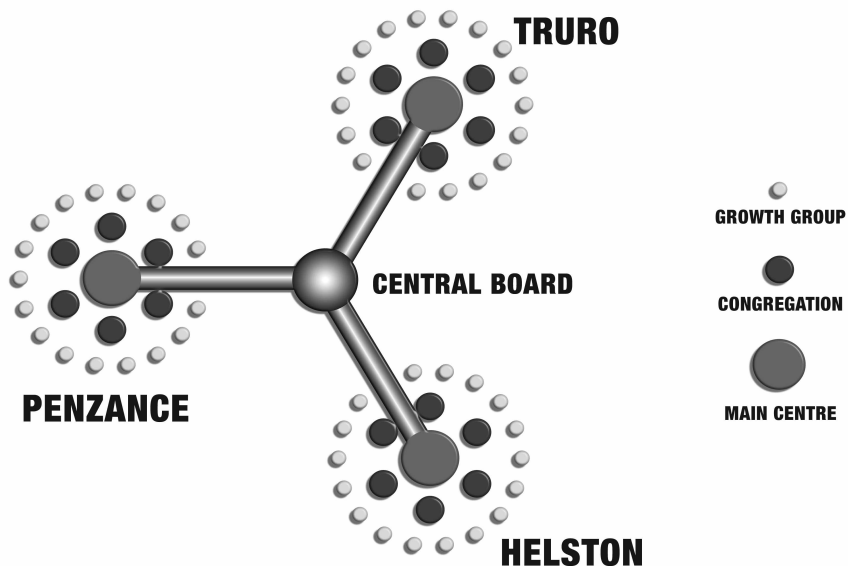
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At *Light & Life* we are committed to team ministry; team is at the heart of life in God's kingdom. We're not individuals doing our own thing, but a family of Churches working together. We realise that **T**ogether **E**veryone **A**chieves **M**ore.

Since 2001 we have been working towards what we believe to be a God given vision. The vision is for 3 interconnected Worship Centres of 1000+ people located in **Penzance, Helston** and **Truro**. These three Main Centres are connected together as a family under a shared leadership team.

Each Main Centre will include 2 types of smaller groups:

- a) **Growth Groups** – These are smaller communities (up to 15) where people are encouraged, supported and equipped to be disciples of Jesus Christ (see page 11).
- b) **Congregations** – These are medium sized groups of Christians (varying in size from approximately 20 to 120) gathered in a local area as a light and witness, seeking to regularly reach the lost for Christ (see page 12).



# Growth Groups

In a big Church it is essential to be a part of a smaller caring community. Growth Groups are just that. They are a great way to get to know others and grow in your Christian faith. They are groups of up to 15 people who meet regularly for worship, prayer, Bible study, friendship and outreach.

## Aim - (The 3 G's)

- Growing in relationship with God
- Growing in relationship with one another
- Growing numerically

## Structure

Led by a leader and assistant leader who together are responsible for running the group and implementing the 3 G's.

Every Growth Group leader and assistant is cared for by an encourager. An encourager has responsibility for up to 5 growth group leaders and their assistants.

Encouragers are cared for by a Growth Group Area Pastor who is responsible for encouraging and overseeing up to 5 encouragers.

*NB. Sometimes there are not enough Assistant Growth Group Leaders or Encouragers, in which case people double up.*

## Training

### **Assistant Growth Group Leaders**

- On the job mentoring
- Additional training (e.g. Discipleship course, Bible School)

### **Growth Group Leaders**

- Bi-monthly meetings for leaders, assistants and spouses where they receive teaching and share from experience
- Input and support from encourager

### **Encouragers and Area Pastors**

- By observing their Growth Groups realising what is effective
- Reading material, attending seminars

## Multiplication

When a Growth Group reaches 15 people it is time to begin the process of multiplication.

## Congregations

As well as meeting together as a larger Main Centre we meet in smaller congregations for mission.

### **Aim**

*To be a light and witness in a local area creatively sharing the life giving message of Jesus Christ.*

### **Structure**

Located in different communities and contexts, congregations are individually shaped to best reach the lost for Christ. They are not 'mini churches' but 'mission outposts', connected to and resourced by the Main Centre.

### **Organisation**

How congregations fulfil their unique vision is the responsibility of the 'Prayer and Planning' team. This team is overseen by a Main Centre Pastor and consists of four *Light & Life* members elected by the Main Centre Board.

### **Administration**

The Main Centre bears the burden of administration, freeing the congregation to concentrate on mission rather than maintenance.

### **Finance**

All congregation collections go into the Main Centre, which pays the congregations running costs (such as facility hire, staff salaries etc). In addition the Central Board (see page 14) issues the congregation with an annual budget.

Congregations are reviewed every 18 months.

## Main Centres

### Aim

*To be the heart and hub of the Church, where we collectively gather to celebrate, worship, pray and be equipped for mission.*

- Weekly – Sunday morning services
- Joint Sunday evening celebration – 1st Sunday of every month for all of *Light & Life*.

### Structure

Main Centres are led by a Main Centre Pastor, Pastoral Team and Board. There are weekly staff meetings and a monthly board meeting where decisions are made.

### Discipling and equipping

As a part of the ongoing life of the Church the Main Centre facilitates many activities and events, such as:

- *Alpha* – Exploring Christianity
- *1st Steps* – Nurture
- *Discipleship course* – Lifestyle
- *Lifeshapers* – Breaking old habits
- *Accountability triplets* – Transparent holiness
- *Bible School* – Going deeper
- *Crusaders* – Youth and Children's activities
- *Men of Valour* – Men together
- *Esther Days* – Women together
- *Membership training* – Accepting responsibilities and privileges
- *Parenting Course*
- *Marriage Course*
- *Leadership seminars*

In addition Main Centres may run other groups and events (e.g. gospel choir, football, community fun days, social action events, debt counselling etc.)

## Central Board

In addition to the Main Centre Board, which deals with the implementation and administration of the vision in a specific area, there is a Central Board which oversees the whole of *Light & Life*, West Cornwall.

### Aim

The Central Board is a team of people whose role is to ensure that the bigger picture is being fulfilled. It simultaneously guards the existing vision and tests new vision that affects *Light & Life* as a whole.

It exists to resource and empower not to restrict. An example of some of its work includes:

- *Policy* – e.g. child protection/health and safety.
- *Personel* – e.g. the approval of Main Centre staff.
- *Finance* – The management of the central fund, e.g. the setting of budgets for each Main Centre.

### Structure

The Central Board consists of;

- The lead pastor - John Townley (casting vote)
- The Main Centre pastors (voice but not a vote)
- Two lay people elected from each Main Centre (vote)

### Leadership accountability

Main Centre Pastors are accountable to the Free Methodist Superintendent. Each Main Centre has annually elected representative(s) (Lay delegates) to ensure good relationships between the Pastors and the Church, and also the Church and Conference. Conference leads the Free Methodist family in the U.K. comprising of the Superintendent, U.K. Pastors and the lay delegate(s) from each fellowship. All other staff are accountable to the Main Centre Pastors and Boards.

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*“There is nothing like the local church when it’s working right. Its beauty is indescribable. Its power is breathtaking. Its potential is unlimited. It comforts the grieving and heals the broken in the context of community. It builds bridges to seekers and offers truth to the confused. It provides resources for those in need and opens its arms to the forgotten, the downtrodden, the disillusioned. It breaks the chains of addictions, frees the oppressed, and offers belonging to the marginalised of this world. What ever capacity for human suffering, the church has greater capacity for healing and wholeness.*

*The church has many critics but no rivals”*

**Bill Hybels – Courageous Leadership**





#### **CHURCH OFFICE**

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