

# The ABC of



[www.light-wave.org](http://www.light-wave.org)

Knowing what you value

## What is Lightwave?

All over the county of Suffolk, there are churches with services each Sunday. Lightwave is a Christian community, meeting in small groups in homes, pubs, offices, schools and other places which works alongside more traditional ways of doing church. The name comes from the idea of lightwaves being the way in which light spreads into dark places. Lightwave is committed to shining the light of Jesus in Suffolk through acts of kindness and practical service as well as worship and witness.

Lightwave groups do the essential things of church - but in a whole variety of different ways, suited to the needs of their members and the context of a small group who get to know each other well. So there are no sermons - but we read the bible and try to put it into practice in our lives. There may be no singing (unless the members are musical) but we find other ways to worship and pray for each other and our local community. We eat together and share the Christ-focussed meal often called "communion" or the eucharist. We have fun, support each other and try to put faith to work in practical care for friends and neighbours and the most needy in our society. Each group is part of the great wave of God's love which brings light to our county.

## Who can be part of Lightwave?

Anyone who wants to join one of our small groups. You do not need to be a Christian or have faith to be part of Lightwave - if you'd like to explore with us what it means to experience and speak God's light in our communities that is enough. Having said that, many Lightwave members are also very active members of another church (most often Church of England but other kinds too) and find that being part of a Lightwave group helps them with the everyday putting faith into practice.

Others would not be part of a church at all if it were not for Lightwave. Lightwave enable those who cannot get to a Sunday Service to be fully included in a community based on Christian faith. Our aim is also that people who find Sunday worship too formal or structured for them, especially younger generations and those unused to traditional forms of church, will find Lightwave to be somewhere where they can find friends to explore the journey of faith with them.

## **What happens in a Lightwave group?**

They're all different - but most meet weekly and follow the typical pattern used in these notes:

**Welcome** - time to chat and generally "catch up" over coffee or a meal. At some point an ice-breaker question or activity introduces the theme of the meeting. This gives everyone a chance to join in and gives a relaxed feel to the group.

**Worship** - time to focus on God and become aware of his presence, giving thanks, leaving behind the business of our day, and allowing him to touch and refresh us and realign our will to his.

**Word** - This is the Bible Bit. We typically use discussion and activities to help us understand a passage or a subject. Our emphasis is practical - what difference will what we learn make to our lives?

**Witness** - Showing God's love for our friends and neighbours. This includes praying for the needs of people, giving practical help and providing opportunities for people who want to explore faith. Many lightwave groups will be the team for a fresh expression of Church such as Messy Church or Cafe Church which provides these opportunities.

Lightwave groups have a lot of fun together - barbeques, bonfires, Traidcraft parties, children's events, youth lazerquest, bowling or cinema. These are great times to invite friends and neighbours who might not normally feel comfortable to get involved with church events.

## Transforming Values

*"The most important commandment," said Jesus, "is this: 'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' The second is this: 'Love your neighbour as yourself.'"* Mark 12.29-31

These commandments reflect Jesus' values - what was important to him: - a high view of God, a high view of others, a high view of ourselves, and sacrificial love. We believe that these values can be used to set a life-giving framework in which people can grow and help others to do the same. In Lightwave, they are reflected in a simple "rule of life" for the small groups:

**All Involved** - Everyone is included and valued, whoever they are. Everyone has a role to play.

**Becoming Disciples** - The purpose of the group is to encourage us to love and live more like Jesus.

**Creating Community** - We will "be real" with each other - honest about the things we go through ourselves and to respond in a loving way to each other. Caring for each other enables us to care for our wider community too.

**Doing Evangelism** - Being as well as telling good news together. Giving other people the opportunity to learn about Jesus (Not everybody likes the word "evangelism", but really it is just about being the very best of good news for people in what we do and say; so we think it is important to understand this word – it does not involve bible-bashing!)

**Encountering God** - Meeting with God. It is God who helps us and changes us.

This introductory course takes us through this simple “rule” and seeks to explore how this can help us to “be real” and “be light” in everyday life.

## **Week 1: Being Real. Being Light. Taster Session**

(NB: This session is also part of the Lightwave experience "Being Real Being Light which incorporates the Basics Course used for Elder training)

### **Welcome** (15 mins)

If your group is meeting for the first time, introduce yourselves to each other - and get the facilitator to tell you a bit about the group and what it's all about. For example, everyone is respected in a Lightwave group and if there is any activity or conversation which you don't want to join in, it is fine to pass. Disagreement within the group is fine and normal - we learn more from each other when we share what we really think.

### **Introductory Question**

(Good for over a cup of coffee)

What is the best (or worst) coffee you have ever had?

**OR**

If someone said that they thought it was important to "be real" what would you take them to mean? (Do you think "being real" is important?)

### **Worship** (15 mins)

Play some quiet music and take time to remember God is with you. Each light a candle as a sign of gratitude. As you light it name something or someone for which you are truly thankful.

*Every good and perfect gift is from above,  
coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights,  
who does not change like shifting shadows.*

James 1.17

### **Word** (40 mins)

1. Start with a prayer, inviting God's Spirit to guide your hearts and minds as you listen to the reading from the bible.

2. Begin with one person reading the bible passage below aloud to the group.

Matthew 5.13-16

*"You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot.*

*<sup>14</sup> "You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. <sup>15</sup> Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. <sup>16</sup> In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.*

3. Allow some silence to unfold as people let the words have their impact and to allow people to reread the passage to themselves again. All are invited to identify a word or phrase which stands out to them or speaks to their imaginations.

4. Find a person in the group you know least well. In pairs listen to each other as you tell each other the phrase which struck you and why. (Any reason is ok. There are no wrong answers here if it is real to you.)

Listen well, because your job will be to report to the rest of the group what your partner has said, not what you yourself said. Note-taking is OK.

5. Draw back together as a whole group and each tell what you learned from your partner.

6. Wrestle together as a group. Ask, "What might God might be up to in the passage for us today?"

## **Witness**

In what ways are you currently part of being God's salt and light in your community? Or what ways do you feel called to be salt and light in the future?

Offer these things to God in a time of prayer or silence

Finish with a prayer such as

***May the grace of our Lord, Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all evermore. Amen.***

Share out leading different parts of next week's session (WELCOME, WORD, WORSHIP, WITNESS) before you go

## Week 2: All Involved

Small groups like this one are sometimes called "cell church". The term "Cell" comes from the idea of the church as a body - a living organism made up of smaller cells which multiply and are vital to the life of the whole.

Today we're exploring the first of 5 values for healthy Lightwave groups.

**A**ll Involved

**B**ecoming Disciples

**C**reating Community

**D**oing Evangelism

**E**ncountering God

### Welcome (15 mins)

Watch the short film on **All Involved** at <https://www.light-wave.org/core-values>

Each name one skill you have which can benefit other people and then discuss together the questions raised by the film.

### OR

Play pictictionary in two groups - strict time limit.  
What makes a good team?

### Worship (15 mins)

Focus some time on thanking God specifically for the people who are serving in different roles on the body of Christ.

Begin by reading aloud 1 Corinthians 12.4-11

Then take it in turns to pray short prayers of thanks.

*Eg*

- *Thankyou God for Jean and Peter and the way they use their driving skills to help people*
- *Thankyou God for Jim and the work he does in school*

Give space for silence. You could possibly intersperse your prayers with reading a verse or two from the rest of the chapter to inspire further praise.

### Word (45 mins)

1. Building on your previous discussion, brainstorm on a large piece of paper as many gifts/talents skills/ other things different people can bring to your Lightwave group (eg. Hospitality, a car for lifts, being able to put things simply so others can understand, making people feel welcome)

2. Read 1 Corinthians 12.12-31. Then discuss with this overall question in mind –

**What does this passage mean for your Lightwave group?**

- **What happens to the leg if the eye stops working?**
- **Why didn't God make everyone good at everything?**
- **What should you do if your Lightwave group is missing something you think is important?**
- **What happens in your Lightwave group if everyone plays their part?**
- **What happens if some don't play their part?**
- **Why is it important for everyone to be fully involved?**

Here are some other relevant passages - Ephesians 2.10, Ephesians 4.11-16, 1 Corinthians 14.26

Pray about what you have learned. For example, for the involvement of every member of your group - and especially for those who find it difficult to feel "part of things" because their main involvement in ministry is through responsibilities at home or work.

4. Spend a few minutes discussing how could you spread the responsibility for the overall running of your group. Here are a few roles which could be taken on by different people. If you are a new group, you may need to come back to this in another week, once you know each other better

- Group co-ordinator
- Host (venue provider or refreshments provider)
- Prayer co-ordinator
- Worship leader (not necessarily with music)
- Bible study leader (regular/occasional)
- Organising social evenings/outings
- Telephone mate (keeping in touch with those who cant always make it to the meeting - for prayer, support and keeping up to date)

**Witness** (45 mins)

Pray about and begin to plan together a social event to be a blessing to people who are not part of any church. For example, a trip to the cinema or bowling or a Christmas party or summer barbeque. (List of ideas available) Make sure everyone in the group has a part to play in organising this. Pray for each other and the people who hope to invite

Share out leading different parts of next week's session before you go

Finish with a prayer such as

***May the grace of our Lord, Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all evermore. Amen.***

Acknowledgements:

*Phil Potter, The Challenge of Cell Church Chapter 3*

## Week 3: Becoming Disciples

Today we're exploring the second of 5 values for healthy Lightwave groups.

**All Involved**  
**Becoming Disciples**  
**Creating Community**  
**Doing Evangelism**  
**Encountering God**

### Welcome (15 mins)

Challenge the group to memorise the 5 values. Give a small prize (a chocolate?) to anyone who can recite all 5 values without looking!

THEN

Watch the short film on Becoming Disciples at <https://www.light-wave.org/core-values>. Go round the group and each say one person or group who inspires or influences you. Discuss anything else which struck you from the film

OR (IF YOU DO NOT HAVE ACCESS TO THE FILM)

Think back to your school days - was your school an effective place of learning? Can anyone remember things that they learned parrot fashion but have never used? What experiences or people have you learned the most from in your life? Go round the group and each shared your answers (passing is allowed)

THEN

Conclude by leading the group in a short prayer, offering what you have discussed to God and asking for Him to inspire you as you study the bible together.

### Word (45 mins)

Read John 15.1-17

1. Look in John's gospel at what happens before and after Jesus says these words. What other things does he talk to his disciples about? What do you think was his intention in this section of teaching?

2. The word "disciple means "follower", "learner" or "student". What learning opportunities did Jesus give his disciples?

Ideas can be found in John 2.11; Matthew 5.1-12; 10.1-15; 14.22-33; 18.1-6; 26.36-46; Luke 9.18-21

How can we have similar experiences today?

3. Jesus describes how a branch bears fruit. First it is pruned. How does pruning take place in our lives?
4. Secondly, it remains part of the vine. How do we do this? (v.10) Which is more important in our discipleship - our behaviour or our relationship with Jesus?
5. Why are we to bear fruit?
6. What difference does it make that Jesus has chosen us rather than us choosing Jesus?

## **Worship** (15 mins)

On a large sheet of paper create a vine which represents your group. Draw leaves on the branches and write on them the things you would like to do to move on in your discipleship - as individuals or as a group. Think about what helps you most in building your Christian life - bible reading alone, in a group, sermons, on-line resources, books, conferences, friends...do you need any help to move on - if so, in what area?

Play quiet background music and offer these thoughts to God.

## **Witness** (45 mins)

- Pray about and continue to work together on the social/ event to which you could each invite one or two people who are not currently part of church. (List of ideas available)
- Pray for family and friends, especially for any who will be invited to your next social event.

Finish with a prayer such as

***May the grace of our Lord, Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all evermore. Amen.***

Share out leading different parts of next week's session before you go

### *Acknowledgements:*

*Jenny Baker, Jesus at the Centre, Session 3*

*Phil Potter, The Challenge of Cell Church Chapter 4*

## **Week 4: Creating Community**

Coming Soon...