

## Lighthouse Church - What we believe about leadership

1. **The Local Church** :- The local Church is God's method and means for evangelising and discipling people and to fulfil the Great Commission.

"Parachurch" ministries (ministries that are not a "Church") may be helpful, but as they are only needed when the local Church is not doing its God given job, we generally do not support them, but rather seek to do the ministry they would do as part of this Church.

We believe that each Christian must commit and contribute to one local Church family and submit to the local elders there.

2. **Elders** :- God has instituted leaders (called "shepherds" / "elders") to watch over and grow the local body of believers. They are the highest level of human authority in God's structure of leadership on earth.

These shepherds lead, teach, and equip the saints for ministry. They will give an account to God for how they led, and watched over the people He has put under their care. Jesus is the ultimate Good Shepherd (Jn 10), but He has also appointed "under-shepherds" (elders) to lead for Him and with Him. (1 Pe 5:1-4). In Jn 10:1-10 Jesus describes Himself as the Shepherd for the sheep, and the "door" by which sheep, and other shepherds, enter the sheepfold. He says that "he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door, but climbs up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber." We, as the elders of this local Church, have a God given responsibility to be the "door" for this body, under Christ's guidance. This means that, apart from leading and caring for people, we are also responsible to decide who leads and ministers in this local Church. We take these responsibilities seriously, and we seek to honour and obey God in these matters.

3. **The five-fold gifts** :- The 5-fold gifts listed in Ephesians 4:11 (apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor, teacher) are not positions or titles in the Church, but rather descriptions of giftings given to people in the Church. The elders should exhibit some or all of these 5-fold giftings, but there may also be others in the Church with these giftings who are not elders.

The role of those with 5-fold giftings is not to do ministry, but rather to "equip the saints to do the work of the ministry" (Eph 4:12)

All of these 5-fold gifted people must submit their ministries to the elders in the local Church, and must be invited by them to do any local ministry.

4. **Deacons / leaders** :- The elders appoint some who will help them to lead and to disciple people, delegating this authority and ministry to "deacons". Those who are given this ministry must first be tested before they are given this role (1 Tim 3:10).

This testing includes:

- Time - there must be a significant time period so that the elders can watch and get to know people well;
- Attitude - the elders will look for humility, grace, willingness, helpfulness and submission;
- Relationships - the elders need to genuinely get to know people, their families, and their personal lives;
- Character - honesty, openness and integrity are what are being looked for;
- Service - a willingness to serve and volunteer in any way needed.

While in the Bible these people are called "deacons", we call them "lifegroup leaders" and "worship leaders". While all members of the Church are called to be involved in ministry, and to exercise their gifts, not all are called to lead or to be given positions of authority. Leadership positions and opportunities are a privilege, not a right...they are not guaranteed.

Those who are not submitted and committed to this Church, and these elders, cannot be appointed to leadership positions in this Church.

5. **Members** :- For these reasons it is important that the shepherds know who is in their "flock". We call this "membership", and it is determined as follows:

- A person views our description of membership - [www.lighthousejersey.com/membership](http://www.lighthousejersey.com/membership)
- They indicate on ChurchSuite whether they consider themselves to be a member or not - <https://lighthousejersey.churchsuite.com/my/details>
- The elders review this from time to time, and if they have any questions, or if circumstances change, they arrange a conversation with the person to come to mutual agreement.

We value you, and we are keen to see God's kingdom grow in our Church and all around the world. We would love to help you walk into God's perfect and wonderful plan for your life. Please let us know how you feel about all of this, and your answers to our questions, and whether you have any questions of your own. God bless you. We're looking forward to hearing from you.

The Lighthouse Elders