

CONSTITUTION FOR THE WORKING TOGETHER OF CHURCHES IN FALMOUTH & PENRYN

**As agreed by the Falmouth and Penryn Churches Together Forum
26 November 2014, and amended on 25 November 2015**

BASIS

Falmouth & Penryn Churches Together (FPCT) unites its churches in those areas which acknowledge God's revelation in Christ, confesses Jesus Christ as God and Saviour according to the Scriptures contained within the Holy Bible and acknowledges the power and the will of the Holy Spirit. These churches commit themselves to:

- seeking a deepening of their relationship with Christ and with one another in the Christian Church
- fulfilling their mission to proclaim the life and death of Christ by sharing their faith with each other and giving service to the world

These churches affirm this intention through the love of God, Jesus Christ and the workings of the Holy Spirit.

AIMS

The aims of these churches shall be:

- a) to enable them and their congregations to explore Christian faith together, to develop equal relationships, to work towards a common truth and to make decisions jointly
- b) to encourage them to worship, pray and reflect together on the true nature and purpose of the church in the world – each church being encouraged to share its unique spiritual treasures with other churches and to work with the Spirit to embrace diversity and difference
- c) to enable them to live in the Spirit of Christ's life and work, to spread this message jointly by loving words or actions and to take steps towards a greater unity
- d) to enable them to respond to the needs of society through their awareness of Christ's teachings on compassion, forgiveness, giving, judgement, love, relationships, respect and responsibility

In particular FPCT shall:

- i) serve as a means of communication between churches and the community of Falmouth and Penryn on areas of common concern

ii) provide a focus for relating to local statutory and voluntary bodies (council, police, schools, residential homes, charitable organisations etc.)

iii) co-ordinate mission and evangelism (as appropriate) in the area

iv) provide a focus for discussion and action on matters of social responsibility and for responding to the needs of the disadvantaged in the areas of Falmouth and Penryn

AREA

FPCT aims to serve the towns of Falmouth, Penryn and their surrounding areas.

RELATIONSHIPS

FPCT is affiliated to **Churches Together Cornwall (CTC)** which in turn is affiliated to **Churches Together in England (CTE)**.

MEMBERSHIP

Membership of FPCT shall be open to:

a) any church or association of local churches within a Christian tradition which is affiliated to a church or association of churches which is a full member of Churches Together in England or Churches Together in Britain and Ireland and which can broaden its perspective with compassion and respect to make a place for churches with differing styles of worship leading to inclusivity within this CT group

b) any church or association of local churches within a Christian tradition which affirms the Basis and commits itself to promoting the aims of FPCT and which has its own national or regional organisation and ecclesiastical identity which can broaden its perspective with compassion and respect to make a place for churches with differing styles of worship leading to inclusivity within this CT group and

c) any church which does not contain creedal statements in its faith and practice and therefore is unable to commit fully to statements of faith in the Basis – provided that 75% of those full member churches shall be satisfied that such churches remain committed to the Aims and Purposes of FPCT and that it will work in the spirit of the Basis and which can broaden its perspective with compassion and respect to make a place for churches with differing styles of worship leading to inclusivity within this CT group

OFFICERS

The officers of FPCT shall be a Chairman and Deputy Chairman (one of whom shall normally be a minister of religion and the other a lay person). These officers will conduct meetings, communications and other duties in a balanced, respectful and tolerant manner. In addition to these officers there will be required an Honorary Treasurer and an Honorary Secretary

(plus a Minute Secretary if desired) to be elected at the Annual Meeting of the Forum. Officers shall serve for an initial period of 3 years and may be re-elected if willing to serve for a further period not exceeding 3 years.

NB the Chair and Deputy would benefit from having a staggered period of office to ensure continuity.

FORUM

The forum shall:

- a) consist of clergy, ministers and up to two members of each participatory church
- b) consist of representatives from any association, network, movement or ecumenical partnership which brings together people of Christian denominations within the area for purposes congruent with the Basis and the Aims of FPCT (such organisations may be Christian Aid, YMCA etc.)
- c) be able to co-opt others with particular expertise or understanding but these co-options shall not total more than 25% of the representatives elected to the forum and shall normally be for a maximum of 2 years. Those co-opted may not vote on an amendment to the Constitution.
- d) meet not less than twice annually. The main meeting shall be the AGM at which the audited accounts shall be presented, officers elected and annual reports submitted.

ENABLING GROUP/EXECUTIVE

This body shall:

- a) be appointed with the function of enabling member churches to make decisions in common at and between Forum meetings and to serve as a reference point for the Forum
- b) comprise the officers of the Forum, up to 4 lay representatives and up to 4 ministers appointed by member churches with regard to appropriate representation of the various Christian traditions and denominations in membership
- c) may set up working groups to explore issues identified by the Forum or the enabling group/executive. It may also commission a particular member church or body to work on behalf of all

FINANCE

Each member church shall pay such annual subscription to FPCT as shall be agreed at the Annual Meeting of the Forum. The financial year shall be from May to April. Cheques will require the signatures of two of the four officers. An Honorary Auditor will be appointed at the AGM.

CONSTITUTION

The Constitution and any subsequent amendment to it shall require the approval of 75% of the member churches acting through their normal decision-making bodies.

REVIEW

It is intended that FPCT shall reflect the developing life of its Christian churches as they continue their journey together. Every 5 years, a review group shall be appointed by the member churches in consultation with **Churches Together in Cornwall** to report on the progress of its journey and to make proposals for desirable changes.

November 2015