



# Sharing the Story...

## Hope Baptist Church, Liverpool

Hope Baptist Church is the direct result of two churches merging together, the former Stuart Road Baptist church (whose building has since been demolished) and the former Bethel Baptist Church. Mergers are not always successful or pain free, but the fact that both congregations were in agreement has meant this coming together of two congregations has been accomplished successfully with many positives moving forward as a new church.



Since the merger, and forming of a new church, Hope Baptist Church, several new mission initiatives have begun to emerge. We now have (an albeit small) creative art school which started in September 2012. It is run by an established group of Christians who are based in the south of the city. They wished to have a north Liverpool base and we needed something new for children in our area. Pure creative art school aims to get into local schools to encourage and help young people who lack confidence or who have low self-esteem through the medium of drama and music. This project enables us to build bridges into the community and we now have one parent joining us at morning worship through this link.

We also established a coffee morning to open the church doors to the community. There had been one that had been in operation at Stuart Rd for a number of years without great success, but now we have our regular members (who come from the church) but also members come from the community and on average we get twenty to twenty five each week. We have competitions and quizzes each week and we also put on a special diamond jubilee celebration for the group. This has been an amazing blessing and an easy way to connect the church with the local residents. Through my links with other ministers in the area we have been able to support CAP (Christian against poverty) which is based at Northfield Church, a local neighbour. We do this through a food bank, which has resulted in us receiving some growth from those who have found themselves in debt but through CAP have discovered Christ.

Finally we have begun an elderly-link line, and this was completely new to the merged church. The membership is small at present but we hope this will change in the future. The link-line provides elderly people who live alone with the opportunity for a phone call each week. This is to prevent them from becoming lonely and isolated. They are able to contact us at any point during the week should they wish or need to do so. It is surprising what one phone call can do for a lonely individual. “

**1 Corinthians 9: 21-22 To those not having the law I became like one not having the law (though I am not free from God's law but am under Christ's law), so as to win those not having the law. <sup>22</sup> To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all people so that by all possible means I might save some.**

### For your thoughts and prayers:

- Is there a need in your local area, where the church could be the pioneers of response and care?
- Thinking of 2 congregations coming together, are there projects / opportunities opening up for you where you could do more together than you could apart?