

## Millom Baptist Church, Cumbria

Millom is a small and isolated town within Cumbria. The Baptist Church there, led by David Opie, continues to faithfully be a Christian witness among the community. This includes regular school assemblies and David serving in a chaplaincy role at both Sellafield and Millom Football Club. David looks back on the year just gone, and shares something of the church's mission and outreach...



"In the spring of 2013 a Foodbank was launched based in our church, but as a joint venture with other churches in the town. There are many people who are struggling at the moment and this is one way we can be the hands and feet of Jesus in our community. As well as providing food there are opportunities to listen to people's stories and sometimes to pray for and with them.



Each Tuesday a coffee morning is held which enables people from the community to come in and enjoy refreshments and a chat, there is always someone available from the church if anybody needs further support. A local ladies choir (Phoenix singers) meets and practices every Wednesday evening on the church premises, some ladies belong to other churches in the area but there are also none Christians involved with some of our own members as well. Each month there is a Millom Monday Meeting where someone is invited to talk about how God is working in their lives. It involves people from many different churches, and Christians are encouraged to bring along friends and relatives who might not attend church regularly, so the meeting takes place on 'neutral turf' rather than in one of the churches and a meal is provided.

As a church we are keen to connect with those 'outside the building' and there are other opportunities for 'non-church' people to attend services in our own church: 'The Big Welcome' was designed to be accessible for friends and visitors to our church. 'God hears your questions' was the title of this year's message, as part of a national initiative and a way of reaching out into our community. After the service we enjoyed a meal together offering the chance to chat and get to know people better. By forming relationships in this way we hope to be able to invite local people into our church and encourage them into God's kingdom. . We also have a regular Youth Service and Sunday Special which is an interactive service that is all age.

***"If people do not welcome you, leave their town and shake the dust off your feet as a testimony against them." Luke 9: 5***

### For your thoughts and prayers:

- The Big Welcome is a once a year event for a 'seeker sensible' service, but in what other ways could your church work on its welcome to visitors on a regular basis?
- David's work sees him as chaplain in two contexts within the local community - how could you connect with your local context?

