

Brownley Green Baptist Church, Wythenshawe



Home Mission-supported Brownley Green Baptist Church brings the good news of Jesus to the sprawling Housing Estate of Wythenshawe in South Manchester. With contacts with the community centred around the thriving weekly Carer and Toddler and Boys' and Girls' Brigades, it was decided early in 2014 to enter a new phase of work amongst older people. Over 50s fitness classes were already successfully running led by Georgie Christine, the church's family worker and wife to minister, Stuart. These fitness classes take place on Friday mornings alongside our Coffee Morning. Contacts have been made with several elderly neighbours who hate to miss their weekly gatherings on Fridays. Church Deacon Ron Hyde shares more about the church's community engagement.

"In the area around the church, it had been reported that there were many old people living alone. The church, in response, felt led to run a Holiday at Home event for the first time during the summer of 2014. After much prayer and planning, a team was appointed to run the event, and over three afternoons in July, around 30-40 local elderly folk including some of the church membership gathered for a time of fun, entertainment and afternoon cream teas. The afternoon began with a "flight" in a plane using one of the side rooms as a jet plane with flight attendants and simulated flight experience using moving images on the screen at the front of the plane. Following "arrival" the holiday-makers were treated to entertainment, a quiz and a moving testimony from one of our members who had experienced the Second World War, this being the 70th anniversary of D-Day. The "travellers" came from various situations, one lady not having been out of her home apart from visits to hospital or doctors for over four years!



Comments that this was the best time they had had for many years came from several of the holidaymakers. Several new contacts were made and several are now members of the Friday morning exercise group and some have joined the Sunday Worship services. In December we held a Holiday at Home Reunion and Christmas meal and 50 seniors sat down to a three-course lunch provide by outside caterers followed by entertainment from the entertainer used in the summer. A time of singing carols and a word about the message of Christmas and the love of Christ preceded a final cuppa and mince pie. Santa Claus arrived just in time to distribute a Christmas gift to all the guests.

The events of the year have enabled the church fellowship to show the love of Christ to today's older generation and we shall continue to care for them and others we discover needing friendship and support."

Home Mission supports, equips and enables churches in their mission and in engaging with the local community.

"Stand up in the presence of the aged, show respect for the elderly and revere your God. I am the Lord. "

Leviticus 19: 32

For your thoughts and prayers:

- How could your church listen to the voices in your community, and respond to the needs that are already in existence?

- How does your church currently engage with its locality and context? How could you share the good news of Jesus with an aging and elderly community?