

## Greenfield Baptist Church, Urmston



**Greenfield Church is a Local Ecumenical Project situated right in the middle of the town of Urmston in the Trafford area of Greater Manchester. A partnership between a congregational and Baptist Church, who've always had a desire to be spiritually what we are geographically: to be the "church at the centre", showing God's love and welcome to the community it is part of. And over the last few years, the church has had two significant opportunities to do just that, as minister Stephen Smith explains...**

"The first opportunity is our monthly Lunch Club. This was started by two people from our church who have a real desire to cook good food and entertain people and, in so doing, to show something of the hospitality of God. So, in September 2012, we invited thirty people to come on the second Monday of the month and have lunch together. Since then, the numbers have steadily grown, and have now doubled, with anything up to (and sometimes over) 60 people, who all come to share good food and good times together.

The Lunch Club has helped us make friends as a church with people we wouldn't have been able to meet otherwise. There's a wonderful sense of warmth and friendship every month. We've celebrated Christmas together, we've celebrated the one hundredth birthdays of two of our members together (one of these pictured below). People at the Lunch Club have joined with the church in our fund-raising activities. We've been able to get to know them, hear their stories and even pray for them in their times of need. All this, I believe, is a reflection of God's loving welcome (and sense of fun!).

Secondly, for the last four years, the year 2 children of Urmston Infant School have come and been part of our Carols By Candlelight service. Their "Christmas Singing Club" joins us every year and sings a selection of children's Christmas songs. This has really brought a new energy to this service, which the church has embraced and which has now become a regular part of our Christmas celebrations. As well as this, it gives us an opportunity to share the good news of Christmas not just with the children, but with their parents, other family members and teachers as well. It's opened up new opportunities for us to work with the school, such as leading assemblies and me being appointed a co-opted governor of the school.

The support we've received from Home Mission has helped our church, and me in particular, to take full advantage of these opportunities. We simply wouldn't have had the resources to do these things without this support, and I as minister wouldn't have had the opportunity to be part of them without the generosity of other members of the Baptist family. So thank you from Greenfield Church for your love to us expressed through Home Mission.

***"Come, all you who are thirsty, come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost." Isaiah 55:1***



### For your thoughts and prayers:

- In what ways is your church currently connecting with the local community?
- Does your church have a hospitality gift, and how could that be used to share your message?