



Sharing Our Story...

Ellesmere Port Community Ministry

Rose Uitterdijk is Community Minister in Ellesmere Port, and over the years has built relationships, trust and connected with the unchurched and de-churched. Here, she shares about one of the monthly events that happens as part of this ministry, which is enabled by Home Mission.

“Once a month, on a Friday we open our home for a community meal. Anyone is welcome, and we encourage people to bring food to share; for some this means bringing a big casserole but for others it can be a bag of crisps. The format is simple - we eat and then people sit around to chat, play board games, use the garden, or play pool.

Over time, we have seen friendships begin to form and people starting to look out for another. A couple of months ago, one friend was having a particularly challenging time and had no money after benefits were stopped. The next day another woman, who herself struggles financially, brought a couple of big bags of food to help the first woman. It was humbling to witness love in action in such a sacrificial way.

One of our neighbours has started to come along; she lives an isolated life and this is one of very few occasions she leaves the house. Another man lives in a care home, although to all intents and purposes he is fit and well. He had lost confidence following the death of his wife and could not go out by himself. He has become part of our little community and it has been amazing to see his confidence grow over the last year. He is now our resident quiz master and chess teacher. Another woman became estranged from church following the murder of her husband, but over the past year she has felt able to take communion in her own tradition.

We have people of all ages from young parents to the elderly and it is so wonderful to hear snippets of conversation as they talk together. It is great to see adults sit down and play games with children. Most of the people who come along are living with challenging situations, yet when we get together there is a sense of each one reaching out to others, hearing and holding stories and offering acceptance and love. For the most part, these friends are not to be found in church on a Sunday morning, but each in their own way is on a faith journey. These Fridays are noisy and messy, but for us they represent a little glimpse of God’s Kingdom and we love them.

For your consideration, reflection and prayers:

In what ways does your church relate to and share the good news with those who aren’t part of the church? In what ways do you yourself connect with those who aren’t part of church?

What is the value of bringing people together from across the age ranges and how could you play a part in this?