



# Sharing Our Story...



## Chelwood Baptist Church, Stockport

**Andrew Phillips is the Minister at Chelwood Baptist Church, a community-focused church serving the Larkhill Estate in Cheadle Hulme. The church is actively engaged with its locality through ministries such as 'Shine Like Stars', Messy Church, Zumbatonic and Chelwood Foodbank. While running these various activities, the church is on a journey to intentionally shift what it looks like to be church, as Andrew explains here...**

“As a church, we (all ages all together) are journeying towards being fully intergenerational and this has seen both blessings and challenges. Lots of things have gone really well – our Sunday services are more informal and full of interaction between the generations, people are engaging with the Bible and praying more, but the temptation is to stop where we are as it seems to be working well enough.

If we are to become fully intergenerational, however, Sunday services aren't the only thing that needs to change. It's easy for us to say that everyone is treated the same and valued equally, but if that is to be true, then we must also put it into action. Perhaps one of our biggest challenges is how we are intergenerational in our Church Meetings. Attendances at traditional evening church meetings have been falling for a number of years and had got to a point where they weren't representative of the whole church, even though we had tried a number of different formats such as eating together and making the meeting more worshipful.

At the start of 2018, we decided to try moving some of our Church Meetings into the Sunday service so we could involve as many people as possible. We had our first intergenerational AGM where all ages were involved in writing our reports and in discussing and planning for the year ahead. We learnt a lot and will continue to adapt them to encourage everyone that they are part of God's mission in and around Chelwood.

### For your consideration, reflection and prayers:

How do the different ages and generations relate together as part of your church? Do old, young and in-between mix together? How could we nurture and grow the sense of 'one family' within our churches?

Is your church's way of running an AGM currently representative of the whole church body? Are there ways in which this needs to change?