

# Sharing Our Story...

## Newall Green Baptist Church, Wythenshawe



To recognise the 100-year anniversary of the end of the First World War, Newall Green Baptist Church participated with other churches in Wythenshawe to construct an art installation for peace, as Jane Henderson NGBC Minister, explains...

"Churches used their contacts with local groups including schools, uniformed organisations, youth groups and groups to support those with mental health issues, to make origami doves or cranes from recycled materials. They were then taken to Wythenshawe Shopping Centre on Saturday 10th November where they were added to a frame to create a 'wave' of peace birds. Information about World War One, Remembrance Day and 'Working for Peace' were all available, as well as an opportunity for passers-by to make their own dove or crane.

As well as Baptists, there were Quakers, Catholics, Anglicans, Methodists, URC and independent evangelical churches represented, which was a powerful witness for a united church of Christ to the people of Wythenshawe. People passing by were invited to write a response to the question, 'Who or what will you be thinking about during the two minute silence?' This invited great conversations and we were encouraged by people's engagement and response.

The following morning, the churches came together again for a service in the same place in the shopping centre, which was extremely well attended, with many people there as a result of engaging with us on the previous day. The act of remembrance closed with a local school choir singing 'Make me a channel of your peace' and the birds on the art installation were removed and each person present took a peace bird home to encourage ongoing contemplation.

Newall Green Baptist Church values ecumenism and has a heart for its community, so much so that the deacons were prepared to close the church and encourage the fellowship to get out of the building and join in with the service in the shopping centre. As a result of this event and ongoing work in the community, there is much goodwill toward the Churches in Wythenshawe and we hope to build on this ecumenical witness to Christ and his love of the people in our community."

**Questions to consider:** How would you describe the relationship between your church and others in the community? In what ways could this improve, and what steps could your church take in this? In what ways does your church share faith in public spaces?

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