

# Sharing Our Story...

## Hoole Baptist Church, Chester



Hoole Baptist Church have been developing Missional Communities as an intentional way of engaging with those 'outside the church' and growing as a community of disciples. The church have seen some exciting developments on the Blacon Estate where these Missional Communities (MCs) have grown considerably. Andy Glover, who leads HBC, explains....

"As we moved into the autumn term we have multiplied into two Missional Communities now in Blacon. We have Blacon Central – this is a community that is living out the good news of Jesus in Blacon and discipling the people of peace we are connecting with at Highfield Primary School, and through the Shout Kids Club. This club has 25 -30 kids attending all from non-Christian homes and 6-8 families are being recognised as people of peace. These families are invited along to the MC to chat and discuss the teaching the children are receiving at Shout. The second MC is called Open House, and they have a specific vision to see God grow relationships and see people's lives changed within Dee Point Primary School and the surrounding areas in which we all live. One of the members of the community is a governor and another is on the PTA. Once a term, these two MCs come together for a 'special focused' Messy Church Gathering in a local community centre in Blacon."

Ed Green is Minister-in-Training, and part of the ministry team at HBC, with a focus on developing missional communities and the work on the Blacon estate. This growing community and the ministry is enabled, in part, through the support of Home Mission. Ed shares a bit more detail on the work; "Blacon currently has two Missional Communities and a thriving kids club being run by us. We multiplied Blacon central into two. In the original 'Blacon Central MC', we are currently reshaping what we are doing specifically focussed around the children and families who attend Shout Kids Club. The children are mostly from the school where our own children attend. Shout is run by my wife Lynsey and her team in partnership with another church. It has grown to over 30 children and right now we feel that we wanted to connect more with the families. Some of them we already know well and have good connections through school.

This coming Sunday, we are inviting families to come to our house for lunch and to hear from their kids about what they have been learning about Jesus. We hoped for one or two families to say yes, but so far we're up to about six or seven and not sure how we will fit everyone in but God is good! We will then invite them to join us every month for lunch and to know more about Jesus. We feel that we are on the brink of something very exciting in Blacon. We have seen people come to faith, be baptised and continue to grow as followers of Jesus. We are hoping and praying that this will grow and we will see more and more people choose to follow Jesus and as a result have many more MCs multiply out of us. My wife is also a governor in our kids' school where she helps do lessons, and we both do assemblies. We are working more and more with the school to support families that need it.



Also as part of my involvement in Blacon, I am a trustee of a new community 'Pantry' supermarket being set up. We will be launching this in the new year and it is part of responding to the wider issues faced in communities like Blacon around food poverty. I am passionate about caring for the whole of our community and feel called to be a minister not just to our church and MC people but the wider community. Again this in partnership with three churches, local councillors and residents. It's great to be part of it and is something slightly different from the MCs but still important."

*How does your church relate to other churches to reach its local community? In what ways does your church engage with local schools, parents, community spaces and hospitality to those who aren't yet following Christ?*