

## HBC

### “A church where we want God’s very best”

#### Our story

In November 2007 Ruth spoke at the Morning Celebration about the memorial stones for HBC. (it is interesting to note that HBC became a BUGB church in November 1952 with 32 members– 55 years ago). The purpose of this was to set our present context into the context of our history. HBC was started as a mission church to Hoole by other Baptist Churches in Chester. As we reflected on the history we identified the following memorial stones:

- ◆ Risk Taking Faith expressed at the very beginning but at significant moments in the past 55 years.
- ◆ Strong emphasis on work with Youth and Children
- ◆ Strong emphasis on serving the community of Hoole.
- ◆ Working with other churches across the City
- ◆ God’s provision

The church has had 4 Pastors, of which I am the fourth. Since 1994 when I was appointed we have seen the goodness of God expressed in and through our ministry together. We have seen significant change both in the physical, the building is now known as Hoole Lighthouse Centre, we have 135 members (the largest in its history) the growth of ministry can be seen in the appointments of paid and voluntary staff and the development of projects and ministries. For the past 5 years we have seen a steady increase in the numerical growth of HBC and in the quality growth of individual Christians.

We are HBC and we are looking forward with thankfulness to all God has done and with confidence that we shall see the building of more memorial stones as we dream together of what sort of church we will be over the next 3 -5 years.

#### Our Mission

We can identify 3 core areas that will be at the heart of the next 3 – 5 years



#### Our arenas of influence

These will continue to be:

- ◆ Citizen; Congregation; Community; City; Country; Continents

#### Our dream

We dream of a church . . .

where Jesus is the centre piece of a life lived in pursuit of God. Where faith is an adventure because our passion for Jesus breaks into all we are and do.

where you and I have real relationships with Jesus and each other. Where the reason for our relationships is to help one another to become the people we were meant to be

where you and I hang on God's every word, written and spoken. Where you help me and I help you understand and obey it to such an extent that we can't get enough of God. Where we have more faith in the voice of God than in the voice of our own experience.

where you and I are free to try anything for God because He prefers risk-taking faith to safe scepticism. Where we have nothing to prove and so nothing to lose. Where we respect, encourage and celebrate each other because we reflect an infinitely creative God who delights in variety.

where you and I actively pass on all we know about God to the next generation because we long for them to experience God in ways we can't even dream of. Where young and old are true friends because it's the only way to strengthen the church of today and tomorrow

where you and I find healing in body, mind and spirit, where we can question anything and seek God's answer together; where life is considered precious and we can discover new beginnings. Where we experience real change: our destructive lifestyles, habits, addictions and compulsions are forever jettisoned.

where you and I discover that prayer releases the Kingdom of God and we see heaven itself invading earth as God answers. Where the presence of the Holy Spirit is welcome and there is openness to all that He brings.

Where you and I have the heart of the King, where we want Him to impact every life we encounter – across the street and around the world. Where our hearts reach out and include, not defend and isolate.

where you and I care enough about our culture to do something about it. Where we take the Kingdom's perspective and values to the outside world, backed up with practical action. Where our point of view can't be ignored because God is with us.

## **Our priorities**

To build on the past few years it is clear to us that we need to "strengthen the core" of who we are. To do this we need to recognise that although we have influence and involvement in many exciting ministries and projects in Hoole and Chester we need to identify what we believe are the essentials for us to express the dream!

The following shall be the main focus for the next 6 – 12 months:

- ◆ To address the Sunday Morning Accommodation needs so that we have the facility to enable the Celebration Meeting to fulfil our dream and values
- ◆ To explore building a "kingdom community", a family that is a witness to the world open, welcoming and inclusive, where everyone is valued and no one is expendable
- ◆ To offer different and diverse expressions will be explored to enable the individual to encounter God e.g. Pulse, Focus Café, Celebration, Encounter
- ◆ To highlight the needs of the congregation and where we need to serve one another e.g. "Hidden roles and rotas
- ◆ To continue to prioritise the Youth and Children's work
- ◆ To strengthen and develop the work with fathers and men
- ◆ To be an Alpha Church and to run the Alpha Course and Marriage Course
- ◆ To be an active church partner of Chesterfest
- ◆ To develop leaders by running the Growing Leaders Course
- ◆ To keep a Global perspective and vision in all we do

Underpinning all that we hope and aspire for will be the foundation of prayer; we are a "house of prayer".