

A “pop up” church based on an allotment gave the term “church plant” a whole new meaning when multiple baptisms and confirmations took place amongst vegetables and flowers.



The three child and one adult baptism, and two adult confirmations, were celebrated by the Bishop of Lancaster, Dr Jill Duff. They were the first baptisms and confirmations held by the new church on the Higher Croft housing estate in Blackburn.

The church grew out of small group meetings in the community library on the estate discussing the big questions in life and praying for people.

Lockdown meant it was temporarily homeless but as restrictions eased, it relocated to a disused former allotment.

The church now has a congregation of around 50 after being founded in 2018 by Licensed Lay Minister and urban evangelist Sharon Collins.

She said: “The weekend of the confirmations and baptisms, people brought their families and friends who would not normally have come to church.

“There was a buffet and music and they all saw the love of Jesus. We hope that this time next year the numbers coming forward for baptism will have significantly increased.”

Bishop Jill said: “It’s the only church I know where people give their apologies when they can’t come. It’s as if they don’t want to miss out on the heavenly banquet.”

**More information:**

- Pop Up Church also supports a weekly football session on the estate run by Ambassadors Football, a Christian sports charity. They currently have 57 children registered to take part.
  - Sharon Collins' post is supported by Strategic Development Funding from The Church of England and with local resources and support from the Diocese of Blackburn. Sharon also trains people for urban evangelism through the M:Power programme in Blackburn.
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