

Church Family Faith Stories

Jan L - Christian childhood - nearly 20 before I accepted Jesus.

Mum and dad were both strong Christians and we children were sent to Sunday school. I thought I was a Christian because my parents were. I went along to a local screening of Billy Graham's Crusade in London. In his message he said "God has no grandchildren". This struck me for the first time, that I had to make a personal commitment myself. As I walked to the front at the end, I felt an arm go round me - it was my former Sunday school teacher, who said, "Janet, I have been praying for this day to come for a very long time!"

Judith C - With Jesus I am a new creation. Praise His name.

Childhood Jesus: Sunday School, nativity plays, hot cross buns and Easter eggs

Teenage Jesus: Youth club, boys, parish

breakfasts, became a Sunday School teacher

Grown up Jesus: Habit, duty, questions, doubts, weaknesses, illness, Alpha course, LIGHT.

Loraine C - Bible story hero secured my heart with cords of love

Denis J - I went to South Africa wondering and came home certain

Bob S - My Christian faith is all down to the Boy's Brigade.

I was a member of the Boy's Brigade from an early age. Firstly as a Life Boy and later in the main Boy's Brigade company as private and then serving as an officer for a number of years. It was through a BB camp that circumstances arose which led me quite unexpectedly to end up cooking for a camp of 80 boys and officers. This I went on to repeat on a number of occasions. The experience was such a privilege and joy and set me on a new career path. Leaving school, I followed both my father into the printing industry which in all honesty I loathed. The experience of catering for a large camp opened my eyes to the prospect of a career in the hospitality industry and I went on to train as a chef. Subsequently I moved into Catering Management within local government and a senior NHS post. In the late 1980's we moved to Southbourne and ran a Guest house, and I then became Chef/Patron at our restaurant in Southbourne where we served many local Christians. During the later period I suffered two bouts of cancer which eventually took their toll. From printer to caterer. God really does move in a mysterious way.

Sarah S - Wild child meets a wild Jesus

As part of a Christian family I became a Christian at age 7, I slipped away during my teen years and became quite the wild child!

At 18 I found myself in a church in Springbourne and recommitted my life to Jesus that night. At 19 I was baptised in the Holy Spirit alone in my bedroom and then my adventures with Jesus began from setting up and running a Christian youth charity, to being on the mission field in China. I now have the privilege to serve with the mission organisation, Operation Mobilisation where I get to be part of taking the gospel to the least reached people on the planet, which is pretty wild!

Deborah M - Battered, Bruised. Restored, Repaired!

Battered and bruised from a long, unhealthy marriage. I began talking to a God I didn't know and asking for things He wasn't likely to give me. (Money mostly to try and overcome the debt that my then husband had accumulated, which was enormous!)

When the money wasn't coming finally stopped asking for it and simply prayed that if God was real, that He would just help me because my life was such a mess. My circumstances didn't change immediately, but I did! Once I surrendered in prayer by asking only for help I seemed to find the courage to make new choices and finally leave my abusive marriage.

I met Malc soon after, and the first question I asked him was, "Do you believe in God?" After he straightaway told me he did, the rest is history!

Louis S - Struggled. Prayed. Heard.

During my teens, I met people from other churches, who used their bibles to learn about our relationship with God. I bought a bible but could not understand it.

In desperation I prayed "God if You want me to understand this, You have got to help me!!!"

Suddenly there was an explosion all around me, but without pain. I know that this was God The Holy Spirit, and immediately, my bible made sense and for many years, this has deepened. I now know that I will meet Jesus one day, because I trust in Him and what He has done for me.

Maureen B - Weekly services, Youth rally, Jesus came alive, 70 years loved.

Weekly Services, Sang the Songs, Good friendly folk... but then... Youth for Christ Rally, Bournemouth Town Hall... Jesus came Alive! Thankyou Lord for 70 years since of Loving and Being Loved.

Charlotte D - God in the distance. God by my side.

Always went to church with my family when I was growing up. Knew God but felt he was at distance. (Down the garden!). Moved away to train as a nurse and got involved with a lively church. Made a commitment to follow Jesus at a Nicky Cruz rally in Painton. Entered into a personal relationship with God. Life has had its ups and downs and indeed disappointments, but he has walked with me through the good and the bad. In recent years my relationship has strengthened, due to circumstances, and I have finally let go and surrendered totally to God.

Alan G - Mocked Christians, found faith in 1991, never worried again since.

I had always envied other people who were Christians and had amazing faith. At the same I was derisive of Christians, called them Happy Clappers and Bible Bashers. But when I was 41, I went to a local charismatic church because I felt something was missing in my life. As we were singing Above All, and got to the words "You lived to die, rejected and alone, Like a rose, trampled on the ground" my eyes welled up with tears and I sat down and cried, oblivious to the rest of the congregation. An assistant minister took me aside to pray the repentance and acceptance of Jesus in my life. I even remember the date 14th April 1991. From that day onwards I have never worried about anything happening, even through two bouts of cancer.

Brenda W - Inherited faith, walking the road, will arrive at home.

I had no Damascus Road experience as I inherited my Christianity from my family. I have been walking the road ever since and will arrive when I get home.

Duncan R - Scared of dying, given eternal life.

When I grew up during the 70s the IRA were always on the TV news with their bombing campaigns on the Mainland. It stirred in me a real fear of death. It was two questions that changed this fear and changed my life. "If you were to die tonight would you go to heaven?" And "if you were to die and stand before God and he were to ask you "why should I let you into heaven" what would you say?" The best answer I was given was from the Bible in Johns gospel.

My purpose in writing is simply this: that you who believe in God's Son will know beyond the shadow of a doubt that you have eternal life, It is this belief and hope that empowers me to work in a hospital with patients of all stages of life.

Geoff B - Faith as small as a mustard seed

I have read UCB Word for Today daily together with about 3 chapters of the Bible for the last 30 years, Over the past 3 years it has taken me over 5k emails to come up with my vision for the UK "Better education, better housing, better electric transport, better joined up services leading to lower taxes". Faith and work journey are still in progress. If you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can affect big change.

Iris D - Caring for elderly Christians led me to discover Jesus and believe.

I was sent to care for an elderly Christian lady living with her daughter and son in law in her family home. To earn some extra cash, I was sent through an agency to do a sleep over with an elderly lady who was a Christian. She lived with her Christian family who cared for her during the day. Every evening before her son in law went to bed, he would say prayers and read a passage out of the bible for her. I joined them and listened to Stan reading the bible to his mother-in-law. I then started to want to know more about Jesus and became a Christian through caring for this old lady.

Pat A - Churchgoer 43 years - attended children's mission but I found Jesus!

I went to and was involved in church for 37 years. On moving to new area, found the local church cliquey and unwelcoming and convinced myself as I was already a Christian I didn't need church. Began teaching at local church school and encouraged my class of 5 year olds to attend a 4 day mission after school, each day. I went with them and heard so much about Jesus that I returned to the church after 6 years away, but now with an evangelical vicar. Attended evening services which were bible based - one evening I remember breaking down and asking Jesus to forgive me for my sins. Left church in tears but was followed up by the vicar the next day and I made my commitment of faith with him then. Never looked back. Still experienced difficulties in life but now have my faith to uphold me and the reality of Jesus in my life every day!

Malc M - Frightened & Fearful, Humble & Happy

Whilst knowing God virtually all my life as I got older, I realised that I feared The Lord rather than had a relationship with him, however since being with Debs over the last 24 years that has gradually changed into being Happy and Humble that Jesus truly loves me. What a great journey.

Jill G - Severe illness. Christian parents prayed. The Lord heard and healed.

Andy G - Invited to church BBQ, later met Jesus

I was in the 6th form at a boy's school and a classmate invited some boys to a church youth group BBQs with the promise that there would be girls there. I started to go to the group and several months later I gave my life to Jesus.

Jeannie K - Lost, angry, broken: loved, restored purpose

Life was tough growing up for a number of reasons. My parents showed no signs of faith, though I discovered after her death that my mother had been baptised as an adult. At age 15, having moved into town 3 years before, as we lost our tied accommodation in the hospital when my father died, I started going to a local Anglican church youth group, mainly to be as disruptive as possible! One day the curate spoke on the man at the pool of Bethesda: 'Do you want to be healed?' To my surprise I found myself standing and discovered friendship with Jesus. Without that rescue life would have been very different. God also some years later brought Malc to faith: he teaches me so much about God's love. I am still very much a work in progress, so grateful for God's grace. It is a story that continues...

Kellen F - Lost, found God, blessed with people, rediscovered joy. Praise God!

Lost, alone, didn't want to live. Found God who blessed me and surrounded with the most incredible people who helped me find joy in life again. Praise God!

Ron D - Joined Boys' Brigade Wanted Fun & Friendships Found Jesus

When I was 13 a friend at School invited me to his Boys' Brigade Company. That invitation has greatly influenced my life. Even as a late starter I soon became immersed in the BB and all its activities and eventually it took over a big portion of my life when I became a young leader. At the same time, I believed in God but had not experienced or accepted his Son as my Lord and Savior. However, I grew in knowledge of Jesus through running BB Bible Classes and studying. It was around the early 1980's that I started to understand that you had to make a personal decision to follow Jesus and to accept him as your Savior and that he died on the cross for my sins. I was greatly encouraged by several outstanding Christian BB leaders. There were many evangelistic events during this period, and I went to several of them. I never had the courage to respond to the invitations and calling to get to know Jesus personally and never went forward when challenged to do so even though I knew it was what God wanted me to do.

1983 was the Centenary of the founding of the Boys' Brigade and many special events had been arranged for that year to celebrate the occasion. It was at a large BB rally in Central Hall Westminster that a speaker by the name of Eric Delve was challenging the young people and leaders to become real followers of Jesus that at last I had the real courage to stand up and respond to what I had believed for a long time. I will always remember that evening as a young lad that had suffered my football referring said "well done Ref" as I went forward!!

Christine T - A death led to life with Jesus.

It was cancer that caused the death of my Dad and at the age of fifteen changed my world. So, what is life all about? What's its meaning and purpose? We are born, grow up, get a job, maybe get married, have children, grow old and end up in a box! Is that the repetitive pattern, or is there a particular meaning and purpose to life and living? These were the questions that filled my thinking in coping with loss. The day I then heard that Jesus had died to be my Saviour and Lord changed my thinking and life. I knew tremendous peace, that His hand was upon my life and my life is now in His hands. So very grateful.

Mavis H - Upbringing Anglican, christened, confirmed. Powerful testimony, baptism. Religion became relationship.

Geoff H - Experienced grief - Jesus gave my soul relief.

Timothy A - What's the Holy Spirit? Got filled!

My parents were committed to the Christadelphian faith, my father was a speaker and leader of the church and I with two brothers and one sister, went to Christadelphian meetings, Sunday school and youth gatherings. My Grandparents on both sides were Christadelphians and as far as we know their parents were also Christadelphians.

I was challenged by my middle brother who was leaving the faith, to believe something different about the Holy Spirit. I had no one to ask as all my friends and family were Christadelphian and there was no internet in those days and I did not know what books to turn to. I prayed asking God to show me if the Holy Spirit was real and more than a power.

After about a year of praying about the Holy Spirit and asking what it was, and repenting of lots of things, on one day during my finals at college early in the morning, I realised something had changed. I did not get the definitive answer I was looking for about the Holy Spirit, but I felt a great big rucksack had been removed from my back; I praised God and worshiped more than I had before.

During this time I had been attending a non Christadelphian church as well as the Christadelphian church to try to work out what I should believe. I recounted my experiences to someone, who explained I had been born again. This made sense, I felt like a new person, like a baby in the faith, I had been born again. Then I knew the answer; the Holy Spirit is God, who comes to us in a personal manner, to dwell with us, in our body and life.

As a baptised Christadelphian believer at 18, I was later disfellowshipped by the Christadelphian church at 21.

Robert C - Knowing Jesus began with Alpha. Now working towards Omega!

Martin J- Mr Nutt brought me to CBC which eventually cured my nut!

I was brought to a CBC service by my friend and neighbour Nick Nutt when I was at a low ebb in my life mentally-speaking. I liked it here and carried on coming. After a while I joined a house group and was eventually baptised in 2017. It was just around then that my symptoms from paranoid schizophrenia disappeared. I had prayed about this with my church friends. I have since found a job at Brockenhurst College as a learning support assistant and recently wound up in hospital where I had a successful operation to remove bowel cancer.

God had helped me again after prayers from my church family at CBC. And I didn't need any chemotherapy! He has aided me on many occasions in my life for which I am eternally thankful.

Dave E - Christian home, rebellious teenager challenged by eternity

Brought up in a Christian home and attended church from early years. Began to rebel during my teenage years. We moved home and my parents attended a new church. I went along to young people's meetings and joined the football team. One evening I was taken to special meeting for young people in the area called a squash. I was challenged by the question "if you die tonight where will you go?" God wouldn't let me off the hook so that night back home I knelt by my bedside and asked Jesus to come and take control. For the last 64 years I have been learning to trust and follow Jesus. I want to always be a person dominated by His grace.

Deborah B - Catholic Methodist Baptist Saved

Growing up as a bad Catholic, accepted in Methodist church with my children. Found a Baptist Church to my liking now saved forever.

Richard A - Knew God, but found Jesus in 2016, changed my life.

Pam N - I needed a friend who didn't bully me - found Jesus

Denise L - From questionable Christianity to the real thing!

My grandfather was a vicar (and Christened me) and I went to a church school so it seemed right to call myself a Christian - until aged 35 I was taken to a Billy Graham crusade in Birmingham. There I had a personal encounter with Jesus and found myself walking forward to give my life to Him. Life hasn't been easy as a Christian but Jesus my saviour has given me the strength to come through many trials and tribulations - a divorce, two episodes of breast cancer, the illness and death of two husbands and the dread and anxiety of my only son's two tours of duty in Afghanistan and other places of danger. Without the Lord in my life, I know I wouldn't have coped. Thank you Jesus for carrying me through. I trust you and know that you will never let me down.

Vivien P - 60 years ago I was baptised at 16.

Having been brought up in a Christian home, I knew Jesus loved me from a young age. My mother was a Girls life brigade officer so I attended camps from babyhood.

After I was baptised at 16 I worked in the primary at Sunday school and when I got married I trained to become an officer in the girls brigade. My mother retired and had my children to stay with her on GB nights and camp weeks!

I loved working with the children so when I retired down here was disappointed not to be working with children.

God showed me other ways of working for him and I enjoyed flower ministry and pastoral work for the elderly. I believe we all have a role to play in evangelism, and never too old to share faith

Steph H - Slave to Fear. Found Jesus

Ruth M - Deeply unhappy, met Jesus, Deep JOY!!

7 years ago my life was a mess! I was alone, gambling, internet dating with disastrous consequences. I was deeply unhappy. On July 9th 2017 after an upsetting family event I decided I was going into the church I'd walked past for 8 years...CBC!

I had such an amazing welcome from Chris and Kay! Chris spoke about how Great Jesus is and the words "This is the truth" were going round and round my head.

I had always believed there was a God but no idea who he was!

I met up with Chris 4 days later and my first question was "did Jesus have a sense of humour?" A SOH had got me through a lot in life...

From that day on I was hungry to know more about Jesus, the more I knew the happier I became!

My relationships have improved so much and I am so thankful I have a huge church family. Knowing I am truly loved, forgiven and held forever by Jesus puts a smile on my face every day! 😊

2 Peter 3:18 Growing in the Grace and Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, to Him be Glory now and forever Amen!

Susie J - Instead of losing baby found Jesus!

At the age of 29 I moved with my husband and 2 years old son to a new area.

I found out I was pregnant and then started bleeding! The advice was bed rest so my son went to stay with his grandparents.

I had visited a local Methodist church and met a lady called Mary. When she knew the situation she started coming round and blessing me with gifts, one of which was the book 'The Hiding Place' by Corrie Ten Boom which impacted me greatly!

I was a church goer but didn't know about having a relationship with Jesus! One day I prayed to God that if He let me keep the baby I would read the Bible more often - I hardly read it at all at the time!

Shortly after this the bleeding stopped and Mary took me to another church where an evangelist was speaking in the evening. My heart was touched and that night I felt God say that I'd been on the fence long enough - I was either for Him or against Him - I had to decide!

The next evening we went back and I was so overwhelmed I was offered prayer. One of the ladies praying said she thought I was ready to ask Jesus into my life but something was stopping me - I knew it was my marriage as we loved each other and I thought my newfound faith might come between us!

The lady reassured me that I could pray for my husband if I became a Christian and that made sense to me.

At home, I knelt by the bed and repented of my sins, thanked Jesus for dying on the cross and asked Him to come into my life! Instantly, I felt a surge of what felt like electricity, go through my whole body!

That baby is now a mum herself and I prayed for my husband for 21 years before he became a Christian moments before he died!

Thank You Jesus!

Shirley K - Always believed but no assurance until the Holy Spirit broke through

Being brought up in a Christian home and our lives being centred around church and faith, I felt that all I heard about Christianity was true. However, I didn't feel that I had enough of a personal connection with the Lord and assurance of my salvation. My parents were searching for more of the Holy Spirit and investigating the Charismatic Renewal in the 1960s. When I was 13, we went on a holiday conference organised by the Fountain Trust. The speakers included Corrie Ten Boom and Brother Andrew. I felt the presence of the Spirit was so real and the worship included singing in the Spirit, speaking in tongues, interpretation and more. I, personally, felt filled with the Spirit and overflowing in worship of my amazing God and Saviour and love for Him. My subsequent journey of faith was not always smooth or following that narrow path but my Lord was always with me and is still. He is faithful.

Ruth W - From Tick Box Christian to What Next God? Christian

Go forward and become a Christian, be baptised, take part in breaking of bread, serve in the church - Sunday School Teaching. Discover Post Office Sports Club, Netball and Cricket Teams and travel on Sunday to other offices. Exciting. Then much much later Ephesians 3 verses 16 to 21. Verse 20 so relevant. The Joy I have is a bubble inside which is hard to contain or explain sometimes.

Joyce L - Seventy years of knowing and loving the Lord and I keep falling in love with him over and over again.

Niki G- Confused, lost teenager found hope and a future

I lived locally and discovered Post Green which helped in my early steps of faith. I have known God's hand in my life from a young age and feel very blessed to have experienced God's presence and guiding hand for so many years. As a couple we have faced many challenges with health issues in our family and I can't imagine how we would get through without God.

June M - Christian parents but had to choose myself to follow Jesus

I was blessed to be brought up in a Christian home with parents who lived by faith and we moved to Cornwall from Scotland so they could be missionaries. When I was 7 I crept downstairs after my bedtime and told my Dad that I had asked Jesus I to my heart. They were thrilled orated with me and sent me back to bed. From then on I have failed many a time but the Lord has never left me and I always am brought back choosing to live the way he wants for me rather than my own way. My verse that is always with me is Trust in the lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him and he will direct my path. More could be said but not enough words thankful that I have the Lord