

Baptism Testimonies - 30th July 2023

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Date: 30 July 2023

[0 : 00] Can you give it up, please, for Fionn, who's going to come on down and share some of her story with us. Great stuff. Now, I appreciate this is a little bit nerve-wracking, but she's got this.

Hi. I'm Fionn, and I'm 13, and I'm good at it. I love music, and reading, and adventures, and just being with people.

This is me, and this is my faith, a faith that I fully trust and believe in. I've come to trust God to guide me through my journey in life, and to help me avoid most big disasters.

I have felt I would like to be baptised for a while now, because I know there is going to be some bumpy times in the road ahead, where I will make mistakes. Growing up is never easy. I hear it all the time.

But growing up, I think, will be a little easier with God and my church community by my side, to help me get back on my feet, to learn how to do hard things, and to keep on being me.

[1 : 08] So thanks in advance for loving me as I am, for supporting me and guiding me, and for sharing this moment with me now. APPLAUSE Well done, well done. Thanks ever so much for your fine words there, and we look forward to taking the plunge in the pool in a bit.

All right. Where's Jane? Come on down, Jane. Jane's going to share a little bit as well. Let's give her an applause. APPLAUSE I feel it's my destiny to come to Pertwood, because I moved 18 months ago, and the first day I was out, I saw Pat Hall.

And she says, come to St John's. And then in the park, I saw Judy, the ghost of dropping. She says, come to St John's.

So I feel that was the Lord telling me, this is where my destiny was. And it's this wonderful family that I feel part of now.

When I was baptised as a baby, my mother had died in childbirth, so it wasn't a happy event. But now I want to reaffirm those powers to the Lord in my own name. Thank you.

[2 : 38] APPLAUSE Well done. Well done, Jane. APPLAUSE Fantastic. Great stuff, Jane.

And it's great having you with us in our church community, and you're a full part of that. So thank you very much for those words. All right, Kev, I need to be looking forward to this. Come on down, mate. Come on down.

APPLAUSE Morning, everyone. Morning.

Now, a lot of people who may know me quite well realise that I'm normally a very shy, reserved and quiet person. So this is a bit difficult for me, but we'll see how we go.

My church journey and path has been somewhat disjointed, to say the least, with varying elements of emotions, experience, good and bad along the way. As a youngster growing up north of the border, we as a family attended Church of Scotland, where I remember sitting on cold, hard, long pews, being told to keep quiet.

[3 : 42] Still same now, just different seats. I did venture on occasion into the pulpit and do a few readings from the Bible. A nervous young boy, as well as attending Sunday school.

And when older, I attended youth club, which was a good social outcast. In times, Boys Brigade beckoned and I enjoyed my time there on a Friday evening, helping out at various coffee mornings, playing the bagpipes in the pipe band and going on camp and outdoor pursuits.

Fast forwarding somewhat, incorporating two family house moves due to my father's job, resulting in us moving a week before Christmas, December 1988, to the house that my parents still reside in now.

The start of my journey at St John's, and the reason I am standing here today, is down to one person, my recently becoming wife, Juliet. We married here just over a year ago, seems longer, on the 23rd of July 2022, and it was there when we met back in July 2018 that St John's, for us both, became part of our lives.

Juliet had reconnected with an old friend on Facebook and came along, asking me if I wanted to come, saying that it wasn't the kind of church that involved kneel stools. Well, lo and behold, the first time I attended, Matthew Sutton was leading, and as if by magic, a kneeling stool appeared, and we did have a bit of a chuckle.

[5 : 08] The relationship I have with St John's faith and the church in general has been up and down, with lots of tears of both joy and heartache, caused mainly by me on both occasions.

I've been involved in YPC superstars and helped out with some jobs around the church, including putting up the Christmas tree, attending social events such as pub club, party in the park, as well as meeting up with members of the congregation outside of the church walls to chat and gain support. A big stepping stone in my faith journey has been house group, which I attend on a Wednesday evening at Nigel and Karen's. It has been a midweek top-up to my faith, learning and understanding.

I've made some new friends who have listened, advised and been a support, but importantly never judged me. Nigel and Karen, as well as all my house group family, have been brilliant. Juliet, Erin and Auntie Judith have helped me considerably in both general life and my faith journey and progress.

I believe in God and however high ever resistance to hand in my woes and worries for fear of what the future may bring or hold, I am scared, nervous, but also excited at what God can add or bring to my life, both personally and as part of my family.

[6 : 19] Amen. Great stuff, Kev. Fantastic.

Well done, mate. Well done. And you can relax now. All right. Brilliant. Brilliant. Okay. So I said to Gina, because it was last minute with Gina, at a time to prep and I think, we'll hear a little bit from Gina when we come and sprinkle her at the font, if that's okay.

So we'll combine the two, save your wheeling back and forth. But we look forward to hearing just a couple of reasons why Gina feels today is the day for her in a bit. But next, let's have a two for one, shall we?

Can we have Marvell and Mia forward? You want to come on down and let's give them a round of applause. Well done, well done.

Bit of mother-daughter combo here. So, Marvell, do you want to go first and Mia next, maybe?

Good morning, everyone. I'm Marvell and I'm 59.

[7 : 22] Today is my big day. I have knocked the door for several times in my past, but not success.

Today, I know that God has his plan to me. God sent lots of miracles in my life. I know that he will always be with me.

And he gives me strength to go through all the problems and go through all the hard times. I know that he will always be with me in the rest of my life.

After the bad times today, there will be no regret in my life. I love God. Deeply, in my heart, I want to say thanks to Matt and all of you.

And God lead me to the St. John Community Church here. It's all his plan. I know that. I love God.

[8 : 24] Thank you for everyone. You make me feel warm. Thank you. Good morning, everyone.

Sorry, my English is bad, not good. I'll try my best. I am Mia. I'm 39 years old.

To be honest, I wasn't a believer in my whole life. I only started to trust God recently. For some special reason, I don't know why, when I moved to UK, I asked my mom to go to church with me. I believe that's God's plan. God has always been walking with me and guiding me through a lot of things.

I thank him for that. Thank you, everyone. Thank God that helped me find this church. I love everyone.

[9 : 41] Thank you all so much. Thank you, Matt. Thank you, God. This is my big day. Thank you. Well done.

Well done. Great stuff. Thank you, Marvell. Thank you, Mia. Well done, indeed. Well done. I know you say your English isn't good. It's far, far better than my Cantonese.

So brilliant stuff. Brilliant stuff. And we'll be baptizing Marvell and Mia in a bit. And then, last but not least, Kem. Do you want to come on down?

Kewpie's going to help to translate. So let's give a round of applause for Kem and for Kewpie, her granddaughter, as well. Proud day for us.

Proud day for the family. Hi. Hi. Good morning. Good morning. I am Kem. I come. Yeah.

[10:39] She is Kem, and I'm going to translate what she told me. So she's really happy to be here today. And then, so I would just, like, be the first person to tell what she has been before she came to UK.

So she's born in mainland China and have no chance to know God because of the time period and all the stuff happened in there. So, like, after she moved to Hong Kong, her father-in-law introduced her to go to church.

So what a miracle. Like, and then, but because of work, she needs to do work on Sundays. So she does not have any chance to go to church anymore.

But then now she retired. That's why she got more free time to go to church. So it's really happy today that she wants to, like, have baptism like this because we have asked her to do it back in Hong Kong many times.

But because of many reasons, she can't. But now today, she, like, when my mother asked her, oh, do you want to be backtipped? And then she was like, yes, I want to. And then that makes us feel really happy.

[11:51] So even though she does not understand, like, a lot of English or other languages, but she's really happy in it because she also, like, your big smile on your faces.

And you're so kind and, like, happy to her. So thank you for everyone here. And give her a chance to practice. Yeah. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Brilliant stuff. Great stuff.

Thank you, Kem. Thank you, QP. And, again, we'll be baptizing Kem in a few minutes' time.

Brilliant. Brilliant. That's what it's all about. Well done.

Well done. Now, the others, Gina, were able to share a little bit about why today was a significant and special day for them and their choice. You said to me when you walked in a couple of things.

[12:50] Maybe, do you want to just share why today felt right for you? It felt right for me because it's something that I've had such a strong feeling of for a long time.

As a child, I was christened, not by choice, because I was a baby, but as an adult, this is my choice, because I feel the Lord very, very strongly and have done all my growing up years.

And yet I was never taken to church, never taken to Sunday school. But even in my darkest times, I always knew that the Lord was there.

Well done, Gina. Well done. That's great. Thank you.