

Testimonies - 27th August 2023

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[0 : 0 0] I'm just about to do something now, and I really apologise to all of you who have the talent of a singing voice. Because I don't.

But this song has got me through lots of dark times. It's been like a thing that's just gone on and on inside my head.

And it reminds me that I am a survivor, and I come from a very strong family. And so...

In my Liverpool home, in my Liverpool home, We speak with an accent exceedingly rare, Meet under a statue exceedingly bare, And if you want a cathedral, we've got one to spare, In my Liverpool home.

The Lord said, No, Leslie, the song's in. I thought, okay. Right, good morning.

[1 : 1 8] It's two years since I started to hear voices telling me that I was worthless, And that my family and friends would be much better off without me in their world, And I wouldn't be missed at all.

So they told me to take all the tablets that we had in our home at that time. Now, how do you distinguish between a nice voice and a bad voice?

I don't know. But this was not a nice voice. And I panicked, and I was petrified, And I knew there was something very, very wrong. So I text everybody on my contact list, And told them, Please pray.

Which I'm sure they did. After that, After a couple of days, I was able to calm down. But things made me feel very, very vulnerable.

And I didn't feel as if I was here. Don't have to be where I was, But I just didn't feel 100% in myself. Then in October, I had a huge mental breakdown.

[2 : 3 5] And it happened over nothing more simple than I bought the wrong cheese. And I totally lost it.

I smashed the kitchen up. I hit Gary. He's my husband, by the way. He tried to restrain me. And for those of you who've seen Gary, He's not a little chap.

He's huge. But even he couldn't restrain me. I eventually got out of the house without him knowing. And where we lived, there's an alley.

And I went down the alley. And I went behind the bushes. And behind the trees. And I sat down in the mud. There. And sobbed for a few hours.

Don't know how long I was there for, But I was there a while. So, I eventually went back home. I went upstairs. I was screaming.

[3 : 3 1] I was out of control. There was nothing you could do to me. Eventually, I cried myself to sleep. Now, you're probably thinking, Well, how does she have depression and function?

Well, I come from a long line of functioning depressives. And that's what I do. I get up. I get washed. I get dressed. Actually, sometimes I don't get washed.

But I do get dressed. I don't like to communicate. So, I won't talk. I won't maintain eye contact. In the end, Gary got me to the doctors.

After a couple of days, They realised how bad I was. They said I was bordering on suicide. They didn't take me to hospital.

They just left me to my own devices. Because it was COVID. Coming to the end of. Eventually, I had three telephone assessments. They all said, Yes, you need to have counselling.

[4 : 33] I've had counselling before. But because I thought I could do this by myself, I tried to do it by myself. And I've obviously failed.

And the most incredible thing happened. I heard a voice. And it was my Heavenly Father.

And he said to me, He wasn't angry. But he said to me, Leslie, I want you to go and sit on that stair And not move.

And a light came. And I could see some stairs. And I went and sat on the stairs. And I did not move. And I was there, I don't know how many weeks. Two, three weeks.

And although physically I moved around my house, I was still on the stair. And eventually, little bits of light started to come through.

[5 : 32] And eventually, I could see I was still on the stair. However, I was sitting on somebody's knee. And that knee was my Heavenly Father's knee.

And I looked at him. And I said to him, Oh, you're here with me. And he said, I have never left you. I was a physical wreck.

But this time, I knew the only way I was going to get through any type of a breakdown was with my Heavenly Father, my Lord, and the Holy Spirit.

And so after 36 years of depression, this was the last time I was going to have a breakdown. This is the last time I've had a breakdown.

I'm not saying I can, but I'm not going to have a severe one anymore. Because the Lord is with me. I am a child of God.

[6 : 38] Thank you. Thank you. And I am worthy. I do not have to carry around all the things that went on in my life from a child to an adult and carry them forever.

What good is me carrying around somebody at school telling me I was an ugly girl when I was five, when I've grown?

Okay, I'm no beauty, but I'm not ugly. So, I've learned now to, with the help of the Lord, to get through my rucksack and so many things have gone.

I am not carrying a rucksack anymore. I am carrying the Lord's love and his peace and that, to me, is something beyond that anyone can give you.

I want to thank Matt and Gemma and every one of you here who have supported me.

[7 : 51] And although some of you don't even know my name, well, you do now, but although some of you have probably said, I've never spoken to you, just by smiling at me or saying good morning to me, that was enough a lot of the days when I really couldn't do anything.

I wanted to come back to church so Irene and I decided we would put a plan together and I would come back to church.

So Irene gave me air car keys, Irene came in, she sat down, she texted me and said, you can come in now. I got as far as the foyer and I saw all of you and I froze and I thought, I can't go in there.

Nigel saw me like I was a rabbit in headlights so he just got me a chair and we put it behind that door over there by the radiator and that was my first journey back into church.

The fact people recognised me even with my hood up, I was gobsmacked really. Anyway, I got out before the end of the service then I started to come back on Mondays because I realised I can't sit in a crowd.

[9 : 11] I can sit at the side where there's windows or the back where there are doors or now where there's a wall I can sit there because that's my control but I can't sit amongst you but I can walk amongst you.

which is very strange I don't know why but that's how I cope. I couldn't walk or do anything after this depression so Heavenly Father carried me through every single day.

then he would say to me do you want to try and walk? He put me down I try and walk he picked me up glad to say I am now walking side by side with the Lord if I need him I just reach out he's still there.

Having therapy is very slow and exhausting but it is so good to talk to people and for any of you who have any type of mental health issue please talk to somebody even me because it really does help you and what was so important to me was I wanted to be I wanted to renew my baptism vows which I was able to do last Easter on the Easter Sunday when I came out of the baptismal waters the peace I had then is still with me now in my heart it has not left me and I thank the Lord so much for that so a bit later on Matt do you remember when Matt gave us those lists to see what we could do in the church well I got another voice didn't

I the Lord said to me right on the back turn it over Leslie this church needs a group for mental health issues and well-being so I did and after much to and fro me and Matt came up with creating space which started this March and thank you for those wonderful people who have come and supported each other because it's there for you it's not there for me it's there for you and we are learning to just enjoy a moment together I've now finished my therapy and my final therapy said right now is it's up to you you now have to take a large leap of faith so I have taken that leap of faith my faith has grown in ways I would never have imagined and I am truly blessed and what's happened to me over the last two years is unrecognisable and the

[12 : 13] Lord has used me every single day in the way he wants me to be and I am truly thankful so please remember you are all important you are all children of God you are all worthy never allow anybody to put you down say this in the name of our son Jesus Christ Amen don't get off that lightly right okay a journey a story a heart wrenching story really because none of us knows what's going on inside of our heads our hearts and we might put a smile on and pretend everything's okay but I've known Leslie for many years before she came to this church and there has been a transformation no doubt about that hasn't there Irene because Irene has been your best friend along the way and it is about support and it is about being there for other people so let's just pray for you before you leave here just to cement what you've shared with us today because it's been a brave thing to do well it's like taking the plaster off and allowing the air to get at it and you know

I'm going to go forward and I will go forward with the Lord and I will go forward with all of you brilliant so let's pray let's pray for Leslie thank you for Leslie's courage in sharing a story today thank you for Lord for what you've been doing in Leslie's life thank you father for her willingness to obey you to listen to you and to do the things you've asked her to do even though it sometimes seems a bit weird but it's important it's important to do that and we just pray for the days, weeks, months, years ahead and we just know that Leslie's going to be a blessing to us here at St John's and this creates space although I haven't been myself I know and I've heard of what it's doing for other people so I just thank you for her willingness to do this and for what she shared today bless her mightily we pray in Jesus' name

Amen Amen Thank you Well done Thank you Right now we've got Kim Kim's not been coming so long to St John's have you Kim not too long March Would you like to come forward and tell us a bit about yourself no stranger to doing this are you lovely I'll take this away lovely thank you very much thank you as Jane as Jane says my name's Kim and it's smashing to be able to be up here Matt asked me if I'd share a bit of my testimony I won't stand still sorry I don't do the standing still thing and Matt asked if I'd share a bit of my testimony and I promise you I promise you with my whole heart I did not know what Leslie was going to say but you know what God is amazing and he does add to our experience and what

Leslie has said has been incredibly powerful thank you that was so good and as Jane said I've been coming since March and I came by a very circuitous route to come to this church but boy am I glad I came here I am so glad I came to this wonderful fellowship of believers because my story is quite long and I promised I'd only stuck to 10 minutes and my story is quite long and you will get to hear it as time goes on a bit more and a bit more because I'm a preacher and I am going to I'm on the preaching rotor so I'm going to be talking in October as well so when people say to me where do you come from because they listen to my accent they think oh my goodness there's a lot of stuff in there and I can't really tell them I can tell you I was born in Birmingham yay proud Brummie Birmingham City supporter yay there's got to be some of us yay there there's got to be so for the villains in the room I will tell you that

I have a heart of love for you pity me my dad my mum and dad ran a pub right next to Birmingham City Football Ground which was my dad's most it was his most favourite thing because he was a true blue a bit like me a bit like my son but yeah I was born in Birmingham but between when I was born a long time ago and when I was 18 we had moved 10 times and not just up the road we had moved to lots and lots of different places because my dad had itchy feet and actually I think I've inherited that as well so can you imagine my childhood I'd just get to know some people and I'd go on oh we're moving and we go on to something else and we go on to something else and we go on to something else and there was one time in my life that I was so so happy because we lived in a village in Shropshire and my grandad was in the same village and I was so happy there and after a few years we're moving again we're moving again so all through my life and my brother we just moved from one place to another when I was thinking about that I was thinking that maybe that was probably something to do with my dad's mum who was a bargee she used to live on the narrowboats on the canal so she's a water gypsy and her family and they used to take stuff from Birmingham to all places around the country on a canal and I think that's probably where we get the wanderlust from anyway I didn't grow up as a Christian mum and dad told me there was this great guy called God who would always look after us and we could pray to God but that was as far as it went never any talk about Jesus never any talk about the Holy Spirit we just I was just brought up in a loving loving family

[18:44] I mean really loving family had brilliant parents but I didn't know anything about God really and I you can sing Leslie you can sing I used to sing in church church when we went as guides and brownies you know the guides and brownies and scouts of us you know the church services but I did like the singing I like the singing at assembly but and this is something that ties into Leslie's never felt good enough I have never felt good enough all my life to do anything when people asked me what I wanted to be I always wanted to be a policewoman that was it I don't know where that came from I do now I don't know where that came from but I wanted to be a policewoman I wanted to help people I wanted to make the world a better place so when I was 18 I joined the police force and I we were living then I think we were living in Tamworth then so yeah mum and dad had a pub in Tamworth and in fact when I was at police training school down in Kent they moved pubs because they were publicans they moved pubs and they never told me so

I didn't know where my mum and dad were anyway I did find them they can't get away from me that easy so so anyway joined the police force I was in the police force for 13 years loved the job it was the job of my dreams loved the job still didn't feel good enough still didn't think I was going to be a good police woman despite what other people told me I wasn't good enough I got married met a man called Richard we got married we had beautiful son in 1982 called Robert who's called Rob he didn't want to be called Robert and all his friends call him Yogi because he's smarter than the average bear and he eats everybody's picnic baskets so he was in the army cadets they called him Yogi there because he kept stealing food from them so wonderful son called Rob but when Rob was nine months old my husband and my ex-husband decided he didn't love me anymore and he left so I had a very hard job as a police officer which I didn't think I was good enough for I had a very hard job as bringing up a child on my own which

I didn't think I was good enough for so I had a similar experience to Leslie I had a similar experience where I didn't think that I made any difference in this world whatsoever so there was no point me being in this world mum and dad would look after Rob so I knelt at the foot of my bed and I said God if you're really there if you're really there I kind of need to know because I'm at the end of my tether now and there's the I can only see one way out and I'm prepared to do it and God came and knelt beside me and put his arm around my shoulder and I still feel that to this day I still when I think of that moment I still think wow he is real I felt that real actual physical touch of God so I thought oh okay so he's answered that prayer so I better not do anything about that but God I need to know what to do next perhaps a week later I went to work and during our tea break I went up to the canteen and there was a poster on the wall and it's Billy Graham

Billy Graham was coming to England and yeah some of you remember it some of you remember the one before as well and on there it said Billy Graham's coming why don't you so this lady who was the most miserable woman in the world she was a civilian employee and she was so miserable people wouldn't talk to her because she was so miserable but you know I did and she came up to me and she said oh I see you're looking at the poster and I said yeah she said I put that up there I said did you she said and these are the three words three phrases I remember always I'm going it's gonna be good why don't you come with me if any of you ever think you struggle with evangelism please say those three words to you if you see something that you think is gonna be good determine yourself that you're gonna take them to that place I'm going it's gonna be good why don't you come with me it changed my life because this man called

Billy Graham who I kind of heard about but not much Billy Graham stood in front of me and said personally to me there is nothing in your life that you've done that you can't be forgiven for yeah amen there is nothing in your life that you've done you can't be forgiven for and that was it that was that moment and I thought this stuff's real this is real this is this is this is right this is what I've been looking for so on and on I went and I just want to share by the way I had to come out of the police force because I broke my knee at work I had an accident busted up my knee they've pensioned me out of the job that I loved forever there I was unemployed homeless and with a small weather well he was about eight when I left the police force after 13 and a half years moved back to the Midlands and then there's another chapter of my life where God called me to do something else which I'll tell you about some other time but these are the two bits of scripture that I want to encourage you with because these have been a lot in my life you know I said I'm not good enough I'm really not good enough and one of the things I did when

[24 : 28] I became a Christian when I gave my life to Jesus I started reading the scripture I started reading his word and oh my goodness it was really encouraged me it's really encouraged me it's really challenged me it's frightened me and it's also just been my strength and my stay because do you remember Samuel feels called by God to go to a family and get the next king God tells him to go I'm going to anoint the next king yeah so he goes to the family of Jesse and he looks at this tall strapping handsome man and thinks surely that's the Lord's anointed and in 1 Samuel 16 from verse 6 when they arrived Samuel saw Eliab and thought surely the Lord's anointed stands here before the Lord so yeah oh look at the size and the stature of him he must be it because he looks great but the Lord said to Samuel and this is the bit that got right to my heart because I've always had a bit of a problem with how I look and being fat and things like that but the Lord said to Samuel do not consider his appearance or his height for I have rejected him the

Lord does not look at the things people look at people look at the outward appearance but the Lord looks at the heart and I'm looking round at your hearts now you know you are beautiful you really are you say I'm no great beauty but you are you are beautiful you are the Lord's anointed Moses poor Moses led the people all the way around the desert for 40 years and then God said to him you're not going to go and see the promised land so Moses talks to Joshua so in Deuteronomy 31 Moses summoned Joshua and said to him in the presence of all Israel be strong and courageous for you must go with this people into the land that the Lord swore to their ancestors to give them and then it says the Lord himself goes before you and will be with you he will never leave you or forsake you do not be afraid and do not be discouraged that was the message as disappointed as Moses must have felt that was the message he passed on to Joshua who was the next generation who was going to go on and do the Lord's work and I think for us as Christians that's what we have to do is we have to encourage one another which is when Matt said to me why don't you go and share your testimony or a bit of it and then hopefully it will help people to get to know you but also hopefully help people to be encouraged as well I still don't think

I'm good enough but you know what God is good enough God is good enough in me God lives in me he's good enough in me he's good enough so we're good enough if we put ourselves in his hands like I say I I just didn't know what Leslie was going to say but it kind of dovetails really well doesn't it isn't that God's God's way you are good enough you might not feel it you might think oh see now I've retired I went on I'll tell you later on when I'm preaching I went on to theological college and I became a vicar but that was a struggle and but now I've retired I've retired retired early and again I'll tell you a bit more of my story later on I retired early but when I came back to England because I was living in Australia I came back to England and I just didn't know where my purpose was I didn't know where my place was I didn't know but you know what I knew where God was I knew who God was who God is and I just want to encourage you with if you're struggling a bit at the moment God is good he will never leave us or forsake us just like Moses passed God's message on because God had told Moses this before I want to pass his message on to you too

Amen Wasn't that great that was really great because I've smiled at you and said hello to you but I've not had a good conversation with you so to learn how people function with God in their lives it's so important you know and the trouble is it's great but the trouble is about having the church growing although I know we're a smaller church today we probably know most people here today but the church is growing and as it grows we find more difficult to get to know everybody I was having a conversation with Ron and Jo about this yesterday and because it's it's more difficult to talk to people sometimes you can come into church you can feel as if you don't know half the people there so having this testimony time it's wonderful and before we came out of the prayer room before the service

Sian said she put her hands on my shoulder and she put her hands on Phil she says I feel you're a bit burdened today you two and and I said well we're a bit tired but we're okay in that you know and I said to her well we might look as if we we've got all the confidence in the world but actually we're quite reserved in some ways believe it or not we are and we feel unworthy do you know we feel unworthy and she said Sian said but God doesn't look at the person he looks at the heart so there you are so God has got all this in hand today so I want to pray for you because you've encouraged us greatly father I know we've only heard a fraction of Kim's testimony but what a joy and what a light for you Lord and I pray as we get to know Kim more fully in the weeks ahead Lord that we can become friends and this church

[30 : 57] Lord can really go forward with the encouragement of knowing how good God is and how worthy we all are and we all have a place and we all have a purpose to work for you in Jesus name Amen Amen thank you thank you wow that was good excellent excellent and now just before the service I did mention to Ruth about a friend of hers called Jane and a miracle that's been happening in in Ruth's friend's life and she said she'd like to just come and share that little bit is that okay so give Ruth a round of applause very often we get to know people through the prayer chain if you aren't on this or don't know anything about it it's good to be on this because you get messages on the phone about people that are in trouble or people that need prayer and we've had prayer messages from you haven't we would you like to explain a little bit about it this is all a bit unexpected I wasn't expected to be standing up here this morning but it's fine I'm all right I'm all right I'm all right take the weight off some of you will know a very dear friend of mine three weeks yesterday was involved in a road traffic accident young gentleman from London decided to come round a bend on the wrong side of the road and hit the medon he and his female passenger and my friend's husband escaped okay my friend not so she stopped breathing at the scene they had to perform CPR but you know the

Lord decided you ain't going anywhere girl and they got her back this happened in Nilfrakeum because she lives in Nilfrakeum now so they got her to Barnstable Hospital they realized that she was too serious for them to handle so they air ambulance to Bristol with critical abdominal bleeding so in the space of probably four days she had four surgeries the last one involved holding metal work in her spine because she'd broken her C2 vertebrae three weeks she was in intensive care on a ventilator she's got broken ribs a collapsed lung she's got it all going on on the Sunday morning after this happened on the Saturday I came here and went out for prayer with the lovely Leslie Sean and Simon because I felt that well my friend needed that extra prayer support it's not something that I've ever done before made use of the prayer support outside but it really comforted me you know and most of all I knew that Jane needed it she's been on the prayer chain so I know that a lot of you have been praying for her as well and I'm just felt really comforted by the

Lord that I knew that he he'd got her you know the Lord has got her and he's healing her slowly you know he's making her rest which is what she needs yeah she's doing okay she's now out of intensive care she's now getting movement back because she had no movement for two weeks from the neck down so that was a worry but um yeah she's slowly progressing so please continue to pray for Jane it really is appreciated thank you Ruth I'm sorry I put you on the spot but um Sean mentioned it again in the prayer room and she said that a miracle is is happened to Jane and I said well that's what we're at about this morning we're about encouraging messages about what God can do and what God is doing all the time so thank you for being brave enough to come and share that with us today and and I want to share another similar thing in a minute so thanks for that bless you bless you

Irene's sitting at the back there she won't stand because she can't at the moment she's got a really poorly leg and I think we need to pray for Irene a bit later as well but um she said that she got a testimony from a chappy called Andy Hill now Andy came to this church for a short time and he's had a lot going on in his life and he's now home after I'll be telling you about about this in a moment but Irene said that she'd like to share that now she's not been very well this week have you love and she's we're lucky to see her today because she's she said she might not be able to make it but she did send me Andy Hill's testimony which I'm going to read out because it does make sense about the prayer chain I keep going on about it but sometimes you don't have to know the person as long as we're praying for the people things happen so this is from Andy Hill and he says good morning brothers and sisters in

Christ some of you I've known for many years others I've known from my brief spell at St John's Community Church and to some I'll be a total stranger I've been asked by my good friend Irene to tell you a little bit about my journey with God through cancer just over two years ago I was diagnosed with bowel cancer 60 tumors in total that's 60 60 sounded like a big deal but apparently with chemotherapy and radiotherapy they could shrink the tumors I would have surgery and everything in the garden would once again be rosy so off I went and had the treatment as prescribed and after a short wait I was called in to see my surgeon when I went in I was expecting to be given a date for surgery but unfortunately that wasn't the case the chemo and radiotherapies had indeed shrunk the tumors but with them out of the way the scans had revealed a big tumor on my spine that had nerve involvement and was way too dangerous to be operated on at this point I was told the likelihood would be palliative chemotherapy although there was a very small chance that a specialist hospital in London may be able to help my scans were sent to them to see if they could indeed help and after that I was put back onto chemotherapy for another 12 months if this were a film there would be a wibbly wobbly lined now on the screen to indicate the passing of time one day I get an email from

[38 : 33] St Mark Hospital in London to say they want to set up a video call as they think they can help and during the call they frightened the living daylights out of me by telling me what could go wrong as they would need to cut round a few nerves running down my spine in order to get the tumor out all the way through I had a constant message which was God wouldn't throw me this lifeline if it wasn't meant to be and for that reason I agreed to go on with the surgery in May this year I was admitted and given a surgery date of the 12th of May incidentally my mother's birthday the idea was to have surgery go into intensive care then on to a ward after a 10-hour operation I woke up in recovery where they said I would spend the night I could feel and move my legs which they said

I may not be able to I spent most of that night in prayer giving God thanks that I was still alive and everything had gone well my surgeon came to see me the next morning and said he hadn't expected to see me looking so well in fact he said I could avoid intensive care and go straight to the ward another blessing however they noticed something not quite right with my blood tests and I was taken straight back into theatre for emergency surgery turns out there was a leak somewhere in my bowel from my first operation that had to be put right all in all I was in hospital for six weeks and had seven operations during this time Irene kept in touch with me to let me know I was being prayed for you can't imagine how comforting this was it was keeping me going knowing that people that I had possibly never met were petitioning God on my behalf

I remember that sometime in the fourth week I woke up a bit in a bit of an emotional state I don't know why but I felt that everything absolutely everything was hopeless at that time I was very aware of a voice saying let me take that from you although I say heard the voice it wasn't physical but more spiritual and after that moment everything was calm and I knew where the voice had come from that was the first time that I heard God so very clearly and from that moment on I knew that everything was going to be fine my blood tests all came back clear and now I'm waiting for a scan in September to confirm that the cancer has gone I want to thank you all for praying for me and to let you know that God was listening to you that's to you prayers

I have no idea how I would have got through this journey without my faith and God may God bless you all today and always Amen I think that deserves a round of applause as well don't you so a few lessons this morning I think don't you one that prayer does work and it isn't always how we feel because God knows how we feel and he never does leave us or forsake us and for some people the journey isn't always how we expect it to be we might not be completely healed but whatever happens we've all got to face him sometime we're not going to live forever are we but it's the journey we keep going back to this word journey and you know it's what happens inside our physicalities keep us restrained we can't always do what we want to do because of our bodies our bodies decay but our souls go on it's just it's just a little tiny speck in eternity we're living here isn't it it's a little tiny speck because what happens is immense immense but through it all

God is working out his purposes we might not always be able to see it but he is and we just have to trust him trust him for the journey okay we might not always have it how we want to have it and difficult times will come and they'll knock us sideways I'm sure but we are a team we are a team and we need to be team players don't we one person can't do it all Jesus himself had a team he had the disciples he knew he wasn't going to be around forever and he had to leave that team behind to continue the work and because of their work and only because of the Holy Spirit because those disciples were shaky people frightened people they'd seen their master crucified and they did nowhere to go but he rose again and they probably couldn't wait to get cracking but he told them to do what?

[44 : 35] he told them to wait to wait for the Holy Spirit before they went out and did the work so that's what we need in our lives it is his Holy Spirit to guide us to help us and it's his Holy Spirit that gives us the confidence to do what we do and what Kim does what Leslie does what anybody does if they're working for him so Phil's going to lead well the band are going to lead us in a few songs and that lovely prayer team is going to go into the foyer and I'd encourage you if you can to be prayed for Leslie can't walk into the foyer not Leslie Irene can't walk into the foyer because of her leg now she needs prayer today badly I think she should go to A&E; personally but God's got a big A&E; upset so I think she needs prayer so if she can't get to you would you go to A&E; please that'd be great if you'd like to stand we'll sing we'll praise God for who he is and if you can and the prayer will go on and we'll praise God thank you we're coming into land any minute now but

Lottie just wanted just to share a couple of things before we go is that okay Lottie yeah I think most of you probably know me if you don't I'm Lottie and up until 16 months ago I was the children's worker here at St John's and St John's was an amazing kind of launching pad for me for what I am doing now and I just wanted to kind of share with you with the testimonies of Leslie and Kim very similar story for myself I haven't felt good enough iPad counselling and I can honestly say I am good enough and I can believe it now so thank you for all of the love that I still have here I am very lucky to have three churches behind me obviously here my home church and now I work for Doxy in Stafford and St Paul's in Stafford building up their children's youth and family ministry and part of my whole I'm not good enough is I hide away from adults doing something like this is I'm actually shaking it's way out of the boat but I am a bit of a Peter and I do kind of say things like oh let's build a tent for for

I'm trying to remember who it was on the mountain now I've got a mental block and say things that just aren't appropriate at the time but I've had for a long time Jesus saying to me get out of the boat trust me and get out of the boat so 16 months ago I applied for a job with YouthNet and I am over there now and the children's stuff is coming along I'm actually running a family support group for parents which is way out of my comfort zone and I'm actually able to share some of my depressive episode problems and some of my counselling stuff with them and they're really really helped some of the comments I had to do a whole report for church recently and some of their comments were it's a lifeline what else am I doing we've been doing a food bank over there Doxy is a very deprived area and we're really working with the families to try and help them out of the poverty that they're in

I've just finished doing three weeks of family fun again working with families which is way give me kids I can do kids but God is really kind of going come on most of the time I'm like I hope you know what you're doing because I have no idea and he's there and I'm just following him and trusting in him it helps that I have a half an hour journey into Stafford I listen to the sermons here podcasts I'm worshipping more I'm reading my Bible more and I think it's really showing in all the work I do we did a trip to Landudno last Saturday with these families one little lad never seen the sun the sand not the sun the sea sorry you could tell this was just totally off pat I've been wrestling all week with God who's been saying you need to share this and I'd be going no no no no I'm not standing up the front yes and he really pushed me just go and do it so I'm here so it's all off the top of my head I'm afraid he saw the sea and he just went sea and he ran into the sea fully clothed soaking wet but he loved it and they wouldn't have had that opportunity one parent said to her son now you can say you've been on holiday to Landudno to everybody at school and he hasn't had he's five and he's never had a holiday but he had that one day and that's the difference that God is helping me to do for these people he's he's just saying trust me get out the boat follow me and I don't get it right all the time

I get a vision of a maze a maze a maze maze they have them at the farms and stuff and I'll be walking along with God and then oh butterfly and I'll go off into the maze where have you gone God or Jesus and Jesus will say I haven't moved you've disappeared after a butterfly come back and I'll come back and we'll start again and then I'll see something else and I'll wander off and every time Jesus is there saying I haven't moved come back to me and let's walk together and he's never crossed he never says oh for goodness sake I've had enough of you wandering off now he's just there and he's patient and you know he's ready to start again and walk with him and I just hope that that encourages somebody here and I want to thank you all for your love as well because I know that you're some of you are praying for me in my job and whenever I see people you're always asking you know how are things going and I really know the love of this church and yeah thank you and thank you to Jane who first brought me to Christ so thank you brilliant thank you Lottie do appreciate that you