

As Tracy said Lynn introduced us to this church.

I never really considered myself to have any deep beliefs of any kind. I had the occasional visit to church as a child but other than that my life was devoid of any real faith.

We were married in a civil ceremony - quite a long time ago - when the only choice was church or a registry office. We didn't think it was right to marry in a church and then not go again feeling this was hypercritical.

At the beginning of the year there wasn't a bible in the house. I would not have believed anyone if they had said to me by the end of November that I'd be giving a testimony.

I would like to stand here and say I had a blinding revelation and found my faith. But I can't. Mine was more gradual.

After Tracy started Alpha we found ourselves discussing matters of faith. Something we hadn't really talked about before. We started coming to church and were made to feel very welcome: That was it I wanted to learn more, so I put my name forward for the next available course.

Talking of Alpha I would like to say thank you to everyone involved. I can't think of a better way to explore the meaning of life. Alpha was relaxed, informal and sensible and I would certainly recommend it.

The first few weeks of coming to church and Alpha I was quite anxious. I prayed, my faith grew, between the morning service and Alpha I started to understand more. I took my first communion; we even attended church as a family for the first time.

I started to feel different, more at peace; contented, less materialistic the feeling of 'that something missing' in my life had gone.

I'm not used to standing in front of people talking, or mixing with people I don't know. I generally get nervous and apprehensive in such situations. I thought of loads of things that I wanted to put in my Testimony. The ideas sounded great in my head. But when I came to actually put them down in writing I couldn't seem to convey what I wanted too. At work I have to compile technical reports nearly everyday, so I was surprised to find it difficult to articulate what I have been through. The best description I can think of would be profound. But that would have been a really short testimony!

On Alpha we talked of Jesus knocking at the door as depicted in Holman Hunts The Light of The World. For me that is a powerful image.

Looking back I now realise the knocking had been there a while.

But what a difference there is when you actually get up and open the door.

Mark Jelfs
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