

CONNECT @ BRBC

Welcome to Brighton Road Baptist Church (BRBC). We are a thriving Christian community with God at the centre of our lives, and we would love to see people of all ages in Horsham experience life in all its fullness. There is loads going on for everyone. In this issue of **Connect** find out how three people became Christians, why the Queen's 90th birthday will be celebrated with a strawberry tea on a Pleasant Monday Afternoon, and who will be at the Bennetts Field Family Fun Day on 21 May.

Horsham mum overcomes cancer



Gina with her daughters

Gina had a huge tumour and an ovary removed. After her treatment finished she was amazed to find her second child was on the way. Read her story on page 3.



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Rev. Tim Carter

"Becoming a Christian does not mean losing your individuality or switching off your brain."

What was your reaction to that phrase on the front page about three of our members becoming Christians? What exactly does that mean? Each person's story is different, yet they have all had a life-changing encounter with God as a result of putting their faith in Jesus Christ.

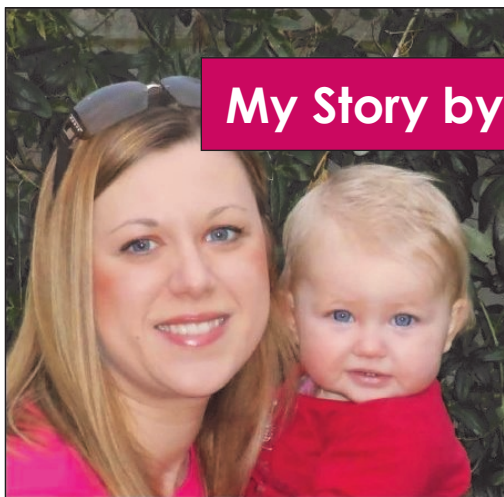
BRBC is full of ordinary people who could share extraordinary stories like these, and every one is different — one of the great things about BRBC is its diversity.

Becoming a Christian does not mean losing your individuality or switching off your brain. But it is about recognising that Jesus gives us the definitive picture of what God is like: and he has shown us that none of us is beyond redemption or falls outside the scope of God's love.

Up until now, God may have been a bit of an irrelevance in your life, but the truth is that he cares passionately about you.

Don't believe me? Why not pay us a visit one day and see for yourself? Coming to BRBC won't change your life, but the God who drives and inspires everything we do certainly can — and would like to, if you're prepared to let him have a go...

My Story by Gina Leadbeatter



Gina with her second daughter

"I have always prayed: for a boy to like me, or for no more spots, or good GCSE results. But, the time I prayed the most was when I was diagnosed with ovarian cancer."

As a new mum of 25 it was a devastating shock to undergo surgery and chemotherapy. I questioned my faith, but when I think back now, sitting in that hospital on my own at night it was God I spoke to the most and I asked him to bring me home.

As I got better I accepted that I was unlikely to have more children. So when our second little girl arrived five years ago I started to think that maybe someone up there might be listening.

My uncle Peter died and I went to his funeral service at BRBC. I was in a troubled state. As well as saying goodbye to Peter, my Mum had just been diagnosed with breast cancer. The prospect of death scared me, and I had many unanswered questions. Where do we go? Is there a place for us? Where is that place called heaven?

I started coming to BRBC regularly

and found it a comfort. Before I'd tried to find comfort in the bottom of a Merlot bottle, but that only had a temporary effect and the next morning I'd feel even worse than I did before.

I joined an Alpha course. It was a weekly group for people like me searching for answers about life. I couldn't believe that on a Friday night (which had always been pub night followed by a lift home via a shopping trolley) I was going to talk about Christianity.

The Alpha away day at Micklepage in Nuthurst was an experience I shall never forget. We all talked loads about our big questions for God. Before leaving, I sat down on a tree stump alone, closed my eyes and said a prayer. That moment all the worries I had about life — money, cancer, death — I handed them all over to him and said, 'Right I'm going to trust in you that you're going to do what's best for me. And I will accept it. I will follow you through whatever I am faced with.'

Walking back to the group everyone was staring at me. They said I looked different. I felt different.

I thought to be a Christian you had to be a certain type of person, but I now realise you don't have to be perfect. You just have to believe in Jesus and take a small step towards him.

I don't just pray for me any more — I pray for other people too. At the end of each day I simply just say,

"Thank you for keeping me here and giving me the gift of another day."

Made in China and called to Africa

***"It's a miracle
how God
turned my life
around"***

Liu Liu grew up in Kunming in China. He had a troubled childhood because his mother and father lived apart in different towns. School was a struggle.

"It's a miracle how God turned my life around."

Liu Liu's father enrolled him at a specialist school for English translators. He came top of the class and his English teacher helped him to get a job in the language school at Kunming University.

Liu Liu had many questions about cosmology and the universe but was not sure where to direct his spiritual awareness.

"As Chinese we are



Liu Liu in Soroti, Uganda, with a vegetable growing bag for people with no land and little water

quite acutely aware of the spiritual world. People respect the creator and the order of the universe. There are different gods for fertility and long life, prosperity and making money. It is ingrained into people's everyday life."

He got to know some Christian missionaries.

"The way they behaved was quite different. I wanted some of that. Someone gave me *The Jesus Movie* and I watched it and made a commitment.

"Becoming a Christian gave me a set of guidelines for my daily behaviour. Somebody

to turn to when you go through difficult times. Somebody to be thankful for when your life is going well, so you don't take it for granted."

Liu Liu met his English wife at the university. They married, moved to Horsham and started attending BRBC.

"When I came to visit the first time the people in the church made me feel quite at home. I took a *Just Looking* class and a Baptism class. I was baptised as an open declaration of faith in Christ."

Liu Liu found a job with Tearfund, a Christian relief and development charity. He also

enrolled with the Open University and spent the next ten years studying evenings and weekends for two degrees.

Now he is a disaster management programme advisor for 11 countries in west and central Africa.

“My work is to help people not just respond but to prepare themselves better. I train partner organisations to prepare for and respond to both natural and human-made disasters, and I connect people so they can share experiences.”

Some Bible verses (*1 Corinthians Chapter 12, verses 12-31*) are particularly important to him. In these verses the apostle Paul likens the Church to a physical body with many parts. Every part of the body

“If one part suffers, every part suffers with it”

has a special purpose and is dependent on other parts. If one part is hurting other parts will hurt too.

Liu Liu explains that Tearfund is trying to help in those parts of the world where people are hurting the most.

“We try to work in places where the need is greatest. We’re all created in God’s image, and we’re all equally valid. We’re all supposed to love each other and to work together because different people have different skills and talents.

“If one part of the body is hurt or becomes ill or diseased, we ought to attend to it.

“That’s what Tearfund is doing.”

tearfund



Liu Liu (pictured centre) engaged in field work in Bousso, Chad

Jesus surprises Jan on the stairs

As she was coming down the stairs Jan Morley was stunned to 'hear' Jesus say he was coming to live in her house.

"I thought, 'Will he wear jeans? Have I got time to clean the house?'"



Jan stands on the spot on the stairs where she 'heard' Jesus

Jan was born in 1942 and survived a bomb that exploded in the street outside the flat where she lived.

Many years later, at the age of 51, Jan was divorced and living in Horsham. She had just been made redundant and was worried about money when she had an experience that changed her life.

"I was in the house on my own coming down the stairs. I heard a voice say, 'The Son of God is coming to live in your house.' It was a soft male voice.

"I carried on down and then I thought, 'Jesus is coming, and is he going to wear a

suit? Will he wear jeans? Will he look like a guy of today? When is he coming? Have I got time to clean the house?'"

Jan hastily cleared a bookcase at the bottom of her stairs that housed several books about Hinduism and other religions.

"I thought, 'I've got to get rid of them before he comes.'

"But the voice sat next to me and said, 'Do you really need them?'

"I started cleaning and as I was cleaning the pipes at the back of the toilet I knew the person who'd been with me at the bottom of the stairs

was there.

"I knew then I needed to confess all my sins to God. It changed my life completely."

Jan started reading the Bible and coming to BRBC.

"I never did get a job that could provide me with the same prestige as my old job or the same amount of money, but I wasn't scared any more. I got part-time and short-term jobs and still had enough money to pay my bills.

"I still have low points, but Jesus has been with me throughout, giving me courage and support to carry on, and I am never alone."

PMA throws a party for the Queen's 90th



The PMA group will be holding a birthday party for its members at BRBC on Monday 20 June in honour of the Queen's 90th birthday.

PMA, otherwise known as Pleasant Monday Afternoon, is planning an indoor street party with Union Jacks, paper hats, strawberries and cream, and tea and cakes. The cup cakes will be Union Jack-themed and some will be decorated with a picture of the Queen.

Other activities on offer include a quiz on the Queen and singing action songs that the Queen knew when she was in the Girl Guides.

The birthday party is not open to non-members, but the group meets regularly throughout the school year on Monday afternoons at BRBC, between 2.30 and 3.45.

Most people who go to PMA are retired, but adults of any age are

welcome, whether Christian or not. Typical meetings start with a short service with hymn singing, a cup of tea and a biscuit. A visiting speaker then gives a talk.

Speakers this summer include the grandmother entrepreneur from Steyning, Christine Daws, who invented the drying caddy.

Trips are planned to Biffa's waste treatment facility at Brookhurst Wood and Terra Amata Farm at West Chilmington.

Anyone interested in joining PMA should contact PMA leader Celia Steere via the church office (tel. 01403 211150).

Celia says: "Older people do like having fun. They're young at heart. People have a smile on their face and enjoy being out and in each other's company. We make people very welcome."

BENNETTS FIELD

Family Fun Day

Saturday, 21st May, 1pm – 4pm

Bennetts Field, Horsham

EVERYTHING FREE OF CHARGE

Mobile skate park

Inflatable assault course and gladiator dual

Bouncy castle and physical play activities (0-4 year olds)

Organised football and football cage

Street entertainer, music and dance demonstrations

Face painting, crafts and bubbles

Boules, giant games and lots lots more!

Learn scout skills

Plant sale and gardening advice

Tea/coffee/soft drinks/cakes

Bring a picnic and a chair and chill-out for a few hours

Coordinated by Brighton Road Baptist Church

Regrettably the event will be cancelled if it's wet

AND COMING SOON... Sports Week

Monday 25th to Thursday 28th July

10am - 3pm, Millais School

Dodgeball, basketball, softball, ultimate frisbee and Danish longball

For school years 6-9

£30 (LAC card holder discount available)

Free tee shirt, games-in-the-park night and awards evening

For more details contact:

wendy.brown@brbc-horsham.org.uk

