



My parents were not churchgoers but I was christened and encouraged to go to Sunday School at a local church which I remember enjoying. As an adult I started going to church regularly, but stopped when I was told by a member of the congregation that my father, who had taken his own life, could not be buried in church grounds. Although I soon found this not to be true, I was confused and angry with God and His church. My adult life continued with many ups and downs and I struggled with anxiety and depression. Much of it was to do with why and how my father had died but I also found my work stressful and unfulfilling because of a bullying manager. Eventually, I retrained as a psychotherapist and thankfully went on to enjoy a deeply fulfilling career.

Some years later though I became very unwell. Following surgery, I was in constant pain and my physical condition was deteriorating rapidly. Specialists seemed unable to help but I got an emergency appointment with a GP who diagnosed me with an underlying condition which had gone unnoticed and untreated for years. My recovery was slow though and I was frustrated that my medication didn't seem to be making much difference. What followed amazed

me. I started to discuss with my GP what more I could do and as part of the conversation he shared his faith with me. He said that he had been praying for me and believed God was with me in my healing. I realise that my GP was taking a huge risk, but I was very moved because for some years I had felt my life was missing something spiritually. The conversation gave me a sense that God knew me and was calling me. So the following Sunday I came to Trent Vineyard, where my GP attended. From that first visit, I knew my life had been changed for the better.

When I reflect over the last few years I've been part of Trent, I can see how much my faith has deepened. My day always starts with prayer now which places me on the right track. If I feel anxious or low, I feel much more able to ground myself in a way I wouldn't have been able to before. When I look back, I realise how much God has been present in my life. He didn't abandon me when I doubted Him about my father. He didn't abandon me when I felt powerless at work and I'm certain that God led me to my wonderful and brave GP, to show me that He was always working His purpose out in my life, especially when I was at my lowest.

**Changing Lives**