

Four generations of my family at church

Worshippers at St Michael's Paulsgrove have always been there to help **Katie Goodchild** navigate life's highs and lows

Who are you? I'm Katie Goodchild.

Which church do you worship at? St Michael and All Angels, Paulsgrove. Four generations of my family worship at St Michael's.

Why did you start going there?

I moved to Paulsgrove when I was in Year 3 in 2004 – and my mum and dad started bringing me and my brother, Andy. When we were a little older we were asked to make a decision: do you want to keep going? I did and always have.

When I was younger I was a server. Now I'm a mum! I was confirmed at St Michael's, I married my husband, George there, my three girls – Summer, Everlynn and Sadie – were all baptised there, and Summer was confirmed there. My mum and dad will be celebrating their 30th wedding anniversary by renewing their vows there in June.

What do you love about the church?

St Michael's has been a place I have grown up and a place where I have grown personally and spiritually. I understand God is everywhere, but St Michael's has always been the anchor where I feel he is most present and I am most at peace.

St Michael's is so inclusive now too, with people from all walks of life who have experienced all sorts of



Katie Goodchild (holding baby Sadie at her baptism) with four generations of her family at St Michael and All Angels, Paulsgrove

stuff in their lives. We're all about embracing everyone and accepting everyone. We are all part of God's family. Anyone can walk through the door and everyone is accepted. It's a safe place.

That's where the sense of community and inclusivity comes in. It's one big church family. I am accepted for me.

My church family was with me as I grew up and has seen what life has chucked at me – and has always been there to pick me up. St Michael's has helped me and I hope will help my children to navigate through life – I'm still learning about

myself even now.

My girls love it too. Our Sunday School – God's Little Angels – is fun, they get to see their friends, learn a story and do an activity and then share it with the grown-ups at the end of the service.

St Michael's lets in a lot of light. When we belt out the hymns and the light shines through the windows, I have always thought of it being a sign from loved ones looking over me from heaven and that it's their way of saying "we're here with you". It's comforting. They are with me now as my girls grow up.