

I felt welcome, so I was baptised aged 74

Barry Glover felt so at home in this church that he chose to be baptised with the whole congregation looking on

Who are you? I'm Barry Glover, aged 74, and I've just been baptised!

What church are you part of? I joined St James Church, Milton, in Portsmouth. It's the place where my wife was confirmed and we were married. My eldest daughter was christened there, was in the church choir and was confirmed.

I've lived in the area for 40 years, but I'd never been a regular churchgoer before.

Why did you start going there?

I came a couple of times before the lockdown started. I felt welcome and accepted. There was no pressure, but someone asked if they could sit with me and help me if anything about the service wasn't familiar. That made a difference.

The lockdown didn't make too much difference to me, as I'm a carer for my wife and I didn't get out much anyway.

But after that I started going regularly and began to look forward to it. You could sit in quiet for half an hour, and it made you think.

I'd been in the Navy for nine years, and we had parades there. I like singing the hymns, even though



Barry Glover after his baptism at St James, Milton

I'm not a good singer. But getting involved in St James's was different.

What do you love about your church?

I like the quiet reflection. I like being able to sit at the back, by myself, appreciating the peacefulness. And I like the sermons too. It's very modern and down-to-earth and something that you can relate to.

At the moment when I go to church, I go up for a blessing rather than taking Communion.

I thought that I ought to get baptised and then think about confirmation, so that I can join in with everyone else.

I was one of eight children, and the first four were baptised, but I wasn't sure about myself. I was number five, and I know that one of my younger sisters wasn't christened. I tried to find out, but we grew up in Essex and we couldn't find out for sure.

I preferred to do the baptism within the normal service, because it was that congregation who made me feel welcome, so it was the right place for it to happen.

It was just a sprinkle of water on the head, but it was special. My two daughters, son-in-law, and grandchildren were there. I also had a bottle of Moët champagne I'd been keeping for 20 years and never had an occasion to open it. So we opened that!

I'm pleased that I've done it, and one thing I loved about St James was that people I didn't even know came and congratulated me. It just shows that you're never too old to make a commitment to God!