

# The church at heart of our local community

**Amy Grindlay** is delighted to worship God in the same building where she helps to create community during the week

**Who are you?** I'm Amy Grindlay, a mum of two from Portsmouth.

**What church are you part of?** I manage the Foodbank, community shop, café and soft play area which are all inside St Margaret's Community Church in Highland Road, Southsea.

**Why did you start going there?** I was previously going to another church, but when I got the job at St Margaret's, I decided that we should also worship here.

Working here during the week opened my eyes to the kind of welcoming community St Margaret's is, and we felt that we wanted to be part of that. We started coming to the 4pm Sunday service each week from January 2021.

**What do you love about your church?** Like a lot of people, I found lockdown was a really lonely time. I struggled to stay disciplined and persistent about speaking and listening to God and about reading the Bible.

But when I joined St Margaret's, I found community. I joined a small group. There are about six of us and we share our life together.

We chat about the Bible and the teaching on Sunday, we pray together, and we can rely on each other.



**Amy Grindlay serves in the cafe inside St Margaret's Church, Southsea**

I can attend various prayer meetings during the week, and I can get involved in so many different ways to serve the community, including the Foodbank, community shop and café.

One of the great things about doing this job is that we have so many different ways to welcome people and to help those in need. We reckon we have something to offer for pretty much anyone who walks through our doors – food, clothes, conversation, prayer, lots of fun or a break for adults when their children use the soft play area!

I was reading in Acts 14, about

Paul, an early follower of Jesus. Paul was doing what God had told him to do, speaking to people about Jesus and seeing people's lives transformed. But the people turned on him and hurt him. And in verse 20 the church (meaning the other disciples who were also his friends), "gathered around him". Then he got back up again and he did what God told him to do, all over again.

So, for me church is my family, my support, and my encouragement, an opportunity to help see lives transformed by Jesus. St Margaret's helps me to stay close to God, and they help me to recover when life happens and when I make mistakes.