

# These people are like a second family to us

She joined Hope Church, Whiteley, 16 years ago - and **Katie Ashmore** has found the congregation welcoming, diverse, and fun

## Who are you?

I'm Katie Ashmore.

## Which church are you part of?

I'm part of Hope Church, Whiteley, and worship there with three generations of my family - my husband, Rob, our daughter, Emmie, and my mum, Rosemary.

## How did you start going to that church?

My husband and I met at our previous church, High Cross, in Camberley.

When we were planning to move to this area, over 16 years ago, we started to research churches and discovered that Hope Church (then called Whiteley Church) was the only local one available. We went along and have never looked back.

Our daughter was three at the time, and has since been confirmed in Portsmouth Cathedral, and also renewed her baptism vows at Hope Church last year. My mum came to live with us at the end of 2019 and she has been attending the church ever since.

**What do you love about it?** Hope Church has changed a great deal in the last 16 years, but I have always loved it. It has been a second family throughout my time here - a community where I've been loved,

supported, and valued. I've had a lot of personal challenges during that time and the church have been there with love, support and prayer. It's a great blessing to have such wonderful people in my life.

The church has always been willing to try new things, with a variety of services and styles of worship over the years. I look forward to services and events, which are always welcoming, fun, and faith-filled. Hope Church has given me the opportunity to continue my faith journey and to grow spiritually.

From the beginning, I've been encouraged to get fully involved. Currently, I run one of our small groups, I'm on PCC, and I'm about to start training as a Reader, which is exciting. It's only come about due

to the guidance, encouragement, and support of my church family and especially of Amy (our vicar) and Philippa (our former vicar).

It's an exciting time to be part of Hope Church - God seems to be doing great things. We've had our own home for the last three years, having moved into our chapel space and rooms at Cornerstone CofE Primary School. The church is growing and the congregation is wonderfully diverse. We have a new children and families worker and we are excited to keep developing God's work here.

I love Hope Church because it's a family - welcoming, diverse, caring, and fun. A family that loves God, others, and even me!



Katie Ashmore (circled) with the congregation at Hope Church, Whiteley