

# Our family loves this caring community

**Samantha Conlon** and her family were part of the team that planted a new congregation within St Philip's Church, Cosham

## Who are you?

My name is Samantha Conlon, and I'm a primary school teacher. I am married to Sean Conlon, and we have two sons - Reuben, who is four, and Ezra, who is two months old.

## Which church are you part of?

St Philip's Church in Cosham.

## How did you start going to that church?

We originally took our son to the Friday afternoon soft play sessions at St Margaret's, Southsea in March 2024. From there, we were invited to join the Sunday services, where we quickly became regulars. We thoroughly enjoyed becoming part of the church's family community and getting involved in church life.

The vicar then approached us to share his vision of planting a new church in our local area of Cosham and asked if we would consider joining the team. We were thrilled by the opportunity, especially as it meant being part of a church closer to home. We began preparing and

planning with a small, committed group who came with us.

We spent many hours praying together, sharing ideas, and growing in faith, all with the aim of making a meaningful difference to a church that had a small congregation at the time. We distributed leaflets throughout the local community to share the exciting and positive changes taking place. We were delighted to welcome many new faces to our Sunday services.

## What do you love about it?

We love how friendly and welcoming our church is. From the

moment we arrived, we felt comfortable and included, with a genuine sense of community and people who truly care for one another. Being part of the church helped us build meaningful friendships and grow in our faith. Our favourite part of church is the worship. We feel the presence of the Holy Spirit and are able to connect deeply with God.

Joining a life group strengthened our sense of belonging, and our son feels happy, settled and supported in the children's group. We enjoy helping with tea and coffee and sharing meals, which create opportunities to connect, build relationships and support one another. Church genuinely feels like a place where our whole family belongs.

We've also enjoyed community events to help raise the profile of the church locally. We've taken part in a Light Party with food, activities, and a bouncy castle, a film night with popcorn and hot dogs, and a community day selling Christmas gifts. These have been wonderful ways to welcome people, build connections, and serve our wider community. There is a strong shared passion within the church for sharing Jesus and helping people grow in faith, which is something we feel privileged to be part of.



Sean and Samantha Conlon with Reuben (left) and Ezra