

# Now I can get excited talking about my faith

**James Hollingshead** discovered his questions about faith were answered at All Saints, Denmead - and now he's a regular

## Who are you?

I'm James Hollingshead, and I run a company making industrial seals in Waterlooville.

## Which church are you part of?

All Saints Church in Denmead

## How did you start going to that church?

I had been baptised and had a Christian upbringing, but I'd never really understood about faith or salvation.

When I married Jo, she went to St Wilfrid's in Cowplain. Our daughter Daisy was baptised there in 2003, and I went on-and-off for a while. But my dad died and I felt that if there was a God, he wouldn't have let that happen.

Neither me nor Jo were receptive to church for a while. And then my mum died unexpectedly, and I was in an awful state mentally. I remember being at work but just pacing around and hardly doing any work.

Then in January 2025, Jo started going to Alpha at All Saints. There was a gospel of Matthew in her goodie bag, and I started reading it in secret at first. I would pick it up from somewhere in our house and put it down in the same spot, so she

didn't know I was looking at it! Then we started reading it together, and Jo and I were so excited - we'd ring each other at work to talk about the Parables.

We went to the All Saints 'Walkthrough Easter' event in April 2025, which had helpful exhibits telling the Easter story.

I had all sorts of questions, but the people there could answer them. I began to understand more about eternal life and realised that new life in Christ involved taking away that fear of dying. I got a different perspective on life, and realised I wouldn't get satisfaction from anything else.

## What do you love about it?

I love the 10am service at All Saints and how joyous it is, with families and

with modern hymns. I don't think I was able to be as receptive in my previous church, as I was in a bad place. But All Saints has helped me with the answers that I needed.

The vicar, Emma Racklyeft, and the team have really looked after us. I'm now in a small group where I can ask any question I like.

Previously, I couldn't imagine myself talking about God or Jesus, but now I do get excited talking about my faith within the group. And to cap it all, I reaffirmed my baptism vows this Easter, which seemed appropriate as it was Easter the previous year when I walked into the church.

I do love my new church family, and so many people chip in to make it the great church that it is!

