



# Five Stories



## **#DOYOUKNOWHIMTELFORD**

Who could ever have imagined the last 12 months or so? At times it felt like we were living through a Hollywood epic didn't it?

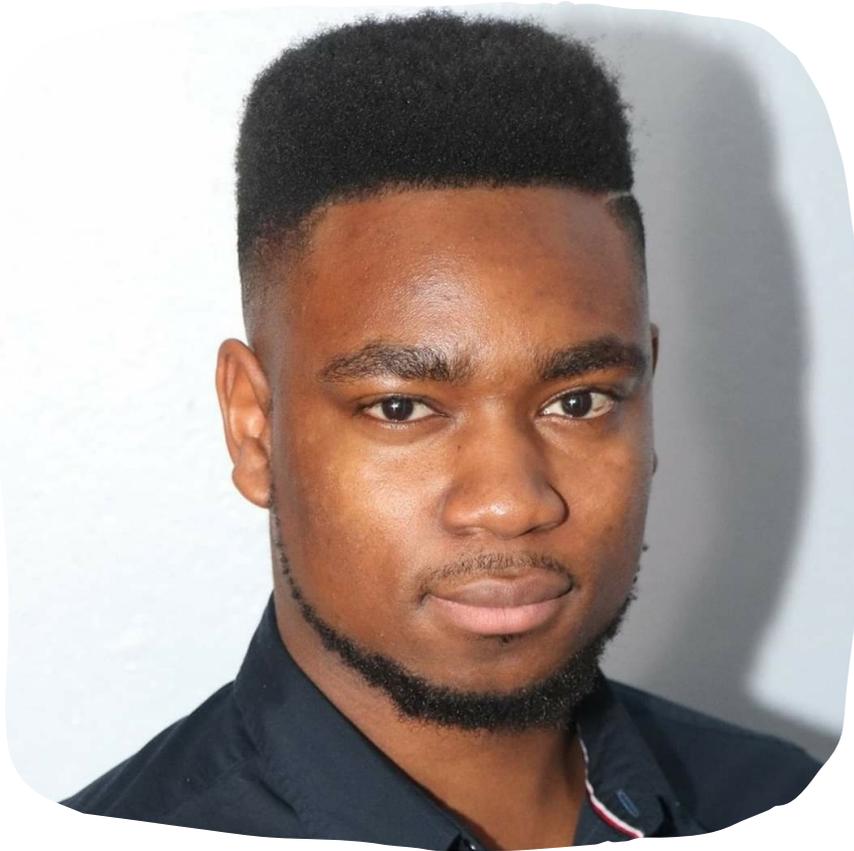
As we begin to emerge from the pandemic the Churches across Telford and Wrekin are asking a very simple question:

Do you know Him?

The Him being Jesus, our founder. Life is sometimes complicated and for many reasons Churches have not always been fully focused on Jesus. As we begin to re-gather in person we're taking the opportunity to ask this question of one another and of the people around us.

This booklet contains five very different stories of local folk and the difference Jesus has made in their lives. If you'd like to know more about Jesus take a look at the back cover.

# Isaac Alawode



My name is Isaac Alawode, I am 25 and was born and raised in London in a Christian home. Growing up I'd regularly attend church and would describe my decision to give my life to Christ as a gradual process rather than dramatic, this was at the age of 15 when I was baptised.

I can see the touch of Christ in every aspect of my life, from making major decisions regarding which direction I take for my education, to my career and my health. With all this, and more, Jesus is the one I can fix my eyes on when a lot can seem uncertain. As a person, who by nature likes to have a vision, He is my guide and focus in taking each day as it comes, and He is my strength.

I recall a particularly challenging time whilst at university when I was close, but ultimately unsuccessful, in securing an internship opportunity; though disappointed at the time, I felt that I should be patient with the second half of Habakkuk 2:3, "Though it linger, wait for it; it will certainly come and will not delay," particularly important.

The result led to an opportunity that was indeed well worth waiting for.

Following Jesus gives me a fresh perspective on life, to be content with what I have, helping me to see myself as an individual not to be compared or contrasted with others, but also to serve others just as He served us. To encourage others in using their God given abilities all for His glory. With Jesus, I am able to have full confidence that all things will work together for my good - even if I can't see it immediately



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# Steph Warrell



My name is Steph Warrell and I first met Jesus when I was about 5 or 6 at a church in a primary school. I was taken there with my older sister each week and LOVED it. Maybe that was because of the biscuits.

Due to this, God's existence has never been a problem to me, and I've gone to church my whole life. But I wouldn't say I lived for Jesus. The moment that changed was at university.

When I first went to uni I wasn't fussed if I went to church or not. I wanted to go and be a student. But there came a point when I was struggling, and my mum encouraged me to go and find a church.

I still felt reluctant. Yet I was doing theology and there were Christians on this course. One fellow student, I'll call her T, invited me to Christian Union amid this difficult season. I arrived late, after finishing athletics training, to a Pastor talking about two ways to live.

My whole life I had my feet in two camps never wholly committing to God. I was completely overwhelmed by the Spirit and T knelt beside me and prayed. I heard God ask me 'who I was going to choose Him or the world'.  
I choose Him.

Being a committed Christian changed A LOT of things. Before this, I was choosey when I wanted God in my life. By choosing God every day, I no longer felt alone. I felt expectant and became friends with those who wanted the best for me. This has not meant things have been easy. It has meant I never feel alone that I know there is a bigger plan and there is hope and that hope is found in Jesus.



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# Les Noon



My name is Les Noon, I am 92 years of age and I worship with God's family at the House of Prayer, Wellington.

I have believed in God from a very early age, but up until I was 61 years old the God I knew was a very distant Being who had laid down a set of rules to be followed. After my father-in law's death, my wife and I attended a thanksgiving service for his life and it was there that my wife saw something different in the people who also attended and consequently decided to attend the local church. We were drawn into a circle of Christians, which meant the Bible was studied more closely than previously.

One night in 1990 I had a dream in which I had a vision of myself in a furnace of burning gold and as I saw myself, I also saw a person's head of brilliant white hair and eyes that shone radiantly. This occurred twice during my dream. So it was that on the morning following my dream I was aware of a distinct change in my being. I had always been pretty laid back, but now I had a sense of peace and tranquillity that was wonderful and I then realised that I had indeed been born again. I had no knowledge of what this (dream) meant at the time but later in the year I was at a meeting when someone read from the book of Revelation and I realised Jesus Himself had visited me. The dream now meant far more to me as I had worked in the non-ferrous metals industry for most of my working life. I realised that in order to obtain high grade bronze the metal was melted twice to remove all the impurities.

I have the assurance that the Holy Spirit of God will guide me and teach me all things if I would only be prepared to listen.



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# Sue Rawlings



My name is Sue Rawlings and the most important elements of my Christian faith include the certainty that there is “more”, that God loves me and that I have Jesus’ presence in my life. Prayer is an inherent part of my everyday life and using my gifts to help others in Jesus’ name is fundamental to me.

I have been attending church since I was 7 years old – my Grandad was a church organist and I joined the church choir. I was confirmed at 13. God has always been an integral part of my life – even when I tried to deny He was – during my university years..

However, in the last 23 years, my faith has become a far more living and active faith – why? Because I met my best friend Pauline. She is a very strong Roman Catholic and we shared experiences and explored and grew our faith together: we both began to describe ourselves primarily as Christian as opposed to C of E or RC. We set up in business together and the Christian ethos was a fundamental part of who we were – both privately and professionally. This has continued to this day. We prepare and lead monthly ecumenical services together, we volunteered with a prison chaplaincy for 15 years together leading a music group, and we continue to explore, read, and annually visit Iona to learn and challenge and experience God in different ways. I would describe us now as Celtic Christians: that we try to ensure that our faith pervades and is expressed in every element and activity of our daily lives.

Jesus makes a massive difference to my life. I may not always succeed, but I believe I am kinder and empathetic because of my faith. I try to help people – I firmly believe we are known by our works...we can share the love of Jesus through our actions.

I feel blessed by God in so many ways.



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# Jillian Harber



My name is Jillian Harber. It was 2am and once again I couldn't sleep. Over the previous few months the dark shadow of depression had spread over me like the long shadows on a late summer's evening until I was completely enveloped in darkness and despair. It was like being in a deep pit with no way out.

I had a loving family and friends who were desperate to help me but the thick blanket of despair that I carried acted like a shield that no one could penetrate. But this night turned out to be a turning point in my life - on this night I called out to Jesus.

Could He help me?

I had grown up going to church and learnt all about Jesus at Sunday School. I thought I knew Him. And it was easy to believe the promises of the Bible when life was going well but alone in the darkness was Jesus really there? I couldn't pray long prayers, I had no words so I just called out His name..... "Jesus" ..... then "Help me!" There was no blinding light but I did feel a peace spread through me from my head to my toes. The darkness was still there but in that instant I knew that I was not alone, Jesus was with me. It would be some months before I emerged out of the despair, months when I went from knowing about Jesus to knowing Him and trusting Him for the future.

Over 30 years has now passed since that night. I have continued to call out to Jesus when life gets tough and He has continued to be faithful to me. Where once there was nothing but darkness and despair Jesus gave me and continues to give me peace and hope.



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# Want to know more?

You could try:

- Talking to a Christian you know and ask them why they follow Jesus
- Visit the *#doyouknowhimtelford?* Facebook Group at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/480919013075467>
- Read about Jesus for yourself in the Gospel of Mark by downloading the YouVersion Bible App <https://www.youversion.com/>
- Email [doyouknowhimtelford@gmail.com](mailto:doyouknowhimtelford@gmail.com) and we can put you in touch with a Christian in your area or give you details of local Churches, whichever you'd prefer
- Like to try praying and see what happens? Visit <https://www.trypraying.org/try-it/> where you can download the app or access the booklet.
- Visit <https://christianity.org.uk/> for much, much more!



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