

If you want to read a heart-warming story of how God met a young family's real needs, read on.

Although Clare, Lee and their son Ben were very close as a family, they had some really tough medical problems which they were having to cope with. They all found God could meet those needs a few months ago and were Baptised at this church in August 2007. If you want to say hello to them in Church on a Sunday morning, look out for the ones with the biggest smiles ... that's them !!

Click here to read Lee's and Clare's story which they told at their baptism service.

12th August 2007 – Baptism Service Welton Baptist Church

CLARE AND LEE'S TESTIMONY

Clare

Lee and I met in March 1993, aged 20 and been inseparable ever since. We married in May 1997 and had our son, Ben, in August 1999. We have always had a good relationship and it was no secret that Lee had issues, that even though I understood, I couldn't seem to help him with, only support him.

Lee

After living with mental health problems for over 20 years, going through school and working life with very low self-esteem and no confidence and having an inner voice saying how useless and what a loser I am and that I will never amount to any thing and everything I do will go wrong.

I really hated being me.

I didn't want to be here anymore.

All my life, I have felt that I have something missing, I have a lovely wife a great son, but there was still something missing.

I spent all my time looking, but was not quite sure what I was looking for.

Clare

Lee has always battled with low self-esteem issues and as a wife, was at times very difficult to witness. Over the years, Lee had tried many ways to overcome this problem, but always seemed to be on his own with no professional support. It was heartbreaking to hear him say endless times that he would hate it if Ben were like him, always looking at the negatives, not positives.

Lee

In September 2006, I went to the doctors and saw this particular GP who was only at my surgery for 2 days and told him everything that I was feeling.

He said, "I don't think that you are depressed. I think that you have some thing missing in your life".

Then he said "have you ever thought about going to church?", and I said "no thanks, I don't think church is for me", so we said our goodbyes and I left. When I got home I told Clare about the conversation I had with him.

The next day I could not stop thinking about what the GP said about going to church. Could Jesus be what I have been looking for all this time?

Well I had to find out. I had tried everything else and nothing seemed to work. So that evening when I got in from work I phoned the doctors and left a message for the him to phone me back.

He phoned me back later that evening, after a good chat on the phone we arranged that he would pick me up Friday to go to an Alpha Course. Friday night came and we went to the course. On the way I felt very nervous thinking, "what an earth am I doing?", but it was too late to get out of it now!

When we arrived every one seemed friendly but most of all, normal. We all had a good chat, great meal and watched Alpha Course DVD.

All the way through the DVD, Nicky Gumbel was talking about his life experience and how he grew up with something missing in his life and always looking for the next thing.

But I could not help thinking he's talking about me.

After we had a good chat then we left.

Perhaps the GP was right, perhaps it was Jesus that was missing in my life.

Clare

It was only a week later that a series of events that had built up over months, led to Lee having a breakdown and it's a day I will never forget.

I felt totally helpless as I watch him cry like a baby. We ended up in hospital seeing a psychiatric team who organised for Lee to have daily visits from community nurses as long as I was with Lee 24/7. It was either this or stay in hospital. On top of this, Lee had lost his job so we had no financial support at all.

Lee did not return to the Alpha course due to his illness and the Doctor he had spoken to was leaving to do Missionary work. Jim Ironside rang about a week later asking why Lee hadn't returned to Alpha (not knowing what had happened to Lee).

Lee wasn't ready for conversation but I found myself pouring my heart out to Jim, even though we had never spoke before. I found great comfort talking to him (on more than one occasion). Jim rang periodically, offering Lee the chance of a friendly chat or a walk with the dog. Eventually, Lee and Jim spoke on the phone and arranged to meet each other at Church that Sunday. Lee had the attitude that he would try anything, as he had already tried most other things.

Lee

Sunday morning came, still not sure if I was going to go or not, any way I got dressed and went.

I meet Jim at the entrance and as I went into the hall, I was amazed by the amount of people there and the mixed age group and everyone seemed so friendly, genuinely friendly. I had a great time. I remember saying bye to lot of people I didn't even know.

After, I drove home with this warm ready-brek feeling and I could not wait to tell Clare and go again next week.

Clare

I couldn't believe it, but was proud of Lee for taking the challenge. At this point, it was something I felt he had to do on his own, and when he came back he was beaming all over this face.

He told me that I would love it and I trusted his judgement and decided to go as a family the next Sunday.

During the week, Lee was slightly coy about telling people that he went to church on Sunday, but told my Mum and Dad first. They were pleased - even though there was a bit of mickey taking but the funniest thing was, they too decided to tag along!

So, the following Sunday, we all came along, with open minds, and much to our surprise thoroughly enjoyed it. it was nothing like I expected. We were met by a friendly face at the door (Jackie James) and from then on, more and more people introduced themselves. The whole service was upbeat. We came away with a buzz and had a long conversation about it that afternoon.

In January 2007, we started an Alpha Course at Guy and Teresa's house on a Tuesday night. Even though I only decided to go along 2 days before, I'm glad I did. We couldn't have wished to meet nicer people in a warm and friendly environment.

We looked forward to each week but I found myself concentrating so much on what exciting things were happening to Lee and watching him change before my eyes, that I didn't notice a change in myself.

As part of the Alpha course, on Saturday 3rd March, we went to Manor Farm for Holy Spirit Day, which was an amazing day, where I made my commitment with Jim and Guy in the beautiful gardens with the sun shining.

Lee

I made my commitment on 7th February 2007 in the Somerset Wagon car park, with Jonathan Cooper, as we normally meet there weekly for a lemonade and a chat!

Clare

On the following Sunday when Mike announced my commitment at church, we had to explain to Ben what this was all about. Immediately, he said he wanted to do the same and for Jesus to be part of his life. We were so proud.

Lee

As if we hadn't had more than enough events in our lives, I was also diagnosed with severe Dyslexia in October 2006 and Colitis in December 2006. My Colitis is still ongoing as my current medication isn't working effectively. I may have to have an operation to remove my bowel and colon.

I know that if it wasn't for the support of my family and friends, and having God to guide us, we wouldn't of got through this past year.

We know God is in our lives now. There are too many occasions to mention, but I know that if it weren't for God's Grace we would be in terrible financial trouble by now. We have received blessing after blessing, just at the right times. We have also been blessed with the way Ben has accepted God into his life. He knows God is always with him and has such a great understanding of the way God is working in our lives.

We decided to be Baptised together as a symbol of starting a new life as a family, with God. We are really looking forward to what the future brings. Even though things are still tough, we know God has great plans for us. Can't wait to find out what those plans are!

Clare, Lee and Ben Green 4.8.07