

Sunday June 3

Sunday 3 June will mark 5 years since we moved back to our Kleins Rd property following 9 months of redeveloping the site. We continue to be so thankful to God for the wonderful ministry facilities we have, and on Sunday 3 June we will express that in celebration. **We would love for you to be part of this celebration and share your story of being part of PBC.**



Fill in the survey online or there are cards in the foyer which have a number of questions about your experience of belonging to PBC.

PBC's 2018, 5 Year Anniversary Story Collection

The first weekend in June marked five years since moving back into our redeveloped church property here at Kleins Rd.

Since then, God has drawn more and more people into the life of our church. In answer to our prayers the past five years have been filled with story after story of the ways God has encountered and brought transformation in our lives.

In the lead up to our 5 Year Celebration we wanted to collect as many of these stories and testimonies as we could. They were then displayed and shared as part of our 5 Year Celebration in June. In our growing church family sharing these stories and making them known is a beautiful collective testimony to God's goodness among us; and will continue to inspire our own personal faith.

The congregation answered at least one of the following questions:

Why do you think God brought you here?

What has God been doing in your life since being here?

What does being part of this church mean to you?



- * I like the games and I like learning about God. I like small groups.
Shayne
- * I am grateful that this church building is being used in many ways, by many groups so as to bring people to hear and see the love of Christ.
- * I like the way we learn about God. I like the leaders and I like the way they make it fun.
- * My family was so excited to find a church that permitted AND encouraged the kids involvement in worship. We love it here!
- * My favourite part of Youth is hanging out with friends and learning about how I can develop my personal relationship with God.
- * PBC Church is special to me because people pray and care. I feel I belong.
Annette
- * Hi. I'm turning 10 this year and I've been coming to PBC my whole life and through these years God has encouraged me to make new friendships and learn new ways to be kind!
- * The LORD my older Brother has been teaching me a deeper understand of His word and its application in church planting.
- * I feel connected and part of God's plan when I attend Church here and other activities in this building.

* I'm thankful that our church is a place where there are people seeking after God; to follow Him, to discern His ways; to become more like Him: allowing God to use them to bring about His heart for themselves, others and the word. / I'm thankful our church is a place where all are encouraged to be a part of God's work, recognising we are all important and can be used by Him ... from the youngest to the eldest! / I'm thankful that at our church there are people who inspire and encourage me to be all God has made me to be.

Lynn

* The whole church has impacted my life, since I started 10 years ago coming to playgroup. I am now 11 and having the best time!

* I have been coming to youth since the very start. It has been amazing to see the youth grow and so many more of my peers to learn about God.

Jessica

* My favourite thing about youth is learning about God and being with my friends.

* My Mum, Gloria, loved the teaching and fellowship of PBC. The Lord placed His hand on my shoulder and said "It's time to let me into your heart". I smile when I enter the doors of PBC. WOW What a God!!

* I have been at this church since I was a baby. I have made many friends and I have been given many good opportunities.

* I have been here for 10mths ... I'm not sure yet why God has brought me here ... but I know God has been softening the soil of my heart to receive more of His grace, forgiveness and His Spirit.

Rebecca Hart

* The basement is such an awesome place! A great space for youth discussion and bible study groups!

* This church is my family!

Kylie

* I came to this church when I was 18 months old, and I got involved with Kids Church and PBC Church Youth. I have enjoyed being part of church!

* Here 10 months / To be revived and awakened / A new joy and revival. Life in Spirit course is helping so much / serving and being served.

Robert Hart

* You don't have to have it all together to come to God. He loves you as you are and in your circumstances. Just be real! God is Real!

* How great is our God. How great it is to worship Him here.

* I have been so encouraged by the way God has been working in the lives of my kids. God has blessed the ministry of Kids Church – so thankful for it!

* I've been coming to PBC for 18 months. God brought my family to this LOVE filled, OUTWARD looking, FAMILY friendly, GRACE based, GOD centred HOME. Thank YOU Heavenly Daddy.

- * Thank you Father that this place is family for me.
- * I learn about Jesus!
- * PBC has been a refuge for me. A place to grow and change, develop gifts and find myself, all the while being safe in the arms of God and a church who gives love and endless kindness.
- * God will never fail you nor forsake you.
- * PBC has been the greatest blessing in my life over the last 10 years, and has been at the centre of most of God's blessings to me and my family. Being here is a constant joy and encouragement!
- * Thankful for the provision of this multipurpose auditorium that never sleeps. Our Phunster family have so much enjoyed their musical journey here and comment often that they love the feel of the place. Wonderful friendships have formed many opportunities to witness and speak of Christ. Praise be to God.
- * Being part of a church that have people being there in times of need when I don't always ask for it. Feeling grateful for it.
- * A great friendly church. Good sermons and worship team. Love the people. It is a great feeling when the support is given through love and prayer. PBC has been a wonderful place to worship God. May God be praised!
- * PBC was a place that I could come to and meet with other women at all ages at a mid-week bible study group. During this time I was so encouraged to see and hear about how God was working in the lives of these women. How faithful they were in praying for one another and showing their deep love and affection for one another. I grew so much in my faith during this time. Thanks KYB ladies!!!
- * A meeting with 2 members of the church, Heidi and Jessica, who were happy to talk of God things came at the same time as we were looking for a church where worship and service were evident. God provided the introduction so here we are – four years later.
Trish Anderson
- * I misinterpreted 2 Timothy 4:13 realising that a) I don't know anyone at PBC called Paul, and b) my name is not Timothy. I guess I'll keep the cloak and books. (Note to self, learn to differentiate between descriptive verses and prescriptive verses).
- * I have been attending PBC for several months now and have been overwhelmed by the welcome I have received from a number of people. I thoroughly enjoy the services each week especially the preaching. I really look forward to coming to church each week to learn something new. I am so glad I have come to PBC.
RS
- * God brought me to PBC to let me know that 'I've got you'. Before becoming a Christian (my family is a Muslim family), I was filled with guilt and shame. Not being able to live up to everyone's expectation. All I wanted my whole life is for Mum to trust me, like she trusts my siblings (especially my brothers). This church has been a family to me, everyone cares for me and makes me feel like I belong. That I am wanted and included in this family. God changed my life tremendously, He gave me hope, He healed me of past hurts and gave me a sense of identity. God is great. Being a

part of this church means being a part of a family I never had. Being told or let know that I am worthy and that I am loved. God made me feel okay, feel fine and that He is there to provide and guide me through this season of life.

Neda

* Youth Group has been a true inspiration to me but how can I become better?

Oliver

* In bringing me to PBC, God was bringing me to a home and family where He would grow my love, trust, faith and desire for Him.

* 26 years ago our family was looking for a new 'Church Family'. We visited PBC – and the rest is history! Significant changes occurred for me personally 3 years ago when I retired. Having more time available enabled me to help out at 'Playtime' and join the 'Love In Action' team, - my desire being to return, in a small way, the practical help and support we received when it was needed. I am grateful to God for the cherished memories, the love and support of wonderful friends and the rich Biblical Teaching I receive on Sundays and my small group. I thank God for everyone at PBC. Keep looking UP!!

Marje Brugel

* My name is *Raymond Lee*. Been to PBC for 5 years. God's love brought us to this Church. We experienced God's loving fellowship and feeling the Christian love.

* We have been coming to PBC 3 years. This has been a time of refreshment and renewal for me – where I have been able to walk the journey of faith and relationship with God, without judgement. God has brought new life into the barren and hurting places. He has encouraged, comforted and grown me through his Holy Spirit – by teaching, prayer and friendships. Thanks be to God!

* Having been part of the church family for over 30 years we praise and thank God for all His blessings in many ways as with the people and building facilities and His generous Holy Spirit.

* This church has helped me rely on God more. The pastors and people have helped us to repair, build and strengthen our marriage and family. We have been coming for 5 years.

* I think God is good and He does marvellous things like turn water into wine for the wedding.

* When I first came to Parra it was like coming home and I just love seeing the work of the Holy Spirit in the Leadership and in one another so that we don't stay the same but grow in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Narelle Meades

* I have been at Parramatta Baptist for six years. Due to changes in my wife's circumstances I believe God made it easier for me to attend PBC. Since being here I have renewed some old friendships and made a number of new ones. I have tried to use my abilities as much as possible and to develop new ones. My Christian life has received a change for the better, I believe. I appreciate the sound Biblical teaching and the leading by the Pastoral Team. The spread of age groups is very refreshing. I look forward each week to the worship and fellowship.

Doug Worsley

* THANK YOU PBC I first came to PBC in January 2010, having grown up and becoming a Christian in the Uniting (Methodist!) Church, then 20 years in the Anglican Church, and now a good 8 years serving and worshipping God here at Parramatta Baps. Thank you for the faithful Bible teaching, seeking to reach people in our community with the

Good News of Jesus, caring for the poor and suffering and marginalised, and for being family – brothers and sisters - in Christ. I pray our loving Heavenly Father will continue to guide, give wisdom and bless PBC bountifully.

Danielle Whittlesea

* Going somewhere where Christians can gather and share their experiences.

Timothy

* 1) I have been coming to PBC for 59 years. Don and I came to the Church as a young married couple with twin girls. PBC was in George Street, Parramatta and we came because PBC was under the wonderful leadership and ministry of the Rev Ian Emmett. 2) Since coming to PBC Don and I have always been involved. Don was Superintendent of the Sunday School. I was Superintendent of the Pre-Schoolers. Don was a deacon for many years. I was involved in Ladies Ministries, had a lot of street stalls and played the piano in Church on Sundays. I am happy now praying for my church family, my friends and my lovely family. 3) PBC is my spiritual home. I really look forward to the fellowship and the wonderful bible teaching every Sunday.

* I have been with PBC since 1997 when I returned to my childhood home to be a carer for my Father. I worked at our Childcare Centre for about 16 years until I retired. I have had the privilege of being a member of our PHUN Ukulele group along with Arthur and Denise Ongley. This is a wonderful ministry where many friendships have formed and lots of conversations spoken. I have also been able to pray for and with some of the folk there. One lady who I have come to know had always been so hard hearted when it came to God conversations, I told this lady I was going to pray for her. "You're wasting your time", I was told. This lady recently endured a very difficult time when a family member had a serious accident but then she requested prayer!! WOW – God is softening her heart – be prepared for God to use you wherever BECAUSE He will – He has with me.

Robyn Swan

* A great church to raise a family! We love the teaching both the kids get and the adults get! The word of God is powerful and taught well here.

Graham Family

* You should believe in God.

Zain

* I've been attending PBC for 19 years. I was with another church for 6 years but felt their teaching had gotten off the track. Most of the sermons were on "Prosperity" (material). I was invited to PBC by a member and from my first attendance felt a genuine Christian love. PBC has now become my family. I feel accepted for who I am, with all my quirks.... The Lord's love has been demonstrated through each PBC family member, which has been a great encouragement to me over the years. All Glory and Praise to Him.

Iris May Vanden Berg

* My name is *Heidi Beasley*. I've been coming to PBC for about 12 years now. I initially came here to do a course called "40 Days of Purpose". The church I was attending at the time was not doing the course. I was greatly blessed by doing the course and met many wonderful people. Our daughter was already a regular attendee here at that time. Soon after my husband, Greg, and I along with our son, decided to move to PBC. I think God brought me here to help me grow in my Christian faith and help me show love to others. Since being here God has encouraged me to be part of The Care Ministry Team or "Love in Action". Greg and I are also on the Morning Tea roster and at times are "Welcomers" for the 10.45am service. Being a part of PBC is like having an extended family with lots of brothers and sisters in Christ! It is a place where I can feed on God's Word, and enjoy warm fellowship, joyful worship and serve Christ as I grow in Him and share His love and goodness with others.

* We left our previous church because they had little opportunities for children. We have been here for almost 30 years. Our children love the Lord, and have married wonderful Christian partners. We ourselves have been encouraged and nurtured by the PBC family and we know the deep love of God.

Ross and Laurel

* We have both been at PBC since 2004. We got married when the church was undergoing renovations 5 years ago. Since then He has blessed us with 2 kids. PBC keeps us in touch with God and helps our kids grow up knowing God.

Darren and Sarah

* I thank God for the way He has journeyed with me, leading me forward Himself, through His Word shared here and His people sharing their lives here at PBC. At PBC I have experienced the goodness and fellowship, the truth and integrity within God's will. (I hope that makes sense). Kathy said "We haven't arrived. It's a journey".

* 15 years. This community is like my family; in fact it **is** family....I have been challenged and encouraged and moulded and changed by the people who are part of this place....God is good and I am so thankful for PBC.

* 5 years...Wow! God brought me to PBC around 6-7 years ago. In this time I've been incredibly grateful to the ministries of PBC and the overall leadership of the church. I've loved being part of the PBC community, engaging with a bunch of awesome, energetic and welcoming faces. God has used my youth and church leaders as wonderful role models in my life, encouraging and spurring me on in my faith. Five years ago...boy I was a shy young thing! I was timid and honest not great in social scenes, but our God is awesome and those are now quite untrue! In the last 5 years I've stepped into kids worship and youth ministry. God has continued to develop and strengthen our relationship. I would never have seen myself as an Interim Youth Pastor or preaching but He equips. I'm immeasurably grateful to this church and how God has been working within it!! Praise God!

* For the first time in over twenty-five years, I belong to a church that I feel more than happy to ask my non christian friends to.

* By coming to church it brings me such hope and happiness to my life as I pray for my family and sick friends and God answers my prayers and I love the messages that the ministers give in the sermons.

Gwenda Rahilly. I have been at PBC for 12 years since 2006

* God brought me here to heal from the past and to move forward with him into the future. Coming here has helped me grow closer to God. It is exciting to learn new ways to serve him.

Nicola Stowe. Eight months

* I came to the church as a teenager with my parents. Since then I have experienced much emotional and spiritual healing (even physical - cancer 10 years ago). I have discovered a love for praying for people and seeing them set free and healed. This church is like home, a spirit lead community, open to what God would like to do. I love that!

Emily Wray. 25 years

* God brought us to PBC to restore our hearts, remind us of our belovedness and recommission us to a ministry of outreach and encouragement in the wider community. Through the faith community at PBC we have found all three, and so much more. For ten years we served on the morning worship team. Then God opened the door for us to reach out in service to the community through the ukulele. From a handful of us sitting around two or three coffee tables in the old church foyer ten years ago, we now have over 100 people attend the two sessions we hold each month in the Main Auditorium. We have a performer group that visits churches retirement villages and other community groups from time to time to share the joy of music and contribute all proceeds to the homeless ministry. PHUN is

primarily, though not exclusively, a ministry to seniors, helping them to discover to joy of music and friendship. It is an open community in which every person is welcome and valued. There are Christ followers and not-yet-Christ followers. People come to PHUN from the local community, and from as far as North Richmond, Milpera, the Eastern Suburbs and Northern Beaches because we're "different". We believe that "difference" is Jesus Christ manifest in authenticity and real care. Conversations about Him take place across bridges of friendship. Conversations with Him on behalf of the sick and struggling are an important part of our service. PBC is our spiritual home. Within this faith community we are accepted, nurtured, encouraged, supported and loved. We are at all times reminded that life is not about us but about Jesus Christ.

Arthur and Denise Ongley . Over 20 years

* God brought me to PBC because He knew I needed to draw closer to Him, and to go deeper with Him and to be in a church where I could raise my hands in worship and not be frowned upon! God has been teaching me about really serving Him and about humility, the staff exhibit true humility, unlike any other church. I have learnt so much already and still have so much more to learn! Being part of PBC means everything to me, I have never been to a better church. I feel loved, accepted, and understood for the first time and, I can truly be myself. PBC is truly a family of God where I know I belong!

* I think God brought me here firstly to serve others as God has gifted me but secondly to take on more of the servant heart that is so evident at PBC. I love being part of a body of believers where I feel so accepted and where there is room for us all to worship and serve God in different ways, while still remaining deeply unified through our faith in Jesus Christ and our shared desire to reach out to others in the power of the Spirit.

Jo-Anne Berthelsen. Around three years

* Coming to PBC was a big step for me in leaving the church I had been born into and spent my whole life. It was time to find the next place for me to grow, be challenged and serve. I visited a few different churches for one-off visits before things got put on hold for 5 months. During that entire time the name PBC continued to return to my mind whenever I thought or talked about when I would start my search again. A friend had recommended the church but I did not actually know anyone there. The plan was to spend a month to get a feel for it, then visit other churches too. I showed up right at the start of a series in Learning to Live and Love like Jesus: Who is the God I know? I really felt God speak to me over the next number of weeks, challenging me in the way I thought about Him and my life, and really confirming that a big life decision I had recently made was the right one in trusting Him. I was encouraged to visit a small group which helped me feel connected, get to know people better, and delve into concepts on a deeper level. At the end of 4 weeks I decided I had to see the series through. Then I wanted to see what it was like between series ... and the rest just flew by. God has clearly shown me this is where I am to stay for the time being.

* I didn't have any idea when we came...probably felt it was more about me and what I wanted from God like being somewhere that knew how to worship (a whole other story). But it became that I was to be a part of a church family that would allow me to flow in my gifts, help me grow in the things of the Spirit, be challenged about missional living and ministry and then release me to be an inaugural member of the church plant Parramatta City Church. *Heather Marchant. 5 years and 3 months by the time of the anniversary.*

* I can remember when I first started coming to PBC. I was very shy, I avoided hanging out with people I didn't know, and didn't really contribute to the church or think much outside my selfish desires. But over the time I have been here God has slowly brought me out of my shell (a bit!) and given me opportunities to be part of his kingdom plans and love other people. I thank God and also His church at PBC for changing my life.

Andrew Kean. 13 years

* God brought me to PBC to join my elder teenage daughter (who was very active in Kids Church @ PBC). I also counted Arthur and Denise Ongley as dear friends and I knew they worshipped at PBC too. The actual timing was set by the celebration closure of our house church in Toongabbie. It was a big change coming to a church after being in a small

group for ten years but I felt very much at home from Day 1! Within a year of coming to PBC I was baptised (in the Ongleys backyard swimming pool). Got involved in a few different ministries/groups including 'MandMs' which targeted 40-60 year olds. Through MandMs met a certain lady named Kathie Bawden who became one of my good friends at PBC. The rest is history as they say since Kathie and I married in November 2012. I am ever so thankful that I found such a wonderful and supportive church community and I am so encouraged and challenged in my faith journey by all that 'is' PBC. I have one regret - that I didn't find PBC earlier in my life! (Oh and yes, there is one more regret, the timing of our auditorium re-development meant that Kathie and I couldn't get married at PBC!)

Don Still. About 13 years

* Most of my Christian walk has been at this Church. I am so thankful for how I have grown closer to God and come to know Him through the help of this Church. Starting here as a 'precious pebble' kid I have been part of super stones, radical rocks, smiggs, ignite, octane, switchboard, 3 bible studies, young adults, gathering, holiday programs, family and youth camps, mission trips, courses, morning service and evening service ... all of these have been key in my walk with God. I am now interning here and youth and worship leading. PBC has been a blessing from God! I pray that God will continue to use this Church to bless others (as He has me) and draw many closer to Himself!

Christine Hadfield. 14 years.

* When we arrived at PBC we were burnt out and in desperate need of the loving support of a new Church community as our daughter was very sick and soon after we started attending PBC, she was diagnosed with anorexia. It was an unbelievably traumatic time in our family life as we were living one day to the next. The support we received from Kathy, Steve, Kaye, Travis, Lyn, Colleen, Lisa and others who we met early on at PBC was an absolute blessing. We are loving the inter-generational community, children and youth ministry, wonderful worship, spirit lead leadership and the variety of thought provoking teaching. God knew what we needed before we knew and he provided.

Mark Robards. 3 Years

* Parra Baps has been a constant in the lives of myself and my family for over 10 years. A safe, accepting, welcoming environment full of people who care and encourage and continue to point us in the direction of God. Being part of this church means the world to me - it meets each of us where we are at, accept us for who we are, supports us in our walk with God and I can't imagine anywhere better to raise my children in the faith. Thank you,

Monique. 10+ years.

* I thank the Lord for this community that encourages all people to continue to find healing and wholeness in Christ. Last year, through prayer ministry I had a picture of my child self who carried wounding even into my adult years from a critical father. In the picture, Jesus was holding my child self and our faces were close as we were laughing and enjoying things that he was pointing out. I was aware of our breath ... mine was muddy brown which I knew symbolised the hurts of my childhood. Jesus' breath was lime green, which I knew represented life and healing. As I breathed out my hurts, it was as if they were taken away from me. In its place, I was breathing in Jesus' breath of life and wholeness. It is now 14 months later and I can honestly say that the healing that happened in that time of prayer has been life-changing and permanent. The old reactions of my child self that had me recoiling from perceived criticism are gone and I feel so much freer in relationships.

Kathy Bates. 24 years

* I wanted my Mum to come to church with me but she didn't feel comfortable where I was attending at the time, and as my cousin, Karen attended PBC, we decided to visit here. Mums reaction: "I could come to this church"! We never stopped coming, and Mum gave her life to Jesus a couple of years before she died in 2013. Since I've been here, God has given me the confidence to step into areas that I've become involved in, Playtime and women's ministry. Being part of PBC is truly being part of a family. I've made amazing friendships and am always blown away by the willingness of people to step in when they see a need. I also feel I've grown so much in my walk with God since being here and feel so blessed to have such an amazing pastoral team leading us.

Robyn Barr. 9 years

* Being part of the church community means a lot to me I always have someone to go to talk to which is God he is always by me and to be friends with people that believe in him like I do is a very warm and comforting feeling.

Sam Ellis. About 3 terms

* To restore my brokenness and reconnect me to His family. God knew what was to take place with Annette's health. I believe God was placing us in a place where we would be loved and cared for. We only knew one member of the congregation when we arrived. Through our struggles God has been teaching us patience and a need to take each day at a time trusting in His leading. Time and time again we have experienced His peace. His love has been so powerful through the pastoral team and brothers and sisters in Christ. I cannot begin to imagine what it would be like coping with Annette's health problems without the support of my church family. My KYB small group is a tower of strength as they show the love and understanding of Christ to each other.

Heather Nobbs. We have been at PBC for about 14 years.

* The first day we came here we were welcomed warmly and we felt right at home. We loved the balance of ministry to the local community (families, the elderly, homeless, counselling and justice ministries) and global concern for sharing our faith across cultures and caring for the needy across the world. Personally I have learnt to pray for things I wouldn't have dared asked before. I took part in the prayer ministry course last year which challenged me to think about what I believed about God and prayer, and I have learnt from others who have prayed for healing for me when I was overwhelmed with fear. I was released completely from that area of anxiety. I am always encouraged by Open Mike time and hearing the evidence of God at work in others' lives. We were also part of a small group for a few years - it was a real blessing of friendship. I am constantly challenged about my faith walk and deeply appreciate our PBC family.

Debbie Linder. We came to PBC about 4yrs ago

* Being part of PBC is being surrounded by close, supportive and caring friends. At a personal level, I have experienced love and acceptance during difficult times plus celebration of the good times. I have received broad support by the Pastoral team and many others, of the missions I have been involved with, supporting refugees for 12 years with International Teams and of HOVC Uganda for the past 9 years. This support has been both financial and emotional. I have been challenged by excellent teaching and my spiritual journey has been enriched by courses, retreats and prayer. I love being a member of PBC.

Marion Pendlebury. 18 years.

* God has done so much for me over my years at PBC:

- He has provided me with an accepting and supportive community, when I was a young teenager who felt so alone and unaccepted/rejected.

- He gently led me and revealed His truth to me in areas around my sexuality when I was unsure and burdened and in the dark.

- He (via Steve and Kathy) created space, and gave permission, for anyone and everyone to try new things, contribute to, and participate in making "Church" happen. I have found freedom to express myself here, in particular, I have thoroughly enjoyed experimenting with using flags during worship - an opportunity rare in Churches.

- The past 5 years alone, God has led me to complete a Diploma of Ministry, join the Church Plant and become a School Chaplain. God continually calls me to the lost, a call that is still a challenge for me.

- God has also recently answered a prayer I have prayed for about 20 years - that He would provide me with a best friend/close friendships. This year I have seen how God has provided these special friendships and I am so thankful - He is so faithful!

Daniel Tuckwell. 16 years.

* I was searching for a place of unassuming, quiet and deep faith and prayerfulness and for a place I could grow. Helping me hold the course of my life. Belonging to a community of faith. Friendships. A mainstay of my life. A place through which I can serve and give to the needs inherent in the wider world.

* On a 'practical' level, I came to PBC because the church I was previously attending didn't have a Youth Group and as a High School student at the time, that was what I wanted from a church... #priorities

In the grander scheme of life, I'd say God brought me here to have my life irreversibly shaped by the phenomenal individuals who were my youth leader, to give me the opportunities to develop, and serve using, my unique gifts; to build friendships with other believers, and to continually stretch and grow my understanding of Him.

Katie Banning. 16 years (since 2002).

* I have experienced the love of God and his people in this place. I appreciate the soft edge the church has. My family and I have been welcomed in and it feels like home. I have been ministered to by the preached word, the music, the people, and have experienced real healing and hope here.

Josh Carmichael. 2 years

* Why God brought me Here? Simply to thrive.

It's like finding the missing family you knew you belong to.

It's empowering and also something you want to contribute too. This is characterized by our journey 5 years ago, we could have as a church, just sat back and admired the view.

Very impressive, Gods work always is. But that's not where we went.

The past 5 years reveal Gods providence is Our Journey in Loving, Growing and sharing with Consistency as Christs Local community, always more than just us drifting along. It's a marked by Gods love lived out, this takes real effort by so many people.

The PBC team involves all of us, led by a leadership team and many talented people who are given to share their Gifts to Bless us week by week.

It's not that we've Made it, as we are on a journey and are blessed that our final destination is certain.

For me, this consistent community, enables me to mission in many places, in many ways, being connected, supported and loved.

Through the many struggles in Life, over the recent time have been in the context of a community that cares, that encourages living out God's Word, The Bible isn't a textbook or a piece of Literature, but the Truth that drives us together and forward in Love and in service for Jesus.

Being able to Join in Sunday by Sunday and at other times of our shared each time we do community together, is simply Life Giving.

As we continue to Grow, being part of the PBC Community is A blessing and a continuous challenge to Live in Love and in Unity,

Trusting God and Listening to the Spirit's Voice and continuing in Loving obedience is a must.

Kim Riley. 22 years

* Our daughter, Melissa, paved the way for our move to PBC.

We came from a much smaller church and were really experiencing "burn-out" and dissatisfaction with the leadership of our then Pastor.

We recall the first Sunday that we attended PBC and the refreshing tone of worship in the service - in particular, the singing of Brian Doerksen's wonderful anthem - "Come, now is the time to worship".

The pastors of the church made us feel quite at home and we found it very easy to make new friends here at PBC.

We have always found the teaching at the church both uplifting and, at the same time, challenging and relevant in a rapidly changing world.

God has richly blessed us both at PBC.

Greg and Heidi Beasley. 12-years

* When we moved to Sydney 5 years ago and were looking for a new church, we were looking forward to visiting numerous churches and seeing what God was up to around our new city. We wanted to be part of a church where people lived out genuine faith in Jesus and who cared about the local and global community and put that love into action in practical ways. We visited PBC on the recommendation of a friend who pastors another church and it was the first church we visited. We liked it straight away but didn't want to settle into the first church we saw! We were

attracted to the kind, down-to-earth leadership, insightful and challenging teaching and the way the church engaged with HOVC and the people experiencing homelessness in the city. The way the leadership and church family welcome and accept children as a valuable part of the church is a rare and valuable thing. The church genuinely loves children and this makes families feel valued and supported. Joining a small group has helped us feel more connected to the church and has been a source of support, prayer and practical help especially in times of hardship. We have always heard God speak to us through the messages and during services at PBC.

Although it is sometimes a challenge getting to church we always leave feeling like we have encountered Jesus and have a desire to connect more with Him.

Melissa Rodriguez. 5 years

- * We have had all our children while being a part of this church family. We have journeyed this part of life with many special people and been supported and loved. The kind and helpful responses when Grace was diagnosed with cancer will remain a special memory. We continue to love, value and serve our Christian family here and are excited to have our children be raised as a part of this community of believing Christians.

The Pearson Family. We have been at PBC for 10 years.

- * I think God brought me to Parra because he wants me to use my gifts to help stir up a passion for Him. I think I'm here to add my faith to the body and to believe for and pursue the huge kingdom work that God has for us.

Victoria. I guess it's about 20 years now

- * PBC has given me so many opportunities to explore and use my gifts. It's been a wonderful time of learning and working together with others for Him. I am thankful for the leadership and how they are so faithful and humble in their service. They have taught me so much and smoothed my rough edges through their loving example week in and week out. I've also enjoyed meeting God's kingdom in all its variety of expression and skill. It's been so good to worship with you; to hear what He is doing and see how He is working in each person's life.

I also feel very blessed to have had the help of every person who has been a part of kids and youth ministry in bringing up my kids - every friend, kids church helper, parent, leader and mentor who has made my kids a priority in their lives and engaged them in God's Word - I thank you! Being newlywed (1 year), a young parent (early 20's) when I had them and relatively young Christian (8 years) from a mixed-faith, dysfunctional family background, it's been vital to me to have your love and support in teaching them about God. We would have struggled without you! Instead you have helped to make Him a constant in their lives by showing them who He is in who you are and journeying with them weekly - a precious gift of love, faith and family. Thank you ALL so much for growing us!

Mireille Kean. About 12 years

- * The Lord showed us step by step when we moved from Newcastle after my husband's diagnoses of Early Alzheimer... Our house sold quickly. We moved to Constitution Hill Village and I joined PBC. I have learned so much since coming to the church. I praise the Lord for the teaching, love, care, songs and prayers. Thank you all. I feel a part of a loving, caring family. In a very small way I have been able to serve others in the church. I look forward to continuing at PBC.

Elaine Butler. 3 years in July

- * Being part of this church has shown me what it looks like when a local church operates as God intended - from the leadership down. It's a place where the GENUINE love, acceptance, and compassion of Jesus is played out in so many different ways. PBC have become my FAMILY!

- * God brought me here to heal and recover my spirit.

He led us to this place of support and strength, so that my children could grow into the knowledge and love of God; and so that I could recuperate spiritually while he worked his plans in my life.

He continues to use PBC to unfurl his plans and designs, and I look forward to the phase of growth that is to come. PBC feels like family.

* I think God brought me to this Church to give me a community of fellow believers that would be able to help me grow in my faith and relationship with God.

It has been awesome coming here, because I have grown in my faith, and after a few years at youth group, decided to get baptised. I'm so thankful that I started coming to this Church, because I have been able to meet so many amazing people, and grow in my faith, all while getting the opportunity to serve God and this church through different opportunities.

Lewis Wilson. About 6 and a half years

* PBC has been a place where I have met so many people who have loved and cared for me through some very difficult times. It has also been a significant time of growth for me. I know Jesus more intimately and enjoy walking in the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

Margaret Baker. 22 years

* When we moved to this district God began a new chapter in my spiritual journey.

He has been developing my discernment by spending more quality time listening to Him and acting upon His promptings, being aware of His leading when opportunities arise to witness appropriately, especially in volunteering work in the community.

Belonging to this church family, which is growing, blooming and bearing fruit, fills me with hope and joy. We build each other up in the faith as we work and worship together.

All praise, thanks and honour be to our mighty ever-present God.

Beverley Harmer. 22years.

* Approaching retirement we felt God challenging us to make some changes in our life. We had been at the same church for 30 odd years and were 'cruising' and 'comfortable'.

PBC was the third church we visited, and a different denomination, but we looked at each other half way through our first service and knew that God had plans for us here.

God has challenged us to pray and read the bible more and to step out of our comfort zone and help in areas we never imagined we would.

We praise God for the leadership and love of all on the staff and the examples that they are to this caring congregation.

Graham and Eileen Lawson. Three and a half years.

* Back in mid 2010 after becoming disillusioned at another church, I went nowhere for 9 months where I went through a period of being extremely distant from God and disconnected from community. In early 2011 I was discussing my general unhappiness with a non Christian and self proclaimed atheist work colleague and friend. This friend suggested that I need to find a new church to go to. This might seem common sense, but coming from a self-proclaimed atheist it caught my attention. Seeing God at work like that was overwhelming.

A number of weeks later my housemate at the time took me along to PBC, just to see what I thought in late May 2011. Over the next few weeks and months I enjoyed coming to church again. My passion for God started stirring again, the preaching from our pastors was exactly what I needed to hear and I felt part of the community. Over the following months I joined a small group and went out of my comfort zone and joined the evening welcoming roster, Despite feeling like I did a terrible job at welcoming, the encouragement from those who knew me in the church community made a big difference, demonstrating the importance of community in church.

My time so far at PBC has been beyond anything I've expected. Even now when I'm in a season of feeling disconnected quite a bit from God and our church community, I find hope through earlier experiences with God, in this community, that I'll make it through the other end of this season. That faith is a great testimony to God's work in his church at PBC.

Stephen Cook. 7yrs

* God brought me to PBC so I could find a new perspective and sense of identity in areas of serving him. Being part of PBC means that I am connected to good friends who are encouraging examples of living for God in our generation, and who help me rediscover where my abilities in serving God fit in the bigger picture.

* We walked through the doors of PBC exactly 3 years ago, planning to perhaps visit other churches, but it was clear that God led us here and wanted us to stay.

As a family, we had decided to move on from our church for various reasons, but primarily to find a church where our 3 children would want to come and develop their faith. We had heard that PBC offered a great kids program and holiday workshop. Our heart's desire was to be a part of another church community and we trusted God would plant us wherever that was to be. Within a couple of weeks of coming to PBC in 2015, our 11 year old daughter Naomi, was diagnosed with an eating disorder, anorexia. Each week I would walk into Church feeling vulnerable and overwhelmed and I'd look at the vision statement on the wall 'Restoring the broken'. Going through this extremely dark, scary and often lonely season of my life, I yearned for this hope and reassurance, that I would and could experience restoration in all its fullness. And that one day this would be Naomi's experience as well.

There were significant people who we met in our early weeks at PBC and without any doubt, God led us to them- it was no coincidence. We were introduced to Colleen Alford one morning who worked at the eating disorders unit at Westmead Children's Hospital. We'd been informed of the extensive waiting list to be seen at WCH. Naomi's health was declining quite rapidly. After meeting Colleen, we had an appointment the next week which led to a hospital admission. In our darkness and despair, we knew God was carrying us and He was bringing people into our lives to help us- building my trust and obedience and handing life over to Him.

Our children were somewhat reluctant to move from safety and familiarity, to a new church. It took time to adjust and with God's provision of amazing leaders who took time to build relationships with each of the kids, they now love coming to PBC. In comparison to our previous Church, it was new for me being part of a community with a vision of being led by God's Spirit. My understanding and experience of the Holy Spirit has been confronting (in a good way), exciting and revealing. For the initial months I sat in Church and cried each week, soaking in God's compassion and grace like I had not experienced before. God told me I needed to stop, take time and rest in Him before being ready to serve in leadership again. We were encouraged to do the Life in the Spirit course and beautiful Lisa Roberts looked after our kids, allowing more opportunity for restoration and revelation.

Last year I sensed God calling me back into kids ministry and I am now a Kids Church leader in the morning. I value deeply Lynn's loving, shepherding leadership, encouraging and guiding me. Being a part of a Church which is: firmly planted in the vision God has set; remains true to being led by God's Spirit; compelled to share Christ and restore the broken, has stirred up my desire to know God more and to be more intentional about making this happen. This has challenged me. God is always speaking to us and I am so thankful for the teaching from PBC's awesome ministry team and also the worship teams. This Church is really blessed with incredibly gifted leaders.

I am on a journey. I know that His grace is sufficient, that He is more than enough and that He will continue to reveal Himself. This restores my soul and gives me hope.

I thank God that He brought us to PBC, as we need other people to help us grow and to walk with us on our journey. We have been blessed deeply by genuine love and care within this Church community. I love being a part of a Church which is welcoming, who serves the community near and far, where there are no barriers across generations worshipping and serving together. Love it!!

Jane Robards. 3 years

* I have been a member at PBC for over 30 years. Last year I experienced a recent health concern, and during that time I appreciated the wonderful prayer support of so many people at PBC. I was so aware of the grace of God upon my life through this time and in my recovery. I really felt a peace from God and the support I received from so many people was very humbling and wonderful.

Glenn Calnan. Over 30 years

* We came to PBC since my daughter Hadassah was invited by her beautiful friend Amalia to the youth programs. My journey from traditional to pentecostal churches have been life changing. I became spiritually exhausted. I know God lead me to be part of this church for spiritual refreshment. We are in different places in our spiritual journey for a

season only. It is the season for spiritual refreshment and that is exactly what God is doing in my life right now. I am grateful for the faithfulness of the PBC Pastoral Team. God bless you all always.

Sisilia V.2 years

* Been part of this church means a lot to me as I feel I have got close to God, unlike before when I hardly went to church. I now attend church Service every Sunday and I feel the presence of God in my life. I sometimes used to drop my wife Charmaine in church and I used to sit in the car and wait for her as I did not have the inclination to go to church. I am a changed person now and this church means a lot to me.

I got used to sitting next to the same people every Sunday and the songs sermon and everything else has uplifted me. Even if my wife Charmaine cannot go to church due to health reasons I go to church by myself.

I give thanks to God, my wife Charmaine and my son Pat and daughter-in-law Lisa for their prayers and support in enabling me to worship Our God every Sunday at Parramatta Baptist Church.

Geoff Roberts. About 10 years

* Being part of this church means so much to me. It really is like being part of a big, wonderful family. For me PBC is a place of encouragement, a place to be challenged and grow, a place to test and practice gifts, a place where faith translates to real life. I love seeing our kids feel so at home at PBC and it is such a blessing to see their faith develop. So many beautiful friendships across all ages! And I love that we are never "standing still" as a church.

Colleen Alford. 27 years

* I think God brought me to PBC as it is closer to my home and it is an opportunity to be part of a growing church.

There are many ways to be involved at PBC and there is the potential to exercise my spiritual gifts. Also able to share my healing testimony from MS and encourage others and pray for them too. I feel very blessed to be here and to meet so many amazing Christians as we journey and grow together.

Dorothy Lee. 5 years

* God put on our hearts to check out PBC as we went for walks in the area.

We had discovered that my Great Great Grandfather and Family were involved in PBC from its beginning. We were surprised when we very quickly realised that God was wanting us to leave the Church we were attending and come to PBC. I have been blessed by all that happens at PBC. I love the broad age range of Christians at this Church and the maturity of so many. I hope we will be here for some time to come.

David Lee. 5 years plus

* God brought me to PBC to seek support and guidance whilst my family was going through a tough time. It was here that I met my now husband Huw and we have been married for over 10 yrs, after being married in the old church building. God has blessed our family - we have 3 children, our second child Annabelle was born whilst we were worshipping at the Adventist church and Matthew was born a year after returning to the new building. We love being a part of the PBC community - we have always felt at home here and we try to make others feel the same. Being connected with other Christians and being a part of his work in this community is what our family loves!

Beth Smith. Since August 2005

* Being a part of our church means that I can grow up knowing God. God guides me and gives me the things that I need. I like the relationships that I have built with lots of different people at church.

* Being a part of PBC means to me that I get to regularly go to a place where I can talk about and strengthen my faith, it is a place where I can learn and seek refuge. God has worked through me in a variety of ways at school as well as in the church. I am now involved in kids church and the holiday program.

* I think God lead me to PBC as a way to heal from some of the hurts from the church I grew up in, and to allow me to grow in a new way.

God started by allowing me to rest and heal and then has been showing me how to accept and embrace true grace, and not to cling to the law and rules that some people in the church try to add. I have learnt more and come to discover more about Him, and have been equipped to serve in another community.

PBC means FAMILY ... so many different people and characters and backgrounds, but one Father, and one aim. This family encourages and supports me, challenges me and holds me accountable, and constantly points me back to our Father.

- * God has brought me to PBC to grow in relationship with Him and to become part of a church family. Since coming to PBC, God has begun healing me emotionally and setting me free from a life dominated by fear, which had me living a very isolated life. God has also been leading me into a deeper, more meaningful relationship with Him.
Being part of PBC means being welcomed and accepted for who I am. It means being part of a loving, caring family.
- * I have been on a journey since I arrived at PBC 2 years ago. There have been ups and down I can testify that God has been drawing me closer to himself, teaching me to find joy in Him, having my spiritual thirst satisfied in Him alone, and showing me how to more fully live as one of His followers. He has been enabling me to let what was previously just head knowledge become heart knowledge as well. He has been challenging me to live out my faith in my everyday life rather than it be something more abstract. He has been encouraging me through many godly role models how I can better live for Him and has shown me the benefits of walking through life with other believers.
- * When I first visited PBC I was living within walking distance. A friend had told me there were some lovely people here. I was in a dark time in my life, and was needing an oasis where I could rest my exhausted soul and find a way through things without being overwhelmed. My one goal was to become a gracious lady instead of the hurt angry one I was. My family was in crisis and I had a near death experience in my first year here. Week by week I pulled myself along. I had nothing in me to give to the church, but it was never a problem. I was welcomed and treated kindly. Since being in PBC I have got out of a bad habit of striving in my faith. I have made some lovely friends and found myself in a church community that is kind and caring. Perhaps the most significant discovery is the freedom to be myself without having to meet expectations. Instead I find this is a nurturing environment where I get to grow, discover and re-discover who I can be in Jesus.
Learning to live and love like Jesus develops self-confidence, is rewarding personally and brings an inner joy. Quite a different result from striving.
Life is not dark now, but it can still be a bumpy ride at times. Having a loving Christian community where we can give and receive is wonderful. Being in a healthy community is counter cultural, as we learn to trust one another we grow from strength to strength.
Susan Davy. 8 years
- * God brought me to PBC to serve and use the gifts he had given me.
God my father is changing and reshaping me every day. He wants me to live a self-controlled and godly life.
I am able to be myself and to be part of a ministry at PBC.
Pat Roberts. 17 years
- * Originally, I thought God brought me to PBC for a time to rest and to experience His healing! This did in fact happen, but, it inevitably led me to become part of PBC where God has used me to serve Him in many different areas: music ministry (when the night service was just getting started in its current form), the Holiday Bible Program (under Lynn's amazing leadership!), KYB, prayer ministry and other areas of service. At various times over the last 20 years at PBC, God has given me plenty more opportunities to rest and experience His healing! I have always been conscious of God's timing and His presence with me. Through the ministry of PBC, I have been constantly challenged to seek God's guidance in every area of life and to accept His unconditional love for me. I have seen my children grow up at PBC and have had the privilege of seeing my daughter baptised here. God has constantly challenged and encouraged me through the ministry and teaching at PBC. I have loved the support and security of being part of a church that accepts

you as you are and encourages you to use the gifts God has given you. It is a privilege to be part of a church that actively and passionately seeks to follow God's direction and purposes.

Jodie. 20+ years

* PBC was where I was supposed to be. I can see, as I look back over the years, that God's plan was for me to be here. I came with lots of baggage from my past and found PBC to be a place where I could be healed. I've experienced so much freedom in areas that had held me captive. I changed in my relationship with God. I went through a personal revival, particularly related to the Holy Spirit, that has been and continues to be life changing. This happened after about 30 years of being a Christian. I praise God because of the transformation that He has brought into my life. I've been encouraged to use the gifts He has given me - I've been able to serve others in the ways that I've been created, not to fill a hole.

I've formed many deep friendships which are so important to me. I've been through some difficult times and those people became God in action. People at PBC care; they take time to listen and pray. This has enabled me to grow. I feel supported, cared about and valued. I'm allowed to grow in the directions that the Spirit has planned, not to fulfil someone's agenda.

There is just some of what the Lord has done in my life though being part of PBC. Thank You Lord!!

Robyn Tallon. Started attending PBC at the end of 2000.

* Being part of PBC means being part of a family.

There have been numerous times where I, or someone in my family, have needed support, and it has been freely and generously given.

PBC is a place where I can be real with those around me - when times are good, there are friends to celebrate with; when times are tough, there is no need to pretend, because there are friends who care and will provide a hug and a listening ear.

At all times, we remind each other that our amazing God is in control, and He loves us beyond anything we can possibly imagine.

Melissa Betts. 18.5 years

* I actually knew about Parramatta Baptist Church through some friends, when I was still attending a different church and serving in ministry there. I longed to go to a church where there were more young adults like me, and where I heard stories of people really listening to God's Spirit. God kindly answered my prayers when my then boyfriend (now husband) was looking for a new church - I suggested he attend PBC and I joined him here about a year later!

God has done so much in my life particularly in the areas of emotional healing, building deep friendships, serving in new areas of ministry and learning to listen and walk more in step with the Holy Spirit.

Being part of this church means so much to me. For me, it is a community where people seek to be honest and authentic about their struggles and challenges but also lift each other up, trusting in what God can do. It is also a church that constantly challenges me to keep looking out into the community and the world, beyond the issues of my own day to day life, and to believe that God wants to use me to make a difference.

Ruth Fordyce. About 12 years

* It's a taste of the kingdom. People come and go, but they tend to go well and remain family.

* Being part of this church has helped me to grow in my relationship with God and the Spirit. It has given me hope and helped me through hard times in my life.

* I started attending PBC soon after coming to Sydney as a young man. It seemed to be a good place to be in terms of finding a spiritual home. That turned out to be the case and that is why I am still here 41 years later. As a bonus I met my wife, Joy, here. Both of our children found their spouses here too. We have all been greatly blessed by being part of the PBC family.

Colin Helmstedt. 41 years

* I just love being part of the body of Christ here at PBC. Right from the start I have felt welcomed and included. The worship is inspiring and the teaching is Biblical, practical, and applicable to day to day life.

I love the fact that we are a church that practises and believes in the power of prayer. I am grateful for those who have prayed with me and thankful for the way in which God has and is continuing to work in my life.

Tracy Hillier. 3 years

* PBC has been the community where I have lived most of my adult life. It is the place where God's people have ministered and cared for me and my family throughout life's journey; in births, dedications, youth groups, bible studies, celebrations, death, marriage, healing. In sadness and great joy, in grief and celebration. Throughout the journey God has been ever-present, ever-loving, ever faithful, and his people have been his hands and feet. I'm looking forward to many more years of living, loving and serving together. Thank you PBC!

Allen Sibley. 27 years

* Toward the end of 2010 (after the collapse of the youth group at another church) youth group at PBC became a safe place for my youngest son. The Church soon felt like home for me too. Within 18 months my personal journey hit a low point and I became more and more grateful that God had said 'No' to my prayers for the previous church.

The new friendships and teaching helped me through the journey into singleness.

It was at PBC that I met God's handpicked man for me. The prayers, support and love from our church family in the good times and bad is why Parramatta Baptist is home.

Jenny Sibley. Seven years

* We really wanted a family friendly church and felt welcome by the pastoral team whenever we visited PBC. Having newly found out we were pregnant with twins we needed to be able to "just be" in a church family and not need to volunteer for anything. We were quickly surrounded by so many loving people here - and both during pregnancy and when the babies arrived, we were blessed with so many meals from our home group and the church. Our new church supported us brilliantly as we adjusted from a family of 3 to becoming a family of 5! We know God brought us here and are so thankful for this body of believers he has surrounded us with.

Emma and Jared. 3 years



My Mum, Gloria,
loved the teaching and
fellowship of

Parramatta
baptist church

The Lord placed His hand
on my shoulder and said "Its time
to let me into your heart."



I smile when I enter the doors
of PBC.

Wow!

What a
God!!