

## **Michael Potter**

This is a day that could be the saddest day of our lives. A man we all loved has been struck down by cancer and has died a lot earlier than we all expected. We are sad because Mike made such an impact on all our lives that nothing can replace him. That is also the reason it *should not be* the saddest of day because it is Mike, our Mike who we knew so well.

The Mike we knew, bore this illness, like every other tragedy and trial he faced, with courage, but without recrimination, and without self-pity. The Mike we worshipped with at church, had a real faith and lived his life as a devoted Christian. The Mike, who was our friend, was so full of life and fun, he would not want us to be sad. He was one of those people who found a way to enjoy life no matter what came his way. He would want us to remember him every time; we are happy and enjoying a joke no matter how silly it might be.

The Mike who was our Grandad, our Uncle, our Dad and most of all our husband, this Mike loved us and cared for us so much and he would not want us unhappy for long on his account. He would want us to find again, all the happiness he shared with us, and live good lives together, sharing all the joys of family life.

Mike was the youngest of three children born to Claire & Arthur in Woking Surrey, he had a brother Nick & sister Elizabeth know as Liz who while you might not think so sometimes, he adored. From the start he was an intelligent and very mischievous child. He was fortunate enough to be sent to boarding schools finishing at Framlingham. I think there was some hope it would straighten him out. It didn't.

He met there three other boys all called Mike. They were known as the four Mikes and between them they got into so many adventures know one knows exactly how much they got up to. Yet it would be wrong to say he was a rebel who hated authority. He always accepted, if caught, that his actions deserved punishment and he took it with out complaint. I think sometimes he was so taken up with the fun of the thing he did not see all the implications and consequences. When it did, he understood completely.

Mike's father had built a very successful career in shipping, and on leaving school Mike reluctantly followed him into that world, but it was not for him. He left it behind for the Mutual Provident Insurance and learned to sell pensions and saving schemes. It was also at this time he began attending a Baptist Church and found the two great loves of his life Wendy and his Lord Jesus Christ. These two were the greatest influences on his life. They supported him, loved him and yes in a way formed him into the man we knew and counted as our friend. They also cleared up after him in so many different ways.

Eventually the family came to Moreton Hall in 1985 as our church began.

Mike in particular played a leading role in much that made Christ Church what it is today. He was the leader of our highly successful youth work Kool Crowd. With his particular skills he was great at running the sound system for the Band and our services. Even when they moved out of Bury to Rede, Mike remained totally loyal to his Lord and this Church.

Which leads us to his other great Love, Radio and being a very good disk jockey. Whether it was SGRFM or hospital Radio he was the complete professional. He used his extensive knowledge of contemporary music and his natural charm, to make the listening experience such a delight for those able to tune in. He was a multi award winner year after year he was that good.

Mike Left insurance and then worked in Social care looking after Children with significant social and interpersonal needs. This he did with the same dedication and care he did everything else.

Eventually he moved into Occupational Therapy providing support to adults with mobility issues to continue to live at home. Mike loved this work he said it was his perfect job. I am sure a visit from Mike with his natural warmth, good humour and desire to help, was a great blessing to everyone he was sent to.

This was a full life but for Mike the family was always the very centre a good example was he loved walking with his children and grandchildren to talk about anything and everything. He was so proud of each and every one of you. Telling us all of your achievements & triumphs and all you meant to him. He also had an artistic side to for he also loved taking photos while he was walking from a small daisy to the sun setting.

So yes, we must give thanks to God for sending us Mike who has given so much to us all though all his talents abilities and love. Yes, we are so sad cancer struck him down so suddenly and so unfairly. He leaves a hole nothing can fill. This is where Mike Faith in Jesus comes to the fore. By dying and rising Jesus shows death is not the end. He promises all who follow him, like the disciples in our reading and of course Mike, that a place is prepared for us in Heaven by Jesus himself. In the moment of death, it is Jesus who come and takes us there.

Mike knew that and trusted in it completely so we can think of him now free from pain and enjoying a wholeness of life he never knew here. He is waiting for us to join him. If we put our trust in Jesus as he did that place is ours, for always.

Jesus who comforts all who mourn, asks us to care for each other as Mike once cared for you. In that way we keep his memory alive. And with Mike it is easy to do because we all shared so much fun and laughter with him. So, we say goodbye to Mike and give thanks for all that he did and said and meant to us. Let us take comfort from the God's promises and rest in the love and support of our families and friends. Amen