



LIFE CHANGE

CELEBRATING 2016

421 BAPTISMS

"WE HAD 421 BAPTISMS IN 2016 ACROSS ALL OF OUR COMMUNITY LOCATIONS, THAT'S THE MOST BAPTISMS WE HAVE HAD IN ONE YEAR EVER! HERE IS JUST ONE OF THE MANY STORIES OF PEOPLE WHO FOUND THEIR WAY BACK TO GOD!"

I first learned about God as a child, growing up in a Christian home with loving parents and two brothers. Around the age of 14, things changed. I didn't have any friends and I became depressed. I was shy and didn't feel accepted by kids my age; I felt different and not good enough.

By age 16, I started to find my own way in the world, but by 18 it came crashing down. I hated God and had turned to liquor and drugs to numb myself. My life was so dark and empty and I hated the person I saw in the mirror. I was lost. I continued using and drinking into my mid-20's when I hit rock bottom. I didn't want to live anymore. I knew God existed, but I was angry at Him, at myself, and everyone around me. I knew I needed to change something.

I decided to check myself into a detox center to get clean. There on Christmas Day, I read from the AA big book, "If you don't know who you are, you can become whomever God wants you to be." So I got clean, got a sponsor and started meetings in the program. When something still felt missing, I looked for a church and found COMMUNITY. What caught my attention was that it was a church that helped people find their way back to God. I went to a service right before Easter Sunday, and when I entered, my emotions hit me hard. I was remembering the past and saw where my life had gone, yet I knew God had been there with me through it all. He had never given up on me. I shared my story with the pastor, Eric, and he prayed with me.

When I was little, I wanted to be baptized in the lake, and today it's happening! I feel like I'm on the right path. I love God and I know that, through everything in my life, He has been with me, waiting for me to come back and accept his love. I'm happy to be part of God's family and I hope to grow closer to Him and become the woman he wants me to be. Today, I feel happiness because now He can wash away all this darkness and I can be free. I'm grateful for my life and grateful He has given me this second chance. I've found my way home!

Kristy Candir

*Lincoln Park | Old Town Attender
Baptized July 2016 in Lake Michigan*

