

My Journey of Change

IAN CARTON



Ian is a former Presbyterian Minister who served for over 25 years in the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. He is married to June with two sons in their 20s. He was born and grew up in the town of Ballymena in Mid and East Antrim.

In his talk, Ian explains his family's journey towards LGBTQIA+ inclusion. Coming from a conservative theological perspective originally, Ian's experience of having gay friends and a gay son brought the issue into sharp focus. After researching and exploring more about the unfamiliar term 'gay Christian' he became more and more uncomfortable with the decisions being made by the Presbyterian Church in Ireland from 2018 onwards. Ian explained what happened when he stood up for what he had come to believe in.

He has suggested you consider these questions after you have listened to his story.

Suggested Questions

1. "Should I stay or should I go?" What three things would you look for in a church that would encourage you to stay or to commit to belonging?
2. What three kinds of behaviour in a church might make you choose to leave?
3. Do you think that Jesus' emphasis in his teaching / living was doctrinal or pastoral? What makes you think that?
4. Do you see the church as being more concerned with doctrine or with people? If you chose people, what people or people group is the church most concerned about?
5. What matters more to you, how the church treats you and your family, or how the church treats other people and their families? (Think about others inside the church as well as others outside the church in your discussions.)