



Sharing Our Story in Her Story...

Trinity Baptist Church, Fleetwood, Fylde

Our Baptist family is full of inspirational characters. Trinity Baptist Church pastor, George Ayoma, tells the story of a wonderful woman from Fleetwood he got to know well.

"Georgina Chandler, (pictured centre with a beaming smile), recently died at the age of 104. In her life, Georgina witnessed significant historical events and went through some of the greatest technological advancements that humanity has ever known. Yet, very few people knew her within our Baptist family, and not even here in her home town of Fleetwood. But why indeed should Georgina now be known? The answer is, because she lived an exemplary life and by how she has invested much of her life to champion others. Even so, Georgina has finally received the greatest honour that can ever be bestowed - eternal life and a welcome into her glorious inheritance that can neither diminish nor spoil.

Georgina was a member of Trinity Baptist for 60 years or thereabouts. On her 104th birthday, a group of us, including Audrey Doyle, (church secretary and part of Trinity Baptist Church for nearly 80 years), went to sing 'Happy Birthday' to Georgina at the nursing home where she spent the last four months of her life. She enjoyed this very much. In her light, comfortable room there were several British, Burmese, Filipino and Kenyan members of her church. This group would no doubt have never met, were it not for women like Georgina and Audrey, and some other wonderful local Christian ladies who have flown the Baptist flag for many decades in Fleetwood.

Georgina had always kept a strong relationship with Jesus, which came across during the Bible studies and the local Ladies' Fellowship. This was also reflected in her commitment in the church and many remember her as a great example of how to be a real follower of our Saviour and Lord. She took a great deal of interest in individuals, had a wonderful sense of humour and could readily put people at ease. When the few remaining members of Trinity felt that the old prefab structure that had originally been donated by Ansdell Baptist could not take any further repairs, it was this group of ladies, with Georgina at the helm as Building Fund Treasurer, that decided Trinity Baptist should have a proper brick permanent structure. Georgina had worked in finance all her life, and her competence shone through. Audrey remembers, 'often we would struggle to pay a big bill, and Georgina would ask everyone to pray. Before too long, a cheque would come through her letter box, matching the exact need we had to meet. She hardly mentioned an amount we hoped for, so it was definitely God, who kept the money coming!'

In 1981, Georgina was one of the leaders present at the opening ceremony of the new building. When she was in her 70s, not having been married before, Georgina surprised Audrey by declaring over the phone that she was to be married, for the first time in her 70s. Ernest Chandler had been Georgina's boss for a number of years, but had been widowed. Georgina had also known the Chandlers for many years, and had taken young Peter Chandler, Ernest's son from his first marriage, with her to Sunday school. That desire to see young people learn about God marked Georgina apart. She has made history as the oldest and longest supporter of the youth organisation Christian Endeavour, who have said of her: 'For the greater part of her life, Georgina has led and guided many young people in their Christian walk and their belief in God'. The history of our local church now owes much of its current and future witness to Georgina Chandler."