

The Little Church

Once, there was a little church. He was built by a good and kind lady of bright-red and mellow-yellow bricks. He had a shiny bell on his roof, coloured windows with pictures in and an organ for the people to sing to.

Oh! How proud was he of his bright-red and mellow-yellow bricks! Of his shiny bell on his roof; of his coloured windows with pictures in and of his organ for the people to sing to.

How proud he was!

But, most of all, he was proud to be God's house, where Jesus, God's son would live.

The Little Church's bright-red and mellow-yellow bricks, his shiny bell on his roof, his coloured windows with pictures in and his organ for the people to sing to told everyone that he was God's house and Jesus – God's son, who loves everyone, lived there.

The people loved the Little Church. They loved his bright-red and mellow-yellow bricks. They loved his shiny bell on his roof. They loved his coloured windows with pictures in and they loved his organ to sing to.

But, most of all, they loved the Little Church because he was God's house and Jesus was there.

The people who went to the Little Church all worked in a big, noisy factory that made rope. The factory had a tall chimney to let the smoke from the engines out. Gradually, over many, many years, the smoke from the chimney made everything very dirty.

As the years passed, the smoke from the chimney made the Little Church dirty. It made his bright-red and mellow-yellow bricks dirty. It made his shiny bell on his roof rusty. It made his coloured windows with pictures in dull and it made his organ wheeze.

The people who had loved the Little Church looked at him and said to each other "The Little Church's bricks are now very dirty. His bell doesn't shine anymore. His coloured windows aren't bright, and his organ now wheezes".

Then, they looked down the hill and saw something...

"There is a big church in the valley" they said. "He is built of beautiful stone instead of dirty bricks. He has twelve shiny bells instead of one rusty one. He has lots of coloured windows with bright pictures in instead of dull ones, and he has a big organ that doesn't wheeze. Let's go there instead!"

So they did.

The little Church was left alone.

Nobody came anymore.

The Little Church was very sad. He was sad because his bright-red and mellow-yellow bricks were very dirty. He was sad because his bell didn't shine anymore. He was sad because his coloured windows with pictures were dull and he was sad because nobody played his organ or sang.

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But, most of all, he was sad because the people had forgotten that he was God's house, and Jesus was still there.

Quietly, he went to sleep.

Many, many more years passed. The weeds grew in the Little Church's garden. His bricks got dirtier and dirtier. Nobody rang his bell, looked at the pictures in his windows, played his organ or sang.

They quite forgot that he was God's house, and they forgot that Jesus was still there.

Another good and kind lady though, didn't forget the Little Church, and loved him still. She loved him because she remembered his bright-red and mellow-yellow bricks. She remembered his shiny bell, his coloured windows with pictures in and his organ for the people to sing to.

But, most of all, she loved him because he was God's house, and Jesus was still there.

One day, she thought "Jesus is still here. Jesus loves everyone. The Little Church is where Jesus lives. The Little Church must do Jesus' work".

So, she and her friends tenderly washed his bright-red and mellow-yellow bricks. They polished his bell, cleaned his coloured windows and made sure his organ played in tune.

Then they opened his doors, which had been closed for many years, and did what Jesus had said.

They fed the hungry. They taught the children. They made friends with the lonely and they cheered up the sad.

They did it because that was what Jesus has said, and the Little Church was where Jesus lived.

Little by little, people came. Slowly, the Little Church woke up.

The new people who came loved the Little Church. They loved him for his bright-red and mellow-yellow bricks. They loved his shiny bell on his roof, his coloured windows with pictures and his organ to sing to.

But, most of all, they loved him for being God's house. They loved him because Jesus was there, and they knew he loved them.

The Little Church saw all the new people and smiled. He was happier than he had ever been.

Jesus my friend; Although, like the Little Church I am also little, with you beside me I can do big, good and kind things. Help me to do those things always. Amen.