

MICANEWS

Leeds Mission and Care Group

Let's be Clear about Clare!

Clare has asked me to issue a special edition of MiCaNews so that we may feel that we know her a little better as she begins her ministry in Leeds

Read on about her Induction Anthem as inspiration to serving Christ whoever we are and wherever we may be

Why is Yorkshire Day special for Brian and Clare?

To introduce myself: A number of folk have met me already, and I've been delighted to see so much support at my Induction, not to mention the delicious cakes brought along by the Mission & Care Churches. My thanks to all. There was much happy consuming and chatting, and I look forward to getting to know you more over the coming months.

Contact details and other info:

Please do not hesitate to get in touch by phone or email on:

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My day off is generally a Monday, which is Brian's day off as well, so we ask not to be disturbed on that day.

CLARITY FROM CLARE

I originally come from Brighton on the south coast, where I regularly return to as I have been fortunate enough to inherit their house to retire to in 14 years! I went away to University in Manchester, living at the URC College, then in Whalley Range, studying a very broad course in Psychology which has been useful ever since.

After Uni I volunteered on the 'Time for God' scheme and worked as a residential youth worker in a YMCA, then at a URC near my home, before moving to London to become engaged to Brian who was in his second year training for the Baptist Ministry in South Norwood. We were married in 1987, funnily enough, on Yorkshire Day, although we didn't know it then (I just remember the florist couldn't get hold of any white roses - of course, they were all in Yorkshire that day!)

While in London I worked as a Community Development Officer for the Open University until funding was cut, then as a supervisor for the Crime Prevention Initiative. I also volunteered as a youth worker at a Council run club and with the URC in Elephant & Castle on the local estate. When opportunity arose to work in youth and community work again, I took it, at a Baptist/URC in Sydenham. It was from there that the call to Ministry I had felt some years earlier was encouraged, and when we moved to Nottingham for Brian's 1st pastorate I enrolled on a ministerial training course back in Manchester.

Through that I applied for ordination in the Baptist Church, was turned down as I had been baptised as an infant and it felt right ecumenically not to be re-baptised. Our older 2 children were born in Nottingham, (Jonny, who now lives at our Brighton house when he's not working in London, and Suzie, who lives in Bristol), and having finished the training course, we moved back to London in 1995. This time it was to a Church near Ilford, Essex, bordering east London, for Brian and I to job-share at a Baptist/URC.

We did this for over 7 years, during which time I applied for training in the URC, topping up previous training with an MA, and our youngest, Stuart, was born.

After a break to finish the MA and spend time with little Stuart, now 15 and attending Silcoates School in Wakefield, I was ordained in 2004, and first served in the Forest Group of Churches in East London for 9 years, being the named Minister for Highams Park and later also for Woodford Green. We moved to Yorkshire in the summer of 2013 for Brian to take up a pastorate in Huddersfield, where we lived just below Castle Hill, and I served as a Transitional Minister for 18 months at Little Lane Church Bradford (Baptist/URC/Methodist), helping them to move from having their own Minister to sharing in the Methodist Circuit, and then as a Transitional Minister for 2 years in the Halifax Group of Churches, helping them look at their mission and future.

In my spare time I enjoy gardening, playing my musical instruments (not very well!), and since my sabbatical on dance in worship in 2015 have been going to an adults' ballet class, and to Christian Dance Fellowship workshops organized by the Yorkshire branch, of which I am now a team member. My childhood was taken up with music, dance and drama outside of school lessons. Now my own children are flying the nest I have a little more time to take them up again!

My role: For my Induction I was asked by Headingley St Columba's organist, Ian Lawrie, to choose a verse from Scripture for him to compose an anthem for the occasion. I chose Jesus' words from John's gospel, "I have come that they may have life, and have it abundantly" (John 10.10). Those words remind us what we are about as Churches, to be Christ's hands, feet and voice to bring fulness of life to others.

I see the base-line of my role as to see how the Churches could work together in partnership to fulfil this, and to encourage us in it. It will involve helping Churches to identify our mission opportunities and resources, including people resources, with a view to sharing these for God's Kingdom where possible. I am hoping to build on the relationships that have already been formed between Churches, so that we all get to know each other better, and what we're about. As ordained ministry becomes in shorter supply across the city, my role is also to build on the Ministers working together more in team, alongside Elders and Churches.

Initially I will be visiting Churches on Sundays - it will take several months to get around us all, so please don't think I've forgotten you if you don't see me on a Sunday before Christmas - and activities that take place in Churches, from Community Café's to Messy Churches, from outreach events to the everyday meetings, and all in-between, anywhere where I can get to know how Church life is lived and breathed. I will be chatting to Church Secretaries and Elders, and will listen to anyone who will share how Church life is for them and their community. So if you see a small, smiling stranger in your midst, that looks a bit like the photo on this page, it's probably me - come and introduce yourselves!

Ian's anthem also included other words of Jesus from John's gospel: "I have come down from heaven not to do my own will, but the will of Him who sent me" (John 6.38), and, "I have come as light into the world, that whosoever believes in me shall not remain in darkness" (John 12.46). I am looking forward to serving with you to proclaim Jesus in word and action, whom God sent, and who brings light and life.