

**CALDERDALE CIRCUIT**  
**PREACHERS' AND WORSHIP LEADERS'**  
**QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER**  
**ISSUE 3**  
**MARCH 2011**



**In This Issue**

We have a bumper issue with profiles of two more of our ministers  
five Local Preachers, a Worship Leader and a brief look at the  
Worship Groups in the Circuit

There is also a memorial.

The name of the Magazine on the Circuit Website is now  
PWL News so you can catch back issues there.

Your co-operation would be much appreciated, if you can send me a  
profile, when you have time to write one. This would mean I do not  
have to hassle anyone as the next meeting approaches.

Next issue will be for the June meeting.

I would also appreciate information if you have knowledge of  
someone who requires pastoral care from the meeting,  
i.e. a 'Get Well' card or visit.

**Compiler (self appointed) - Helen Stafford**

Please send information you would like to see printed  
in the next issue to me at -  
tonyandhelens1@aol.com

**Rev Paul Welch**

This is my third year in Halifax and you do wonder where on earth the time goes. I am in my second ministerial appointment and before coming to Halifax I was in North Leeds for 7 years.



I enjoyed my time there and had three very different churches one in the leafy suburbs, one in a commuter village, and one on a council estate. I am also Chaplain to Leeds United FC and this is my 8th season there. I enjoy spending time with my family, (my wife Lynn, Hannah 11 and Bethany 5) I love playing and watching Football and Golf. This coming summer I am on my sabbatical and I am combining it with two things I am passionate about, Sport and Mission. I am looking at how the church can use sport and leisure as vehicles for mission or in other words engaging with the folk in our communities. In the Circuit one of the responsibilities I have is being the Co-ordinator for the Mission and Vision group as well as other things.



**Rev Steph Jenner**

I was born in 1968 and grew up in a village on the Somerset/Dorset border with an older sister and various cats. From the age of 6 I knew I wanted to be an engineer and by 16 I had narrowed that down to civil engineering. I moved to Bradford university in 1986 to begin my course.

I had always attended Sunday School and Church, had done some tentative preaching and naturally joined Methsoc. Here I met and married the girls' father and worked for a Number of years for British Rail in their Leeds and York engineering departments. After my second daughter was born I gave up work.

When the third daughter was 6 months old I changed direction and worked for Methodist Homes setting up a Live at Home Scheme in Bradford. This led to becoming a full time regional fundraiser and church liaison within MHA.

I knew now I needed to work for and with people, not just for profit, and during this time also having divorced I was sorted and ready to answer God's call that I had been making excuses about for 10 years. As I started my training I was blessed with Peter (thank you Albert) and felt that everything had come into place.

I worked part time at a playgroup and then sorting out the finances for a very busy Baptist community church.

My probationer years and subsequent ministry have been in Brighthouse - a huge learning curve but always supported prayerfully and practically with God finding ways to use all the skills and experience he found for me on the way.

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### Caroline Stead

Born a Brummie, I lived in Handsworth until escaping the smog and moving to Halifax at the age of 7. The welcoming children at Warley Road School told me "you don't talk proper" so I rapidly acquired a Yorkshire accent! We also acquired a dog and I relished the countryside and became a passionate horse rider. Riding and helping out at the local stables led to competing, teaching and breaking in young horses. Sadly, I do very little riding now.

I attended Crossley and Porter Grammar school and from there I travelled north again, to Durham University, to read Mathematics and then to complete a PGCE.

It was while I was in Durham that my life as a Christian 'took off' and I became a member of the Methodist Church. At Methsoc. we were fortunate to hear regularly speakers such as Kingsley Barrett and Paul Smith and I had wonderful friends - many of whom are now presbyters.

Returning to the Halifax area to marry and teach at Holy Trinity Senior school, I learnt to appreciate incense. After a break from schools and the birth of Rachael and Jonathan, I returned to teaching at Hipperholme Grammar School in 1992ish and am still there!

My Methodist pedigree goes back to my birth - mum was the deputy organist and dad the choirmaster at Rookery Road Methodist Church. When we moved to Halifax, we attended West End Methodist (the one at West End, not the one at Queensbury) until it closed - we then attended King Cross. That too has now closed. Following university, I worshipped briefly at Lindley (still open) and then Hipperholme Methodist (now Christ Church LEP).



I was a Circuit Steward in the Halifax Circuit and have been Senior Steward and Church Secretary (the nearest LEP equivalent role), and many other things you wouldn't be interested in.

Currently, I am a trainer on the EDEV Encounter programme in the District, a Conference Rep and a member of the Conference Business Committee. I LOVE Conference - do try to visit next July when it is in Southport.

The call to preach came in spite of me frequently telling people that I would "do anything except preach". God has a strange sense of humour at times - borne out by the fact that I will be fully accredited on April Fools' Day, 7.30pm at Christ Church.

The training course has been wonderful - very thorough, fascinating, stimulating and of course, incredibly hard work. I feel incredibly privileged and humbled by the fact that God has chosen to use me to spread his word to others - not just in worship but also through my daily work amongst children and teaching colleagues.

Help - I'm double the number of words I should have written - a problem I frequently had with my LP assignments!

The picture shows me and my cat Spice - I did tell her it was rude to stick her tongue out!

Number of words no problem Caroline - fills the space nicely and it is entertaining reading (CC)  
(CC - Compilers comment)

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Dates to note  
**Bible Roots** - Stories, scribes and scrolls - a study day for preachers and anyone interested in finding out how the Bible was written. This is to be led by Rev. Tony Buglass at Salem Halifax on March 19th - 11 until 4 - bring a packed lunch (or go hungry? CC)  
**Caroline Stead** - will become a fully accredited Local Preacher - on April 1st, at Christchurch LEP - start time 7.30 p.m. I'm sure she would welcome our support  
Next **Preachers and Worship Leaders Meeting** will be on Thursday June 2nd - location to be decided.  
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## David Wilkinson

A Lancashire lad from Littleborough, but my wife Irene and I have lived in Ripponden for some 40 years. We have two children, Mark and Diane, who have given us five grandchildren.

Mark's family live in Hereford and Diane's family live very close by to us in Kebroyd.

As a young married couple we tried a few churches locally when we moved into Ripponden. Irene's background was Anglican and mine was Methodist. We eventually settled in at Soyland Methodist Church. Our neighbours Bill and Peggy Collinson both Local Preachers were members at Soyland and were a big influence. Peggy was also very supportive of Irene bringing up our young family. Bill coaxed me into considering a call to preach.

I remember taking a correspondence course as tuition for the exams. My tutor was keen to establish my educational background. It must have been down to my grammar. He stated he had successfully tutored everyone from Dr Horace King, speaker of the House of Commons, through to a 'jobbing' gardener. I suggested he put me in the same bracket as the latter. It must have worked, I passed.

Eventually, due to the small number of children at Soyland it was agreed that the two or three families involved should transfer themselves to Stones Methodist Church where the Sunday School was stronger and it is where we have been ever since.

Along the journey I have been a Church and Circuit Steward. For many years Irene and I ran a Young People's Christian Fellowship, within the circuit, in our own house which attracted 40 to 60 youngsters every Sunday night. In the 1980's when the old Stones Wesleyan Day School was no longer required by the LEA I helped convert and run the building as an outdoor pursuit centre for young folk. At the turn of the millennium we closed due to dry rot and the escalating capital costs needed to meet Health and Safety requirements.

My own career has been in education. My interest and hobbies revolve around sport and outdoor pursuits, football, badminton, walking, gardening, building, sailing and caravanning.

I have enjoyed my preaching and in many ways still feel I am best used in leading family and all age worship. I feel the biggest challenge the church faces is reaching the missing generations.



## Mary Chilton's call to preach and subsequent history

Mary and I moved to the Glossop Circuit in 1981 where I took up the Circuit Superintendency with Mary's wholehearted support.

During the first few years we became aware that a member called Kath had felt the call to preach. I think the training course at that time had a title like "Worship and Preaching" which Kath regarded with some trepidation. Over a meal Mary and I were mulling this over. I remember saying that what Kath needed was a "running mate". "Hmm" said Mary on that occasion but a few days later she came back to it and said "Do you think God's telling me something?" God has His own way of doing things!

Very soon afterwards Kath and Mary began the course together. From memory I think these were the days when candidates sat examinations at the climax of the course. Mary and Kath did so and were both delighted to pass.

I still have the letter from the then President of Conference, whose signature is barely legible, I think Gordon E Jowitt. It starts "In the name of the Methodist Church it is my joy and privilege to welcome you as a fully accredited local preacher."

Mary became an acceptable preacher in the Glossop and neighbouring circuits, especially at Women's anniversaries where her former experience as President of the Women's meetings proved valuable.

Mary continued to conduct worship until 1994 when she felt the need to stand down from preaching (and from driving). By that time we were a retired couple and the long process of deterioration, both mental and physical had begun. Mary was relieved of all that on 13th November. Her funeral, on 23<sup>rd</sup> November was a tribute to her great qualities when over 200 people gathered in Southgate Methodist Church to sing God's praises.

**Rev John Chilton**

## Evelyn Graham

I was born, and grew up in a Methodist family in the Lincolnshire market town of Louth. In my late teens I responded to God's call to preach and went to see my minister, also the 'super'.



To my surprise he told me I would be put on note with another, middle-aged, lady who had also heard the call to preach. At that time the Louth circuit

consisted of 49 preaching places and we soon found ourselves very busy constructing services to take on the Wolds or the Marshes. Then on trial, and two years later received on to full plan with three other preachers, having completed the compulsory studies I now found myself taking 10 services a quarter, as well as doing extra studies with the Methodist Study Centre. Car loads of preachers would go out to little country chapels being dropped off and later picked up by the driver. We called these vehicles 'gospel chariots'.

In my early twenties I started going to Easter schools, for Local Preachers, at Pembury, Kent. Here I met my future husband Maurice Morgan. I was reluctant to marry because he was nineteen years older than I was. However, in 1961, we married and I came to live with him in Mytholmroyd.

We had 37 happy years together until his death in 1998.

I am still preaching, though fewer appointments now.

My father was a local preacher, so is my daughter, so it's in the family!

Recovering from a serious illness, I am now happy to take services anywhere in our new circuit.

We are pleased to hear that Evelyn is back on the plan. And we wish her continued good health. (CC)

## Stella Cusworth

I was born on a farm near Hawes in Wensleydale. I was baptised, went to Sunday School and Youth Club at Hawes Methodist - 'Chapel' to us. Later on I was married in the same Church and our two girls were also baptised there. I grew up surrounded by animals and later studied Zoology at University. After teacher training in Leeds I taught Biology in Stevenage where I met and married Mike. Our daughter Alison arrived and I became an old-fashioned stay-at-home Mum. We moved to Gomersal, where Linda was born and then in 1978 we arrived at Rose Cottage, dated 1719 and in need of serious renovation. It has 4 acres of Pennine hillside, space enough for children to grow and run wild and to keep a variety of livestock. We now have a dog, 2 cats and 12 Shetland sheep. We have also created a large garden and each have a greenhouse.

We attended Stones where I played piano for, and taught at Sunday School for a while before moving to St. Paul's. I had been helping with Circuit Youth Club and when the leader left I resisted the suggestion that I take over. However, one night I felt God's presence telling me in no uncertain terms to just 'get on with it'! So began my work with young people, MAYC and all that that entailed - - the most exhausting, frustrating, challenging, exciting and rewarding 9 years of my life.

In 2001 I did the Worship leaders course and also found myself leading our Music Group. I enjoy all aspects of worship leading but feel that music is where I am called to be. So most Sundays I choose and introduce a couple of worship songs and then play the piano for the singers. Our congregation is quite used to me throwing completely new songs at them and they always rise to the challenge. We must strive to keep our worship new, fresh and exciting and I love searching through new songbooks for that next 'special song'.

We have 3 little grand daughters and they are a great blessing. I spend time gardening, dry stone walling, reading, sewing and spinning yarn from fleeces off our own sheep.



## Chris Robinson

I was brought up in a loving family very much involved in Princes Avenue Methodist Church in Hull so attended and took a big part in Sunday School YPF and Youth Club before going to university. Cambridge Meth Soc had discussion groups to one of which I was allocated, and each term they prepared a service for a local village church – this was my first preaching! In Bristol doing my Teaching Certificate course I met Barbara and we were married two years later (I was slow to believe!)

My first teaching job was in Gloucester and there I declared a call to preach and was immediately given lots of village chapel services to take (on my bike to begin with too!) and had no time for exams until I moved to the Plumstead circuit where there were plenty of ministers and less pulpits to fill. It was there that I passed (it was scary taking exams again – I was more used to setting them!) and was fully accredited.

Nine years in Aylesbury followed where I sometimes wondered whether I should be leading evening worship for six or seven instead of bathing the children and preparing lessons for my day job. Then came Shebbear in North Devon where I was deputy head of a Methodist boarding school and still had a large circuit of small, formerly Bible Christian, chapels to service.

In 1988 I came as head to Hipperholme GS and found my secretary was the chief steward at the Methodist Church and we were made very welcome there, the largest and youngest church we had ever attended. I did give myself a sabbatical year from preaching while getting used to the school but since then it's been seven new sermons a quarter!

I love preaching – it is the most creative thing I do since I never got into art or music – and congregations have been so encouraging in their thanks each time. A fortnightly miracle happens, still usually on Monday evenings even now I've retired, and a service is born often surprising and always exciting me; I just start with a prayer and a Bible passage and then write it all out longhand – by Sunday I may not stick to my script completely but usually the start and finish are word perfect.

I read little fiction except on holidays but usually have a religious book on the go – my latest bit of training however has been helping two new LPs with their Faith and Worship courses – it is so different from my course in the 1970's and so much more demanding in my opinion.

Apart from preaching and church activities I walk every Tuesday with a Brighthouse group, I have an allotment, I am a school governor at Fulneck, we have a daughter and 3 grandchildren in London and sons in Telford and Bedford as well as friends from all the places we have lived in.



We travel when we can fit it in and I enjoy taking photos and sticking them in an album perhaps because I used to collect British stamps (until 2000)! We have a second home in Scarborough which we visit and look after when it is not let to holidaymakers.

I count myself extremely fortunate in all that has happened to me in the last 64 years and am amazed to have such a healthy and full life in 2011.

A nurse on a paediatric ward, before listening to the little ones' chests, would plug the stethoscope into their ears and let them listen to their own hearts. Their eyes would always light up with awe. But she never got a response to equal four-year-old David's.

Gently he tucked the stethoscope in his ears and placed the disk over his heart. "Listen," she said, "What do you suppose that is?" He drew his eyebrows together in a puzzled line and looked up as if lost in the mystery of the strange tap-tap-tapping deep in his chest. Then his face broke out in a wondrous grin. "Is that Jesus knocking?"

## Dr John Hargreaves

Although I have strong Methodist roots on both sides of my family in Burnley, I was baptised and confirmed as an Anglican, but following my marriage to Susan at Marsden United Church, when she moved to Halifax to train as a midwife, we joined St Andrew's Methodist Church where we have worshipped for 39 years, where Susan is Junior Church Superintendent and where I responded to my call to preach in 1976,

becoming fully accredited in 1979 and where I have served two terms as a church steward and also trained junior church teachers.

Our four children, Anne, Helen, Paul and Stephen, were all born and bred in Halifax but all completed their degree courses in Lancaster, where both our sons met their wives. We have three grandchildren,

Joshua, Adam and Naomi, who have shared holidays with us with the Scripture Union Holiday Mission at Abersoch each August, where I regularly lead the adult Bible Studies. Susan and I have been linked with the mission since 1984 and treasure the fortnight we spend on the



beautiful Lyn peninsula as a rich time of refreshment and renewal. We love walking in the Welsh mountains and climbed Snowdon with our eldest grandson last summer on the wettest day of the holiday arriving at the summit drenched.

Another delight is also swimming daily in Cardigan Bay, weather permitting!

After graduating from Southampton University, I taught in Wigan, Huddersfield and Batley, retiring from a career in full-time secondary teaching in 2006, in the course of which I taught a former British ambassador to Bosnia and Europe's current foreign minister. I love teaching and continue to do some part-time teaching in secondary, adult and higher education. I also lecture and write extensively on aspects of local and religious history. I have written a full-length history of Halifax, edited the annual Transactions of the Halifax Antiquarian Society since 1992, scripted three DVDs and am currently jointly editing a book for the University of Huddersfield, where I am a Research Fellow in History, on the campaign to end child labour in textile factories in the Industrial Revolution, writing a new history of Huddersfield,

working on an edition of the Wakefield Manorial Court Rolls for 1812 for the Yorkshire Archaeological Society and writing a history of the Halifax Choral Society.

I have also written three dozen articles for the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* including articles on Dr Dorothy Farrar, who preached memorably at my recognition service as a Local Preacher, the Revd Bramwell Evens still remembered by folk in Calderdale as the Methodist radio naturalist, Romany, Eric Treacy, the Railway Bishop, Harry Corbett, the creator of Sooty, Wilfred Pickles, the actor and broadcaster, Jane Tomlinson the charity fundraiser, Percy Shaw, the inventor of catseyes and a host of other Yorkshire figures.

I have represented West Yorkshire Methodists in the recent Treasures Revealed project and written on the historical interpretation of Halifax Minster, where Susan and I are members of the Friends, and Mount Zion. I am currently teaching a WEA course on the social history of religion in Calderdale entitled Church, Chapel, Mosque and Minster which in the summer term will visit four historic sites in Halifax including the Minster and Mount Zion and have been asked to speak at an educational event at the Halifax Central Mosque. I also serve as General Secretary of the Wesley Historical Society and as Chairman of Halifax Civic Trust and took a leading role in the campaign to save Calderdale Central Library and Archives from demolition.

## Worship Groups

The Hebden Bridge Worship Group grew out of a need to fill preaching appointments in the former Upper Calder Circuit. It takes a preaching slot on the plan at any church rather than assisting a preacher with a service at Hebden Bridge. It has four members, Graham, Linda, Marji and Maureen who develop a service on a theme which is taken to different churches.

The group has been going about 5 years and are now able to re-visit some of their earlier themes as they are planned to lead worship at churches in the new circuit.

Since the group started, Kathryn Ogden and 2 others from Mytholmroyd have formed the Mytholmroyd Worship Group.