

Hello Sheffield Circuit,

Michelle Deans here. I am so excited to be joining you as I enter my first year on probation as a presbyter in the Sheffield Circuit. I'll be working with Brightholmlee, Holy Trinity and Wisewood. Everyone I've met so far, either online or in person, have been a joy. I'm looking forward to praising, serving and collaborating with them and the communities they are involved with.



I move to Sheffield with my husband, Paul and our daughter, Elisha, who decided she could do with a fresh start, she's 23. It's a new beginning for many of us as we attempt to navigate our lives into a 'new normal.' There's no getting away from it, Covid has impacted all our lives, in one way or another. We each have the opportunity to participate in the new things God has in store both individually and corporately.

You can probably tell that I am a bit of an optimist, although I do have my off days. Perhaps you want to know a little bit more about who I am and where I've come from?

Both Paul and I were born in Bradford, were married there and it's where our eldest son was born. We lived there until the early 90s, when we moved to Lincolnshire, to be near Paul's parents. Our other two children were born and raised there. Nottingham was our next move and then Birmingham for the last two years. We're happy to be coming back to Yorkshire.



(From bottom left: me, Jenson, Alexander, Elisha, Nathaniel and Paul)

We are very family oriented, coming from large families, and although we are dispersed around the world, we enjoy gathering as often as we can. Currently we have two grandchildren, Jenson and Raeya, both to our second son, Alexander who is married to Rebecca. Our first son, Nathaniel and his fiancé, Sarah, are due to have their first child, a daughter, in early September and she will be born in Uganda!

When I'm not involved with family affairs; I like to walk whilst listening to books or podcasts; play guitar (I'm self-taught), sing, and write; I've also signed up to do pottery classes at Hillsborough College. I'm hoping to get back on plan too, I used to be a target member at Slimming World, and I am determined to be one again! I feel it's important to keep my mind and body as active as possible; it helps me with my overall well-being.

Speaking of well-being – God has guided me through some tough times, being with me in the lows and the highs. I left school with three CSE's (not good ones!) and decided to go on an access course, in my 30s, so that I could be a better example to our children and improve my opportunities for employment. I have had lots of jobs over the years: from factory work, to care homes, running my own business, and finally being a secondary school teacher. I felt God promise me, in my spirit, that I would teach for 15 years and then I would work for him. I had no idea how that would pan out, but God keeps His word; I began training at Queen's College 15 years after I started teaching!

When I became a Christian in April 1994, joining a local fellowship, in Mablethorpe, where I remained until 2013, I never would have dreamed my life would turn out the way it has. Whilst there, I was part of the worship team, the youth leader and eventually became the chair of trustees. Those years were very busy, but many came to know Jesus and I met a lot of wonderful people.

God has blessed me and my family, mightily; I am so thankful for all the support and encouragement we have received from many of God's people across the country. I pray that God will, use me, fill me, and mould me, as he desires, as He builds His Church.

I look forward to being part of the Sheffield Circuit, to meeting new people, making new friends and joining in with what God is doing.

God bless you and keep you.

Reverend Michelle Deans