



I've been asked to introduce myself as your new Archdeacon. So here goes:

- **I was born and brought up in Yorkshire:** specifically the West Riding of Yorkshire, first the Calder Valley and then Doncaster. I've retained a slight Yorkshire accent, a willingness to call a spade a spade, and a love of hills and dales.
- **I studied History at The University of Newcastle upon Tyne:** actually it would have been theology but women weren't able to be ordained into the Church of England at that time.
- **Was (briefly) an auditor and then a research historian:** strangely, very useful skills for being an Archdeacon.
- **Before starting the family:** which grew, and grew until there were six children.
- **And moving house a lot:** seven houses in thirteen years, from North to South, mainly living in villages or market towns, in support of my husband's career.
- **To keep the grey cells ticking over:** I studied for an OU degree in Psychology, specialising in child development (many thanks to the children and other family members who were willing participants in psychological investigations for assignments).
- **I trained for ordination with SEITE:** that is The South East Institute for Theological Education, which being peripatetic, sent us to such wondrous paces as Aylesford Friary, The King Charles Hotel in Gillingham and Kent University in Canterbury for residential weekends.
- **Then served my curacy at St John's, St Leonard's on Sea:** just along from Hastings in East Sussex, slightly run down sea side town with a royal past in Burton St Leonard's, and a hopeful future in the artistic refugees from London.

- **And then moved to the Becontree Estate:** in Dagenham, as their Team Rector, which was quite a contrast. There was never a dull moment, though it sometimes felt like I was herding cats.
- **Then into rural Essex doing 'Turnaround' ministry:** working with parishes which needed help, advice and quite a lot of TLC.
- **I moved to West Stafford with two cats:** and set up the house to suit the youngest daughter when she's back from uni, the three grandchildren, and their parents and aunts and uncles (and, of course, to be the base for the job of Archdeacon).
- **I have a passion for:** mission (we have Good News, Very Good News, so why not share it?), social justice (I come to bring Good News to the poor), the Church (One thing I ask from the Lord, this only do I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to gaze on the beauty of the Lord and to seek him in his temple). And family, and cats, and extreme reading.

I hope this gives you some idea of who your new Archdeacon is. Please pray for me as I get to know the patch, as I pray for you, the people I've been called to serve.

God bless.

Archdeacon Penny