



Greetings from Lincolnshire, in these unprecedented times, when we've had to learn new ways of being church or maybe rediscover who we were called to be. I'm looking forward to being part of that ongoing exploration: as I write, restrictions have been eased so hopefully I will be with you as planned in September.

In my home church of Freckleton there's a beautiful piece of wood carved by one of life's saints which says "there are no strangers here, only friends we haven't met yet." With that in mind I offer a few words of introduction.

Born a Tyke, I've spent most of my life in 'missionary duty' on the Lancashire coast, though I found a faith of my own training to be a pharmacist in my home city of Bradford. Many an adventure followed (ask me about barges some time!), not least Easter mission weeks.

Christened Congregational, in many ways I was born to be a Methodist as music is often how God speaks to me. Don't ask me my favourite song though - you might be there all night! I also love films/theatre, nature and history and Dr Who /Star Trek and in time hope to get a dog as a companion.

I've had the privilege of visiting Tamil Nadu seminary in India and studying at Yad Vashem in Jerusalem, both of which challenged my faith, but that's no bad thing, for as Jacob, wrestling with God, and Thomas, voicing doubts, found it can lead to intimate moments of divine presence. On the road to Emmaus 2 travelers found Christ alongside. While we may not understand his words, if we're prepared to continue the journey we'll have our 'breaking bread moment,' an insight shared with me by a ministerial friend before I candidated.

For me worship is about creating that sacred space where the divine can be encountered and faith strengthened as we share stories of God's grace in us.

Four years after being ordained, one of the best days of my life so far, I anticipate a new chapter with the usual mix of apprehension and excitement

May the Spirit continue to encourage and strengthen us all along our long and winding roads. Grace and peace to you in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

*Rev Melanie Greenall*