



â??It felt like coming homeâ??

Description



Norman and Jan Hooks found peace with their past and a future together.

Norman grew up amid fierce religious division in Northern Ireland. Jan had to work through issues from her childhood. Yet they both found healing from each of their own troubles.

Both of us felt a sense of oneness and harmony in our Christian faith

The couple met at Cliff College in 1969. Jan was brought up in Salford as a foster child. She had to cope with all the emotional challenges such a journey can bring. Norman was brought up in Springfield Road, a junction of nationalist and unionist communities that saw much activity during the Troubles.

Norman went to a Methodist church and felt a call to Methodist ministry. Yet he never questioned the divide between Catholic and Protestant. Change came when he met a Catholic priest on a long train journey in the early 70s. “Both of us felt a sense of oneness and harmony in our Christian faith,” said Norman.

Jan and Norman married in 1971. They became involved in the “house church” movement and Norman served as an itinerant speaker.

The couple visited Cliff College on their 25th wedding anniversary in 1996. That marked the start of a journey back to Methodism. Norman sensed a renewal of his early call to Methodist ministry. “It felt like coming home,” he said.

“They’ve been phenomenal,” Jan said of MMHS

He became a local preacher. The process towards ordination began in 1999 at the Buckingham, Bicester and Brackley Circuit – affectionately known as “the 3Bs”. Norman was ordained as a Methodist minister at the turn of the millennium.

Years later on a retirement course, they heard about the work of MMHS. The Society helped the couple find a home near their family on the east coast of England. “They’ve been phenomenal,” Jan said of MMHS.

(Photo of Norman and Jan supplied by the couple. The full version of their story can be found in the [Spring 2020 edition of *Root & Branch*](#))

Category

1. Our residents

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