

ANDREW GODSALL – ELECTION FOR GENERAL SYNOD

I'm standing for General Synod for a second term. I've been ordained for 27 years and am currently serving as Mission Community Development Officer in the Diocese, having previously been Chaplain to the bishop and then Director of Ministry.

Personal history

I grew up in the suburbs of Birmingham and left school at 18 to join the BBC as a sound engineer. I studied for a degree in Theology at Birmingham whilst I also worked at BBC Pebble Mill. After graduation, I joined the BBC Studio Manager scheme and after several years working in the BBC World Service, I was seconded as a producer of religious radio programmes. I still enjoy doing some occasional work in broadcasting and believe that better communication is crucial for the Church of England.



Ordination history

I was a curate in Stanmore, a predominantly Jewish area of North West London. Dialogue with those of faiths other than Christian is a major interest of mine. Stanmore also had an RAF base and I had a great deal of contact with service families.

I served an Associate Vicar's post in Ealing, West London and during my time there I also served as a Chaplain at a Church of England Secondary School.

I was then Vicar of All Saints Hillingdon in the Diocese of London for 7 years. The Parish was a typical suburban London Parish on an estate. During my time there I chaired the Willesden Area Liturgical resources group and contributed to the Reader training and Adult Education. For two years I was one of the London Diocesan Directors of Ordinands. In 2001 I moved to Exeter to become Assistant and Chaplain to Bishop Michael, a post I held for 5 years before moving to be Director of Ministry. In Exeter I have been closely involved with Moving on in Mission and Ministry and am passionate about its implementation - hence my current post.

Interests outside of the church

Music is my major interest and leisure activity. I have played the drums since I was 10 and play most weekends in an 80s tribute band. We play for parties and functions and in the local clubs and pubs of Devon. It gives me an invaluable insight into many different people's lives, and is a rich resource for me in many ways.

A vision for General Synod

During the last session of General Synod we embarked on a debate about re-engaging the nation with the Church of England. The debate was effectively postponed because it was too important to rush during the final session of five years of a synod that had focussed on getting the legislation about women bishops finalised. I am a member of WATCH and supported the legislation. Re-imagining the Church of England will be the major challenge facing the new General Synod. I hope that debate and conversation about the inclusion of all in the Church regardless of sexuality will not dominate the next five years of General Synod and that by 2020 this will no longer be an issue that causes such division in the Church, or causes the nation to wonder what on earth we think we are doing. General Synod will need to focus on things that communicate the Gospel in imaginative and generous ways.

Andrew Godsall, Sept 2015