

## CHURCH OF ENGLAND GENERAL SYNOD

### ELECTION ADDRESS FOR

Michael John Wilson

I am standing for election to the House of Laity for the General Synod of the Church of England, to represent the Southwell and Nottingham Diocese and ask you to cast your vote in my favour.

I am a member of the Diocesan Synod at which I have enjoyed contributing to the debates and in particular listening to other members. I was elected by the synod to be a member of the Diocesan Board of Education at which I have witnessed a number of changes to church school provision in response to the changes introduced by the government. I believe my previous experience in education has helped me make worthwhile and supportive contributions.



I am the lay-chair of the Newark and Southwell Deanery which so far has been challenging, interesting but also stimulating. Trying to work with so many parishes within the deanery, especially with over half being in vacancy, has been a big challenge but I have learnt so much about the wider Church of England as a result. This has been the interesting part, seeing how different and varied parishes are but at the same time enjoying a common fellowship and faith. The stimulation is to go forward to use what gifts, experiences and skills I have at another level within the churches structure, hence my candidature.

I worship at St Giles, Balderton where my main role is of treasurer. I have served as the editor of the parish magazine and choir master, although I continue to sing in the stalls and help with the music as best I can. Other roles include administering the chalice, reading lessons and leading prayers of intercession when asked as part of a large team of the members of the congregation. For a number of years I was tasked with leading the PCC team on communications within the parish and believe we made progress in improving people's awareness of St Giles Church. The group produced leaflets about baptism, for the young, those preparing for marriage and general information about services, different booklets containing the Eucharist Service for the major seasons of the church's year; not to radically change any worship or theology but to make the format and wording more accessible to everyone attending a service. With others the web site is also being reviewed again to update and make it a useful tool in the spreading of the Gospel. However, none of this would be possible without the support and actions of many members of the congregation who are willing to do their bit. I am in that respect a team player who will be ready to take their part but not take over. I think that my family has made sure that I don't do that. This has led me to consider the appeal of the Church of England to the not committed population; is it appealing? Further what else should be done to widen the mission of spreading the Gospel; does tradition get in the way rather than move us forward?

I have been married to Alison for 43 years and we have two grown up daughters, and one grandson. Alison is an active member of St Giles being the Sunday Club leader, member of the PCC and part of the group looking at new expressions of worship.

I am a retired teacher having taught Religious Education for 40 years in a Nottinghamshire comprehensive school as well as being the Head of the Humanities Department. As a result of my membership of the NASUWT teachers' trade union, I represented teachers in a number of ways from serving on the Nottinghamshire SACRE to being a national representative to the OCR examination body. During my career I have gained experience and skill in many ways which I believe will support me in representing you at General Synod. Procedures and Standing Orders are not a mystery to me; I understand that they are there to ensure smooth running where debate is the main way of carrying out business. I believe I would be able to quickly understand the ways of General Synod which will enable me to make relevant and appropriate contributions on behalf of our diocese and the church as a whole. I also have experience in negotiating, counselling and leadership.

My other interests include being chairman of the Newark branch of Save the Children and also singing in Newark Choral Society. I enjoy cooking and eating and am not adverse to a glass of wine or a pint of beer. My wildest interest is that I am a season ticket supporter of Middlesbrough football club, my home town.

Theological interests include the works of Frederick Denison Maurice, Octavia Hill, Mary Sumner, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Teilhard de Chardin, John and Charles Wesley, John Newman, Donald Coggan, Mario Borrelli, David Jenkins and Daniel Clark. I try to read widely about understanding God's purpose and expectations; whether I understand or agree with others is something else. Who is to know the answer? I enjoy worship of all traditions so long as I am included.

This then is a short resumé of Michael Wilson based upon my church life, family, work and wider interests. It is a bit about "I" but the aim is to tell who I am without hiding anything. I was once told by another member of the Church of England that my honesty would be my downfall. I have always taken this as a compliment.

Any form of address for this election cannot be a manifesto to which a candidate can be held accountable. This would be meaningless because the agenda will be inspired by God and the synod will all be members of the Church of England. "Vote for me because I promise this and that will happen" is not what the synod elections should be about. The General Synod is the body which supports the work of the Church of England in taking the Christian Gospel to the people. It should be a spiritual not a political institution. So, all I can promise if elected to the House of Laity is that I will work hard to understand the debates and issues basing any need to vote on the strength of argument and the needs of the church as a whole and our diocese in particular. I am not affiliated to any group or organisation within the Church of England and have never been a member of any secular political party.

I try my best in what I do, I am willing to admit when wrong and I am not afraid to question why something is to happen.

I submit myself to your scrutiny and consideration and ask you to vote for me to become one of your representatives to the General Synod of the Church of England.