

Rev Roger Driver

Rector
St Michaels Without
Bath

Proposed: Preb. Sue Rose

Vocations Team Leader

Seconded: Revd Bruce Faulkner

*Rector of The Ilchester Benefice
Area Dean of Ivelchester*



About

I have been encouraged to stand for General Synod, and in offering myself to serve I would be able to draw from lengthy and rich experience of Parish ministry. We are living through challenging times, but my heart remains in still wanting churches to flourish as we reach out to the communities we serve with the good news of Jesus Christ. I am passionate to see our churches grow and have renewed impact in the communities. Commitment to church unity and strong ecumenical links are very important to me and have been a significant part of my ministry.

Born and raised in the South West, I currently live in Bath with my wife and serve as a Parish Priest at St Michaels Without in the city centre. Both of my sons are in active church ministry, one who is ordained and leading an outer estate Parish church in Cambridge and the other training as a London Diocese Ordinand. Before ordination I did a multitude of ordinary jobs having left school at 16. They included working in shops, takeaways, a gardener, van driver, unemployed for a short while and beach attendant on Weymouth seafront! It was at the age of 16 that I became a Christian and in my late teens volunteered to work with the Church Army which took me to the East end of London, Darlington and a return to London working in New Cross and Deptford. I have a hobby as a qualified Cricket umpire and a highlight so far was standing in Rome in a game between the Vatican v Archbishop of Canterbury's XI.

Experience

Following ordination in 1990 I have gained extensive ministry experience including:

- 31 years in ordained Parish based ministry
- Serving in 6 Parishes as Team Vicar, Team Rector and Incumbent, 9 years as Area Dean
- 23 years in Urban Priority Area (Magnificat) parishes
- Assistant IME Officer & Training Incumbent in Bath & Wells
- Vice chair – Diocese of Bath & Wells Vacancy in See Committee
- Member of Bishops Council since 2017
- Council Member & Chair of Standing Committee - Trinity College Bristol
- Member of CPAS Council of Reference
- Previously elected to General Synod 2010 - 2016

Forward Looking

With all the challenges brought about by the pandemic this next Session of the General Synod is going to be very important. As the Church of England, we have the historic foundation of

being rooted in every community across the country. We know the importance of that in our Diocese and I am committed to be part of seeing Parish ministry renewed and the structures and resources of the Church being used to see growth. A vision has been expressed of wanting to see a simpler, humbler, bolder Church that is Jesus Christ centred and Jesus Christ shaped.

I am an active elected member of our Bishops Council representing the clergy voice where I question and challenge. Having an advantage of previously being a member of General Synod, I have an understanding of how it works, and how to work to get our Diocesan voice heard in forthcoming debates and agendas around:

- seeking to simplify our governance structures to make things easier at Deanery and Parish level
- being humble as a church, facing up to our historic failures and how we can continue to contribute to the common good of the nation
- being bolder, to encourage and energise the church as we share the good news of Jesus.

We are as a Church wrestling with some very important matters as we seek to be welcoming and be an open church, and also to be a significant and influential voice to the nation on matters of the climate emergency that is facing us. Finances and resources across all Dioceses is going to be very challenging, continuing to face up to issues of racial justice and inequality which leads to change, and in regard to 'Living in Love and Faith' continuing in this careful listening phase leading to prayerful consideration of what will happen next.

Through these challenging times, when many clergy are feeling exhausted and drained, finding ways to support the ongoing health and well-being of clergy will be vital. Serious problems and inadequacies have been exposed in recent years with the Clergy Discipline Measure and reform is pending. If elected I would seek to be a strong representative voice for the clergy and for the local church.

Thanks

I am grateful for you reading this personal statement, and would appreciate it if you were willing to support me by voting for me in the election. I certainly would value your prayers. Giving thanks to God for numerous things, after many year's service in ordained ministry, despite many challenges, I remain positive and optimistic. Do contact me directly if you have any questions as I would be happy to have a chat.

God bless

Roger

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