

THE DIOCESE OF CANTERBURY

ELECTIONS TO GENERAL SYNOD 2010:



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PROPOSED BY: WILLIAM PETTIT
of the CANTERBURY DEANERY
SECONDED BY: MRS. SANDRA BIERMAN
of the ELHAM DEANERY

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September 2010

Dear Friends,

Later this autumn a new General Synod of the Church of England will be elected, and I am very grateful to William and Sandra for showing their confidence in me by proposing and seconding my nomination to stand for election to the new Synod.

What a task lies ahead of the New Synod! All topics on the Synod's Agendas will require careful and prayerful thought and consideration before those elected will be able to vote on such important issues. If elected to the Synod, I will seriously consider every issue before registering my vote; such a commitment is essential.

Many issues will be part of the work of the next Synod: The Anglican Covenant, Multi-Faith Britain, Young People and the mission to Schools, Human Sexuality, Environment and Climate change. To name but a few!

Currently the main issue before us is the consecration of women to the Episcopate. I feel that this is quite simple to deal with. Once it was decided to ordain women to the Priesthood, then to consecrate them as Bishop seemed to me to be a logical progression. Ministry is without gender issues and to unnecessarily delay such progression makes the process more difficult and divisive. However, I do feel that those who cannot accept such change, because of their conscience, need to have acceptable pastoral provision and legal protection. When the Priest stands at the Altar, the Holy Sacrifice is being offered for all, whether the Priest is male or female. The validity of the Sacramental offering is not in question. Surely the same logic applies to the other Sacraments of Mother Church? I believe that the diversity of opinions, which form the Church of England, are one of its greatest strengths and there is a need for a greater and mutual respect of our neighbours' opinion.

“ You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And the second is like it. You shall love your neighbour as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the law and the prophets.”

Matt. 22.37-40

I have always been strongly in favour of Christian Unity. Unity but not uniformity and I remain committed to that belief. More generally and to put a label on me, I fall into the category of being 'a liberal catholic'. Such labels can be dangerous, but in this day and age they are seen to be necessary by some. I do not subscribe to a 'party line'!

No one person knows how circumstances may change during the next Synod; be it locally in the Canterbury Diocese, the Church of England, or in the Anglican Communion; as well as the interaction with other Christian denominations and World Religions, and also not forgetting the influence that the secular world has on ethics and moral codes!

To arrive at a considered judgement is truly a difficult tightrope to walk! Which makes it all the more important to make sure that the Christian message is part of the World's decision making process at all levels.

My curriculum vitae gives a potted history of my previous experience and history, which I believe stand me in good stead to serve God and His Church if elected to serve the Canterbury Diocese as a member of the General Synod. I shall be at the Hustings on the 22nd & 28th September and look forward to meeting you then. If there is any point that you would like to discuss with me personally, please contact me as above. Before I close, I would like to thank the many friends who have been very encouraging and totally supportive during the course of this election.

Please pray for all candidates exploring this way to serve God and His Church.

Yours in Christ,

EDWARD ASQUITH

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES:

Dr. EDWARD GEORGE ARTHUR ASQUITH

Edward was born in Huddersfield, on the 19th July 1951 and was baptised and confirmed at Huddersfield Parish Church. In the early 1970's Edward became a member of the P.C.C. Later he was appointed Assistant Secretary to the Huddersfield Council of Churches and became Secretary of its Community Relations Sub-Committee, which was responsible for an Ecumenical Community Relations Social Worker whose work was funded by an Urban Aid grant.

Edward later became a member of the Huddersfield Deanery Synod, serving as its Secretary for a number of years. He was also a member of the Wakefield Diocesan Synod when the late Colin James was Bishop of Wakefield. During this period, Edward became involved in the mission "Call to the North" which encouraged lay-ministry in the Wakefield Diocese.

In 1974, Edward qualified as a Dental Surgeon and spent the next ten years in General Practice in Yorkshire. From 1975 to 1979 Edward represented Dalton Ward on the Kirklees Metropolitan Borough Council, during which time he was Chairman of Environmental Health and Vice-Chairman of the Social Services Committee as well as being a member of other Council Committees and School Governing Bodies. He was also a member of the Kirklees Area Health Authority and Kirklees Family Practitioner Committee. Edward was also President of the Huddersfield Branch of The Guide Dogs for the Blind, and Chairman of the Royal Society of St. George.

In the 1980's Edward returned to Hospital Practice and was advised to return to Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery. Edward took this advice and after a period in post-graduate training grades was appointed as the Associate Specialist in Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery at the Kent & Canterbury Hospital, taking up his position in January 1990, and serving the whole of East Kent. Edward retired from professional practice in 2007.

After the move south to Kent, Edward soon became involved with Canterbury Cathedral, performing numerous and various roles in differing aspects of Cathedral life. He is a Steward of the Cathedral, a member of the Flower Guild and is privileged to lead the intercessions on occasions and regularly assists with the administration of communion.