

Election address from **Harry J Macdonald**.

Our nation needs good news and Jesus Christ is good news. I want His church to become Good News and not be laughed at or ignored by the world around us.

I am a retired Electrical Engineer and am married to Alison, who is a doctor. We have three children, the youngest of whom is now 20. I have served on Canterbury Deanery Synod for 10 years, 3 as Lay Chair, and am currently on the Deanery Ministry & Mission Committee. I have served on Diocesan Synod for 6 years and have also been Churchwarden through an interregnum.



I was brought up in St Andrews, Fife, going to the Scottish Episcopal church and the Church of Scotland. Since marrying Alison in 1979, we have been members of Baptist and Methodist churches but we have been attending the same Anglican church since moving to Canterbury 23 years ago. We have supported the work of the Evangelical Alliance for many years

I believe that one of the great strengths of the Church of England is its diversity and that Synod needs make every effort to accommodate those who value different styles and traditions. Jesus showed "meekness and majesty, manhood and Deity" and His Church on earth needs to show the same characteristics. No one parish church can fully embrace this but together we can and I believe that unless we learn to value those who are more comfortable with different styles and emphases to our own, we will not fully reflect Jesus to the world around us.

I also believe that we need to take mission, and mission to the young in particular, very seriously. I am much encouraged that thousands of teenagers and students attend New Wine and similar events each year but this needs to be reflected in all corners of the Church. I do not know the statistics for church attendance by those under 60, but I see this as this is a good indication of the size of our congregations one generation from now. If I am right, then much work needs to be done if we are to engage the young and continue to provide a church in every part of the country.

As a church, we need to tell the young people of today that God is not a 'kill-joy', His laws are there to protect us from the harm that our own selfish behaviour can, and so often does, inflict on ourselves and those we love. We need to tell them that there is a better way than following the social and sexual behaviours of the world around them, and we need to tell them of a God of love whose readiness to forgive can best be described as 'outrageous grace'.

We would also do well to learn from the newer churches what it is that attracts so many to their doors. Whether it is the musical styles, the uncompromising teaching, the creative evangelism, or something else, we can surely show that this, allied to the traditions of the Anglican church, can be equally if not even more attractive.

If elected to Synod, I will not go with any preconceived position on the various issues making the headlines. I will listen to the debates and trust that I will be guided to the view that is in accordance with the Word of God as we can best apply it to the society of today. As an example, my inclination is to believe that St Paul's teaching relating to women in leadership arises from it being inappropriate in the society of the New Testament era, (after all, there were female judges in Old Testament times), so I personally have no problem with women bishops but I will listen to the arguments and debates on this and similar contentious issues.

Coming from an engineering background, I am always ready to ask "but how will this actually work in practice". God did not make me a visionary with ideas as to how we can revolutionise the church, I am the one who asks to see the detail, the one who is ever mindful that the best ideas of men can often have unintended results. If given the chance to serve, I would always try be inspired by and to support those appointed to lead, but I would not hesitate to ask the awkward question when appropriate.