

## ELECTION STATEMENT TO GENERAL SYNOD

**Julian Desborough**

**Proposed by Nigel Wildish**

– former lay chair, Central & West Barnet Deanery Synod

**Seconded by Graham Thomas**

– Central & West Barnet Deanery



### Why vote for me?

This past year alone, most of us have gone through significant challenge, trauma and change.

The result is that we are faced with an unprecedented opportunity to share Jesus with more people in all walks of life. But the Church and what we know as church is not equipped to do this as it should.

I want to be part of a nationwide church which is more energetic, outward-looking, missional, hospitable, resourceful and responsive.

If that resonates with you, then please consider voting for me.

### What do I stand for?

- Getting the message across in a simpler way. It's not about changing or watering down the doctrine – but it is crucial that we communicate in language that people can understand by cutting out jargon and labels.
- Engaging in authentic discipleship – developing a Church that is rooted in lay ministry, where members are valued, fed, mentored and encouraged to step out in their natural and God-given gifts, equipping them to be visible Christ followers in the world.
- Going where people are – including reaching those marginalised by race, ethnicity, culture, age, education, economic circumstances, etc., with compassion, practical works of kindness and a willingness to work alongside them in the pursuit of inclusion and equality.
- Building bridges through collaboration and partnership with churches, denominations and organisations in providing initiatives that regenerate our communities.
- Being more effective in shaping society by applying truth, standing firm against injustice and walking humbly alongside influencers and decision makers.

### Where am I coming from?

I would use three words to summarise where I am coming from: **Word, Spirit, Love**

Word – I believe in the authority and accuracy of Scripture, that it is divinely inspired and, when properly interpreted, leads to a deeper understanding of God and provokes a response to His mission of salvation.

Spirit – I believe that we are saved through a personal relationship with Jesus and experience the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, which transforms our lives as we serve Christ.

Love – I believe that holding Word and Spirit in perfect balance requires Love, as demonstrated by Jesus in the Gospel accounts and by whose example we should follow.

The key is going forward in love since I recognise there are deep-seated divides within the Anglican Church and issues that seek to alienate the Church with the wider society. On live issues such as gender and sexuality, I acknowledge these are complex subjects, that absolute truth is God's alone and that I would seek to be open-minded to hear all sides of the debate and honouring of others as shown by Jesus' humanity and love.

Regarding marriage, I hold with the Church's current position. I believe Scripture affirms that sexual difference is important to God and that union of "the different bodies of a man and a woman in marriage represents the union in difference between the divine Jesus and the human church in the ultimate marriage" of the new creation, where all Christ followers will experience full intimacy with Christ (Ed Shaw – *Purposeful Sexuality* / Ephesians 5: 28-33).

Whether you decide to vote for me or not, I believe that active participation at Synod is about more than just one issue and Word, Spirit and Love will be needed in abundance (along with prayer) to negotiate many crucial topics including church reform, relevance, mission and finance.

## **What would I bring to Synod?**

### **Experience**

Last year, I retired after a 40-year career in publishing, where I worked for a range of print and online publications, both local and national. The last 12 years I ran my own consultancy business assisting specialist publishers. Working in a sometime hostile and often challenging industry, both corporately and independently, the insights and experiences I have picked up have helped me communicate with integrity and provided ideas and solutions.

I have been a member of Diocesan Synod and Area Council for two terms where I have seen the higher workings of my Diocese. I have been Deanery Synod member for 20+ years and am a former Deanery School Governor. I have found them all to be valuable places of learning and fellowship.

As a Licensed Lay Minister at Christ Church Barnet, I regularly lead services, preach and serve on the core leadership team. I was Church Warden during our last interregnum and am honoured to act as Mission Representative for a missionary family we support in Malawi.

I am secretary of Barnet Churches Action, an ecumenical charity set up by Churches Together in Chipping Barnet. BCA oversees the running of Hope Corner Community Centre, which serves Dollis Valley and the Underhill Ward in High Barnet, responding to local needs. As trustee and voluntary part-time manager, I have seen God work in astonishing ways, particularly His blessing when churches come together as one body.

### **Personal**

I am married to Carol and have a son and a daughter, both of whom are married and have left home. One chose to follow me into the publishing industry while the other is preparing to go abroad as a missionary.