

## **Hugh Scriven: Vicar of St Germain's Edgbaston**

### **General Synod Election Address**



#### **About myself**

I grew up in London, was ordained in 1984, and served in parishes in West Yorkshire, and Telford new town, before coming here to Birmingham 15 years ago. Prior to ordination I studied theology in Cambridge and Durham, and worked as an assistant in parishes in Liverpool and East London. Over the course of more than 30 years parish ministry I have sought to relate the gospel to diverse and changing contexts.

I have grown up as an Anglican, and value the ethos of Anglicanism at its best, of principled comprehensiveness and generous orthodoxy, seeking to retain the best of the old while being open to the best of the new.

As an evangelical, I place a strong emphasis, in personal spirituality and public teaching, to close attention to hearing God's word in Scripture. In it I find myself constantly nourished by the story of God's amazing grace in Christ; I seek to submit to what I learn there; I am convinced that "God has yet more light to break forth from his holy Word."

Both I and the congregations where I have worked have been enriched by the Charismatic renewal movement, in deeper experience of God's love, and in being opened to God's working in surprising ways.

#### **What I bring**

If elected, I would want to be engaged across the breadth of the synod's agenda, but this is some of the particular experience that I would bring.

**Mission** I continue to be excited and stretched by the challenge of growing a congregation of grace and hope in our multi-faith and multicultural urban setting, with the pastoral contact and experience that brings. I am concerned with seeking patterns of the church's life which equip the church for holistic mission – serving the community in which we are set, and also being unashamed about calling others to faith in Christ and nurturing them in discipleship. I have long been inspired and



challenged by the saying of Lesslie Newbigin that “the only hermeneutic of the gospel is a congregation of men and women who believe it and live by it”.

**Vocation and Ministry** Since coming to Birmingham I have been involved in a variety of ways in accompanying those pursuing a call to ordained ministry. Over the years a number of candidates from St Germain’s have gone forward to be ordained; I have accompanied others in theological reading as part of their discernment process; we have had students on placement as part of their training; I have been involved in training a number of curates here; and I am an Educational Adviser on Bishops’ Advisory Panels.

**Liturgy** I have been on the Diocesan Liturgical Advisory Committee for a number of years. My particular concern is in developing patterns of liturgy and worship which engage with our diverse congregation, and working at a pattern which is both liturgical and “open to the Spirit”.

**World Church** Our congregation have a number of links with worldwide Anglicanism, both through mission partners who we support, and through the family links of members of our congregation. I am aware that the heart of world Christianity is now in the global south, and want to both learn from them, and ensure that they remain conversation partners in our deliberations.

**Sexuality** Following the publication in 1992 of The Bishops’ report “Issues in Human Sexuality” I became part of a group in the diocese where I then worked which sought to enable discussion of the report; and I have been involved in some way in the debates and discussions ever since.

I am often frustrated that in the past many of our discussions have polarized between groups which simply end up lobbing grenades at each other over the parapets of entrenched positions. I am not convinced by those who seek to change the church’s teaching, but remain committed to working hard at listening to those with whom I disagree, and articulating my convictions in ways which engage with the narratives and concerns of others.