

2015
General Synod Elections
Carlisle Diocese House of Laity

Allan Daniels
Personal profile

I have been a member of St John's church, Keswick, for the past 10 years. I am a member of the PCC, chair of the fundraising committee, and for the last two years have been a member of the Deanery synod.

Previous to this I lived in British Columbia, Canada, serving on the PCC and also a synod member for Williams Lake. During this time I was active in the church community and organised the Churches Together Easter 2000 Millennium Concert. I was taught the Alpha course and became the Alpha advisor for northern British Columbia.

The following is my election address:

I have read with interest the Archbishops' Council's report on Reform and Renewal. I am particularly interested in the plan to prepare and educate candidates for the priesthood so that they would be more rounded and bring a wider range of gifts to their ministry. I believe it is vitally important that all clergy are IT savvy and have at least a basic knowledge of business management.

The report also acknowledges the need to properly train lay people. It is obvious that in tomorrow's Church lay people will be taking on more responsibilities and roles which were traditionally undertaken by the clergy. This is particularly true in the Carlisle Diocese with the Mission Community plan. I look forward to seeing these plans successfully implemented.

I firmly believe that we need to take a lead in social responsibilities in our community and take an active interest in areas such as housing, welfare, and poverty, and in the encouragement and support of credit unions and foodbanks.

We should avoid playing party politics. All too often we comment on policies of the elected government in a negative way, without having a solution to the problem ourselves.

I fully support the General Synod's programme to appoint more women to positions of authority as Bishops and other roles in all dioceses, and call for speedier progress to be made.

I am very encouraged with the opening of the sexuality conversation which is now in progress bringing together gay and straight clergy and lay people. It is to be hoped that there will be refreshingly open and honest discussions in an environment free

of hostility and animosity. I am fully aware that this is a sensitive and emotive issue, particularly in churches in other countries who have less liberal views on sexuality, but I do believe that this has dragged on for too long and that it needs to be finally resolved.

Our mission to the wider community needs to be re-evaluated. Too often people who show an interest in church ceremonies, such as weddings and baptisms, are put off by what seems to them a baffling and bewildering amount of rules and regulations. I am glad to see that there are plans to relax, amend, and get rid of the more outdated regulations.

It would also be helpful if parish churches were given a bit more freedom and not micromanaged by a hierarchy that can have little understanding of local issues. If we want our congregations to grow we need to be more proactive and less reliant on old fashioned practises so that people would be encouraged to enjoy a more relaxed and welcoming church atmosphere.

Thank you for reading this, I would welcome your questions and the support of your vote in the forthcoming election.