

Revd Mike Duff

Team Rector, Upper Wylze Valley

Proposed by Area Dean Cliff Stride,

Seconded by church-planter Tom Morgan



Thank you for taking the time to read this. Let me tell you a little about myself. I'm married with two children. After university, I worked in database software for 10 years and then for a Christian retreat house. I took my leisure pursuits to a high standard, performing around the country as a Dramatist, Mime-Artist and choral musician. I have worshipped in urban, inner-city, suburban, city-centre and village settings, and in catholic, traditional and evangelical congregations. Since my ordination 27 years ago, I have served in Indonesia for 4 years, in Southsea for 16 years, for CPAS for 6 years, and now in the Upper Wylze Valley for 9 months.

In Indonesia I worked for CMS as a consultant to the Indonesian-speaking Anglican Church, where I shared responsibility for national strategy including translation of Anglican liturgy into Indonesian. I was in charge of national training in Anglican theology, identity and models for ministry and acted as liaison with the Diocesan leadership in Singapore, where I was a member of the international synod.

In Southsea, I had responsibility for a large, growing and lively congregation with a strong children & youth ministry which included an intern programme, a parish school for which I was a foundation governor, and a PCC-owned Nursery. The ministry of women at every level was celebrated at St Jude's. We planted a new community congregation into a neighbouring parish which was due for closure. I was associate area dean, a member of the Bishop's Council and of the Diocesan Patronage Board.

At CPAS, I led the Patronage Team with responsibility for 700 churches of every description in every English diocese. As Patron I worked with Bishops, Archdeacons and Parish Reps to run supportive and effective appointment processes for new incumbents. I supported curates & incumbents seeking a new role, and visited and prayed with clergy serving in parishes for which we were patron. I was privileged to hear the struggles and joys of parishes across the country and to discover what God has been doing through Covid and beyond.

In the Upper Wylze Valley team, it is my privilege to have responsibility for 10 churches and 8 PCCs in this beautiful valley which has been part of my family history for five generations.

And wider... I am a council member of Trinity Theological College, Bristol, where I have been privileged to support the leadership and staff in navigating the challenges of these last 6 years and in remaining vibrant and relevant in a changing national church context.

If sent by you to General Synod, my **voting decisions** would rest upon a faith founded in a firm conviction of the power and relevance of God's scripture for our life, understood with reference to the faith of our historic church and interpreted for today's cultural context by prayer and the grace of the Holy Spirit.

- My longing for the Church of England is that we regain confidence in the gospel; that through a Holy Spirit empowered engagement with the nation across the whole breadth of God's Mission we might see lives turned to Christ and communities transformed.
- I passionately believe in the power of the local church as the place of God's compassion, healing, liberation, protection and empowering for His world. My experience is that as our congregations become healthier, they can and should be experiencing growth in numbers as well as in discipleship and impact.
- I long that the current levels of anxiety which I have seen across the country at every level of church life be replaced by a growing unity based in shared opportunities for outreach, ministry, honest and honouring relationships, and mutual hospitality in Christ's name.
- I'm passionately committed to the development and appointment of God's leaders for our church, including the contribution of theological colleges and the historic role of patronage which distils centuries of wisdom whilst seeking the discernment of the Spirit.
- I am determined to find ways to encourage the ministers of multi-parish-benefices who lead such complex and demanding ministries with so little support.
- Above all, I want to share with others the encouragement of Christ at work in this Diocese and to bring back a better understanding of how He is at work across the country, so that we can be part of what Christ is already blessing.

I am happy to offer myself to serve the Diocese in this way if you wish me to do so. I have no doubt the other candidates have a similar motivation, and am praying for whoever you choose, that God will equip and enable them to contribute to wise and Godly leadership for our national church at such a challenging time.

I hope you might consider voting for me as your first preference.