



My name is Rev. David Sims- I'm the vicar at St Thomas' in Aldridge, and I'm putting myself forward for election to General Synod this summer.

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Proposer

The Venerable Revd Dr Sue Weller- Archdeacon of Lichfield

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The Revd Preb Jim Trood- Associate Archdeacon of Walsall

A bit about me:

I grew up being taken to church- but quickly found an excuse to stop going in my early teens. I started to enjoy lots of different things that teenagers find out about, but I always felt there was something missing from life. One morning I woke up, and just knew that I had to go to church the next day, and a few months later I heard J-John preach the gospel, recognised my need for Jesus, and said a prayer of commitment. My early Christian life was grounded in an ecumenical youth group, held in a Pentecostal church, attended by Christians from Baptist, CofE, and Methodist churches. It was a real joy to learn together with people who loved Jesus, but who had some different views to me about a range of stuff.

After university I went into teaching in 2010, married Kimberley in 2012, and - and was extremely surprised, in 2014, to feel a call to ordained ministry. In our first year of training at theological college we started our family through adoption- and we now have 3 children, all with a range of complex needs- and looking back I underestimated how much this would impact my approach to ministry. I enjoyed a curacy at Wellington, in Shropshire, and have now been at St T's in Aldridge for 5 years- a church with a vision statement to be a church that is *Gathering, Growing, and Going- real people doing life together, all for Jesus.*

A bit about our context:

St T's is an informal and lively church, with growing numbers of families and youth. We enjoyed celebrating 20 baptisms at Easter, and have 5 more lined up for September. And this is one of the things that really getting me excited:

evangelism. Telling people about Jesus is one of the things that really gives me joy- and also helping others feel equipped to do the same. From Street Evangelism, to door to door prayers, to Warm Welcomes and Christening visits- I long for us as a diocese, and a church, to be excited about telling



the stories of God that are across this wide and varied diocese in churches of all different styles and traditions.

Another thing that excites me is trying **something new, whilst standing on the traditions of the church**. Over the last couple of years, we have started up some new styles of church aimed at families- Lego church, where we gather to create Bible stories out of lego, pray, and eat together, and Wonderfully Messy Church, a monthly church gathering specifically for children with additional needs and disabilities and their families. I am passionate about church being a **kind, accessible** space for those people who are often unseen or forgotten- and we are blessed to find this space to be one that is growing and thriving.

Why Synod?

I am not someone who gravitates naturally towards paperwork and meetings- but the previous brief paragraph of our context explains why I am feeling called to stand for Synod.

Evangelism- I would like the church's focus always to be on Jesus, and bringing more people to know him- across the range of traditions, parishes, theologies and styles that we see in the Church of England. In all the motions, meetings, and ideas discussed at Synod, one of the questions I want to always be asking is How will this lead to more people hearing the good news of the love of God, for them, that can bring them into life in all its fullness? How can we release the parish to fulfil the call of God?



Something new- We are in an exciting time in the church. Across the breadth of Anglicanism, we are hearing stories of people coming to faith, prodigals coming home, and people “just turning up” randomly. As well as parish ministry- school assemblies, funeral visits, weddings, etc, I spend hours a week online on TikTok- sending Bibles out, engaging with people online in apologetics or discussion, leading church services online, and helping link people to their local church- and I would like to see how the church can continue to try something new, whilst celebrating its history and traditions. We do not need to reinvent the wheel, or come up with gimmicks- but there is a space to step into the new things God is doing in our parishes.

Kind and accessible. Sometimes we encounter people who think that the gospel is actually bad news, not good news of life in all its fullness. I would work for our churches to be

places where people from all kinds of backgrounds and contexts can access services which allow them to worship the Lord who loves them. One example of this (albeit in its early stages), has seen me getting in touch with the liturgical commission to look at accessible liturgy for Communion, in particular for children who are non-verbal, or who have significant barriers to understanding the language we might use in our services- and I have a meeting lined up with them, so watch this space!

If you have any other questions for me, please do get in touch with me via my contact details on the front of this- and thanks for reading!

Every Blessing

Revd. David Sims