

The Reverend David Pickett

Rector to the Parish of Guiseley with Esholt in the Diocese of Leeds



At court in 2022 for the adoption of our youngest – Jeremiah.

Proposer: The Reverend Alison Battye
Vicar, Parish of St John the Baptist, Adel

Secunder:

General Synod Election Address

Dear Elector

I write to you ahead of the forthcoming election to General synod 2024 to kindly ask for your vote to send me to Synod as a representative of the Diocese of Leeds.

Who am I?

I am 59 years old and was born into a mining family in South Wales. I have been married to Sarah for 30 years and have six children. Two of our children are blood birth, whilst the other four are adopted from different parts of the country. Our eldest child is 26 and our youngest 3 - having recently been adopted into our family. Sarah works as a teacher of mathematics at a specialist school for children with pronounced autism.

Prior to being ordained I served the Royal Air Force for 23 years, firstly as an airman, then as an Air Operations Officer. I served in many parts of the world, including Northern Island, Germany, Cyprus, Saudi Arabia, Afghanistan and Iraq. Although I left the Service in 2010 I rejoined the Royal Navy in 2017 as reserve chaplain. I am still serving today.

In 2009 I trained for the Priesthood at the College of the Resurrection, Mirfield and was ordained deacon in July 2011. I served the Belfloe Deanery in the

Diocese of Lincoln until 2014, when I left to take up the post of Rector to the Parish of Guiseley with Esholt. Sarah and I have been here ten years and see ourselves remaining in West Yorkshire for the foreseeable future.

As well as holding a BA (Hons) in Theology and Pastoral Studies, in 2020 I graduated with a PGDipE (Hons) in Religious Education and now offer a half day a week, volunteer-teaching at a local college. I also serve as chaplain to the Leeds branch of the Royal British Legion as well as taking up the Bishop's invite to serve as Area Chaplain to the Mothers' Union.

What are my Interests?

With six children, four still living at home, I like to spend as much time with them as I can. Outside of that I am a big Leeds Rhinos fan, a season ticket holder at Headingley Stadium. Our eldest, Isaac, plays Physical Disability Rugby League (PDRL) for both the Rhinos and Wales. I too continue to

lace up my boots, playing Masters rugby league for Guiseley.

The Wider Diocese

As well as serving as parish priest to two churches, St Oswald's and St Paul's (the Emmerdale church) I also serve other positions within the Diocese.

As well as serving as chaplain to the RBL and MU, I serve on Diocesan and Deanery Synod, as well as the Deanery Standing Committee. I firmly believe in a multi-voice approach to ministerial governance, allowing all a chance to speak. Only by doing this - accepting differing points of view and churchmanship - can we hope to move forward together, carrying out God's mission. We are without doubt stronger together.

My Ministry and faith

Having been brought up as a Pentecostal in the Valleys, I now find myself in a different part of the Church. I have a clear heart for social justice, but also equality for those who less able. With a son who is physically disabled, and three other children who have pronounced physical and educational needs, I am passionate about accessibility to faith for those who may find it difficult understanding Jesus and His gift of salvation. I believe in a fully inclusive church where all are respected, and where all traditions and values are embraced. For too long we have been in tension, with various challenges threatening to pull us apart. The latest is LLF, a process that – if we are to get it fully right – will take time to work through (*Trust in the Lord with all your heart and be not wise in your own sight*). God asks us to serve Him, and Him alone. And therefore, we need to ask: 'where is God in all this? What does He expect of me?'

The Future Church

What is the future of the Church? That question is not only being asked of our Church, but of many other Churches across the world. It's too easy to just sit and morose about drop in attendances, differing viewpoints,

pressures of secular society, poverty, racism, apathy. We also can't worry about the future of Christianity. The Lord is risen, that's all that matters. So, we strive to do His work until we can't strive anymore. But we fight for what is right knowing that we are loved.

My Promise to You

If you send me to Synod, I promise to represent all who are marginalised and feel that they don't have a voice. I promise to do my best to argue for, and fight for, Jesus Christ and our Church. I will use all of my skills, experience and expertise to do right by God's people. I will also fight for the parish system, as there, I believe, is the heart of God. I am a parish priest; I was brought up in a parish and I will die in a parish.

What skills do I have?

During my time in the military, and especially in Afghanistan and Iraq, I found myself in many difficult situations. I spent a lot of time planning life and death operations, sat around tables (shuras) with military and local people. I quickly learned that all people are the same. Irrespective of background or culture we all suffer the same problems; we all share the same anxieties about future life; we are all trying to get through life unscathed doing the best we can. We also want to be loved and valued. I will therefore be a voice for all with no exception, using all my previous negotiating skills to find a way forward for our church and its challenges.

Thank you for taking time out to read this. I hope that when the election comes you will consider giving me the highest voting preference that you can. If you would like to talk to me about my application, especially about my views or previous work, I am happy to be contacted on 07916825465, or email: daipickett@hotmail.co.uk

Please do remember to Vote and help shape the future of our Church.