

# MICHAEL PERRY

*Vicar of the Woodford Valley with Archers Gate, near Salisbury.*

Nominated by Robert Titley  
*Canon Treasurer at Salisbury Cathedral.*

Seconded by Joanna Naish  
*Associate Priest in the Nadder Valley Team.*



**MY PLATFORM:** I believe that caring for the natural world around us, and through that caring for our worldwide neighbours, is a critical area of mission for the Church of England. Creation care is a biblical call on all Christians. I am standing for General Synod to be a strong advocate for this from our diocese. Environmental action can sometimes be portrayed as a fringe interest or a burdensome obligation. My experience is that creation care adds a richness to all areas of church life and is a key missional way to engage and connect with young people and the wider community. The climate emergency makes the next five years absolutely critical for our planet and the church has a wide-open opportunity to engage with society on this, bringing hope in disturbing times.

**MY BACKGROUND:** After several years working in bio-medical science, I moved from the lab to the parish in the late 1990s. Ordained in 1999, I worked first in the Keynsham team ministry, followed by eleven years as rector of six rural parishes north of Sherborne. In 2013 I moved to my current parish, which includes both rural villages and two major new housing estates.

I have served on the diocesan synods of two other dioceses, as well as chairing the Bath and Wells world mission and development group and co-founding their environment group. In our own diocese I have served on the diocesan mission council and am part of the diocesan environment group as well as the net zero-carbon task force. Outside of the Church of England I am one of the directors of A Rocha UK, the Christian conservation organisation behind Eco-Church. I am married to Elizabeth, who works for the Anglican Alliance, the coordinating agency for relief development and advocacy across the worldwide Anglican Communion.

## **KEY ISSUES FACING THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND:**

- **The climate and species loss emergencies** challenge all humanity to have a change of heart and of values. We need to encourage and inspire individuals and communities to care for God's Creation as part of their discipleship. There are missional opportunities for the Church to grasp, to offer hope to the wider community and pastoral care to those affected by climate change.
- **Archbishop Stephen Cottrell's vision and strategy 'Simpler, Humbler, Bolder'** looks to the future of the Church of England. I welcome its focus on the Five Marks of Mission, but with parishes tired from the Pandemic, and with little capacity to consider these issues, there is a real danger of the centre getting far ahead of the grassroots. We need to ensure that there is ownership of any changes by parishes and that what emerges are practical ideas that work on the ground.
- **The Pandemic has put several dioceses in the red.** When faced with this, it is tempting to jump to quick fixes with limited consultation, rather than seeing the fuller picture as our wider society recovers. There is the need for General Synod to provide a wise steadying hand across the two provinces, providing a workable framework for change.
- **The COVID-19 Pandemic** has not gone away, and is leaving a legacy of poverty, debt, poor mental health, and domestic abuse. Responding to these needs must be high on our agenda.
- **The October 2020 IICSA report on sexual abuse** in the C. of E. calls for profound changes in the culture of the Church. We need to embrace and enact these creatively, finding ways for safeguarding to be, not a burden to parishes, but a mark of our faith.
- The timetable to explore **Living in Love and Faith** has been derailed by the Pandemic. We need wisdom from the centre to ensure that this important exercise is taken forward in a timely way that will work for parishes.
- **Racism** remains a stain on our Church that needs institutional change.
- I support moves toward **unity with the Methodist Church.**

Thank you for taking the time to read my election address. If you would like to get in touch, do call or text me on 0779 4328515. I would be grateful for your support.