

Which other churches have you worshipped at?

When we first came to Bromley we tried a number of local churches, and for some time went to St. Edmund's Roman Catholic Church in Beckenham.

What were your 'first impressions' when you began attending BPC?

We first came to BPC because of the welcome it gave to our children, both in services and through facilities such as the YPG. My impressions were of a quiet friendliness, of a high standard of music, and of a church that was fairly traditional without being inward looking or complacent.

Is there any one aspect of the parish or worship you particularly find attractive at BPC?

BPC has always realised the importance of respecting and developing its young people. This is evident in church on any Sunday morning, and of course is vital for the long-term future.

Is there any part of BPC that you feel could be seriously improved on?

It's important for any church to project itself properly, and I strongly support efforts being made in terms of making BPC more welcoming and less insular. This includes the investments being made in tangible improvements such as lighting and signs. Some of these things may seem superficial, but they are all part of keeping in touch with a society that is changing and developing all the time.

Is there an aspect within the Church of England, which you feel is particularly important?

Like any long-standing institution, it needs to combine traditional values with the changes in society. The big buzz-words this year are inclusiveness and accessibility, and I think the Church has a long way to go in these respects

to remove its image as a stuffy and backward-looking organisation.

Do you think the Church should speak out on social issues or restrict it to spiritual matters only?

I don't think you can separate spiritual issues from the realities of day-to-day life. It's important for the Church to speak out on big issues where there is a strong moral dimension, but there are limits. I wouldn't want the Church to get too caught up in party politics, for example.

Do you have a favourite prayer?

This may be cheating, as it's a hymn rather than a prayer, but I have always been fond of 'God be in my head, and in my understanding.....' For me it captures the importance of linking what we do on Sunday mornings with how we conduct our lives during the rest of the week. It's beautifully calm and reassuring as well.

Church growth works on the biological principle that anything that is healthy gives life to itself again. So healthy churches ought to procreate and give health to new churches.

Bishop David Pyches

