



MEDIATION

in the Rochester Diocese



**Is there a dispute in your Church?
Then this leaflet may help.**

CONFLICT, GREAT OR SMALL?

The Church is a family, and from time to time families fall out. Not many in the pews or pulpit can say that their church has no conflict. This can be between individuals who cannot see eye to eye over an issue, or between groups within the church pulling in different directions.

Sometimes these things can threaten church unity, and take the focus off the church's real mission.

However GREAT or SMALL a conflict, MEDIATION CAN HELP, and is not a sign of weakness.

WHAT IS MEDIATION?

Mediation is a way of dealing with disputes that aims to enable the people involved to reach an agreement acceptable to everyone.

Disagreements can be sorted out confidentially, with the help of a Mediator, who will not take sides, make judgments on the rights and wrongs of the issues, or impose a settlement.

It is best to try mediation early before the parties become too entrenched in how they feel.

Cases in the parish are referred through the Archdeacon with the Incumbent's permission.

The Mediator will usually:

- Visit the first party to hear their account of what has happened.
- If the first party agrees, ask to visit the other party to get their views, and
- If both parties are willing, help them to reach their own agreement.

WHY SHOULD CHRISTIANS USE MEDIATION?

Christians are called to be peacemakers – Jesus said, “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called the children of God.” (Matt. 5 v 9).

Mediation is a powerful tool to help bring peace and reconciliation to disputes. Even in Church it is often difficult to talk to those you disagree with and try to understand their viewpoint too.

But Christ-centred mediation can help, as its emphasis is on communication, respect and forgiveness.

THE BENEFITS OF MEDIATION

- The Mediator is **IMPARTIAL** – and will not take sides.
- The process is **CONFIDENTIAL** – all meetings take place in private and anything said will be kept confidential to the parties. Only information authorised by them will be passed to the other or third parties.
- **THE PARTIES ARE IN CONTROL** – you can withdraw at any time during the process. It is the parties, not the Mediator, who decide on terms of agreement.
- The service is **FREE** – your Church will be asked only to pay/contribute to the Mediator’s travel costs.
- Most importantly, **IT WORKS** giving the Church more time for what it is called to do.

A PASTORAL AID TO CHURCH UNITY
to help people in dispute

If you have a problem you think could be helped by mediation, or just want to talk through the process:

PLEASE CALL:

The Diocesan Mediator, Nikki McVeagh during working hours (or out of hours if it is an emergency) on 07870956677 or leave a message which will be confidential to the Mediator on this line.

Fuller GUIDELINES on the procedure are available on request from:

Mediation,
St. Nicholas Church,
Boley Hill, Rochester,
Kent, ME1 1SL
Tel 01634 560000