

I am vicar of Bollington in the deanery of Macclesfield and a trustee of the Clergy Support Trust.

I would be very grateful for your vote.

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In 2023, more than one in every five serving clergy in the Church of England received help from the Clergy Support Trust. I have had the privilege and responsibility of being a trustee of the Clergy Support Trust since 2019.

Clergy understand that ministry is sacrificial, but too many clergy and their families are struggling. Stipends have not kept pace with inflation and the provision and maintenance of clergy housing and retirement provision is not consistent across dioceses. Very often clergy families suffer in silence because parishioners are having a hard time too. Who cares for the carers? Diocesan resources time and money are stretched thinly, and clergy can be reticent to raise personal issues with diocesan staff.

The Clergy Support Trust has a dedicated team of full-time people on the end of phones to listen to clergy. Hundreds of clergy and their families call every week. Clergy are listened to, heard and where we can, we help. You can contact the trust here <https://www.clergysupport.org.uk/> As trustees, we know the impact on clergy lives is transformational.

Under a new Royal Charter and strategy, the Clergy Support Trust now provides national leadership on issues of clergy wellbeing, independent from the National Church Institutions who are responsible for caring for clergy. The Trust has the data to know where there are gaps. We are able to respond quickly to issues and to influence policy.

The Covenant for Clergy Care and Well Being was influenced by trustees on Synod, but more needs to be done on implementing the recommendations. Clergy Support Trust is a trusted champion but at this moment in time, no trustees are members of General Synod.

This by-election gives the clergy in Chester Diocese the opportunity to enable the Clergy Support Trust's voice on behalf of clergy to be present on Synod.

I really hope that you see the important reason why I am standing and see it as a reason to give me your first preference vote.

Although passionate about clergy wellbeing, I am not just a single-issue candidate. I would be a good representative for Chester Diocese on General Synod, and I have experience to know what it entails. I was a member of General Synod for Blackburn Diocese, membership ceased when I moved parish back home to Chester Diocese in 2021. Previously, I was a vicar in Morecambe Bay for 9 years, served my curacy near Blackpool, I was an Area Dean, a member of Bishop's Council, I have served on a diocesan parish share review group. Prior to ordination I was an accountant.

Theologically I am uncomfortable with labels, I am part of the mixed centre of clergy who joyfully and prayerfully seek God in the local church and community in many different ways through many different people. Lots of us feel disheartened with all the time spent on LLF. I'd vote to allow same-sex marriage in church for those who want it and seek to move on.