

RACHEL MASON

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Proposed and seconded by Alyson Ward and Jonathan Masters.



ABOUT ME

I am 33 years old and live in Alsager, Cheshire. I grew up in a village in north Shropshire before going to the University of St Andrews and then University College London to study for an undergraduate degree followed by a Masters in Geosciences. After university I went into full-time Children and Family ministry in the church. During my life, I have been part of several churches, from a small village church in rural Shropshire to a large city church, and others in between. I have just left my role as Children and Families Leader at Christ Church Alsager, to start training as an Ordinand at Emmanuel Theological College.

EXPERIENCE

Over the last 5 years, I have worshipped and worked for Christ Church Alsager as the Children and Families Leader. In this role, I have had the responsibility to lead and develop all areas of the church's work with children and families, which has included: developing and implementing vision; leading, motivating and growing teams; co-ordinating and holding responsibility for the church's work with children aged 0-11 and their families including: Sunday children's ministry, toddler group, midweek children's clubs, support for parents through groups and beyond, schools work, Messy Church, events and activities for children and families, involvement in community events, working with the Youth Leader for transition, and involvement in leading all-age worship; developing and setting up new initiatives; offering pastoral care to children, their families and those on teams; and promoting the spiritual development of children and their families in the church, helping children integrate into the church community and acting as a voice for them in church affairs. In recent years, I have been part of the leading and preaching team for Sunday services, as well as getting involved in many other aspects of church life and it's day-to-day running; and have been part of the Staff Team through a time of Vacancy too. In addition to being part of the Staff Team, I have also been a member of the PCC and Deanery Synod; and am now a member of Diocesan Synod.

GENERAL SYNOD

I would like to stand on General Synod, bringing myself to join with many others from different walks of life, to listen to God, to discern His will together and put into action His vision for the Church of England. I come with energy and enthusiasm, and a heart

to serve and to work with others to live out the calling which we as the Church of England have: 'to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ afresh in each generation' and to equip, enable and encourage the whole church to be able to do this. I will offer my voice and my service as we work together to develop and embody the vision to be a simpler, humbler, bolder Church that is Jesus Christ centred and Jesus Christ shaped. As we put into action those strategic priorities laid out by the Archbishops' Council and work out in practice what it is to be the Church of all people in all places, I pray for the Church to fully reflect what Christ calls us to be.

There are many important matters the Church of England is presently addressing and it is my prayer that as we each bring our voice to the discussion we listen to God and one another, discerning together how the Holy Spirit is at work and what God's will is, so that we can move forwards embracing our differences and mutually flourishing in the Body of Christ.

Children are the church of today, as much as the future of the church. Having worked in Children and Families Ministry within the church for several years, I know how important it is that the voices of children and young people are heard in their local churches, by the dioceses and the national church. Working with and in schools, both Church of England schools and non-faith schools, is vital and we need to prioritise it as a Church.

Diversity brings richness to the church. We need to educate ourselves and act to form a Church that has racial equality. This must remain high on the agenda and be something we are moving forwards on. Each individual brings something unique to the Body which enriches who we are; let's be a Church that celebrates diversity.

Learning to live in love and faith is a daily task for each of us and for us as a Church, so that all are welcome, included, valued and respected, no matter what differences we see in one another. As we discern what this means in the Church of England through engaging with the Living in Love and Faith (LLF) materials, I hope that we can become a Church that listens better and one that remains united in Jesus Christ despite difference.

Creation is crying out to us, are we doing enough? We have been given stewardship of this wonderful world in which we live. We need to prioritise our efforts to become carbon neutral, to become eco-friendly churches and take a lead in caring for God's creation. Let the whole of creation sing God's praise!

We are a missional people, so it is important to be continually working out what this looks like for the Church at this moment in history. This flows out of our identity as a Jesus Christ centred and shaped Church. We are able to use the five marks of mission: tell, teach, tend, transform, and treasure, as a framework to equip, enable and encourage dioceses, churches and individuals to live out whole-life discipleship, both as gathered and sent church.

As we live in a time of continued uncertainty, amongst the broken and hurting, we have good news, good news of each individual, each family and household, each community, each region, our nation and the whole world. We as the Church have a task, given to us by Jesus Christ – let's go and do it in the power of the Holy Spirit.