

General Synod Election Address

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Proposed by

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About me

I love Jesus and long for our shared life to be increasingly shaped by his outrageous love and grace. In 13 years of ordained ministry, I have been curate in different contexts, an Associate Vicar with incumbent responsibility, and now a Self-Supporting Minister alongside a full-time diocesan role. I was brought up in a vicarage and I'm also a clergy spouse. I currently work in the Ministry Team at Church House. Although my main responsibilities are for curates, first posts, and major transition points in ministry, I also share in the work of the wider team delivering training and resourcing to ordained and lay colleagues. I live in Tarporley and when not taking services in other parishes, I worship and minister at St Helen's Church. I live in a household of two adults, three kids and four cats. I'm often found walking the Cheshire countryside, or in the swimming pool or gym – or the pub! Spare time is given to studying for a Professional Doctorate in Practical Theology with the University of Chester, researching ministerial power, trauma informed ministry, and safer pastoral practice.

Relevant experience: Previous and current

- A parish priest, stipendiary and SSM, in several contexts, clergy spouse and (previously) clergy child.
- Assistant DDO.
- Ignatian-trained Spiritual Director/Companion and IPCS-certified Pastoral Supervisor.
- Director of Studies: training, resourcing and supporting Licensed Lay Ministers.
- Training and teaching in trauma-informed ministry.
- Directing a flourishing IME 2 programme for curates.
- Implementing structured support for clergy moving into first or subsequent posts of responsibility.
- Covering the full breadth of the Ministry Team workload during several recent vacancies.
- Developing and delivering a range of training opportunities for licensed and other lay people.
- Building collaborative culture within Church House and between central services and local contexts.
- Doctoral research and teaching into power in pastoral ministry and healthy church culture.

Member of: The Diocesan Safeguarding Executive Group.
The National Safeguarding Team's Safeguarding Learning and Development Group.
The Diocesan Vacancies Resourcing Group.
The Diocesan Board of Education, and the DBE Finance and Estates Standing Committee.
The Diocesan Growing Faith Core Team.
The Diocesan Clergy Wellbeing Group.
The National Lay Ministries Network.
Bishop's Council and Diocesan Synod.

Key areas of Synod's work

Safeguarding and Healthy Church Culture

Creating safer church cultures and environments is a gospel imperative. My safeguarding work at both national and local level enables me to see how decisions made affect ministry on the ground in parishes and other ministry contexts. I am committed to this work being both realistic and achievable, but nevertheless non-negotiable. I will commit to holding those of us in leadership to account over the transparency of process, while recognising the complexity surrounding these processes. My ongoing research and training in trauma-informed ministry will enable me to make a significant contribution in the light of the Wilkinson report (December 2023).

Mission and Evangelism

The Five Marks of Mission are central to the call to discipleship. In my work with parishes and schools I am inspired by the creative ways these are enacted and lived. I regularly liaise with the Diocesan Race and Ethnicity Forum to ensure that Racial Justice remains on the agenda of lay and curate training. As a parish priest and a member of the Diocesan Board of Education I see the complexity of the Net Zero Carbon 2030 target, particularly in relation to buildings of significance, and would seek to progress this agenda in pragmatic and manageable ways.

Ministerial Wellbeing

My ministries as Spiritual Director and Pastoral Supervisor, alongside my current role, bring me into contact with a broad demographic of clergy and lay ministers, and I am deeply aware of the multi-layered pressures we face. My membership of the Diocesan Clergy Wellbeing Group and my own experience of vicarage life from a number of angles, and in both stipendiary and self-supporting ministry, mean that I observe and understand the breadth and complexity of structural issues around wellbeing and burnout. I will seek to ensure that systems and processes become increasingly efficient and unobstructive for both clergy and lay.

Prayers of Love and Faith

I welcome the Prayers of Love and Faith but recognise that this debate is painful and fractious. I believe this is a valuable opportunity for us to learn better how to live together well in disagreement, and that as we do so we stand on holy ground. My instinct would be to vote for inclusive measures, but to seek to listen wholeheartedly to those who disagree, and to pursue an agenda of reconciliation across division, to encourage a church in which everyone who loves Jesus and other people might feel able to continue to minister alongside one another.

Lay Ministry

I will ensure that Synod continues to take seriously the nurture and resourcing of licensed and other lay ministry as a sign of our commitment to baptismal mutuality. I also welcome the upcoming Private Members' Motion on bullying by lay officers, which is a long overdue and much needed piece of work. Well-resourced and accountable lay ministry contributes to the whole Church becoming better rested, safer and further equipped to share the good news of God's love in the "forgotten corners of the world".

Education and Growing Faith

I will ensure that the youngest members of our communities are heard and nurtured, and that schools, especially church schools, are seen as integral parts of Church of England parishes and ministry. As a younger member of the Church of England, with three primary-aged children, I share the language and values of some of those in our communities with whom we have so far failed to build effective and nurturing relationships, and would seek to make a significant contribution simply by virtue of my age and life stage.

I am committed to the shared task of building a church which is safer for all, and in which the love of Jesus is made known through word and action. I would be grateful for your first or highest preference vote.