

# GENERAL SYNOD ELECTIONS 2021

Candidate answers to the following questions:

1. General Synod members are elected for a 5 year period. If elected, what would you hope to achieve during your term of office?
  2. The strap line of the Church of England is 'A Christian Presence in Every Community'. What are your thoughts on this statement?
  3. How do questions about identity, sexuality, relationships, and marriage fit within the bigger picture of the good news of Jesus Christ?
  4. Does the Church of England's current commitment to the environment go far enough?
  5. How can we take positive action to increase the inclusion and representation of BAME people across the Church?
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There are 15 candidates standing for the 4 seats in the House of Laity:

1	Gwilym Stone	Laity
2	Jane Barnicoat-Chongwe	Laity
3	<del>Susan Blomley</del> <i>Withdrawn 16/09/21</i>	<del>Laity</del>
4	Simon Clift	Laity
5	Julie Maxwell	Laity
6	Danny Stupple	Laity
7	John Adams	Laity
8	Andrew Orange	Laity
9	Susan Turner	Laity
10	Chris Scoggins	Laity
11	Eve Paterson	Laity
12	Alison Coulter	Laity
13	Rodolph de Salis	Laity
14	Alwyn Ladell	Laity
15	Alastair Barron	Laity

Candidate Election Addresses are available via the online voting portal, or the diocesan website:  
<https://www.winchester.anglican.org/general-synod/>

# GWILYM STONE

## Candidates Questions

### **1. General Synod members are elected for a 5 year period. If elected, what would you hope to achieve during your term of office?**

Synod will be asked to consider many matters during the 5 years – some like climate change and sexuality are headline grabbing, most are the day to day business of the Church's good governance and house keeping. I would endeavour to bring the same level prayerful scrutiny to the mundane as I those I have a particular passion for.

Building connections with other members of Synod, so that all the representatives of Winchester work together, even when views differ, to have a strong voice for our Diocese. Also getting to know and learn from representatives of other Dioceses. General Synod is a precious opportunity to get to know what is going in other parts of the Church of England and bring that wisdom back to enrich our local contexts.

The Clergy Wellbeing Covenant is really important to me, and I really hope that over the next 5 years there is real progress in implementation, and I would use my place on Synod to hold us collectively to account for that. Working together to delivery effective reform of the Clergy Discipline Measure will probably be the key contribution that General Synod members will make to Clergy Wellbeing during the next term.

### **2. The strap line of the Church of England is 'A Christian Presence in Every Community'. What are your thoughts on this statement?**

Strap lines can distract as much as they inform or clarify, but if this is a line worth having it should mean we value the Parish, it is the particular calling of the Church of England to be engaged with all those in our locality – communities receiving lay and ordained ministry based what God is doing irrespective of the state of the PCC bank balance.

We should not focus simply on those that turn up on a Sunday morning but instead be looking for ever more effective ways to connect with those that have nothing to do with Church. The excellent work that goes on via so many Schools could be just the tip that of iceberg.

We have great opportunities which are probably not maximised. We also need to think about Communities that are not defined by geography – there are many clubs

and societies that bring people together, often with active Church members are there heart – but are we doing enough to give people the tools to make their engagement a public witness.

Our work places are Communities too, we need to be helping people feel confident in being a Christian presence at work.

### **3. How do questions about identity, sexuality, relationships, and marriage fit within the bigger picture of the good news of Jesus Christ?**

We begin with the Incarnation, the good news is embodied. Jesus promised to give life, life in its abundance. Therefore we need to engage with these issues in ways that liberate people to live their best life not shut them down.

I believe that our sexuality is God given, our relationships should echo the joy within the Trinity. If Jesus is good news that news need to be about the healthy expression of our sexual identity. Sexuality, straight and LGBT+, as a blessing not a dirty secret.

Many people, straight as much as LGBT+, seem to have real struggles around finding their bodies a blessing, finding the appropriate ways to be enriched by intimate or sexual relationships.

When Trans people are able to express their authentic identity, they are responding to God calling their true name, rather than being dictated to by society's expectations.

If the Church could get beyond the current debates about who is allowed to get married we could have such an opportunity to speak positively and prophetically into the pain and dysfunction of many lives. As things are, we are seen as dinosaurs and the last people that anyone wants to listen to.

### **4. Does the Church of England's current commitment to the environment go far enough?**

Short answer is No. We need to be taking much more radical action to mitigate climate change, at a national and a parish level.

We need to ensure that there is real action not just nice words, and accept that is going to cost us significant cash.

The ethical investment policies need to have measurable targets, the Church as a shareholder can push companies to decarbonise – but we need rapid action not just aspiration. Otherwise we should be moving our money to green companies.

PCCs need to review their local activity and find the decarbonisation opportunities – whether that is tweaking the setting on the boiler or getting the roof covered in solar panels – a big change or a small change it doesn't matter but we all need to be finding the change that we can deliver. Eco Church is a good place to start, as a tool to get us moving in the right direction not a goal in itself.

As we increasingly see news reports about the direct impact of climate change on people around the world – it is no longer a question of “can we afford to be green” - we simply can't afford to be anything else.

## **5. How can we take positive action to increase the inclusion and representation of BAME people across the Church?**

Some are worried that the term BAME reduces everyone non-white to a single category rather than celebrating the diversity within BAME people's experience.

That said the Church of England is overwhelmingly white, and increasingly middle class, and we need to hold a mirror up to ourselves and ask why the people in the pews are not representative of our communities.

I hope the cases of overt racism are rare, and should be rigorously dealt with, but we need to be aware of subtle ways in which any group can give the cue that “difference” is not really welcomed – despite the warm words on the Noticeboard or banner.

We need to be looking at the make up of our local communities and be building connections. For example if there is a Black-Majority Church in your Parish being proactive in engaging with them – this is not about recruiting them but like all ecumenical links it is a process of mutual enrichment.

Representation is a virtuous cycle - we need role models, like that previous Archbishop of York, and more can probably be done to remove the barriers to more people from BAME backgrounds going forward to ordination, and other ministry roles.

# JANE BARNICOAT - CHONGWE

## Questions for Online Hustings

- 1. What do I hope to achieve during a 5 year term of office?** A closer working relationship between parishes, dioceses and national Church bodies will be crucial to ensure *all voices* are heard and that decisions made are not 'decreed' but instead are collaboratively agreed. Improve dissemination of information (sharing understanding between parishes, dioceses and national Church). Finding a balance between economic sustainability and transformed ways of fully representing the national Church with its heritage and hopes for the future, will require difficult decision making. I would like to see dioceses and parishes focus on 'quality' not 'quantity'. Jesus sowed small seeds, day by day and that is what we as a Church should continue to do. Promoting collaborative funding approaches working with local and national government, and stakeholders, will help the Church to be better represented within communities. Working together with other faith groups, creates understanding and acceptance, this approach is very necessary as it positively promotes diversity and social - cohesion..
- 2. A Christian presence within Every Community.** The parish system ensures that every community has representation of the Church – that is Jesus Christ visible in our communities. The Sacramental and Pastoral ministry of Church leaders, Clergy or Laity, means being present, to witness, encourage, to grieve with and rejoice with each other. To guide, to safeguard, to offer sanctuary and to promote human flourishing. Baptisms, Weddings and Funeral services provide communities with opportunities to corporately acknowledge and profess a faith in a God that loves us all. Marking moments of remembrance, NHS recognition, state occasions (Jubilee or funerals), as well as Churches being used for concerts and fayres (encouraging Arts and Music), brings communities together. Church also plays a huge part in education and Church schools are often oversubscribed. Churches also contribute to voluntary work and charitable causes and Church grounds offer green spaces, demonstrating a care for God's creation, places for reflection and the nurturing of good mental health.

At a national level Bishops speaking in debates, help to influence new policy making. All of this reflects upon how the Church is represented in every community contributing enormously to the life and fabric of society.

- 3. How do questions about identity, sexuality, relationships, and marriage fit within the bigger picture of the good news of Jesus Christ?** We are all perfectly made in the image of God, these questions cannot be asked separately of a person, as identity, sexuality and relationships are integral to the wholeness of a person. They make us who we are. God's world is ever changing and moving forward, and the Church needs to formally recognise this. There is now legislation in place in many countries of the world that safeguards the rights of individuals to be 'who they are' however in some countries to be gay is still 'a crime

punishable by death`. The Church has a role to play in speaking up and out for those who are persecuted because of who they are. The Pastoral Principles and Living in Love and Faith literature and teachings, help us, the Church to understand difference more fully, to rejoice in our uniqueness and to stand with those who have been marginalised. Many young people today, embrace difference knowing, `you are who you are'. After all **God is love, can we afford to segregate love?** Marriage services need to reflect the diversity of relationships around us; and at the very least provide material for same sex blessings. Inclusion is about justice, fairness, knowing that God is a God of love, how can we deny this?

**4. Does the Church of England's current commitment to the environment go far enough?** The Church Commissioners are engaging with some of the global oil and gas producers, such as Shell and BP. Investing Church money in greener forms of energy, supporting and encouraging a better awareness of ecology, and the challenges the world faces, due to climate change, is something the Church must continue to engage in and promote as we seek to exemplify what it means to `Care for God's creation'. Small changes made by communities can lead to big differences, therefore how we care for our Church buildings and grounds is important, because it is an opportunity to set an example. The Church also has an opportunity of `leverage' when considering how and where Church money is invested. Justin Welby Archbishop of Canterbury has spoken recently of the progress the national Church is making. There will always be more that can be done. A good example within the wider Anglican Communion, being the Green Anglican Tree Planting initiative.

**5. How can we take positive action to increase the inclusion and representation of BAME people across the Church?** *Welcome and understanding, celebrating difference and diversity* is key, as the national Church focuses anew on tackling systemic racial injustice. The Church needs to ensure that our collective history is better understood. For too long, history learnt in schools and colleges focused on `explorers, colonizers and missionaries' (white saviour attitudes). We `whitewashed out' people of colour, who have different experiences to our own. We acknowledged slavery but failed to acknowledge the impact that this had on generations of people. We did not consider how we might make reparation. A skewed understanding of the Gospel itself has at times also been used to justify racism, `The light being all that is good' and `the dark representing evil'. In the Church of England after the second world war, we did not always welcome commonwealth citizens into our communities or Churches as equals. This led to communities becoming segregated in all but name.

This led to people from Africa and the Caribbean establishing their own Churches. *We must work more collaboratively with these Churches and communities, and other faith groups, listening to and welcoming people into our Church, not `so they can become like us', but so that we `can learn from them'* and celebrate the joy that is the diversity of difference, one and the same in the image of God.

# SIMON CLIFT

## GENERAL SYNOD ELECTIONS 2021

### Candidates Questions

#### **1. General Synod members are elected for a 5-year period. If elected, what would you hope to achieve during your term of office?**

If re-elected to General Synod for a further 5 years I pledge to continue to:

1. Promote the wellbeing of those in leadership within the Church through my ongoing participation in the Clergy Care & Wellbeing Facilitation Group and by engaging in debate on key issues which have direct impact on clergy wellbeing such as the much-needed revision of the current Clergy Disciplinary Measure (CDM) which in its current format leaves some clergy isolated and unsupported with a profound sense of feeling guilty until proved innocent.
2. Seek to be faithful to God's written word, the Bible and to draw on the tradition of the Church handed down from previous generations as I contribute to debates on a wide range of vital issues for the church and wider society so that we fulfil our calling to proclaim the Gospel afresh in each new generation.
3. Ensure that the voices of our Christian sisters and brothers in other parts of the Anglican Communion are heard within our Synod deliberations as we prepare for the 15th Lambeth Conference rescheduled for July 2022 drawing on my first-hand experience as medical missionary within the Anglican Province of Tanzania and through our diocesan companion links.

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#### **2. The strap line of the Church of England is 'A Christian Presence in Every Community'. What are your thoughts on this statement?**

The Church of England's continues to have a unique role to play as 'a Christian Presence in Every Community'. To ensure this Christian witness is further strengthened we need to:

1. Harness the gifts and callings of all people, both clergy and lay, encouraging everyone to use these skills for the good of God's Kingdom.
2. Equip all people to confidently witness to the love of Christ within their workplaces and through wider community involvement as articulated in Setting God's People Free.
3. Encourage collaborative leadership within parishes & benefices ensuring that Clergy are deployed strategically taking into account both geographical areas and population density.
4. Re-imagine Church developing innovative approaches to both rural & urban mission e.g. in our Diocese where we are piloting Benefice of the Future within rural communities as well as pioneering ministries among 'missing' generations in our deprived urban areas.

5. Work ecumenically as Churches together with our sisters and brothers from other Christian denominations.
6. Recognise the importance of the Church as an agent of social transformation shaping future generations through Church of England schools and by way of example within our Diocese, our network of nurseries and pre-schools, Launchpads through Winchester Social Enterprise.

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### ***3. How do questions about identity, sexuality, relationships, and marriage fit within the bigger picture of the good news of Jesus Christ?***

God's blueprint for identity, sexuality, relationships and marriage is good news indeed, that:

1. men and women are both created in God's image with equal dignity and status.
2. God has ordained Christian marriage as the rightful place of sexual union and as a fundamental building block of family life and for the good of society.
3. In Christ all people irrespective of their gender, sex or relationship status are invited to experience intimacy with God himself as well as the love & acceptance of the Church family.

The Scriptures also speak clearly of the brokenness and sin which tarnishes every aspect of God's good creation marring God's image in all of us as individuals and in our personal relationships.

However, the good news of Jesus Christ is that through repentance & faith, forgiveness, grace, & healing are available to all so that as our identity as individuals and our relationships whether married or single can be restored.

This same good news also points to a future & certain hope that as his people we will be caught up in the ultimate intimacy of fellowship with God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit in the new heaven and the new earth.

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### ***4. Does the Church of England's current commitment to the environment go far enough?***

In February 2020 as a General Synod, we voted overwhelmingly to aim at achieving net zero greenhouse gas emissions for its operations by 2030, strengthening an original proposal to reach that target by 2045. I support this bold & ambitious aim as it both reflects the urgency of the climate crisis and also is intended to inspire us all to "*pick up the pace in the care of God's creation*" quoting the lead bishop for the environment, Rt Revd Nicholas Holtam, the Bishop of Salisbury.

One of the five marks of mission is "*to strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth*" and so working towards achieving this aim is a vital aspect of our collective mission as a Church.

This current commitment also takes seriously our responsibility as the Church of England to the wider Anglican Communion where climate change & ecological collapse are already

being felt most severely by people in marginalized, developing, and least developed parts of the world.

Finally, this Creation care imperative needs to be put alongside the other four marks of mission as we face challenging decisions over the allocation of our time, money and resources.

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***5. How can we take positive action to increase the inclusion and representation of BAME people across the Church?***

To increase the inclusion and representation of United Kingdom Minority Ethnic/ Global Majority Heritage (UKME/GMH) people across the Church I believe we are called upon to live out in practice what the Apostle Paul says in 1 Corinthians 12 :24-26, *“But God has put the body together...so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. If one part suffers, every part suffers with it”*.

We need to be prepared to take positive action in the following ways:

1. Listen carefully to the experience of UKME people within the Church of England as well as GMH Anglicans from our Companion Links across the Communion
2. Repent of the sin of racism and *‘the quiet sense of superiority’* of many of us who are White Majority Europeans (WME)
3. Celebrate the unique insights and wisdom of UKME/GMH Christians for the Church as a whole
4. Promote greater participation of UKME/GMH Anglicans in senior leadership as well as in other areas of the Church where they are under-represented.
5. Consider carefully the other 4 areas for implementation outlined in the Church of England’s Anti-Racism Taskforce recent publication, *From Lament to Action*.

(Word count 200)

**Dr Simon Clift**  
**21<sup>st</sup> September 2021**

# JULIE MAXWELL

## Candidates Questions

### **1. General Synod members are elected for a 5 year period. If elected, what would you hope to achieve during your term of office?**

I would like to increase awareness of some of the issues facing children, young people and their families in our society today. I would also like to get involved in considering how as local churches and the Church of England nationally can better support and reach out to those who are struggling what ever their situation may be.

As we emerge from such a difficult period many people and Churches are considering their priorities and wondering what activities to resume. This is a great opportunity to rethink many of the things we do as Churches and consider whether there are other, better ways to support and engage with society around us.

### **2. The strap line of the Church of England is '*A Christian Presence in Every Community*'. What are your thoughts on this statement?**

The parish system has served the Church of England and the nation well historically but with many congregations dwindling (especially numbers of young people), the increased mobility of many people as well as increased use of online services we need to consider what '*A Christian Presence in Every Community*' might look like going forward.

It is important that everyone can access the gospel wherever they are and the Church of England needs to consider carefully how best to do this in the current situation. Larger Churches could perhaps partner with and support smaller Churches, sharing resources and expertise. Involvement of lay people should be encouraged with appropriate training provided as needed. Churches should equip and support community projects and ventures that raise the profile of the Church and the Gospel out in the community. Services such as toddler groups, youth clubs, parenting support groups, mental health support groups, street pastors, school chaplains to name a few possibilities.

### **3. How do questions about identity, sexuality, relationships, and marriage fit within the bigger picture of the good news of Jesus Christ?**

The Bible presents marriage as a picture of the relationship between Jesus and the Church. Marriage is a very important factor for stable families - family breakdown brings much heartache for all involved and has many negative consequences especially for children. As a Christians we need to do all that we can to support and encourage stable families and as a church there is much that we can do in this area.

Young people today are surrounded by influences from internet and social media which put them under enormous pressure especially in the areas of sexuality and identity. Our culture is highly sexualised and young people are frequently faced with highly stylised images that pressurise them into trying to compete. These young people need to hear the good news of Jesus and the sacrificial love that only he can bring.

Friendship has become much neglected and young people are led to believe that only romantic relationships are important and that you must be in one to be fulfilled. Churches are excellent places to provide young people with spaces to meet and forge friendships without some of the sexualised pressures they may feel elsewhere.

#### **4. Does the Church of England's current commitment to the environment go far enough?**

We have a mandate given by God to take care of his creation and all that is in it. We therefore have a clear responsibility to do all that we can to take care of the environment. It is not an area that I am an expert in but would be interested to learn more and to be involved in considering the Church of England's commitment.

#### **5. How can we take positive action to increase the inclusion and representation of BAME people across the Church?**

The proportion of BAME people in any church will be reflective of local area. We can however talk to BAME members of our churches and ask them how we could increase inclusion and representation. We need to ensure they are visible and represented at the front of church and that examples and quotes used in services reflect a the variety in our congregations. We could consider service and worship styles and ensure they appeal to a wide range of people.

If we are a genuinely welcoming church then we should be attractive to all, including BAME people!

# DANNY STUPPLE

## Candidates Questions

### ANSWERS FROM DANNY STUPPLE

- 1. General Synod members are elected for a 5-year period. If elected, what would you hope to achieve during your term of office?**

I think Phillip North the Suffragan Bishop of Burnley said it better than I ever could in his recent article in the CofE Newspaper on 22.07.21... *"We are enduring a pandemic that has decimated congregations, destroyed youth ministry, wounded our finances and reduced many people to penury. We are ministering to a nation in which 97% of the population never go near to a church and know nothing of the Gospel of salvation. Across our nation, people are asking the big questions of life and death, yearning for relationship with the Lord of Life. In such circumstances, what should matter to us most? And what matters most to the wider church should surely be what matters most to Synod"*.

I would genuinely hope to contribute to helping the business of the next General Synod quinquennium become more the giving of sound guidance – and good legislation – to empower the wider parish-based Church to re-imagine the presentation of the Gospel, as Bishop North suggests.

- 2. The strapline of the Church of England is 'A Christian Presence in Every Community'. What are your thoughts on this statement?**

I am convinced that the idea of the Parish and the CofE having the "cure of souls" for ALL those who live in our Parish, is fully in accord with the teaching and lifestyle of Jesus, as set out in the New Testament. This is probably one of the most solid convictions I hold - and is my main reason for being within the CofE for these past 43 years! This amazingly historic and ancient root in our communities is invaluable, if we are share Christ in a relational and communal context.

There is a challenge now facing us in relation to the place of the Parish in mission : does it stay as it is, or does it develop to move from the expectation of "maintenance", to that of "mission"? If we are to be truly a "Christian Presence" we need to accept that this needs to be explained afresh to the many who have drifted away from such presence over the past two generations. This will need many new and bold creative expressions of the Church in any Parish – both clergy and lay-led.

- 3. How do questions about identity, sexuality, relationships, and marriage fit within the bigger picture of the good news of Jesus Christ?**

I believe our identity is supremely found in Christ alone – and that is good news. By this I mean my worth is rooted in being created and in so being made, we bear the "image of God" - albeit fallen and in desperate need of a Saviour.

Sexuality should not be dealt with separately and viewed as if it is more important than other aspect of our personhood. It does not define us. I view both the call to celibacy and the call to married life, as just that, callings – not simply personal choice and orientation – and that is good news.

Our relationships flow from our identity and seeing that the "you" preposition in the New Testament is primarily plural - not individual. I believe that next to my identity being found in Christ, and in my marriage and natural family, my place in serving amongst the community I live in, is where I find my most satisfying relationships – in sharing the good news.

Marriage for me is clearly defined in creation and throughout the text of holy Scripture, as only being permissible, before God, as between a man and a woman. This is the creation intent – and the Lord called it “very good”.

#### **4. Does the Church of England’s current commitment to the environment go far enough?**

Given my expertise in costing civil engineering construction works and cost-benefit analysis, I believe the recent synodical commitment to zero-carbon by 2030, is unachievable. The Government’s commitment to 2050, seems eminently reasonable and achievable.

That being said, I believe the Christian distinctive in this debate, is towards stewardship of the world’s resources, rather than assuming we can ultimately “save the planet”. So, for me the emphasis should be upon new and disruptive technologies to help the most vulnerable and poor in the short-term. I am very encouraged by advances in possible hydrogen fuel from water and increased dependence upon solar power.

I think the ECO-Church initiative is a worthy endeavour and, on the whole, believe the CofE are committed sufficiently to the environment - but we will need to keep reflecting back and taking new initiatives to model Stewardship as our distinctive as we move into the future.

#### **5. How can we take positive action to increase the inclusion and representation of BAME people across the Church?**

I have had long-term experience working with Asian-British, African-British and Afro-Caribbean- British churches outside the CofE. I note that it is so important to our brothers and sisters from such BAME contexts that we do not, albeit for all the right reasons, seek to positively discriminate in their favour. We cannot in any event, by law, but I am confident they do not want us to.

Therefore, to increase inclusion and representation of BAME people across the Church I think we need to learn from our Pentecostal brothers and sisters, who, it seems to me, are more and more BAME-majority in their assemblies.

Their commitment to lay leadership is key in this and I think this would soon redress any under-representation.

# JOHN ADAMS

## Candidate Questions

### **1. General Synod members are elected for a 5 year period. If elected, what would you hope to achieve during your term of office?**

I have achieved substantial skills chairing large service organisations, that offer essential services to the community, my ability to work within a structured organisation, and working as a team, has helped me through life.

I would like to investigate the method whereby Congregations are helped to achieve their pastoral care and their spiritual growth. The Communities they serve should be researched and communicated with.

Any local authorities and societies should feel the warmth and support of the Church.

Following the recent pandemic, there is so much to learn, improve, and, perhaps review. Finances are worrying, and the congregation is with fewer attendees. We have to find ways to encourage people back, and encourage new members to join the church. The regular ways may have to be reviewed, and although everyone has not got a computer, electronic communication, is the way used by so many to keep up to date.

### **2. The strap line of the Church of England is 'A Christian Presence in Every Community'. What are your thoughts on this statement?**

The Christian Presence in society allows a sociable, flexible, creative existence, with love, Joy, and forgiveness.

We are living our own lives through our father, Our Lord, Jesus Christ, we heal our own pain, to achieve inner peace by actually trying to relieve the pain of others. Our love of life can ripple out to all those around us, it's quite contagious, as is love, compassion, and Generosity.

Peace must come from within. We cannot bring peace if we don't have inner peace. We are social beings, and we need trustful, genuine friends. Pain causes self focus.

Self centred people are socially withdrawn. Happy people, with a combined faith are more sociable, flexible, and creative, more able to tolerate and tackle life's daily problems.

Do good for others, help others, be empathetic, patient, understand, and listen to their needs.

Everything is interrelated Be meaningful, use your natural talents to help society. Lead by example.

### **3. How do questions about identity, sexuality, relationships, and marriage fit within the bigger picture of the good news of Jesus Christ?**

Throughout my life I have always served my community: As a youth leader, as a Special Constable, as a hospital governor, as a local Councillor, as a justice of the Peace, as a charity trustee, looking after the Homeless, and often I have been chosen by my colleagues to represent these bodies nationally.

All these discipline's need the same thing-the ability to listen, then the ability to reason, communicate, and act. My lifelong teacher has always helped me, My prayers each day help me, Jesus Christ has given his wisdom and help, throughout mankind, throughout the world. We are all members of his flock, whatever our colour, race, and sexuality. We are loved by him.

However, we all have to work to earn our daily bread, and we all must not give in to temptation.

I used to visit prisons, and one day was at a prison, surrounded by prisoners, as I was chairman of the Magistrates Association. There was initially a little verbal abuse in that meeting, but when we were all together for some thirty minutes, a prisoner asked if he could talk to me privately. I agreed, and he said- He was forty five years old- and had been in prison all his life- he was aware that he wanted to do his time, and not return, He said, all he wanted now, was a job, and a house, and a car. I told him, yes, but you know, that's what everyone wants, and they have to work hard, legally, and learn to peacefully, live in society, learn to help others, learn to trust mankind. We were holding that meeting in the chapel. I prayed for him that night. I hoped he managed to stay out of trouble. As he parted from me he had said 'Bless you' to me!

#### **4. Does the Church of England's current commitment to the environment go far enough?**

The Climate Change committee recommended, and it was passed that All Social Homes owned by the church should have an EPC setting of C by 2028- seven years time! The Churches themselves are to have Zero targets!

A recent report indicated that 33 per cent off all residential and commercial properties have already reached their target.

40 per cent of Church properties are listed, which poses a huge problem, due to the stringent planning laws protecting their alteration, therefore planning authorities and other agencies are going to hopefully assist, but it will take quite a long time.

Also there is always the financial cost to change boilers, etc.

Yes, I applaud the move, and the intention to go as green efficient as we can, and I think we are trying hard. Yet, I am sure we could do better!

#### **5. How can we take positive action to increase the inclusion and representation of BAME people across the Church?**

Our church is world wide, our church is ever forgiving, our church welcomes the people of the world everywhere. It was the driving force of the church to send missionaries, everywhere.

So we should still expand, and welcome every one, every one.

We should join, and welcome the many societies, charities, hospital boards, etc.

we can, through social media, through meetings, arrange gatherings showing the welcome offered to all, at our churches by the love of Jesus Christ.

I have arranged several meetings of different faiths, and get to know them- we have so much in common! When I've seen a completely different custom, faith, or race, I've tried to get to know them.

I did this to Gypsies, once, with an understanding of them being brought to all of us that were present. I, we got to understand their needs, their phobias, their fears! I believe that the church is an ideal catalyst to create these meetings. We do welcome everybody, to understand our love of Christ.

I have been fortunate to travel the world substantially, each far off country fascinates me, and we all have so much to learn about each other, and be able to show the love of God in our worship.

## Andrew Orange – Answers to Candidate Questions

1. General Synod members are elected for a 5 year period. If elected, what would you hope to achieve during your term of office?

- **The Church of England is in a serious crisis.** We must turn ourselves to a better direction, and put the organisation back onto a solid foundation.
- **I would look for initiatives that reinforce the central purpose of the church,** which is to promote understanding of the life of Christ, and to provide worship. Too often the pronouncements of the Church are around the issues of today, and are rarely about Christ and why our faith is important.
- **I would look for initiatives that would make the church more relevant** to the ordinary person. Over the other side of the Atlantic, 23% of Americans attend church every week, but in England attendance is in single figures. There is no simple, easy fix but one thing I'd hope to achieve is the design of a new programme to achieve revitalisation of the Church at the local level.
- Finally being an accountant, **I would look for initiatives that would put the church on a sounder financial footing.** The Church is not without resources, but it is currently not sufficiently clear how it spends its money, and the prioritisation between parishes, dioceses, and national institutions needs to be made clearer.

2. The strap line of the Church of England is 'A Christian Presence in Every Community'. What are your thoughts on this statement?

I am perfectly happy with this strap line; it resonates with the objectives of the Save the Parish movement, which I support. I would like to add to it:

We not only need to be present in every community, we need to be **evident** – no point in our presence if it is a hidden one, or one that is locked-up, or a 'club'. Our buildings, our services, and our clergy (within reason) need to be available and open for ordinary people when they need them. (I believe it was a mistake to close our church buildings during lockdowns.)

I believe that we should be **unconditionally open**, and never be judgemental to anyone standing at the door. I see the image of Christ the Redeemer in Rio, with his open arms, as a guide as to how we should be.

Finally I think we should try to be **'normal'**! For some, entering a church is a similar experience to you or me entering a betting shop. It's important that we counter this strangeness by giving people opportunity to come to our churches for events other than services. At the same time we need to guard the spiritual aura of our places.

### 3. How do questions about identity, sexuality, relationships, and marriage fit within the bigger picture of the good news of Jesus Christ?

Everything we say and do **should be rooted in the life of Christ**. In my interpretation of the gospels – I hope that you agree - Jesus was not impressed by rules. He was critical of the Pharisees for their blind adherence to rules whilst ignoring the needs of the moment.

On the other hand, **Jesus gave us two firm commandments, to love God and to love our neighbours as ourselves**. I think we need to hold these commandments in our heads when we come to consider matters of identity, sexuality, relationships, and marriage. I think that if we focus on the love of God, the differences in our standpoints on these issues may start to blur.

I believe that **Christ's ministry was all about being inclusive**, and as his followers, we should be naturally inclusive too. Regarding marriage and celebration of partnerships, it seems to me we should be allowing people to express their commitment to each other in church, before God, whether they are same sex or opposite sex. So I would support any moves to allow same-sex marriages in church.

### 4. Does the Church of England's current commitment to the environment go far enough?

Jesus lived in political times (the Roman occupation of Palestine) – and so do we. I am sure there were many contemporary issues that Jesus might have been tempted to speak about – but he didn't, keeping his ministry to the spiritual messages that we study today.

In a similar way, I think the **Church of England should commit itself to doing the right things for the environment in its own operations, where practical, but it should not let this distract from its ministry**. Environment and Climate Change are immensely important issues for the world, but they need political solutions beyond the church, and the Church of England should keep to the spiritual messaging, resisting the temptation to be political.

At this time of harvest festivals, **there is in fact a lot that can be said in the spiritual messaging: about our custody of the world and its resources**, and our duty to be responsible trustees of the wonderful creation that we have around us. The Church of England can, and should, tell us to care about it all – but it must resist straying off-piste from putting Christ at the centre of all that it says and does.

5. How can we take positive action to increase the inclusion and representation of BAME people across the Church?

It shocks me a bit that 'Inclusion' is even a topic for Synod discussion, because in my thinking **Christ's ministry was all about being inclusive**, and as his followers, we should be naturally inclusive too.

Regarding positive action, **I like the model of Nelson Mandela in South Africa**. Mandela was able to see that everybody has something to contribute, and what was needed was a rainbow nation where nobody was singled-out, but all were respected and welcomed for what they could bring. Using this analogy, I would be concerned if we only had 'blue' and 'green', and lacked the other colours – so yes we should be out to make ourselves as colourful as possible, and on the look-out to fill any gaps in the rainbow – BAME and more too - and guarding against our own prejudices.

**I don't believe in having quotas or special electorates** to correct the balance of representation, as I think this can become divisive, and at this time of crisis in the Church of England, we need to have the best people whoever they are!

# SUSAN TURNER

## General Synod Elections 2021: Laity Candidate (Winchester Diocese)

### Written answers to Questions 1-5

**1. General Synod members are elected for a 5 year period. If elected, what would you hope to achieve during your term of office?**

If elected to Synod, I would endeavour to be a voice for the silent majority, who have been and are marginalised, by the lack of transparency and information about radical changes, over which they have no say or control. This has created a perception of a determination by the Church hierarchy to implement such change despite any opposition.

If the battle against ever-increasing secularism is not to be lost, we must be the torchbearers that hold fast to our Christian ideals, until a reaction against the prevailing moral free-for-all loses its appeal in society, and not be over-hasty in following trends in order to be thought 'modern'. I believe that the Parish network is a means to that end, and I will strive towards its survival.

**2. The strap line of the Church of England is '*A Christian Presence in Every Community*'. What are your thoughts on this statement?**

'A Christian Presence in Every Community', is an ideal aim. However, the reality of the continued drive towards centralisation, contradicts this. Following the closure and re-structuring of the Parishes, there are many communities without the presence of a Priest, who can provide spiritual support and stability, when so much else is disappearing and changing in daily life.

Everyone in every community is entitled to the Services of the Parish church, both by law and custom, including the Sacraments and notably Marriage. It should not be a passive role but one that is pro-active and welcoming.

The leaking away of congregations, exacerbated by Covid and the closure of churches, will make it even more difficult for the Church to survive, but surely it is worth a change in direction to try, by saving what we have, rather than flying to unknown outcomes in an attempt to keep up with current trends, which may well be redundant in a generation, whereas the Church has survived a thousand years.

**3. How do questions about identity, sexuality, relationships, and marriage fit within the bigger picture of the good news of Jesus Christ?**

The Church should welcome all those who wish to follow Christ's teaching and worship within the family of the Church of England. However, whilst various majority groups demand their right so to do, there must be an acceptance of the responsibility that goes with that right. To become part of the Church is to endeavour to live a Christian life, not merely to make narrow political points.

Same-sex couples have a right to civil marriage, but there has been pressure to extend a right to the Sacrament of Marriage, despite the statement 'to join together this Man and this Woman in holy Matrimony'. Therefore, to accommodate a minority, should the Church relinquish the right to perform the Sacrament and offer a new form of Marriage in the shape of a Blessing generally, or should the Church retain the right to perform the Sacrament?

Modern society has become over-sexualised and historically the Church has never been particularly clear in its attitudes to sexual behaviour. With the spread of social media and the insidious harm to the young, the Church should now be vocal in speaking up against its dangers, and propagating the idea of restraint and confidence in self-value. Surely there must be a counter to the idea of immediate gratification which has grown in Society and in which the sexual act has become diminished and trivialised. This is not a popular view. In the past, advocates for sexual restraint were vilified and mocked, but their fears have been vindicated.

Most groups of different sexual orientation, by and large, now have the freedom in law to live as they wish, but minority civil law does not necessarily lead to a wider morality in Society. The Church should not fear reaction to speaking out where change in law can create injustice to other members of Society.

#### **4. Does the Church of England's current commitment to the environment go far enough?**

The protection of the environment is of paramount importance. The Archbishop of Canterbury was quoted in the Press recently, saying that individual effort cannot be enough and that the onus should lie with governments and companies.

**The church has urgent priorities, not least championing the environment, but there are issues within the church which if not addressed could culminate in losing its authority. It is the responsibility of us all to promote protection of the environment, with support and encouragement from those in positions of power and authority.**

#### **5. How can we take positive action to increase the inclusion and representation of BAME people across the Church?**

It is a given that the Church should not and hopefully does not discriminate in any way, for as Christ teaches we are all of equal value before God. Unfortunately, the categorisation of people as BAME or the campaigning of groups like BLM are in themselves divisive, and aggressive demands are counter-productive - when it was opined '**All** Lives Matter', the ensuing criticisms silenced that opinion. Clearly, every church should monitor and deal with any overt or covert sign of unwelcome to **any** who wish to worship.

Appointments within the Church, at every level, should be based on merit, ensuring and encouraging opportunity for study towards ordination from candidates of ability, drawn from all levels of society.

Rural Parishes, which have no BAME inhabitants, cannot fulfil Diocesan demands for inclusion, when there are none to include; such demands show lack of awareness of local parishes by centralised Administrations. However, any such parish should and in my opinion would welcome a parish priest or member of the congregation from any race or colour. I was recently in a parish where the priest was originally from Jamaica: he was most welcomed by all - and was the only BAME person present!

## CHRIS SCOGGINS

### Chris Scoggins' responses to the Candidates Questions

**1. General Synod members are elected for a 5 year period. If elected, what would you hope to achieve during your term of office?**

I would engage fully with the business of the Synod so as to contribute to the development of the Church of England. I intend to do this whilst listening to and engaging with you, the electors in our diocese.

I would:

- stand for unity and the revitalisation of the Church
- support Archbishop Justin in his priorities of evangelism, reconciliation, and prayer
- prioritise an outward-looking agenda for the Church of England

I want to see the Church growing as quickly as possible in order that we can share the good news of Jesus with everyone in an effective, relationship-based way.

**2. The strap line of the Church of England is 'A Christian Presence in Every Community'. What are your thoughts on this statement?**

This is the unique gift and strength of the church, to be able to be the incarnational presence of Jesus to and within every community.

Currently something less than 3% of our nation attend church. It is of paramount importance that we create opportunities for the other 97% to encounter Jesus or to return to Him and His church. So we need to maximise the reach of church so that we can share the good news of Jesus with everyone.

Sharing Jesus is best done through relationships, through church communities that are outward facing, generous and build up everyone who encounters them. Church communities need to enable anyone to feel that they truly belong and are at home, without giving any impression of criticising or not embracing those who may be different from some of the current members; each part of the body is different and complementary as Paul says.

This requires church leaders to demonstrate the culture, values and behaviours that are needed throughout the congregation; and the leadership to become more diverse itself, so that people can recognise something of themselves in and so feel comfortable with those leading.

Church schools are a key part of the mission to have a presence in every community, and I believe that we must make every effort to ensure that these schools are truly displaying their distinctive Christian ethos.

### **3. How do questions about identity, sexuality, relationships, and marriage fit within the bigger picture of the good news of Jesus Christ?**

The good news of Jesus is always for everyone. We need to honour our diversity as humans whilst leaving room for difference. As a matter of observable fact we are all created at varying points along a spectrum for any one characteristic, be that physical height, chromosomal count (for instance the recent controversy over DSD athletes in the Olympic Games) or our sexuality; we are called not to judge but to show God's love to all people.

I believe in a generous orthodoxy.

Jesus comes for everyone – so I believe the key is that we work to enable any individual we encounter to feel truly understood and listened to and feel 'at home' in every church community. I believe that it is only in this way that we can we lead people to him whatever their identity and whatever their views on sexuality, relationships or marriage might be.

### **4. Does the Church of England's current commitment to the environment go far enough?**

Climate change is already affecting each one of us and the situation is extremely urgent, as I am sure you already know. It must be a top priority for every part of the church to show how we follow God's injunction to steward creation well.

While the Church Commissioners target date of 2050 to achieve a net zero investment portfolio is in line with the Paris Agreement, I believe that all the National Investing Bodies should look at setting themselves more challenging targets. The recent announcement that the carbon intensity of the Commissioners'

investments can be reduced by 25% over the next 4 years surely means that this essential change can be driven more quickly?

I welcome Synod's February 2020 decision to bring forward by 15 years the target date for achieving 'net zero church' to 2030, however Synod now needs to move more quickly. It has urgently called for an action plan – but the action plan has yet to be published.

A major contributor to the carbon footprint of church activities is the impact of the travel choices of those attending church. While the guidance includes installing cycle locking stations a much bigger issue is the communications and messaging to those attending church to promote low-carbon transport choices, car pooling, etc.

## **5. How can we take positive action to increase the inclusion and representation of BAME people across the Church?**

We must remove all the behaviours that have hitherto lead to BAME people feeling the need to set up separate churches. Our church communities need to enable anyone to feel that they truly belong and are at home, so that everyone feels fully included; each part of the body is different and complementary as Paul says.

We should listen to and learn from BAME people, understanding their experiences and their journeys to and in the church. We should make space to hear their stories and to understand what it's like to be from a BAME background, as we did in my church – we set up story-telling evenings in the wake of the murder of George Floyd. We should then reflect on what we can do in our church community to improve matters.

The leaders of our churches should demonstrate the culture, values and behaviours that they would like to see throughout the congregation. Our churches should live a culture which honours BAME people and rejoices in how God has made us all differently.

Church communities need a strong focus on making all newcomers fully and completely welcome, where every person seeks to engage with any new person they see and takes responsibility for incorporating them into relationships with others in the community.

# EVE PATERSON

Candidates Questions – Eve Paterson

## **1. General Synod members are elected for a 5-year period. If elected, what would you hope to achieve during your term of office?**

*Over the last two years we have journeyed through a season of unmitigated change. Thus, I won't pretend to know what the next five years will hold, but I do trust that God always has good plans for His people, so we can look forward with excitement to what He has in store for us.*

*What I'm most passionate about in the next five years is seeing the church mobilised to serve our communities on a local level and being released to play a greater role in fighting injustices on a national and global level. I know there are questions arising around the nature of marriage and other theological concerns that we must address, but I am keen that these important discussions don't distract from our greater purpose to love and serve our world.*

*In light of this, I am committed to listening to and learning from historically under-represented voices in the Church, ensuring they are given the right platforms to promote change. Alongside this, I would like to help explore where the Church can take on more responsibility in the fight against climate change and the alleviation of poverty and oppression around the world.*

## **2. The strap line of the Church of England is 'A Christian Presence in Every Community'. What are your thoughts on this statement?**

*Many of us love the Church for the way it can give us a sense of belonging, an opportunity to worship, and a space to grow in our faith, but our local churches play a much more varied role for people in our communities.*

*I love that one of the Church's main aims is to serve its non-members – it's probably the only organisation in the world that can honestly say it does that. Our strapline epitomises this call to look beyond our walls and out into our communities, just as Jesus did. We know our impact doesn't begin and end on Sundays, but rather it is in the daily presence of a worshipping, welcoming, loving family of believers seeking to serve their local area.*

*Because of this, I believe it is vital for the Church of England to maintain local churches and continue the work of God's Spirit in members and non-members alike. We may need to become more agile and creative to ensure congregations remain viable, but if we keep our focus on loving one another and serving our communities together then I believe we can continue to be "A Christian Presence in Every Community" for generations to come.*

## **3. How do questions about identity, sexuality, relationships, and marriage fit within the bigger picture of the good news of Jesus Christ?**

*The good news of Jesus is that our past, our sexuality, our race, our gender, and our age cannot separate us from the love of God and there's a place for everyone in the Church. We have a*

*responsibility to ensure that everyone is welcomed into the Church and given the opportunity to experience the love of Jesus for themselves.*

*I also think culture has convinced us that our sexuality, our gender, our marital status, and our income are the most important things about us. But I think being in a personal relationship with Jesus brings us back to the truth that His opinion of us is the only one that truly matters.*

*While I believe God cares about our gender and sexuality, because He loves us as our father and creator, His plan for each of our lives goes far beyond that. I think we understand our identity and our role in God's mission far more fully when we first and foremost see ourselves as children of God and His witnesses to the world. In light of this, the church has a responsibility to model unity, disagreeing well and choosing to love one another despite differences of opinion.*

#### **4. Does the Church of England's current commitment to the environment go far enough?**

*I think the Church has made significant and valuable steps of intent regarding the importance of creation care, but I don't believe any of us have grasped the full scale and urgency of the problem and begun to act in accordance with that reality yet.*

*In light of this, I'm keen for the Church to make creation care its next major project. This is not just a scientific conundrum, there are definite theological and humanitarian implications to this issue that we must take seriously, such as the way that poorer communities will be disproportionately affected by rising sea levels. The Church has a large and powerful platform, meaning people listen when the Church speaks, so my prayer is that our voice will ring out loud and clear on the need for greater and faster action on tackling climate change.*

*Creation care isn't a side line project for those who are passionate about social action. It should be front and centre as a priority for anyone who takes seriously the Bible's call to steward creation out of love for our Creator.*

#### **5. How can we take positive action to increase the inclusion and representation of BAME people across the Church?**

*When discussing inclusion and representation, we must first acknowledge the Church's past mistreatment of oppressed, marginalised and under-represented people. In response, I have spent time learning about racial injustice, recognising my white privilege, and committing to being an ally to people of colour (PoC). This is a core outworking of my faith and my belief that we are all created equal by God.*

*When we view the Church in light of eternity, we know that one day we will worship God as a united people from every tribe and tongue, but this is not just a picture of our future reality; it's a vision for the kind of Church we can build today.*

*I believe General Synod needs to become more representative of the wider church body, increasing accessible opportunities for PoC and those from different class or educational backgrounds. I am aware that promoting diversity as a white candidate may seem ironic, so I take seriously the*

*responsibility to ensure that other women, PoC, and those from disadvantaged backgrounds are given a platform for their voices through me. I see this happening by increasing transparency about what General Synod does and actively supporting those who are keen to engage.*

# ALISON COULTER

## Candidates Questions

### 1. General Synod members are elected for a 5 year period. If elected, what would you hope to achieve during your term of office?

I would hope to:

- Continue to speak confidently to ensure good representation of the lay voice in Synod debates and working groups.
- Continue the work I started in my first term as part of the Setting God's People Free Advisory Group, developing Lay Leadership and Everyday Faith, ensuring lay voices and experiences are well represented in the new vision and strategy.
- Continue to lead The Evangelical Forum, a Synod Fringe group.
- Take part prayerfully in our debates: I commit to doing my homework reading and being present (as I did in the previous term.)
- Build unity and respect, especially where there are strong differences of opinion. I fully support the Living in Love and Faith work to ensure that everyone feels welcomed and included in our Church, whatever their sexuality.
- Encourage the simplification work that started as part of Renewal and Reform but which has a long way to go: we need a more agile church, more adept at supporting the people, Parishes and Dioceses, with a focus on resourcing local Church in our communities.

### 2. The strap line of the Church of England is '*A Christian Presence in Every Community*'. What are your thoughts on this statement?

Yes, I agree! We have an amazing heritage in the Parish system which ensures that there is 'A Christian Presence in Every Community' in England, and I want to make sure we don't lose this precious inheritance. Times have changed, however, since the Parish system was first established and we have to be real about this change. Church attendance is falling, and more than half our Parish Churches have no children or young people in their congregations. Just as those medieval Christians were visionary and bold in setting up Parish churches, I think we also need to be visionary and bold to ensure that our Christian Presence is sustainable, affordable and relevant to our communities. So I am all in favour of supporting local Parish churches, where that is viable. But where the Church is not flourishing, or a small rural community is burdened with an expensive Grade 1 listed building, I think we need to be imaginative and brave and to change how we make this vision work. I

don't think this needs to be one size fits all, and we need to work with local communities to see what will work best for them.

### **3. How do questions about identity, sexuality, relationships, and marriage fit within the bigger picture of the good news of Jesus Christ?**

I believe that each person is created in the image of God and is loved by God. The good news of Jesus Christ is for everyone, whatever their gender or sexual preference; each person is known and loved by God. In John's Gospel, Jesus says, "I have come that they might have life and have it abundantly." I believe this promise is for everyone.

I believe that marriage is an important gift from God, but I also believe that marriage is not the only way to live: Jesus himself was not married. I think that, as a Church, we have emphasised the importance of marriage often at the expense of other relationships, in particular friendship. There are many people who are not married, for many reasons including divorce, bereavement, or singleness. I would like to see more support for single people and more affirmation of the importance of Christian friendship in our Church communities.

I have a number of friends and family in committed, loving, same-sex relationships, and I want to accept them and affirm them: I believe that Jesus loves people whatever their sexual preferences.

### **4. Does the Church of England's current commitment to the environment go far enough?**

I was part of the General Synod Climate Change debate in February 2020. We voted to be more ambitious than the original motion that the Church of England should become carbon neutral by 2045 and voted that this should happen by 2030. This is a very ambitious target, but the feeling at Synod (which I supported) was that we needed to take the challenge seriously, particularly since climate change is a greater threat to the most vulnerable in our society, and to poorer nations. I was impressed by the young people who spoke in the debate about the concern felt by their generation, reminding us that the consequences of our decisions and lifestyles will be felt by future generations. I think the Church of England has shown admirable and ambitious commitment to this issue, but the real challenge now is implementing changes to achieve this goal. This will need all of us to change the way we live – using less, buying differently, recycling more. Together, we have

some very difficult realities to face, which will mean changes for all of us; for example, how can we continue to heat several hundred grade 1 listed churches AND use less energy?

#### **5. How can we take positive action to increase the inclusion and representation of BAME people across the Church?**

I am deeply saddened by and sorry for the racism that my BAME brothers and sisters in the Church have experienced. I am committed to making sure that the Church becomes inclusive, just and fair to all people, whatever their race and background. I am white British and I know that, in spite of my commitment to inclusion, I still have an unconscious bias. We need to be aware of our bias, support and listen to BAME people in the Church and encourage them and enable them to have a voice. We need to invite them to become more visible by nominating or co-opting them to join our PCCs and Synods, inviting them to serve in our Churches in visible and affirming ways in order that they don't remain hidden or marginalised. We need to ensure we make time at every level of Church governance, to hear their voices and perspectives. I support the idea for a lead for Racial Inclusion in every Diocese. I think this should be funded by the Church Commissioners as a practical and visible commitment to the importance of racial inclusion, as discussed at General Synod in July 2021.

# RODOLPH DE SALIS

## General Synod Election 2021

### 1. General Synod members are elected for a five-year period. If elected, what would you hope to achieve during your term of office?

Scrutinise; draft; examine upcoming Measures; propose; represent; amend; learn; listen stand up for the quiet congregants, 'passengers', who come along every week and often give the church significant amounts...

Watch out for measures that seek to precipitately close things as has just happened in Hampshire (where viable parishes have been cancelled and their vicarages sold). LESS one-size-fits-all response in the future-

Oppose proposals which centralise power and authority.

Thus amend or Oppose: THE MISSION AND PASTORAL MEASURE 2011 (GS2222) it defines how parish boundaries can be changed, whether clerics can be 'dis-appointed' if parishes are amalgamated, how clergy are appointed in parochial and nonparochial roles, yet 'checks and balances but not blockages.' The danger of sweeping away protections is real; removing a vast number of the rights of local parishes, clergy, and communities.

I'd watch out for the liturgy, as 'Liturgy protects the laity from the clergy', and now even more so 'protects the laity from the laity'.

Probably oppose: CENS – the Church of England National Services  
*'the crucial thing keeping inherently messy organisations together is a belief in the cause. They don't even need better management flow charts, they don't need more command and control – often less of it – they need better preachers. And the Holy Spirit has no need of acronyms'.*

### 2. The strap line of the Church of England is 'A Christian Presence in Every Community'. What are your thoughts on this statement?

Christians should try to behave well wherever we are, thus we can take this effort around with us, to work, & play in all our communities and actions.

However, the parish is at the heart of the Church of England and best means of evangelism. It informs every aspect of our mission and our vision of ourselves.

The parish is prized well beyond those who attend church on a Sunday, and is spoken of passionately by bishops and archbishops.

Thus the community is clergy, vicarage, church school, church (often clearly a beacon-spires, towers, etc) itself representing both physical & spiritual, fete, coffee mornings, informal clergy surgeries, wondering around, administrations

Parishes — *'often small, semi-independent pockets of half-organised goodness, spreading out into their communities rhizomatically'.*

Trust the local, the vernacular.

### **3. How do questions about identity, sexuality, relationships, and marriage fit within the bigger picture of the good news of Jesus Christ?**

This refers to a CofE process or survey called -Living in Love and Faith-

To identify as a Christian, isn't that enough? Christianity is already by definition inclusive, and the CofE is for all. Parish churches are fundamental to the Church of England's identity. Sexuality waxes and wanes, sometimes it is irrelevant and if two same sex people want to live together, why not bless them, we have pet and crop blessing services? I attended the blessing in his own Church of a man-man marriage of the Rector of St Mary of Eton, Hackney Wick circa 2011, that seemed ok, and he is still married, though now a Scots Episcopalian dean.

The BCP recommends matrimony for three things, two of which can be achieved by same-sex couples, ie stability & mutual society. Other greater sins are available? Heterosexual fornication is a great problem, (as is nowadays legalised covetousness, viz Compulsory Purchase Orders, and some aspects of recruitment agencies).

Having said that the Bible, God and Christ are explicit (Mark 10.8, Matthew 19.5, Ephesians 5.31, Genesis 2.24), ergo the proper field given to us for human sexual relations is within marriage which is for life between a man and a woman.

### **4. Does the Church of England's current commitment to the environment go far enough?**

Genesis says "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth." And God said, "Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed which is upon the face of all the earth, ...", yet this gift comes with a requirement to look after it, ie be SUSTAINABLE.

Adam & Eve teach us that misuse of God's fruit can have dire consequences.

We have 'SC21/01 Diocesan Approach to Carbon Net Zero by 2030', the commitment is in line with the Church of England's national target of net zero carbon emissions by 2030, set at General Synod in 2020, the Fifth Mark of Mission, & there is the upcoming Climate Sunday in November.

The CofE already sets good example, the best example anywhere, with our make-do-and-mend: using buildings some 1000 years old; mostly built to maximise light, thick walls for warmth, stained disco glass, robust pews, and acoustics so electricity not required, healthily spacious to minimise virus spread, with many doors. The CofE could set up some things like Leckford - John Lewis style farms which could double as retreat centres (reinventing the Monastic wheel). As mentioned CofE should encourage on its land: coppicing in woods, no (tree) plantations, grass meadows, methods of planting and cropping to minimise soil degradation, and avoid poisons, & where small parcels of land remain as charity or quasi glebe to keep as farmland & let it out to young (to enable them to learn) or just to small farmers.

## **5. How can we take positive action to increase the inclusion and representation of BAME people across the Church?**

Accepting and loving all neighbours, and interlopers, is at the heart of Christian thought and being.

What attracts people would be a constant, ie race should be irrelevant- viz punctual, disciplined, accurate noticeboards, congenial congregations, (impressive?) and regular services, not too long, and light touch welcome- as in, some people want to be embraced others to be left alone. There are as many types of BAME as there are varieties of Christian so one shouldn't generalise, besides some BAMEs don't like the acronym.

Having many parishes and PCCs is a way to lure the shy, an easy gateway to presentation.

Keeping churches unlocked also fosters.

Things like Church fetes and schools are ways to include people who hadn't quite yet considered actual Church going.

This diocese's work with Mityana, Uganda is a fruitful avenue.

CofE could make more noise in defence of persecuted Christians in Africa and Asian, and everywhere, such robustness would be attractive.

In clergy terms the first Black bishop was Sir Wilfred Wood, Bishop of Croydon (1985 to 2003), from Barbados.

Other significant BAME bishops have been John Sentamu, (York), from Uganda; Michael Nazir-Ali, (Rochester), from Karachi; and Rose Hudson-Wilkin, (Dover), from Jamaica (CofE via Church Army).

## GENERAL SYNOD ELECTIONS 2021

### Candidates' Questions ... and Alwyn Ladell's answers.

1. General Synod members are elected for a 5 year period. If elected, what would you hope to achieve during your term of office?

As the roof of a church nave may remind us of the inverted hull of a boat, so the Church may be likened to a ship navigating the sea of life. The role of Synod is to maintain a steady course, respond to external conditions, make any necessary corrections, and facilitate the crew in protecting and enabling the ship's company to reach its destination safely.

My personal concerns, anticipating agenda items to come, are to ensure we preserve the integrity of our parish system, protecting the checks and balances that have been incorporated over centuries, and promoting it as the frontline of our mission and ministry.

The seal of sacramental confession is something we share with the worldwide church. I would strive to defend our clergy from secular or political pressures to undermine this sacred trust.

I do not believe we have the authority to alter the received teachings of the Church as defined in her historic Creeds and Councils. I would therefore resist any attempts to force the church into redefining marriage.

I support the Five Guiding Principles, with the pastoral and sacramental provision they enshrine, and would seek to ensure they are upheld without any specified time limit.

2. The strap line of the Church of England is '*A Christian Presence in Every Community*'. What are your thoughts on this statement?

From the earliest apostolic meetings in synagogues and homes, Christians have come together to pray, break bread, teach, learn and receive the Holy Spirit. As Christianity came to these islands, over many centuries, church and parish have become part of the fabric of the nation, enshrined in the very structure of our communities: part of their lifeblood. The daunting responsibility of the care and cure of souls given to a priest is the essence of parish ministry. The parish is the place where the priest builds that needful relationship, the church is the gathering place and sanctuary at its heart. As stewards of

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this precious inheritance, we risk losing it at our peril and must not allow it to be threatened by shortages of priests or cash.

The Bishop of Burnley wrote to the Blackburn Diocese: *"We will never 'manage' or 'decline' our way out of a crisis... Only faith can do that. As a diocese we remain committed to parish life, to maintaining our current numbers of stipendiary clergy, to forming excellent priests and lay leaders and to investing in the front line. We need more vocations to the priesthood and more lay leaders. And we need you!"*

3. How do questions about identity, sexuality, relationships, and marriage fit within the bigger picture of the good news of Jesus Christ?

I am as conflicted as the Court of Appeal by the gender dysphoria bandwagon and the vogue for self-identifying in a gender other than that which was defined at birth. Anomalies do occur in Nature and sometimes medical intervention is helpful. My concerns include puberty blockers and gender reassignment before an age of discrimination, dangers associated with safety in public conveniences and changing rooms, and the minefield of fairness in sport.

Marriage predates both Christianity and Judaism. When heterosexual relationships result in procreation, marriage helps define the family unit and protect offspring. Jesus taught that marriage is temporal and warned that lustful thoughts equate to adultery in the heart. Echoing St Paul, the BCP acknowledged the element of containment for carnal desires. Decriminalising loving relationships outside the traditional model was right but, regardless of secular arrangements which may cause confusion, I would resist attempts to compel clergy into solemnising same-sex marriages.

For me motive is crucial. A selfish relationship, treating a partner as a sex-object, dehumanises and tends to deprave. On the other hand, generous and unselfish love is not confined to heterosexual relationships - though finding a way to endorse it, without detracting from traditional marriage, is not easy.

4. Does the Church of England's current commitment to the environment go far enough?

Even from a secular standpoint, it is clear from rapidly advancing climate change, global warming, shrinking polar ice caps, rising sea levels, forest fires, reducing biodiversity, the increasing frequency of extreme weather events, air and water quality, harmful farming methods and industrial pollution, that none of us is going far enough in our

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commitments or practical efforts to protect the natural world we inhabit. The vocation of the Church in this unfolding situation is to set it in the context of the gift of Creation. I am no fundamentalist or creationist but, perceiving the Mind of God in the whole created order, it is clearly incumbent on us to cherish and honour holistically that Divine Plan. Whilst there is room for debate and interpretation, we must respect conscience and freewill, avoiding a dogmatic approach. The Church should rather lead by example, demonstrating and encouraging best practice, and using its investment potential to influence the commercial world for the better. The cost of change for local churches often comes at a price which cash-strapped PCCs struggle to afford and the leeway for grants may be limited. However, guidance through Diocesan Advisory Committees and church insurers, etc., can play a decisive role.

5. How can we take positive action to increase the inclusion and representation of BAME people across the Church?

There can be no place for racism in the Church. As part of the worldwide Anglican Communion, we share a rich heritage of Christian traditions around the globe. The Church of England glories in diversity and one of its strengths is as a broad church: embracing differences of ethos whilst holding true to the received faith of the Church in its most catholic sense. As the Established Church we welcome all in search of God, respecting the freedoms of non-Christians to practice their beliefs freely; but, remembering that we have a Gospel to proclaim, politely declining to dilute the Christian message in our churches, schools or culture in general. Whilst we may express regret for outdated attitudes, I do not believe it possible to apologise on behalf of others and am very wary of removing historic memorials. Tolerance is a sign of maturity in religion. In our Christian country, with its myriad of multicultural expressions, our role is to educate and lead by example - not by tyranny. At the same time, we need to stand foursquare alongside Christians who are persecuted around the world, challenging oppression and using our influence to extend God's Kingdom in the hearts of all.

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*Candidates are asked to provide written answers of no more than 200 words (per question) by 5pm on Wednesday 22 September.*

*Candidates will be asked to give 2 minute oral answers at the Zoom Hustings to questions 2 and 3.*

# ALASTAIR BARRON

## Candidates Questions

### **1. General Synod members are elected for a 5 year period. If elected, what would you hope to achieve during your term of office?**

My overall goal would be to become involved and effective. I want to make a real contribution to Synod's work in growing God's kingdom and so representing our Diocese to best effect – working with colleagues, developing strategy, speaking out and making our Church and the love of God relevant in our society, particularly to young people. Further than that, I would want to ensure that the Synod's work, its debates, its policies and its measures have the work of the church out in the parishes firmly in mind in all it does.

As I said in my election address, I am a 'doer' and so this overall goal would be based particularly in contributions in several specific areas:

- Education. We must play our part in bringing our faith to young people as part of their education – visibly and inclusively.
- The laity, its role and ministry. Trained and enabled lay ministry,, and its role in developing parishioners' faith, must be a powerful force.
- The challenges of rural ministry. We need to nourish our rural communities. Some may be relatively small but they are still God's people supporting their churches and we must make the Church accessible to them.

### **2. The strap line of the Church of England is 'A Christian Presence in Every Community'. What are your thoughts on this statement?**

This is rightly our aspiration and must remain so. Our reality is, though, that the day of every community having its church and its priest are gone so we must develop different ways to create that presence, to meet God and Christ, to find Christian fellowship.

The parish structure is likely to remain our basic framework and the traditional approaches are still important – the church building as a visible sign of Christian presence, Sunday services, the priest.

We must, though, develop other touch points, going to people rather than them coming to us in a formal setting – e.g. an active, trained laity, collaboration with other civic organisations and in our schools, pastoral visitors programmes, publicity in the press and community locations, church events, sometimes a physical presence e.g. street pastors in major towns. I am a Street Pastor in Winchester and it is a great way for Christ's love to be seen - caring, listening, helping and relevant, particularly for young people.

We must do more, though. Accepting its limitations and difficulties, the positive and inclusive experience of lockdown has shown that the internet can provide that presence that coming together, particularly in rural areas e.g. prayer meetings via Zoom.

### **3. How do questions about identity, sexuality, relationships, and marriage fit within the bigger picture of the good news of Jesus Christ?**

The good news of Jesus is that God loves us and that belief in Jesus as God's son is the way to that love and to eternal life. We must live our lives, in all its complications and variations, in this belief. God knows us individually and collectively. He knows the human condition and he loves us.

Jesus loves us too and, further, directs us to love each other. Jesus says in John's gospel: 'I give you a new commandment ..... Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another'. Our love must be inclusive, without reservation – there are no caveats, conditions or lesser people in Jesus's words. Paul emphasises this in Galatians 3 '..... for you are all one in Christ Jesus'.

This inclusivity and acceptance of our different ways of living and loving, and God's love that underpins it, is absolutely part of the good news. There are certainly challenges for many that we must respect but I believe we should recognise and celebrate our different lives, the differences of our own human condition and love each other, accept and treat each other equally and hold each other before God, as we hold ourselves.

### **4. Does the Church of England's current commitment to the environment go far enough?**

'Reducing the causes of climate change is essential to the life of faith. It is a way to love our neighbour and to steward the gift of creation.'

Archbishop Justin Welby

Noting that the February 2020 General Synod agreed to a net zero carbon emissions target by 2030, a more aggressive target than initially proposed, the Church's commitment to caring for God's world seems to be clear. There is an active environment programme in place described on the website. This commitment focuses on what the Church does at international, national and local levels and offers information about what individual churches can do, e.g. to reduce emissions.

The key outcome, though, is changing behaviours and achieving this through collaboration and partnerships, helping churches to do it for themselves and as a secondary benefit, encouraging our church members to change their behaviours also. More might be done to enable local churches to contribute to the Church's targets - including training of PCCs and architects, provision of support and reference information and perhaps acting as a conduit to external advisors and incentivising PCCs. It's not clear to me whether these additional activities would sit more efficiently at Diocesan or Central Church level.

### **5. How can we take positive action to increase the inclusion and representation of BAME people across the Church?**

It would be important to understand the problem – what are the barriers and what are the reasons? I am sure that this problem does not affect the Church in isolation and so initially, there may well be lessons to be learnt from other large organisations – e.g, other churches, education and law enforcement. Additionally, it would be important to understand how localised the problem was – i.e. rural/urban, north/south, young/older, ordained/lay? There would also be work to do within larger BAME communities to identify their perception of the reasons for the lack of engagement – cultural, social, economic?

Having drawn meaningful conclusions from this research, remedial actions might include outreach programmes from current church communities including church plants and resource churches, identifying role models as advocates for involvement in the Church. There would be value in recruiting particular skills and capabilities into both the ordained and lay communities and reaching out, particularly into youth groups - another example of the Church out going to people.

Getting the communications right will be critical – a consistent accessible message, seen and heard in the right places with clarity about where a touch point in the local Christian community can be found, will be critical.