

Emily Hill

Proposer:

Wendy Coombey – Priory
Church of St Peter and St
Paul, Leominster (General
Synod member 2015-2026)

Seconded:

Judith Bailey – Churchwarden
in the parish of St. Edward's
Dorrington, Condover



Hello, my name is Emily, I am 26 years old and work as a Registered Nurse at Shrewsbury Hospital. I am a life-long Christian having been raised in churches in South Shropshire, twice moving house as my mum undertook clergy training, and committing to my faith when I was confirmed at age 11. I am currently a member of the congregation at St. Edward's Dorrington in Condover Deanery, a small, rural parish church typical of Hereford Diocese.

My experience

I am a PCC member at my local church and until last year was the editor of my local benefice magazine, doing this role for 5 years. I served on the last General Synod quinquennium and was its youngest elected member starting my term at 21 years old. During this time, as part of my role, I was ex-officio on my Deanery and Diocesan Synods, gaining experience of wider church governance and actively participating in these meetings to write reports and verbally feedback General Synod business. I have also served as a member of the Bishop's Council since January 2025, working as a sub-committee of Diocesan Synod to make governance decisions with the bishop's staff.

Why me?

General Synod this last five years has been a rollercoaster experience - challenging yet rewarding. I am proud of the differences I have made and of the discussions I have contributed to in that space, especially as a young, female, working-class member of the House of Laity from a rural parish, hopefully at times adding a different viewpoint. I have learnt a lot and have found a bit of a nerdy love of synodical processes and standing orders - which also means if I am re-elected I can "hit the ground running". I have an eye for detail and am not afraid to challenge ideas that I fear may have unintended consequences or may unfairly disadvantage people, trying to look at situations from a variety of perspectives. I still have the energy and passion to make a change in this space, I don't yet feel like my work on General Synod is done.

What do I stand for?

My views are liberal, I believe church should be a welcoming place for everybody, every time and am committed to equality for everyone, at all levels and roles within the church, regardless of disability, economic power, ethnicity, sex, gender identity, learning disability, mental health, neurodiversity, or sexuality. I believe that what makes our church special is the variety of views held, there should be a place for everyone, and I hope that despite particular divides in the Church of England over the last few years, we can find a way to hold together in unity without uniformity.

Giving a voice to the rural church is also important to me. We struggle regularly to keep our churches open and healthy with old, protected and loved church buildings that are often difficult to upkeep. Recruiting to vacancies in multi-parish benefices is becoming increasingly difficult with reduction in clergy nationally and decreasing ordinand numbers. We also have aging volunteer workforces and an increasing reliance on them. Some parishes and the diocese are struggling financially with little hope of central support as national initiatives often focus on funding urban areas.

Safeguarding is another huge issue facing our church at the moment, especially with recent inquiries into historic church abuse being published and changes being made to safeguarding practices nationally. We have made progress but there is still work to do; we need to be strong in our approach, willing to acknowledge our mistakes and make smart and effective changes to make our church a safer place to everyone we encounter. I'm no safeguarding specialist but my background as a nurse and trustee does help my understanding of the expectations on us as a church, helping me to make informed decisions.

Personally, I would also love to use my time on General Synod to help encourage more young people to have a voice in our national church. Having been nurtured throughout my life by youth initiatives in our Diocese, I would like to use this opportunity to support other young people in this space too.

Thank you for taking the time to read my address, and generally for your contributions to the Church of England. If given the opportunity I hope to serve you well for the next quinquennium.

I would be incredibly grateful if you would consider giving me your first preference vote, but most importantly please do use your vote, ballots close on the 13th of October at 5pm.

If you have any questions or would like to contact me to talk this through further, please don't hesitate to email me at emily.hill2000@icloud.com or call me on 074741 474924 - please be aware I may not be able to answer your call straight away if I'm on shift, but leave a message and I will get back to you.