

Dear Elector

Everyone who puts their name forward for election to Synod will have good reasons for doing so. For me, it comes down to the simple desire to serve the Church I love and to help it proclaim Christ with confidence, for it is in him that we see the transforming love of God for his creation. I would welcome the opportunity to play a part in shaping the future of the Church of England.

I currently worship at St. Andrew's in Presteigne, where I am a member of the PCC and Deanery Synod. I came to faith in my teenage years, having been a chorister and server in a village church. I enjoy both the traditional BCP liturgy as well as more contemporary expressions of worship. For me, however, what matters most in any fellowship is simple: Christ must be at the heart of what is said, sung and lived.

I have spent most of my working life in education, teaching Religious Studies and English before taking early retirement as a Deputy Headmaster at a school in Oxford. In that role I was involved in drafting policies, conducting staff appraisals and mentoring new teachers, experience which I believe would serve me well in Synod. I have always valued the importance of listening carefully to others, and was fortunate to be regarded as a positive and sympathetic colleague. Throughout my professional life I have sought to be open about my Christian faith while respecting those whose views differ from my own. I believe that conviction and courtesy are not opposites. I am happily married with three children and serve as a Trustee of a museum. In my free time I enjoy reading, cooking and walking in the hills.

I would bring to Synod experience of leadership, church and charity governance, as well as an understanding of the practical challenges faced by parishes. I would seek to listen carefully, consider issues thoughtfully and contribute constructively to the work of Synod. I am prepared to give the time and energy required to do the job well.

The challenges facing the Church are considerable. In the current climate of uncertainty and financial pressure, it would seem to me that the Church must do what it does best: providing an inviting place of Christian worship for every community, supporting its priests, encouraging vocations, strengthening parish ministry and welcoming all who seek God. We must also be wise stewards of the resources entrusted to us. But above all, we should remain rooted in prayer and faithful discipleship, confident in the grace of God rather than tempted to reshape the Church to fit the prevailing culture.

The Church of England has expressed its desire 'to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ afresh in each generation' and has a vision of 'a Church for the whole nation ... a church that is simpler, humbler, bolder.' I wholeheartedly support that aspiration. If elected, I would want to help turn those words into a reality: a Church that is humble enough to listen, bold enough to speak, and confident enough to put Christ at the centre.

Synod will, inevitably, contain people with different priorities and perspectives. I do not expect to agree with everyone, nor would I want to. Good debate requires us to listen carefully and to treat those with whom we disagree with courtesy and respect. I am passionate about my beliefs, but I am also even-tempered, and I believe that both qualities have a place in Synod.

The Church does not ultimately depend upon our ingenuity or our strength. The Holy Spirit transforms lives, brings healing and forgiveness, and equips the Church for its mission. My hope is that, whatever challenges lie ahead, we will have the courage to trust God,

proclaim the gospel faithfully and continue to build up the parish ministry that has been the backbone of the Church of England for generations.

If elected, I would be honoured to serve, and would do so with faith, energy and good humour.

Thank you for taking the time to read my election address.