

# Andrew Smith

## Candidate for House of Clergy

Proposer: Revd George Briggs // Seconder: Revd Peter Clements



Hello,

I would love to serve you in being one of the Carlisle Diocese members of the House of Clergy in the upcoming season of General Synod. I'm new to Cumbria, I moved here in March to take up the role of **Growing Younger Enabler** as part of the Diocesan team. I'm married to Nicky, and we have three children, Olive (13), Etienne (11) and Amélie (9). I hope this paper gives you somewhat of an overview of why I am standing for Synod, a bit of background about me and, my priorities and passions. If you have any questions you'd like to ask please do reach out ([revandysmith@gmail.com](mailto:revandysmith@gmail.com)). I look forward to meeting you in person soon.

We moved as a family from **Bangkok**, Thailand, where Nicky and I served as Mission Partners, prior to that I was **Vicar** of a church in **Southampton for eight years**. I'm part of a clergy couple and lots (six) of my wider family are ordained. I have been ordained for twelve years.

If elected I would hope to speak on behalf of those who are under represented and often unable to have the platform to speak for themselves. I spent much of 2020 working as a mission partner in Bangkok in Thailand. The role included the support of a **large refugee community**, primarily from South Asia and Iran, alongside a separate ministry that supported Christian refugees in the camps on the border with Myanmar. These communities came with unique stories, but a common theme was fleeing from persecution because of their Christian faith. It was a privilege to see first hand the **persecuted church** and to serve them spiritually and materially. They are **voices that are often forgotten** and they need to be heard.

I believe we need to work to prioritise fresh engagement with young people. In 2018 nationally the Sunday attendance of under 16s in the Church of England dropped below 100,000 for the first time ever. **70% of churches have less than 5 under 16's** in them. The statistics are just as stark for young adults. The **decline of the church amongst the younger generations** is more rapid than for other generations. Yet these sobering statistics, whilst true as an average, are not true for each and every Anglican church in England. Nationally 21% of Church of England churches are experiencing growth in under 16's, the number of under 30's being recommended for training for ordination is at a record high. There is hope. **Growth is possible**. God has not given up on his Church. God is calling the church to engage afresh with millennials, Gen Z and the generations that follow them. I would seek to bring this perspective to synod.

I am convinced of the **centrality of the local church** in mission. I have recent experience of leading a church community in Southampton through significant cultural change to enable mission and fresh engagement with young people. I led a community (Ascension, Southampton) through a season of significant growth, both numerically and in depth, from an average Sunday attendance of 30 to over 130. It is now a multigenerational community including children, youth and students, we sponsored six candidates for ordination from the community. In Bangkok Nicky and I had the joy to **baptise** a number of people who had come to Christian faith from Buddhism, supported by the local church. I would seek to speak up for church communities and, their **health and revitalisation** being central to the strategic prioritisation of resources.

I have experience of leadership and governance at **parish, diocese and national forums**. I have served as Vicar, in a diocesan role and as an **overseas mission partner**. For many years I have been part of the national governance group of the Church of England's Ministry Experience Scheme, alongside serving on Diocesan Synod. I have the experience and determination to seek to represent your views at General Synod. **Please would you prayerfully consider voting for me as your first preference vote.**