



Revd Fran Parkinson

NSM Assistant Curate of the High Westmorland Benefice

General Synod Election Statement

I confess I'm a little late to this particular party . . . that is candidacy and ordination! 😊

My background is an evangelical one, being brought up in a Christian family, from which I benefited a solid biblical foundation and a love of scripture and I sit very comfortably within a diversity of traditions. I have always been a keen 'student' and thrived among my fellows during ordination training and am enjoying being able to continue my studies to MA level at Cranmer Hall, Durham. I have been encouraged by the forum which enables me to have a voice and contribute to debate. Likewise, the Diocese has generously invited me to be on various steering groups contributing to the Godforall vision and its recent refresh. I have a passion for people and for the living word of God, so ministry (for me) is wherever those two collide, be it in the Parish church or in the Pub. I also have very strong family connections and am a wife, mother, and grandma, which is where the real stuff of life happens!

That said, I never expected to be able to fulfil my calling to work in the church as a minister for the gospel. I assumed that I would be excluded as a divorced female, and yet it is within the breadth of the Anglican tradition that I have been given the opportunity to do just that, and was priested in September 2019.

I have only minimal experience of the structures of the Church of England, being part of Diocesan Synod since November 2019, but I know that God has given me a desire for both grace and truth and a hunger for learning. This has led me to begin to reflect theologically on many issues, and while I may still be seeking to find answers, I hope that I am able to ask different questions into the space, what Migliore terms, "faith seeking understanding".

Neither am I of any particular political persuasion, rather, I am interested in people. I am also a joyful servant of Christ, seeking to live out my life of faith in the community where I live and worship, and to witness to the love of God that I have found so powerfully in Jesus Christ.

But I recognise that we are at a critical moment in the history of the church, indeed the world, a time when we will stand or fall by the decisions we make regarding the environment; ecumenism; human sexuality; the demanding role of clergy and laity amid financial pressures; concern for the poor and the pilgrim, the vulnerable and the voiceless; to name but a few of my concerns, and how we as church worship and witness faithfully in the light of all these will be significant. I believe that God is calling the whole church to listen attentively, discern wisely, and walk faithfully into the next chapter of our history.

So it is with genuine humility, and some trepidation, that I offer myself as a potential candidate in response to God's call to stand as a representative for you and your concerns. To that end I would love to hear from you!

Please do get in touch by email – curate.hwparishes@gmail.com or by telephone – 015396 23393, or by good old-fashioned letter – Studfold Farmhouse, Fell End, Ravenstonedale, Cumbria. CA17 4LP.