

ANDY WALKINGSHAW

“now is the opportunity for the Church to look outwards with a fresh vision and the confidence of the Spirit of Christ.”

Who am I?

Born and brought up in Whitehaven, I experienced the joy of going to church with my parents where I heard the good news about Jesus and, as a teenager, decided to follow him for myself.

After leaving school, I was an apprentice at a local manufacturing company before studying engineering in Leeds. I then worked in car factories in the Midlands where I met and married my wife Ann. We returned to Cumbria in 1998 and I took on the role of Managing Director in the Volkswagen dealership my father started. After leading the business through a period of growth I was able to retire in 2024 with the aim of dedicating more time to serving the Lord.

I have been worshipping at St John's Hensingham for over 25 years serving in youth work, as Warden and in preaching and teaching ministry. I am currently training to be a Licensed Lay Minister (Reader) through Emmanuel Theological College and in my spare time I enjoy running, cycling and walking the fells with Ann.

Why am I standing for General Synod?

The Church of England has been the spiritual home for me and my family (we have three sons) and we have all been greatly blessed by it. In this new season of my life, I want to offer my experience and skills to give back what I can.

I believe that we are custodians of the Church for future generations and I want to do my part to pass on not only fine buildings, but thriving, diverse, worshipping Anglican communities across Cumbria and the rest of the country.

It's my view that the Synod's primary focus should be on supporting parishes on the front line. All local parishes, especially rural and underprivileged urban ones, should have the best support and resources the national church can provide to continue with Jesus' great commission of making disciples.



Contact

3 Round Close Park
Whitehaven
CA28 8UH

walkingshaw@me.com

07904 243711

What experience do I bring?

In my formative years, I was a member of several lively non-conformist churches of various sizes where I served in children's and youth work and Bible teaching. I helped to lead the annual Cumbria Christian Youth Camp at Braithwaite for about 30 years where 140 young people enjoy an outdoor holiday and hear about the claims of Jesus. I served as Warden for 6 years at St John's, and for the past 5 years as elected synod member in Calder Deanery. I currently lead a home Bible Study Group, and I am part of the preaching team. Our church in Whitehaven consists of around 200 people from many backgrounds and nations and is an absolute joy and privilege to serve in.

I am about to enter my second year of training to be a Licenced Lay Minister so that I can better serve the church family and our Mission Community in preaching, teaching and theological reflection.

Outside of church life, I worked for 10 years as a Senior Quality Engineer for two multinational car manufacturing companies, responsible for all mechanical areas of the vehicle and travelling worldwide to audit and authorise suppliers. Then, for 26 years, I led the family car retail business through its expansion into a multimillion-pound turnover organisation recognised for outstanding customer service, taking as my model the servant leadership of Christ. The Church is not a business, but I believe my leadership skills and experience could bring a helpful perspective to the national church organisation.

What do I hope to influence in Synod?

Mission

The outgoing Synod has guided the church through challenging internal issues such as recovery after Covid, safeguarding failures and Living in Love and Faith. I believe the 2026 Synod is an opportunity for a new direction.

After this period of internal reflection, now is the opportunity for the church to look outwards with a fresh vision and the confidence of the Spirit of Christ; holding out the hope of the Gospel in a broken world.

Ministers

The recruitment and training of ministers, both ordained and lay, is crucial for the future but during the period of the last Synod we have lost 900 stipendiary positions. It is an inescapable fact that churches with faithful ministers (who are not over-stretched) tend to grow.

I believe we need to turn the tide of what can feel like managed decline and invest in growth.

Making the Most of the Opportunity

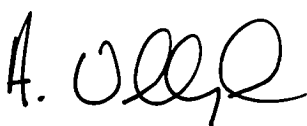
Many people, in particular young people, are once again interested in meaning and are seeking for truth both in churches and online. The Church of England is uniquely positioned to reach every corner of the country with the hope of Jesus.

I want to determine how we can make best use of national church finances and resources to grasp the opportunities God has given us.

Thank you for reading this address, please feel free to contact me should you have any questions. I would be so grateful if you would consider giving me either your first or highest available preference vote.

If I am elected to General Synod, I commit to be both prayerful in service and to uphold the truth of Scripture.

Yours in Christ Jesus,



Proposers: Davy Jones, St Andrew's Mirehouse, Whitehaven.
Tony Newgarth, St John's Houghton & St Peter's Kingmoor, Carlisle.