

I'm a very new incumbent, so am standing for election to the house of clergy for the first time, but I previously served as a lay member of General Synod between 2015 and 2021. At that time, I was a clergy spouse and mum to an 18 month old... I'm now ordained myself and mum to a nearly teenager. I stood for election then because I wanted to see the best possible future for the Church of England for my daughter's sake. I stand again now for the same reason.

I genuinely loved every minute of my previous term serving the Church on its legislative body. I believe that good legislation should be the underpinning of what we do. It should be fit for purpose and clear cut, but driven by and designed for pastoral need and praxis. Throughout my previous term, I attended every meeting of Synod, and often didn't leave the chamber during session. I love the detailed debate on legislation just as much as the perhaps more lively debates on contemporary issues.

I speak often of my love of the glorious dichotomy of the Church of England. I think it's wonderful that no matter where you'd place yourself on the candlestick-spectrum, you can find a place to belong within the Church of England. Having been raised in a very conservative evangelical free church, I would now describe myself as somewhere fairly middle of the road. I appreciate and understand both high and low worshipping traditions, and am grateful for the diversity of our church. I think this is of particular importance in rural churches, where the charism of each church community is more likely to be tied to its location than its style of worship.

Being able to disagree well is increasingly unusual in our society, yet I strongly believe it is the calling of the Church to model holding differences of opinion with love and respect. Whilst I hold a more conservative view of marriage and sexuality, I found the shared conversations process, which I took part in in 2016, to be incredibly helpful and deeply moving. I have not changed my mind, or the way I read Scripture, but I do long to see us move forwards together, with love and respect - holding our shared differences.

As the established Church, I believe we have a special responsibility to speak out prophetically and publicly, not shying away from the gospel message, wherever it needs to be heard. I think General Synod has a role to play in that, which is a responsibility I would take very seriously. I'm a particularly passionate advocate of good safeguarding practices; my maiden speech in the House of Laity was on safeguarding, and I will seek to be a voice for the voiceless.

Thank you for your consideration - it would be an honour to serve the diocese and the Church in this way.