

Questions to candidates for General Synod House of Laity

Q1. Do you fully support the equality of women at all levels of ministry, including ordained and episcopal ministry?

In line with the teaching of scripture and the Church of England I do fully support this.

Q2. In July the General Synod was asked to "affirm that all baptised, believing and faithful persons regardless of sexual orientation are full members of the Body of Christ" and that "recognise a legitimate range of theological perspectives, held in good conscience, across the Church of England, on the right ordering of committed, faithful, intimate same-sex relationships". If you were on Synod, did you vote in favour of this. If you were not on Synod, how would you have voted?

I was not on Synod at the time, but I would have voted in favour. The first part of this particularly seems like an obvious statement that not only should we all agree on, but we shouldn't need to take a vote on. I think it's important for General Synod to think carefully about the motions it votes on, making sure we see change from them.

Q3. Parish share is intended to support all churches across the diocese. Has your church ever applied restrictions on who can benefit from receiving parish share, for example through making use of the Ephesians Fund to prevent your contribution supporting the majority of clergy in the diocese?

No, I believe unity in both parish churches and between churches across the diocese and beyond is of the utmost importance, including how we use our finances.

Q4. To what extent do you consider the decreasing number of stipendiary clergy and increasing lay-led congregations to be an issue that needs addressing across the Church of England?

I think this is a complicated issue. We certainly need more lay leaders as the size of benefices clergy are having to cover continues to increase. Experts in different areas of ministry (e.g. children and youth ministry) often sees that ministry grow and is a good thing. However, sacraments (communion and baptism) are an essential part of being church and currently we need clergy for this. I would want to think carefully about growth too. If there are more people coming to church, which is what we hope for, what does that mean for the number of clergy and lay leaders we need to serve those congregations.

Q5. Do you agree that the Church should commit fully to training and ordaining local leaders as self supporting priests?

Again, as question 4 implies, we need to think more widely about different types of ministers and how they can best serve our communities. I think self-supporting priests is one part of this puzzle, and we should invest in them through training and ordination.

Q6. What do you consider to be the Church of England's priorities for the next 5 years?

As set out in the Church of England vision, the priorities should be becoming a church of missionary disciples, becoming a church where mixed ecology is the norm and becoming a church that is younger and more diverse. I am disappointed that generally these questions don't reflect this vision. But I am excited by these three priorities and think they give a lot of scope for growth in the church.

Q7. Do you feel that the Bible's teaching on sexuality and marriage is still relevant for the Church in 2026?

I believe all the teaching of the Bible is relevant to the church today, in all areas of life. How we then interpret the Bible will be different from person to person. It is vital that we listen to each other people's interpretations with love and openness.

Q8. What are views in taking forward the Living in Love & Faith (LLF) process, which appears to have come to a natural ending?

The process has finished with no obvious changes and if anything, more division in the church. I feel more concerned about the amount of time money and resources that went into LLF only to feel more divided at the end of it. I would want to evaluate the whole process and the outcomes to learn from before deciding how to move forward.

Q9. What personal qualities do you have that you feel are suitable for serving on General Synod for the next 5 years?

I believe it is important for me to humble through this time. I have a lot to learn as I go (which I am excited about doing) and I know I will get it wrong sometimes. I am open to my opinion changing as I learn and experience more.

I also think my passion for young people, unity and diversity will be important for General Synod too.