

2024 General Synod By-Election

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Bob Chambers

Candidate for House of Laity, General Synod (Chichester Diocese)



It would be an honour and a privilege to serve on General Synod (GS), at what is clearly a significant and challenging time for the Church of England (CofE). Despite the pressures, I believe the CofE still has a precious and unique place in our society, with all sorts of missional opportunities. The commands to love both God and neighbour are non-negotiable, and those efforts start close to home for each of us – with our families, those we live next door to, or work alongside – seeking to share the good news of the gospel of Jesus with them, supported by our own church community. Holding faithfully to the timeless truths of Scripture, trusting our all-powerful and eternal Heavenly Father with confidence, we must not be swayed or cowed by cultural shifts and pressures.

I am very thankful for the various experiences I've had over the years, that I believe now equip me well for this opportunity. Standing for election is not something I have entered into lightly or in my own strength; rather, it is the culmination of several years of reflection and prayer, and a growing sense that I should express an interest in serving in this way. Having followed some of the debates and decisions from recent GS sessions, my unease and motivation have grown stronger, and I could no longer simply observe and wonder.

I grew up in a church-going family living in greater London and was part of an active Crusader youth group in my teens (now 'Urban Saints'). In addition to attending our own local parish church, I sang for several years as a treble in a [chapel choir in central London](#), which provided a taste of a very different liturgical tradition. On leaving school, my gap year included a short-term mission trip to Bolivia, before heading to Sheffield for a Business Studies degree; as part of my degree course, I spent a semester on exchange in Melbourne. As a student, I led the Christian Union on campus and attended [Christ Church, Fulwood](#) (Sheffield) and [St Jude's](#) (Melbourne). My placement year included a season on residential staff at [CYE](#) Christian activity centre in Chichester Harbour – prompting my dissertation on 'Human Resource Management at Christian Outdoor Centres', as well as working for Marks and Spencer in their Bradford and Leeds high street stores.

My father died during my final year at university. On graduating, I took up a place on the NHS Management Training Scheme, which led to a series of managerial roles in hospitals in Lincoln, Leicester and Cardiff, and a secondment to the Civil Service (in the Health Strategy team at the Welsh Office Health Department), over a total period of seven years. On leaving the NHS, I joined a management and leadership development consultancy, and alongside that was involved with a small charity sponsoring Christian university students across Romania. Six years later, I moved to the relief and development agency [World Vision UK](#) in an organisational development role. That in turn led to a related opportunity in the World Vision Southern Africa Regional Office, based in Johannesburg; my family and I lived there for three years, during which time my work took me to various countries across the continent.

On returning to the UK in 2013, I joined the [Christian mission agency Feba](#) (the Far East Broadcasting Association), initially as Director for Transition before being appointed Chief Executive in 2014. I am responsible for leading Feba's UK ministry, as well as serving in an elected position on the global Executive Committee (ExComm) of our international association. The role involves leadership of the team and oversight of all day-to-day operations, including a portfolio of partnerships and projects across Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe and the Middle East, plus our various fundraising and communications activities with Feba's UK supporter base – comprised of individuals, churches and grant-making trusts. Please see [LinkedIn](#) for further career details.

I have been married to my wife, Rachel, for 23 years and we have two sons, aged 19 (at university) and 16 (awaiting GCSE results). As a family, we have been attending [St Margaret's church in Angmering](#) since we arrived in the area in 2013, where I currently serve on the PCC and lead a homegroup. I have previously been Foundation Governor at the local Church of England primary school, where my wife works part time.

In the course of various relocations and travels with study and work over the years, I've experienced a variety of church traditions and cultures, for which I am thankful. In Cardiff, for example, my wife and I attended

[Highfields](#) (a thriving FIEC church), and in Johannesburg we worshipped at [Northcliff Union Church](#) (with roots in the Baptist tradition). An underlying commitment to faithful, orthodox Bible-based teaching and Christ-centred worship has been a prerequisite, with the Church of England being our default throughout. Whilst living in Warwickshire for seven years, we were part of our small local village church (with a population of barely over 500 people) and invested heavily in all that was going on there, including several years of us leading a children's group, and me serving on the PCC and as Church Warden. We also attend the [Keswick Convention](#) regularly.

My career to date has spanned a fairly diverse range of roles and sectors, each of which has taught me valuable lessons. Alongside the main task responsibilities of the positions I've held, I have at different times been elected to the National Council representative bodies for the [Institute of Health Service Management](#) (was IHSM, now IHSCM) and the [Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development \(CIPD\)](#), of which I am still a Chartered Member. Those past governance roles and my current ExComm position – coupled with experience of PCCs, as school governor and Churchwarden – provide a useful basis for the somewhat similar function of the CofE's national body. The ability to operate at a strategic level and see 'the big picture', yet without losing sight of important detail, is something that others have observed in me. Being comfortable dealing with all manner of operational matters (including financial, legal and personnel) has been a prerequisite, and working effectively cross-culturally with different personalities and characters has been essential, too.

Items to be included on the General Synod agenda in the coming months are all important in their own way, and some are particularly complex and contentious. It is probably fair to say that the ongoing work around *Living in Love and Faith* is quite likely to grab the headlines more than most other topics, but GS should not be defined solely by this as a single issue body. For reference, my personal view is that the marriage relationship between one man and one woman is a foundational, integral and essential part of God's perfect design, and all other patterns of sexual relationship fall outside of what He intended. It is absolutely true to say that there are all sorts of areas in which we each sin (certainly myself included): we all fall short of God's standard in some way, and none of us can be right with Him except by grace – by accepting the gift of forgiveness, with Christ alone having paid the price on our behalf. In uncertain times, I believe it is critically important that the church proclaims unswervingly this universally good news, as we seek to inspire people to trust and follow Him.

Other important matters such as families and children, safeguarding, migration, slavery and trafficking (both historic and modern day), the war in Ukraine and tensions in the Middle East, and climate change also feature in our news and on the church's agenda, in a context of considerable financial challenge and disunity across the wider Anglican Communion. Each of these requires a prayerful, biblical, and carefully considered response if the Church of England is to bear faithful witness to the living Lord Jesus in a messy and hurting world.

As I said at the beginning, I acknowledge my dependence on God: standing for this election is first and foremost an act of obedience to His stirring. As I reflect on what I learned and experienced of local church from my parents – and from my grandparents too (all of whom were actively involved in various ways), and consider the CofE as we know it today, I wonder what it will be like for my own sons in adulthood. My prayer is that it would be a vibrant and faithful witness to the living God, honouring Him in submission and obedience to His word, relevant and accessible to all, that we might be worthy of the title 'Bride of Christ'. I would certainly give of my best to that end if elected.



Thank you for your consideration of my application. I would obviously be extremely grateful for your vote, and it would be an honour to be elected. I hope you have found the information I've provided helpful, but if you do have any related comments or questions, please don't hesitate to contact me using the details provided below.

Bob Chambers
92 Sea Lane, Rustington, West Sussex, BN16 2RT
bobchambfam@gmail.com



Hi! My name is Sophie and I grew up in a Christian family in London, and I have never known a day where I did not love God at least in some small capacity as a child. I've grown up in the Church of England and I would love to see it flourish and grow as it leads more people to know Jesus as their Lord and Saviour.

Since I was a teenager, I have served in children and youth ministries and I believe children are the future of our church. Since then, I have taken seriously Jesus' call to bring the little children to him. It is so important that we engage and inspire the next generation, equipping them to take on leadership roles within the church when they grow up. I am passionate about developing ministry with them that nurtures their spiritual growth and provide opportunities for them to serve their church family. By God's grace, the ministries I have served have grown. However, I am passionate for the growth of the whole church, and I am known in my church family for including people of all ages in my ministry, appreciating the wisdom and life experiences that the older generation brings.

One of the main strengths of the Church of England is its unity in diversity, encompassing people of all backgrounds, ages, and walks of life. I believe that our Church should be a place where everyone feels welcome and valued. I will advocate for policies and practices that promote inclusion, ensuring that our Synod reflects the diverse voices and experiences of our members.

I have appreciated working alongside godly men and women of all ages who are passionate about the transforming power of the Spirit in word and worship. The Great Commission calls us to make disciples of all nations. I am dedicated to strengthening our mission and evangelistic efforts in the wider Denomination. I will support initiatives that empower our congregations to reach out to their communities with the love of Christ, and that fosters partnerships with international missions.

I am running for General Synod because I love the Church of England. I want to contribute and help it to flourish, benefiting from the wisdom of others and working together for growth. I love to work in a team and I am patient with those who hold different views to my own.

As we navigate the challenges and opportunities we face, I am filled with hope that by God's grace, we can continue to build the Church of England faithfully reflecting the love and grace of Jesus Christ to the world.

Please vote for me.

Yours in Christ,
Sophie Davies-Jones

Mark Gill

MBA BSc DIS CEng FICE MAPM



1 Vicarage Close
Seaford

East Sussex
BN25 1SQ

Birth: April 1960

markdesmondgill@gmail.com

07541541935

Sutton with Seaford Parish

Proposed by:
Saron Philips,
Lewes and Seaford Deanery

Seconded by:
Bob Carrington
Lewes and Seaford Deanery

"If elected to General Synod, I will endeavour to grow in faith, I pray God will challenge and enable me to honour Him, to serve the Synod and represent the Diocese of Chichester for the glory of God and his Kingdom. I will advocate through prayer and fasting to learn more about where God is leading his Church: to share his inclusive love for all, to be good stewards of his creation and to see the Kingdom grow through ministry and mission".

Grace and Peace to you in Jesus name! First of all, I am a Christian and adhere to the Creeds, the Word and the Spirit. While serving in Mission, I have learned the joy of diversity of different church traditions; of observing different faiths, of seeing God's inclusive love for everyone: so like Paul, I have learned to be content in knowing God is with me and seeks only good for his creation, for he is Love. This is summed up I believe in Prov. 22:2 which was part of my call to mission vocation. 'The rich and poor have this in common, the Lord is maker of them all'.

If elected, I will serve to seek God's will in current and emerging issues. My mission overseas experience of living in Hindu, Buddhist and Islamic countries of 33 years have given me intimate knowledge of cross cultural issues. My passions are for the environment, community, diversity, social and spiritual growth where the Mission of the Church continues to meet temporal and spiritual challenges. Trends develop, we have become familiar with sustainability, climate change, carbon reduction, net zero: new concepts are developing such as net gain, habitats and nature-positive – and so we come back to God's creation and his charge to be good stewards of His garden!

Having just returned from long term service overseas, I have settled in Seaford, where I moved in 2013 when I started my current employment in Brighton. I am a Chartered Engineer, working for most of my career constructing Hydro Electricity Projects, most recently in Pakistan where I was lead Consultant on a \$750M project. My employment is in an engineering consultancy and am Fellow of the Institution of Civil Engineers.

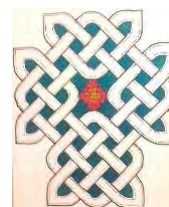
Now that I am 'home', I want to explore how God will use me in further ministry and mission; maybe through this opportunity if elected to serve on the General Synod.

I believe my professional career has been planned for me by my Heavenly Father, as he guided me towards mission service with Church Mission Society. After my first tour, I was to speak at a CMS enquirer's weekend for others interested in mission. Alison Richardson was also attending to speak on her experience in Iran, being evacuated with others such as Jean Wadell and Bishop Teqhani Tafti. Alison was preparing with CMS for mission service in Sierra Leone as a Midwife, but God had it all lined up: we married and went to Nepal! We were seconded to the United Mission to Nepal where we lived and worked building hydropower projects. Alison developed health clinics. When there, we saw the Holy Spirit work: hearts were changed, churches formed and the Kingdom, growing. Some people call this Business in Mission. As well as hydro projects, we also installed water systems, sanitation, poly clinics, schools, disabled kids centre, hospitals, bridges, roads and along those roads (usually walking) we had many journeys, talking to people and seeing their hearts change. We were thankful to see the Kingdom grow from 10,000 Christians in 1983 to about one million when we left in 2013 – it is like the Acts of the Apostles, chapter 29! Being fluent in Nepali, I led, taught and preached in our small and growing fellowships, saw signs and wonders in people's lives and whole communities.

Our two 'mishkids' were born and grew up in Nepal: for me, I was glad they had that upbringing, very different from my own in the 'troubles' of N. Ireland. My son has also served with Mission Aviation Fellowship in Australia and South Sudan.

Throughout my mission service in Nepal, we lived in relatively primitive conditions, close to nature and the environment. We learned about sustainability and climate effects before they became popular here in the '10-40 window'. I have learned about Kingdom investment and the hope that we have in Jesus Christ and His great love for his creation.

With engineering geometry in my veins, some of my spare time is in drawing Celtic knotwork and calligraphy. Now back in UK, I hope to see the odd rugby or football match!



Previous UK church experience

St Columba, Portadown (to 23 years old):

Boys Choir, Member of cross community trip to USA for aspirant youth, Youth Club founder/leader, Sunday School teacher, Church Warden and Select Vestry (PCC), Diocesan youth council member, Civic youth council Deputy Chair, Diocesan Synod member (Armagh), Men's Society Treasurer, Fellowship of Vocation, Scout Leader (School Troop).

University of Ulster:

Chaplaincy Diocesan Synod representative (Connor), Christian Union home group leader, Mission committee

Church of the Ascension, Newtownabbey:

Youth Fellowship founder and leader, Home group

St Patrick's, Whitehead:

Church Warden and Select Vestry (PCC), Churches Together Youth Centre, Churches Together civic events, Alpha course leader, Prayer Ministry Team

St Anne's, Belfast Cathedral:

Divine Healing Ministries: Prayer Ministry Team

Church of the Good Shepherd, Monkstown

Buildings team (maintenance and extension planning), Prayer Ministry Team, Home group, Men's Group

Current Parish: St Leonard's and St Luke's, Seaford Parish:

Prayer Ministry Team, Prayer Team, Home Group, Diocesan Parish Environment Support Network, Men's Group

Mission experience:

- Theological training: CMS Crowther Hall, Birmingham and Belfast Bible College
- CMS Mission Partner: 1983/84; 1985/97; 2001/2013 (25 years) – Nepal. As a Civil Engineer and Team Leader working on remote hydro projects (up to 3 days walk in) with United Mission to Nepal. Also, on its Leadership Team as a Development Director serving on several Company, School and Hospital Boards. I served as management consultant and Engineer with Human Development and Community Services – the first Christian NGO in social development: we managed 5 Hospitals (I was Board Chair of the group and led the Strategic 5 year planning), a Mission School (I was on the Board, taught woodwork, car driving, moved the school twice), a Church management training programme (I was a trainer), a disabled kids centre (for which I fund raised £108k with CMSI, designed and built it with the first sensory rooms and hydrotherapy pool in Nepal).
- CMS Ireland Trustee: 1998/2001
- Adjunct Professor/Facilitator with Development Associates International teaching MA Organisational Leadership and Management (Development and Social Change, Conflict management, Culture/Diversity) to Clergy and Laity in India (Allahabad University), Uganda (Uganda Christian University) and Burundi (Light University).

Other overseas experience:

- Albania – 3 years (attended Albanian Orthodox Church)
- Pakistan – 6 years (attended Anglican Church, St. Peter's, Tarbela)

I humbly submit my candidacy for your prayerful consideration.

Mark Gill

Gilli Howarth

STANDING FOR THE HOUSE OF
LAITY OF GENERAL SYNOD

gilli.howarth@hotmail.co.uk



Why Am I Standing?

- Recently retired, I believe that I have the time and life/work experience to be able to serve the church through General Synod. Both my life growing up in the Church of England as a vicar's daughter, and my experience working as a Managing Director on strategic issues in a global Investment Bank, have given me skills pertinent to General Synod. I am able to navigate large organisations - to tackle complex detail, as well as understand the big picture issues - and have the interpersonal skills to work well with others. I believe that equips me well for the complexity of issues that General Synod has to deal with.
- I believe that at its best the church, through God's grace, can live out the Kingdom of God on this earth as in heaven and that the world is now, more than ever, crying out for God's saving grace and His Kingdom. My deepest longing is for people to know that, no matter who they are and what they are going through, Jesus loves them and that they can rely on His sustaining comfort and power through the ups and downs and challenges of life. The great God and creator of the whole universe cares like a loving parent for each of us as if we were the only one.

Work Life

- I worked in Human Resources in the City in a global Investment Bank for almost 20 years, with my last position being Managing Director, Global Head of Diversity and Inclusion. I worked with the board and was responsible for initiating our involvement with "London Schools and the Black Child" along with many other deeply inspiring initiatives across the whole spectrum of diversity.
- I completed a 2 year Psychodynamic Counseling Skills course with the Westminster Pastoral Foundation and more recently an Ana Chaplaincy course through my volunteering with 'Linking Lives' - a church based organization that seeks to reduce loneliness by befriending lonely and isolated people.

My Faith and Church

- I gave my life to Jesus aged 6 and grew up in the Church of England as my father was an ordained priest. My early life was steeped in the church, first with my father as a university chaplain and Old Testament scholar, then living in Nigeria as the family were in the mission field with CMS, and later returning to England and my father working as a parish priest and then for the Board of Mission and Unity in Church House. Through this I have experienced different parts of the church, at home and abroad, both locally and in national responsibilities. I have attended churches with different traditions during my adult life - from high church with incense, traditional liturgy and worship, through to more free-form evangelical churches with modern worship songs. Both represent aspects of church that I love. I have experience of rural and inner city churches and understand the challenges of both, and they have supported my faith in living out the inclusive love and welcome of the gospel message.
- I am grateful to be active within my current church, St. John's Meads, Eastbourne. I am on the PCC, lead a Bible Study homegroup for post Alpha participants, lead intercessions, do readings, help in Sunday School, am a member of our intercessory prayer group and have co-led a monthly church prayer meeting.
- From my working life I understand issues around good governance, and I am on the Deanery and Diocesan Synod.

Issues Facing the Church

Discipleship: I am excited by mission - bringing more people to faith - but my deepest passion is for how we help people in their journey of faith - sustaining their walk with God especially when the going gets tough. I am passionate about people not just believing that God exists, but really having a personal relationship with Him. I long for the Bible and prayer to be both made accessible and understood as the enormous help they are in understanding who God is, who they are and their value to God.

The Local Church: The local parish church is of such vital importance as the cutting edge of mission and outreach, a place which brings people together to encourage each other on their journey of faith and to serve and care for local people in the ups and downs of life. It is where the Church is at its most intimate and impactful with the world. My experience of leading and pastoring a post Alpha Bible Study group with a group of local people has given me a renewed appreciation for how key the local church is.

National and International Life: I believe that the church has a vital role in challenging social injustice both nationally and internationally. At a time of such division and increasing conflict in the world, the church must speak out the gospel of justice, peace and reconciliation. It has a crucial role to speak for the voiceless and the oppressed.

Racial Justice: Unfortunately racism is still a problem in our world. I have felt a lifelong concern that it should be seen, recognised and confronted effectively whenever it occurs, including within the church. I believe that racism and unconscious bias should be included as a topic in the training of ordinands.

Inclusion in the widest sense: I long for the church to welcome and respect all people regardless of their gender, ethnicity, ability or sexuality as each person is made in God's image and is a precious child of His. We are called to love our neighbour as ourself and we must strive as a church to ensure that this is what distinguishes us from the world. I believe that my experience and understanding of working in Diversity and Inclusion in a global multinational organisation helps equip me to understand how the church can be a church for everyone.

Climate Change: We are called to care for God's wonderful creation and I believe that the church has an important role to play in its stewardship.

Clergy wellbeing: Having several members of clergy in my family, I am very cognisant of the particular strains, stresses and loneliness that can accompany the clergy life. I believe that the church must ensure it does not place further stresses upon its clergy and that it has appropriate means and support to help clergy and their families when they struggle. Clergy are so valued for giving their lives in service and the laity must speak up for them to ensure they are nurtured and protected.

"I have known Gilli for forty years as a passionate campaigner and faithful follower of Jesus. Her insight, knowledge of diversity and deep engagement in all levels of church organisation will make her a valuable member of General Synod and I hope to work with her in this important role."

Revd. Martin Poole, Vicar St. Luke's Prestonville, Brighton, member of General Synod.

I am 63 and retired to Eastbourne 7 years ago. I am a mother of 2 grown up children and have 2 grandchildren. I love learning foreign languages, going for walks on the South Downs with my dog and growing David Austin's English roses.

Nominated by:
Sally Scott-Ralphs - Eastbourne
Deanery Synod
Lesley Dawson - Eastbourne
Deanery Synod

Thank you for reading.
Any questions, please
get in touch (email above).
All votes appreciated!

Sue McNeill suemcneill1@yahoo.co.uk

Tel 07759 049 691

Why stand for General Synod?

I hold an orthodox evangelical view of the bible, God's word, and I will be working to see this maintained where I can. I believe that marriage is the union of one man with one woman. I disagree with the motion passed at the recent General Synod to approve stand-alone services of blessings for same sex couples.

I would be particularly interested in moves to encourage church growth and promoting youth and families' ministry. In many areas the church is seen as irrelevant to day to day life and, working with other local churches, this view needs to be changed. The Church of England has a physical presence in every community in terms of buildings but this needs expanding to involve the people in the areas around these churches and tell them the good news of Jesus.

I would also be keen to help ensure there is still freedom to preach the good news of Jesus Christ in a world where secularism is predominant.

Church involvement:

We joined St Johns Southbourne thirty years ago when we moved south. I have been churchwarden, twice, and treasurer for 3 years each. My interests have always been mission and young people so I have served on the mission team and worked in various youth groups. I currently help lead a group for year 6-9 on a Sunday afternoon. Our church runs a coffee shop on certain weekday mornings and I enjoy helping there and meeting new people and hopefully helping them become involved in some aspect of the church.

Before becoming church warden for the second time I served on Deanery Synod for a few years.

During the Coronavirus epidemic and lockdown, I helped to run our church FreeShop with a team of church people and others from the village, providing free food for at least 20 families in the local community

I have volunteered with Christians Against Poverty and currently Homestart, both of which are based in Chichester. Homestart provides weekly support for parents who are going through a difficult time and have pre-school children. I really enjoy sharing books with the children.



A little about myself:

Born and brought up on the Isle of Wight as a nominal catholic, I became a Christian at Liverpool University while studying Zoology. After graduating and marrying Alan I worked for Glaxo Pharmaceuticals for eight years before working as a missionary in Northern Nigeria for four years with Tearfund. My husband helped run the medical programme and I helped in the pharmacy. We could not openly evangelise but hoped to show by our lives and witness the love of God to those around. We returned to the UK in 1990, moved south, had two lovely boys and I was lucky enough to be able to be at home with them full time in their younger years. When they started secondary school I retrained as a teacher, definitely much harder to study later in life and worked at a secondary school in Bognor Regis with young people at risk of exclusion and later on with the looked after children. I retired early a few years ago and have enjoyed more time with Alan and holidays to visit the boys and their families and walk and birdwatch

If there is anything you wish to discuss please get in touch. Otherwise I would be very grateful of your vote, with as high a preference as possible to the House of Laity.

Proposer Mrs Barbara Wilson

Secunder Mr Tim Marsden

Kate Millest

Election Address, House of Laity Candidate

Proposer: Sarah White, Deanery Synod Representative

Seconder: Martin Egede, Deanery Synod Representative

e. kate.millest@stpetersbrighton.org

Please feel free to contact me if you have questions about my application.



CURRENT POSITIONS

Lay Pastor - St Peter's Brighton

Deanery Synod Member

(Previously) Actor & Presenter, Refugee education project manager at Frog Asia.

QUALIFICATIONS

BA Hons Contextual Theology & Ministry - St Paul's Theological College, Malaysia

BA Hons Drama - St Mary's University, London

ALSO...

Living with Cystic Fibrosis.

Married to Dan, mum of four children.

Love Brighton & the Arts

Passions include getting my kids to bed on time.

Why General Synod?

The Church of England has a vital role to play in our nation by pointing an increasingly post-Christian England to Christ.

I grew up in the Church of England, attending my local parish church. I have been closely involved with both revitalising existing churches, and starting new ones in both Catholic and charismatic worship traditions.

One of the greatest privileges of my life has been to serve in the Diocese of West Malaysia for 8 years being part of a team who was invited by Archbishop Moon-Hing to plant a new church in Kuala Lumpur.

I really believe in the Anglican Communion and the Church of England, and that this is a key time for us as a church to listen and learn from the global communion.

I think I would bring valuable experience to Synod as a mother, person living with disability, lover of theology, and having had a broad experience of Anglican worship traditions both here and abroad. I feel prepared to contribute effectively and play my part in the dialogues and discussions that are shaping the direction of the Church of England at this time.

About Me

I'm Kate, age 37, a young mum living in Brighton. I've studied both Drama and Theology, and work with a wide cross section of people in Brighton.

I grew up in a Christian family, and my personal faith came alive as a student at university and then seeking to follow Jesus in the arts scene in London. I love Jesus, and really believe He is the way, the truth, and the life! Now as a mother of young children I spend a lot of time trying to help them develop a passionate relationship with Him.

I care deeply for the vulnerable in our city and meeting their practical and spiritual needs through the local parish church. I long for everyone to know and experience the love of Jesus.

Professionally I worked in the arts for many years before working with refugees in Malaysia for 8 years, whilst also being part of a team starting a new church.

I am now rooted in Brighton with my children in local schools and nursery but also hold dear the global perspective having served in the Anglican Communion in Asia as well as the UK.

I have Cystic Fibrosis, a mostly hidden disability, (though by God's grace I am amazingly well!) and so care about making sure that our churches are accessible for those with barriers that would keep them from worshipping and serving in church.

Areas of Interest

RELEASING PEOPLE INTO MINISTRY

One of the greatest joys is to raise up and release others, old and young, into ministry using the gifts God has given them to serve. This is something that is vital for the flourishing of our church, we all have something to contribute.

CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE

As a mother of young children, early stage discipleship is constantly on my mind, and I am also involved in our youth group, discipling a group of teenage girls. The challenges they face are not the challenges we faced in our early years! I am both encouraged by their faith and determined that their voice and experiences be represented at General Synod.

APOSTOLIC PARTNERSHIPS

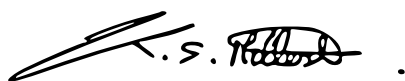
I believe in the parish system and working towards a healthy and faithful church in the heart of every community. I love every aspect of seeing churches strengthened and encouraged and on Synod would champion support for the local level investment through clergy and finances.

UNITY

I care deeply about unity across the church. This was one of the last things Jesus prayed for us before going to the cross that we would be one, and I've seen Him pour out His blessing where we work with and love each other well across our diversity and difference as we follow Him.

Finally...

Representing our diocese at General Synod would be a profound privilege and one I would approach humbly and prayerfully but also boldly for our diocese if given this honour, and would greatly appreciate your vote.



Kate Millest

Jonathan Sharp - General Synod Election Address

RT Kendall famously observed ‘God has an opinion about everything’. This is both challenging and comforting. It brings a sense of immediacy and concentrates the mind and heart on what God’s opinion would be - for personal issues, for what our churches teach and of course at General Synod. I believe we have to start with the Bible, helped by the Holy Spirit, and refined in discussion with others. We also have the Canons and Formularies to keep us on track.

General Synod’s main roles are approving liturgy & doctrine changes, setting budgets and maintaining good relations with other churches.

If elected, I’d join those who seek to follow the Church of England’s orthodox biblical witness because God’s way is always going to be best for us. His loving direction is sometimes a severe mercy but never to be scorned.

Liturgy & doctrine

The dominating issue is the LLF process - which really needs to be reversed, but given the current situation the main concern now is to put legal structures in place to support parishes that continue in the orthodox faith. This could be a big change. We then need to move away from this divisive issue to focus on our urgent responsibility to bring grace, hope and Godly wisdom to our nation.

Budget

The Church’s ample financial resources should be used principally to support parish ministry. We have to recognise that God is at work in the smallest gatherings as well as in festive crowds, so parishes need to be prioritised in financial support and in ministry resources. A strong long-term commitment to biblically-faithful parish communities will help restore confidence in those considering full-time ordained leadership. It will also encourage potential lay leaders to invest time and energy in training.

External relationships

We also need to re-establish good relations with our fellow global majority Anglicans who no longer recognise the authority of the Archbishop of Canterbury. This will only happen if the LLF measures are reversed or a separate structure established.

There is a lot to be thankful for in our churches - welcoming strangers, great children and youth work, warm friendships, God’s presence in our lives, joyful worship, encouraging teaching, lives changed, support for those in need. We need to nourish and build on this.

It’s also encouraging to see biblical principles for human flourishing being more confidently expressed in the wider media. In the midst of many personal and collective challenges the words and grace of our creator need to be heard.

About me - I have served on PCC, Deanery and Diocesan Synod, so I’m aware of the general structure and workings of these assemblies. I have been part of a Church plant and also long-established congregations in Plymouth and London but mostly in Brighton & Hove.

My background is in software development having worked for a British Telecom subsidiary and more recently for the UK branch of a New Zealand firm, building e-commerce and online learning systems. I’ve also developed a cultural-apologetics website. Off-duty I enjoy sailing with family and friends.

thankyou



Lou Shorey

Candidate for House of Laity

St Mark's Church, Holbrook, Horsham

lou@stmarksholbrook.org.uk

To represent the Diocese of Chichester on General Synod would be an honour. We find ourselves in another critical moment in the history of the Church of England and I would like to be a voice to help to shape its future. I am passionate about unity in the Church and its commitment to holding fast to its vision to be the catalyst for social transformation and human flourishing. To have the opportunity to contribute to discussions about the Clergy Conduct Measure, continuing discussions about safeguarding, matters relating to pensions and Clergy welfare, sustaining the vitality of parish life and violence against women, is important to me because of pastoral reasons and personal experience.

I am an experienced lay minister in the Church of England, having served in several churches for over the last twenty-five years in a number of different contexts. I have been involved in leadership in numerous ways (leading music groups, leading and overseeing house groups, youth work, schools work, women's ministry and have taught both young and adult congregations). Currently I serve on the senior leadership team of St Marks, Holbrook, with my husband Simon, who is Associate Vicar, and other staff members. Together, Simon and I are responsible for the planting of a worshipping community in Mowbray, North Horsham, a new housing development in the parish of St Mark's. It is important to me that as this community grows, it is aware of current discussion points at General Synod (e.g. the Dignity of Disabled Children, safeguarding, food banks and socio-economic security, investments and wider issues about the persecuted church) and how it can seek to serve the vision of the wider Church.

Previously I have worked in the retail and telecommunications sector, and founded a business to coach people in running, which broadened my learning about leadership to include management, forecasting, customer satisfaction, marketing and more. My ministry experience has been undergirded by many things, including song writing, publishing my first book, *Less is More*, and theological study to degree level. I am currently studying at Masters level and my dissertation title is "Critically assess the extent to which beauty can be present in the experience of dying."

Thank you for taking the time to consider my nomination for this by-election.

Election Address – Sheila Smith

About me - personally

As a young adult I studied Mathematics and Education at Loughborough University and then completed my Master's degree in Operational Research at the London School Economics. The first six years of my working life were spent on police research and development in the Home Office.

After getting married, I became a teacher and taught mainly Maths and IT in a variety of schools, finishing as a Deputy Headteacher before my retirement. Sadly, my husband, Alan, died of cancer at the age of 54, and since then, I have seen all three of our children get married and start families of their own. One of the joys in my life at present is being Nana to three beautiful grandchildren. I am so privileged to be involved in their young lives and look forward to two more joining the clan by the end of the year!

Since retirement, I have discovered a hidden talent for painting and, to the family's amusement (because I'm not very well coordinated!), have recently taken up ballet.



About me – at church

I have been at St Andrew's Church in Burgess Hill since 1988 (36 years!). During this time, I have been Churchwarden, on PCC many times, Deanery and Diocesan Synods. I have also, at different times, run the children's work on a Sunday and the youth work, plus numerous other roles. Currently, I head up the Prayer Ministry Team and am an Authorised Lay Minister, being able to lead and preach at services. Serving the Lord in this way gives me much pleasure and is another great joy in my life.

About me – my beliefs

I have always grown up knowing about Jesus. Through my time at university, my faith grew and I became involved in the Christian Union, leading small groups in Bible study. The Word of God is paramount to me and I believe it is essential to read His word daily, pray and seek His voice in all that I do. I love worshipping God with other Christians and have enjoyed many Christian festivals like New Wine and Spring Harvest.

Although the last 10 years have been especially difficult for me, I have known the faithfulness of Jesus as I have walked this path. For example, the year after my husband died, my dad died (my mum had died 20 years earlier) and the year after that, my father-in-law. Then I was diagnosed with breast cancer, during lockdown, and all through this time I was also trying to cope with the 'empty nest syndrome' as the children got married and started their own happily married lives. However, God is good, and in the darkest moments He has been my comforter but He is always my constant companion.

About me – standing for General Synod (GS)

When I felt God might be asking me to stand for GS, I prayed about it because I felt a little unsure and then spoke to my incumbent who encouraged me to go ahead. I now feel it is right for me to offer to serve the church in this way. So, what do I stand for?

Family life is very important to me and, I believe, the family unit is, or should be, the bedrock of society. I think young adults today have a very difficult job in bringing up their children and I believe the church should do all it can to support families in this role. Children today have so much more to contend with as traditional values are eroded and street crime is on the rise. There are a lot of mental health issues and people struggling to make ends meet, with a greater dependency on foodbanks and the like. Social media can often be the cause of many problems that young people have to deal with, especially where children can be groomed or trafficked. Making sure that everyone is kept safe in church is of vital importance and we need to ensure that safeguarding is taken seriously.

I believe, that as the church of God, we should be upholding biblical standards whilst being sympathetic to those who hold different views. We are called to love one another, so need to find a way whereby all people feel valued, regardless of their sex, gender, race, disability or anything else. There are no easy answers to the problems that the Church of England faces today, so we need to keep talking and try to find best possible solutions.

Our focus needs to remain on God, who He is and what He wants for His future bride. I believe that one of our primary tasks is to reach the unchurched, and we also need to take a lead in bringing this country back to God. As the church, we shouldn't be afraid to speak out on difficult issues, holding politicians to account when appropriate.

Finally, I believe that we need to be better managers of God's creation and support ethically minded companies and those working towards greener initiatives.

Candidate: Victoria Townsend



Nominator: Mary Nagel, Chichester Deanery

Seconded: Bradley Smith, Arundel and Bognor Deanery

1 Ecmud Road

Eastbourne

East Sussex

BN22 8RN

Telephone 07800 855187

Email address :vickyell1@hotmail.co.uk

Aged 45; married, Parish Children and Families Work Co-ordinator March 2020 to present, Teaching Assistant at Plaistow and Kirdford Primary School 2002 to 2012, Staff Governor 2010 to 2012, Teaching Assistant West Wittering Parochial Church of England School September 2012 to February 2020, Co-opted Governor of Palatine Primary School, Mothers' Union member.

Dear Elector

I am a lifelong Christian (my late father was a Reader) and I have grown through the usual childhood roles from chorister and Sunday School member to Sunday School leader. For the past 4 years I have been a Children's and Families Worker at St Andrews Church, Tarring in Worthing, building relationships in the community with schools, families and our own church community. In the school holidays I run Craft and Play sessions. In term time I help at Baby and Toddlers Group each Wednesday, and I run a pre-school session in church on Thursdays with a different story and craft each week (and of course time to play!)

In my previous job as a Teaching Assistant I was involved in the RE in school, helping to plan and deliver class-led worship and services at the local church at Harvest, Christmas, Easter and the end of term.

I believe it is important to encourage, support and engage with the children, young people and families in the local community. I have for the past 2 years run a Warm Hub space with Mothers' Union once a week after school from November to the end of February for families

recommended by local schools who are struggling with the cost of living. We were able to provide a bag of food for each family thanks to the generosity of the church and others.

For the last 12 years I have been a leader of the Diocesan group for the Children's Pilgrimage to Walsingham, and more recently also a leader for the Youth Pilgrimage to Walsingham. Our numbers increase each year as children grow in faith and confidence.

We need to invest in our Church schools, ensuring that children and young people can explore and develop in faith. I have learnt a lot about this during my time as a Governor at a Special school for children with disabilities – my experience here ties in with the recent General Synod debate on 'The Human Dignity of Disabled Children'.

In an era when Safeguarding is a vital priority for any community, especially the Church, I believe that my experience and my concern for the wellbeing of our children and young people make me a good candidate to represent our Diocese on General Synod.

Vicky Townsend