

ELECTION TO THE GENERAL SYNOD

Candidate: **The Revd Tim Stilwell,**

Vicar at St Mark's Holbrook, Diocese of Chichester

Proposer: The Revd Martin King, Rural Dean for Horsham

Seconder: The Revd Canon Julie Sear (retired)



Seeking to serve you on General Synod with a passionate heart for parish renewal.

I long to see our national church regain its confidence as we seek to engage even more effectively with those who don't yet know God's love for them personally. The 'quiet revival' may have been overhyped but there are definite signs that many in our nation, especially younger generations, are not merely exploring faith in general but specifically the Christian faith. I want to encourage a degree of cautious optimism as the pervasive secularist ideology wears thin. Navigating this cultural moment requires leaders who can speak with theological grounding, compassionate generosity, and a willingness to sit with complex questions.

About Me

I am married to Jo who is Head of Partnership Support at Kidsmatter (seeking to impact the lives of children facing disadvantages). We have three grown-up children and three grandchildren. I have served on the frontline as Vicar of St Mark's Holbrook, Horsham, for two years, following 22 years of parish ministry in the London Diocese (associate vicar at St Paul's Hammersmith and incumbent at St Dionis, Parsons Green). My experience includes serving as Area Dean and assistant DDO in Kensington.

I value the rich combination of ministry in Word and Spirit, planting fresh expressions and revitalising parish life where needed through the local church. This includes growing a worshipping community in Mowbray - a new housing estate in the north of our parish.

I know first-hand the profound joys and the heavy, quiet burdens of local ministry today. If elected, I will bring this compassionate, frontline perspective directly to the floor of Synod, ensuring that our discussions and debates are grounded in the reality of parish life.

My Core Principles & Commitments

Mission and Evangelism

We should celebrate and renew our confidence in the local parish system. It is not an obsolete relic from the past but the heartbeat of our mission and the place where communities can encounter God's love at any and every stage of their lives. I will vote to channel Church Commissioners' funds towards local parish ministry, frontline resources, and initiatives that

support church revitalisation. In an age where there appears to be a renewed hunger for the good news of Jesus Christ, I am extremely committed to supporting ministry and mission at the local level. Inspired by my wife's work at Kidsmatter, I am equally committed to seeing churches partner with other locally focussed organisations to bring the gospel into the lives of those who would otherwise be unreached by God's love.

Clergy Wellbeing

Throughout my ministry, I have walked alongside too many fellow clergy who have experienced stress, isolation, and burnout. Sadly, some of them are no longer in ordained ministry. I want to champion clergy welfare and advocate for high-quality training on mental health support across the dioceses. Clergy morale appears to be low in general and while the work at Synod with regard to housing, pay and pensions is ongoing, we must ensure that those who spend their lives caring for others are sustainably supported in long-term ministry themselves.

Marriage and sexual ethics

Although the LLF process has officially been brought to a close, the recent King Private Members Motion brought to General Synod indicates that the debates around a biblical understanding of human sexuality will continue into the next Synod. While my own ministry in this area is shaped by the traditional understanding of marriage revealed in Scripture and expressed in Canon B30, I recognize that many faithful Christians are in a space of deep re-examination. I do not hold easy answers, nor do I wish to shut down the profound theological and pastoral questions so many are wrestling with. I am deeply committed to listening to those navigating these tensions. My priority is to advocate for a church that combines true faithfulness to the Bible's time-honoured teaching with deep pastoral sensitivity, ensuring care and support for all those who love, or are attracted to, members of their own sex.

Safeguarding Reform

I lament the revelations of terrible abuse in the Church of England over recent decades and support the ongoing work towards new national, independent safeguarding structures. I will press for as much independent professional oversight as is legally possible to ensure that there are transparent systems in place. Trust must be built from the ground up; we must move decisively to ensure our churches are genuinely safe spaces for those who are vulnerable or at risk, and that victims and survivors of abuse are genuinely cared for.

Summary

General Synod requires representatives who can engage across differences with gentleness, humility, and respect without losing their theological grounding. Those who know me will tell you that I am accessible, insightful and a good listener who seeks to bridge divides rather than widen them. As such, I ask for your first preference vote.

Contact: vicar@stmarksholbrook.org.uk Mob: 07772 623543

Please don't hesitate to contact me if you would like to discuss my candidacy or share your own hopes and concerns for the future of our church.