

General Synod Election Address 2026 – Carol Hyatt

Candidate: Carol Hyatt
St Simon & St Jude Church, East Dean (since 2011)
Deanery Synod Member, Eastbourne Deanery (since 2021)

Proposer: Stephanie Carter
St Simon & St Jude Church, East Dean
Deanery Synod Member, Eastbourne Deanery (since 2023)

Seconder: Dr Simon Eyre
St Elisabeths Church, Eastbourne
General Synod Member (2021-26)
Deanery Synod Member, Eastbourne Deanery

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ, please would you prayerfully consider electing me as one of the Lay Representatives from Chichester Diocese to the General Synod. I am surprised myself at making this request but feel prompted by the Holy Spirit to make myself available to serve the church in this way and at this time.

My journey of Faith

As a child, I and my four siblings were packed off to the local Baptist church Sunday School each week. I think to give my parents some quiet time together and on their own, as they didn't accompany us to church. Through attending Sunday school in the morning, Bible class in the afternoon (where I learned to recite in order the books of the bible and a verse for each letter of the alphabet) and church in the evening, along with summer holiday clubs – I came to a personal commitment of faith and was baptised aged 13 in December 1975. Over the following 50+ years I have tried to live out my faith through school, college, work and church environments – worshipping in the Church of England since 1980. I describe myself as a practicing Christian – as I'm not very good at it. But my loving Lord has always welcomed me back with open arms when I've strayed from His ways. I persist through (almost daily) personal prayer and bible reading and regular attendance at my local Church - St Simon & St Jude, East Dean; whilst also supporting Friston and Jevington churches in the benefice.

Serving in my local church

Over the years, I have served in different church communities in many ways through music and bellringing, puppet ministry and holiday clubs, admin, leading and speaking at services. I have served on PCCs for many years and including as Treasurer, PCC secretary, Electoral Roll officer and currently Vice chair (during our interregnum). I have also served on Deanery synod over several terms. During these times of service, I have been sustained by God's presence and power, especially during difficult seasons.

Wider ministry and training

Outside of my local church community, I have volunteered at Spring Harvest (under 5s team), Greenbelt (lost and found children's team) and Bible by the Beach (under 5s team). For a short period, I delivered Bible Explorer in local primary schools. To broaden my knowledge and understanding of God's word, I completed the Study by Extension for All Nations (SEAN) Life of Christ course (2005) and the Sussex Gospel Partnership Saturday Morning Bible Training Course (2012).

Academic qualifications and professional membership

Since leaving school, I achieved a Graduate Diploma (degree equivalent) in Music (1983), Post Graduate Diploma in Housing Management (1993), MA in Education (2019) and Level 6 Diploma in Career Guidance and Development (2021).

I am a Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Housing (since 2005) and a CDI (Career Development Institute) Registered Professional (since 2022)

Professional experience

In employment over almost 40 years, I have worked mainly in the social housing sector (delivery front line management services, then supporting colleagues with policy, strategy, performance and compliance roles). Latterly, I have worked in Career Information Advice and guidance for a local Christian charity supporting jobseekers into employment. As Director of Operations, I have been responsible for contract delivery, performance and compliance, working closely with the CEO to secure ongoing funding and helping the charity to sustain and build its services.

Why me? Why now?

As I write this statement, I am preparing for retirement from full-time work (at the end of October) in the hope that I can spend more time serving my local church community in services and bible study groups. I firmly believe in God's timing and providence and looking back over my life can see the various times and seasons that have flowed and contributed to support my work and Christian service. Looking forward to the next chapter of my life, I feel God's hand in the timing of this opportunity to offer myself to serve on General Synod. I feel that I offer a breadth and depth of personal and professional experience, but I am also keen, eager and willing to learn new skills and knowledge from others as I seek to serve the local and national church through involvement in the General Synod. I would welcome this opportunity to serve on General Synod and am able to commit to the demands of time and energy that this involves.

If elected, I would like to seek debates on the following issues:

- **communion provisions:** establishing alternate provisions for distribution of communion wine element other than use of the common cup – an issue which I feel personally strongly about since the pandemic
- **communications:** exploring how church synods can work more effectively together in communicating, engaging and supporting local parish mission and ministry
- **financial sustainability:** securing a sustainable and affordable financial model that supports the local and national church and is transparent in its application

What I believe

As an evangelical, I believe in the infallibility of the Bible. I believe that we are all made in the image of God and that everyone should be welcomed into our churches to hear the good news of repentance, forgiveness, love and salvation. I support the ministry of women in all aspects of church life. I hold the traditional view of marriage as a union between a man and a woman, so in conscience I do not support use of prayers for Living in Love and Faith. If elected, I will approach debates with an open mind, listen to various points of view, whilst seeking to prayerfully form my own view based on biblical principles.

Thank you for reading my statement, please would you consider giving me your first preference vote in this election to General Synod as I seek to faithfully serve God and the church at this time and in this way.

Contact details - email: carol.hyatt24@gmail.com