

I am offering myself to serve the Diocese of Ely – and the wider Church – in standing for election to General Synod. My hope is that my combination of gifts, training and experience might make a valuable contribution to the Church as together we seek to live out God’s call upon us. That mandate, I believe, involves the Church being both a prophetic voice to the nation and a place of welcome and hospitality where, through the ministry of local churches, people are drawn to know the astonishing love of God for us in Jesus Christ. General Synod, at its best, is well placed to enable and support these imperatives.



Ever since my conversion, throughout my adult life I have been a committed Anglican – the Church of England is my natural home and I love that it has breadth enough to cope with the likes of me – a charismatic, contemplative, sacramental evangelical who loves good liturgy, done well.

These are challenging times for the Church, not only as we recover from the impact of the pandemic, but also as we tackle some challenging issues. Yet I believe that, with sensitivity to the Spirit, and listening to each other, we can find a way through that will lead to growth and renewal; General Synod has important work to do in the next few years.

If elected, I would bring a wide range of experience of parochial ministry (both stipendiary and non-stipendiary), theological education and medicine (both clinical and academic), together with my particular interest in the interface between theology, medicine and ethics.

### Background Information

- Originally from Bristol, I studied maths at Oxford before working with the Church Mission Society in Kenya for 2 ½ years. I then worked in business before training and working as a doctor in Bristol.
- Whilst working as a GP and Clinical Lecturer in Bristol, I completed a PhD which focused on migrant communities, HIV and access to healthcare.
- From 2006 I spent 3 years in Cambridge where I trained for ordination at Ridley Hall and completed an MPhil in doctrine and theological ethics at St. John’s College.
- I then spent 11 years in stipendiary ministry, including 7 years in Ely Diocese as incumbent, before being licensed as Associate Minister in the Meridian Benefice where I now serve in a non-stipendiary capacity.
- Alongside parish ministry I have continued to work as a GP in clinical practice and as a GP Educator in the Cambridge Medical School. As an Associate Lecturer in the Divinity Faculty, I have contributed to the training of ordinands, teaching ethics in the Cambridge Theological Federation.
- Over the past 18 months I have supported the pandemic response by working for the national COVID Clinical Assessment Service both as a clinician and in supporting other doctors through peer support and quality improvement.
- Since moving to Earith last year, where I live with my black Lab, Meg, I have enjoyed exploring the local area and the banks of the Great Ouse. Now that restrictions have been lifted, I’m looking forward to sharing the benefits of my new-found love of cooking.

**Nominated by:**

The Revd Canon Fred Kilner, Rural Dean, St Ives Deanery

**Seconded by:**

The Revd Sue Butler, Pioneer Minister, Thirst Cambridge

### What are the issues facing Synod?

**Vision and Strategy:** The Archbishop of York is leading a major national initiative which seeks to bring simplicity and coherence to our governance structures, and the practical ways the Church is organised. I applaud the desire to see a '*simpler, humbler, bolder Church that is Jesus Christ centred and Jesus Christ shaped*'. I have first-hand experience of frustrating and time-consuming complexities that can detract from our ministry priorities and, if elected, will work to support changes that make it easier to get things done and that enable the local church to flourish.

**Pandemic Recovery and Financial Stress:** The COVID pandemic has had a profound effect upon our nation and Church. Whilst we cannot avoid the reality of declining church attendance and financial pressures, there are some parts of the Church that are growing, and in many parishes COVID has necessitated innovation in the ways we worship and engage with our communities, which we can learn from. Synod can support and retain the very best of the Parish system, whilst also giving permission for greater flexibility, so that new ways of working, rooted in a clear ecclesiology, can be tried.

**Climate Change, Ethical Investment and Racism:** If elected, I will use my background in theological ethics to encourage Synod to develop realistic plans that support the local church to meet the carbon neutral target set by the last Synod; challenge investment decisions which are not in line with Christian ethical principles; and support the Archbishops' Commission's call for urgent change to tackle systemic racism in the Church as a 'missional imperative'.

**Marriage and Sexuality:** We cannot avoid discussing issues relating to gender, human sexuality and same-sex relationships, and this is already happening in many churches where '*Living in Love and Faith*' is being used. While remaining committed to Lambeth 1.10 and the teaching outlined in 'Issues in Human Sexuality' (1991), I recognise from my own study and my medical experience, that social trends, scientific understanding, and debate within the LGBTQ+ community are constantly shifting. We must listen very carefully to the insights brought by all participants in the conversation, and I would seek to do whatever I can to bring grace, love and generosity of spirit to bear in all conversation, whilst also contributing from my medical knowledge and background in ethics.

### What I could contribute to Synod:

**Experience of ministry:** I have both stipendiary and non-stipendiary, urban and rural, incumbent and 'Associate' experience. As a Mission Partner in Kenya, prior to ordination, I have experience of ministry in the wider Anglican Communion. As an incumbent I led a church into growth, both numerically and in depth of discipleship, developing vision and strategy, and growing vocations to licensed ministry. I saw faith grow as we embarked on a major building project which saw us eventually obtain a Faculty after a full hearing in a Consistory Court, but it was a painful, costly and cumbersome process that I want to see simplified.

**Experience from beyond the church** having worked in business, as a doctor, a medical teacher, and academic. My PhD research gives me insight into some of the difficulties faced by migrant populations in the UK. More recently, over the past 18 months I have been part of the 'front-line' COVID pandemic response and am well versed with not only the science, but also the personal cost and suffering experienced by so many. As we emerge from the pandemic in this country, it is vital that the Church is not seen as irrelevant, that Synod engages with the inequalities and injustices in our society, and that we proclaim the hope that we have in Jesus Christ, whilst tackling the practical needs of our time.

**I am able to bring theology and ministry into dialogue with ethics and medicine** as we seek to address some of the important ethical issues facing Church and society today. There have been enormous technological and biomedical advances in recent years, many of which raise important ethical questions that the Church must grapple with and know how to address.

Above all, I am motivated by a deep-seated love of God and his Church, and a fervent desire to see people come to faith in Jesus. If elected, that will underpin everything I do and say in Synod.

Your vote in these elections is important. Please email me if you have any questions or would like to speak on the phone. I would be grateful for your support in the election (and if I am not your first-choice candidate, I would ask you to consider giving me your 2nd or 3rd vote). Thank you.

*Caroline*