



PROFILE

I was ordained in 2009 at Chester Cathedral and served my curacy in Stockton Heath. I became the Rector of Grappenhall in South Warrington in 2012 and Rural Dean of Great Budworth Deanery in 2020.

I am a member of Cohort 3 of the Strategic Leadership Development Course and am currently involved in a pilot to develop a Wellbeing Toolkit for PCCs in collaboration with the national THRIVE team.

Prior to ordination I was a secondary school teacher and have sat on SACREs in both a lay and ordained capacity. I have degrees in Religion and Theology from Lancaster and Leeds Universities. Originally from East Lancashire I've lived in Cheshire since 1993. I'm married with two grown up children.

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SECONDED BY

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REV'D JANE PROUDFOOT

Candidate for election to General Synod

ABOUT ME

I am standing for General Synod for the first time, having been impressed by the call for a more diverse range of candidates, and am asking for your 1st preference or highest possible vote. I am grateful to Elaine and Mark for their support of my candidacy.

EXPERIENCE

I chaired the 2019 Clergy Conference and am currently a member of the Diocesan Advisory Group for Living in Love and Faith. I am a member of Diocesan Synod and a Deanery Vocations Advisor. I took a lead in involving our parish as a pilot for the Everyday Faith (formerly Setting God's People Free) initiative from the Renewal and Reform Group. I have taught on the Reader and Pastoral Workers Training courses and undertook research with students from Chester University into funeral ministry which fed into the national Life Events initiative. I have worked ecumenically with churches throughout Cheshire and surrounding Dioceses as a result of leading the mission to the Creamfields Festival, chairing both our local Churches Together group and Christian Aid group.

WHY AM I STANDING?

The good news of Jesus Christ is a message for all, and I believe that for the church to flourish and grow there must be a genuine and fully inclusive spirit of welcome. Our integrity as the established church is challenged whenever we see marginalized groups within it, excluded and ignored. Collaborative ministry is key; the clergy must listen attentively and openly to the experiences and convictions of the laity, encouraging and valuing their discipleship.

I long for growth and for a church that speaks to everyone, in language they can all understand, with a simple message of love and truth. Keeping hold of the rich legacy and tradition of our church heritage, while moving into the future is a challenge, but I feel that both are possible. I look forward to a time when the church is no longer involved in internal dispute and can give its full energy to mission, the climate crisis and global justice.

"I worked with Jane for two years when she chaired the committee organising the 2019 clergy conference. I know that Jane would serve on General Synod with wisdom and energy, determined to make a difference for the good of the whole Church and for its greater fitness to serve and welcome all the people of our nation." Rev'd Dr Mark Hart

Important matters for the Church:

The Climate Crisis

I want to see the Church leading in good practice and ensuring that Dioceses are responding to sustainability and renewable fuel sources, through the work of their Diocesan Advisory Committees and managing their housing stock carbon footprint. We need to work with the scientists and advisers who can help us with the practicalities of managing and adapting our buildings and policies. As stewards of creation, we must do all that we can to protect our beautiful planet.

Clergy Wellbeing

The clarification and simplification of the Clergy Discipline Measure is imperative if clergy are to be properly supported, valued, and treated professionally. Questions still need to be asked about whether CDM is fit for purpose. The pandemic has highlighted the extreme pressure the clergy are under.

"I have had the privilege of knowing Jane from her training days as an ordinand and have watched her grow into a confident, competent and dynamic leader. She is keen to listen, to explore and to consider the opinions of others and to find different ways of approaching subjects and situations which she may not have encountered before. She is open, honest and approaches life with an open heart and mind and engages with people from all ages and backgrounds and makes them feel respected, cared for and loved. She has much to offer the General Synod at this time".

Rev'd Canon Elaine Chegwin Hall

Inclusion

I am committed to equality for everyone, at all levels and roles within the church, regardless of gender, disability, age, ethnicity, socio-economic status, mental health or sexuality. I believe that we will be a healthier church when we all learn to disagree well and to be open to listen to the views of those we disagree with. To this end I commit to work with others who hold views different from my own. The Pastoral Principles are an excellent basis for good conversations within the church on a whole variety of issues. I would like to see all churches stating clearly their stance on inclusion on their websites. I long for a church which is a braver, safer and more honest place for all people to find welcome and identity in Christ as we learn to live in love and faith with each other.

Mission, leadership and discipleship

After years of decline in the numbers of people coming to Christ and regularly worshipping in our churches we have to listen and respond to the reasons our message isn't getting through. This requires humility in our leadership at all levels and an admission that we have failed to preach the Gospel afresh to each generation. Discerning who are the people God is calling into this crisis is vitally important. At the same time a recognition of the way in which society has changed, working patterns and the additional pressures upon retired people must be taken into account given our reliance on the goodwill of volunteers.

Tempting as it is to sweep all that has gone before away, I do believe that the parish system is a treasure worth reforming and repairing. This should be coupled with greater collaboration at a Deanery level, high expectations, greater accountability and better support for clergy. The pandemic has shown us that the church is able to adapt and change, reaching new people in new ways. The immense learning that has happened over the past 18 months must be harnessed, valued, and built on as we go forward. It has also highlighted the importance of our mission through the occasional offices. Much work could be done to improve and increase meaningful outreach in this area. Working with, empowering and enabling the laity is essential, not as substitute leaders but as true leaders and disciples with amazing God-given gifts and talents. Growing Faith, Everyday Faith and other initiatives grow confidence and enable us all to live out our faith so that the whole of our lives give glory to God.

If you would like further information before reaching a decision on where to place me in the vote, please contact me on 01925 261546 or email me at revdproudfoot@hotmail.co.uk