



Holly Adams

General Synod election address

*Nominated by: Jack Fellows, Churchwarden and
Deanery Synod Representative, All Saints Canterbury*

*Seconded by: Liz Morrison,
Deanery Synod Representative, St Peter's Canterbury*

I am an enthusiastic lay leader with experience at local, deanery, diocesan and national church level and a passion for exploring what a gospel-hearted, relational, justice-seeking church looks like in today's world.

Here's a bit more information to help you get to know me:

- I worked for four years in the Local Church Development team for Canterbury Diocese, amongst other things assisting with Diocesan Synods, organising lay ministry training, and supporting discipleship and spirituality programmes.
- I then worked for two years for the Church Urban Fund (CUF) in the Church Engagement team. CUF is the social action arm of the Church of England and I enjoyed visiting churches and clergy all over the country and encouraging and equipping their engagement in social justice.
- I am currently working for the Methodist Church on their national Connexional team as Evangelism and Contemporary Culture Officer. I love my job which is all about equipping the Methodist people in confident, authentic faith sharing. This also means I would be well placed to engage positively in Synod discussions on ecumenism.
- I worship at All Saints church in Canterbury and I am really proud of all that it is and stands for - we aim to be an inclusive, intergenerational family that serves our community, one of the most deprived in Canterbury.
- I have been PCC Secretary at All Saints Canterbury for six years.
- I have been Canterbury Deanery Synod Representative for three years.
- I have been a Street Pastor in Canterbury for nearly six years and am now a Team Leader. It is a great privilege to be involved in this important organisation which seeks to listen, love and care for people on the streets on a Saturday night.

My work experience has cultivated in me a passion for lay leadership, for church participation in community development and social justice and for a reorientation to the gospel in the ways that we live together as church.

My priorities as a candidate relate to:

Repentance

In so many ways we are in a season of deep repentance as a Church. For our historic and ongoing safeguarding failings, for our institutional racism and our role in injustice in all its forms, for our attachment to privilege, and for our contribution towards the climate crisis – for all this and more we are a Church of sorrow and regret.

Yet, as we repent, we reorientate towards God – towards a deeper commitment to living as gospel-hearted people of love and healing, to being a Church that testifies to and embodies the good news of restoration for all people and creation. This is what excites me about this season: with repentance comes the possibility for change.

Hope

Our opportunity now is to be a Church that pays attention to God, that shows up in humility and hope, and that is willing to take a risk to follow God's call into mission. Our response to *From Lament to Action*, to the climate crisis, and to *Living in Love and Faith* are all opportunities to more faithfully follow God into the future. Our effective connection with younger generations, with marginalised communities, and with those sometimes excluded by church are necessary commitments as we look to the future with hope.

I am committed to equality for everyone, at all levels and in all roles within the church, regardless of gender, disability, ethnicity, socio-economic status, mental health or sexuality. I long to see a Church that reflects the radical inclusion I see in the Gospels.

A community-first local church

At All Saints church in Canterbury I have learned much about what it means to live humbly alongside diverse others as a family. I have learned that church is done best when it's real, which means it can be messy and challenging, but when you put relationship at the centre – relationship with one another and with God - an extraordinary community of God's people emerges.

I believe the future of our Church is about real, mutual relationships fostered in local communities. In this context, mission and evangelism, rooted in the identities and gifts we are given by God, can flourish. In this context, justice and inclusion and transformation are possible for each of us, for our communities and for our world.

I have confidence that this future is possible in the parish system but only alongside a deeper commitment to mission, outreach, evangelism and pioneering new Christian communities. Our use of resources at local, diocesan and national level must prioritise these commitments and those which make our church a safe space for our whole community.

If we can faithfully follow God beyond the walls of our church buildings into real relationship then, by God's grace, I believe we will see more than enough provision to sustain our work.



Thank you for reading my election address. I seek to bring my commitment to God's mission, and my experience, to faithfully serve Canterbury Diocese on General Synod. I hope you will give me your first preference vote. The electronic ballot will open on Friday 17 September 2021 and close on Friday 8 October 2021



If you want to contact me about anything I would be very happy to hear from you on: holly@allsaintscanterbury.co.uk or on Instagram @hollyelsie or Twitter @holly_elsie.