

Rev Canon Barney de Berry



Vicar St Mary Bredin (SMB),
Canterbury.
Chaplain to Kent CCC
Chair of CDEN (Canterbury
Diocese Evangelical Network)
Network leader of the East
Kent New Wine Network

Representing the clergy of Canterbury Diocese on General Synod since 2015 has been a great privilege. I am standing for a second term (though I feel two terms is enough) as I feel I can be even more effective this time round, as it does take a while to get used to how synod works and operates and to discern which areas of synod one has something to really contribute to. At St Mary Bredin we seek to follow Jesus' two great commandments, to 'Be holy and be a Blessing'. This not only means serving and ministering to our parish but also wider in playing our part in the mission of the church as a whole. We are very blessed as a church to have people from every age and stage of life and over the years have seen growth among 0-18s & 18-30-year olds. This ministry of growing faith has always been a real priority for me. Sadly, these age groups are missing from many of our churches and the mission to them needs to be prioritised in the next few years. My call to stand for synod has always included a strong call to advocate for these age groups both in and outside of the church, and to challenge the church in its mission to these generations. Of course, the greatest blessing we can be to someone else is to introduce them to Jesus so they might receive his grace, mercy and salvation. This mission to witness to Jesus and lead others to him should be at the forefront of all we do as a church. I hope that if I am to continue to represent the clergy of Canterbury Diocese at synod that I would continue to advocate that evangelism and the proclamation of the gospel of mercy, grace and salvation should be at the heart of and the motivation for all that we do and that each one of us in our various settings and parishes are given every opportunity and resource to witness to this great good news.

About Barney:

I have been part of Canterbury Diocese for 11 years now becoming vicar of St Mary Bredin (SMB) in 2010. Previously I was Associate Vicar at Holy Trinity, Cambridge and served my Curacy at St Alkmund's in Derby. I love being the vicar of SMB but even more I love being part of the family of God at SMB; in term of churches, it is the love of my life. For the last three years I have also been the chaplain to Kent County Cricket club which has combined my love of sport with the opportunity to minister and witness to those in and around the community of the club and has given me an insight into the great benefits and opportunities of chaplaincy. I am married to Ruth who is a Consultant Gastroenterologist at the William Harvey Hospital in Ashford, and we have three boys (14,12 & 9). This means I am fully aware of the pressures that many in our congregations' face in our busy and demanding society and the need for our churches to support and encourage them in their day to day ministry rather than to add to those

demands. We love living in East Kent and I tell everyone I know what a great place it is to live and minister in. I also grew up in a Vicarage as my Dad was a Vicar in a number of inner city parishes. In my spare time I love watching sport particularly cycling, rugby and cricket and whenever I get the opportunity I like to jump on my bike and ride up a hill.

There are some really important issues facing Synod in the next five years these include:

- Responding to Covid-19 pandemic and the strain particularly financially it has put on our churches.
- Seeking racial equality in our church and society so all may experience the generous welcome that Jesus extends to all.
- Continuing to see how we as a church can respond to the climate change crisis and achieve our agreed aim to be carbon neutral by 2030.

There are also a number of areas that I feel drawn to be particularly involved in and feel I have something particular to contribute:

Evangelism: I am passionate about Evangelism and sharing the good news of Jesus Christ with people of every age. Sharing this great good news by word and action is, I believe, the fundamental business of the church. I long to see a renewed confidence in the message of salvation that ‘God so loved the World that he sent his only Son, so that whoever believes in him may not perish but have eternal life’.

Growing Faith: This exciting initiative to see young people and children reached with the gospel and grown in their faith is something we are committed to and investing in as a church here at SMB and I hope to continue to advocate for at Synod. The decline in numbers across the church are even more acute among children and young people. Our mission to them should be an absolute priority so they might receive the wonderful gift that I received of meeting Jesus at a young age and the blessing that is lifelong discipleship with him.

Living in Love and Faith (LLF): Having been part of synod the last six years it has been a great privilege to have been part of this important journey of discernment through the shared conversations and now LLF. To listen to people from different experiences and perspectives has been such a valuable exercise. To acknowledge the pain and hurt that has been caused by the church has been vital. As we continue to search scripture together it is so important that we remain confident in God’s word as containing all things necessary for salvation and that we continue to trust that Jesus has the words of eternal life, life in all its fullness and flourishing.

The local Church: I am convinced that the local church is vital to our mission and evangelism. The vision of the parish system is a wonderful thing but under severe strain. As we look to grow our churches there will be some difficult decisions to be made and it might be wise to strategically deploy some of our resources. However, the local church must be at the heart of our vision to grow and it must be released to be the body of Christ loving and witnessing to our neighbours and community.

If you did feel you could vote for me then I would be very grateful and if not your first preference could I ask you to consider putting me down as your second or third preference. Please feel free to contact me about any of this.

Rev Barney de Berry St Mary Bredin, 59 Nunnery Fields, Canterbury, CT1 3JN.

Tel: 01227 453777 email: vicar@smb.org.uk