

Rachel Webbley

Nominated by: The Venerable Jo Kelly-Moore
Archdeacon of Canterbury

Seconded by: Rev Bob Weldon,
Vicar of The Trinity Benefice, Folkestone



An experienced and energetic priest, passionate about grass-roots parish witness and loving service at the heart of communities.

I am 45, married with two children and Team Rector of Whitstable Team Ministry since 2018, based primarily at St Alphege Whitstable and St Peter's Whitstable.

- Ordained in 2004 and curate in Bicester Team Ministry
- Team Vicar in Whitstable Team Ministry 2007 – 2018
- Training Incumbent, part of DDO team as ADDO and former IME2 Seminar facilitator, placement and mission module supervisor.
- Member of Diocesan Synod and Deanery Ministry and Mission Committee.
- 17 years experience as school governor in 3 schools; Recently member of Diocesan Children and Young Peoples Framework.
- Previously Women's Ministry co-ordinator for Canterbury Archdeaconry.
- Experience of World Church: Served overseas at Soup Kitchen project in Argentina with USPG short-term placement; Recent sabbatical in New Zealand parish.

Interesting times

A cradle Anglican, I have been fascinated by the church's responses to the **pandemic**, particularly where that has been agile and creative while remaining faithful. As we enter a new era, I am inspired by the vision for the Church of England to be **simpler, humbler and bolder** and to face up to the reality of our changed status in society.

Having encountered Asset-based Community Development (ABCD) I am encouraged that it offers a powerful antidote to messages of scarcity, refocusing on the treasure of God at work that is ready to be uncovered and celebrated in our communities. Challenging institutional over-reach would lead to an empowered local culture of accountability with the local church recognising what brings life in all its fulness that is sustainable for future generations. It is an access point to a humbler shape of lay and ordained ministry that could be hugely liberating as we pray to discern the future of the Church of England.

Inclusion and power

I believe that in the church, and in society as a whole, we all need everyone, and that we have a fuller understanding of God when we include different perspectives.

Even before the pandemic, the truth that **IICSA** revealed was an important call to repentance for the unhealthy cultures in the church that have caused so much damage to ordinary people. I have hope that we can re-learn how to champion the vulnerable and model safe communities, being honest about how different kinds of power are shared and exercised. The replacement of the **Clergy Discipline Measure** is important not least because it is an indicator of how people are treated with justice and mercy, which goes to the heart of how God calls us to be in the world.

From Lament to Action is a refreshing report that I will work with Synod towards making a watershed. Since ordination training, I have been involved with understanding white privilege and regularly challenge my own subconscious assumptions when dealing with people. 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.

The **Living in Love and Faith** process is an important attempt to live well with difference, as the Five Guiding Principles also articulate. I actively seek to understand those with different points of view, and rejoice in the diversity of our Deanery where different churches minister effectively alongside each other for the good of the whole.

Finally, **The Climate Emergency** is the most important and urgent challenge of our time. We all know that the problem is complex and multi-faceted, and there is no simple solution, as our National Investing Bodies Approach To Climate Change report recently set out. I set up the Eco-Church Kent Facebook Group to create a supportive network of people that would otherwise have been isolated in their own churches, and I'm keen to serve the wider church in reaching towards its carbon neutral target.

Thank you for reading my electoral statement. 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:

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Rachel Webbley



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