



Miranda Threlfall-Holmes

Team Rector of the St Luke in the City Team, Liverpool
Toxteth & Wavertree Deanery

Standing for the House of Clergy
General Synod

Nominated by:
The Revd. Canon Bob Lewis
The Revd. Sonya Doragh

Who am I?

I've been ordained for 18 years and have served in parishes in Newcastle, Durham and Liverpool, and have also been a university chaplain.

In the St Luke in the City Team I work with a great team of lay and ordained colleagues across 3 very diverse churches, encompassing the evangelical, catholic and liberal/progressive traditions of the church. The team includes the first Open Table LGBTQIA+ congregation and is fully inclusive, which is very important to me.

I also enjoy writing and speaking, and I am passionate about communicating Christianity to people who might not have considered it an option for them. I became a Christian at university, and can still vividly remember how strange Christianity seemed from the outside. I've written on prayer, church history, mission studies and chaplaincy, and my most recent book is 'How to Eat Bread: 21 Nourishing Ways to Read the Bible'. I led the Diocese of Liverpool's Summer Reading Challenge this year.

I've been a member of WATCH (Women and the Church) since I trained for ordination. I'm a council member of Modern Church and regular attender at Greenbelt.

Why General Synod?

I've served on General Synod for seven years previously, and found that I greatly enjoyed learning from and debating with people from all walks of life and all perspectives in the church. I even enjoyed reading the vast quantities of material we get sent, keeping us abreast of what's going on nationally and in very different contexts to our own.

I value the fact that our synodical system gives an equal voice to each of the three houses, and the way in which a grass-roots motion can start in a parish and be adopted at deanery, diocesan and national levels.

General Synod is where our church laws are made. It is important that we are involved in those discussions and debates: it's no good standing back and then complaining that we don't like what 'they' have done.

What do I stand for?

I believe in a broad church. I hope to counter some of the increasing polarisation or tribalism in our church life, which I find troubling. Previously on Synod I was very involved in campaigning to open the episcopate to women, and I really valued the fact that I maintained and still maintain good working relationships with colleagues who disagreed.

I believe in an inclusive church. I am committed to equality for everyone, at all levels and roles within the church, regardless of gender, disability, ethnicity, socio-economic status, mental health or sexuality. I have particular expertise in gender justice issues.

I believe in the parish. I value the Church of England's historic commitment to being here for everyone through the parish system. I support the idea of building on this through enhancing chaplaincies and online presence, reaching those who may not identify primarily with a geographical location. I want to work to make parish ministry sustainable without increasing the financial and administrative burdens on clergy and laity by better sharing of resources across dioceses and the removal of complex layers of bureaucracy.

I believe in sustainability. We need to grasp the nettle of how we will achieve carbon neutrality and climate sustainability, but I'm optimistic about the future. We are in this for the long haul, and follow a God who is generous and sufficient. I'll bring a realistic, level-headed, faithful approach, and be an advocate for thinking from a place of calm, rather than from the panic and fear that sometimes seems to drive decision making.

I believe in clergy well-being. Following on from the last two points, I believe that parish clergy and chaplains have done an incredible job in this pandemic, and are extremely stretched and weary. I'll be an advocate for resisting solutions that simply tell clergy – or laity – that they should do more. I support Sheldon's suggestions for CDM revision and am a member of Unite.

It probably shouldn't need saying, but **I believe in God!** As Evelyn Underhill once said, 'the interesting thing about Christianity is God'. I'm not primarily interested in internal church debates. The internal operations of General Synod or the reputation of the Church of England must never become ends in themselves. Nevertheless, it is important to get our housekeeping right, to safeguard the vulnerable and exercise good stewardship. I'm prepared to roll up my sleeves and get involved, in the hope that I can help us be a better organised, safer, more welcoming church, co-creating the kingdom with God as the Spirit guides.

This next Synod will see important discussions and votes on LGBTQIA+ inclusion, climate change, financial sustainability, mission and the future of the parish system.

If you'd like me to represent you on these and other matters, then

Please give me your first preference vote.