



Margaret Swinson

General Synod Candidate 2021

If you want to ask me any questions, please contact me by telephone on **0151-724 3533**
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BACKGROUND

I live in Liverpool and am a trained Accountant, working part-time. The main focus of my work is currently corporate and information governance for a Social Enterprise delivering NHS contracts. Working part time enables me to devote significant time to church activities in the parish, diocese, nationally and also in the Anglican Communion, alongside work, family and recreation activities.

Since 1980 I have worshipped at St Matthew and St James, Mossley Hill, with my family. We are a growing church providing both formal and informal opportunities for worship. I take an active role in the life of the church leading worship, preaching, and through the music group. In the past I have served as churchwarden and PCC Secretary. As a church we are seeking to develop every member of our congregation so that we are equipped, empowered and enabled to exercise ministry in every area of our lives.

I have served on the Deanery Synod since 1982 and Diocesan and General Synods since 1985. I served as chair of the House of Laity of the Diocesan Synod from 2003 to 2015 and have been a member of the Bishop's Council. I also serve as a member of the Liverpool Cathedral Chapter.

GENERAL SYNOD

Since my election to General Synod in 1985 I have been an active member. I currently **Chair the Appointments Committee** of the Church of England, and was elected Vice Chair of the **Anglican Consultative Council** in 2016.

At Synod I contribute to debates and have served on a number of working groups, Boards and Councils including working from 2007 to 2014 on the groups which culminated in the ordination of women to the episcopate. I have also served the governing structures of Churches Together in Britain & Ireland in various roles, including two terms as moderator, between 1996 and May 2014.

FUTURE ISSUES

The Church of England and the new General Synod face a number of important issues and challenges:

- **Vision & Strategy development:** The Archbishops have called for a **simpler, humbler, bolder** church which influences governance, structure, how we own and respond to the past and serve society in the present, and the energy and enthusiasm of the church for sharing the good news. The priorities underpinning that vision are a younger and more diverse church, with a mix of old forms of church with new and full of disciples, living out and witnessing to the gospel. The articulation of this vision and strategy has raised questions about the balance between mission and management, and between parish and network or new forms of church. I am personally committed to the development of a breadth of entry points into the church and into faith, and to the exploration of new and sustainable patterns of ministry which recognise the gifts of both lay and ordained leaders as partners together in the work of the Kingdom. I am also committed to working towards diversity in the church and I bring my personal experience as a person of mixed ethnicity which has at times been challenging.
- **Living in Love and Faith:** Human sexuality continues to be a hotly debated area throughout the church and the Anglican Communion where the full range of views is represented among the provinces. I have been committed to ongoing dialogue in this area and was a member of the Theology of Friendship Group in the diocese in the early 2000s. I was able to continue the process of dialogue through our diocesan conversations with Akure and Virginia and took part in the regional shared conversations on scripture, mission and sexuality which are part of the follow-up to the Pilling Report. Although I personally believe the church should welcome and honour all people irrespective of their sexuality, I seek, as I did with Women in the Episcopate, to hold the Church of England together to the highest degree possible, regardless of the views held by individuals.
- **Anglican Consultative Council:** Initially as the lay member on the Council for the Church of England, and now as Vice Chair, I am very aware of the tensions within the Communion and also the valuable work which is undertaken by Anglican churches and which makes a fundamental difference to the lives of communities across the world. The strength of the Communion lies both in its diversity and in its engagement with the local communities it serves. In spite of the challenges and differences of view, I believe it is important to work to maintain relationships between the provinces and for provinces to be open to learning from one another as they seek to share the good news each in their own unique location.

Maggie Swinson