

Lucy Davis

General Synod Election Statement

Nominated by: Richard Banham

Seconded by: David Kesterton

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God's call is often unexpected, and it unfolds over time. I have come to feel that part of my vocational call in this time is to contribute to national discussion and debate as a member of General Synod, building on strands of vocation which have developed over 12 years of ordained ministry, and my life and experience before then. I hope you will vote to affirm this vocation.

A bit about me

I have lived in St Alban's Diocese for 25 years, ministering in parishes in both Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire, and currently serve as Vicar of St Andrew's, Bedford. These experiences mean that I understand the reality of parish ministry on the ground, its joys and its significant challenges. My husband, Anthony, is also ordained, and we have three children in their twenties, whose visits home are primarily to see Rosie, our puppy. Before ordination, I taught Geography in comprehensive schools.



Values and Interests

- **Faith and flourishing of young people:** I am a board member for a national Church of England project which aims to develop and support 30,000 new leaders of ministry with children and young people, and additionally I have carried out research nationally about faith during the transition from primary to secondary school. As a Church we need to find ways to encourage and nurture the spirituality of young people, not because they are the Church of the future but because they are a vital part of the Church of the present, and faith has so much to offer as they navigate a complex and difficult world.
- **Safeguarding:** In my teaching career and in ministry I have helped support victims of abuse, and have been nominated safeguarding governor for three schools. The ways in which the Church protects those who are most vulnerable, and prevents the misuse of power, speaks of the nature of God. Humans are inevitably imperfect, and therefore as an institution the Church has to have safeguarding structures which are robust, and responses to abuse which are survivor focused. General Synod continues to have a road to travel to ensure these things are in place.
- **Diversity and Inclusion:** I have been called to advocate for diversity and inclusion throughout my ministry. As Dean of Women's Ministry in this Diocese, and Chair of the National Association of Diocesan Advisors in Women's Ministry, gender equality is very important to me. St Albans Diocese has always been underrepresented in terms of women clergy on General Synod; at present only one of our five representatives is female. This election an opportunity for the diocesan clergy to rebalance that representation. More broadly, we cannot raise one group without raising all, and General Synod needs to continue to challenge all structures and cultures in the Church which diminish individuals or create barriers to inclusion or, vitally, contribution.



Support from The Very Reverend Jo Kelly-Moore, Dean of St Albans:

It is a privilege to offer my full support to The Reverend Canon Lucy Davis being elected to General Synod. Lucy's commitment to, energy for, and understanding of the opportunities and challenges of local parish ministry, together with her leadership experience in the national church, similarly with its opportunities and challenges, makes her well placed to make a valuable contribution to the important work and witness of the General Synod. Please offer her your support.

Living in Love and Faith

It seems likely that the Living in Love and Faith process will continue to take time on the agenda of General Synod for several years. I am open about my own stance on same sex relationships and their recognition by the Church. Having read and prayed and discussed over a long period of time, I am theologically convinced that we should be able to bless permanent, faithful, stable same sex relationships. Two of my own children are gay, and I have seen at close hand the harm and hurt done to individuals, their faith and their well-being, when the Church denies them the fullness of life that comes from loving relationships, or makes them feel they have to hide an important part of who they are.

Having said that, theological differences have, from earliest days, always been a part of the Church's life. While I am personally fully committed to inclusivity, as a Church we need to find a way forward which holds theological difference and does not cause further damage nationally or locally. Tribalism and fissures diminish our ability to proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ. Drawing a parallel to the ordination of women, I see clearly that the mutual flourishing of people with different theological positions is possible within the Church. While it is not always easy, and comes at a cost, female clergy and those who for theological reasons cannot accept their ministry, are able to coexist, and indeed work together for the Gospel, as my colleague in the neighbouring Society Parish and I do together. I believe that this offers hope for a way forward for the LLF process.

Why Synod?

During my recent sabbatical, I heard a phrase which was new to me: 'God has a mission, and the mission has a Church.' I believe in a God of resurrection, who can bring life and healing to a broken world, and I believe in a Church, which however fallible, exists to join in with that work; the role of Synod is to help make that possible.

I would ask you to give me your first preference vote in the election for General Synod.

The electronic ballot opens on **Wednesday 20th November** and closes on **Thursday 12th December**.

I would be delighted to hear from you if you'd like to be in touch:

The Reverend Canon Lucy Davis

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