

Electoral Address



Rev Preb Karl Freeman (64) I am married with three adult daughters, a son in law, two grandchildren and an aging Golden Retriever! I grew up in Islip, a rural village just outside Oxford. I trained as a teacher at St Luke's College in Exeter where I met Nicky, my wife. Playing senior rugby was probably as much an incentive to go to St Luke's as learning to teach! I taught for eight years before theological training at Wycliffe Hall, Oxford and being ordained in 1990.

Why am I standing for synod?

Call me a fool if you like but I love the Church of England! I love working together with brothers and sisters from different traditions who are bound together

by their love for Christ. I love the almost inexhaustibly diverse opportunities that our unique position, in parishes up and down the land, hands to us on a plate with which to serve our Lord!

- ***Because I love serving in the Church of England***, I believe our identity, access to community life and effectiveness in mission are worth contending for.
- ***Because I've already served once on General Synod***, I know how the machine works and how to contend for the good of the church within it.
- ***Because these are critical times for the re-development and re-vitalisation of our church***, I want to be in with a faithful shout as to how we should 'keep the old as long as it's good' but be prepared to 'take the new as soon as it genuinely serves us better'.
- ***Because these are not times for the fainthearted or those without energy, vision and passion***, I want to bring those essentials, together with my long and diverse experience, to bear on enabling mission. (See over!)
- ***Because our Archbishops are reviewing 'strategic priorities for the next ten years' and seeking to 'transform our operating model for the future'*** we need experienced ministers in the arena of Synod who can match their innovative ideas against the realities and demands of practical parish ministry.
- ***Because these are turbulent times for belief***, I believe our church, is called to hold out Christ's call to *all* people in a loving kindly, and gracious manner, whatever their pre-existing background or faith perspective might be. The Gospel speaks of proclaiming love and forgiveness and of taking up our cross, forsaking the way of the world and following Christ. That voice needs to be nailed to the mast of our church if we are to remain faithful in our great commission to go and make true disciples. Love, repentance and faith must be at the heart of the Gospel cry.

To these ends I make my solemn pledge of endeavour should I be elected.

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Overleaf is the historical background of my ministry in our Diocese to-date!

My Passion

My foundational calling and passion as a disciple of Christ is to see the 'ordinary person' introduced to following Jesus and deepen their relationship with him through membership of his body, the Church. In short, to bring people home to their loving Father.

Background and experience in ordained ministry

I was converted at the age of sixteen through a Bible study group at school. As a schoolteacher I attended my local parish church and lead a home Bible study group. At eighteen I helped on C.S.S.M Beach missions (for those old enough to remember them!). Having taught for eight years and re-trained for a further two, I served my title post at St Andrew's, Plymouth before being appointed four years later as Team Vicar under the then rector, Bishop Nick McKinnel. Following ministry at St Andrew's, I became stipendiary chaplain at the University of St Mark and St John (Marjon), working amongst students and staff for five years as well as serving on the Academic Board and Board of Management. Thence I became rector of Emmanuel with St Paul, Plymouth in 2000. Spanning all three posts I also served 29 Commando Regiment, Royal Artillery as their military, reservist Chaplain. I was fortunate to deploy and serve with 29Cdo in almost every environment for which they train and also in several operational theatres. After 23 years of service I was made an MBE shortly before leaving the regiment. My mission remained constant throughout – to make sure our Lord was always part of the equation of the life of the regiment. They graciously accepted me and the Gospel ministry which accompanied me!

I have served outside the parish as Rural Dean on two occasions. The second time, being responsible for establishing what is now Plymouth City Deanery out of the former three city deaneries. I have been a member of Diocesan Synod. I have served as an assistant Diocesan Director of Ordinands for four years. I co-founded an ecumenical group, The Peninsula Gospel Partnership, through which was brought into being a training course for lay people in biblical understanding and ministry. I remain on the development group. I am a training incumbent. I am a member of our Diocesan Evangelical Fellowship. I served on General Synod during the most recently extended quinquennium which I feel has left me with unfinished work to do following the covid disruption of business.

Diversity of understanding

Since entering the Diocese in 1990, I have amassed considerable experience to draw upon in offering debate, wisdom and guidance for the future of the Church of England. I have been invited to conduct mission work in both the rural and urban contexts; served as chaplain in a hospital, schools, a university and the military; served on many synods, committees, working and management groups; and am used to speaking up in meetings.

It takes time to feel at home and confident to speak up at General Synod and I feel my experience hitherto puts me in a good place from which to represent our Diocese. I hope you feel able to support my nomination with your vote.

Yours, in Christ,
Karl.