

Morwenna Ludlow

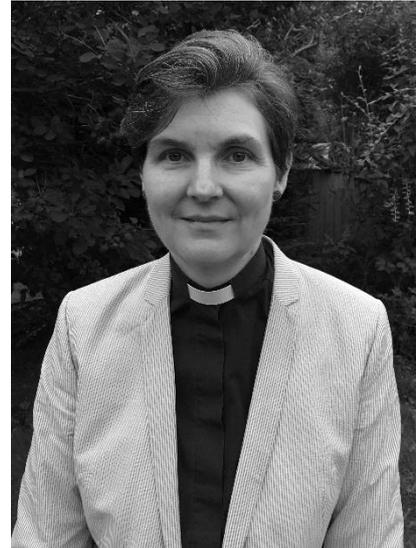
Nominators:

The Rev Preb Henry Pryse Rector of St James, Exeter

The Rev Preb Deborah Parsons Team Vicar, Totnes

I believe that at its best the Church of England is a church that has space to hold different traditions together. I believe that we are bound together by a love and trust in Jesus Christ which reaches out to all people.

I am a Self-Supporting Minister in Exeter; my current role is Canon Theologian at Exeter Cathedral which I undertake alongside teaching theology at Exeter University.



I grew up in a suburban parish with a broadly Anglo-Catholic liturgy and an evangelical youth group. Of course, those labels meant nothing to me until I went to University, where I discovered them—rather to my dismay. As a student, I was a regular worshipper in chapel and, for a while, co-leader of the College Christian Union. It was not always a comfortable combination, but it left me with a stubbornly hopeful belief in building bridges between different perspectives.

I only discovered theology after arriving at university! I was deeply influenced by the humility of my College chaplain, who taught me that it is ok to ask questions. I learned that one could be profoundly touched by God's love, and at same time not know all the answers. This spirit of seeking after God inspired me to study theology after completing my undergraduate degree in classics. I've spent the rest of my professional life combining my deep love of theology with my fascination for "old stuff". I have taught in Higher Education for 25 years and I specialise in the history of early Christianity. I have, amongst other things, written an introductory book on *The Early Church* and I am always deeply touched when a reader tells me it's helped them.

I feel we have so much to learn from those early centuries, from women and men who sought to live out the gospel message and tried to worship faithfully in difficult times. I see so many continuities between their communities and ours and I am especially inspired by the way they read the Bible, bringing scholarship and a heartfelt love for Scripture together. They believed passionately that Scripture could change lives and at their best they used it to preach for the inclusion of the poor and vulnerable. I also think we have much to learn from the way in which early Christian communities changed without losing their core faithfulness to the Gospel. For me, Christian tradition is a precious living thing to be handed on to the next generation; it is not a fossil, nor is it a family heirloom to be fought over as if only one part of the church has a proper claim to it.

I have lived in Exeter since 2015 when I got my job at the University. I began to explore my sense of vocation here in Devon (although, like many people ordained later in life, I think the call has always been there in some way). When we arrived here, our local parish church was enormously welcoming but had no children's church. I started a children's group and I began to feel that God was teaching me how I could connect my heart and hands with my head in ministry. I trained with SWMTC and I learned so much from the pastoral experience of my teachers and fellow-ordinands. I am really very grateful for that formational experience. I'm honoured now to be a Trustee of SWMTC.

Meeting Christians from other denominations has strengthened my sense of how much we have in common. One of the privileges of my day job is working with people from many different perspectives, including Christians from Methodist, Baptist, Eastern Orthodox, Catholic and Lutheran churches: I have learned so much from them! I have also been asked by the CofE to be part of some ecumenical work, working on agreements to bring churches closer together. I believe that in our increasingly interconnected world ecumenism can often make a real difference to people's everyday lives, whether it's churches working together for the climate or social justice, or simply making it possible for ministers to work in other churches when families move location.

I am delighted to be on the list of candidates supported by Inclusive Church. If I were to be elected to General Synod I would also have a particular interest in education (especially Higher Education, ministerial training and RE teaching in schools). My training in theology and history and my experience as a leader in Higher Education gives me a distinctive experience which I hope can contribute to several areas of Synod debate. I worked on a committee tasked by the Archbishops with reviewing how diocesan Bishops are appointed and I am interested in seeing how Synod takes up our suggestions about diversity.

But above all, if I am elected, I commit myself to listening carefully and considering prayerfully before speaking and voting.

I love to blow the cobwebs away by walking with my family on Dartmoor or on the beach at Exmouth. I like making things, especially sewing and (when I get the chance) craft activities with the children at the Cathedral's cloister club. My husband—a historian—is also a University teacher and we have two daughters.

I will be participating in the Zoom hustings on Thursday 23rd September and look forward to your questions.

A handwritten signature in green ink that reads "Morwenna". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.