

Timothy Hamilton

Dear Elector,

I am grateful for this opportunity to write to you as a candidate for the House of Laity at General Synod.

Thank you for taking the time to read my statement. I hope that you will conclude that I have the skills, energy and experience that would enable me to serve as one of your diocesan representatives.

As a member of your local Deanery Synod, your vote in this election matters and I would very much value **your first preference vote**. If you have any questions, please contact me and I will be happy to discuss anything further.

Yours in Christ,
Timothy

Proposer: Dr Francis Sansbury, Christianity Deanery

Secunder: Mrs Suzy Andrews, Woodleigh Deanery



Deanery: Christianity

Parish: St Leonard with Holy Trinity, Exeter

Age: 32

Email: edmund_hamilton@me.com

Professional Experience

I have an MA in History from Exeter University and I now work in marketing and communications for local government supporting business growth across Devon and Somerset.

Before this, I worked in ICT and communications for a state school and two independent schools: most recently at Exeter Cathedral School, where I was part of the School's senior leadership team.

Through my professional experience, I have an eye for detail and can collaborate and work well with others – qualities that are well-suited to a position in General Synod.

Parish Background

I grew up in the Church of England, became a Christian in my early 20s and have been growing in faith ever since.

As a family, we worship at St Leonard's Church in Exeter. We chose St Leonard's because it was incredibly welcoming and proactive in outreach to newcomers. We are thankful for its focus on teaching and discipleship.

Currently, I am a member of the PCC and I am a Deanery Synod Rep for Christianity (Exeter).

As a practising Christian and a keen member of the CofE, I want to develop my faith, spread the Gospel and support the work of the CofE to ensure that future generations (such as my daughter) can fully understand the truth of the Christian message.

About Me

I grew up in Devon and have recently returned having spent ten years living and working in Cheltenham. I have been married to Olivia (a Primary School Teacher in Exmouth) for 6 years and together we have a 9-month-old daughter called Martha.

My other interests include reading (history, theology, and biographies), cycling, croquet, renovating our house and growing vegetables on my grandparent's farm outside of Broadclyst.

Key issues facing the CofE and General Synod 2021

Of the many issues up for discussion, I have outlined a few that I feel are important for the church and that I would hope to address through General Synod:

- **Outreach to Young People and Families**

Outreach is essential. Only 2% of young people, many of my generation, still attend an Anglican church.¹ My faith was greatly helped through youth groups, summer camps and committed outreach efforts. Having recently become a father, I hope that my daughter will also be encouraged in her faith by similar support. Having run groups for boys aged 7-11 and international students, I know something of the challenges and fruit that outreach can bring. It is vital for the church that such outreach is grounded in prayer and fully resourced: *'Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.'* (Luke 9:38)

- **Current Social Issues**

The church and the Gospel have the capacity to speak into the challenges we face as a society. **The Environment:** As Christians, we are called to care for creation (Genesis 1:26-28) and there is much that we can do to address our current relationship with the planet and reduce our impact. **Loneliness:** Whether young or old, loneliness is on the rise and this has been further exacerbated by Covid-19.² With a worshipping community in every village, town and city, the CofE has the unique potential to connect with and support many isolated people.

- **Discipleship and Evangelism**

It takes courage to introduce people to the Gospel and time for Christians to grow. As a church, I believe that there is much more that we can do to reach our society and share the good news. In my experience, outreach need not be hard or complicated, it just needs to be hospitable and genuine. In Cheltenham, I ran a Bible study for international students alongside a retired Bishop and Vicar. It was incredibly exciting to share food, testimonies and Bible talks with around 20+ students in a crowded living room and see seeds of faith sown. I believe that we need to train and resource new clergy and lay people with the skills and confidence to share the teachings of Jesus in accessible ways to people of all ages and backgrounds.

- **The Parish System**

Having grown up in a country parish as the son of a CofE vicar, I know of the challenges and struggles that rural ministry can bring. I want to ensure that everything is done to keep rural churches viable and see that they thrive once again. I believe that it is important to support and equip rural churches in connecting with their local community.

My commitment to you

In seeking election as one of the lay representatives for the Diocese of Exeter on General Synod, I would like to make the following commitments to you:

- That I will devote the time and effort to fulfil my responsibilities faithfully and considerately
- That I will be actively involved in Diocesan affairs to be able to address local matters
- That I will be available to you by phone, email or in person to answer questions

Thank you for reading my address. I hope that you will select me as your first preference vote.

¹ <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/sep/07/church-in-crisis-as-only-2-of-young-adults-identify-as-c-of-e>

² www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/wellbeing/articles/mappinglonelinessduringthecoronaviruspandemic/2021-04-07