

Mrs Anna Crabbe

1. What has prompted you to stand for election to General Synod in particular, and in which ways do you think it will challenge your capacity and capabilities?

I am passionate about supporting rural churches and the role of the parish church in small communities. I feel their voice should be heard at the General Synod. I relish the challenge of an opportunity to speak up for the rural church, whose congregations make significant impact within their local community. As an active member of my village church for over forty years I have taken on many roles, including preaching and leading worship as an LLM for the last six years.

I recognise the important role, as part of the General Synod, in feeding back information from and to the deanery and parishes. I am keen to be involved with the decision-making that goes on at General Synod level. Having been a teacher governor at the Church of England primary school where I taught for several years, I have experience of making strategic decisions for a school community. I am a supporter of Save the Parish and agree it is very important the General Synod undertake a thorough review of the way the whole church is funded.

2. What do you believe the Church of England should prioritise over the next five years to support mission, Christian discipleship and the flourishing of parish and other worshipping communities?

It is vital that we maximise the number of ordained ministers available to serve in parishes, enabling them to devote time and expertise to mission initiatives and Christian discipleship. One exciting initiative is our Exeter Ordination Pathway (EOP) which is a new twelve-month ordination training pathway being offered by our Diocese. It is designed for people identified and called out by their local church leadership with a vocation to serve as an assistant priest in their local context. The pathway is aimed at people who are settled in their local community and do not anticipate moving. This kind of initiative is proving successful and is of particular relevance to rural communities.

3. What should General Synod do to help the Church become safer, more accountable and more trusted, ensuring that national reforms work effectively in parishes, dioceses, and cathedrals?

The General Synod needs to ensure the rigorous implementation of recent recommendations in all its parishes, dioceses and cathedrals. From my working experience as a social worker I know the importance of robust systems to both monitor and support all those involved in the protection of those who are vulnerable. I believe that a degree of external scrutiny is essential.

4. How should the Church prioritise good intentional investment in mission and growth whilst also resourcing parish ministry in all its forms?

Every diocesan post should be scrutinised as how it will support and promote the ministry of clergy and laity in our parishes. This includes ensuring that those in full-time ministry are supported so that they don't 'burn out' and leave ministry prematurely. I support Save the Parish in their commitment to resource the parochial system of the Church of England.

5. General Synod must address issues on which faithful Christians hold deeply differing views. How would you contribute to honest debate, good disagreement and clear decision-making while helping the Church maintain its common life and mission?

I recognise that fellow Christians both at General Synod and within the Diocese may hold strong and opposing views on several contemporary issues. I am known as a good listener and expect to form positive relationships with diverse individuals. One of my gifts will be to enable people to unite around initiatives where we can agree and, working positively together to achieve common goals, enable opposing parties to grow in mutual respect.