

The Revd Canon Prof. Morwenna Ludlow

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 served as a General Synod member for the last five years and found this a stimulating and challenging experience. I came away thinking that this was a way that I could be of service to the Church, using my particular skills in theology and my experience of how large organisations work. If I were elected, it would be challenging to serve Synod alongside my other commitments, but I feel that having gone through the steep new Synod member learning curve I am now better prepared.

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?

General Synod is a legislative body, and it seems to me that it is there to serve those whose task it is to set the priorities – and that is, primarily, the Bishops. It can provide those who set the strategy with helpful perspectives (especially through debates on Diocesan Synod motions) and useful challenge. Having said that, my hope for the next five years is that those who set the Church's priorities will show that they understand that good structures give people confidence in the sustainability of local communities and that good processes free people up for mission and the formation of all disciples. We need structures and processes which empower people, not sap their energy. I'm also especially keen that theological education – of all kinds for all people – is made a priority, because I know from experience that it enables mission to flourish.

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?

This is similar to my answer to question 2: the Church needs good structures and processes that empower people. Synod can scrutinise proposed measures of all kinds, using members' perspectives from all parts of the country and from many walks of life, to test the viability of the proposals. There is a lot of wisdom on the floor of synod and I have seen how it has been used well to make some important changes to proposed legislation. Synod members also play very important roles as members of drafting and revision groups on particular issues. This is all very valuable work and it makes the Church's legislation better.

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

I think that the two can go together and I think there is an increasing recognition that careful investments in parish ministry can enable mission and growth. I spend a lot of my

working on campus teaching young people between the ages of 20 and 25 and I know that they respond to questions of faith in very different ways: some thrive in communities their own age with modern worship and structures that are quite flexible, which can adapt quickly to change. Other young people are drawn to parish communities, which bring them connections to the local community. Especially if they miss home, being part of a multi-generational community can be very encouraging. Finally, churches and Cathedrals with more traditional worship give a sense of stability and security that many young people today really crave. The Church is in a position to offer all these things in its mission.

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?

Listening is crucial. It's easier to say and harder to do in a packed chamber when many people are wanting to have a say and you are waiting to see if you will be called. But as an experienced public speaker I have sometimes been able to adapt what I had planned to say. It can be helpful to acknowledge the points of agreement in the chamber, even if one also has points of disagreement to add. What happens outside the chamber is also important. Being naturally shy, I'm not a natural networker, but I've had many lovely conversations with people I've just happened to sit next to at meal-time. This July, someone I'd spoken to perhaps once in five years came up to me and said that he'd read about the unsettled time Exeter University was going through: he just wanted me to know that he was praying for me. I found this incredibly moving. It's building up those kind of interactions that can maintain our common life: not expecting to be best buddies, but learning how to be sisters and brothers in Christ.