

The Revd Tandy Ruoff

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 standing for General Synod because I care deeply about the life of the Church of England and about the people we are called to serve. I want to bring a voice from the ground, from parish life, schools, chaplaincy and the communities in which the Church of England is seeking to share the good news of Jesus.

I am particularly conscious that decisions made nationally can feel very distant from the realities of local churches. I would want to listen carefully, speak honestly and help ensure that the experiences of ordinary parishes and worshipping communities are heard.

I know Synod will challenge me. It will require me to engage with complex issues, listen to people with very different perspectives and sometimes make difficult decisions when there is no easy answer. I will need to learn, to ask questions and to be willing to change my mind when appropriate.

I hope to bring both conviction and humility: the courage to speak when I believe something matters, but also the willingness to listen well and work with others.

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?

I believe Jesus needs to be central to everything we do: prayer, Scripture, worship, discipleship and sharing the gospel.

We need to become a Church that is confident in inviting people to discover faith, while being honest about the challenges of following Christ. Mission cannot simply mean attracting people into existing structures. We need to be willing to go where people are; into schools, communities, workplaces, prisons and places where the Church of England is currently absent.

Alongside this, we must invest in the health of existing parishes. Parish churches remain one of our greatest gifts: rooted in their communities, present through every stage of life and able to offer belonging, pastoral care and hope.

I would prioritise equipping and supporting lay people, clergy and other ministers to disciple others and to lead mission locally. We need space for new worshipping communities while also valuing traditional forms of church.

Growth should not be measured only in numbers. We should ask whether people are becoming deeper disciples of Jesus and whether our communities are becoming places where people genuinely encounter God and loving one another.

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?

Safeguarding must be something we live, not simply something we comply with.

General Synod should ensure that safeguarding structures within the Church of England are properly resourced, consistently implemented and understood at every level of the Church. National policy is important, but it is only effective if people in local churches know what it means and have the confidence, training and support to put it into practice.

We also need a culture in which concerns can be raised without fear, where survivors are listened to with compassion and where those in positions of authority are genuinely accountable.

Trust will not be rebuilt through policies alone. It requires transparency, humility and a willingness to acknowledge where the Church of England has failed.

I would also want Synod to listen to those working at parish level. National reforms can sometimes create significant burdens for already stretched volunteers and clergy. We need systems that are robust but also practical and proportionate.

Above all, safeguarding must be about people rather than processes. Every person who comes through our doors should know that the Church of England is committed to their dignity, wellbeing and safety.

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

I don't think we should set mission and parish ministry against one another. Healthy parish ministry is mission.

Investment should begin with a clear question: where is God already at work, and what might help that work flourish? That may mean supporting an established parish, developing a new worshipping community, investing in chaplaincy, reaching schools or equipping lay leaders.

We need to be courageous about investing in growth but also recognise that growth takes different forms and different lengths of time. A small rural church faithfully serving its community is not a failure simply because it is small.

Equally, we should be prepared to invest in new initiatives where there is genuine opportunity for people who currently have little or no connection with the Church of England.

I would like to see funding decisions become more locally informed, with greater trust placed in those who understand their communities. Investment should be intentional, accountable and reviewed honestly, but not so tightly controlled that creativity is lost.

We need both roots and new shoots: resourcing the ministry we already have while creating space for the Church of England God is calling us to become.

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 believe we can disagree deeply and still treat one another with generosity, dignity and Christian love.

I would seek to listen before responding, particularly to people with whom I disagree. I want to understand not only what someone believes, but why it matters to them and what experiences have shaped their understanding. We all have a story behind our own beliefs.

At the same time, good disagreement does not mean avoiding difficult conversations or being afraid to say what we believe. General Synod needs people who will speak honestly, but who will do so without caricaturing or dismissing others.

I would try to keep bringing conversations back to our common calling: Jesus Christ, the gospel, prayer and the mission of the Church of England. Our unity cannot depend on everyone thinking identically.

Clear decision-making also matters. We should be willing to debate thoroughly, consider evidence carefully and then make decisions responsibly, rather than allowing disagreement to become endless.

I hope to be someone who can hold conviction and compassion together, prepared to stand firmly where I believe something matters, while remaining committed to listening, relationship and the common life of the Church of England.