



## GENERAL SYNOD ELECTION ADDRESS 2021

*Diocese of Southwark*

# Michael Bailey

*Incumbent, St Stephen with St Mark, Lewisham*

Proposed by Rev. Lindsay McKenna, *Vicar, of Andrew's Catford*  
Seconded by Rev. Steve Hall, *Vicar of St. Mary's, Lewisham*

### **About me**

I'm an Irishman, coming from a rural and very ordinary family background, arriving in London to study nursing at the age of 18, at St George's Hospital and Kingston University. I graduated and worked in Cancer Care for nearly 10 years. I worked at St Bart's in the City and the Royal Marsden on Fulham Road. I was also a Pastoral Assistant in Lavender Hill. London is my second home although I left in 2008 to study for Ordained Ministry. This adventure has taken me up and down the country and I have served in urban priority area parishes. I now have returned grateful for this experience and wanting to serve you and listen to what you want of a General Synod Candidate.

My ministerial experience is grounded in service to the disadvantaged and the sick; for me this is best exercised in parish and chaplaincy settings. Jesus' compassion compels me to see that it is in the suffering where our Christian calling is especially focused. That is to be alongside the housebound, the elderly frail home communicant, the bereaved, disadvantaged youth all of which need that presence of encouragement and message of hope. I've been ordained for 11 years – a time of great change. I'm asking you to vote for me, not because I have all the answers, or because I am a Catholic Christian, but because I'm willing to listen, to use my skills and to do my best to help shape the church in its breadth. Whatever our label, there is a place for us all in our Church and its synodical structures.

I was commissioned as a Street Pastor four years ago, and this ministry has sharpened my awareness of the problems and difficulties many face today. The Christian perspective on suffering is surely focussed on Jesus and the cross; He came to share our earthly experience and through His death, passion and resurrection He gives life, life abundant, and through it we have Hope and even joy. Our vocation as priests in serving within the national church is surely to proclaim this Easter message, not only in preaching and teaching but in daily encounter in street, supermarket, school or wherever we meet people. Often clergy feel pressure in terms of finance and numbers, as if these were indicators of effective ministry, indeed of 'success': such worldly judgment needs to be challenged. The CofE's parochial system is the jewel in its life, far from being a limiting factor. Any undermining has a negative effect on clergy and leads to stress and suffering, recently made more so by Covid and its effect on congregational attendance and giving. Renewal of confidence in our mission and calling is much needed; indeed, there is need for urgent conversation about the way ahead.

### **Why stand?**

I believe that my skills and experience can be put to good use as an active Synod member. Coming back to this Diocese, has been like a second home coming (despite Covid). I think I can bring an informed, sensible, and positive voice to issues facing our clergy, our diocese, and the wider Church of England today.

**I hope you will be willing to vote for me and give me your first, or high preference.**

*Continued overleaf* 🍀

**Serving the poor****Luke 6:20-22**

I never quite understood the extent of poverty until I visited a parishioner's home. This opened my eyes to what some of our people are experiencing in the inner city. I became a trustee member of Christians Against Poverty (C.A.P) in one of my parishes and saw what Christian help can achieve. We as a national church need to be the voice of the poor. As a General Synod member, I would seek to ask how are we as a Church engaging with this work? How is this engagement been accessed and what are our future plans?

**Serving each other****Mark 6:30-34**

As a church we must learn to be more truly inclusive. The Church of England is for everyone. Everyone means everyone. I am the Incumbent of a lively inner-city parish, and this has truly warmed my heart rejoicing in the diversity of God's Kingdom. As co-workers in the vineyard, I relish engaging with other traditions within our Church as well with people of organisations with good will. Working across parish boundaries for the needs of God's people, where this is appropriate.

**Serving our God****Matthew 28:19**

*Go then and make disciples of all the nations.* We must show our love for God by sharing it with others. Our Churches should be beacons of welcome, hope, love, and of friendship and fun. The parish inheritance of the Church of England is the setting where this happens above all. These beautiful sacred places of Christian hope should welcome all. As a Synod member, I would ask that all missional activities be done within the Parish settings. Parishes **must** be supported to grow and thrive – and we must recognise that cannot just be a 'tick box exercise' especially in tough and difficult areas which need greater resourcing and support. Mission, not managerialism is what God calls us to live – governance should support the former, not the latter.

**Serving the Church of tomorrow****Matthew 19:13-14**

I believe passionately that we need to care for and inspire our young, I have experience of Uniformed Organisations. I helped set up and was a trustee of a council run youth club in Coventry. I helped establish fresh expression groups for mums and toddlers and youth fitness clubs over the years. I have been a School Governor all my Ordained life and have held positions of Chair and Vice Chair. As a General Synod member, I would always seek that we protect our Children and our Church Schools, unapologetic in our faith and seek ways to serve, and inspire our young.

**Serving all who minister****Matthew: 25: 34-40**

As the Established Church, I feel we are in the privileged position of being the Church for all people of our Country and protecting the life of faith of other denominations and faith groups. This privilege includes the celebration of the rites of passage and being alongside those who are dying, conducting the funerals of all who live in our parishes whether they come to Church or not.

As a member of General Synod, **I will represent you.** I am happy to meet in person or virtual if you wish to ask me any questions. If I am elected, then I would like you to feel you can **always** contact me.

**I hope you will be willing to vote for me and give me your first, or high preference.**

**My contact details are, please get in touch for any clarifications:**

[frmichaelbailey@gmail.com](mailto:frmichaelbailey@gmail.com)

St. Stephen's Vicarage, Gressingham Road, London, SE135AG

07713258429