

## Revd John Watson

**Vicar, St Barnabas with Christ's Chapel,  
Dulwich.**

**Foundation Chaplain**

**Area Diocesan Director of Ordinands**

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**Proposed by Revd Gill O'Neill, Vicar of St John's  
East Dulwich, Area Dean**

**Seconded by Revd Canon Simon Butler, Vicar St  
Mary's Battersea, (Prolocutor of the Lower House of the  
Convocation of Canterbury & Member of the Archbishops' Council)**

### **Why now?**

New voices at General Synod are more important now than ever. I would be honoured if you would let me be your voice in this next term of General Synod. With over 30 years experience of Christian ministry with congregations and parishes, both UK and overseas, urban and rural, multi-cultural settings, and new expressions of mission, I bring experience at working for change at the local level and now I hope national one.

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*I see these next 5 years being vital in the shape and life of the Church and see parish ministry being the key focus and target of resources that should occupy strategic level funding.*

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*I see opportunities to refresh and inspire the vision of the Church towards the local level and will work hard to see resources refocussed, releasing parishes with their faithful and creative clergy and congregations to be courageous and loving examples of communities of the Kingdom.*

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*I see that the time is now to stand up for communities that tend not be heard in places of power or privilege and my experience of church planting amongst the Hispanic communities of South London ensured they were heard and resourced.*

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*I see the time for change is upon us in welcoming, honouring and supporting all who come to seek God in their relationships. I am committed to equality for everyone, at all levels and roles within the church, regardless of gender, disability, ethnicity, socio-economic status, mental health or sexuality.*

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This is a time to reflect on what we are becoming. This pandemic sojourn is shaping us and reshaping us, not just as individuals but also as a community of faith. What are we being called to be as we move forward? What things are we being invited to take hold of? What opportunities will we discover? What will we

look like when we get to our post pandemic future? Are there areas of ministry we will need to refocus on? Are there new forms of ministry we can take up? What things need to change?

The key areas of life that need to be addressed and cannot be avoided are:

### **Funding and Mission**

I believe we have to foster self-sustaining congregations in more concrete and firmer ways, whilst not neglecting real opportunities for mission. We must not avoid the hard questions but we must also be brave enough to take risks.

There are also opportunities to release new expressions of mission across bi/tri-lingual communities and now is the time to make this a strategic priority.

### **Structure**

How can our structures and the way we organise ourselves release local mission. Is it time to see further diocese merge to create less bureaucracy and less re-inventing the wheel. A vision for a Simpler, Humbler, Bolder church will need tough decisions to help get us there. I promise to keep our national leaders accountable to this.

### **LLF**

The time is now to offer an all-inclusive, thrilling, positive and authorised liturgies for those seeking to have God's blessing on their relationship. A pastoral and loving response is required and I will work to see this happen so that all may flourish in faith.

### **Training and formation of clergy**

I am committed to seeing our clergy trained and invested in and cared for. Formation of clergy is essential in helping lead our congregations and ministries into the challenges and opportunities ahead. Accountability must be fair and open and we must learn from the mistakes we have seen.

### **Our common life together**

We are called to be expression of loving community shaped by the Love of God. I will work hard to ensure that the painful lessons of our past in failing the children, young people and vulnerable adults in our care are taken forward to help our churches be safe spaces for all.

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