

Rev'd Canon Anna Norman-Walker

– House of Clergy

If elected, I will hit the ground running.

It has been a privilege to represent the Diocese of Southwark following my election at the mid-term by-election two years ago. During that time, I have found my feet in Synod, learnt how it works, built relationships across traditions and begun work in areas about which I care deeply. I would value the opportunity to continue that work during the next quinquennium.



As Rector of St Leonard's, Streatham, I serve in one of the most diverse communities in our Diocese. Every day reminds me that the Church of England matters. Our parish churches remain one of this nation's greatest gifts: places where people of every age, background and belief can encounter Christ, find community and discover hope.

If re-elected, my priorities will be fourfold.

1. A Church of genuine inclusion.

The Living in Love and Faith process made significant progress during the last Synod. Trusting relationships were beginning to emerge and people holding profoundly different convictions were listening to one another with generosity and respect. The events surrounding November 2025 interrupted that progress. I believe Synod must find a way to return to that spirit of trust and continue the work of enabling the Church to become what it has promised to be: *a radically more inclusive Church*. To be clear, I support the blessing of same gender marriage in churches that wish to do so, and the ordination (and licencing) of married LGBTQ+ clergy. Inclusion must, of course, extend far beyond sexuality. It embraces every person, regardless of race, disability, gender, age or background. Every human being bears the image of God, and our churches should increasingly reflect that truth.

2. Putting Parish Mission & Ministry first.

I believe our parish churches are the jewel in the Church of England's crown. They are where the overwhelming majority of ministry, evangelism, pastoral care and community transformation happens. I will continue to argue that national resources should strengthen—not diminish—local parish ministry. I support the emerging vision of the Save the Parish movement, not because I am nostalgic for the past, but because I believe confident, well-resourced parish churches remain the Church's greatest opportunity for mission. I will continue to scrutinise financial decisions made by the Church Commissioners, The Archbishops Council and the House of Bishops and advocate for investment that enables parish ministry to flourish.

3. Clergy wellbeing.

Across almost a decade of ministry in Southwark (and a further 14 years in the Diocese of Exeter) I have watched the administrative burden placed upon clergy continue to grow. Most clergy are not afraid of hard work, but many are weary of bureaucracy that consumes time and energy better devoted to prayer, mission and people. Healthy parishes require healthy clergy. I will continue to press for simpler systems, greater trust in local leadership and support that enables clergy not merely to survive but to flourish.

4. Independent safeguarding.

Nothing matters more than creating a Church that is safe. We must be accountable to independent scrutiny and governance, learning from failure with honesty and humility. Public confidence cannot be rebuilt unless safeguarding is demonstrably transparent, professionally accountable and centred on those who have experienced harm.

I have been ordained for twenty-three years and have served in the Diocese of Southwark for almost a decade. Although I have previously served in diocesan and cathedral roles, I have always returned to the privilege and joy of parish ministry. It is there that I have learnt most about the Church of England at its best, and it is there that I have come to understand the pressures, frustrations and extraordinary commitment of those who serve in it.

Despite those challenges, I remain profoundly hopeful about the future of the Church of England. If elected to serve as your representative on General Synod, my unwavering commitment will be to ensure that clergy are heard, valued, supported and enabled to flourish in their vocation.

Archbishop William Temple famously observed that "*The Church is the only organisation that exists for the benefit of those who are not its members.*" That conviction continues to shape my ministry. I believe parish clergy are at the very heart of that calling; present in every community, discerning and nurturing lay vocation, enabling local mission and ministry, and leading the worship of God's people. I want to help shape a Church that is trusted in every community, confident in the Gospel, and committed to serving those who have yet to discover the love of Christ.

There are three reasons to vote for me:

1. **Experience** – I have served on Synod already and know what is required. I will hit the ground running.
2. **Commitment** – I will commit to working hard on Synod and putting my energies into the priorities I have set out here.
3. **Courage** – I am fearless in speaking truth to power.

I would be honoured to continue serving you in the House of Clergy.

Proposed by: The Revd Dr Charlie Bączyk-Bell, (Associate Priest, St John The Divine , Kennington) who writes:

'Anna has been a superb representative of the diocese in Synod - speaking consistently with courage, clarity, and compassion. She oozes both competence and joy in the Gospel and I am delighted to nominate her'

Seconded by: The Revd Hannah Gordon (Rector, St Margaret's, Chipstead) who writes:

'Anna is an excellent candidate to represent the breadth and depth of clergy in our wonderfully wide and diverse diocese. She is an unanxious and courageous voice whose candidacy I am pleased to support'.



Contact details:
rectorstleonards@btinternet.com
Tel: 07557053567