

WHO WANTS TO BE AN ANGLICAN TODAY?

AND WHY SHOULD GENERAL SYNOD CARE?

This is surely a question we – as the Church of England – should be asking ourselves. We should be looking for who is actively seeking to be involved, and who already gives generously of their time to the building up of the Kingdom of God through this church. Not in spite of it, and not under duress; not despite the ever-increasing list of complaints, but in the joy of the Holy Spirit – in the joy that flows from the grace of their vocation – in whatever shape or form that comes.

Yes – we have a lot to answer for; a lot to fix and to work on over the next five years, and in the years to come. After all, we are a human institution, too, full of strife, and not immune to sin. But I strongly believe that if we commit ourselves to prayer – if we entrust ourselves collectively to God, using our talents to discern well and do our best for this church – God will not leave our call unanswered, ever.

Jesus said: “*You did not choose me, but I chose you, and I appointed you to go and bear fruit – fruit that will last*” (John 15:16). That is why we need to be paying attention to who wants to be an Anglican today. Not as a second-best option available, not because it offers a nice pension to clergy, not because we are still relatively wealthy – but rather as a response to the Living Lord, Jesus Christ, whom they have encountered in the Church of England. The Holy Spirit guides and renews, and each person who gives themselves, and of themselves, is a blessing and a sign of God’s abundant love for the People of God in England. That is why we are here in the first place – to be the chaplain to the nation – and that is the call we are responding to as an established church. May we be worthy of that call as the church of this land.

This question also asks each of us – who are we? And surely that is important, too. The Abrahamic generosity of the *via media* is a gift we must not lose sight of – it is fundamentally born of the wisdom that true Christian unity can only grow out of diversity. There are a number of questions we will have to answer as a synodal church – and we will have to answer them together. We must not be a millstone around the neck of those whom God has called – our siblings, gathered with us around the Lord’s table. Instead, we must look for ways to help, encourage, and show love to one another (John 13:35) – and pay no heed to those who want ideological purity over our collective and individual flourishing as a beloved community, with each of us already called by name, and each of us with a seat at His Table.



Piotr T. Baczyk-Bell

PETER, HE/HIM/HIS | LAITY

I am a young adult immigrant, and I am part of a diverse Southwark parish. I work for the National Trust, where I care for heritage and the natural world, and I bring a background in finance and strategy. I am queer and married to my wonderful husband.

I am training towards ordained ministry, and under the Church’s present regulation on sexuality and marriage I cannot be ordained – I am an Anglican because it flows from the response to the vocation to serve in this church.

I am committed to racial justice, intersectional equity and inclusion, and I resist the discrimination against people on grounds of disability, economic power, ethnicity, gender identity, learning disability, mental health, neurodiversity, sexuality, and age. I stand for human dignity.

WHY VOTE FOR ME?



On Synod, I would press for a reform of our resourcing model so that it funds parish and diocesan mission, building up God's beloved communities in every corner of England. This includes funding for the stewardship of creation & conservation of our heritage.

My background in strategy and finance means I will ask hard questions – including those of our spending, and of whether we live, as an institution, the virtue we preach. I will work to make that a tangible reality – delivering on the promise the synod made to the church.

And I will work for a church that welcomes and serves everyone in the name of Jesus, and discriminates against no one. Today and always, all Christians should be able to grasp how wide and long and high and deep the love of Christ is for us. The role of the synod is to do all we can to enable that institutionally.

In early 2026, General Synod voted to recommit to ending poverty. This quinquennium is when we must build the structures that will make it real: a *Faith in the City* for our own day, working to the maximum the gifts we have as an established church, with our presence in every neighbourhood, our voice, our buildings and our wealth – putting them to work against the systemic injustice of poverty and homelessness.

PRIORITY BUSINESS

1. PASTORAL CARE, FAITH & ORDER

- **Pastoral guidance for clergy**

I will press for a clear and fair guidance that clergy can rely on in their ministry.

- **Ordination and licensing**

I will work for the bar on ordaining and licensing people in same-sex marriages to be lifted immediately

- **Same-sex/same-gender marriage**

Standalone blessing services still require authorisation. The time is ripe for the church to commence work on the sacrament of marriage.

- **Women's ministry as the norm**

Women are a majority of those entering training, and under a third of our incumbents. The 2014 Declaration itself anticipated that adjustments might be necessary. We now have the experience to return to the table. I will support an honest review of the Five Guiding Principles – conducted with the good faith owed to all those who accepted them.

2. SAFEGUARDING & GOVERNANCE

Our priority should be to regain public trust, which has been eroding exponentially. We have two main levers to accomplish this turnaround:

- Implementing a **national governance** that **shares power** & does not concentrate it.
- Operationalising an independent and effective **safeguarding for a safer church**.

3. MISSIONAL FINANCE

- **Resourcing model that is fit for purpose**

Current model was built for a Church we no longer are. Many of dioceses are budgeting deficits. Finance should be an enabler, not a bottleneck - and not a leash!

- **Concrete commitment for this Synod**

to receive a proposal for a new resourcing model - not a direction of travel, not an update. It should set out how national money reaches parishes with fewer hoops and more transparency; how funds are shared equitably between and within dioceses, deaneries and churches; how allocations and evaluations are published in full; and what Synod's formal role in the funding framework is going to be.

4. TRANSVERSAL AUDITS & PLANS

3 questions I want the Synod to pose & answer:

- **What is the state of religious & spiritual life of the Church of England?**

A church that runs on exhausted people is not sustainable. It is being fed by the hungry.

- **How are we proclaiming the gospel?**

1/3 of churches had no children at all in an avg. week. We should plan for the England we have.

- **What is the state of our formation and theological education more broadly?**

How are both lay and ordained sustained and resourced in their ministries?