

Election Address for Andy Salmon to the House of Clergy of General Synod

I have served in the Diocese of Manchester for all my ministry and have served on General Synod since 2010. I am currently the longest serving cleric from Manchester Diocese and although I could stand down this time, I feel I have more to give. I'm asking you to vote for me as a creative but experienced voice for Manchester Diocese at this crucial time.

Current Roles. I am half time Vicar of Sacred Trinity Church, Salford (sacredtrinity.org.uk) and half time North West Co-ordinator for the HeartEdge Network (heartedge.org).

Covid. We have all been through a really testing time and clergy have worked relentlessly, learnt new skills and been a rock for their community. Now we are coming out of it there are many questions about the future. It is likely that some churches will not survive and that those that do will have to be doing some things differently. I don't claim to know the future but I have some ideas that I hope will help us face the future with greater confidence. I think it important that General Synod has strong voices that will remind people of the hard work and commitment of the parish clergy but will also work for improvements in legislation to make mission and ministry easier.

Church Growth. There is so much talk in the church about church planting and church growth and I think we have to be very careful about this. Too often we are guilty of giving someone who has finished their curacy 3 churches to run where all of them have had 50 years of decline and we ask them to grow the congregation in all three. We have to be more honest and wiser about cultural factors. Churches can grow but without additional investment many will struggle to. We need to help parish clergy to find the right response for their community and find the resources that are there already. We also need to manage the administrative burden and find real ways to support ministry.

Young People. If our churches are to survive then we need to get more young people in them. We need to listen to them and what their concerns are find ways to engage with them where they are. My church serves a parish where most residents are in their twenties and so I have a lot of experience of listening to young adults. We have had some success and have grown a church that is much younger than the average. I believe that the main reasons for the success that we've had is that we welcome, we listen and we share the love of God with people.

Sexuality. This is an issue that isn't going to go away. I am clear that I believe in a God of love that wants all people, whatever their gender or sexuality to play a full part in God's church. I'm hopeful that the next Synod will be able to give permission for churches to bless same sex relationships and eventually allow same sex couples to get married in church. I



think that this should be done in a permissive way, as now happens with marriage after divorce.

The Climate Emergency. This is the most pressing issue facing us today. I voted at General Synod for the more ambitious target of becoming carbon neutral by 2030. This is extremely challenging, but I believe that we have an obligation to care for this world and for the poor who are always most adversely affected by change. I have often raised environmental concerns at Synod and especially my passion for cycling and “active travel”. At General Synod in July I raised the issue of the “Cycle to Work Scheme”, which stipendiary clergy are excluded from. If re-elected I will continue to pursue this issue as I believe many clergy would like to benefit from the reduced cost of getting a new bike for work.

Finance. I am currently on Archbishops’ Council Finance Committee, as an elected representative of General Synod. I have taken this responsibility seriously to consistently speak up for northern and urban parishes. I have also been critical of the preponderance of funding initiative money going largely to one type of church. I’m only one voice there but I believe I have had some impact.

I have also urged the national church to have a look at the disparities in wealth across dioceses. There is a vast difference between the financial reserves that a diocese like Lincoln or Oxford has and the likes of us and Liverpool. A group chaired by the Bishop of Sheffield has been looking at it and although the current recommendations are looking to be modest I urged a more radical approach and am hopeful that more might be done to even out the finances.

HeartEdge. My current part time role with HeartEdge brings me into contact with a lot of different churches and before starting work for HeartEdge I was Mission Action Planning officer for the diocese. Both roles have given me great insights into the many problems and opportunities we face and the vast range of different churches. I’m able to bring all that experience into my role at General Synod.

Please do support me if you can and if elected I will continue to work for a more inclusive, fairer and Christ-like church that values and cares for the clergy.

I am always happy to be contacted about Synod matters and you can get hold of me on 07432536408 or at andy@sacredtrinity.org.uk . I would welcome any opportunities to say more about my views or my priorities.

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