

Candidate: Revd Canon Simon Ward

1	Describe your Anglican identity in three words. Liberal Catholic Generous
2	What would be your top three priorities for this coming General Synod if you were elected? Promoting Parish Ministry: ensuring clergy and volunteers are well resourced whether they are rural or urban and all shaped for evangelism. Promoting inclusion: being a voice for an inclusive church but making sure all voices are heard and respected and disagreement does not become exclusion. Supporting Clergy: helping Synod's debates and legislation to keep a focus on clergy well-being and being passionate about ministry.
3	What would you bring to the General Synod which will enhance its culture, reputation and work? I am rooted in Parish ministry and have broad relationships with many clergy and parishes across our Diocese. I am very practical, grounded in reality and would always want Synod to remember that decisions are lived out by real people in real parishes serving real communities.
4	How best do you think the National Church could use its significant financial resources to further the 5-marks of mission? People encounter the church at Parish level. They meet at the school, the coffee morning, the lunch club, the food bank and sometimes even step into church. Decision decisions by the national church must keep focused on the grass roots and green shoots and financial decisions should make a difference there.
5	What steps do you believe General Synod must take next to ensure robust independent and transparent safeguarding practices across every level of the church? Safeguarding is not to be understood as institutional risk management but is part of our Christian duty to protect the vulnerable and to tell the truth about abuse. Any new national safeguarding arrangements must have independence, good resourcing, transparency and be open to scrutinise decisions and practice at diocesan level as well as standing up to scrutiny itself. Experiences of survivors must be heard and shape our attitudes and response.
6	What is your vision for the rural church and how its life and mission should be supported? The rural church is a vital part of the identity of the Diocese of Norwich. I love how rural churches have an astonishing sense of prayerful focus, faithfully holding the ground in their parish for centuries: a ground which should not be given up lightly. They are places of encounter, worship and community with a reach far beyond their regular congregation, thus rural models of support are different to the urban.

7	What do you believe the church's role is at this time of climate crisis?
	Creation is a precious gift and we only get one go at it. It is important in these times for the church to listen carefully and call out those who diminish or ignore any sense of climate crisis (something we are hearing more and more). There is a huge moral issue underneath the presenting environmental issue where huge injustice and imbalance are clear: there is a duty for the church to preach, teach and pray clearly on climate crisis.
8	In light of the Church of England's <i>From Lament to Action</i> report, and recognising the increasing polarisation in UK public life around nationalism, identity, and migration, what would your contribution be to fostering racial diversity and challenge discrimination in our church?
	Losing sight of the fact that every person is made in the image of God is a significant challenge in our society because voices of division and discrimination are becoming too common: this is something I am acutely aware of in my community. We must act upon the experiences of UKME and global majority heritage Christians to ensure that our structures and governance are a genuine reflection of the communities we serve.
9	What are your views on Project Spire (the Church Commissioners' findings about transatlantic chattel slavery and the proposal to create a fund for healing, repair and justice)?
	Christians are called to tell the truth and strive for healing and justice. The proposed fund cannot be a mere symbolic gesture but needs to be accompanied by growth, understanding, discipleship and service. I also hear from people in the church who find it remarkable that such a large fund can be created in a church which is struggling financially, meaning Project Spire needs careful thought.
10	What is your view about the sacramental ministry of priests and bishops who are women, and do you personally receive their ministry in full?
	I have always welcomed, supported and received the ministry of priests and bishops who are women.
11	What is your view on the current status of the 'House of Bishops' Declaration on the Ministry of Bishops and Priests and the Five Guiding Principles?
	I love the breath and diversity of the Church of England but respect and dignity must always come first. I support mutual flourishing but that places an obligation on everyone in our church to work and flourish together.
12	What is your view about services of blessing in church after a civil same-sex marriage at (i) a usual service, or (ii) a standalone service, and (iii) same sex marriage conducted in churches (in all cases where the incumbent and PCC are supportive)?

Where an incumbent and PCC have agreed, I support making use of the authorised provision for same-sex couples and would also support moving towards authorisation for standalone services and indeed towards marriage, following the proper canonical process.

13 What is your view about the ordination of candidates who are in same sex marriages, and the licensing of clergy who enter same sex marriage?

I believe a person's capacity for ordained ministry should not be limited or determined by their sexuality. The present position requires further legal and legislative work and the relationships, sexuality and gender working group have been asked to explore this.

14 How do you plan to communicate and consult effectively with the wider electorate?

Listening and understanding is foundational. If elected, I would see representation carrying as great a responsibility to listen as well as speak. I am clear about bringing my experiences and understanding of this Diocese, its parishes and people, to the Synod. I endeavour to be clear and concise in communication.