

Candidate: David Ryczanowski

1. Describe your Anglican identity in three words.

- Prayerful · Creedal · Missional

2. What would be your top three priorities for this coming General Synod if you were elected?

My priorities would be: first, confidence in Jesus Christ and the authority of Scripture as the foundation for the Church's faith, teaching and mission; second, reversing decline through evangelism, discipleship, church revitalisation, support for healthy local parish churches and encouraging the work in children and young people through the National society for Education and our parish children's groups; and third, restoring trust through good governance, effective safeguarding and responsible stewardship. I would also work for the unity of the Church, while recognising that genuine unity must be grounded in truth, charity and our shared confession of Christ.

3. What would you bring to the General Synod which will enhance its culture, reputation and work?

I would bring extensive leadership experience from education, operational and project management, including strategic direction, international programmes and managing significant organisational change. I am accustomed to scrutinising proposals, solving problems, making difficult decisions and turning strategy into effective action. I would bring those skills to Synod with energy, determination and a collaborative approach. Just as importantly, I would listen carefully to those with whom I disagree, seeking first to understand. I believe Synod's culture and reputation are strengthened when we combine rigorous debate with humility, courtesy and prayer, disagree graciously, and work constructively together in service of the Church's mission.

4. How best do you think the National Church could use its significant financial resources to further the Five Marks of Mission?

Resources should be directed primarily towards the Church's fundamental calling to proclaim Christ, make disciples and sustain worshipping Christian communities. I would prioritise parish ministry, evangelism, church planting and revitalisation, ministry among children and young people, theological education, and support for churches serving deprived and rural communities. The other Marks of Mission—including compassionate service, justice and care for creation—flow from our discipleship of Jesus Christ. National expenditure should be transparent, demonstrably effective and regularly evaluated to ensure that resources entrusted to the Church genuinely strengthen its mission.

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 must protect children and vulnerable people, respond compassionately to victims and survivors, and command confidence through professional independence and transparency. I support genuinely independent scrutiny and decision-making, clear accountability, consistent national standards and an effective complaints process. However, independence must not mean outsourcing responsibility: safeguarding remains the responsibility of everyone in the Church. We must learn from past failures, listen carefully to survivors and ensure concerns can be raised without fear or institutional self-protection. Synod should scrutinise the new safeguarding arrangements carefully,

ensuring they deliver measurable improvement, transparency, competence and accountability rather than simply creating additional bureaucracy.

6. What is your vision for the rural church and how its life and mission should be supported?

Rural churches are not historical liabilities but living Christian communities with enormous missionary potential. My vision is for flourishing local churches rooted in prayer, Scripture, worship, evangelism and service to their communities. We should resist models that place unrealistic numbers of churches upon individual clergy or assume that rural ministry should simply manage decline. National and diocesan resources should strengthen clergy and lay leadership, encourage collaboration between parishes, develop new vocations and support creative forms of mission. The parish church's continuing presence in rural communities remains one of the Church of England's great opportunities for mission.

7. What do you believe the Church's role is at this time of climate crisis?

Christians are called to be responsible stewards of God's creation and to love our neighbours, including those whose lives are affected by environmental change. The Church should therefore encourage responsible stewardship, practical action and wise use of resources. It should also bring a distinctively Christian perspective: creation belongs to God, humanity has a responsibility to care for it, and our ultimate hope is in Christ rather than politics or human endeavour. Synod should pursue proportionate, evidence-based measures while ensuring that environmental commitments do not unnecessarily undermine parish mission or disproportionately burden poorer churches and communities.

8. In light of *From Lament to Action*, what would your contribution be to fostering racial diversity and challenging discrimination in our church?

Every person is created in God's image, and racism and discrimination are incompatible with the gospel. By appointing me, you would be fostering racial diversity and challenging discrimination in our church with my Polish heritage! I would support removing genuine barriers to participation and ensuring that appointments and opportunities are fair. I belong to an ethnically diverse church, and I can draw on that positive experience to create a more inclusive church on General Synod. The Church can offer an increasingly polarised society something better: reconciliation in Christ, truthful acknowledgement of injustice, forgiveness, equal dignity and genuine fellowship across differences.

9. What are your views on Project Spire?

I deplore the evil of slavery and support honest examination of the Church's history. However, I question whether Project Spire is the right response. Jamaican friends have shared with me a more nuanced history, including positive influences of the church educating and supporting their communities, and have told me they do not support reparations. Their voices deserve to be heard alongside others. Repentance and reconciliation are profoundly Christian, but our response should promote genuine reconciliation while ensuring that resources entrusted to the Church are used responsibly for parishes, mission and ministry today.

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 believe men and women are equally created in the image of God, with equal dignity, worth and standing in Christ, and I wholeheartedly affirm the many ministries of women across the Church. I recognise and respect the Church of England's settled position on women's ordination and episcopal ministry. Therefore, I fully receive the sacramental ministry of priests and bishops who are women.

11. What is your view on the current status of the House of Bishops' Declaration and the Five Guiding Principles?

I support the House of Bishops' Declaration and Five Guiding Principles. Whilst I recognise concerns and weaknesses, I want to support the Church of England's desire to both receive women into all offices and to provide a legitimate place for those who, on grounds of theological conviction, cannot receive that ministry. Neither women's established ministry nor the recognised place of others holding traditional convictions should be undermined. I support maintaining it, and its commitment to mutual flourishing and the highest possible degree of communion, while seeking to improve how it functions in practice.

12. What is your view about services of blessing in church after a civil same-sex marriage at (i) a usual service, (ii) a standalone service, and (iii) same-sex marriage conducted in churches?

This issue has been painful and caused a lot of hurt on both sides. Everyone is loved by God and should be welcomed, valued and treated with respect in our churches. However, I am concerned that the Faith and Order Commission report (GS Misc.1430) found such liturgy risks being seen as celebrating marriage and so in my view risks undermining our integrity, unity and parish ministry & mission. My priority, if elected, will be to pay attention to this report and to stress proper Synodical and canonical processes for moving forward.

13. What is your view about ordaining candidates in same-sex marriages and licensing clergy who enter same-sex marriage?

I recognise the gravity of this question and the pain felt by people of differing convictions. Everyone should be treated with dignity, compassion and pastoral sensitivity. However, I am committed to proper process and upholding the Church of England's doctrine and rich heritage. Canons B30 and C26 remain unchanged, and it's important for our missional credibility for our clergy to live consistently with the doctrine they are ordained to uphold. My view is that any change should only follow from doctrinal change established by proper Synodical process. I am concerned that ministers who remain committed to the traditional Anglican view can continue to flourish inside the Church of England.

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

I would regard election to General Synod as a responsibility to represent and engage with the wider Diocese, not simply to express my own views. I would use Synod's existing reports to keep Deanery Synods and parishes informed, while actively seeking their views before important debates and votes. I would welcome correspondence and listen respectfully to people from across the breadth of the Church, explaining my decisions openly. Formal reporting is important, but personal communication matters too. Having retired early, I have the time and flexibility to be accessible, attend meetings and maintain genuine two-way communication throughout the five-year term.