

Candidate: Pamela Spychal

1 Describe your Anglican identity in three words.

Faith, Hope, Love

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

- Mission and ministry, including the development of lay ministries. I will endeavour to support any development which helps us grow and spreads the Good News.
- Community development and outreach to those who need us most. Before the NHS the church provided care for the sick; before Education Authorities, the church was building schools. Now, for example, there is a housing and homelessness crisis - I believe the church could have a part to play.
- Inclusion, in the whole life of the church, regardless of disability, economic power, ethnicity, sex, gender identity, learning disability, mental health, neurodiversity, or sexuality.

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

I will bring:

- A prayerful attitude, praying alongside, with and for every delegate I meet, praying about every paper, debate and vote.
- A willingness to see the bigger picture, hear all sides of a topic or issue, interrogate the evidence, including biblical, historical, and contemporary sources.
- Everything I know about the people in the parishes, the deaneries, and the Diocese of Norwich, ensuring that their voice is also heard.

4 How best do you think the National Church could use its significant financial resources to further the 5-marks of mission?

The five marks of mission are about **people**, and what they can do - proclaiming the Good News; teaching, baptising and nurturing believers; loving service; challenging unjust structures, pursuing peace and reconciliation; caring for the environment and protecting nature. This suggests to me that the National Church's financial resources

should be directed to **people** as they strive to practise these marks of mission. The resources should make a real difference to **all** members of our worshipping communities, enabling them to stop worrying about THE CHURCH (buildings, organisations, structures) and instead thrive and grow in pursuit of the marks of 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?

As a headteacher, I welcomed the progress of safeguarding practices. This experience informs my beliefs about safeguarding in our churches.

I believe General Synod must continue to scrutinise and interrogate the work of the National Safeguarding Team, and also pay close attention to any independent analysis or critique of the safeguarding work of the church, whether at national or local level.

Culture and leadership, response to victims and survivors, information sharing and recruiting are all continuing themes. Work around male violence and young people, are newer themes which should be explored.

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

Vision:

Every parishioner has an opportunity to worship at a church service every Sunday:

- a church within walking distance, on a suitable bus route, a car sharing scheme, a video stream straight to parishioners' homes;
- a worship team, comprising ordained priests, lay ministers, authorised worship assistants, chalice assistants, musicians, intercessors, sides-people, technicians and, of course, tea-makers.

A church should also be a central part of the local community. providing weekday activities open to all parishioners and run by parishioners.

Supported by

- parishioners - front and centre;
- the Diocesan Mission Strategy <https://www.dioceseofnorwich.org/mission-and-ministry/mission/mission-strategy/>
- national church's Diocesan Investment Programme.

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

There is a role for every level of the church and everything should be considered and acted upon if at all possible.

- At parish level... supporting people to reduce their fuel costs e.g. car sharing... warm spaces and cool spaces... or changing to lower wattage light bulbs in the church... or developing the churchyard to support wildlife.
- At diocesan level... to continue to manage clergy housing and other properties, to advise and support parishes, to search for and promote supportive grants.
- At national level... to listen to, debate and interrogate current national and international issues about the climate crisis.

8 In light of the Church of England's From Lament to Action 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?

I will continue to support local initiatives such as:

- Great Yarmouth's Peace Walks; simple, quiet walks organised by local faith groups;
- Greater Yarmouth Interfaith and Belief Network; promoting discussion and understanding between faith groups;
- Great Yarmouth Unity Project
- Events organised by GYROS (gyros.org.uk) which support migrants and culturally and linguistically diverse communities;
- Events organised locally around listening and responding sensitively to polarised views.

In General Synod I will be looking for and supporting every opportunity to foster racial diversity and challenge discrimination.

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?)

Project Spire has become mired in controversy and debate about facts, figures and legalities. The money involved is relatively small: £100 million from a fund worth about £11.6 billion. Some people argue that the money should be used to repair churches. I believe it should be used to heal people, still suffering from the after-effects of slavery. I believe it should be used repair communities, still blighted by inequality and racial

tensions. I believe it should be used to demonstrate justice, which could just possibly improve the battered reputation of our beleaguered national church.

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?

All human beings are made in the image of God. Some, very special, human beings are called to sacramental ministry. I personally receive the 'ministry of priests and bishops who are women' in full. Each ordained individual brings a different perspective, skills and knowledge to their ministry. Without women's ministry we are diminished.

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 wholeheartedly support the principle that all orders of ministry are open equally to all without reference to gender and that all ministers must acknowledge that our church has reached a clear decision. I acknowledge that some denominations only ordain men, but celebrate the fact that many denominations accept the ministry of women. I accept that people should be enabled to flourish, as best they can, even without the ministry of women and that we should strive for a degree of communion and mutual understanding.

Should a bishop who rejects the ministry of women have episcopal oversight of women ministers?

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)?

I am strongly in favour of all the above. Marriage is a tricky business. A huge percentage of marriages end in divorce - both opposite sex and same sex marriages. I have examples in my own extended family of disastrous opposite sex divorces and spectacularly successful same sex marriages. Based on my own experience, I believe being married or blessed before God tilts the odds in favour of success. I cannot see why we should refuse these blessings and sacraments to same sex couples.

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 am “committed to equality for everyone, at all levels and roles within the church, regardless of ... sexuality.” I believe it is discriminatory to treat candidates for ordination or clergy differently because of their sexuality.

The church is crying out for priests. Some of the above questions hint at the dire need for more priests, especially in parish ministry. Discrimination of any sort - disability, economic power, ethnicity, sex, gender identity, learning disability, mental health, neurodiversity, or sexuality - means we run the risk of further diminishing our shrinking appeal to the people who live in our parishes.

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

My electoral statement contains my email and postal address. I invite any member of the electorate to contact me to discuss any matter they wish to raise. If I am elected I will try my best to visit Deanery Synods across the Diocese.