

Candidate: Revd Chris Hutton

1 Describe your Anglican identity in three words.

Rural Anglican Evangelical

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

- a) The Churches Mission – To encourage all discussions to think about how the actions we take reach out with the good news in Jesus Christ to all.
- b) Rural – I want to be an advocate for Rural Ministry and church. The Rural church has many strengths and this need celebrating in Synod. I want to bang the drum for rural ministry.
- c) Church Schools – We are incredible lucky to be able to shape the lives, values and ethos of so many children through the work of our schools. The work of the schools' teams and what they do must not be neglected by synod. Being Chair of Governors at a 800 strong diocese school as well as the fact my wife is chair of the Diocesan Board Education gives me a unique insight into church schools.

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

I am a dedicated Parish priest who loves the Church of England and all it stands for. I am a huge advocate for it and while it definitely isn't perfect, a local church in every community is incredibly important and unique to the Church of England. Synod needs 'normal' parish priests who are imbedded into their communities which hopefully means the discussions will focus on what is really important to the person in the pew. If elected, this is what I will bring.

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 often overlooked in the discussions we have or when we discuss mission. Really everything we do, and that includes how we spend our finances, should be measured against the mission of the church. I would wish that we spend more finances on high-risk mission that fulfil these 5 marks.

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?

Church should be something that people can trust and that means it needs to be safe and transparent. This means good safeguarding is also part of the mission of the church. We need to do better with safeguarding. It needs to be a process that all can trust, but also not so onerous that it saps energy for mission, or people just ignore it. It is about driving culture change rather than being a tick box exercise.

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

I am a believer in both city, town and rural Parish Ministry and each is different and I often feel we have a lack of Rural Rectors on General Synod. One of the Church of England's strengths is the rural church. While it has its challenges, e.g. how we manage the system we have inherited, paying for individual parish ministry and care of buildings, the fact that everybody has a local parish church is hugely important for ministry, especially in a Rural context. I will argue that more support is needed from the church commissioners to go on frontline Ministry and help release some of the burden of parish share on individual congregations.

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

The Care of Creation is one of the church's 5 marks of mission and we should be striving to protect our planet. This means that Care of Creation is good in and of itself and as a church we should be doing all we can. However, the church needs to be careful not to support solutions to environmental problems that cause harm in other ways.

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?

Discrimination of any sort should have no place in any churches. We must be welcoming to all whatever race, or background or country people are from. In eliminating this, the church needs to push back on political ideologies that will cause further division and needs to lead by example.

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?)

This is a topic that I would need to understand more about, but from what I have read, the picture painted in the press seems very different to the reality of what is proposed. An investment fund to work towards healing, repair and justice means our actions match our words. Words are easy, action is harder.

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 receive ministry from women priests and bishops, and within our Benefice we have a women priest who takes a full roll within the Benefice.

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 support the Five Guiding Principles. The Church of England is a broad church and those who don't support women's ministry should be able to flourish within it.

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 hold a traditional view of marriage as between one man and one woman. This means that I am unable to offer a service of blessing after same-sex marriage. This was an agreed position with the various PCC's. I feel that the current liturgical provision is sufficient. Synod has spent to long on this and my hope is that the new synod is happy with the settled status at present.

Despite my own personal opinion, the churches that I serve still strive to be fully welcoming to those in same sex relationships and we have two same sex couples who take a full part in the life of our churches.

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

I do not support the ordination of candidates or that licenced clergy should be allowed to enter same sex marriages. I am also a realist and understand that there are clergy in same sex relationships and I have worked well and got along and shared Ministry with them as part of my role as Rural Dean.

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

If elected, I would want to communicate with those I agree with and those I don't. I hope that those who know me, know that I am approachable and also willing to engage and therefore I would be happy to communicate with anyone who wanted.