

Candidate: Rebecca Hill

1. Describe your Anglican identity in three words.

Liberal Anglo- Catholic

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

- Restore Church Commissioners funds to their founding purpose with particular regard to provision of the cure of souls in parishes where such assistance is most required
- Address vocations crisis
- Reform of Mission and Pastoral Measure

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

- In my day- to- day life I practice as a barrister advising in, and litigating on, property and agricultural matters
- I am currently studying for the MA in Church Law
- General Synod will face a number of important decisions this quinquennium and the revised Mission and Pastoral Measure and National Church Governance Measure are due to return for debate
- As a lawyer, I would hope to contribute to the scrutiny and reform of legislation in a meaningful and informed way

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

- Prioritise funding towards parish ministry- at present only 8% of the of Church Commissioners planned annual distribution is ring fenced for parish ministry
- Full funding for residential and increased funding for non- residential training for clergy – as part of a drive to encourage and thus increase numbers coming forward for ordination

- Funding directed to enable robust training in scripture, creeds, history and Anglican liturgies – to prepare ordinands for parish ministry
- Adopt Charter of Care for Clergy to guard them against mental and physical exhaustion – both to sustain and retain clergy and encourage those considering ordination

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?

- The scope of power and authority of the new Independent Safeguarding Authority ('ISA') and relevant enforcement powers and sanctions will need to be considered very carefully particular as regards parish level.
- In making it workable and manageable, consideration will need to be given to avoiding duplication with compliance with secular statutory safeguarding requirements, cognisant of the obligations imposed at parish level particular where ISA is likely to have power to request information and inspect
- For pastoral, theological and ecumenical reasons, I do not support a change in relation to the seal of the confessional.

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

- A flourishing deeply rooted presence of the church which is at the visible centre of the rural "community" and is there for the beginning, the hard times, and the end.
- To achieve that, we need to move away from managing decline, and we must:
 - aspire to have a priest in every parish
 - ensure financial support directed to those poorer parishes
 - minimise multi parishes starting with a cap on number parishes within each benefice

- Given the number of rural parishes across the country
 - Ordinands should be required to spend a specified period of time in a rural parish
 - Priests should spend a period of time in their first 10 years serving in a rural parish

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

- There has to be a pragmatic approach and realism rather than setting arbitrary goals at the expense of church attendance and deterioration of church buildings
- It must not be set in opposition to farming and food production; it needs to be in tandem with agriculture not against it
- It must be cognisant of the huge cost of slavishly and blindly pursuing “green” policies (e.g. the difficulty in heating churches). The answer is not a complex and bureaucratic grant system
- I query the need for “Creation in Christ” Sunday given Harvest Festival

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?

- We should be praying for the “uniting and knitting together of the hearts of all persons and estates..., in true Christian Love and Charity one towards another, through Jesus Christ...”
- We need to shift from a focus on “differences” and conflict to one of unity
- The active and visible presence of the Church of England in every parish and pastorally available to all, whether they profess its faith or not means that the church is in a unique position in its mission

- The Church needs to be alert to its absence in communities, and that its public conduct or pronouncements (as perceived or otherwise) may of itself encourage divisiveness

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)?

- I do not support Project Spire
- I have grave concerns that the use of such funds would be compliant with their duty as charitable trustees regardless as to whether the funds will be siphoned off to a different charitable body. To date, the legal advice given has not been disclosed.
- There are serious doubts as to the historical basis that the Queen Anne's Bounty income derived, and in turn the Church of England profited, from slavery. Those concerns have not been satisfactorily met

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 acknowledge that the Church of England reached a decision about the sacramental ministry of priests and bishops, and I accept their ministry in full.

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 House of Bishops' Declaration on the Ministry of Bishops and Priests and the Five Guiding Principles.
- We must work hard to promote genuine mutual flourishing

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)?

- Save that sub- paragraph 9(iii) must be a separate question, and subject to satisfaction of Church Law, I am not opposed to same sex blessing.

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 do not oppose the ordination of such candidates.

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

- In addition to attending diocesan synod, I would want to meet each of the deanery synods in person in the first instance
- Establish point of contact with each chair of deanery synod
- Provide written reports following General Synod meetings