

General Synod Candidate Statement 2026

House of Laity

Nominated by:

Proposer: Caroline Herbert – Thetford and Rockland Deanery

General Synod: House of Laity former member

Seconded: John Brydon – Norwich East Deanery

General Synod: House of Laity former member



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LOTHINGLAND DEANERY

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WHY I AM STANDING FOR GENERAL SYNOD?

I am standing for the House of Laity because I believe the Church of England has a vital role to play in proclaiming Jesus Christ, serving our communities, and blessing our nation.

I believe that the Church of England is at its best when Christians of different traditions listen to one another, disagree graciously, and work together for the flourishing of the Church and the nation. I would seek to be a constructive and principled voice—firm on the essentials of the Christian faith, generous towards those with whom I differ, and determined to find common ground wherever possible.

My Christian understanding of leadership is one of service. The Church needs people who can combine conviction with practical wisdom, listen carefully, ask difficult questions, and turn good intentions into effective action. I would bring energy, tenacity and a strong commitment to making the most of the resources entrusted to us.

WHO AM I?

My family story has also shaped my understanding of service and gratitude. I am the son of a Polish immigrant and, in many respects, the product of bravery. My father fought with the British 8th Army during WWII. After being wounded, he settled in Britain and built his life here. His courage, sacrifice and determination have left me with a deep appreciation for this country, for those who serve it, and for the opportunities and responsibilities we inherit from previous generations.

I grew up on a council estate in Swindon, an experience that gave me a strong appreciation of community, opportunity and the importance of people supporting one another. I began my working life on the shop floor as a machinist with British Rail Engineering Ltd, gaining first-hand experience of the

dignity of work, the value of teamwork and the contribution that every individual can make. I then studied Engineering at the University of Wales, Cardiff, where I met my wife, Kate, who was training for a degree in nursing.

EXPERIENCE

My professional career has prepared me well for the responsibilities of the House of Laity. I have been a secondary school teacher for 20 years in several Norwich schools, including director of science and a regional director of an educational trust. Before teaching, I was an operations manager, an experienced engineering, a project-management professional and a supply chain manager. I bring practical experience of governance, leadership, complex projects, difficult decisions and, importantly, bringing people together behind a shared purpose.

I moved to Lowestoft in 1996 and have been proud to call Suffolk home ever since. My career has taken me from managing production at Bird's Eye, through senior leadership with Unilever as European Head of Automation, to factory management and, ultimately, teaching.

Along the way, I have led teams, managed significant change and worked on government projects involving the development of procedures and legislation. These experiences have taught me the importance of listening, bringing people together and turning good ideas into practical action.

Now retired early, I have the time, energy and commitment to serve on General Synod. I want to use my experience to make a positive contribution to the Church of England and, above all, to listen to the people I represent and ensure their voices are heard.

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I became a Christian in 1991. The year before, my wife and I were married in church, and we soon realised that if we were serious about the vows we had made, we needed to make church a regular part of our lives.

It was through an Alpha course that the Gospel of Jesus Christ truly came alive to me. I began to understand who Jesus was and what He had done for me. I knew God was calling me to put my faith and trust in Christ and to serve Him and His Church.

That call has remained at the heart of my Christian journey ever since. I am deeply grateful for God's grace and for the privilege of serving Christ and His Church. I now serve in my church by leading services, occasional preaching and running mid-week groups and clubs for teenagers. This includes attendance on Christian summer camps as a qualified pool lifeguard.

I ran an ecumenical youth group for young people aged 11–14, bringing together members from the Baptist, United Reformed, Roman Catholic and Church of England traditions. This experience was particularly formative, teaching me the value of listening to different Christian perspectives, working collaboratively and finding unity in our shared faith.

These experiences have given me a deep appreciation of the importance of lay ministry, ecumenical cooperation and investing in the next generation. They have also shaped my conviction that the Church is at its strongest when people are encouraged, equipped and given the opportunity to use their gifts in the service of God and their communities.

Should I be elected, I would seek to serve collaboratively, engage respectfully with differing viewpoints, and approach every issue with prayerful discernment, seeking the good of the whole Church.

I have a passion for:

- Strengthening parish ministry.
- Encouraging evangelism and church growth.
- Supporting clergy wellbeing.
- Ensuring financial decisions benefit local churches.
- Improving theological education.
- Discipleship of all.

HERE ARE SOME OF MY VIEWS:

On unity: I believe the Church of England is strongest when we remain committed to one another despite our differences, seeking to speak the truth in love and to preserve our unity in Jesus Christ.

On listening and representation: While I hold my own theological convictions, I am committed to listening carefully to those with whom I disagree and being a faithful representative.

On Scripture and discernment: I believe that the Holy Scriptures are God's Word and that the Church is called to proclaim that word in all its fulness and to discern how it should be applied to Christian discipleship and to the world.

On mission: I want to see every parish equipped to proclaim the gospel, serve its community, and make disciples of Jesus in ways that are compassionate and hopeful.

On parish life: I will be a strong advocate for parish ministry, recognising that every parish has a significant role in the Church's mission.

On safeguarding: All people – regardless of age, gender, sexuality, colour, ethnicity, race or disability – are precious souls made in God's image. The Church, therefore, must continue to strengthen safeguarding, ensuring that every person is safe and treated with dignity and care.

On stewardship: I will work for wise stewardship of our resources so that local churches are better equipped for worship, mission, and service.

On younger generations: I believe investing in children, young people, and new disciples is essential to the Church's future. I will look to support the National Society for Education.

Thank you for reading this, and please feel free to contact me should you have any questions. I would be so grateful if you would consider giving me either your first or highest available preference vote.

With every blessing in Christ,

David Ryczanowski