

General Synod: Election Address

The Reverend Matthew Price

Nominated by:

The Revd Jo Wood, Great Yarmouth Deanery
The Revd Mark Capron, Heacham and Rising Deanery

“I want the experience of parish churches and the communities we serve to be heard in national decision-making.”



At a glance: Who am I?

- Vicar of St Mary Magdalene, Gorleston
- Former City solicitor
- Three years serving in Uganda with a Christian legal aid project
- Member of Diocesan Synod and the Bishop's Council of Trustees
- Bishop of Norwich's Advisor for Urban and Estates Ministry
- Regional Lead for the Estates Evangelism Task Group for East Anglia and the East Midlands

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Dear clergy colleagues,

I am Vicar of St Mary Magdalene, Gorleston, a growing church serving a very deprived estate community in Gorleston. Before ordination I was a solicitor in the City of London and later spent three years serving a Christian legal aid organisation in Uganda.

Alongside parish ministry, I have served on the Bishop's Council of Trustees since 2022 and am currently the Bishop of Norwich's Adviser for Urban and Estates Ministry. Since 2025, I have also been the Regional Lead for East Anglia and the East Midlands for the Church of England's Estates Evangelism Task Group.

These experiences — local, diocesan and national — have shaped what I would bring to Synod:

1. Confident about holistic mission

In Gorleston we have discovered that we don't need to choose between proclaiming Jesus and serving our community.

Foodbank, community meals, work with children and young people, practical support and Sunday worship are all part of one mission: loving our neighbours, building relationships and creating opportunities for people to encounter Jesus.

Social action and evangelism belong together. The Church should serve people simply because they matter, while remaining confident that the greatest gift we have to share is Jesus Christ. I want to see parishes resourced to share that good news faithfully, relationally and creatively.

2. Trusting the local church and renewing the parish

There is no one-size-fits-all model for mission. The gospel doesn't change, but how we communicate it must take seriously the culture, needs and opportunities of the communities we serve.

Our approach in Gorleston has begun with listening and a simple principle: *nothing done to us without us*. Some of our most fruitful ministries have grown by recognising the gifts already present in our community and enabling people to become contributors rather than simply recipients.

I believe the parish remains an extraordinary missional gift: a commitment not simply to gather a congregation, but to seek the flourishing of a particular place and be present for the long term. I welcome church planting and new worshipping communities alongside that commitment.

National and diocesan structures are at their best when they listen to, trust and equip local churches. Through my wider estates work, I have seen extraordinary ministry in

communities experiencing significant deprivation, often with limited resources. I want their voices to be heard.

3. Investing in children and young people

At St Mary Magdalene we have seen what can happen when children's and youth ministry is central to the mission of the whole church.

Through work with families, youth clubs, opportunities to explore Christianity and pathways into discipleship and leadership, we are seeking to create places where young people can belong, ask questions, encounter Jesus and grow in faith.

Despite the Church's ageing demographic, I see considerable reason for hope. We should invest courageously in children and young people and make their evangelisation and discipleship a priority.

4. Conviction with generosity

I am committed to the Church's historic understanding of marriage and relationships, rooted in Scripture. I also recognise that faithful Christians have reached different conclusions on these questions. I want to listen carefully and engage graciously, seeking as much unity as possible and making space for one another's ministry to flourish. Our churches should be places of genuine welcome, friendship and belonging for everyone.

5. Using our resources well

Money and structures exist to enable mission, not the other way around. We need governance that is transparent and accountable, and structures that release resources for frontline ministry.

My background in law, parish leadership, charity and more recently education governance, together with my experience on the Bishop's Council of Trustees, has given me experience of difficult decisions about priorities and resources. I would bring to Synod a willingness to read the papers, ask questions and engage constructively.

Ultimately, though, the renewal of the Church will not come through better structures or cleverer strategies. At St Mary Magdalene we have learned our dependence upon God: upon prayer, Scripture and the power of the Holy Spirit.

What I would bring to Synod

General Synod has significant responsibilities for the legislation, policy and wider life of the Church of England. If elected, I would seek to listen carefully, speak graciously and contribute constructively.

Although I will inevitably bring my own convictions, I would seek to represent and listen to clergy across the Diocese, including those with whom I disagree, and to communicate regularly about the work of Synod.

If elected, I'll keep asking some straightforward questions:

- **Does this help us proclaim Jesus?**
- **Does it strengthen the local church?**
- **Does it help us reach people who currently have little connection with Christian faith?**
- **What will it mean for communities with the fewest resources?**

The Church of England faces real challenges, but I remain hopeful. I see people discovering faith, Christians serving their neighbours, young people encountering Jesus and congregations finding new confidence in mission.

I would be honoured to bring that perspective and experience to General Synod, and I would be very grateful for your **first or a high preference vote**.