Revd. Katie Cross – Candidate for House of Clergy, General Synod



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Dear clergy colleagues,

For the first time, I am offering myself to serve the Diocese of Coventry and the wider church by standing for General Synod. I long to see the church flourish in our towns, cities and countryside, encouraging new people to discover the love of Jesus, whilst supporting our faithful congregations as they worship God and serve their local communities. I want to see Synod resource our churches in every place, enabling them to support mission and ministry at parish level, both practically and with creative solutions to long term issues. I aim to listen well and work hard to do what I can to help the church grow over the coming years.

About me:

I am married to Paul with three grown up children. I enjoy cooking, gardening and playing the guitar (even if it is not very well!). I have recently discovered bird watching, much to my children's amusement.
I grew up in a family that found faith when I attended Sunday School, with me making my own decision as a child a little later. My dad went on to become a vicar when I was in my late teens, so church has been at the heart of our family for most of my life. In my twenties, I took a break from my banking career, and spent a missional year with YWAM which included overseas ministry in Venezuela. I came back with a desire to reach out to the young people in our village and talk about Jesus. I began a youth outreach project that is still running 35 years later. I met my husband Paul and as we grew our family, I began to serve the local church through youth ministry alongside work at Scripture Union. We were called into full-time youth ministry, serving in a variety of churches, and I responded to God's call to ordained ministry in 2011. I served my curacy and initial title post in large multi parish benefices in rural Devon, before relocating in 2021, to Alcester in Warwickshire, to lead the rural mission hub and Alcester Minster family of churches (8).

The last five and a half years have seen huge challenges and joy as we experienced God at work. Rural ministry takes time, so we have been creative about what we offer those in our communities as well as serving our committed congregations. Schools work has flourished, Messy Church has been planted, as has a new worshipping community on a retirement village. The civic life of Alcester has provided many opportunities to talk with the great and good, and we have supported the local food bank, take steps to set themselves up as a CIO. I serve on a number of local charities supporting those in need. I am a training incumbent and have just having signed off a self-supporting priest. I now have a new stipendiary deacon.

Leading the rural mission hub has enabled me to spend time with other clergy and laity, seeking creative solutions to both mission and governance complexities, aiming to offer support as requested. I have sought to be an advocate for mission and rural ministry. I am an Area Dean and have seen first-hand the difficulties faced by many diligent serving clergy, resulting in a more collaborative approach to ministry in our deanery. Equally my role on the DAC has given me an insight into the inner structures surrounding management of historic buildings and the scrutiny we are under.

The Church of England

I have spent the majority of my life within the Church of England. I felt a very strong calling to the Church of England and have sought to bring my missional pioneering and theologically reflective skills into the centre of my ministry. I am supportive of ecumenical partnerships, having served in a Baptist Church as their Youth Director for three years, whilst being committed to our Anglican roots.

We are seeing many denominations and organisations leaving the countryside. The Anglican church is in a unique position, remaining where there is a congregation to enable the gathering. I think the genius of the parish system allows each person, whether of faith or not, right across the country, to have a place where they can turn when they are looking for spiritual support. Our long standing tradition, doctrine and heritage are to be valued, whilst recognising the pressure of modern life and ever growing list of requirements and regulation that we face. Being a large and diverse communion, we often wrestle with big issues. However, the things which unite us are of far more significance and to be affirmed.
As a woman in ministry, I am humbled each time I lead and preside, understanding the friction that can arise with those who find my position a struggle. The grace afforded to me, helps me to seek open hearted conversations and explore gracious responses to long held views.

If I am elected to General Synod:

I will seek to represent all of the clergy as faithfully as I can, bringing my passion for rural and multi parish ministry, particularly in areas where structure and reform are debated.

As the Church of England's legislative body, I would seek to represent all clergy in seeking manageable workloads and the wellbeing and support of clergy, both for those who are serving and those who are retired. The structures we agree need to be fit for purpose for ministry in this century and beyond, enabling new ministers to come forward with confidence that they will be supported throughout their ministry and into retirement. The ongoing work around responding to complaints and the CDM process continues to need attention.

The discussion around finances and how they are distributed is also a key area of interest, helping to advocate for good stewardship and the delivery of resources where most required, for our ministry across the nation to be supported.

As a former youth and children's worker, Safeguarding is also an area close to my heart. The serious failures in the Church of England have both saddened and shocked us all. The impact for victims, both historic and those facing challenges right now, continue to be an area of development that enables the whole church to do better.

As you prayerfully consider how to vote, I would be grateful if you would entrust me with your first preference vote, (or if not, your second or even third preference vote would be appreciated!).
If you have questions please get in touch.

With my prayers

Katie