

GENERAL SYNOD ELECTION ADDRESS OF THE REVD STEPHEN PARKER

Assistant Curate, Worksop Priory



01909 282283

curate@worksoppriory.co.uk

Proposed by The Revd Nicolas Spicer

Seconded by The Revd Colin Rushforth

Who am I?

I am a third year Assistant Curate at Worksop Priory in the north of the Diocese. I came to faith aged 19 whilst at University. I took a year out after university to work for a parish in Liverpool during which time I had an active ministry with the homeless of the city, helping out 5 times a week with an early morning Christian outreach project. I trained for the priesthood at S. Stephen's, Oxford before starting my curacy at Worksop Priory.

Why am I seeking election to the General Synod?

My desire to stand for General Synod is based firstly upon the invitation within the House of Bishop's Declaration for 'mutual flourishing' within the 'life and structures of the Church of England'.

The outworking of this invitation is that during my time in Worksop I have strived to play as full a role as I am able in the life and work of the Diocese; as such I sit on both the young vocations group and on Diocesan Synod.

Secondly, I have always valued the breadth of tradition that is held within the Church of England. As a priest standing within the catholic tradition of the Church of England my decision to stand for election is an attempt to see that this breadth and diversity is preserved within the life of the Church. A vote for me is a vote for a broad Church that seeks to allow everyone to flourish.

Lastly, given that the Church of England is such a broad church, I am dedicated to the building of bridges between the various constituencies. I am convinced that we all have something to learn from one another. If I am elected I look forward to the chance to contribute my own distinctive catholicity to the life of Synod whilst learning and listening to and from others.

Vocations & Mission

As a young priest within the Church I have a heart for mission; I am convinced, that as Bishop Paul said at his welcome service at Worksop Priory, an encounter with Jesus Christ transforms lives. From this flows a desire to see young vocations, both priestly and lay, grow in our Diocese and across the Church at large as we seek to grow disciples together. As ours was the Diocese that put forward the discussion of allowing children to administer communion to the faithful, if elected I am eager to build upon this foundation of enabling a broad variety of ministries to flourish within our churches.

Anglican-Methodist Covenant

As chair of Worksop Churches Together I have a passion for ecumenism, and a strong desire for the Church of England to play its part in realising Christ's prayer that we 'might all be one'. Should I be elected to serve on Synod, I would therefore look forward to discussing the possibilities of deeper Anglican-Methodist relations whilst promoting those things which are integral to our Anglican identity and ecclesiology as gifts for the whole church.

Same-sex Marriage

Same sex relationships present a difficult area for the Church of England. We need to be honest about that fact.

The Church is facing a potential pastoral crisis in how she treats her LGBT members and how this affects societies perception of the work and mission of the Church. The facilitated conversations that are currently taking place are certainly a step in moving forward together on this issue. I wish to belong to a Church that, whilst remaining faithful to the Church's doctrine 'that marriage is in its nature a union ... of one man with one woman' (Canon B 30) is still inclusive and welcoming to all; a church that is built upon tolerance and love. How that works itself out practically in the life of the Church of England will be decided in the next synod. If elected to represent the Diocese of Southwell & Nottingham I will seek to prayerfully discern how God is calling the Church to respond to this difficult pastoral situation.

Your first choice vote would be greatly appreciated.

If you have any questions please feel free to ring me. God Bless. Stephen