

Laura Taylor - House of Laity

Local Missional Leader, Stanford on Soar

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Why I am standing

I am standing for General Synod because I long to see the Church of England renewed in confidence in the good news of Jesus Christ and rooted in faithful, local parish ministry. My own ministry and work have given me a particular heart for rural churches, for generosity and sustainability in local mission, and for rebuilding trust through honest, accountable and gracious decision-making. Looking back over my years of ministry, I have become increasingly aware of how God has prepared my heart and deepened my sense of calling to stand for General Synod.

Who I am and what I bring to General Synod

I have been a churchgoer all my life, and it has played a large part in pivotal moments of my life, including meeting my husband, Jamie, in the church choir. My faith has seen me through many difficult parts of my life, from my dad dying at a young age to more recent health challenges. Through the difficulties, I have felt a great sense of peace and rest in God.

Local Missional Leader and Reader

Over the last four years, my husband and I have shared in missional leadership in a small rural parish; I have grown in my understanding of the challenges of mission and ministry on the ground. I would seek to bring the experience of the successes, challenges, and needs of rural parishes to Synod and hope to be a good representative for rural parishes in this space.

Parish Giving Officer - Diocese of Leicester

I work with people across a diverse range of theological convictions and expressions of worship. I seek common ground in forming pastoral relationships with PCCs and have a passion for shaping a generous, faith-sharing culture in all churches. I would seek to bring a listening ear to people across the diocese, taking their concerns to General Synod while seeking to maintain faith and unity amid theological difference.

Former Secondary Teacher

I built strong pastoral relationships with staff and students, living out my faith and being open about it in a secular setting. I set up an active and thriving Christian Union. This experience has deepened my concern for trust, accountability and safeguarding in the church.

Ministry Experience

I have been involved in children and youth ministry since I was a teenager and now support youth work in our benefice. I have a heart for pastoral ministry, including a passion to address rural poverty. I have held several roles on PCC, including secretary, treasurer and parish safeguarding officer. I have a breadth of understanding of the governance and structures of the Church of England, and the ministries within it. This would help me to contribute thoughtfully to a wide range of conversations at General Synod.

My top three priorities

Sustaining parish and rural mission

I would like to see **rural parishes thriving** rather than struggling to sustain regular worship, community engagement and pastoral support. People in rural parishes often look to their church in times of celebration and sorrow. I would also like to see greater support for rural churches, enabling them to thrive and deepen their **connections with their local communities**.

How national resources serve local churches

I would like to see further consideration of changing the restriction on money managed by church commissioners, allowing a greater proportion of these resources to be used to **support local parish ministry**. In my job, I see the impact that the rising cost of ministry has on churches, with fewer churches able to support and sustain stipendiary ministry. I would like to see Synod consider distributing resources to better strengthen and **support the ministry of local churches** on the ground.

Rebuilding trust and accountable governance

Recently, General Synod received a [report](#) outlining research into a lack of trust in the Church of England. This lack of trust stems from failings in a number of areas, including governance, safeguarding, and the way debates concerning LLF and finance have been conducted. I would like to see the report's findings considered, and I hope to help shape a way forward to rebuilding public trust. This will include learning **to hold unity amid healthy disagreement**, as well as **strengthening cultures and structures** around accountability, transparency and humility in the Church.

Theological conviction

Through my relationships across a wide variety of churches, I'm acutely aware that the Church has not always offered good pastoral care towards those who find the Church's teaching on marriage problematic, difficult, or hurtful. I would like to see the Church be a place where **all are welcomed and treated with love and dignity**.

Alongside this conviction, I remain convinced that the current teaching of the Church of England on human identity, marriage and sexuality is good and worth upholding; and my hope is for a **sustainable way forward** in which we speak truthfully, listen carefully, love well and no one feels excluded from the Church.

My commitment to you

- I would seek to be **available to listen** to you, to listen to the needs and concerns of you and your parish
- I would be **happy to be contacted** by phone, email and in person to answer any questions
- I would aim to **communicate regularly** about the happenings and proceedings at Synod

I hope this address has given you a sense of who I am and how I would represent you as a candidate for General Synod. I hope you will feel able to give me your first-preference vote, or to rank me highly in your preferences. If you would like to know more or have any questions, please feel free to email me. I will also be [posting video updates on my channel](#).