

Steve Johnson
Candidate for the House of Laity, General Synod



Dear friends,

I am seeking election to the General Synod because I believe the Church of England is called to be present where people are, discerning where God is already at work, and bringing the hope of the Gospel through both word and action.

I am 55 years old and live in the rural village of Church Broughton with my wife, Jo. We have been married for 28 years, have two adult children, and share our home with a much-loved Springer Spaniel. My faith has been shaped by a rural, low Anglican tradition that values Scripture, prayer, faithful discipleship and service to the wider community.

I have been a Licensed Lay Minister (Reader) in South Derbyshire for nearly three years and serve within the benefice of Etwall, Egginton, Sutton on the Hill, Dalbury and Trusley. My ministry includes Messy Church, Young Christians, All Age Worship, contemporary worship, leading a home group and serving as part of the benefice leadership team. Through these roles I have developed a passion for helping people of all ages encounter Christ and grow as disciples.

Alongside my parish ministry, I serve as a Street Pastor in Derby. One night each month I join teams serving in the city centre from late evening into the early hours of the morning. This experience has reinforced my conviction that effective mission does not begin with expecting people to come to us. Instead, we are called to go to them, listening, caring and sharing God's love in practical ways. Some of the most significant ministry takes place beyond the church building, among people who may never otherwise encounter the Church.

Professionally, I am the Living Generously Adviser (Giving Adviser) for the Diocese of Derby, a role I have held for more than four years. This position gives me a unique perspective on the realities facing parishes across the diocese. I work alongside churches of many traditions and sizes, helping them develop cultures of generosity, stewardship and sustainable ministry.

This work allows me to see first-hand the challenges churches face, including financial pressures, declining attendance in some areas, volunteer fatigue and the demands placed on clergy and lay leaders. Yet it also enables me to witness extraordinary faithfulness, creativity and resilience. Time and again I encounter congregations discovering new opportunities for mission, building stronger communities and finding fresh confidence in sharing the Gospel.

My commitment to the Church is rooted in long experience at parish level. For more than twenty years I have served on PCCs in a variety of roles, including Deanery Synod Representative, Electoral Roll Officer and Honorary Secretary. These experiences have given me an understanding of church governance alongside the practical realities of local ministry.

If elected to General Synod, I will bring three particular commitments.

First, I want to encourage a Church that is outward-looking and mission-focused. We must continue finding ways to engage with people who have little or no connection with church life, meeting them where they are and helping them discover the transforming love of Christ.

Second, I am passionate about lay ministry. Across the Church of England, lay people are already exercising remarkable gifts in leadership, discipleship, evangelism and pastoral care. I want to see lay ministry further encouraged, equipped and valued as an essential part of the Church's mission and future.

Third, I care deeply about the flourishing of rural churches and communities. Rural churches remain at the heart of countless communities and continue to provide faithful Christian witness. National decision-making must recognise both the challenges and opportunities of rural ministry and ensure that these voices are heard.

Throughout my ministry, prayer and Scripture have been central to my approach. I believe the Church's future will not be secured primarily through structures, strategies or programmes, but through faithful dependence upon God. We need to be a Church that listens prayerfully, speaks graciously and acts courageously.

I am standing as an independent candidate. I do not represent any organised party or pressure group. Rather, I seek to represent the people and churches of Derby with integrity, humility and a willingness to listen. I value honest conversation, respectful disagreement and unity in Christ, even where differences exist.

At a time when society is searching for meaning, purpose and hope, I believe the Church has a vital contribution to make. I would like to see an authentic reintegration of Christian values within mainstream society, not through privilege or power, but through faithful witness, generous service, truth, compassion and the transforming message of Jesus Christ.

It would be a privilege to serve the Diocese of Derby in the General Synod. I would be grateful for your support, and for your prayers, as together we seek God's guidance for the future of His Church.

Steve Johnson
Licensed Lay Minister (Reader)
Living Generously Adviser, Diocese of Derby