

General Synod 2026 – Hustings questions

*Answering is optional in all these questions. Enter your response below the questions.
Responses limited to 200 words per question*

Your Calling

1	In what ways do you think God has called you to this role?
	I've spent a lot of time praying and reflecting on why I feel called to be on General Synod. It comes down to my competencies for the role along with the traits that I possess that instils in me that I could bring a positive change to Synod. My current circumstances allow me the time to contribute and to participate fully in the role.
2	What is your personal hope for the Church of England?
	My hope is for a Church that welcomes and serves everyone in the name of Jesus Christ; remains faithful to the Word and the sacraments; proclaims the Gospel afresh in every generation; and, through the power of the Holy Spirit, helps all people grasp how wide, long, high and deep Christ's love is. My vision for the church is that lives are transformed through Christ.

Church of England Structures

3	What do you consider the three top priorities of the Church of England over the next five years?
	1. Safeguarding 2. Growing the number of children and young adults 3. Becoming a truly inclusive, intergenerational community, welcoming people of all ages, backgrounds and stages of faith
4	What do you feel are the main safeguarding topics for discussion at the General Synod? How would you rate your own understanding of those topics?
	Creating a culture where it's perfectly normal to challenge – especially those in a leadership role Managing and reporting safeguarding concerns Holding leaders accountable Streamline the risk assessment process Support for smaller parishes – make training available for them that's easy to deliver I feel 100% competent in my ability to deliver change and drive results in the above areas. This is something that I did in my professional role, and I do this today as our Parish Safeguarding Officer.

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5	Do you recognise the key structure of the parish and priest as the bedrock of local ministry and mission in the Guildford Diocese and the Church of England?
	Yes. I look at my own parish and how this works in action. Our clergy team is so visible within our community – present at the foodbank sessions, leading school assemblies, working with all the churches in our town (including our synagogue), providing pastoral care in our nursing homes, and the list goes on. Their ministry is far and wide beyond the physical building presence. The role of the clergy is also to enable others to flourish – allowing lay people to take new roles and step up with responsibilities. The clergy doesn't have to do everything themselves.
6	What is your view on maintaining a church in every parish when many are struggling financially?
	When I think about my own church, it is in the heart and centre of our town. I couldn't imagine it disappearing. I do believe there should be a church presence in every parish but that doesn't necessarily mean a church building in every parish.
7	Given the previous question, what thoughts or concerns do you have about the choice of central funding for limited focal projects or a model of funding towards the dioceses in support of all parishes?
	The last resort is for a church to close its physical presence. I would support a central fund if it didn't increase the Parish Share. Our parish churches face financial setbacks on a weekly basis and must make tough decisions about what we can and cannot afford. Like our churches, the Diocese needs to tighten their belt. We can't spend our way out of this. Before further front line positions/posts are cut, there should be a complete review at the Diocese level to see how local churches can better be supported.
8	How would you solve the burden of expensive church building maintenance costs?
	I would use local traders wherever possible – this brings costs down exponentially – especially when long-term relationships can be established. Going local ensures that people are near to you, can get to you more quickly, and will most often prioritise you as they know you personally. Yes, church building maintenance costs are a burden. I would argue our church buildings are a gift for mission and community, and a gift that needs maintenance in order to pass down to the next generation.

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9	Should a candidate for General Synod who threatens to redirect parish share to the Ephesian Fund, withdraw their candidacy? Why or why not?
	Yes. Those sitting in General Synod need to act on behalf of the Church of England and not their own parish. A candidate supporting the Ephesian Fund and what it stands for is not a candidate that if elected, would act on behalf of the wider Church. To be truly inclusive means recognising our diversity in a theological and a biblical approach. I don't believe that finance should be used as a political lever to affect decision making. We're in this together. We are the body of Christ.

Doctrinal and Theological

10	In what ways does the doctrine of original sin (as defined in article 9) influence your wider theology and ethics?
	Thank goodness for our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who is the new Adam and took all our sins upon his shoulders when he died on the cross. What love he has for us! Only Jesus saves, and he opened the kingdom of heaven to those who trust and believe in Him. The church is a place for all sinners.
11	Thomas Aquinas defined love as "to love anything is nothing else but to will good to that thing." (Summa Theologica 1.20.2, c.f. Romans 12:9). Do you agree with this definition? If so, how would you define the word <i>good</i> (particularly but not only moral goodness), and practically what does it mean to will good when loving God or our neighbour?
	I believe in rejecting evil and holding firmly to what is good and God is the ultimate definition of what is 'good.' Moral goodness reflects God's righteousness and is reflected in the commandments. At the end of our days, we are wholly dependent on God's mercy. To love our neighbour is to wish good for others. It's the ultimate 'we are in this together.' Love is a deliberate choice – it's choosing to flourish and to will good upon others. Our foodbanks are an excellent example of this. Those who give to the foodbank choose to have less, so others less fortunate can have more.

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Mission and Ministry

12	What is the most significant change to the structure/strategy of the Church of England that will allow more people to come to know Jesus?
	The most significant change that will allow more people to come to know Jesus is our national emphasis on growing the church younger. We must train our clergy teams in leadership to support this area. We must strive to connect the teaching of Jesus Christ as revealed in the Gospel to what we experience in our everyday lives – and share that with others.
13	Why does it appear that other denominations are able to attract children and youth more than the Church of England?
	Core church attendance and belief in God are declining, while congregations are ageing. Attracting children and young people usually begins with engaging parents, as most attend church as a family rather than independently. Many children's programmes also require considerable effort but often attract too few participants to support church growth. We have changing structures in our society which have only heightened since COVID. The Church of England is reaching children via ministry in schools – there is further opportunity to grow in this area. What if the goal of every Junior Church, youth group meeting, school assembly and youth activity were simply this – that every young person who came left knowing that they are loved and that they belong. How would knowing they belong deeply and unconditionally to our communities, and to Christ, shape the way they move through the world?
14	Care for Creation is part of the Church's marks of mission. How do you feel about the net-zero targets for 2030?
	Lots of exciting opportunities have arisen in this area. We have the potential at the heart of every community to lead by example and to recognise what God has given us first in the Care for Creation. We are called to be stewards of God's creation and cherish the beauty of the world surrounding us. It's fair to say that many churches are struggling with net-zero targets and that tough decisions will need to be made.

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15	What are your thoughts on encouraging more people to enter the church as trainee ordinands?
	Growing vocations is essential. A big part of encouraging more people to enter the church as trainee ordinands is for candidates to see people that look like them. Everyone who has a calling should be considered regardless of any personal characteristic. The church has developed different pathways to ordination – which is wonderful. It's not enough to have the pathways though. There needs to be a wide recruitment campaign around vocations, and everyone in ministry, on PCCs, etc. should have the tools available to speak to this intelligently.

Inclusivity

16	Are you aware of the Racial Justice Covenant in place for the Guildford Diocese, and can you make a statement about your recognition of the aim of the covenant and your support?
	I wholeheartedly support the Racial Justice Covenant. Our clergy and leadership should reflect the communities they serve, and everyone should be treated with dignity and respect. Effective training, including unconscious-bias and diversity training, is essential, alongside a clear understanding of each parish's demographics, current representation and future goals. Conversations about race, gender and sexuality may be uncomfortable, but meaningful change requires us to address them openly. Society needs to see that the Church of England is not represented solely by a narrow demographic.
17	How will you encourage a Church of England where each parish can foster a balanced and informed understanding of inclusivity, creating a culture where differing perspectives can be expressed openly, and where everyone feels genuinely heard, seen and valued?
	This commitment is central to my beliefs and how I conduct myself each day. I do not think the Church yet shares a clear understanding of inclusivity or its potential when practised well. Too often, we define inclusivity through our personal views rather than through the teaching that God loves everyone and created each person in his image. When we centre our minds, hearts, and mission on the love of God, our differences and dissimilarities no longer divide us. They bless us.

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18	What do you think the Church of England needs to do differently if we are to engage those who have experienced the church to be abusive, homophobic or sexist?
	Honesty. We need complete honesty where we have failed. To build trust, the truth needs to be revealed. The damage exists not only in the actions taken, but in the cover up of those actions. <i>‘For nothing is hidden that will not be disclosed, nor is anything secret that will not become known and come to light.’</i> Meaningful change must begin with leadership. Until Church leaders recognise that cultural change is essential for growth and act accordingly, progress will remain limited. This responsibility extends beyond Diocesan and parish clergy to synods at every level.
19	How do you think the Church of England can ensure LGBTQI+ people are fully welcomed, valued and able to flourish in the life of the Church?
	Faithfulness to the call of Christ to love and be loved. God looks on our heart’s intentions, and we should do the same, because God is love. We must give each other strength and comfort in times of difficulty and rejoice together in time of good fortune and grace. It is important to acknowledge the challenges of scripture, how it can be interpreted, and respect space where all can flourish.
20	Given that faithful Christians interpret Scripture differently on difficult and contested questions, how would you seek to maintain unity within diversity when they disagree?
	It’s perfectly fine to disagree with others as long as it’s done with respect. In my parish, we say, ‘disagree well.’ Disagreeing well requires honesty and an ability to see each person is made in God’s image. In the Eucharist, Christ chooses to meet us as we are – unity amidst diversity.
21	Do you believe that women and men are treated equally in our churches? If you were elected to the General Synod, what changes would you like to see which would support women’s ministry?
	Change clearly takes time and patience, and women have been very patient! In the church I attend, women are fully supported at every level. In the wider Church of England, I perceive there is still good work to be done. I am hopeful with Archbishop Sarah’s appointment that women will be seen as equal to men within the church. The Church has restricted women’s roles for too long, and that must end. If I attended a church where the clergy team, those serving as occasional preachers or Eucharistic ministers, for example, were exclusively male, I would ask why. My own church

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	currently has an all-male clergy team, although our two previous curates were women. <i>We have always done it this way</i> is no longer an acceptable excuse.
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Equal Marriage and Marriage Law

22	Marriage laws in the UK are being reformed, with the proposed change moving the system from licensed buildings to licensed officiants. Should clergy be permitted to conduct weddings in any dignified and safe location?
	Although marrying in a church would matter to me, I recognise that others may feel differently. What matters more is that the couple has a religious ceremony led by clergy, wherever it takes place. Given a choice between an outdoor wedding without clergy and one led by a priest, I would choose the latter.
23	How do we resolve the apparent conflict between making all people feel included and welcome whilst holding firm to the Bible's and CofE's historic position on marriage, and so allow the CofE to move on from endless debates about sexuality?
	The Church needs to move beyond this endless debate. It's 2026. People, whether heterosexual or same-sex couples, may choose to live together, raise children or remain unmarried. Their choices do not affect me. Healthy families take many forms, including couples with or without children, single-parent families, and families with two mothers or two fathers. The Church's responsibility is to support everyone in following Jesus Christ, without judging their personal choices. I can support people without requiring them to share my beliefs.
24	If you were an Incumbent, would you allow an assistant priest or curate in your parish to use the Prayers of Love and Faith if, in conscience, they felt able to do so?
	Yes.
25	Would you support a member of your congregation who was in a same sex marriage being on your PCC, or leading worship or children's/youth work in your church?
	Yes. This question appears to suggest that someone in a same-sex marriage may be less qualified to serve on the PCC or lead children's or youth work. Suitability should be based on an individual's skills and abilities, not their relationship status. Such discrimination has no place in the Church or society.