

Joel Plant

General Synod Candidate

Proposed by: Shayne Ardron (General Synod, National Liturgical Commission, Bishop's Council & Advisory Forum)

Seconded by: Stephen Adshead (Diocesan Lay Chair, Trustee - Diocese of Leicester, Trustee - Diocesan Board of Education, Bishop's Council & Advisory Forum)



In a nutshell...

I am a firmly **inclusive candidate**, who has served the church extensively, and has rich **experience across church governance**. This experience includes **General Synod**, where I have spoken about both substance and technical elements of motions during debates, as well as **Diocesan Synod**, and **Bishop's Council**. My life experience gives me insight across **city** and **rural** contexts, for **lay people** and the **clergy** who serve them.

About me...

Now aged 25, I am Leicester born and raised, having **lived and attended church within the city and county**. My central vocation is work involving mental health. I have studied **Psychology BSc (De Montfort) and Mental Health MSc (Uni of Nottingham)**, and plan to complete a PhD. My aim is to improve people's wellbeing; to this end I am particularly interested in OCD and neurodiversity and their relationship with the church.

I have **served the local church extensively**. At **parish level**, this work includes supporting children's and youth ministry, additional needs provision, a social enterprise and a food bank. And at **diocesan level**, I have served on Bishop's Youth Council, Bishop's Council, Bishop's Advisory Forum, the Disability Advisory Group and Diocesan Synod. A **notable achievement is my diocesan synod PMM** calling for divestment from Barclay's bank - which was carried. Each of these experiences demonstrate my rich **understanding of church-based organisational leadership** across the varied lenses: mission, motions, strategy, and finance.

Importantly, I have **experience of General Synod** which is invaluable given the novelty and intensity of the space. During my time as a young adult member, I have shown the ability to engage by **addressing General Synod four times** (the most of my cohort), as well as networking and leading peripheral 'fringe' events. My speech topics have been varied, including thoughts about national strategy, reflections upon neurodiversity and mental health inclusion (separately), and a procedural point about the wording of an amendment. Together, I think these contributions **show that, if elected, I would be a rounded and valuable member of General Synod**.

On top of this experience of life as a lay church member, which will allow me to represent you effectively, I am the **son and brother of clergy**. As a result, I share an understanding of how the Church supports, and can support its clergy to help sustain ministry well.

What I believe...

Looking at Jesus' example, I recognise that worship and social justice are inseparable. I am **passionate about church spaces remaining places of sanctuary** amongst the trials and tribulations communities face; but **recognise that as society changes the Church can offer new ways of doing things to complement the old**. One complementary aspect of the church is its **social care provision, which I commit to championing at national level**.

As someone who is passionate about the entirety of God's creation, I believe that all should be included and empowered to participate in the church. Therefore, I am **committed to equality for everyone**, across church contexts, regardless of disability, economic power, ethnicity, sex, gender identity, learning disability, mental health, neurodiversity, or sexuality. Additionally, I recognise that safeguarding will be a significant theme across the next quinquennium. If elected, I will be a **passionate and thoughtful representative to promote safety in the Church**, as well as the provision of justice where safety lapses. Furthermore, I am committed to the **support of Project Spire**, which represents the delivery of social justice in paying slavery reparations to those whose persecution selfishly and wrongly benefitted the Church.

Creation care is not complete without love for the environment. I believe that the Church can play a role in reducing the effects of climate change and habitat destruction through **responsible investment and engagement with tenant farmers** and will speak/vote in favour of this. I will continue to **support decarbonisation** efforts too.

I hold these beliefs and values with humility and **commit to listening and conversing well where difference exists**, as well as **reading about and engaging with issues** across the broad spectrum Synod is responsible for, as opposed to focusing on just one issue.

Contact me!

If you have questions for me regarding my candidacy, please do not hesitate to get in touch!

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“Joel is **dedicated** to all he does and is a **valued** member of our diocese, this is reflected in his time on General Synod, where he has been an **active member**, speaking **wisdom into complex debates**. I have every confidence he will continue to play an **outstanding** role on synod and represent the rich **diversity** of our diocese if elected to represent you.”

Rev. Clive Watts (Leicester Clergy GS member)

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Your vote matters!

Thank you for reading my electoral statement, and for all you do to serve our Church. I hope you will give me your **first preference vote**. If this is committed elsewhere, your highest alternative will be crucial and much appreciated!



My policy summary:

- Passionate about inclusivity in all areas
- Supporter of missional outreach
- Believer in clergy and their place in communities
- Calling for robust safeguarding and church safeguarding reform
- Advocate for climate and ecological care by the the CofE and Church Commissioners
- Backer of Project Spire
- Desire to work across difference to deliver