

Abigail Ogier

Member of St Richard's, Peel Hall (in the Wythenshawe Team)

Nominated by Hilary Thomas (Salford and Leigh)

Seconded by Andrew Dawson (Manchester South & Stretford)

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About me:

Church life and involvement:

I have lived in Manchester all my life and have been a committed Christian within the Church of England since childhood.

I have

- served on the PCCs of three different parishes
- been PCC Secretary at two
- am currently Treasurer at St Richard of Chichester, Peel Hall.

I have been part of choirs and music groups, read during services and led intercessions since my teens. In 2018, I was licensed as a Reader (Licensed Lay Minister) and have since preached and led services within Wythenshawe and beyond.

I am an Associate Member of the Iona Community, and in terms of my spiritual life, I find Ignatian prayer and spirituality helpful in supporting me through the joys and challenges of life.

I was first elected to General Synod in a by-election in October 2020 and re-elected in 2021. I have spoken on a range of issues including governance, adult social care and LLF. I successfully introduced an amendment to recognise the worth of unpaid work in a motion on the Dignity of Work. I have found membership of General Synod to be a worthwhile role, and feel called to continue, should you choose to re-elect me.

Working life:

I am a qualified Youth and Community Worker and hold an MA in Ethics of Social Welfare. I worked for the national children's charity, Barnardo's, for 16 years, most recently as a Children's Service Manager for Domestic Abuse Interventions. This gave me particular knowledge around safeguarding and trauma. I left this post in 2018 to move to a part-time role that aligned better with my voluntary work in the Church. I spent 14 months as a Community Chaplain then, feeling a call towards ministry with older people, in 2019 I moved jobs to become Chaplain to an MHA (Methodist Homes) care home, which provides nursing and specialist dementia care. In 2025, I moved into the chaplaincy central support team as Deputy Head of Chaplaincy.

I have served in a voluntary capacity as a trustee of both church and secular charities, including Benchill Ecumenical Service Scheme (a charity that provided youth work and counselling) and Independent Choices (a Domestic Abuse charity).

And also...

Personally, I am married to Marc, have two grown up children from my first marriage and am blessed with 2 grandchildren.

In General Synod elections, candidates may not always express their views clearly particularly regarding women's ministry or inclusion. I would encourage you, if you are unaware of a candidate's view on any matter, to contact them and ask them. So that you know where I stand, **I am committed to equality for everyone, at all levels and in all roles within the church, regardless of gender, disability, ethnicity, socio-economic status, mental health, or sexuality.**

About my priorities:

Inclusion in its widest sense is not just right, it's key to evangelism and growth – if people feel that they are not welcome or respected because of their gender, ethnicity, or sexuality, or if they face barriers when they attend because our buildings or materials are not suited to their needs, or if they feel judged in church, they are unlikely to be able to hear our message of God's love. I also understand that the way we relate to one another can have a positive or negative impact on how others are able to hear us (John 13:35). All sides in every debate have a responsibility to take care with our words and their impact on others. I have tried to model this in my own interactions at Synod and will continue to do so.

Gender and Sexuality In the last quinquennium, we introduced authorised liturgy to celebrate same-sex relationships within existing services, but I believe that most members want us to go further. It is important that those of us who take an inclusive view can clearly articulate the scriptural and theological basis for this, and also to make the discussion, and the whole church, safer for our LGBTQIA+ siblings.

Racial Justice is also an area where the church has fallen tragically short in the past. Synod must continue to work to implement the recommendations of "From Lament to Action", and to ensure that our decision making bodies and senior clergy groups reflect the diversity seen in the church as a whole. I believe that those of us who are white have a responsibility to speak out against racism as allies (just as those of us who are straight have a parallel responsibility to be vocal in support of LGBTQIA+ inclusion). I am an active member of the General Synod Anti-Racism Network and if re-elected will continue with this.

I believe that justice requires openness, penitence for past failures and active work towards healing and repair, and that is why I fully support the Church Commissioners' Fund for Healing, Repair and Justice ("Project Spire")

Climate change is a genuine emergency. I welcome the ambitious target of the General Synod to work towards being carbon net zero by 2030. Our buildings and their grounds can be both a challenge and an asset in achieving this. We need to listen to scientists and other experts in the field, and to ensure that every other decision that we take is taken with due regard to its impact in this area, and to resource congregations with information and financial support to make changes.

Links with other denominations can strengthen us all. Although a lifelong Anglican, I have had the privilege of studying at a Roman Catholic sixth form college, working in two Ecumenical charities, leading the Northwest Christian Fellowship at Barnardo's and working for Methodist Homes. I know from my own experience that no one denomination has a monopoly on insight and understanding and am committed to exploring how and where we can work more closely together, with due regard for our own traditions and theology. I am currently fulfilling this in part by serving as a Church of England representative on the Life in Covenant group (Anglican/Methodist Covenant).

Importance of Parish Ministry Parish Ministry is vital to our identity as the Church of England. Sustaining this means ensuring clergy are well trained and well supported, distributing resources equitably (with special care for those parishes in the poorest areas whether urban or rural), recognising and supporting the volunteers that sustain our parishes and making sure that positive words about the centrality of the Parish are turned into meaningful actions.

Thank you for reading my address – if you wish to discuss anything, please contact me; my email and telephone number are in the heading at the start of this address. I would be very grateful for your first preference vote, or the highest preference you feel able to give me.

