

# The Revd Canon Donna Williams

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Dear Friends and Colleagues,

I am deeply moved to have been asked to stand for General Synod and thank Phil for proposing me and Rachel for seconding me.

I was ordained at Manchester Cathedral in 2000 and have served all of my ministry in the diocese. I bring 26 years of experience in supporting local parishes and leading people into a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ. Throughout my ordained ministry I have also served in a variety of ways that has been a joy and blessing to me. During my curacy I was an archdeaconry healing advisor. I have also been an archdeaconry prayer and spirituality advisor when we had them and have been a spiritual director. I also was a tutor for SNWTP MODULE: Encountering and Responding to Christ - Prayer and Spirituality. I have twice been part of the team that led teaching and ministry including healing in Pakistan as well as looking at positive parenting. I also helped to set up a Food Pantry and community hub to serve the local estate in my last parish. I am a member of the Manchester Diocesan Evangelical Fellowship and serve on the MDEF committee. It has been a huge privilege serving as a parish priest in the diocese of Manchester.

I hold a traditional view of marriage - although I wholeheartedly believe that our churches should be places of love and welcome to all.

I am totally on board with the Transformation Programme and believe that I bring experience from a range of perspectives from within our Diocese – I have served as a Mission Community Leader where I was a representative on the Transformation Board– I have also served for two years as Area Dean for Bury & Rossendale gaining a vast amount of experience as well as serving on Diocesan Synod.

I am committed to representing and supporting our clergy, lay leaders and parishes. After a period of illness, I have now returned to parish ministry during this time I have become even more aware of the need to champion clergy well-being as well as that of our lay leaders. I have helped to organise a lay leaders conference for the B & R deanery and a second one this September with a focus on wellbeing for our lay leaders. I was elected to fill a casual vacancy on General Synod in July 2024 and again have been able to support the uplift in clergy stipend and pension and the importance of clergy well-being.

Although I haven't served for very long on General Synod, I do believe that it is important that we have some continuity as well as new members, I found that it does take time to get used to the procedures. I hope to be able to represent you all and enable your concerns to be heard both locally in our Diocese and nationally through General Synod.

My own spirituality does not fit neatly into any one churchmanship and has been influenced by the evangelical, charismatic and catholic traditions of our church as well as the desert fathers and mothers.

I am an active member of the ReSource (ARM) family and I wholeheartedly believe their ethos of supporting the small, local and ordinary churches. Enabling churches to engage with the Holy Spirit for renewal, discipleship and mission. Alongside that I regularly visit the orthodox monastery of St John the Baptist in Essex where I am nourished and sustained by the rhythm, liturgy and Jesus Prayer. It was good to support the first half night of prayer held at General Synod in July organised by Bp David Walker and Bp Jill Duff.

I support and am happy to work within the existing structures of the Church of England and I support the parish system and the local church, working to ensure that it is properly equipped and resourced to build God's kingdom.

I believe we are called to not only be disciples but to make disciples and so encouraging and releasing our laity is hugely important if we want to see our churches flourish and grow not only numerically but also younger and in a deeper relationship and knowledge of Jesus Christ. This will always be my priority and I will vote in a direction that I feel best supports this to see the nation reached with the gospel and to see people growing deeper in their relationship with Jesus Christ.

I believe that I will bring a prayerful discerning presence recognizing the significance of all synod business and not just the big issues of the day.

If I am re-elected, I am committed to standing with you and representing you at General Synod. Please do contact me if you wish to have a further conversation with me and I would be grateful if you could give me your first vote in the election.

With every blessing  
Donna