

House of Clergy

Paul Hutchins

Question 1.A

The Prayers of Love and Faith are commended by the House of Bishops. They are there as a form of pastoral provision and are not a marriage or a wedding service. They are however the Church's response to pray and with same sex couples who wish to give thanks and mark their commitment before God.

If elected to Synod it is important to listen and be attentive to the needs of all those you are called to represent. For me I would not be able to support same sex clergy marriage. The Church of England has not altered its understanding of the doctrine of Christian Marriage and therefore the teaching of the Church has not changed.

b. The Church of England over thirty years ago discerned that women could be and should be ordained in its life as deacons, then priests and then eventually as bishops. Therefore, women are ordained in the Church of England and I support my female as well as my male colleagues who are ordained in the life of the Church. We are all priests together. Women clergy are supported and accepted by the parishes that I serve in, and there is a divergence of opinion of this matter. Our parishes are fully supportive of inclusivity in holy order, this is reflected in the variance we have as guest preachers, particularly in Lent, however for some of us and for the sake of unity across these parishes the sacramental ministry of women clergy is not celebrated. This does not stop us working in close collaboration which I have done for over twenty years now and is highlighted by my Archdeacon and former Area Dean (both female colleagues) who have nominated me for election. We also host a mixture of diverse ordinands in our parishes and have grown female vocations to the ordained life to. We mirror good and viable mutual flourishing.

C. Climate crisis is of a huge concern to me personally and in faith. I have connections with the Church in West Africa in Ghana and so I am aware of just how impactful the climate crisis is. This is also influencing migration and economic poverty, and this is something which is very real and live subject for the context of my parishes as our communities grow and develop. It is something which is very real and concerning and one which we can only hope and pray will be manageable, although at times it looks bleak. I personally encourage the smallest of steps in anyway that might help us as a planet that enables us to achieve bigger goals, for example the careful use of water, by being more mindful that can have an impact. We should not feel that we cannot do anything about it because we can and as people of faith we need to pray and talk about it.

The goal of NetZero is fixed. We must work towards it in whatever way we can. Particularly practical steps within our church buildings are a major stride towards this. How realistically the 2030 deadline will be a challenge, but it doesn't mean we should abandon hope. I am in another role the Chair of the DAC and here we take very practical steps with churches when they are exploring new heating systems which can make a huge difference to the NetZero goal. It's about openness and a willingness to move forward in these matters and to know that it does matter, and we can do something about it.

Question 2. Yes, I do support and rejoice in the ministry of women within the life of the Church. There are many roles within the life of the Church that women and men can be called to and I thank God for that.

The Church of England is very clear that ordination is a calling that women and men can respond to. It is something I delight in and work collaboratively and whole heartedly with all my clergy colleagues. Women being ordained as, deacons, priests, bishops and even appointed as Archbishops shows whole heartedly the inclusivity of the Church and therein lies the gift of the Church of England, it's ability to be accepting of all in a spirit of mutual flourishing.

Question 3.

Christianity and Nationalism is something which we are seeing an increase in, and it is something historically that has always been there. There will be in any cross section of people a divergence of political opinion and that is a fact of life. Whatever our politics it will differ from others, and we must be aware of this, informed and engage in a way that enables us to continue to have dialogue. When we stop talking then we lose any ability to listen, to trust and understand one another, whatever our personal preferences.

Is it our role to seek the conversions of those of other faiths? I would think that we must be mindful and respectful of those of other faiths and none and we are all ultimately on a journey as different people. I think we must always be open and willing to engage in whatever way we can to come and communicate and have dialogue with one another and see what we have in common. Whatever sharing a journey of discovery can lead people to is ultimately where they may find themselves and so therefore, we must accompany one another.

Ben-Paul Jennings

Question 1.

a) Please could you describe your views in relation to the use of the Prayers of Love and Faith liturgy for blessing couples in a same-sex relationship and whether, if elected to synod, you would support or not the marriage of clergy in same sex relationships. It would be helpful if you could outline the reasons for whatever position you take on these issues.

I uphold the Church's traditional teaching that marriage is the lifelong union between a man and a woman. I therefore do not support the Prayers of Love and Faith being used to bless same-sex relationships, nor would I support the marriage of clergy in same-sex relationships.

This is not about rejecting or excluding anyone. Every person is made in the image of God and deserves to be treated with dignity, love and respect. My position comes from my understanding of the scriptures and the Church's received teaching on marriage, which I believe we are called to uphold faithfully.

b) I would like to know if you support women exercising ministry in the church - whether as clergy, bishops, etc and whether women clergy are accepted within the church in which you worship.

I wholeheartedly support and rejoice in the ministry of women throughout the Church. I recognise the many gifts' women bring through preaching, teaching, pastoral care, leadership and service, and I want their ministry to flourish.

As a matter of conscience, I therefore do not receive sacramental ministry from women priests or bishops. This is a personal theological conviction, not a judgement on the validity or fruitfulness of their ministry. I respect the orders conferred by the Church of England and recognise the genuine good that women's ordained ministry brings to the life of the Church.

c) Please could you explain your views on the climate crisis and the diocesan commitment to reach Net Zero by 2030. How does your faith support the views you hold about this?

I recognise the seriousness of the climate crisis and the responsibility we have to care for God's creation and for future generations. I support the diocesan commitment to reach Net Zero by 2030, while recognising the practical challenges this may bring for parishes.

The whole of creation is God's gift, entrusted to us to care for rather than simply consume. This calls us to be responsible stewards of the world God has given us, whilst

seeking practical and sustainable ways for our churches and communities to reduce their environmental impact.

Question 2.

Do you support and rejoice in the ministry of women in all roles in the church, including ordination as priests, consecration as bishops and ministry as diocesan bishops and Archbishop?

I deeply value and rejoice in the gifts, ministry and witness of women throughout the life of the Church. As a matter of personal conscience, I do not receive sacramental ministry from women priests or bishops. This conviction is not a judgement on the vocation, dignity or gifts of women, nor does it lessen my respect for their ministry. I continuously seek to support, uphold and encourage women to flourish fully within the life of the Church, while recognising, respecting and upholding the two legitimate theological positions held within the Church on this matter.

Question 3.

What is your response to the appearance of those who claim to be both Christian and Nationalist? Is it the Christian vocation to seek the conversion of Jews and Moslems?

The Christian faith calls us to love our neighbours, reject hatred and prejudice, and respect the dignity of every person. I would therefore be concerned by any form of nationalism that places national identity above the Gospel or excludes others.

I believe Christians are called to witness to Jesus Christ and share the Gospel, including with Jews and Muslims, but always through love, respect and genuine freedom, never pressure or hostility.

David Leaf

Responses to electors' questions

I have a traditional/biblical understanding of the nature and purpose of intimate, sexual relationships which is that male and female marriage is a sacrament in which the identity of God is in some mysterious way made manifest in creation through the union of man and woman, and as such cannot be manufactured in other unions. The sexual act in which the man and woman come together physically, and bringing about a union which is symbolic of their differences, this union is God's only choice for sexual compatibility. The nature of sin brought about by the disobedience of man and woman brings about a brokenness in the sexual identity of man and woman, and this consequence is endemic to all, of whatever sexual orientation they may feel they have. All are therefore under the penalty of sin and are in need of redemption, and this

includes the redemption of our sexual identity, even for those who may identify as heterosexual. For this reason I do not see how we can affirm any sexual relationship outside of the male/female marriage union as being God's intent for human sexual intimacy.

I do support the ministry of women in the church, and recognise that their offering has brought much for which I am grateful, and which has done much to improve the way in which the church has reflected the true nature of God as both male and female, ideally I am not convinced by the equality issue. Taking the previous statement about God creating male and female in His image, different and yet together reflecting Him, it is before the fall of man that the issue of headship is established and not as a consequence, and so I would see this as a creation order. Having said that I do not make this an issue of me being unable to work with female clergy, and have had a female curate in the past with whom I was able to work well with. At the moment therefore, I am happy to work with the situation at hand and will pay due canonical obedience to the Archbishop of Canterbury, and if the situation arises to a woman taking on the role of Bishop of Manchester.

In response to question 4, I would be happy to affirm a relationship of mutual love and support for two people of the same sex, if there were a commitment to acknowledge that the relationship is not a marriage, and that there is no sexual activity involved in it, although why this would be necessary to affirm in such a way would be intriguing.

In response to Question 1 section c, I take the instruction made to Adam in Genesis to care for creation as something which for too long the church has ignored. It seems to me that the only thing that Adam was given to do in the garden was to care for it, and the people of Israel were predominantly a community which depended on the climate for survival and their whole worship was founded on their ability and willingness to manage creation. While there are so many different issues that we are having to face as a church, so much of it has to do with how humanity has failed to care for God's provision, and as such I feel that a part of our responsibility in calling the world to repentance is also about calling out our own abuse of creation and lack of care for what God has provided for us.

Kenson Li

Question 1.

a) Please could you describe your views in relation to the use of the Prayers of Love and Faith liturgy for blessing couples in a same-sex relationship and whether, if elected to synod, you would support or not the marriage of clergy in same sex relationships. It

would be helpful if you could outline the reasons for whatever position you take on these issues.

Answer 1a

I fully support the use of the Prayers of Love and Faith, and lament that at present the Church of England is unable to solemnise Holy Matrimony between same-sex couples. I am also deeply disappointed that people already in same-sex civil marriage are unable to enter the discernment process for ordained ministry.

If elected to synod, I will support the marriage of clergy in same-sex relationships. Here I briefly outline the reasons for my position:

Objectively, the Church has never possessed one settled and timeless understanding to marriage. Marriage has changed considerably according to kinship arrangements and social expectations about women, not least in the history of England; these changes have almost always been about male ownership of properties and not personal love. Recent changes to marriage have exposed its deeper human character: as the patriarchal functions disappear, marriage as a concept reverts to its former and more proper reality as an expression of mutual respectful dependence and personal communion.

The 'Good' of marriage in Augustinian formulation need not be understood as admission tests to marriage, but the categories which point towards the sacramental grace in marriage; the faithfulness, sacramental bond, and bodily respect between same-sex couples satisfy all these.

I believe a proper Christian account of marriage is fundamentally sacramental—that is not to say that human marriage can be sanctified through the addition of grace—but that, genuine human communion and communication witness the love of God, and in their public declaration of vows and intention, they provide the Church and its people a glimpse of Christ's saving mystery through which the marriage is assumed into. In such a framework, especially when the modern understanding of mutual service, affection, and consent are taken into account, one sees the admission of same-sex couple into the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony is neither an augmentation of the Sacrament's remit or a degradation of tradition, but the rightful restoration of faithful, generative, enduring and exclusive same-sex relationship to its proper place in the life of society and the world—that is, seen in the abundant Grace of God, mediated through the sacramental action of the Church.

b) I would like to know if you support women exercising ministry in the church — whether as clergy, bishops, etc and whether women clergy are accepted within the church in which you worship.

Answer 1b

My last speech as a member of General Synod was given in support of equal female representation on committees which select bishops. I fully support women exercising all forms of ministry in the Church—from lay ministry to (archi)episcopacy.

In the churches I minister, both at Manchester Cathedral and Oldham Parish Church, we wholeheartedly welcome and accept the ministry of women in both Word and Sacrament.

I am a member of Woman and the Church (WATCH).

c) Please could you explain your views on the climate crisis and the diocesan commitment to reach Net Zero by 2030. How does your faith support the views you hold about this?

Answer 1c

The devastating effects of the climate crisis is undeniable. I believe that as humans we are charged to be good stewards of the creation, and we have collectively failed to do so. I believe that any initiative which seeks to reduce and slow down the destruction of our environment should be commended and supported by all.

Question 2.

Do you support and rejoice in the ministry of women in all roles in the church, including ordination as priests, consecration as bishops and ministry as diocesan bishops and Archbishop?

Answer

I rejoice and support in the ministry of women in all roles in the Church, including the threefold ministry of deacon, priest and bishop. Having had the privilege of supporting her ministry in London as one of her theological advisers, I am delighted that the Church of England is now led by Sarah our Archbishop of Canterbury.

Question 3.

What is your response to the appearance of those who claim to be both Christian and Nationalist? Is it the Christian vocation to seek the conversion of Jews and Moslems?

Answer

Our citizenship, as Christians, belongs to the Kingdom that is from above.

Christian nationalism becomes problematic when Christianity is misappropriated as constitutive of a particular national identity; people of other faiths must not be considered lesser members or participants in our British society. A real Christian,

nationalist or not, would give up their claim to any privilege their identity accords them, and honour the least of all, even at the point of tearing bread from their own mouth to feed the one in need.

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Christianity is undoubtedly a religion of conversion; yet this 'conversion' ought to be qualified. St John the Baptist's cry resounds in the Church daily: 'Repent, for the Kingdom of heaven is near.' (Matthew 3.2) The repentance of the Church, the metanoia we are all called to, begins with the recognition of God's sovereign will in all humanity. The response to this recognition is summarised by Jesus in the commandment to 'love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind,' and to 'love your neighbour as yourself'. (Matthew 22.36-40)

In this respect, there is no doubt as to whether people who adhere to the Jewish faith participate in the universal response to God's will, since these two commandments are both contained in the Hebrew Bible. (Leviticus 19.18 and Deuteronomy 6.4)

Regarding those who adhere to the Muslim faith, they too are a people who acknowledge the Creator through ceaseless worship, prayer, fasting and almsgiving. As such, they join in our repentance and adore with us the one, true, everlasting and merciful God and judge of all. (Cf Sūrat I-baqarah 2.163, Psalm 103.17 and Hebrews 12.23)

In Britain, we are blessed to have abundant opportunities to meet people of different faiths. Our exposure to these peoples' faithful witness, their daily 'conversion', should, upon thoughtful and prayerful reflection, lead us to an even deeper understanding of the mystery of God's will in humanity, and open to us St Paul's vision of humanity's ultimate unity in Christ, which he wrote in his Epistle to the Galatians (3.28): 'There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus.'

In this past year, Britain has seen more race and faith-based violence against people of both Jewish and Muslim faiths. As Christians who worship the one who was rich but for our sake became poor (2 Corinthians 8.9), and emptied himself to take the form of a slave (Philippians 2.7), we must recognise the face of Christ in these our siblings (cf Matthew 25.31-46), especially when their very safety is threatened by racist, antisemitic or islamophobic rhetoric rife in our media today.

To respond to our common vocation as Christians, that is, to be human, we must witness to Christ's universality in honouring people of all faiths, and to desire everyone's conversion towards God through the proclamation of the Gospel: that our God is generous beyond even our belief.

Ayoka Olabisi

Response To General Synod Election Question 1

A) Prayers of Love and Faith and the Marriage of Clergy in Same-Sex Relationships

Thank you for asking this important question. I recognise that questions concerning human sexuality, same-sex relationships and marriage are deeply personal and pastorally sensitive, and that faithful Christians within the Church of England have reached different conclusions. I therefore want to state my own conviction honestly while treating those who hold a different position with dignity, compassion and respect.

My understanding of Christian marriage is rooted in Scripture and in the Church of England's historic teaching that marriage is a lifelong union between one man and one woman. I understand Genesis 1:27 and 2:24, together with Jesus' teaching in Matthew 19:4-6, as providing an important theological framework for marriage. Canon B30 of the Church of England continues to express marriage in these terms.

For that reason, if a proposal came before General Synod to permit clergy to enter same-sex marriage, I would not support it.

I want to be clear, however, that this position is about my understanding of Christian doctrine and ordained discipline; it is not a judgement upon the worth or dignity of LGBT+ people. Every person is created in the image of God. I want our churches to be places where LGBT+ people, like everyone else, can worship, pray, hear the Gospel, receive pastoral care, develop Christian fellowship and know that they will be treated with dignity and respect.

I also believe that ordained ministry carries a particular responsibility for the way clergy order their lives. At ordination we make the Declaration of Assent, affirming our loyalty to the Christian faith revealed in Holy Scripture, set forth in the creeds and witnessed to in the historic formularies of the Church of England. We also undertake canonical obedience. For me, priesthood therefore involves continually allowing the Gospel that I proclaim to examine and shape my own life.

Importantly, I do not believe that this expectation applies only to gay clergy. The same call to holiness, faithfulness, self-discipline and integrity applies to heterosexual and LGBT+ clergy alike. Before speaking about another person's life, I must first allow God to examine my own life.

My own journey of faith has taught me something about the cost of discipleship. There have been times when, through personal prayer, I became convinced that aspects of my own behaviour were inconsistent with the life to which God was calling me. I had to ask

for grace to surrender what I desired and to live differently. That experience has made me slower to judge other people, but it has also taught me that obedience to Christ can sometimes be costly.

I have also encountered gay Christians who, after prayer and discernment, have chosen celibacy because of their understanding of Scripture and their discipleship. I respect the cost of such a decision. I do not offer their experience as a judgement upon every LGBT+ Christian, because each person must stand honestly before God and discern faithfully. It does remind me, however, that celibate singleness should not be treated as a lesser Christian vocation. The Church has a responsibility to support people who are called to live faithfully in singleness, whatever their sexuality.

Regarding the Prayers of Love and Faith, I would personally choose not to use them. I recognise that they have been commended for use in regular public worship and that individual ministers are free to decide whether they offer them; clergy are not obliged to use them against their conscience.

For me, publicly asking God's blessing in this particular context has theological significance, and I would not feel able in good conscience to lead those prayers because of my understanding of Christian marriage. At the same time, I recognise that other clergy have prayerfully reached a different conclusion. I would respect their dignity and seek to engage with them graciously.

I believe the Church must learn how to hold conviction and compassion together. I do not want disagreement over sexuality to become hostility, humiliation or exclusion. Equally, I do not believe genuine inclusion requires people to conceal sincerely held theological convictions. We should be able to speak truthfully, listen carefully, disagree graciously and continue to recognise one another as people for whom Christ died.

B) Women Exercising Ministry in the Church

I fully support women exercising ministry at every level of the Church, including as deacons, priests and bishops. Women clergy are fully accepted within the church in which I worship and serve, and as a woman priest myself I am grateful for the opportunity to exercise the ministry to which I believe God has called me.

My position is grounded both in Scripture and in my understanding of the calling and gifting of the whole people of God.

Genesis 1:27–28 presents both male and female as created in the image of God and entrusted together with responsibility for creation. Galatians 3:28 reminds us of our fundamental unity in Christ. Across Scripture, we also see women entrusted with significant spiritual responsibilities: Deborah exercised leadership as judge and prophet; Huldah exercised prophetic authority; Priscilla participated in theological instruction;

Phoebe served the early Christian community; and women were entrusted with being among the first witnesses to proclaim the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Taken together, I believe these passages demonstrate that women can be called and equipped by God for significant leadership and ministry within His Church.

The Church of England has formally committed itself to all orders of ordained ministry being open equally to women and men. I wholeheartedly support that commitment.

At the same time, I recognise that there remain Christians within the Church of England whose theological convictions concerning women's ordination differ from mine. I believe the Five Guiding Principles offer an important framework here: wholehearted support for the ministry of women does not require treating those who conscientiously disagree with disrespect. I support the mutual flourishing of people within the Church while remaining clear about my own conviction that women should be free to exercise their God-given calling at every level.

For me, Christian leadership should ultimately be characterised not by gender but by calling, character, spiritual gifting, competence, humility and faithful service to Christ.

C) Climate Crisis and Net Zero by 2030

I support the Church of England and Diocese of Manchester's commitment to work towards Net Zero Carbon by 2030. The Diocese continues to encourage year-on-year reductions in carbon emissions and practical action by parishes as part of that commitment.

My support for this is grounded in my Christian understanding of creation.

Psalm 24:1 reminds us that "the earth is the Lord's, and everything in it." We are therefore not absolute owners of creation but stewards of what belongs to God. In Genesis 2:15, humanity is given responsibility to tend and care for the garden. I understand this as establishing an enduring principle of responsible stewardship.

Creation care is therefore not simply a political or environmental issue for me; it is part of Christian discipleship. If God has entrusted the earth to us, we have a responsibility to consider how our choices affect the environment, our neighbours and generations who will come after us.

It is also an issue of justice. The consequences of climate change and environmental degradation frequently fall most heavily upon people who have contributed least to the problem and who possess the fewest resources with which to respond. Caring for creation is therefore connected with Christ's command to love our neighbour and the Church's concern for vulnerable communities.

I support the 2030 ambition, but I also believe that implementation must be practical and responsible. Parishes vary considerably in their financial resources, buildings and circumstances. Historic and listed churches can face particular challenges in reducing energy consumption and replacing heating systems. Churches therefore need realistic pathways, good technical advice and appropriate financial support rather than simply being given targets without the means to achieve them.

At parish level, this may include understanding our energy use, improving efficiency, considering renewable energy where practicable, reducing unnecessary consumption and making responsible decisions whenever buildings or heating systems are renovated or replaced.

Romans 8 speaks of creation itself groaning and longing for restoration. Christian hope ultimately looks towards the renewal of all creation in Christ. That hope does not encourage carelessness about the present world; it should make us more faithful stewards of it.

For me, caring for creation and proclaiming the Gospel are therefore not competing priorities. The earth belongs to God, our neighbour matters to God, and future generations matter to God. Responsible creation care is one practical expression of our gratitude to the Creator and our love for those to whom we will hand this world.

Concluding Reflection

Across all three questions, I would seek to bring the same approach to General Synod: prayer, careful engagement with Scripture and evidence, attentive listening and integrity.

I will not pretend to hold convictions that I do not hold, but neither do I believe conviction permits me to treat another person without love. Where Christians disagree, I believe we should seek to speak truthfully without hostility, listen without immediately condemning, and remember that our common calling is to follow Jesus Christ.

I desire to contribute to a Church that is theologically faithful, pastorally compassionate, intellectually honest and gracious in disagreement, while remaining confident in the transforming Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Response To General Synod Election Question 2

Question 2: Do you support and rejoice in the ministry of women in all roles in the Church, including ordination as priests, consecration as bishops and ministry as diocesan bishops and archbishops?

Yes, wholeheartedly. I support and rejoice in the ministry of women at every level of the Church, including as deacons, priests, bishops, diocesan bishops and Archbishops.

As a woman priest myself, I am grateful for the calling God has placed on my life and for the Church of England's recognition of women's vocation and gifts. Women clergy are fully accepted within the church in which I worship and serve.

My conviction is grounded in Scripture. Genesis 1:27-28 tells us that both women and men are created in the image of God and entrusted together with responsibility for God's creation. Galatians 3:28 reminds us of our fundamental unity in Christ: "there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus."

Throughout Scripture, women are also entrusted with significant spiritual responsibility. Deborah served as judge and prophet; Huldah exercised prophetic authority; Priscilla participated in theological teaching; Phoebe served the early Christian community; and women were among the first witnesses commissioned to proclaim the resurrection of Jesus.

I therefore believe that where God calls, equips and gifts a woman for ministry, the Church should recognise, nurture and release that calling. I rejoice when women faithfully exercise ministry as priests, bishops, diocesan bishops and Archbishops.

I recognise that some faithful Christians within the Church of England reach a different theological conclusion. I believe those differences should be handled with grace and mutual respect. My own conviction, however, is clear: women should be able to flourish fully in every order and level of ministry to which God calls them.

For me, Christian leadership should ultimately be characterised by calling, godly character, spiritual maturity, competence, humility and faithful service to Christ.

Response To General Synod Election Question 3

Question 3: What is your response to the appearance of those who claim to be both Christian and Nationalist?

I believe we must distinguish carefully between healthy love of one's country and nationalism that places nation, race, culture or political identity above our primary allegiance to Jesus Christ.

There is nothing wrong with loving our country, praying for it, serving our communities and seeking the well-being of the nation. Jeremiah 29:7 encourages God's people to seek the peace and prosperity of the place in which they live.

However, Christian identity must always come before national identity. Philippians 3:20 reminds us that "our citizenship is in heaven," while Revelation 7:9 gives us the vision of God's redeemed people drawn from every nation, tribe, people and language.

I would therefore be concerned whenever Christianity is used to promote racial superiority, hostility towards foreigners, hatred of other religions or the idea that one nation or ethnic group possesses a special claim upon Christ.

Jesus Christ does not belong exclusively to Britain, Africa, Europe or any other nation. He is Lord of all.

I believe Christians can be patriotic while remembering that our first allegiance is to Christ and that the Gospel calls us to love our neighbour, welcome the stranger, pursue justice and recognise the God-given dignity of every human being.

Is it the Christian vocation to seek the conversion of Jews and Muslims?

My understanding is that Christians are called to bear faithful witness to Jesus Christ to everyone, including people who are Jewish, Muslim, of another faith or of no faith. However, I would make an important distinction between witnessing to Christ and believing that it is my responsibility personally to convert another human being. It is not my responsibility to convert anyone. Conversion is ultimately the work of God.

Jesus himself says in John 6:44, "No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws them." Paul expresses a similar principle in 1 Corinthians 3:6: "I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God has been making it grow."

My responsibility is therefore to proclaim Christ faithfully, live out the Gospel authentically, answer questions honestly and love people genuinely. God is responsible for drawing people to Himself.

My understanding of Christian-Muslim relations is also shaped by personal experience. I come from a Muslim family in which marriage to a Christian was strongly opposed. My own decision to marry a Christian therefore met significant resistance. Over the years, however, I have tried not to force Christian faith upon members of my family, but to explain respectfully what I believe about Jesus and why I believe it.

In those conversations, I have sometimes begun with what the Qur'an itself says about Jesus. The Qur'an calls Jesus the Messiah and "a Word from" God (Qur'an 3:45), and describes him as God's Word conveyed to Mary and "a spirit from Him" (Qur'an 4:171). I would then explain that, while Christians and Muslims understand these descriptions differently, the Christian Scriptures go further in declaring that the Word became flesh in Jesus Christ (John 1:1, 14) and that salvation is found in Him (Acts 4:12).

I have also drawn attention to the significant place Jesus occupies within Islamic tradition. A well-known hadith records Muhammad speaking of Jesus as God's servant and messenger, His Word bestowed upon Mary and a spirit from Him, alongside belief in the reality of Paradise and Hell. I recognise that Muslims understand these

statements within an Islamic theological framework, and I would never present them as though Islam and Christianity teach exactly the same thing about Jesus.

My father eventually professed faith in Jesus before his death, and other members of my wider family have also become Christians. I do not regard that as something I accomplished. I shared what I believed, answered questions and tried to live my faith before them; their response was theirs, and the work of drawing a person to Christ belongs to God.

This is why John 6:44 is important to my understanding of evangelism: "No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws them." Similarly, Paul says, "I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God has been making it grow" (1 Corinthians 3:6).

My responsibility is therefore to witness; it is not to force conversion. I can explain Christ, answer questions, love my neighbour and point towards the Gospel, but I trust God with the person's heart and respect the individual's freedom to respond.

I also believe that there is significant common ground from which respectful conversations with Muslims about Jesus can begin. As mentioned in the previous paragraph, the Qur'an gives Jesus remarkable titles. Qur'an 3:45 describes Jesus as the Messiah and "a Word from God. Qur'an 4:171 again calls him the Messiah, describes him as God's Word conveyed to Mary, and refers to him as "a spirit from Him."

The Bible similarly identifies Jesus as the Word. John 1:1 declares, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God," and John 1:14 tells us that "the Word became flesh."

There is therefore genuine shared language concerning Jesus, but I would not pretend that Christianity and Islam understand these expressions in exactly the same way. The Qur'an does not confess Jesus as the divine Son and Saviour in the Christian sense, and Qur'an 4:157 differs fundamentally from the Christian account of the crucifixion.

The Christian confession goes further. We proclaim Jesus not only as Messiah and Word but as Saviour. Acts 4:12 declares that salvation is found in no one else and that there is no other name by which humanity must be saved.

Therefore, when I speak with a Muslim, I do not believe my responsibility is to attack Islam or force someone to change their religion. I can respectfully begin with what we already share concerning Jesus and then explain why, as a Christian, I believe He is more than a prophet: He is the Word made flesh, Lord and Saviour.

The person listening has freedom to consider what has been placed before them and to respond according to conscience. Faith cannot be coerced.

The same principle applies in my relationship with Jewish people. Christianity arose from within Judaism; Jesus, Mary, the apostles and the earliest disciples were Jewish. Romans 11 specifically warns Gentile Christians against arrogance towards the Jewish people. Christian witness must therefore never be accompanied by antisemitism, contempt or disrespect for Judaism.

I would not therefore speak of Jews or Muslims as particular groups that Christians should “target for conversion.” The Great Commission is universal: Jesus sends His Church to make disciples among all nations (Matthew 28:19–20).

My calling is to witness faithfully to Christ before every person God places in my path, whether Christian, Jewish, Muslim, Hindu, atheist or someone who has never seriously considered faith.

I believe there are truths concerning Jesus that Christians and Muslims can discuss openly. The Qur’an itself honours Jesus as Messiah, Word from God and a spirit from Him; the Christian Scriptures proclaim Him as the Word made flesh and the Saviour of the world. Each person must be free to examine these claims and respond honestly.

I can share the Gospel, but I cannot convert anyone. I can plant and water, but only God gives the growth. I can point someone toward Christ, but according to Jesus himself, the Father draws people to Him.

That conviction allows me to be confident in Christian evangelism without becoming coercive. I can love my Muslim and Jewish neighbours, respect their freedom of conscience, work alongside them for the common good, and at the same time remain completely open about my own conviction that Jesus Christ is Lord and Saviour.

For me, genuine interfaith friendship does not require Christians to hide Jesus, and faithful Christian witness does not require us to disrespect people of other faiths. We are called to speak the truth in love, trusting the work of conversion to God.

Marie Pattison

Question 1.

a) Please could you describe your views in relation to the use of the Prayers of Love and Faith liturgy for blessing couples in a same-sex relationship and whether, if elected to synod, you would support or not the marriage of clergy in same sex relationships. It would be helpful if you could outline the reasons for whatever position you take on these issues.

While I welcome the Prayers of Love and Faith, I was ready to welcome them ten years ago. I think most folks want to get married, and we are in the business of facilitating

that. For years, people had a right to marry in their parish churches. Yet there is a proportion of my parish who have the right to marry under law, from whom I must withhold marriage before God in their parish, against my will. It is easier for members of other faiths to marry in church than for faithful Christians in committed relationships. I am not sure how long we can withhold marriage from LGBT+ people with integrity. We need to decide if we are the church for everyone or if we are for a select few, I would like to serve my whole parish. If some of my colleagues wish to opt out, as they are free to do with divorced persons, I am happy to leave that to them.

This conversation we are having is harmful to Christian LGBT+ youth who are statistically more likely to attempt suicide than their non-Christian peers. A situation which I am sure grieves the heart of God.

As someone who has recently been to theological college, ordinands are in desperate need of a sexual ethic grounded in scripture, ethics and today's reality. Issues in Human Sexuality has been withdrawn and needs to be replaced. Preferably with something that would check the entitlement of straight men.

We say that Guidelines for the Professional Conduct of the Clergy states that 'sexual intercourse, as an expression of faithful intimacy, properly belongs within marriage exclusively' but then we withhold marriage from people, creating a cruel limbo for my LGBT colleagues.

b) I would like to know if you support women exercising ministry in the church - whether as clergy, bishops, etc and whether women clergy are accepted within the church in which you worship.

I am, myself, a woman. And my church is thrilled to have three of us.

c) Please could you explain your views on the climate crisis and the diocesan commitment to reach Net Zero by 2030. How does your faith support the views you hold about this?

My faith tells me that harm cannot be passed down to the most vulnerable, that we must order our society to prevent this. Our lifestyle has cost the poorest people on the planet and other species we are charged to protect. This needs a change in how we think of our buildings, our worship and our lifestyle. We need to go beyond targets and rejuvenate how we deal with our property, investments and liturgy. We have a responsibility to speak prophetically to those in power and hold them to accountable for making big changes that will benefit future generations.

Question 2.

Do you support and rejoice in the ministry of women in all roles in the church, including ordination as priests, consecration as bishops and ministry as diocesan bishops and Archbishop?

Very happy to have women at all levels as long as none of the Bishops and Archbishops have to be me.

Question 3.

What is your response to the appearance of those who claim to be both Christian and Nationalist? Is it the Christian vocation to seek the conversion of Jews and Moslems?

I firmly believe that Christian Nationalism is an oxymoron. If you desire a faith that stops at the water's edge, then we must be aware that such a faith never reaches our shores. Yet Jesus looked at a sick child and a clever mother and understood that grace cannot be contained. If you are a citizen of the Kingdom of God then that is your primary allegiance.

When I have engaged in interfaith work, both with Jews and with Muslims, it is clear to me that we worship the same God. I have been part of an interfaith women's group of Jewish and Christian women. I have worshiped with both Jews and Muslims, in Synagogue and at Masjid. Some of the prayers I did not understand, but I know what prayer feels like.

The notion that Christianity has superseded Judaism is harmful to our theology, it teaches us to believe in a god who is not faithful and I do not believe that the God of Abraham & Sarah, Isaac & Rebekah, Jacob, Daniel, Amos and Ruth breaks faith with anyone. In this, I share the view of both the World Council of Churches and the Roman Catholic Church.

Paul Pritchard

Question 1:

1. I fully support the use of Prayers of Love and Faith for the blessing of couples in same-sex relationships. I do not feel they go far enough to honour LGBTQIA+ people but I am very happy that we have them and commend their use. I also support the marriage of clergy in same-sex relationships.

The reason for my responses is simple; if we are to be truly rooted in the love of Jesus Christ, the church is called to celebrate the diversity of deeply loving relationships, remembering that Jesus is found on the margins and calls us all as we are.

My lived experience as a member of the LGBTQIA+ community is one of contrast, for the first 30+ years of my life I felt I had no place in the church unless I pretended I was someone else. Then I found a place that celebrated who I was and I realised not that Jesus' love was for me, but I regained a dignity that had been denied me.

I would love to serve in a church where people no longer experience the indignity of rejection for being who they are.

2. I fully and unreservedly support women exercising ministry in the church as Bishops, Priests, Deacons and lay leaders. All of the churches in which I serve are part of the 'Inclusive Church Network' and delight in the ministry of women, this includes one that had previously been a 'resolution' church.

3. I believe we are living in seriously troubling times that require individual and corporate action in relation to the climate crisis. The church has a significant role to play locally and nationally in the global response. I think my role as a church leader is to work with my churches and our local communities, including the schools, to navigate the changes we urgently need to make in order to do our 'bit' to help the earth replenish and repair.

I think the commitment to reach Net Zero by 2030 is essential and needs to be at the top of our agenda. This is completely grounded in my faith in a Creator God and I welcome this new season of Creation in Christ.

Question 2:

I fully and unreservedly support and rejoice in women exercising ministry in the Church of England as Archbishops, Bishops, Priests, Deacons and lay leaders. I serve alongside women in my context now and my Training Incumbent was a woman. I would not wish to serve in a church without the leadership of women.

Question 3:

In parish ministry we are called to be alongside those with whom we vehemently disagree and to endeavour through listening to try to understand their perspective; I pray I do exercise this calling as best as I can, however if by nationalism we mean being hostile to immigrants and acting to create an environment of fear and exclusion, I can never accept this is of Christ and so I struggle to understand how one can claim to be Christian and nationalist.

The Christian vocation is to share the love of Jesus modelled in our words and actions in the hope that people come to Christ. I do not believe this to be the same as a vocation to seek the conversion of Jews and Muslims and I feel strongly that positive interfaith relationships are essential for the church and our communities; we have much to learn from one another!

Andy Salmon

Question 1.

a) Please could you describe your views in relation to the use of the Prayers of Love and Faith liturgy for blessing couples in a same-sex relationship and whether, if elected to synod, you would support or not the marriage of clergy in same sex relationships. It would be helpful if you could outline the reasons for whatever position you take on these issues.

I believe that LGBT+ Christians are as much a part of the church as anyone else. Galatians 3.28 is a pivotal text for me on this question and other questions below. "There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus." In the beginning was the Word and in Genesis we are told that "God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them." As humanity we all hold the image of God in us whether black or white, male or female, rich or poor, gay or straight. And so I am very happy to use the Prayers of Love and Faith to help people celebrate their commitment to each other and to pray for God's blessing on them, whoever they are. I also believe that all our clergy should be allowed to marry and enjoy the benefits of a loving committed relationship.

b) I would like to know if you support women exercising ministry in the church - whether as clergy, bishops, etc and whether women clergy are accepted within the church in which you worship.

Absolutely! Yes, and yes. I have personally benefitted from the ministry of women and encouraged women to follow their vocation. I took part in the ordination of the first women as priests in our diocese back in 1994 and what a blessing they have been to the church!

c) Please could you explain your views on the climate crisis and the diocesan commitment to reach Net Zero by 2030. How does your faith support the views you hold about this?

Going back to Genesis we as humanity were asked to be stewards of the Earth. We have failed to take adequate care of creation. At my church we always keep the Season of Creation in September and explore the importance of Wonder and Awe (using Job 38) to inspire us in caring for our planet. I was one of those who at General Synod urged us to be more ambitious than was proposed and voted for the 2030 target. We will fail to meet it but in my view it's better to try and to miss than not to bother. There are many existential threats to humanity (AI being something much talked about now) and as

Christians we need to remember God's sovereignty whilst working hard to preserve the gift that God has given us.

Question 2.

Do you support and rejoice in the ministry of women in all roles in the church, including ordination as priests, consecration as bishops and ministry as diocesan bishops and Archbishop?

Yes, see above.

Question 3.

What is your response to the appearance of those who claim to be both Christian and Nationalist? Is it the Christian vocation to seek the conversion of Jews and Moslems?

So called "Christian Nationalism" is an abhorrence. It's fine to be patriotic but nationalism is a denial of the sovereignty of Christ and a denial of all Christ's teachings. Many hoped that the Messiah would be a nationalist for the Jewish people but Jesus completely turned things around to be a Saviour for us all and challenged us to be Peacemakers. The early church spread the gospel without any sense of any chosen nationality. Unfortunately there is a loud minority in this country that espouses racist, misogynistic, homophobic views and the church needs to stand firm against these unchristian forces. I don't believe the Church of England should be taking funding from Paul Marshall, who through his ownership (and subsidising) of GB News stokes fear and hatred. He does currently fund Holy Trinity Brompton and at least indirectly the spread of HTB "resource churches".

On conversion I believe that all of us should be praying for and working for the conversion of the whole of creation. (Romans 8.20-21) On Jews and Moslems specifically I believe we should work in partnership where we can but also be clear about our Christian hope and willing to share the gospel. I have baptised quite a few people who have converted from Islam but I also count Jews and Moslems as friends and partners in the task of not just praying that "your Kingdom come, your will be done" but working towards the fulfilment of God's Kingdom.

Ben Somervell

Question 1(a): "Please could you describe your views in relation to the use of the "Prayers of Love and Faith" liturgy for blessing couples in a same-sex relationship and whether, if elected to synod, you would support or not the marriage of clergy in same-sex relationships. It would be helpful if you could outline the reasons for whatever position you take on these issues."

I do not support the "Prayers of Love and Faith", the solemnisation of same-sex marriages in church, or permitting clergy to enter same-sex marriages. This is because I uphold the Church of England's historic position, as expressed in its formularies and liturgy, that marriage is the lifelong union of one man and one woman. I believe that Scripture consistently teaches that marriage is between a man and a woman, and that sexual relationships are to be expressed only within that context. This is because men and women complement one another within marriage, being equal in dignity and worth while also distinct in their God-given roles. Each sex is both irreplaceable and indispensable. This is one of the distinctive strengths of the biblical doctrine of marriage. It is a partnership between a man and a woman. The biblical doctrine of marriage is also grounded in the relationship between Christ and his Church, as described in Ephesians 5.

The "Prayers of Love and Faith" have significantly deepened divisions not only within the Church of England, but also across the Anglican Communion where most Anglicans are located worldwide. Moreover, despite the significant divisions they have exacerbated, the prayers have satisfied neither conservatives nor liberals, being regarded as either going too far or not far enough.

Rather than mirroring the prevailing ethic of the culture, Christ calls the Church to be distinct in its witness to the watching world, offering something that the surrounding culture cannot provide. This precisely what originally drew people to Jesus in the Gospels: he offered something that the world around him could not.

Question 1(b): "I would like to know if you support women exercising ministry in the church - whether as clergy, bishops, etc and whether women clergy are accepted within the church in which you worship".

I fully support women in word-based Christian ministry, but just not in ordained roles.

There is no doubt that the church relies upon the vital, indispensable and unique ministry of women. Churches would simply collapse without it. Most churches today have congregations that are majority female. I believe women often have particular gifts in children's ministry, youth ministry, discipling and mentoring other women, prayer, hospitality, pastoral care, fostering church unity, and relational evangelism.

Personally, I am a complementarian. I believe that God created men and women equal in dignity, worth and value, while also giving them different and complementary roles within the church. Men and women are equal, yet distinct. Their roles are not identical, nor are they interchangeable. Men and women are mutually interdependent, and each sex is indispensable. We deeply need one another in order to flourish together as a united church body.

I base this view primarily on 1 Timothy 2 and the fact that Jesus, who was revolutionary in his social attitudes, chose only male apostles. I also look to numerous other passages throughout both the Old and New Testaments. My view is reinforced by the historic unity and witness of the mainstream Church worldwide on this issue until the latter half of the twentieth century. Before the 1950s, mainstream Christian denominations were largely agreed on this matter. Even today, Roman Catholicism and many Protestant denominations continue to hold a traditional position on this subject.

I realise this is perhaps an unpopular view today but, as a convert to complementarianism, I have read, researched, thought, discussed and prayed about this subject for many years before ultimately reaching this conclusion. This is my personal view and I have demonstrated throughout my ministry that I can work constructively and graciously with those who hold different views on this issue.

This is particularly important today when the “Five Guiding Principles” and the General Synod’s settlement on this subject are suddenly being increasingly questioned. It is worth remembering that, in 1994, when General Synod voted to ordain women as priests for the first time, Synod deliberately and explicitly made provision for those parishes, clergy and lay people who could not in conscience support the measure. The same principle was applied again in 2014 when the General Synod voted to consecrate women as bishops.

It is worth remembering that there are almost 600 parishes — both complementarian evangelical and traditionalist Anglo-Catholic — which have passed Resolutions, with more doing so in recent years. We have 26 such churches within our own Diocese. Given the significant number of these churches within our Diocese, it is right and fair that they should be proportionately represented within our Synod delegation.

One of the reasons I am an Anglican is because of Anglicanism’s democratic system of church governance and because, unlike many institutions, we do not simply exclude people with whom we disagree. We do not pretend that complementarians and traditionalists do not exist, nor do we seek to marginalise them. Instead, we strive to flourish alongside one another, making gracious provision so that all may be included and valued together in unity.

Synod has twice voted for such provision. I hope and pray that we will continue to uphold the principle of mutual flourishing and seek to embody it together as one united church body.

Question 1(c): “Please could you explain your views on the climate crisis and the diocesan commitment to reach Net Zero by 2030? How does your faith support the views you hold about this?”

I fully acknowledge and respect the Diocese's consensus position on this subject, whilst personally holding a different view. I believe that the Net Zero by 2030 commitment is unlikely to be achievable in practice, and this can already be seen in the slower rate of progress than was originally hoped for.

I observed a very similar pattern in my previous diocese. It was frequently discussed at Deanery and Diocesan level, where clergy often felt insufficiently supported in pursuing this target and believed that doing so placed additional pressures upon parish ministry, particularly in the sphere of finances.

Restrictions on certain types of boilers and heating systems are likely to significantly increase annual energy costs for many churches at least in the short-term. This could then place additional and sometimes unsustainable financial strain upon parishes, especially smaller ones.

I do not believe that, at present, either the national Church or individual dioceses have sufficiently supported or funded the transition to Net Zero.

As a country, we should prioritise and focus investment on improving and subsidising renewable energy technologies so that they become increasingly reliable, efficient and, crucially, affordable. We should focus on effectively managing and fruitfully responding to the challenges of climate change.

Within the Church, we should promote and subsidise the introduction of overhead infrared heating systems nationally. These are among the most efficient, reliable and practical options available for many church buildings, particularly large historic buildings that are used intermittently. They are especially effective because they heat people and surfaces directly, rather than also unnecessarily heating large volumes of empty air, and they also provide instant heat on demand.

Question 2: "Do you support and rejoice in the ministry of women in all roles in the church, including ordination as priests, consecration as bishops and ministry as diocesan bishops and Archbishop?"

I fully support women in word-based Christian ministry, but just not in ordained roles.

There is no doubt that the church relies upon the vital, indispensable and unique ministry of women. Churches would simply collapse without it. Most churches today have congregations that are majority female. I believe women often have particular gifts in children's ministry, youth ministry, discipling and mentoring other women, prayer, hospitality, pastoral care, fostering church unity, and relational evangelism.

Personally, I am a complementarian. I believe that God created men and women equal in dignity, worth and value, while also giving them different and complementary roles within the church. Men and women are equal, yet distinct. Their roles are not identical,

nor are they interchangeable. Men and women are mutually interdependent, and each sex is indispensable. We deeply need one another in order to flourish together as a united church body.

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It is worth remembering that there are almost 600 parishes — both complementarian evangelical and traditionalist Anglo-Catholic — which have passed Resolutions, with more doing so in recent years. We have 26 such churches within our own Diocese. Given the significant number of these churches within our Diocese, it is right and fair that they should be proportionately represented within our Synod delegation.

One of the reasons I am an Anglican is because of Anglicanism's democratic system of church governance and because, unlike many institutions, we do not simply exclude people with whom we disagree. We do not pretend that complementarians and traditionalists do not exist, nor do we seek to marginalise them. Instead, we strive to flourish alongside one another, making gracious provision so that all may be included and valued together in unity.

Synod has twice voted for such provision. I hope and pray that we will continue to uphold the principle of mutual flourishing and seek to embody it together as one united church body.

Question 3: What is your response to the appearance of those who claim to be both Christian and Nationalist? Is it the Christian vocation to seek the conversion of Jews and Muslims?

I am not a Christian nationalist, and I oppose the ideology of Christian nationalism. It can become a form of idolatry, seeking to impose Christian values through power, rather than winsomely persuading individuals of them through witness, persuasion, and relational evangelism.

Many in Jesus's day expected and wanted him to come as a military revolutionary and political liberator who would free Israel from Roman rule and establish an earthly kingdom. Yet he defiantly refused that path and instead came in humility, gentleness, peace and love, seeking to meet people where they were, patiently persuading them, and journeying onwards with them to faith in the gospel. He taught respect for the governing authorities and instructed people to pay taxes, rather than pursue political revolution.

People of every background equally need the unique, life-giving and redeeming message of the Christian gospel, because it is God's means of salvation for all people everywhere. We all deeply need the gospel and we need it just as much as each other - to be rescued from sin and brought into eternal life through blessed union with Christ.

I do not believe that the message of the gospel is intended for only some groups of people while others have no need of it. The Christian gospel presents all people as standing equally in need of God's grace and salvation. I need that grace every bit as much as anyone else.

Gareth Mark Thomas

Q 1)

a) I am in favour of using the prayers of love and faith to bless the marriages of same sex couples and would support clergy being able to marry their same sex partner. I find nothing in scripture that would oppose this and plenty that supports loving, committed and supportive relationships.

b) I do support women's ministry, working with several excellent women priests and being married to one too.

c) The climate crisis is here and making a huge impact already, all we can do is try to mitigate the damage and hopefully in time allow the planet to heal. The book of Genesis tells us of humanities role as stewards of creation, and it is important for us as Christians to care for and appreciate this beautiful planet we have been given.

Q 2) Yes, I do

Q 3) I am concerned by the rhetoric of those who claim to be “Christian nationalists”, as while you certainly can be a Christian who is proud of your country, a lot of the language used by this group is full of hatred, xenophobia and a total lack of compassion for those in need. The bible explicitly tells us to welcome and care for the foreigner and the refugee, and parables such as the good Samaritan emphasize that calling to care for and support those who have fallen on hard times, such as asylum seekers. The language and aims of those claiming to be Christian Nationalist is quite the opposite.

I do not believe it is our vocation to convert Muslims or Jews to the Christian faith, and while I have friends from both those faiths who have converted to Christianity, I also know members of those faiths who have a real and close relationship with God and I would never seek to disrupt or damage that.

Vincent Whitworth

Question 1a

As stated in my election address, I support and uphold the church’s current doctrine regarding marriage. Theologically I believe God’s perfect intention for us as humans is to live with one another as man and woman (Genesis 2: 24). Therefore I could not in all conscience use the Prayers of Love and Faith. However I do think it is important that regardless of our own theological convictions, we find a way to ensure all feel loved and welcome within our church, particularly those who are LGBTQIA+.

Over the last 5 years as a General Synod member, I have valued working with other General Synod Representatives from the Diocese of Manchester. Even though we have held very diverse views on LLF, we have found ways to work together and love and respect one another. I believe the mutual love and respect that we have for one another here in Manchester is an example for the wider church to follow.

I do think whilst LLF is a very important issue, I think it is also important that we don’t have a 1 issue General Synod for the next 5 years. Elected members of Synod are here to serve you and represent you the wider Diocesan family on the wide range of issues the church currently faces and I think there are other vital issues Synod needs to urgently address such as resourcing parish ministry and the vocations crisis we are facing. As a previously elected member of Synod I have always sought to serve you, and hopefully if elected again will continue to do so and be a voice for Manchester.

Question 1b and Question 2

With permission I will address these questions together. I am extremely grateful and supportive of the ministry of women within the church at all levels, including women who serve as bishop and indeed archbishop. Theologically women played significant roles within Jesus' circle of followers and in Jesus' life and ministry, and there are many examples of women having significant leadership roles within the early New Testament church.

Throughout my ministry I have valued working alongside female clergy in many of the parishes I have served in, and I am blessed to work alongside female clergy colleagues in my current parish. However I do recognise that we have a broad church and the need to ensure there is also a place for clergy and churches who in all conscience do not feel able to recognise the ministry of women.

Question 1c

I believe God has given us an imperative to be good stewards of God's creation (Genesis 1:26) and therefore it is important that we as a church take seriously the call to care and look after our world. Indeed my own parish has been awarded the Bronze Eco-Church award. I am committed to ensuring that the church, both at Diocesan and national level, reduces its carbon footprint to net zero as soon as possible, and in my role as a previously elected member of General Synod, I voted for the C of E to commit to net zero by 2030.

However I do believe that any commitments we make regarding net zero need to be achievable and not just virtue-signalling. We need action rather than talk. Whilst we are making significant strides in reducing our carbon use across the church, sadly I think Net Zero by 2030 is now not achievable. I think it is important that we have an achievable plan moving forward so we can hold ourselves properly to account as we look after the world God has given us.

Question 3

Sadly we live in a divided society where people focus too much on what differentiates us rather than what unites us and what we have in common with one another. Yet I believe the church at its best, can show our society that there is a better way. Many of our churches here in our Diocese, perhaps more so than any other institution, demonstrate that people across different ages, gender and race can come together as one in community.

It is our Christian vocation to proclaim the Gospel and demonstrate to the world that there is a better way. Jesus calls us in the Great Commission to 'Go and make disciples'

(Matthew 28:19). It is not our job to convert – all we need to do is be faithful in pointing people to the good news of Jesus and allow God to touch and transform people's lives.