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Introduction

I have been a member of General Synod for Newcastle Diocese for seven years and during that time have learnt much about how the national church works. There has been the opportunity to speak, listen and vote on important issues for the mission and ministry of the Church. My experience of Synod leads me to believe there is a crucial role for lay people in deciding the future of the Church of England, working in partnership with clergy and the communities we serve. The leadership of the Church and how that leadership translates into action at Diocesan, Deanery and Parish level is vital and during the life of the next General Synod decisions will be made that impact on us all.

This is why I want to continue to represent you as a lay member of the General Synod.

A bit about myself

- An important part of being involved in the Diocese is working with Deaneries and Parishes to ensure all are served well and that the Diocese hears the voices of Parishes and Deaneries when changes are proposed. The "Lay Voices" initiative that I am committed to provides that opportunity for lay people to work more confidently in all aspects of Church life. It is very important to me and I have been delighted that the encouragement for lay people to participate is bearing fruit.
- In the Diocese I am the elected Lay Chair of Diocesan Synod, Leader of the Deaneries Development Task Group, and member of Bishop's Council and the Strategic Development Group.
- This year I was elected as a member of the Crown Nominations Commission to appoint a new Bishop for the Diocese and have chaired the Newcastle Team.
- I represent General Synod as a Board member of the Lindisfarne Regional Training Partnership.
- As a Canon of Newcastle Cathedral and a member of the Cathedral Council I am able to support and assist in the life of the Cathedral.
- At Holy Spirit, Denton I am a Reader, where I preach and teach. It is at parish level that the reality of the Church in action becomes real for me.
- I work part time as a freelance Consultant involved in mentoring and various personnel and training projects.
- I enjoy singing (not very well!) in a Choir.

My beliefs and values

I want to make a difference in the Church that I love and for the Church to proclaim the gospel to a world that is in so much need.

For me, conflict and disagreements should be resolved in ways that do not damage relationships or the image of the Church we represent. I am able to listen and understand others perspectives, willing to stand up for my own beliefs and to do so in an atmosphere of mutual respect. (And a sense of humour sometimes helps!)

I believe the Reformation of the Church is continuing and evolving as it responds to the Holy Spirit working in the world. I am encouraged by the Reform and Renewal programme proposed by General Synod which aims to deepen our discipleship and the opportunities for the Church to grow, spiritually and numerically and for the ministry of both lay and ordained to be transformed to meet the needs of God in the world.

The legislation to allow women to be consecrated as Bishops, and the provision for those who cannot accept this, was agreed during the last General Synod and in 2015 we have witnessed the first women to be consecrated as bishops. I voted in favour of the legislation as I believe men and women have equally important roles to play in the church and that our choices for leadership roles within the hierarchy should be based on ability, skills and Godliness rather than gender or sexuality. However, for those who are unable to accept the ordination of women as Bishops and priests, I pray the guiding principles that General Synod adopted will be honoured so that all may flourish.

My thinking is that the future will require some different roles for clergy and lay people and the style of leadership may need to continue to change. I think the role of lay people in the Church is crucial and should to be encouraged and developed to assist us survive and grow in different directions over the next decade.

What will I contribute to General Synod?

- My experience of working in Parish, Deaneries and the Diocese has given me understanding of what the issues are for lay people and how the Church at local and national level makes decisions. I will use the skills, experience and expertise I have to enter into the debates and decision making at General Synod.
- Training as a Reader has given me understanding and cognition of the theological perspectives of decision-making in the Church.
- I am told I am good at thinking strategically, seeing the big picture and how the bits fit together.
- I understand the implications and impact of change on people through my work as a consultant.
- I enjoy working with people and am enthusiastic about the future.
- I have the professional skills of a Human Resources specialist.

If you would like to contact me about my nomination, I would be delighted to respond in person, by e.mail or telephone

If you think I will be a good representative for Newcastle Diocese, please may I ask that you give me your **first preference** vote?