

Having served as a member of Oxford Diocesan Synod for the past three years and the Bishop's council for the last 18 months I felt called to put my name forward for General Synod.

I have been a member of St Mary's, Wendover for more than 20 years now. My husband and I moved to the area in 2002 and joined the congregation. We were married in the church in 2005 and now have two teenage sons. I have been involved in Music and working with young people and children at the church since the beginning. Growing up through music in church has given my faith continuity throughout my life.

We are very fortunate to live in an area with much privilege and it is our duty to use this advantage to support those without resources. The handling of finances and the fair division of resources is of the utmost importance.

There are other forms of privilege too and we need to be doing more to use that privilege to support overlooked and undervalued members of our church community. It is extremely important to me that the LGBTQI+ members of our church are given equal opportunities in our church life and mission. I help with the LGBTQI+ support group at my school and listening to the students has shown me how little support they have been able to find in the wider world. I truly believe this is an area in which we as a church should be leading the way in showing acceptance and giving support.

I am privileged that my role as Head of Music in a local secondary school gives me a very broad insight into the wider perception of the church in society and I think this is a perception we should be more aware of as we strive for more diversity within our church. It is true to say that many young people regard the Church of England as behind the times and exclusive of many groups, a fact that saddens me when I know that for many churches and church goers that is simply not the case. I do, however think that we spend a lot of our time looking inwards and there is more for us to do if we were to look outwards to the wider world as well.

I believe I can bring a fresh voice to the general synod. I am good at listening to others and passing on their thoughts. I consider myself to be thoughtful and calm with a practical approach to problem solving that I think would be useful in this role.

I would like to take this opportunity to continue to serve my community and support those who do not have a voice. We often speak about bringing the church into the world, but I feel we need to be doing much more to bring the world into the church.