



Proposed by Canon Peter Babington
Vicar of St Francis, Bournville
Seconded by Canon Martin Stephenson
Vicar of St Peter Hall Green, Chair of the House of Clergy

The Reverend Peter Law-Jones

Team Rector of Salter Street and Shirley

General Synod

Election Address

Dear Elector

I am writing to ask for your first preference vote in the forthcoming General Synod elections. First, though, I would like to introduce myself to you. I am married to Kate. We have two children and four grandchildren. I was ordained in 1987. Kate and I brought our children up in vicarages, so I am very aware of the challenges of life for a clergy family.



The main focus of my priestly ministry has always been the parish, but having been at different times a part time hospital chaplain, a tutor on a regional training course and an area dean, I have always sought prayerfully to understand and support the many expressions of the priestly calling we share.

Since Kate and I moved to Shirley in 2013, I have been humbled by the commitment to mission and discipleship shown by the parishes, supported by the diocesan staff. It is my belief that the partnership in mission that is central to life in Church of England Birmingham has much to say to the wider Church and its structures in the next five years and beyond. With your help, with your vote, I will commit myself to representing the Diocese of Birmingham to the best of my ability.

I am committed to bringing the experience of parish life to the service of the wider Church and take an active interest in the synodical life of the Church. The voice of the parish clergy needs to be heard on General Synod. I was privileged to serve as a Proctor for the Convocation of York in the previous General Synod and while I shared some of the frustrations it is possible to experience as a member of that body, I believe it is vital that it remains an articulate, confident voice in the wider life of the Church of England.

Thank you

Peter Law-Jones

Discipleship and Mission

As the Growing Younger initiative takes its place in the life of the parishes, with your vote I will take to General Synod our shared commitment to innovative and effective mission, forged in the challenges we all face in the Second City of the Kingdom and the many and varied communities in and around it that together are our Diocese.

Centralisation

There is life outside London! And in the Diocese of Birmingham we know how vibrant that life can be! The Archbishops' council proposes a new Enabling Measure which will mean that many changes in church law can be made simply by an order of the Archbishops' Council. Synod will be able to accept or reject, but not amend, to the detriment, I believe, of the whole Church. The present system will be by-passed and while some will applaud the prospect of faster decision

making, this development will make the Archbishops' Council the board of the Church of England and the Archbishop the Chief Executive. It will also stifle healthy input and debate from the dioceses. I will oppose this in order to make the voice of Birmingham heard and heeded.

Talent Pool

The Church needs the gifts and talents of many in order to fulfil God's mission in the world. No one doubts the need to discern who is called to leadership in this mission. However, the decision not to debate the report prepared by Lord Green on how to go about this was a mistake. We need proper consideration by General Synod of such major changes in our discernment of God's will for the Church and its witness.

It is necessary to have a balance of experience and the particular brand of enthusiasm that comes with youth. There is a talent pool of younger vocations waiting to be discerned, developed and encouraged. With your vote I will do everything in my power to ensure that new initiatives on vocations and leadership are properly tested and effectively implemented

The Clergy

The Church is not only the clergy. Yet without confident well supported clergy the Church cannot fulfil its mission. Recent changes such as the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline measure contain much that is good and necessary, but it was only after a submission to the Revision Committee that the requirement for Synod approval in regulations was introduced. I am committed to ensuring a proper balance between the need to have effective safeguarding and the just treatment of the clergy.

Major changes to the clergy pension arrangements took place in 2011 and in 2016 there will be more changes which will have a substantial impact on those who are beginning ordained ministry now. It is vital that General Synod is allowed to exercise proper oversight over the Pensions Board so that the Church as a whole may exercise its duty of care to the clergy.

The Simplification Task Group have made some helpful proposals, but the proposed changes to

the patronage system need proper testing on the floor of Synod. I am committed to ensuring that this takes place to protect the security of the parish clergy.

With your vote I will be able to do everything in my power to ensure that just treatment of the clergy is not neglected as changes continue in the way we fulfil our calling

Shared Conversations

The shared conversations about women in the episcopate offered a way out of an impasse and were successful in helping to ensure that the Church of England remains genuinely inclusive and welcoming to all. The Diocese of Birmingham is good at celebrating diversity, so as one of your representatives on General Synod, I will bring that commitment to faithful witness while celebrating our differences to the conversations about human sexuality.

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Thank you