

General Synod Election Address 2015: Sophy Vickers

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Proposer: Mr Simon Baynes, St Albans Deanery
Seconded: Mr Paul Jellings, St Albans Deanery



I am writing to give you some details about myself in the hope that you will vote for me as a representative on General Synod for the 2015 - 2020 session.

Background

I am currently aged 35 and I have been a member of the congregation of St Albans Abbey all my life. As a result my faith has been formed and nurtured within the liberal catholic tradition of the Church of England.

I studied psychology at Loughborough University, and then having decided I would like to work in Human Resources studied for a Masters in Human Resource Management at the University of Surrey. I currently work as a HR Business Partner for Middlesex University where my area of interest is employee relations and employment law. Prior to this I worked for a Trade Union providing representation and advocacy for employees in employment disputes.

In my free time I like seeing my friends, running, swimming, playing badminton, reading and going to the cinema.

I am married to Tim who is currently training for ordination on the Oxford Ministry Course at Ripon College Cuddesdon. He will be ordained in 2016 when we hope to move to a new parish within the St Albans diocese.

Church Involvement

Currently I am involved in many activities at the Abbey including:

- Abbey Assembly (body reporting to Chapter concerned with parish matters)
- Social Events Team
- Preparation of children for communion

Previously I have served as:

- Youth Group Leader (2004 – 2013)
- Chair of Children and Youth Committee (2010 – 2012)
- Deanery Synod representative (2011 – 2014)
- Cub Scout Assistant Leader (2008 – 2012)

Issues

Here are some of my views on a few issues which may come up in the next session.

- Inclusivity

I support the position of *Inclusive Church* and I hope and pray that the Church of England will become a church where everyone is welcome, and is able to fully participate in the membership and leadership of the church, regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, wealth, sexual orientation or disability. I am in favour of marriage for everyone.

- Vocations and training

I feel strongly that the Church should be doing more to ensure that all people are equipped to serve God, and all ministries valued, not just ordained ministries. I am pleased that there are so many ordinands currently in the Church of England. However, I feel more needs to be done to ensure that the selection process and training options are not a barrier for those who are truly called to this role.

- Social Action

I want the church to be a loud and outspoken voice in our country regarding political issues, particularly those concerning social justice.

- Young people

Through my experience at the Abbey I have first-hand experience of the challenges which the church faces in engaging with young people, and I believe that some audacious action is needed in order to significantly increase the numbers of young people involved in the running and governance of the Church of England.

- Ecumenism

My experience of an ecumenical project which brought young people together from different denominations from across Europe, in Loreto in Italy, has taught me to hope that unity is possible. I hope that ecumenism will not be forgotten over the next five years as we deal with our own divisions.

What can I offer?

- I have good attention to detail and have experience of policy scrutiny
- I have experience of conflict resolution
- I am good at getting on with all kinds of people
- I really want the church to grow and develop
- I am straight-talking, honest, fair and pragmatic

If you want to know more feel free to contact me.