



Rev. Peter Kay

Priest-in-charge of Milton Ernest, Pavenham and Thurleigh

Proposer:

*Rev. Canon Richard Hibbert
Vicar of Christ Church, Bedford
Rural Dean of Bedford
General synod member 2005-15*

Seconder:

*Rev. Ann Pollington
Vicar of St Ippolyts with
Great and Little Wymondley
Rural Dean of Hitchin*

About Me

After a varied career as a Chartered Management Accountant and Credit Analyst I was ordained deacon in 2011, serving in Hertfordshire as the curate of St Paul's Letchworth with All Saints Willian. In my 'previous life' I lived in both Watford and Bedford, so know both our counties well. Last September I was licensed to three village churches in Bedfordshire: Milton Ernest, Pavenham and Thurleigh. I am married to Vanessa and we have a baby son, born this April, called Gus.

My home is the evangelical Anglican tradition but I greatly value working, worshipping and, importantly, making friends with people from different traditions. As a curate I worked as a member of the Hitchin Deanery Mission Action Planning team, and of course my current village ministry often involves drawing from different spiritual streams. I have greatly benefited from working with gifted women clergy colleagues and very much support the admittance of women to be bishops.

Why am I seeking election?

As a relatively junior member of the clergy I have got to know a younger generation of curates and clergy. I am excited about the future: across different traditions our emerging leaders have a great depth of spirituality, commitment, creativity and missional energy. This is a time of particular change in the national church - especially through the Reform and Renewal programme - and I feel that it's vital for General Synod to have younger voices as we shape our future for the next generation. My previous career required strong analytical and relational gifts, ones I still use in ministry, and I am sure are important as a member of General Synod.

I feel the following issues are key priorities in the coming General Synod session:

Mission and Ministry

I care about mission in all its forms, and my leadership experience in both suburban and rural churches has given me a breadth of missional understanding. However, having grown up in Lincolnshire I have a particular passion for rural ministry. I am convinced that a healthy rural church is vital to the spiritual life of the nation, with a great deal to contribute to the wider church. Indeed it is also strategically vital: 2/3rds of the Church of England's 15,000 churches are rural, and nearly half its benefices. We should celebrate and support what God is doing in the countryside, and if elected I will be a voice for rural mission and ministry.

This coming General Synod session brings particular opportunities to help multi-parish benefices: the Church's recent report 'Released for Mission' recommends sensible changes to simplify structures

and reduce burdens, freeing clergy and lay people into wider ministry. I would strongly support measures to reduce administrative burdens for multi-parish benefices, both rural and urban.

Developing Leaders

I am convinced that a central way God builds His church is through raising up gifted and Godly leaders - of all shapes and sizes! - to minister in His body. Leadership development is a particular area of focus of the Church of England's Reform and Renewal programme. For me, the Ephesians 4 description of Christ's 'Ascension gifts' - Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors and Teachers - is fundamental to my understanding of the richness and diversity of Christian leadership. I long for a confident, prophetic church, sharing the Good News with joy, caring for and building up people in Christian teaching and love. There are different levels of leadership where I feel General Synod has an important role:

Senior Leadership

The Green Report on senior leadership was released last year to a mixed response. I worked in business for over a decade, often alongside senior managers and leaders, and appreciated their gifts and skills. I can see how some 'MBA-style' training could help bishops and senior clergy in their roles, but the church is a much fuller and richer organisation than even the largest of companies. It's important for 'ordinary' clergy (and laity) to have a voice in shaping the type of leaders we need.

Ordained leadership

Our clergy training is a vital part of the church's overall strategy, and is a fast-changing area. Well trained, high quality clergy are vital to our future. It's encouraging that the central Church of England is starting to address the approaching demographic challenges through an increased commitment to vocations. Alongside this, given people's increasingly varied lifestyles and circumstances, I believe it's right that we provide more flexible modes of training alongside our traditional residential colleges - whilst ensuring that our standards of training and formation remain uniformly high.

Local leadership

General Synod has an important role in enabling us to develop our local leaders. Whilst we wrestle with the large issues of episcopal and clergy training we must also hold in view the grass-roots reality of our local congregations, and encourage more resources to build up our laity.

Human sexuality

The 'Shared Conversations' are important as we seek to understand different viewpoints and stories. Over the years I have listened carefully myself to many stories and perspectives. I remain convinced in the church's traditional teaching that heterosexual marriage is the only appropriate context for sexual relations, but am concerned that too often 'traditionalists' have lost sight of the real pain for those who are directly affected, and fail to show fully Christ-like love and care. In Synod I would support measures which combine pastoral sensitivity with a traditional doctrinal framework.

*I hope I have given a helpful picture of who I am and what I hope to achieve if elected. **May I invite you to give me your First Preference vote?***

Of course I would seek to represent your views across a wide range of issues so if you have any comments or queries please do not hesitate to get in touch - my email is rev.peter.kay@outlook.com, and my telephone (01234) 918027