

GENERAL SYNOD 2021

CHRISTOPHER BUNCE

Name: The Revd. Christopher Bunce, Ordained 2012

Post: Team Rector of Hitchin with St Paul's Walden and Preston, formerly Rector of St Andrew & St George, Stevenage, and Rural Dean of Stevenage

Pre-Ordination: Solicitor

Current Church Roles: Assistant Rural Dean, Deanery Synod and Diocesan Synod

Member of: Inclusive Church and Mosaic

vicarstmaryshitchin@gmail.com

Telephone: 07539101957



Proposed by: The Revd. Will Gibbs, Vicar, Redbourn (St Mary)

Seconded by: The Revd. Rachel Phillips, Team Rector of Dunstable

Thank you for taking the time to consider voting for me to represent you on General Synod in the coming years. These are the three main reasons that I am standing, in order of priority:

1. Save the Parish!

I have only ever served my ministry in parish churches and believe the Church will only flourish if parishes are valued, clergy are well-supported and resources are used to bolster parish mission and ministry. This must be a priority for Synod as it continues to build on the Reform and Renewal programme.

There is, of course, a place for FX and new ventures in a missionary and mixed-economy Church and we have seen the value of this in Hitchin with The Hub, but one should never flourish at the expense of the other. Any “re-imagining of ministry” must recognise the value of parish ministry and acknowledge that has never been as difficult as it has been coming out of this pandemic and the clergy on the ground need representation by those who are also on the ground and “get-it”!

2. An Inclusive Church

I believe in a church which is generous, welcoming, inclusive and open; a church where everyone is able to participate fully in membership and leadership regardless of gender, ethnicity, wealth, sexual orientation or disability. It is my hope that the LLF process will enable the Church to have good conversations, foster good listening and where necessary, good disagreement. The Church of England is fighting for relevancy in our culture, and I believe that unless a *truly* Inclusive Church is sought from the centre, it will be a huge hinderance in sharing the Good News of Christ. We need more than platitudes on issues of inclusion.

3. A commitment to working constructively within the structures whilst listening to voices outside the structures of the Church

As a former Area Dean and Assistant currently, accountability to the Diocese has been important to me, as has challenging the Diocese where necessary. As we address the Simplification agenda it is important for there to be an awareness of how this will affect the ministry of Parish clergy.

I hope that I can bring my experience of Parish ministry, legal skills, and a passion for the above to the work of the General Synod. Moreover, I suspect I have over 30 years until I am of pensionable age, so what happens in Synod in the next few years **really matters** to me. If my priorities chime with yours, please consider giving me your first preference vote!