

Standing for General Synod

Diocese of Lichfield

I am standing for election to General Synod because I believe the Church has an extraordinary opportunity to bring hope, purpose and community to a generation that is searching for all three.

I am an NHS surgeon, having worked for many years as a consultant. I meet people at some of the most vulnerable moments of their lives. These experiences teach me the importance of listening, compassion, honesty and service—qualities that I believe are just as important in the Church as they are in healthcare.

I am married with three grown-up children, and like many families, we have experienced both the blessings and challenges of modern life. Through family, work and faith, I have come to appreciate how important it is that the Church of England remains relevant, approachable and rooted in the realities people face every day.

One of the strengths I would bring to General Synod is a broad experience of the Church of England. I have worshipped in churches ranging from the Catholic tradition of Anglicanism through to Evangelical congregations; these different styles have given me new and deeper insights, broadening my understanding of scripture. As a result, I am less interested in labels and more interested in what unites us. I believe our diversity is a strength, not a weakness, and that we can model a better way of disagreeing—with grace, humility and mutual respect.

I currently serve in the Walsall Deanery and have seen first-hand the dedication of both clergy and lay people across our Diocese. I know how much voluntary effort goes into keeping local churches alive and active, often in difficult circumstances. Parish voices deserve to be heard and supported nationally.

Outside church structures, one of my more rewarding roles has been serving as a street pastor. On Friday and Saturday nights, faith becomes very practical. There are no debates about churchmanship or committees—only opportunities to listen, support, care and show God's love in simple ways. These experiences have reinforced my view about how distorted the Christian message has become and my belief that people are more interested in how Christians live than in what they say.

Twice each year I travel to Kilimanjaro Christian Medical Centre (Tanzania) to support their colorectal surgical unit. These visits are deeply rewarding and have shown me a Church that is vibrant, outward-looking and deeply connected to local communities. It reminds me that Anglicanism has a global reach and we must continue to learn from Christians whose joy, faith and commitment thrive in challenging circumstances.

If elected, I want to be a voice for a Church that looks outward rather than inward.

Younger generations are interested in spirituality, justice, community and purpose and are returning to church, exploring Christianity. For those who are struggling we need to meet them in the marketplace.

Rather than asking why young people are not coming to church, we should be asking whether the Church is meeting people where they are. I would work to increase the voice of chaplains, often working in isolation in schools, universities, prisons and hospitals; they are the first contact for many searching for a faith.

I want to support churches that are creative, welcoming and willing to engage with their communities. I want to champion ministry among students and young adults. I want to see lay people encouraged to use their gifts, ideas and leadership. Most importantly, I want the Church to be known not for its internal disagreements but for its compassion, generosity and witness to Christ.

General Synod faces important decisions about safeguarding, mission, governance, finance and the future shape of the Church. These issues matter, but they are not ends in themselves. Our ultimate purpose is to share the good news of Jesus Christ and to help people encounter God's love.

My years in medicine taught me how to evaluate evidence, listen carefully and make balanced decisions. My Christian journey has taught me the importance of the word, prayer, humility and service. This informs my opinion on the divisive issues facing Synod such as gender, race and net zero, for which there are no easy and unifying answers.

I am not standing to promote a particular faction or agenda. I am standing because I love the Church of England, value the rich diversity of the Diocese of Lichfield, and believe that our future can be one of hope, growth and renewal.

Above all, I want to help build a Church where young adults feel they belong, where communities experience God's love in action, and where Christ remains at the centre of everything we do.

I would be honoured to have your support.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mal Chapman". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style. The first name "Mal" is written in a simple, slightly stylized font, and the last name "Chapman" is written in a more elaborate, cursive script with a long, sweeping tail on the final letter.

Candidate for General Synod – Diocese of Lichfield

August 2026