



I had a couple of emails and realised there was an opportunity to apply to join the General Synod. I have prayerfully and carefully considered whether I should apply and consulted with others. I realised that it was an opportunity not to be missed. It is a great opportunity to bring my experiences and knowledge to the meetings and will enable me to take full part in the discussions and raise questions if I feel that is necessary and beneficial.

I strongly believe the laity representatives to the General Synod should be godly people from a wide range of backgrounds, inclusive in their thinking and democratic. This should enable a range of experiences, knowledge and perspectives to be brought to the discussions on agenda issues and to enable sensible, inclusive and practical decisions to be made. The General Synod of the church, though having national and international decisions to consider, still need to be conscious in their overall responsibility of remembering Jesus' commission to his disciples. We must always be mindful of that. We need to be sure that our decisions are building up our parish congregational members in spiritual thinking and leading them in a passion to serve God well as a response to what He has done for us.

Well to my history, I was one of only a few in my class who passed the eleven-plus examination and went to grammar school (the first in my family). Leaving school, I went on to teacher training college and became a primary school teacher. My career was in several primary schools mainly in deprived areas in Sandwell and Harrow London. I was a SENCO and member of the SMT and the work was very rewarding. When I did Assemblies, if I asked what my special word was the children would all respond in unison, Inclusion, Miss. It was a moving experience and so wonderful to enable the children from a vast range of backgrounds to expand their learning despite having different special needs and make something of themselves. I was also responsible for Religious Education and this was very exciting as we had many different religions represented in each class. The children were very keen to find out all the things that were the same in their different religions and it was always amazing when they realised that there were so many. My career brought me into contact with social workers, police and drug councillors. My past career has certainly given me a knowledge of how people struggle to manage in our modern society as well as seeing ways through which they can thrive and move away from their economic situation and the influence of their peer groups. I became a Christian I suppose when I was 8 when I could understand more. My parents had always taken me to Church on a Sunday. I attended Sunday School and was going to be confirmed but I still needed questions answering so I

went off to Teacher Training college in Dudley, questions still unanswered. This was a long way from my home in East Yorkshire. Studying RE there brought me into contact with Vic Temple who answered my unanswered questions and we became a good friend. After leaving college I went to live in Kinver and started going to St Peters Church where after a confirmation class, I was at last confirmed and amazingly found out that Vic Temple and his wife, Margaret attended St Peters. Vic sadly died a few years back now but I am still good friends with Margaret.

I have worshipped now for quite a long time at St Peters, Kinver. I was Church Warden for ten years and I have been on PCC many times and am now on it again at the moment. I am also a member of Deanery Synod. I have been on the Church rota for everything in the past but now do the readings and I am on the rota for Intercessions which I love doing. A real love is the work I do with the local schools. I am a Chaplain in the High School. Part of a team with the Methodist Church. I am also a member of the Churches Together in Kinver group which includes members of St Peters and the Methodist Church.

I am also St Peters/Kinver Schools liaison officer. This covers many things. I do transition work in Year 6, organise children coming to do activities in Church, organise rotas for the team of volunteers for these activities, risk assessments etc and much more.

I believe that Jesus is my friend, someone who I can talk to and not just a doctrine to believe in. This has helped me greatly in church life and serving our

This changed my life, and I have been involved in church life and serving our Lord since. I am open to different styles of worship. When I worked in Harrow my nearest church was a Baptist Church and I got involved with the church and got the priest to come into school to do Assemblies. He got so involved that he became our Chair of Governors. I also went to mid-week service at an Anglican Church and got the vicar to come into school to do Assemblies. In the Baptist Church we sometimes had a café church and I also found a seriousness for studying the bible and what it taught us about living today. This has helped me doing Pilgrim Courses and Lent Courses. I also do Bible Studies with the Methodist Church when time allows. All these have helped me understand the development of the individual member's needs in teaching and encouragement on their spiritual journey and sometimes their physical and mental needs too.

My roles over the years, SENCO, member of senior management, school governors, Union rep, PCC member and church warden, have meant I have had to engage in discussing difficult topics, searching out points of view and working together to reach a decision that is thoughtful and allowing every voice to be heard which I am sure would be helpful in this role on the General Synod. My passion are the children I am still involved with and our St Peters congregation developing as disciples of Jesus. I have a real love for teaching and discussing the bible and what it tells us about who God is and how we should live for him in 21st century Britain. I enjoy studying and discussing together our Christian faith bringing in a sense of awe for God.

Having put together these words to support my application I have prayed about what I am doing. I know I am making the right decision.

Anne Drew