

Rev'd Dr Abbie Walsh

Rector of St Michael and St Mary,
Lichfield with St John, Wall

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Nominated by: Rev'd Graham Adamson, Vicar of Berkswich

Rev'd Lisa Knight, Vicar of Harlescott

About me

Formerly an inner-city GP, I was ordained as a priest in 2019 and served my curacy in the Central Wolverhampton team. I have been in my current post as Rector since 2022. My other roles include Assistant Rural Dean of Lichfield, Vocations Advisor, member of the Property Management Group and interim LGBT+ chaplain. I am also a member of the Diocesan Green Team. I am passionate about mission in schools, creation care, collaborative working and encouraging lay and ordained vocation.

I was elected to General synod in a by-election in 2025. I have found the sessions to be challenging and sometimes frustrating but I believe it is a place where the Holy Spirit is at work and real good can be done. I feel called to stand again and continue to join in this work, if you re-elect me.

Although agreement between us sometimes feels far off, I am committed to unity and collaboration with others. I enjoy and value my professional relationships and friendships with those with really different views and traditions to my own. In my time so far on General Synod I have been committed to building relationships with those I often disagree with, seeking to offer fellowship and to find common ground where it is possible. If I were re-elected, I would hold myself to the highest standard of compassion and vulnerability in discussions, and of prayer and careful consideration in voting at all times.

The Body of Christ

I am committed to equality for everyone, at all levels and in all roles within the Church, regardless of gender, disability, socio-economic status, ethnicity, mental health or sexuality. I believe that the Church can't really be Christ's body on earth unless we truly welcome and value all of God's children in Church and in the world. I support any action at General Synod to tackle racism, sexism, homophobia and all discrimination and would call for repentance and honesty about our past failures and real culture change, especially regarding our failure to prevent abuse and our failure to support and believe survivors. I want us to work together to make sure our Churches really are safe and welcoming communities for all.

I am affirming of LGBT+ people, their relationships and of supporting LGBT+ people in their vocation. I support the full use of Prayers of Love and Faith. I believe that we have fallen short as a Church of our calling to racial justice. The Church has much work still to do and I believe synod must continue to support the recommendations of "From Lament to Action" and to ensure that our decision making bodies and senior leadership reflect the diversity of the whole Church. I fully support the Church Commissioners' Fund for Healing, Repair and Justice ("Project Spire").

Supporting Local Churches

I care deeply about the local church and the congregations and volunteers who make up the heart and soul of the Church of England. I support General Synod to make decisions in a way that always considers the effect on the work of our volunteers, seeking to empower them and free them to do the work they are called to. I would seek to challenge us to find a fairer balance between resourcing new projects and supporting the faithful and creative mission and ministry going on in the parishes we already have, and especially to improve financial support for our poorest parishes. As Rector of a small rural church I am committed to making sure rural parishes and ministry are not forgotten.

Helping Clergy to Thrive

If I were elected to General Synod I would advocate for clergy wellbeing. I love being a parish priest and I intend to keep loving it for another 25 years, if God wills it! But, at times that love feels quite fragile, and it can seem hard to do a good job of being a parish priest.

Clergy need more opportunities for support and reflective practice, more emphasis on collaboration, and relief from some of the administrative burdens we bear, so that we can truly thrive and be the priests we were called to be.

Lots of us worry about our personal finances. I would advocate for a stipend that increases in line with the cost of living, and firm assurances about our pensions and affordable housing options in retirement.

Creation Care

I believe that creation care is an essential part of Christian ministry and a focus for unity both within the Church and in building collaborative relationships with people and groups outside the Church, particularly young people and schools.

If I were elected to General Synod I would advocate for bold action towards our ambitious goal of Net Zero Carbon by 2030, with support for Churches to take action, and to courageously and creatively use our Churchyards and Glebe Land to foster biodiversity.

Thank you for reading my address.

**If you would like to discuss anything or ask me any questions
please do get in touch.**

**I would be very grateful for the highest preference vote you
feel able to give me, and for your prayers.**