

Reverend Simon Robinson, Vicar of the Parish of Minehead.

Nominated by the **Reverend Jane Haslam**, Rector,
Alfred Jewel Benefice, Chair of House of Clergy.
Seconded by **Reverend Tobie Osmond**, Vicar,
St Mary Magdalene, Taunton.

Dear colleagues in Christ, I am asking you to consider voting for me so that I may serve the Diocese of Bath and Wells on the General Synod.



Who am I and what has my church life been like?

- Born in Rugby, Warwickshire, aged 54, single, from a working class impoverished background. Started attending church as a young child.
- Previously a teacher and headteacher of tough estate schools in London and Bristol for 24 years. Absolutely loved being a teacher and working with some of our most deprived children and their families.
- Have been churchwarden twice, St James' Piccadilly in London and St Thomas Widcombe in Bath. Have been PCC member and lay deanery synod member.
- Currently, I am the Vicar of the Parish of Minehead, ordained for 9 years, a member of Diocesan Synod, a spiritual director, national BAP Adviser (Education) and a Bishop's Examining Chaplain for Bath and Wells and an ADDO and placement supervisor for the Diocese in Europe. Member of the Pioneer Project Board.
- Hobbies include walking, cooking, gardening, photography and embroidery. I have recently completed a course with the Royal School of Needlework. I have a dog.
- I am an Anglo Catholic, affirming of the ordination of women to all three Orders and the full inclusion of LGBTQI+ Christians at all levels and in all roles in the church. I am the Superior of an internationally dispersed community of priests, men and women, called 'The Sodality of Mary.'

What do I think are our priorities?

Tackling poverty and well-being through working with young people and their families via education.

- I spent 24 years working in state schools on tough estates in London and Bristol. I frequently saw little to no involvement from the church and so am committed to ensuring we engage with all schools, church and community and with local youth provision in order to alleviate long-term and intergenerational poverty and the associated issues that come with it.
- I was the Chair of the Diocesan Board of Education for 5 years, am currently the Chair of Governors of two schools, a Governor of a federation of rural schools and have been a trustee of two academy trusts. I still advise headteachers and am currently mentoring a new headteacher.
- Our mission and ministry to families and children here in Minehead has grown exponentially over the past 6 years and I see working with families and children as

a key missional responsibility of the role of the church as well as a way of tackling poverty, unemployment, youth crime and exclusion.

- I believe tackling poverty must be a key focus of the work of General Synod.

The Rural Church and Community and the Climate Crisis

- I am committed to being one of the many voices that speak for the rural church in the life and the witness of the church as a prophetic and pastoral presence in local community. I believe that the rural church should be a key voice in holding Synod and the church to its promise to be carbon net zero by 2030. I am also committed to ensuring Synod understands that mission and evangelism in the rural context is distinct and built on centuries of heritage of presence in community.

Inclusion matters.

- I support the equality of all people in all areas of church life, regardless of gender, disability, neurodiversity, socio-economic status, ethnicity or sexual orientation. As a headteacher I took any child who came to the school and gained a reputation for taking children excluded from other schools. I believe that God in God's goodness has given us a broad church that all may find a place to call home. I support fully the LLF process and the Five Guiding Principles and see them as part of our methodology for ensuring a fully inclusive church. I long to see a church where we can live together with understanding, compassion and care despite theological difference or disagreement.

IICSA.

- I fully support the call of IICSA for independent oversight of safeguarding within the Church of England and will call in Synod for this and for support for those who are survivors of abuse at the hands of the church.

Clergy formation and well-being.

- With a background in both vocational discernment and in psychotherapy I am committed to the formation of young and new clergy and to creating healthy emotional cultures that nurture good mental well-being and care for clergy.

Governance and decision making.

- I have recently been involved in a project looking at governance in the Church of England, in particular at the perceived disconnect between the 'pew' and 'policy.' I believe there is important work to be done by General Synod in regard of this and in ensuring that all voices are properly heard and are part of building our understanding of mission and service.

I ask that you consider voting for me as a high preference when it comes to casting your vote in the General Synod elections. I will do my very best to serve the whole of the Diocese of Bath and Wells, our church communities and our schools. Please do not hesitate to be in touch either by email: vicarminheadparish@gmail.com or phone 01643 709771. Thank you. Simon.