

Jay Greene

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Proposed by Tim Hind, member of
Diocesan Synod and Bishop's Council

Seconded by Rob Sage, Lay Dean, Bruton &
Cary Deanery Synod



I am seeking re-election to General Synod because as a PCC member, past churchwarden, and deputy lay dean as well as being a clergy partner, the complexities of life in today's church are daily apparent to me. The need to keep the lead on the roof, the central heating oil in the tank, and money coming in to pay the bills is always with us. With "maintain a presence in the digital world" now added.... the task list grows. **The debates of General Synod need to be rooted in the realities of everyday life.**

Since 2002 I have lived in country parishes and know at first hand the key role the church has in rural areas where, in some villages, there is no longer a shop, pub, post office, or school, no obvious place to meet and where the difficulty of getting to know neighbours can mean increased risk of social isolation. Helping my partner, Marion, who until Easter was priest in charge in a multi-parish benefice, I saw that the activities of the local churches can and do bring people together. Our experience of Covid with its lockdowns has underlined the importance of our local church communities so I do see the parish and the benefice as foundational to our Church.

I have been an active member of the Church of England for more than 20 years, in three different dioceses (Salisbury, Winchester, and now Bath & Wells). I have helped to run a church youth club, an affiliated Scout troop, and with others, set up a popular fresh expression of church. While in Winchester diocese, I served as an authorised Lay Worship Leader which was a great joy.

Most of my working life I was a social worker in a variety of community and hospital settings. My last role was as a Change Manager for Hampshire County Council assisting the Adult Services and IT departments understand each other better for the good of all – that experience has been useful at General Synod and as an elected Church Commissioner.

To outsiders, our Church is experienced through its buildings, its music and attendance at weddings, christenings, and funerals. We need to be aware of this in our decisions-making. I believe that diversity is strength and it is possible to enjoy the Book of Common Prayer and

also to like aspects of Taizé and Iona Services, or alternatively to be engaged by modern worship and music but to be uplifted by quiet Compline.

The Church cannot function without its active volunteers: sidespeople, PCC members, treasurers, churchwardens but also the increasing army of Self-Supporting Ministers, Readers, and Lay Worship and Pastoral Assistants. I want all these volunteers to be respected and considered in decision-making.

Why am I standing: As well as being the Church's law making body, General Synod is a place where issues are debated and we, the laity, play our part, asking difficult questions and holding the House of Bishops and the National Church Institutions to account. It's the Church equivalent of Question Time and I have used it to raise issues on behalf of deaneries and parishes.

Care for the environment: Serving on General Synod for the past six years, I have worked with the Synod environment group to back calls for urgent action to tackle the climate emergency. As a Church Commissioner I welcome the work our Responsible Investment team have done to partner with other large investors to bring pressure to bear on fossil fuel companies like Shell and Exxon. If re-elected to General Synod, I pledge to go on using my influence to keep care for the environment at the top of our agenda.

Social Justice and Social action: All of us seek to make the Gospel real by translating our words into actions. Combatting modern slavery, addressing gambling addiction, publicising the causes of food poverty: General Synod has played its part in doing all this and I would seek to continue this work.

Inclusion: No matter how much work we put into mission and evangelism, we will fail while the church is seen as misogynist, class-ridden, racist, and homophobic by many of those whom we seek to attract. The real sadness of this is that it is a misconception since, broadly speaking, it has not been my experience in our Benefice or in the Deanery which have been welcoming and supportive places.

I want others to be able to love the Church as I do, to find it increases their closeness to God, and gives them a place of peace in our increasingly troubled world.

I will continue to work towards creating a church which is generous, welcoming, inclusive and open. A church where everyone is able to participate fully in the membership and leadership of the church, regardless of gender, ethnicity, financial status, sexual orientation or disability.

Tim Hind adds *"I have seen Jay in action at general synod and she is a conscientious and proactive, serving as she does as a Church Commissioner. She is an enthusiastic member of the inclusive community bringing knowledge and perspective from her personal experience. I believe she would add to the expertise needed to serve on General Synod for our diocese."*

I ask for your first or a high preference vote, many thanks