

Charlie Thomson

Team Rector of Melksham

charlie@melksham.church

Candidate for House of Clergy

Dear clergy friends,

I am seeking your vote for election to the General Synod to serve as a grounded, constructive, and parish-rooted voice for the clergy and worshipping communities of the Diocese of Salisbury.

Having served in parish ministry through periods of significant change, I remain convinced that the local parish—where people are baptised, marriages are blessed, the sick are visited, and the Gospel is proclaimed Sunday by Sunday—remains the beating heart of the Church of England.

As Synod faces complex legislative, cultural, and financial choices, my pledge is to represent you with theological integrity, practical realism, and a deep commitment to seeing our churches thrive rather than simply manage decline.

1. Mission & Evangelism

I am excited about the future of the Church of England! Where the Gospel is proclaimed with clarity, prayer is prioritised, and local communities are genuinely loved, God surely brings fruit.

In our local context, we have been privileged to see God at work: welcoming new families, seeing adults come to know Jesus through Alpha, celebrating adult baptisms, and deepening youth engagement. This growth is not the achievement of one leader; it is the fruit of God's Spirit working through a dedicated community of volunteers, readers, and lay leaders. It proves that when we invest confidence in the local church, ordinary parishes can experience **renewed life and hope**.

I want Synod to give local churches the freedom, confidence and resources to evangelise, make disciples and serve their communities, rather than burdening clergy with unnecessary administration.

2. The Power of the Parish

Growing up outside the Anglican tradition, I came to be captivated by the power of the local parish as a lay assistant in rural Gloucestershire, and despite the rapid societal shifts we're currently witnessing, I've personally never been more excited about 'nuts and bolts' ordinary (yet also extraordinary) frontline parish ministry.



Previous roles

Associate - Battersea Rise, Southwark (2019-21)
Curate - Upper Chelsea, London (2016-19)
Ordinand - St Mellitus, London (2013-16)
Mission Partner - Crosslinks, Johannesburg (2013)
Parish Worker - Moreton, Gloucester (2010-12)

Other commitments

Chair, Salisbury DEF
Member, Salisbury Diocesan Synod
Council of Reference, CPAS

I believe passionately in the local church, and want to see parishes properly resourced so they can continue doing the faithful, everyday ministry that sits at the core of our Anglican identity.

Yet across the country, vacant posts and ever-larger multi-parish benefices are placing increasing pressure on parish ministry. Over the coming quinquennium, I believe Synod needs to commit to a root-and-branch rethink of how we resource sustainable parish ministry: through renewed investment in vocations and frontline clergy numbers, but also through creative local partnerships and confident lay leadership.

3. Clergy Wellbeing

Following a particularly demanding season in ministry, I was recently able to access support for counselling and therapy services for the first time. I have been incredibly grateful for the help I've received, and am **keen to champion clergy wellbeing** at a national level, to create a culture where seeking support is normalised and easily accessible for all. As a member of General Synod, I would advocate for increased resources, improved awareness, and practical and systemic changes so that every minister has the support they need to thrive.

4. Passion for Unity

I love it when we get beyond our various tribes and groupings to come together in mission. It's heartbreaking to see the church so deeply divided by aspects of the LLF process, so whilst I remain committed to the Church of England's received doctrine of marriage, I want us to **move forward together**, finding a path that enables us to remain united in Christ. As a member of General Synod, I would advocate for a way forward that fosters genuine unity rooted in both truth and grace, by working across the traditions to find solutions rather than compound the problem. I would seek to be a thoughtful and independent-minded member of Synod: willing to listen, willing to challenge, and willing to work with people with whom I disagree.

Thank you so much for reading - I'd be hugely grateful for your **first or second preference**. If you'd like to get in touch to ask anything about what I've written above, or about something I haven't had space to mention, please do get in touch!



Proposer: Jenny Nelson
Rector, Holy Trinity, Bradford on Avon & Ass. Rural Dean of Bradford Deanery

Seconder: Mike Tufnell
Team Rector, Canford Magna Parish