

Luke Miller Archdeacon of London



Proposed by The Venerable Catherine Pickford

Seconded by The Rev'd Nigel Taylor

Please do vote as this election is important. I ask you to give me your first or high preference vote.

Christ's Church, founded on Him, is His Bride, but in her human aspect she is ever called by Him to proclaim the Gospel afresh in every generation.

The synod we are electing will make fundamental decisions about the Church of England and what it is to be one of her clerics in the next decades. Please give me your first – or high – preference vote as someone who cares about the issues, and who can be effective in contributing positively to the debates.

MY BACKGROUND

As well as being Archdeacon I am Rector of S Andrew by the Wardrobe in the City of London. I have served in parishes in Watford and Tottenham, where I helped plant a Church and helped set up the church of S Francis at the Engine Room Tottenham Hale. I am a traditionalist catholic, living out the Five Guiding Principles: I am married to Jacqui who is SSM Associate Priest at S Peter Eaton Square. We have three sons. If elected this would be my second term on Synod.

The issues this Synod will approach are significant for Christ's Church and its mission. I believe I have the experience and capacity to contribute effectively, and I ask your first or high preference.

WHAT WILL THE CHURCH BE?

For me the parish is at the heart of the church's mission. I have written and spoken on how the parish must continue to frame our service of our communities. I have planted and supported church plants, chaplaincies and non parochial ministries. I have used my wide experience of establishing churches with Bishop's Mission Orders to help get legislation around them right. In our context we need many mutually supporting ministries. Parishes are the foundation and structure, but they cannot and do not do it all.

WHAT WILL A CLERIC BE?

The last session of the last Synod debated the nature of clerical ministry and vocation. We are uncomfortably caught between two visions: clergy as office holders vocationally committed from cradle to grave; or employees with rights and concomitant duties. Called of God in every aspect of life, we are not simply employees – but we need to have structures that work for us all to thrive in our call. This needs work, and the answers are more complex than they first seem.

THE CLERGY DISCIPLINE MEASURE

The reform of the CDM, acknowledged to be bad for those who are trying to complain and bad for those who are responding to complaints, will be a central work of the new Synod. The understanding I bring of the current flawed CDM can help to shape more Godly and effective processes. Clergy discipline is not simply secular discipline – matters such as upholding the seal of the confessional need to be understood. I recently intervened at Synod to clarify that we will work to apply some matters of discipline to lay volunteers as a step towards addressing issues of bullying of clergy.

DIVERSITY OF OPINION

I am a traditionalist catholic; with the Bishop of London to whom I work directly I seek to model how across our differences we may seek the mutual flourishing of all in the work of the Kingdom. The experience of how diversity of opinion works out in the day to day issues of serving the church is an unusual perspective. (I am one of only two traditionalist archdeacons in the whole Church of England.) Synod desperately needs the direct experience I can bring.

LIVING IN LOVE AND FAITH

I hold a traditional view that the proper field given to us for human sexual relations is within marriage which is for life between a man and a woman. Many disagree with that. Yet we believe that our views are grounded in scripture, upheld by tradition and answer to reason. The LLF process is helping us to learn how to disagree better. It is not designed to bring about a single viewpoint, and there may be difficult debates to come; but they will start from a better place. The experience I bring of diversity in other matters helps me to bring good perspectives to these conversations too.

THE DETAILS MATTER

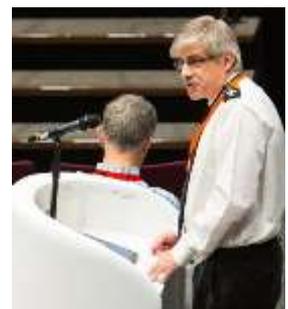
Too often stuff ‘does not work’. The archidiaconal eye for detail and practical application can help that. Each Synod has a ‘Miscellaneous Provisions Measure.’ It sweeps up little things which can seem technical and tedious. The Tea Room often fills up when the MPM comes to be debated. These details can be significant for day to day life. They are bread and butter for Archdeacons, and I can help try to make sure they do indeed make things better and not – despite good intentions – worse for us all.

THE MISSION AND PASTORAL MEASURE

This Measure is being reviewed. It defines how parish boundaries can be changed, whether clerics can be ‘dis-appointed’ if parishes are amalgamated, how clergy are appointed in parochial and non-parochial roles. My speech at the initial debate was quoted in summing up as giving good principles: ‘checks and balances but not blockages.’ The danger of sweeping away protections is real; but we do sometimes need to be able to act.

WIDER PERSPECTIVES

Perspectives from my experience your first or high preference vote will mean I can bring to Synod. **Ecumenism:** I am Chair of the Executive of London Church Leaders which is the main pan-London ecumenical organization. **Multi Faith:** As London Resilience Faith and Belief Sector lead, I work closely with Faith Forum for London and the London Boroughs Faith Network. Firm commitment to one’s own faith enables close engagement with others in common endeavour. **Public Square:** Work in the pandemic response has seen an important shift in attitudes to faith & belief perspectives. I have been appointed by the Mayor to the London Recovery Board to help bring this voice to recovery. **All this brings a wider perspective to General Synod.**



Speaking in Synod in Sea Cadet Uniform to draw attention to Chaplaincy

RECORD OF EFFECTIVENESS

In the last Synod I was Chair of the Revision Committee of the legislation on Religious Communities showing that I can contribute to getting legislation right. I have made regular contributions in the chamber and asked questions. I have helped Synod to influence Government legislation – on Covid restrictions on places of worship and the Prevent Duty. **Please vote for me, a first or high preference!**

Luke Miller