

REV'D SAM FOLLETT

DOB: 30th April 1990

Proposer: Rev'd Jemima Haley, HTB, Chelsea Deanery

Seconded: Rev'd Peter Vannozzi, St Francis Isleworth, Hounslow Deanery

I believe the Church of England has its best years ahead, but we need wisdom, humility and courage as we listen to the voice of God guiding us through the complex and challenging years before us. We will need to respond to significant financial pressures, navigate the huge complexity of our diverse views on marriage and turn back years of numerical decline.



The General Synod needs members who will stand for unity; support our archbishops in their agenda of prayer, evangelism and reconciliation; and pursue an outward-looking, positive agenda. I hope to offer courage, creativity and commitment to see the whole Church flourish under God, for His glory and for the sake of our nation.

About me

- Served on General Synod 2010-2015
- Member of London Diocesan Synod
- Caleb Stream Chaplain – a national accelerated ordination pathway for local ordained ministry, resourcing the clergy shortage in areas of most need
- Serving on the clergy team at Holy Trinity Brompton since 2016
- I grew up in a vicarage in Hertfordshire and took two gap years with Church Army before studying physics at the University of Nottingham. I trained at Ridley Hall, Cambridge (2013-2016).
- I met my wife, Rhiannon, when we were teenagers and we married nine years ago while at University. We now have two beautiful children, Toby (2 years old) and Tilly (3 months old). Rhiannon works as Quality Improvement Lead at Great Ormond Street Hospital.
- I love music and it has been great to get back to live performances post-lockdown. I play guitar and trumpet. We love good food - and even better when it's shared with good friends!

Areas of interest

Young people

When I served as the youngest member of General Synod (2010-2015), I put myself forward to be a voice for young people in the Church of England. This has been a long-term passion and commitment for me since I came to faith myself as a teenager through local church youth work. Aged 20, I chaired the Regeneration Summit which gathered 50 bishops, including the two archbishops, to listen to 150 young people share their experiences and views on how the Church can more effectively reach their generation. I co-founded an award-winning online discipleship resource for young people, The Bridge, with a built-in feedback mechanism designed to feed their perspectives into wider Church decision-making. I have had the privilege of seven years in student ministry including, during the pandemic, pioneering a wellbeing project, Well, to reach isolated and struggling students across London. Eleven years after I was first a member of General Synod, I am still just as passionate about seeing the Church of England reaching, serving and empowering the emerging generation.

Resourcing mission and ministry

The local church is God's chosen vessel to minister to His world and, through the parish system, we are privileged to have a presence in every community. As we face financial pressures, we need creative solutions to resource mission and ministry at the parish level. This will include releasing lay ministry, to see the whole church exercising their gifts, and encouraging more into ordained ministry. As Caleb Stream Chaplain, I am working to see accelerated numbers of clergy ordained and deployed, particularly to resource those parishes that do not have a focal minister. As the Church, we carry good news that the nation needs to hear. We need a Synod that will value the richness of our inherited church and creatively resource mission and ministry at the parish level.

Emerging church

The pandemic has changed life forever and we must continue to respond to changing patterns in the ways people engage with church and faith. The Church of England must continue to support those churches finding it challenging to navigate this new space, and also lead in innovative mission as we respond to new opportunities. Through the pandemic, the Church's practical care for those in need became particularly visible: a clear expression of the love of God. We united and served together in new ways. We must build on this and continue serving our communities.

Renewal of church structures

As outlined in the recent report from the Governance Review Group, the General Synod is in need of reform to meet the needs of the future church and reflect our vision for the 2020s. I have been passionate about church structures from a young age (I know that's unusual!) and my call to ordination came hand in hand with a sense of call to serve the structures of the Church of England. It is vital for the health of the Church that we get this right, and I would consider it a privilege to serve at General Synod and help shape governance structures that are dynamic and fit for resourcing the ministry on the ground today. We must think creatively about the future while holding to our traditions and wisdom of the past. Even more so in our post-pandemic world.

In my teenage years, God gave me a deep love and passion for the Church of England. I value its breadth and, if elected to General Synod, I will listen carefully to the diversity of voices and stand for unity in Christ. When serving on Synod previously, I prayed before every vote, 'Lord, how would you have me vote?'. I commit to do the same if you choose to elect me for another quinquennium.

I would consider it a huge privilege to serve again at General Synod and would be so grateful for your support with your first preference vote.

Rev'd Sam Follett

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