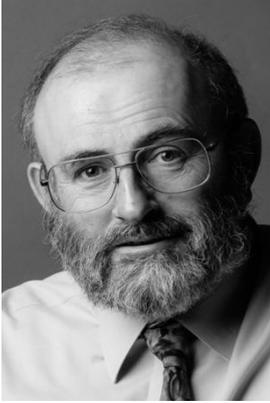


RE-ELECT

CLIVE SCOWEN

Proposed by: **James Normand**, outgoing Chair of Diocesan Synod House of Laity and of Diocesan Finance Committee

Seconded by: **Sarah Tett**, member of Bishop's Council and Chair of Vacancy-in-See Committee



I have been honoured to represent London's laity on General Synod for 16 years. I invite you to elect me for a further term: please give me your **first preference vote**. To discover what I believe, my priorities, what I stand for, my assessment of the situation the Church of England now faces, and

whether I have done what I said I would do 6 years ago, please read on.

The Church of Jesus

A worship song says "It is all about you, Jesus ... Your glory and your fame. It's not about me, as if You should do things my way: You alone are God and I surrender to your ways." The Church is Jesus's church. He is its head and Lord. It exists to make Jesus famous and give Him glory, so that the world will see Him and find salvation through faith in Him. It is not ours, and He calls us to do things His way, not ours. The same is true of General Synod: if it is to fulfil its role in the governance of the Church of England, **Synod needs to surrender to His ways, and so do I, for He is God.**

Priorities

Our nation desperately needs to hear again the Good News of Jesus Christ, and to see it lived out in loving service in the power of the Holy Spirit. So my overriding priority is to enable the Church throughout England to have **evangelism** at the top of its agenda, to allocate finance in support of that, and to remove all impediments to effective mission. I long to see huge numbers of women and men of all backgrounds, but especially younger people, come to personal faith in our Lord Jesus Christ and become His disciples. Nothing must be allowed to get in the way of that great task for which the Lord has commissioned us. I long to see all our traditions being increasingly effective in making disciples and growing the church. Vital to that task is **unity**, because God commands His blessing where brothers and sisters live in unity.

We can embrace much diversity of practice and emphasis within a framework of orthodox doctrine and a common focus on Jesus as Lord of His church. In particular we must ensure that **the promises made to those unable to accept the ordained ministry of women**, of an honoured place to flourish in this church, are **kept**.

We must retain and renew the **parish system**, with its focus on the salvation and pastoral care of all people in the local area, and also invest in newer models of **planted churches**, reaching out on a more eclectic basis to particular demographics or people groups. Both need to be properly financed and resourced with both **ordained and lay leaders**.

Opportunities

While Covid-19 has devastated both our nation and the church, exacerbating the already parlous financial position of many parishes and dioceses, it has also given rise to **many opportunities for reaching folk who did not previously attend church**. Research shows an upsurge in interest in prayer and willingness to explore faith in the early days of the pandemic. It is time to reimagine the future of the Church of England to be able to take those opportunities. I support the principle of the vision articulated by the Archbishop of York of a **simpler, humbler but bolder church of missionary disciples**; a **Christ-centred church** for the whole nation shaped by the 5 Marks of Mission. The new Synod will have a key role in testing, shaping and fleshing out that vision and commending it to the whole church, and I shall be keen to ensure that at its heart is a thoroughly **Biblical view of the Lord Jesus and of the Gospel He proclaimed**.

Threats

If the church is not only to survive but to be effective in **re-evangelising England**, we shall need a quantum increase in (i) **prayer**, (ii) **equipped laity** and (iii) **financial giving**, alongside further **release of Church Commissioners' money** and **elimination of wasteful duplication**, which will require some reorganisation at national and diocesan levels. **Giving follows vision**: if lay people catch a God-given vision they will give generously to enable it. The new synod will need to make the **legislative changes** required to make these things possible, as well as pursuing **radical culture change** regarding **lay ministry and leadership, giving and prayer**.

The greatest threat is that the Church of England may break apart over issues around **sexuality**. I believe that the Lord Jesus clearly teaches that God ordained marriage to be the lifelong union of one man with one woman, and that He calls us all to a fulfilled celibate life unless or until we enter into such a marriage. So I would oppose any proposal to change the church's teaching or canon law so as to allow the blessing of same-sex relationships or to permit same-sex couples to "marry" in church.

At the same time, we need to learn to be like Jesus who, while upholding Biblical truth, showed love and acceptance to people whose lifestyles were far removed from the demanding ethics which He taught and practised. We should give no-one the impression that God does not love them, but rather be crystal clear that the call of the Gospel is for all. Achieving that balance is difficult but I believe that if we depend on the Holy Spirit's resources it is possible for us as it was for Jesus.

My record

6 years ago I said the same things about sexuality. I **voted in favour of the bishops' proposal not to make changes in doctrine or liturgy regarding same-sex relationships**, but that was defeated by a small majority in the House of Clergy. Then on the Business Committee I **supported not taking any business concerning sexuality pending the completion of the *Living in Love and Faith* process**.

In 2015 I said that General Synod should continue to promote generous (indeed sacrificial) giving, both as a joyful response of worship to the love and grace which God has lavished on us in Jesus and as the main way in which God provides His church with financial resources. There has been little opportunity in synod to advance that cause since then, but, as indicated above, I will continue to advocate for it when the opportunity arises.

I also said that Synod should (i) signal that mission and evangelism are to be mainstream priorities for the whole church, (ii) help to clear the ground of legal obstacles to effective mission and (iii) influence the allocation of the Church Commissioners' money so as to support mission initiatives, growth and training of extra ordinands. **All those things I have supported. To an extent they have been achieved but much remains to do.**

As promised I **have supported the aims of the Simplification agenda while being astute to scrutinise the detailed proposals to ensure that**

legitimate interests are appropriately protected, which at times has meant opposing some changes.

In addition, in the last 6 years I have

- chaired the revision committee for the Diocesan Boards of Education Measure
- served on the revision committee for a Miscellaneous Provisions Measure
- been a member of the Business Committee and chaired its Elections Review Group which, among other things, oversaw the introduction of electronic nominations and voting for these elections, and ensured proper synodical consideration of different ways of electing the House of Laity
- served on the synod's Legislative and Standing Orders Committees
- piloted through Synod London's diocesan synod motion on fixed-odds betting terminals, which played a major part in persuading Government radically to reduce the maximum stake allowed
- spoken and moved amendments in a number of debates

Me

I am

- 63 years old and single
- a licensed lay minister and former church warden at Christ Church Roxeth in Harrow
- a semi-retired barrister and former Editor of The Law Reports and The Weekly Law Reports
- trustee of 2 charities and director of 3 charitable companies
- a former local councillor for the London Borough of Harrow (1990–2002)

I am involved in the synodical life of this diocese at every level, currently serving on

- Diocesan Synod, Bishop's Council and Finance Committee
- Bishop of London's Mission Fund Board
- Willesden Area Council
- Harrow Deanery Synod Standing Committee



If you have any questions please contact me:

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Please give me your FIRST PREFERENCE VOTE