

Rev'd Kat Gregory-Witham



Who am I?

- Follower of Jesus!
- Associate Priest, St Matthew's Burnley
- Ordained Pioneer Minister, ordained deacon in 2019, priest in 2020
- Youth Worker prior to ordination
- Live with my partner, Esther, and big black lurcher, Che
- Netball player, hill walker, slow Parkrunner!

Why do I feel called to serve on General Synod?

Since my teenage years in the Youth Council for Derby Diocese, I have felt called by God to work for a positive and faithful future for the Church of England. I've been fortunate to experience a diverse range of ministries within the Church of England including prison chaplaincy, hospital chaplaincy and church schools. I believe as a Church we are well placed to continue to point people to Jesus across our nation and I am passionate about creating opportunities for a people to encounter God. Since the beginning of this year, I have been thinking about the importance of General Synod and have been encouraged to consider standing. After prayer and discussion, I believe God is asking me to offer to serve in this way.

Skills & Experiences:

- Chair of Church of England Youth Council (CEYC) from Nov 2010 – Nov 2012 including observing General Synod and supporting the elected CEYC representatives
- Church of England delegate at the 14th General Assembly of the Conference of European Churches (CEC) in Budapest, 2013
- Diocesan Youth Officer for the Diocese of Blackburn 2012-2016, this role involved supporting churches across the theological spectrum in various different contexts
- Experience of the wider Anglican Communion - Visited the Diocese of the Free State in 2014 and co-led a Pilgrimage of 20 young people there in 2016
- BA (Hons) Christian Youth Work, BA (Hons) Theology & Religion, MA Theology & Ministry
- Member of the Diocesan Board of Finance Audit Risk and Governance Committee Jan 2024-present day, this role involves assessing a broad range of risks faced by church

Rev'd Carol Backhouse, Vicar: Christ Church, Lancaster; Area Dean: Lancaster & Morecambe -

"Kat speaks for many whose voices would not often be heard at Synod. She's passionate about welcoming people to faith, and making church accessible and inclusive for those closest to Christ's heart. Please give her your number 1 vote."

Rev'd Alex Frost, Vicar: St Matthew's, Burnley; Priest in Charge: St John's, Cliviger –

"Having worked alongside Rev Kat for many years, I can honestly say she is an outstanding candidate for General Synod. As well as being professional, diligent and compassionate in her work, she is most certainly a force for good. Her gift to see the best in all people will help herself and others at Synod should she be elected."

Three things I particularly care about:

Youth Participation

Aged 36, I am sadly (even in the Church of England) no longer a 'young person'. But, if I were to be elected, I would advocate for more and better opportunities for the voice of young people to be heard at General Synod. I am part of the team that runs the annual Endeavour Youth Holiday and I've also been involved in Diocesan Youth Forum. As part of the body of Christ, young people are key members of the church and yet are often under-represented. I believe we need to hear their insight and be inspired by their passion.



Estates Ministry



It's such a joy to be part of a growing church, especially as we are in a context of significant economic deprivation and many don't expect anything to flourish in communities like ours. If I were to be elected, I would seek to continue the excellent work of my colleague, Fr Alex Frost, in asking the Church to recognise and value the treasure in our estate churches. We might be economically deprived but we are spiritually rich and have much to offer. Through serving on the M:Power board and as an ADDO, I have been overjoyed to witness God at work in estates across our diocese, including through four Urban Mission ALMs in our parish.

Good Disagreement

This may sound like an odd one, but I wrote my undergraduate dissertation on good disagreement in the Church of England and it's something I continue to be passionate about. When I was a teenager my youth worker did a session about Jesus' prayer in John 17. At the end she handed us cards that said, 'John 17 – what are you going to do about it?' I had mine stuck next to my bed for years. Jesus prayed for future believers "that they may all be one ... so that the world may believe" (John 17:21). Jesus didn't call disciples who would get along easily, he called a diverse bunch and they argued! But their witness transformed the world. If I were to be elected, I wouldn't surround myself with those I agree with. I would take opportunities to listen and to learn from the breadth of our church. I would seek to build bridges, not walls, so that together we might point to Jesus, who the Father sent to save us.

I am committed to equity for everyone, at all levels and roles within the church, regardless of disability, economic power, ethnicity, sex, gender identity, learning disability, mental health, neurodiversity, or sexuality.

Please contact me if you have any questions:
revkatgw@gmail.com
07397 775388

Thank you for reading my statement.

If you feel able to, please give me your first preference or highest possible vote.