



**Sheri Sturgess**

## ***General Synod election address***

I was privileged to serve as one of your representatives on General Synod from 2005 to 2010 and am now seeking your support for my election for a further five-year term.

I have been proposed by Bob Foulkes (West Wivelshire deanery), until recently Chapter Canon of Truro Cathedral, and seconded by Geoff Cox (Lay Chair of West Wivelshire Deanery).

### ***What issues facing the Church of England do I feel strongly about?***

In my opinion the **Reform and Renewal programme** introduced to General Synod in February 2015 is arguably the most important thing facing the Church of England at present, as it seeks to equip the Church to meet the significant challenges of the future across a number of different areas. It is radical and challenging, and if implemented will help us to grow into a more efficient Church, making better use of our resources and more relevant to the society we are part of.

Within this programme, the report on **Facilitating Lay Leadership** acknowledges the potential of the laity to offer more to the Church, whilst continuing to support and work alongside our clergy. I welcome the current mood for a change of culture in the development of many different forms of lay ministry, and believe that this needs to be supported and encouraged.

The **Developing Discipleship** strand fits so well with our own strategy in the Diocese of Truro, and is a crucial part of developing the ministry of the laity. I want to see our own Way of Life programme continuing to be promoted across the Diocese, as well as tapping into the resources that are being developed nationally, such as the Pilgrim courses and Exploring Christianity.

I was privileged to be asked by Bishop Tim to be one of 10 people from this diocese to attend the first of the **Shared Conversations on Scripture, Mission and Human Sexuality** taking place around the country. We met with others from four other South West dioceses over three days, people of all persuasions and a full range of views on, in particular, homosexuality and same-sex marriage. This issue is scheduled to be discussed by General Synod in July 2016. It is not yet clear how the Church will seek to move forward, but what is apparent to me is that in all our discussions we must take care in our interpretation of Scripture, proceed in an atmosphere

of openness and trust, acknowledge our differences and disagreements, have respect for the beliefs of others and ensure that we are seen to be a welcoming Church.

## ***If I am elected, what can I offer?***

- I will be committed to attending all the sessions of General Synod, and voting on the business before us.
- I will take part in the debates and the group work, and network with other GS members, using the knowledge I gained of the workings of the Church of England during my time as Diocesan Secretary and since.
- If re-elected, I will continue to use my professional skills as a member of the Archbishops' Finance Committee. This Committee advises the Archbishops' Council and diocese on all financial aspects of the Council's work and the overall needs of and resources of the Church.
- In the last quinquennium, I was a member of the Steering Committee of the Miscellaneous Provisions Measure, a Measure that made changes to many different pieces of legislation. I will indicate my willingness to serve on a GS Committee again.
- In my contributions and voting, I will take account not just of my own beliefs, but of what I believe to be in the best interests of the Church of England as a whole, and our own Diocese.

## ***Biographical information***

Educational and Professional background: I have an MA in Mathematics from Newnham College Cambridge (1977), and am a Chartered Accountant (FCA) (1980). Following our move to Cornwall in 1983, I set up and ran my own accountancy practice for 10 years, whilst also raising our two daughters.

Diocesan roles: I served as Diocesan Lay Chair from 2010 to 2015, and have recently been re-elected unopposed to that position for a further 3 year term. I am a member of the Bishop's Diocesan Council, Chair of the Churches Uses Committee, and have served on the Board of Patronage (to which I am seeking re-election), the World Church Committee and the Discipleship, Learning and Training group. I am a facilitator for the Sunday Plus course for Local Worship Leaders.

I worked in the Diocesan office from 1997 to 2010; the last 8 years as Diocesan Secretary and so can demonstrate a thorough knowledge of the workings and concerns of the whole Diocese.

National roles: As a member of General Synod, I was elected to the Finance Committee of the Archbishops' Council, and also served as a member of Steering Committee of the Miscellaneous Provisions Measure. I meet annually with the other Diocesan Lay Chairs, and we network by email regularly.

**Please vote for me to be one of your representatives of the  
Diocese of Truro at General Synod for the next five  
years.**

If you wish to discuss any of the above or any other matter with me, please do not hesitate to contact me.

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