

GENERAL SYNOD ELECTION 2021 -2026

KATHRYN TUCKER

Stetfold Rocks Farm, Exford, Minehead, Somerset TA24 7NZ. 01643 831213 stetfoldfarm@gmail.com

Thank you so much for the privilege of allowing me to represent you at General Synod for the past six years. It has been a huge learning curve and I have met such interesting individuals and enjoyed the interaction and discussion with so many. I was part of the initial LGBTQ supporting Inclusivity which is paramount to my faith. I belong to WATCH, the Evangelical Forum and recently joined the Environmental Group, and am also member of the Diocesan Bishops Council.

I live and farm with my husband John at Exford in the heart of Exmoor. Our fifth-generation family Exmoor Hill farm has a traditional focus on livestock, sheep and cattle and includes property lettings. We are blessed with 4 children and 11 lively grandchildren, whose ages range from 14 years to twins of 4 months and live in Sweden, London, Malvern and Winchcombe.

Growing up in mid Devon, my early church experience led me to join the Young Anglicans, this opened my eyes to a new horizon, a prayerful, exciting journey with God, which continues. I am fully embedded in the rural church and serve as churchwarden, Deanery Synod representative and Safeguarding officer but most of all, am here for everyone regardless of faith. Our church is part of an eight parish Benefice and we all work together, especially since COVID, organising well supported Zoom services. We reach out to the young and many people who do not usually attend church. I recognise that there is a place for different styles of worship within the Church of England, which we do well in the Benefice, catering for all. There is an inclusiveness in the countryside which finds a place for people with all their differences surrounded by God's creation.

I am a huge supporter of family life and education, my involvement with children ranges from 0-18 years, as a Founder member and Trustee of West Somerset Academies Trust (6 schools, 4 nurseries) Governor of



Exford and Minehead schools and Invigilator at West Somerset College. Before COVID I regularly took assemblies at Exford First School, assisted with church club, helped organise church nativity services. There is nothing more rewarding than telling the children the wonderful Bible stories, listening to their reactions and watching their innocence, is quite emotional and humbling. Recently our church took the tentative steps of welcoming children into the church again after the Rector organised a Pilgrimage around the perimeter of the village. Candles glowing provided a warm welcome to this happy bunch of young pilgrims. What joy to listen to their chatter and feel their awe!

The church is facing challenging times as is farming. We know that farming is needing to adapt, trying new ways to thrive and be viable for future generations while also keeping true to its roots. The same is true for the church, especially in rural areas. We must be ready to face these with prayer and a willing heart, adapting where and when we can. Rural ministry presents many problems which are often overlooked by the main church. I would like these to be recognised when we have less clergy and there is an increasing work load for those of us with appropriate gifts to offer encouragement, support and positive help.

I have been approached by the Archbishop of York's Vision and Strategy Group of General Synod to contribute towards understanding the positivities and concerns regarding the rural church.



I would like to stand for General Synod to help enable our Church -

- ◆ **To be bolder, more prayerful, more inclusive and diverse. A church for EVERYONE.**
- ◆ **To be more attractive and welcoming for young people and to appreciate the steadfast work of the folk who continue to maintain and support the church.**
- ◆ **To welcome and accept women Bishops.**
- ◆ **To be more adaptable, as I have become. I am fully embedded in the Rural Church and know how effective it can be within its community but I have also witnessed, sadly, when it has not worked. Throughout COVID the rural church has adapted successfully to new challenges, one being ZOOM, reaching out to many who hesitate going to church.**
- ◆ **To be more sympathetic and support ways to tackle climate change. Our farm is part of a Higher-Level Scheme which helps us to adapt to be more environmentally conscious. I feel my role as a Christian is to be a good steward of God's creation and I want to encourage others to do the same.**

It is my dearest wish to be able to rise to the challenges the church faces, and to make a positive contribution to General Synod.



Thank you for reading my election statement. If you would like to see and hear me online I have a short message for you:

<https://youtu.be/8MR2eNVMHa4>