

Mark Lucas

Rector of St Botolph's, Barton Seagrave and Hanwood Park
and St Edmund's, Warkton



- Peterborough Diocese for 16 years
- Member of General Synod since 2015
- Member of Appointments Committee (2015-2021)
- Member of Diocesan Board of Finance 2012-2025
- Member of the Bishop's Council 2013-2025
- Ordained in 1994 in Chelmsford Diocese
- 1998-2010 served in Chichester Diocese
- Four married children and nine grandchildren.

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Please consider giving me your first preference vote

I have served on the General Synod on your behalf for the past eleven years. I have been privileged to play my part in this work and would very much appreciate your support to continue. My prayer is that the church of England will be alive and thriving for my grandchildren (and, in turn, for theirs). I have taken a particular interest, among other things, in the 'Five Guiding Principles' and their application within the church. I believe strongly that the church should maintain a valued place at all levels for the flourishing of those who find current developments problematic.

I am totally committed to the Church of England, I am a 'conviction' Anglican. Yet, over the last 50 years the Church we serve has seen more change than ever before in its history. Some examples:

- 1980 and 2000, the introduction of new, alternative, liturgies
- 1981, permission granted for remarriage of divorcees in church
- 1994, the ordination of the first women priests, followed in 2015 by the consecration of women bishops
- 2010, Clergy *freehold* replaced by *Common Tenure* bringing 'professionalisation' to Parochial ministry: annual reviews, disciplinary procedures, and codes of conduct. Much of this is still being shaped by debate in the General Synod
- 2003, the disastrous Clergy Discipline Measure (CDM) was introduced, now to be replaced with the Clergy Conduct Measure (CCM) agreed by General Synod in 2025 and due for implementation this year
- We have had multiple reports on human sexuality culminating in the huge collection of resources, 'Living in Love and Faith,' which has now run its course, though the debate continues and will certainly shape the next quinquennium of General Synod
- Multiple parish benefices have continued to grow in number and size, and with it, clergy workload and stress. Decreasing parochial clergy numbers means we now face increasing reliance on voluntary lay and PTO ministry to keep many parishes alive
- Financial constraints have increased in many dioceses. There have been significant changes in parish funding and share allocations within dioceses as budgets become more and more stretched
- The COVID crisis has taken its toll, and many parishes are still recovering, many others learned new skills and continue to use new skills and technology creatively
- Sunday church attendance is now under 1 million with significant loss among young people and children. This is now significantly lower than attendance of Muslims at weekly worship.

Change is not all bad, of course. Recent years have seen:

- Advances in safeguarding training and practice, and recognition of serious past failings
- A refreshed desire to see more children and young people in our churches leading to freedom to experiment with new liturgies and fresh expressions of church
- Increased lay involvement in ministry, both voluntary and professional
- Since the COVID crisis many parishes have real and ongoing experience of the 'Quiet Revival' leading to significant and encouraging church growth
- Following debate in General Synod, a recent (2026), and welcome, increase in clergy stipends and pensions, and ongoing discussion about clergy retirement provision

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Church of England,
a 'conviction' Anglican**

We should not lose focus on our core beliefs, heritage, tradition, and practice; the things we do well. We have an ageless, life changing message to proclaim. A message of forgiveness through Jesus Christ, and the promise of eternity. Everything else is peripheral.

I believe very strongly in dialogue. If we want to arrive at the truth, we need to listen and be free to challenge one another with respect, truth, and honesty. I am conservative in belief, but I support change in practice where it leads to better, clearer communication of the gospel

During my time on Synod I have:

- Asked questions about the 'Five Guiding Principles' and their application within the church
- Asked questions about ecclesiological balance at senior levels
- I have spoken up to urge respect for others in debate
- I have spoken in support of the parish patronage system as a means of maintaining parish traditions and distinctions
- I have listened and made good friends across traditions

If elected to serve for the coming quinquennium I will:

- speak up for busy parish clergy against an increasingly episcopally directed church.
- support reforms to clergy condition and terms of service that will enhance clergy wellbeing and the proclamation of the gospel
- support reforms to enhance clergy pensions and retirement housing provision that will improve the lives of those who have served the church
- support the freeing of central church resources to benefit parishes on the ground
- continue to work to maintain a respected place within in the Church of England for all who find themselves isolated or marginalised by change

I would really appreciate it if you would consider giving me your first preference vote.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Phil', followed by a long horizontal stroke.