

The Revd Canon Dr Rowan Williams Vicar, St Mark's Wellingborough



Nominated by: Canon Tim Alban Jones, Vice Dean, Peterborough Cathedral

Seconded by: Revd Clare Glover, Rector of Aston-le-Walls, Byfield, Boddington, Eydon and Woodford Halse

I bring a wide range of experience both inside and beyond the Church: before ordination I lived in two religious communities, and worked with adults with learning disabilities and complex needs. I was ordained in Leicester in 2005 and have served in deprived urban parishes, hospital chaplaincy (with a specialism in palliative care), higher education chaplaincy, and most recently in cathedral ministry. After 8 years at Peterborough Cathedral, I have been called to return to ministry rooted in a local estate community, where the Church tries to practise what it preaches in terms of welcome, service and accessibility to all.

I also come with previous experience of Synod, as a representative for York Diocese between 2013-8. One of the things I most valued about my time on Synod was the chance to work closely with people whose views and theology are very different from my own; if elected, I would want to do that again, because I believe passionately that by listening to each other's experience, we can have more honest and informed conversations about the issues we find hard to agree on, and grow into a closer love for the whole people of God.

Since I arrived in Peterborough diocese I have been privileged to support parishes, deaneries and individuals as Bishop's Adviser for Liturgy and Worship; assisting with cover in parishes of varying churchmanship across the diocese from Brackley to Rutland has given me additional insight into the everyday challenges and joys of ministry in all sorts of contexts. After acting as ADDO for Young Vocations in York, I am now a Bishop's Adviser assisting in the discernment process for ordained ministry, and it has been a joy to support several ordinands and curates on placement.

I have a strong academic background, with publications on Franciscan spirituality, chaplaincy, and the missional potential of cathedrals. But alongside all that I am also neurodiverse, and I'm still working out what that means for me as a creature of God, made a particular way, when the world and the Church isn't always geared up for people like me. How do our churches best respond to the needs of people who are physically and mentally different? How can we support congregations to see every member as a gift, rather than a challenge? I am keen to see effective safeguarding in place in our churches, and to encourage wider representation so that our Church actually looks like the communities in which it is set. I long to be part of a Church where race, gender, sexuality, disability, economic or educational background are not barriers to full participation at every level; a Church which values all its ministers, and supports all the people of God to become who they were called to be.

If you have any questions that could help you decide whether to give me your vote, please don't hesitate to get in touch: rowantheless@gmail.com