

Diocese of Oxford
General Synod Elections 2021

Questions to Candidates

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| Name of Candidate (please enter name in full) | Prudence Mary Prior Dailey |
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Questions and Replies

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| Question 1: Reply: 120 word limit applies | How do you think General Synod can promote engagement with the recommendations of the <i>From Lament to Action</i> report published in April this year? The original brief of <i>From Lament to Action</i> was to feed into a commission: it seems to have jumped the gun somewhat by producing recommendations of its own. While the report identified shameful anecdotal instances of racism, a commission should be established with an evidence-based approach (similar to that employed by the Government's <i>Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities</i>), with which the General Synod can engage. It should revisit the question of whether the Church is, in fact, institutionally racist, rather than starting from the assumption that it is. The General Synod, and the wider Church, must begin from the premise that 'there is neither Jew nor Greek' (Galatians 3:28), and avoid the unchristian precepts of Critical Race Theory. |
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| Question 2: Reply: 120 word limit applies | What are your views on the place of the parish in the Church of England, bearing in mind concerns raised by the 'Save the Parish' campaign, concerns about availability of resources for the rural church and opportunities for new mission initiatives outside the usual parochial structure? The Parish IS the heart of the Church of England; and in rural communities especially, the centrality of the Parish Church to the 'cure of souls' cannot be overestimated. It is implausible to imagine any centralised approach to declining congregations, however well intentioned, being <i>more</i> effective than a dedicated ministry on the ground, with its own building, in every locality. It comes as no surprise that—as the Archbishop of Canterbury recently admitted in a Church Times interview—central expenditure intended to produce church growth has not borne fruit. The Church simply does not have the resources to run parochial and extra-parochial models in tandem: every available penny should be ploughed into Parish ministry (including parochially based mission initiatives). |
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| Question 3: | If a motion was presented for a change in the law to permit same sex marriage in the Church of England, would you support it and, in any event, what outcomes would you like to see from the <i>Living in Love and Faith</i> conversations? |
| Reply: 120 word limit applies | I would not support same-sex marriage within the Church of England, as I understand it to be contrary to the Christian understanding of the purposes for which marriage exists. Ideally, I would like to see a reiteration of the Church's historic teaching on marriage and sexuality; although I am realistic about the deep divisions now existing within the Church, and I support a high degree of pastoral accommodation. At the same time, I would like to see increased mutual understanding, including of the challenges faced by those who identify as LGBT; and I would like to see a shift away from the intense focus on LGBT issues and towards a greater understanding of the Christian view of sexuality more generally. |

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| Question 4: | Would you support any further proposals for 'Church of England' financial resources to disinvest from fossil fuel industries and what other actions do you think could be taken in the Church of England in order to promote the Fifth Mark of Mission? |
| Reply: 120 word limit applies | Fossil fuels have been central to the development of living standards we in the West now consider basic, and to which those emerging from poverty elsewhere in the World rightly aspire. Ultimately, the solution to reducing CO ₂ emissions will be technological—so it is right to encourage investment in the development of cheap, reliable, clean energy, but not to demonise fossil fuels (on which we still largely rely). The Parish Church has a vocation to transmit a sense that 'the earth is the Lord's and all that therein is' (Psalm 24v1). Churchyards are often incredibly biodiverse (having been untouched by development), and have a particular role in reminding us of God's gifts in creation, and of the future New Creation. |