

**Diocese of Oxford  
General Synod Elections 2021**

**Questions to Candidates**

<b>Name of Candidate</b> (please enter name in full)	<b>ROSS ALEXANDER MEIKLE</b>
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**Questions and Replies**

<b>Question 1:</b>	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?
<b>Reply:</b> 120 word limit applies	I support the Implementation Action Timetable from April's report. I also think that General Synod needs to challenge each diocese on the representation of UKME/GMH clergy and laity standing for General Synod, and actively engage the whole church to consider who needs to be encouraged and supported <u>now</u> to stand for the next General Synod. Furthermore, diocesan representatives may wish to reflect on who might need to be discouraged from standing at the next General Synod to create space for those who haven't had a chance to have their voice heard.

<b>Question 2:</b>	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?
<b>Reply:</b> 120 word limit applies	<p>I advocate for the parish framework, providing firm foundations to our mission through churches and schools.</p> <p>I was a member of a fresh expression, so I know the value of new mission initiatives. They stretch discipleship and reach out to others. Let's recognise and support relationships between parish churches and new communities in ways that are collaborative; not competitive nor colonial.</p> <p>I have experience of the delight and struggle of rural ministry. Often they are denied funding, and ministers become increasingly over-stretched with more churches than are feasible for mission. Let's create a culture of celebration and affirmation to our rural churches and ministers, and visible support for incumbents from other clergy within the diocese.</p>

<b>Question 3:</b>	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?
<b>Reply:</b> 120 word limit applies	<p>I would support a change in law to permit same-sex marriages in the Church of England. The significance and preaching of love being the foundation upon which marriages today are built necessitates the openness to same-sex couples. If not marriage, then I would hope for a liturgical space for same-sex couples to know God’s blessing upon them.</p> <p>More importantly, the Church of England needs to repeal the outdated document ‘Issues in Human Sexuality’ and declare it unfit for purpose.</p> <p>Regarding LLF, I hope that it can help us to live together and accept that even if there are theological disagreements, we might still respect, celebrate and see Christ in one another.</p>

<b>Question 4:</b>	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?
<b>Reply:</b> 120 word limit applies	<p>I would support further proposals. It is shameful that there are dioceses who have not yet disinvested.</p> <p>Let’s recognise that this is not merely an ecological matter but a justice matter too. Throughout the crisis, climate refugees will migrate; the poor and marginalised will suffer at the hands of the rich and powerful; and there will be further shortages of food and fuel. The decisions we make now will form the foundation of a long-term response.</p> <p>A strong response will acknowledge the need for supportive action for Q1 and Q3, as the climate crisis will stoke the fires of race-, gender-, and sexuality-based violence; and will test our commitment to Q2 as parishes respond to the needs of their communities.</p>