

Questions to Candidates

On previous occasions, those entitled to vote in the General Synod election have been able to engage candidates face-to-face at hustings. However, during recent elections, the number of candidates and electors attending these events has diminished dramatically. At the same time, electronic media make it much easier to raise questions through email, websites, Twitter, Facebook and in other ways.

We have encouraged voters to pose questions which can be put to candidates collectively. The questions set out below are generic in nature, but based on those I have received.

If you would like to engage in this question and answer process, please enter your replies in the space provided after each question. I reserve the right to remove any response which might reasonably be considered offensive or prejudicial (though I do not expect that I shall need to do so).

A word limit has been set for your replies of ***120 words per question.*** Additional words will be cut from the final submission but you could, of course, give a shorter answer and invite anyone who wishes to discuss further with you to send supplementary comments to your email address (remembering, of course, to give it!).

Please return your completed form to jrees@wslaw.co.uk and copied to sleader@wslaw.co.uk, by **9.00 am on Monday 28 September 2015**. Your submissions will be posted on the Diocesan website, with your Election Address and Video Presentation/photograph, on Wednesday 30 September at 5.00 pm.

Canon John Rees
Presiding Officer for General Synod Election
September 2015

Name of Candidate (please enter name in full)	Andrew Bell
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Questions and Replies

Question:	Given there are such strongly held differing views on the issue of human sexuality in our Church, how do you think the Church of England should approach the issue in the next five years?
Reply: 120 word limit applies	Because this is clearly an important issue, I covered it in my election address – content copied below: (We) should seek to adhere to scripture and ... traditional doctrine of the Church, in a spirit of God's grace and unity

	<p>rather than judgement and division. The teaching ... of the 1998 Lambeth Conference “...<i>upholds faithfulness in marriage between a man and a woman in lifelong union</i>”, while committing us “...<i>to listen to the experience of homosexual persons and ... to assure them that they are loved by God and that all baptised, believing and faithful persons, regardless of sexual orientation, are full members of the Body of Christ</i>”.</p> <p>We should continue to reflect on this issue together as recommended by Pilling.</p>
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Question:	What role, if any, do you think the Church of England and its partner churches in the Anglican Communion might play in response to the world’s current needs?
Reply: 120 word limit applies	<p>God cares about the world and about its problems, from global warming to the refugee crisis. The Church, Christ’s body, must care too. We should give, go, support and campaign – remembering that the greatest need is knowledge of the love of Christ.</p> <p>The Church of England has a presence throughout our land, and a voice in the corridors of power. We must use this to bring hope and support to the needy and to campaign for justice and righteousness.</p> <p>The Anglican Communion similarly is well-placed to meet needs across much of the world. Through my church’s “Love Africa” initiative, partnering with churches in Uganda, I have directly experienced how much can be achieved with limited resources, by the local church.</p>

Question:	Do you think the ministry of the Church of England might need to change in the coming years, and, if so, what changes would you support in the selection and training of its lay and ordained leadership?
Reply: 120 word limit applies	<p>We are “a royal priesthood” (1Pet2:5,9,10). We should encourage every-member ministry, always recognising that different members with different gifts have different roles to play.</p> <p>The recent report of the Resourcing Ministerial Education Task Group expresses a “vision” of a growing church with a flourishing ministry, including increases in ordinations and rapid development of lay ministries. Its recommendations form a good basis for further consultations, planning and proposals.</p> <p>I believe ordained and lay ministry should be mutually supportive. Selection should discern and recognise individuals’</p>

	<p>gifts, and training must grow, develop and encourage those gifts. This applies from selection for ordination to appointment of a Sunday-school teacher or sidesperson. We shouldn't expect the incumbent – or anyone else – to be good at everything.</p>
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