



Revd Dr Andrew Atherstone

**Assistant Minister, Eynsham & Cassington
Tutor and Research Fellow, Wycliffe Hall**

Background and experience

- I have lived and worked in Oxford Diocese for the last 25 years, and for the last 16 years as assistant minister (SSM) of Eynsham and Cassington, two villages in West Oxfordshire in the Woodstock deanery.
- My main employment is training women and men for ordained ministry, and as leaders in theology and mission, at Wycliffe Hall in Oxford, where I teach Christian history and Anglican studies. I am biographer of our archbishop: *Archbishop Justin Welby: Risk-taker and Reconciler* (DLT).
- For the wider Church of England, I currently serve on the Faith and Order Commission, and the Liturgical Commission.

Priorities for the next General Synod

- I am eager that all General Synod decisions be taken with local parishes in mind, especially to enable us to be more effective in reaching out with the good news of Jesus Christ in our local communities and in the public square. I applaud the new Synod vision for the 2020s of being ‘simpler, humbler, bolder’, and on reducing ecclesiastical red-tape.
- The next Synod will decide the future shape of theological education. I am eager to promote training which is creative, flexible, theologically rigorous, and of the highest quality in preparing clergy and laity for a lifetime of ministry.
- The next Synod will also make important pastoral decisions about marriage and sexuality. On this vital question I want to help us hear one another carefully and prayerfully, without polarization, and have contributed as a consultant to the *Living in Love and Faith* project. Our Anglican canons and liturgies wisely uphold the sanctity of Christian marriage as between a man and a woman for life.
- I am keen to see closer partnerships, in mission and practical action, between Anglicans and Christians from other denominations, and currently serve as an elected member of the Church of England’s Council for Christian Unity.
- We also have a great deal to learn in the Church of England from the worldwide Anglican family in all its remarkable diversity, as I have witnessed first-hand as a member since 2019 of the Anglican Consultative Council, one of the Anglican Communion’s four ‘instruments of communion’.
- In all our debates in the Church of England, I want to see an end to harsh language and political posturing, so that all our conversations are grace-filled and attractive to a watching world.

I would appreciate you giving me an early vote.

With thanks, Andrew Atherstone

Proposer: Revd Dan Heyward (vicar of St Andrew’s, Oxford)
Seconder: Revd Joy Mawdesley (associate vicar of St Nicholas’s, Newbury)