

# DIANA FAVELL

**Standing for the role of a Lay Member of the General Synod**

**Proposed by John Hoyland (Diocesan Synod Member)  
and Robert Perry (General Synod Member)**



I was born in South Shields but then moved south when my father was ordained. He had parishes in Birmingham and the South Wales mining valleys.

When I grew up, I found my way into theatre, and after an Equity Apprenticeship in Stage Management I spent more than 10 years stage managing theatres around the country, in London, Chichester, Manchester and at the Bristol Old Vic.

I settled in Bristol, marrying actor/director Andrew Hilton. We have one son.

My career swerved and I started to Stage Manage conferences and national events. These included, in

2010, Pope Benedict's Service of Beatification of Cardinal Henry Newman at Cofton Park, and 2 years later the Queen's Thames Diamond Jubilee.

I have always been a regular church goer. While in Bristol I attended Cotham Parish Church, which has an accent on inclusivity and creativity, where I ran Junior Church, a monthly tea and activity group for older members, was on the PCC and also a Church Warden. I understand the challenges of running a church and all the different aspects of church life and would take this grassroots experience with me if elected.

Since living in Cornwall, I worship at Paul Church (St Pol de Leon), part of the Penlee Cluster, and we live in Mousehole. The church has a strong relationship with Mousehole School where I am involved with Open The Book, writing very short plays for the children to perform. I sing in the church choir, am on the PCC and also help run a weekly Julian Group. I feel being deeply rooted in church and community is essential for being on General Synod.

I appreciate the beauty of Cornwall while being aware of its many areas of deprivation. In the Penlee Cluster our churches support local food banks, a Holiday Club for local children and St Mary's, Penzance, operates a night church. Paul Church is part of the Inclusive Church Network, the first Anglican Church in Cornwall to receive this accreditation. Being a church open for everyone in our community is something I believe is very important.

**Having spent my life involved with the Church of England I would like to contribute at Synod level.**

**My working life has been unusual but has prepared me to absorb information quickly, listen, make thoughtful decisions and be firm.**

## Faith and Inspiration

I believe in the inclusivity of God's invitation, welcome and love for all. I am inspired by the life of St Francis of Assisi, the writings of Julian of Norwich and Richard Rohr's Center for Action and Contemplation.

My inspiration is also this landscape and our Celtic Saints. Their names are scattered throughout our villages and churches with stone crosses at many turnings. There are so many symbols of Christianity embedded in this county.

This is an etching I made of a pre-Norman cross-head placed in the wall of Paul Churchyard.



## Issues on the Geneal Synod

The parish system, ensuring there is **a Christian presence in every community**, is central to the Church of England. We need to get the balance right and make sure local churches are given adequate support within the framework of national decisions. This covers so many things, including the provision and deployment of clergy, clergy wellbeing, connecting parish churches with communities and maintaining church buildings.

I believe in **a church for everyone**, where all feel they belong and are valued for who they are. In the remaining year of this Synod's term a major item will be Living in Love and Faith. I support clergy being able to use the Prayers of Love and Faith with same sex couples, where they think it is pastorally appropriate. I also support clergy not to have to use the prayers. We need to make space for us all to worship within our conscience and to respect deeply held views.

I support moves within the Church to **respect and safeguard the natural environment**. We need to be sustainable in our responsibility to future generations, including moving to be carbon net zero, and in helping natural environments to thrive. As a major landowner the Church of England has a special role to play in protecting nature and supporting tenants on its land to use it responsibly for the long term.

We need to ensure **the Church's place in the life of the community**, that the vital meeting of sacred and secular, is never overlooked. This is something we mark annually in Mousehole, with people coming together for the Blessing of the Lifeboat.

On a Sunday in August, Mousehole holds the annual Blessing of the Lifeboat, the evening chosen for its high tide. With a suppressed roar the huge lifeboat, now berthed in Newlyn, comes into the harbour. The Mousehole Male Voice Choir assembles, along with holiday makers and local people. Hymn sheets are handed out so that everyone can join in singing 'Eternal Father Strong to Save'. The Lifeboat Crew and Revd Derath Durkin are on deck for a service of prayers and thanksgiving, the lifeboat blessed for it's work of rescue in the year to come.