General Synod 2021 Election Address

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"Christendom is dying", wrote Ray Simpson.

A provocative statement. It isn't dying – in many places it is very much alive - but it *is* changing, and the church is both caught up in and has an important part to play in that change.

Our society is changing, we can see it all around us, and its needs are changing. It has changed around us, and the sometimes church struggles to adapt. Now, perhaps more than ever, the Gospel needs to be

heard afresh, the Good News announced in the places and to the people that need it. *You are beloved of God. You are worthwhile.*

Coronavirus has taken much away from us, many lives and many livelihoods. Dealing with its on-going impact, and the accumulated impacts of the past two years, will be a task for a generation to come. Jesus said "come to me, all you who labour and are heavily burdened, and I will give you rest" (Matt 11:28)

Coronavirus has stolen the focus on another on-going crisis, the climate emergency. The Franciscan and Celtic ideas of care for creation can speak into these issues. Zoom has allowed people who would never have tried church to attend, and enabled those no longer able to participate due to age or distance, to participate once more.

In the running of the church, what used to work is coming to the point of not working any more, whilst placing enormous strains on people, lay and clergy.

These are some of the issues that face us, and in them we look to to see what God is already doing, and join in with that. To see where grace will take us next.

This is my first time of standing for General Synod, as I'd like to be more involved in the debate and decision-making that guides the church. I will listen prayerfully to all that is discussed, and represent the views of my Parish to Synod. I would greatly appreciate your first preference vote.