

## General Synod Election Address, 2025

### Revd Matt Rodgers

Vicar of St. Mark's & St. Martin's, Great Grimsby & Assistant Rural Dean (Grimsby & Cleethorpes)

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**Nominated by:** Rev Christine Goldsmith (Rector of the Wolds Gateway Group, Assistant Rural Dean and Mission Enabler)

**Seconded by:** Rev Julie Donn (Rector of St. Andrew's, Immingham, Rural Dean & Assistant Archdeacon)



**A little about me** Hello, I'm Matt. I'm married to Nay and we have 3 incredible children. I'm Vicar at St. Mark's where I have been since its revitalisation in 2021, under the Diocese of Lincoln's *Resourcing the Urban Church* programme. Before that, I spent 7 years in Lincoln, in which I served as an employed lay worker (Youth & Student Pastor) for St. Swithin's before training mixed-mode for Ordination at St. Mellitus College, London. As a planting curate, I completed my final curacy year in North East Lincolnshire, where the real learning began. I am committed to collaborative working, whether in the local church, deanery, community or at home, where my family all play their part in mission and ministry to varying degrees. Prior to 2014, I lived and worked in Kent and was positively shaped and natured by my local church (St. Stephen's, Tonbridge) and given a particular heart for reaching the younger generations. I really enjoy being a part of the Diocese of Lincoln and believe that God has good things in store for us and the wider Church of England.

**Why I am standing for General Synod** Since exploring vocation in the Church of England, I have believed that God is using us for His purposes in this time. I take seriously the call to proclaim the gospel afresh to each new generation and I want to be a part of this, as well as helping to shape the bigger picture of the Church we are and are becoming. Standing on Diocesan Synod, I have valued the opportunity to stay informed of the opportunities and challenges we face, trying to best to contribute to the conversations and practical outworkings of our shared life together. Whilst my personal views inform my contribution, I seek and pray for unity in the church, whilst celebrating our differences. Within my own churches, a generous orthodoxy allows us to worship, pray, serve and grow together, even if the held theology of church and church leader differ. We're holding onto unity and the church is growing.

When I receive feedback and read the reports from General Synod, I am concerned by a culture of division which is forming amongst those who represent the people of our dioceses. I believe how we dialogue and make decisions needs to change. I want to be present, engaged and participate for positive change as we witness to Christ in our nation and the nations. I hope and pray that in time, the atmosphere will change, and wisdom will prevail.

### **My key areas of interest**

- A church that is younger and more diverse: I am encouraged by the *Quiet Revival* report which shows that the Church is now more diverse and reaching younger generations. I also note that this is largely in Pentecostal and Catholic churches. We need an inter-generational approach to worship (which only happens when we have all ages) to avoid extinction and to mobilise the church in its missional mandate. This is an absolute priority for the Church of England.
- How we reach the 'unreached': I am committed to taking learning from my own parish and across the diocese to help us reach more people with the gospel.
- Living in Love and Faith – I hold to the current teaching on marriage and sexual ethics in the Church of England and am committed to prayer, engaging in theological study and understanding, and listening to other Christian brothers and sisters to work out the way forward in this complex process. God-willing, I have many years ahead of me in ministry and it's in my personal interest to get this right.



Ultimately, I will take this responsibility seriously, with prayer and discernment, always seeking the guidance of the Holy Spirit. I'll be a colleague who is ready and willing to listen and pray, partners in the gospel. I will speak up when there is a meaningful contribution to be made. And I will be a person of integrity at General Synod, as I hope to be in the local parish.

Please consider voting for me and giving me your first preference vote if you feel able. Thank you.