



The Revd Dr James Hadley

Nominators

The Revd Canon David Wright
The Revd Canon Joanna Udal

Chaplain

All Saints', Milan
Ascension, Cadenabbia

Bishop's Council & Diocesan Trustee, Diocesan Synod | **Secretary**, Associazione Chiesa d'Inghilterra in Italia | **Treasurer**, Archdeaconry Synod | **Member**, International Anglican Liturgical Consultation (IALC)

A Church with confidence

I love the Church of England. I am standing because I believe the next General Synod needs to help the Church recover its confidence in its common life: the life we share in Christ, across difference and across very different places.

I am not standing simply with a list of things I promise to vote for. Below I tell you how I think about our common life. General Synod is a place of ecclesial discernment and a shaper of ministry: gathering the Church in worship and prayer, reading the signs of the times, and shaping the ministry, structures and law by which we all together, lay and ordained, embody life in Christ.

My vocation has been shaped by different parts of the Anglican Communion. Formed in the Episcopal Church and the Church of Ireland, I came to Rome, where I began training for priesthood in the Church of England, and have since served in England, Palermo and Milan. **I know something of how our Church works — and where it does not. I value institutions enough to want them to work**, and would bring that practical experience to Synod. I am also willing to do the work: to serve on committees, read the papers, listen carefully and contribute constructively to the life of Synod.

Unity without uniformity

Unity does not require uniformity. The Diocese in Europe has taught me that. Across more than thirty countries, the Diocese in Europe embodies the Church of England in very different legal, cultural and pastoral circumstances. **Europe is not an exception to our ecclesiology, but a test case for it:** how do we remain one Church while allowing ministry to take the form that place, people and circumstance require? That experience is part of the common life of the Church of England, and I would bring it to General Synod.

Presence, not acreage

I want to see local ministry strengthened by the wider Church. The fundamental unit of ministry is the Christian community gathered by the Spirit to live in Christ. The wider Church exists to serve and strengthen that local life, not to replace it.

Central resources should enable ministry locally: supporting priests, worship, buildings and the basic life of congregations, while also funding programmes that genuinely require the wider Church.

Deployment of funds for local ministry should be a priority. The test should be whether funds strengthen ministry rather than simply sustain or add structures. This is the principle I would apply to decisions about funding, buildings and deployment. Difficult choices will be necessary. I was formed in a rural church and know that we cannot preserve every inherited arrangement indefinitely. **Ministry is about presence, not acreage.**

The vocation of ministry

I am concerned, too, about clergy. We should expect high standards, and we need **strong safeguarding and accountability at the heart of the Church.** At the same time, the starting point for ordained ministry must be the Ordinal: prayer, preaching, teaching, sacramental ministry and pastoral care. Our structures should support the vocation of ministry, not define it. **The best advertisement for priesthood is a priest who is glad to be a priest.**

The foundation of trust

Trust is about people, not processes. Good processes matter: they give clarity, consistency and protection. But they cannot, by themselves, create a trustworthy Church. We need institutions capable of exercising authority well: accountable, competent, humane and willing to listen.



Trust is tested most seriously when we disagree. Our disagreements matter, but they cannot be allowed to become the whole story of the Church. Synod should be a place where disagreement is metabolised rather than weaponised. On questions of sexuality and gender, I want us to find ways forward that are pastorally honest, theologically grounded and capable of holding the Church together. I believe we can hold genuine theological differences without making difference itself a reason for separation. **The temptation to turn every difference into another institutional boundary is strong. We should resist it.**

Why the Church exists

Above all, I want a Church that knows why it exists. Worship and preaching are our front door. We need to form Christians, welcome children and families, serve our communities, use technology intelligently and speak a credible word of hope to the society around us.

I love this Church. I want it to flourish. And I would be glad to serve it in General Synod.