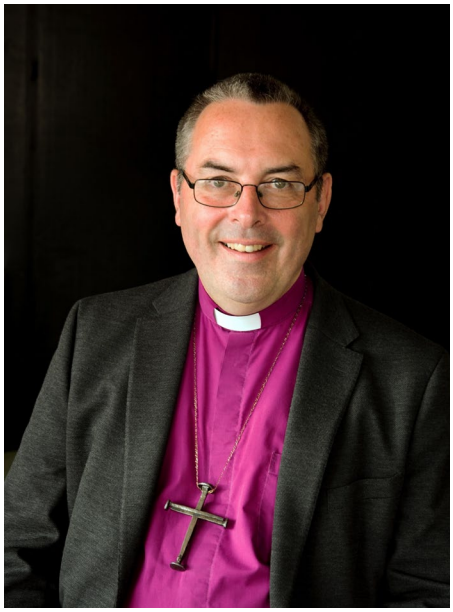
Gavin Collins



## Current role

I have been Bishop of Dorchester, in Oxford Diocese, since February 2021, and, since July this year, am also currently Acting Bishop of Oxford.

I see my role as Bishop as being chiefly to pastor the clergy, LLMs and churchwardens of my parishes; to work with the legal and systemic structures of the church in a way that enables and promotes mission and growth; and – above all – to work as a faithful servant of Christ and the Gospel in my life and ministry.

My other commitments are as a husband to Christina, and as father to our 3 young adult children.

## Background

Before becoming a Bishop, I served for 10 years as Archdeacon of the Meon in Portsmouth Diocese, and prior to that I served for 14 years in parishes in Ely and St. Albans Dioceses. Additionally, I served on General Synod whilst an Archdeacon from 2013-21. Before ordination, I worked as a commercial litigation solicitor in the City of London.

## General

As a Bishop, I am called to serve and represent the whole of the Diocese, and not any particular faction or grouping within it. It would be a privilege to be able to resume that service at the national level at General Synod. As well as working for the good of the church, I also have an active interest in public issues that affect society at large, and have a strong commitment to the mission of the church and our national witness on issues of justice, social equality, international development, education and medical ethics.

## General Synod service

During my previous service on General Synod, I came to appreciate much that is good about the national structures of the Church of England – as

well as why they can often be frustrating – and, particularly, to value the sense of being part of “something bigger” than parish and diocesan concerns. I saw my calling on Synod as being a voice for unity, deliberately helping to bring together people of different opinions, particularly on divisive subjects, and giving a challenge to remember the Biblical call to walk in love as well as truth, with the consequent commitment to ongoing fellowship and unity. Whilst personally committed to working for the church to move forward in our inclusivity and our provision for LGBTQIA+ people, I am committed to enabling the mutual flourishing of the whole of the church, and to honouring and protecting the theological integrity and legitimate position of all convictions.

Hobbies

Cycling, running (I try and run on at least a weekly basis), supporting Brighton and Hove Albion (which proves that I’m a person of faith), spending quality time with my family and engaging in lively debate on politics and current affairs.

General Synod of the Church of England 2026

# The Rt Revd Paul Davies
# Bishop of Dorking

Election of Suffragan Bishops (Canterbury)
☎ 07566 263617
bishop.paul@cofeguildford.org.uk

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Proposer: The Rt Revd Dr Rosemarie Mallett, Bishop of Croydon

*It is a privilege to nominate Paul for election to the General Synod. I believe he brings a valuable combination of strategic foresight, legislative aptitude, and a deep, lifelong commitment to our Church's future. At a time when Synod faces complex and deeply sensitive discussions, his capacity to bridge theological divides and build consensus across diversity—guided by a great sense of humour, warmth, wisdom and humility—will make him an invaluable asset to the house. He is committed to ensuring that the frameworks, policies, and measures debated at General Synod directly empower local communities to be effective in mission, evangelism, and public service.*

Seconder: The Rt Revd James Grier, Bishop of Plymouth

*As I have got to know Paul since he became a bishop, I have been consistently struck by his wisdom and pastoral persepctive. This has been exemplified more than ever as he has loved and led a grieving Guildford Diocese. As a member of General Synod, he would be a pastor who is strategic, missional and places youth and children at the heart of the life of the church.*

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## About me

I'm a cradle Anglican. I was a boy chorister in the Anglo-Catholic parish church in Pembrokeshire where I was raised. I came to faith through confirmation at 14 years old, which was further nurtured by the evangelical chaplaincy and Christian Union at university. I still treasure both traditions. Following formation at Ripon College Cuddesdon, I was ordained at 24 years of age.

I served my title at St Davids Cathedral, followed by two incumbencies: a benefice of three rural parishes in North Pembrokeshire; and then a grotty post-industrial town parish west of Swansea. Both were revitilisation projects which saw considerable growth. This led me into senior leadership and two successive archdeacon posts (in North Wales and Surrey).

As an archdeacon for 11 years, I focussed on being alongside clergy and parishes in missional leadership (designing systems to support them), and pastoral care (establishing clergy wellbeing convenants in two dioceses). As Bishop of Dorking, I have held portfolios for children and young people, vocations, the environment, racial justice, as well as being Warden of Readers.

Alongside my day jobs, amongst other things I have served on the General Synod of two provinces; been Diocesan Ecumenical Officer, DDO, an Officiating Chaplain to the Military, Acting Dean of a Cathedral and a member of a lifeboat crew! I am married to Louise (a town planner and ordinand) and we have two young adult children.

General Synod of the Church of England 2026

## What I would bring to General Synod?

1. Passions

- Jesus: I am wholly committed to a Church of England that is Jesus centred, shaped by the five marks of mission, and is humbler, simpler and bolder.
- Safeguarding: 'the treasure entrusted to us is Christ's own flock, bought by the shedding of his blood on the cross'. We have to get this right.
- Young People: whilst I am committed to all forms of diversity, I have a particular heart for the place of children and young people in the church.
- Clergy Wellbeing: I have been a very strong advocate of this for many years. There has been significant progress, but there is still some way to travel.
- Local Church: I believe the local church is the hope of the world and, whilst I support mixed ecology, I'm a strong advocate of the parish system.
- National Church: I long for us to be a Church of England that exists not for the Church but for England - we need to be more outward focussed.
- Stewardship of Resource: There needs to be a greater conversation about how resources are used within the Church of England.

2. Gifts

- Listening: I'm deeply influenced by the Rule of Benedict and seek to listen carefully to what the Spirit is saying through the whole Body of Christ.
- Unity: I am a reconciler of people - having spent many years in different ministries of reconciliation, I seek to be a bridge builder.
- Hope and Joy: Other people say that I'm a person who inhabits and expresses hope and joy. I hold on to this - especially in challenging times.
- Expereince: In nearly 30 years of ministry, I have served as a curate, minor canon, vicar, archdeacon, acting dean and bishop in very different contexts.
- Governance: I have served as a lay person, clergyperson and bishop across the General Synods of two provinces in the Anglican Communion.

3. Values

- Prayer: I am committed to praying for the work of General Synod and to attending worship when present - which I believe is essential for this work.
- Kindness: I am passionate about cultivating this fruit of the Spirit and seek to influence culture through being kind and investing in relationships.
- Trust and transparency: I lament the erosion of this during recent years and would seek to play my part to build this during the next quinquennium.
- Process: I am committed to following process as part of good governance and, where appropriate, to challenge creative interpretations of it.

I hope you will consider giving me your first preference vote.
If I am elected, I will serve the Suffragan Bishops to the best of my ability.

Many thanks

GENERAL SYNOD ELECTION ADDRESS

# The Rt Revd Rod Green

*Bishop of Stepney*

Nominated by Bishop Emma Ineson and Bishop Dave Bull

> *Rod brings deep experience from parish ministry and diocesan leadership in both the Diocese of London and the Church in Wales. Rooted in the evangelical tradition, he works graciously and effectively across the full range of church traditions, marked by humility, wisdom, and a commitment to moving the Church forward together. A clear, strategic thinker with a pastor's heart, he combines vision with practical leadership, a passion for the Church's flourishing, and a gift for building relationships across difference. I am delighted to nominate him for election to General Synod.*
>
> **— Bishop Emma Ineson, Bishop of Kensington in the Diocese of London**

> *Rod is someone I have known for 20 years and admire as a wise and generous leader. His wide experience in London and Wales have resulted in a sincere love for the full diversity of the church. Rod has an insightful theological mind, which he brings to bear with an attitude of humility and service. I believe he would make an excellent member of General Synod and am delighted to nominate him.*
>
> **— Bishop Dave Bull, Bishop of Buckingham in the Diocese of Oxford**

## ABOUT ME

I came to faith in the open air listening to a street preacher in Cardiff city centre. So, evangelism has always been a priority for me.

I felt a call into ordained ministry a few years later after an experience of the Holy Spirit and the opportunity to share what God was doing in my life. I have been passionate about encouraging vocations and leadership development ever since.

I trained for ordination at Wycliffe Hall, which gave me a robust confidence in the authority of Scripture and the power of the Gospel to transform lives.

I served as Curate and Associate Rector in the East End of London, before serving as Vicar of St Peter's West Harrow, helping start new services and revitalise churches in each place. I remain committed to parish ministry, but also to the part resource churches and revitalisation has to play in the renewal of the Church.

In 2021, I became Archdeacon of Llandaff in the Church in Wales, supporting and encouraging clergy and congregations in South Wales. My time in Wales has left me with a passion for robust synodical government and collaborative working amongst Bishops, clergy and laity, a deeper conviction that it is possible to work well across difference for the good of the whole church, and a deeper and more abundant sacramental life.

After five years in Wales, I was consecrated Bishop of Stepney in May this year. I am the Creative Growth Lead for the diocese and Chair of the London Diocesan Board for Schools.

I am married to Joanne, Global Policy and Research Director at WaterAid. We have three daughters, Emilia (16), Orla (13) and Anastasia (11).

## WHY I AM STANDING FOR GENERAL SYNOD

### *Anglican Communion*

Having served outside of the Church of England for the last five years, I have a wider experience of the Anglican Communion. The Church in Wales is a bilingual church that has made different decisions to those taken in England. It is structured differently and is going in a different direction. As the Church of England faces several strategic decisions in the next five years, this experience will be decisive.

### *Governing Body*

Though this is the first time I have stood for General Synod, I have considerable experience of governing bodies, having served as a trustee of the Representative Body of the Church in Wales and as a member of the Governing Body of the Church in Wales. I also served as a member of the Standing Committee of the Governing Body of the Church in Wales, helping the Church in Wales to think more strategically, with evangelism and growth as clear priorities. I have the diplomatic and political skills to get things done on General Synod.

### *Parish*

Having served as Curate, Associate Rector, and as Vicar in thriving parishes before becoming Archdeacon of Llandaff, I recognise the priority of the parish. I am a Bishop rooted in local diocesan life and committed to the historic structures of the Church of England, so will advocate for the resources needed to ensure they are healthy and sustainable, resisting the temptation to consolidate and centralise resources in ways that undermine parish life.

### *Church Planting*

I am committed to church revitalisation. With experience of resource churches and church planting in East London, Harrow, and Cardiff, and now, as the Creative Growth Lead Bishop in the Diocese of London, I will ensure growing healthy churches remains a priority for Synod.

### *Diversity*

I am an advocate and ally of women in ordained leadership at every level of the Church. Proud to have been consecrated by Archbishop Sarah, I also fully hold to the Five Guiding Principles and the ideals of mutual flourishing, valuing the contribution traditionalist Catholics bring to the Church of England and wanting to see that tradition thrive in the life of the Church.

I have a traditional view of marriage. Having watched from a distance the divisive and demoralising impact of LLF on the Church of England, I believe the Church of England must find a more constructive way forward. I have worked alongside colleagues in the Church in Wales who disagree with me, in collaborative, less adversarial ways, and hope to bring this more relational and informal way of working to General Synod — building bridges, listening carefully, and looking for those things we have in common so we can move forward together.

I will be a gentle and generous member of General Synod, prayerful in my deliberations and kind to those with whom I disagree, as I seek to represent my fellow suffragan bishops.

***I hope you will consider giving me your first preference vote.***

**ROBERT SPRINGETT**

I am seeking your support in this election as I continue to serve as the Church of England's Lead Bishop for Safeguarding.

I am passionate about helping the Church develop a culture in which good safeguarding practice is understood not as a burden or an obstacle to ministry, but as an expression of faithful ministry itself. Good safeguarding strengthens trust, enables mission, supports healthy ministry and reflects God's care for all people.

Alongside my safeguarding responsibilities, my ministry continues to be rooted in a deep commitment to parish life and to the life of the whole Church. As a parish priest, archdeacon and now bishop, I have been shaped by ministry in urban estates, market towns, villages and suburbs, among communities facing very different opportunities and challenges. Those experiences have reinforced my conviction that the Church is at its strongest when it combines faithful worship, generous service and courageous witness in every community. I care deeply about supporting clergy and lay leaders, nurturing discipleship, encouraging mission and evangelism, and helping our parishes remain places of faithful worship, service and witness. If re-elected, I would seek to play a full part in the work of the House and General Synod, contributing thoughtfully and collaboratively across the breadth of its business.

I believe the challenges facing the Church require us both to hold fast to the gospel we have received and to engage courageously with the realities of the present moment. Whether the matters before us concern safeguarding, mission, ministry, vocations, governance, parish sustainability, public engagement or the Church's witness in society, I would seek to contribute with humility, charity and hope, always attentive to the voices of those serving and worshipping in our local churches.

All of this must remain grounded in the realities of ministry in our dioceses and parishes. National policy is at its best when it listens carefully to local experience, and I am committed to bringing my experience of parish, diocesan and national ministry to ensuring that the wisdom and insight of those serving on the ground continue to shape the Church's life and decision-making.

I would be grateful for your support as I seek to continue serving the Church with hope, wisdom and a commitment to the flourishing of every parish, community and person entrusted to our care.

**Paul Thomas**
Bishop of Oswestry

Proposed by: the Bishop of Fulham

Seconded by: the Bishop of Richborough

**My dear sisters and brothers,**

I am grateful for you taking the time to read my address. I ask that you consider voting for me in this election on the basis of the text below.

1. **Breadth of witness** You will be aware that although my episcopal role is largely based within the catholic constituency, I have a deep love for the Church of England *as a whole*. I am on the celebrants' rota for Lichfield Cathedral, I share in the diversity of diocesan life, and along with the Bishops of St Albans and Lynn, I am Ecclesiastical Patron of the Prayer Book Society. I was recently appointed the Lead Bishop for Funerals. I cherish Anglicanism and I always want the best for it in all its expressions.
2. **Mutual flourishing** I have a deep appreciation for the rich variety of Anglican traditions, and I would like to see them all flourish. Where there are significant differences on contentious issues such as human sexuality, we should seek to disagree well and find generous ways to honour one another's views. It is important that we are mindful of the approach adopted by other major worldwide Churches on such issues.
3. **Mission** We need to be bold and confident in mission. From my own tradition, I find there is much to commend sacramental evangelisation. The sacramental life, shared with the Universal Church, has a depth and significance which can win many people for Christ. We should cherish the Anglican pastoral approach, lived out in our parishes, and proclaim its benefits, particularly the close bond between priest and people.
4. **Vocations** The slump in vocations is a great concern to us all. For the sake of the Church's future, we must be bold in tackling the underlying causes of this downturn, whether they relate to finance, structures, communications, our own outlook, or whatever it might be. We should welcome suggestions from pressure groups such as Save the Parish.

5. **Ecumenism**. The dominical prayer in St John's Gospel calls us to be one Church. I very much hope that the Church of England will continue to play its part in working with other major worldwide Churches to bring this prayer to concrete expression. For my own part, I have developed close links with the Orthodox, whose representatives kindly supplied a fraternal message from the Ecumenical Patriarch to be read out at my episcopal ordination.

**What I would offer**

All suffragan bishops have much to offer and so I would not claim any special status for myself. The particular experiences and attributes which I would seek to bring to General Synod are:

a) **Experience of many different dioceses** In the three and a half years since my episcopal ordination I have operated extensively in 13 dioceses in the western half of the Southern Province. This gives me an insight into the working of those dioceses and the issues commonly faced by their clergy and people. Others will be better placed to comment than I am, but I trust that I have maintained good relations at all times with the hierarchies of those dioceses, even when testing issues arise.

b) **Extensive parochial experience** I have over twenty years' experience working in parishes, first as a curate and then as an incumbent. This provides me with the necessary grounding to comment at General Synod on the particular challenges which our parishes face and how we might meet those challenges.

c) **Strong convictions as to the Church's calling** I firmly believe that the Church of England is capable of achieving much more. We seem to be trapped in a cycle of bureaucracy and decline. I do not claim to have all the answers, but others will surely follow if we give the time and support to model lives of prophetic and apostolic holiness to which we are all summoned by the Lord of the Church. We need to create that sort of culture in the Church of England.

Please contact me with any questions: bishop@seeofoswestry.org.uk I offer my prayers for all candidates standing for election to General Synod.

**In Christ, Paul**