

Rev. Alex Coakley-Youngs OMS

Team Vicar – Harbour Church All Saints, Portsea.

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Clergy Candidate for General Synod

Proposer: Rev. Canon. Dr. Ian Meredith

Seconder: Rev. Clive Gardner



I stand for nomination to General Synod to:

- **Bring a voice to the table for low-income parish communities**, grounded in genuine lived experience of hardship.
- **Advocate with an unshakeable commitment** to the local parish and community mission.
- **Represent the perspective of younger clergy**, as someone still in my mid-30s.
- **Be a voice of unity** across the traditions in the Church of England.

If elected, I will follow the calling of Ephesians 4: to lead a life worthy of the calling we have received - with humility, gentleness, patience, and love, making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. I hold firm to the Anglican tenets of Scripture, Tradition, and Reason, standing as a candidate who will listen, learn, and seek the *Missio Dei* in every meeting, discussion, and vote during the next quinquennium.

A little bit about me...

I'm still new to this Diocese, so here's a little bit about me and my story to paint a picture of who I am. I'm married to Emma, who has just started as a Foundation Doctor at QA Hospital, and we have a 6-year-old son who attends one of our Portsmouth CofE primary schools. We live in Stamshaw with our 2 labradors, 2 cats, and 8 chickens (well, at the last count, despite the urban foxes!).

My vocation was shaped on a Lancashire council estate and tested in the uncertainty of time spent in and out of care from birth to the age of 18. That early reality birthed a raw understanding of hard places and a deep desire to stand alongside those on the margins. I have long known what it means to search for hope in tough places, and first discerned a calling to the priesthood at a young age within the RC Church.

As time went on, I moved to Gosport to work for the Sea Cadets, where I fell in love with youth work through offshore sailing. This led me to the Morning Star Trust, a Christian sailing charity, where I developed evangelistic ministry voyages working with NEET (Not in education, employment or training) young people, homeless adults, and those recovering from addiction. It was during this time that I was exposed to the depth and breadth of the Church of England, eventually being received into the C of E after marriage and a time of discernment for ordination.

My faith is rooted in local ministry and sustained by the faithful service of the parish priests who walked before me. Across my ministry, I have served in 7 distinct church settings, including a Bishop's Mission Order (BMO) and 3 church re-missioning projects. My experience spans the full breadth of Church life, from lay leadership in Chatham to rural youth ministry in Bearsted, Kent, alongside time in a tough coastal parish in Bognor Regis and a suburban parish in Dartford. My formation has enriched my understanding across both Evangelical/Charismatic and Anglo-Catholic traditions.

Background and Experience

- 2009-10: Sixth Form Chaplaincy – Cardinal Newman College, Preston, Lancashire
- 2010-2013: Working at Sea in TS Royalist with Young People – Marine Society and Sea Cadets, Gosport, Hants
- 2013-15: Skipper and NEETs Worker – Morning Star Trust, Chatham, Kent
- 2015-2017: Youth and Community Minister – Holy Cross Church, Bearsted, Kent
- 2017-20: CEO Morning Star Trust – Chatham, Kent
- 2020-22: Operations Manager – Saint Wilfrid Church, Bognor Regis, West Sussex
- 2022-25: Assistant Curate – Christ Church, Dartford (Rochester Diocese)
- 2024-25: Hospital Chaplaincy Team – Dartford and Gravesham NHS Trust
- 2023-Present: National Staff Officer for Youth Work – Marine Society and Sea Cadets
- 2025-Present: Sea Cadet Chaplain
- 2025-Present: Team Vicar – Harbour Church

Interests in the next General Synod

- **Care Leavers & Looked-After Children:** Bringing direct lived experience from my time in the care system to Synod's work, advocating for practical, trauma-informed parish networks that offer long-term support and sanctuary.
- **Frontline Parish Resourcing:** Fighting to ensure national funding - specifically Lowest Income Communities Funding reaches the parish floor, easing operational burdens on local PCCs and removing socioeconomic barriers to clergy vocations.
- **Creation Care:** Advocating for increased grant funding and practical support for local churches, ensuring they can realistically achieve Net Zero targets without overwhelming parish budgets.
- **Barrier-Free Inclusion:** Promoting genuine accessibility and participation for disabled and neurodivergent members across every level of Church life and governance, ensuring accessible worship for all with dignity.
- **Clergy Wellbeing and Vocations:** Pushing the Church to do more to protect clergy health and mental well-being, while actively encouraging vocations from working-class and non-traditional backgrounds.

Please consider me to stand for you

I have followed general synod in the last five years and feel called to play my part as a local parish priest to serve God's church in this next season. I have a wide breadth of experience in parish ministry, both lay and ordained, and my experience in Christian charity management and leadership will bring many skills to the table.

If you would like me to represent you, please consider giving me your first or high preference vote. If you have any questions, please do be in touch.