



**Canon Clare Edwards**

**Canon Pastor, Canterbury Cathedral.**

**Nominated by Revd David Ridley**

**Seconded by Revd Sheila Cox**

### **Background**

I joined the church in my early teens and have been involved in it ever since. On leaving school I trained in general and then paediatric nursing, in the east end and central London. I did my theological training at Lincoln and was made Deaconess in 1986. With changing legislation I was deaconed in 1987 and ordained priest in 1994. I served the first 18 years of my ministry in the Diocese of Southwark, always in parish work, in suburbia and rural areas and for five years as part time chaplain to a residential school for children and young people with severe epilepsy. In my later years there I had additional responsibilities as Rural Dean and Dean of Women's ministry. I was involved in the synodical process at Deanery and Diocesan level and for five years served on Bishop's Council. I was involved at Diocesan level on various committees and working parties including the Board of Education and the Diocesan Evangelism Resources Group. I was also an Anglican member of English ARC.

I have been at Canterbury Cathedral as Canon Pastor for 6 years. I particularly enjoy my day to day ministry of welcoming and offering hospitality to pilgrims and visitors from so many parts of the world, of all faiths and none, those who come when times are good and those who come in times of need. It has been an opportunity for me to get a 'hands on' experience of the wider church, particularly the Anglican Communion and the significant part that Canterbury plays in that. I value the contact I have with many clergy and laity from the Diocese - in training, cathedral visits, invitations to lead quiet days, retreats, PCC/parish days, in spiritual accompaniment and with those newly ordained. I attend our Deanery Chapter when able and am grateful to my local colleagues for keeping me in touch with parochial issues. I am thankful for this wide experience over a number of years and believe that it would equip me well to serve the church at national level.

### **Priorities**

At a time when we easily find ourselves talking about the decline of the church I want to be working for its growth. I am committed to being part of the Church of England and passionate about using well the opportunities afforded to us. I am proud that we are here to offer pastoral and spiritual care to all, as a church we need to be committed to enabling that to happen. We have an amazing opportunity to witness to and work for the coming of God's kingdom in all parts of society and to speak boldly on those issues that affect our nation and our world. To do that effectively we need to resource, energise and care more effectively for our congregations and our clergy. I see that as a priority for our church today, teaching people to pray and nurturing loving communities of faith that by their nature attract others to them. If elected to synod I would work with others to positively embrace opportunities to address these issues.

### **Current topics.**

There are many important areas of Christian life likely to be discussed during the life of the next synod, some that particularly interest me are -

Engagement with the wider society.	The environment and climate change.
Multi Faith Britain	Human sexuality
Young People, Schools and higher education	The Anglican Communion and Covenant
Mission	Global poverty
Human rights	The Criminal Justice System
The needs and contribution of older people	Women Bishops
Clergy terms and service	

If elected I would do my best to be informed on these issues, to listen and be open to what others have to say, to foster local ownership and involvement in the Diocese and to be available for report back as appropriate.

Within the church I have particularly interest in liturgy both formal and informal, in the ministry of wholeness and healing, in Christian nurture and formation.

### **Inclusiveness**

I long for a world and a church where all people are valued and respected for who they are, a world that embraces and sees the opportunities of difference rather than being afraid of it. I am grateful to those men and women, lay and ordained who have encouraged and inspired me in my life. I believe the church needs to be ready to take the lead in these areas and to take risks sometimes. I long to see everyone's gifts offered and used and where possible the needs of all met. I would want to challenge myself and the wider church to be truly inclusive and welcoming to all, non judgemental and aware that we're pilgrims on a journey -not there yet!

I would, if elected work for the appointment of Women as Bishops in full equality with their male colleagues.

I am a relational person, so would relish the opportunity of being part of the General Synod community. I would be challenged by and enjoy the opportunity to listen to others, to worship and work alongside those whose views are different to my own, seeking ways forward that say more to the world about who we believe God to be than about our own limited humanity. I would look for ways of celebrating all that is good, and seek to hold at the centre of my own involvement and our corporate involvement the necessary task of discerning God's purposes for our life together.

I would make attendance at synod a priority and commit myself to the background work of synod and its committees.

I look forward to the possibility of serving as a member of General Synod and hope that you will make me your first choice candidate.

*Clare*