

**Election Address for Rosemary Walters
Parish of St Martin and St Paul Canterbury**



Throughout my journey of faith I have valued the Anglican heritage of scripture, tradition and reason and worshipped in parishes with central churchmanship. Spiritually I value the heritage of Anglican choral music and liturgies from Taize and Iona.

Looking forward, we must now face the huge challenges of communicating our faith in a world where belief is often seen as negative or irrelevant. Our Gospel message of hope and compassion desperately needs to be heard as a credible voice in our contemporary world.

Crucial concerns in our national Church of England initiative ***Reform and Renewal*** are:

- *what is effective discipleship in society and culture today?*
- *simplifying bureaucratic structures to aid mission.*
- *being creative and accountable with historic resources.*

I am standing for election to General Synod because:

**I would value contributing to discussions on the way forward for our Church based on my conviction that those inside and outside worshipping communities want to find meaning and purpose behind the challenges of the world we live in locally, nationally and internationally. We need to consider:*

- encouraging Christians to be actively involved in ***local and national politics*** and ***community action*** so that we can be part of the discussions as to how the ***common good*** can be at the forefront of decision making and our ***resources of people and buildings*** used for this purpose.
- ***revitalising pastoral organisation, financial resources and the deployment of lay and ordained ministry*** to respond effectively to local needs so that talents, including administrative support, can be targeted beyond parish boundaries where necessary, using skills across the deanery to become a presence and exercise discipleship in a variety of social groupings in settings that may be outside our churches.
- using ***ways of communicating*** our message of the grace which sees uniqueness and value in each individual through lively ***magazines***, stimulating ***websites*** and ***social media*** so that we can connect with the various networks which are the norm in our culture today. An ideal context to involve newer members of our congregations.

- a ***challenging and creative ministry of the Word*** in both traditional and informal liturgy, including opportunities for intelligent and open minded discussion of theological and ethical issues within our church communities and beyond. We need to share the excitement of such discussion and hear and value the experiences and spirituality of the laity.
- being ***welcoming congregations without discrimination, including on grounds of sexual orientation***. Personally I believe that we should celebrate with those, both clergy and lay, who enter civil partnerships or same sex marriage. I see the Gospel imperative as promoting stable and committed relationships which strengthen individuals and therefore communities and the wider society.

**I believe I can make a contribution on behalf of the diocese with my experience of*

- a working life spent in ***primary, secondary and higher education*** where I have had to, and immensely enjoyed! trying to articulate the Gospel alongside the experiences of mostly unchurched young people. We cannot take our understanding of religious language and points of view for granted.
- relating to the ***mission, pastoral and financial*** concerns and potential resources of parishes as a past ***Lay Chair of Deanery Synod***. I am aware of the anxieties here.
- having a vision for ***flexible opportunities of collaborative ministry*** as a ***Reader*** for over 20 years and latterly a ***tutor for the Deepening Discipleship and ALM Worship modules***. There is so much happening which we can celebrate and gives us confidence for the future.

I hope this statement is sufficiently clear and touches on issues which are of importance to us all with relevance to our priorities, and that you will accept this election address as sent to each of you individually. I am happy to answer questions or provide clarification at the Hustings or you can email me on ra.walters@btinternet.com