

Revd Canon Rick Stordy

Candidate for General Synod

Who am I?

I am married to Gail and we have an adult daughter, Rebecca. Prior to ordination I was a barrister in private practice, specialising in family and child care law. I enjoy curries, running, walking, Bradfield Brewery ales and any thriller by John Grisham (though not necessarily in that order!).

I am an Oversight Minister, vicar of St. John's Chapeltown for 24 years, and now priest-in-charge of St Saviour's High Green since 2022, after a curacy in inner-city Bradford.

A bit of background...

In our Deanery, I have been both Assistant Area Dean and Area Dean of Ecclesfield.

In our Diocese, I have served as

- Leading Well mentor
- on Senior Staff, as assistant to the Acting Archdeacon of Doncaster
- missionary with the 'One Life' Archbishop's Mission to Southwell & Nottingham Diocese
- honorary Canon of Sheffield Cathedral
- chair of the 'Encouraging Evangelicals' network

Nationally, I have served

- as a Bishop's Reviewer of Theological Educational Institutions (TEIs)
- on the Church of England Evangelical Council (2014-18)
- on the Council of Reference for the mission agency, CPAS
- General Synod clergy representative for our Diocese since 2021; member of the House of Clergy Standing Committee (York Province)

What's needed? Challenges ahead

The Church of England faces a number of challenges as we look into the 2030s:



1. *Declining numbers:* particularly among children, young people and young adults – who are simply not hearing about Christ or seeing his life in action.
2. *Public suspicion:* our safeguarding failures at every level and in every tradition demand both humble honesty and clear action to build a church that is seen to be safer, transparent and trusted once again.
3. *Structural overload:* we maintain structures from a very different era in terms of both clergy numbers and congregation sizes.
4. *Leadership:* in a complex, changing world, both laity and clergy need deeper roots and better care from their earliest ministry all the way into retirement.
5. *Identity & Sexuality:* how we all welcome, love and disciple those with a variety of understandings and life experience, many of whom in different ways feel bruised and rejected by the church of Christ.

Why me? Passions and priorities

So why vote for me? I am not a cradle Anglican; I started following Jesus in my early teens, and came to a deep affection for the C of E, not least by being wonderfully nurtured by the Church of England in my youth. That left me with an enduring gratitude and love for this strange yet glorious part of Christ's body. I rejoice in our commitment to mission and service, and our rootedness as a church that is both Reformed and Catholic.

I aim to support and represent the clergy of the whole Diocese, men and women, across the range of our traditions, as I did in my time as Area Dean and in these last 5 years on General Synod. I have been thrilled to work as part of our Diocesan team.

I hope to bring a number of strengths and passions should I serve you once more. My prayer and longing is to see a church that is

1. **Lively and growing:** where families, friends and neighbours encounter the living Jesus, as we share him winsomely and creatively with all. In Chapeltown, we've seen this in a multi-generational congregation: treasuring older, established members whilst consciously seeking to grow younger with a committed team of both lay volunteers and paid youth staff.
2. **Engaged and serving:** so the watching world sees us as friends and partners in an increasingly divided society. 2 issues are close to my heart:
 - Race: how we have appallingly failed – both in church and society – to show love, mercy and justice to those of all races, classes and backgrounds. In 2019-20 I was part of a national team which reported on lessons to be learned from growing Black-Majority churches. This convinced me of the need to start by listening; and then working together, in multi-racial teams and churches.
 - Poverty: no less of a challenge is our commitment to our poorest communities. In Chapeltown and High Green, we have seen our Foodbank grow to become a social supermarket, and fostered stronger relationships with our community hub, releasing resources and building trust in the wider community.
3. **Open and changing:** Our church needs to retain the best of the parish system, whilst discovering new ways of making Jesus known in our culture; and all this whilst our finances remain challenging.

Having served in the same area for over two decades, I remain absolutely convinced of

the centrality of local ministry for the future mission of God in our nation.

At the same time, in Chapeltown we have joyful experience of change through the loss of our church building 26 years ago. Despite – even because of – that, the church's mission has continued and flourished in new places, not least the community hall that's our home each Sunday.

4. **Gifted and caring:** Seeing Christians grow through gifted leadership has long been a focus for me: both inside the church and out. As Area Dean, I prioritised mission and equipping of lay Christians to thrive and be a blessing in their daily vocations.

Within the church, I've nurtured a number of vocations to ordained ministry; trained 5 curates; mentored new clergy, and maintained an interest in clergy education and wellbeing, not least as a reviewer of TELs. In my time on General Synod I have focused on working for better provision for clergy, particularly improved pensions and retirement housing.

5. **Generous and listening:** while taking a traditional understanding myself, I am strongly committed to finding a way forward in our discussions about sexuality. I long to see the maximum degree of charity and unity alongside an honest recognition of the need for wise pastoral provision where divisions remain.

Questions? Contact me

I'd love to hear from you with any questions or comments you may have.

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Nominated by:

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Seconded by:

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