

General Synod Election Address: Mrs Ruth Killen ruthkillen60@gmail.com
Candidate to become a Liverpool Diocese lay representative in the General Synod



Organisation

I consider myself to have excellent organisational abilities and have consistently worked to strict deadlines. After working for the government and in education and then having 40 years within the NHS, I am used to public service. Since my official retirement 3 years ago I have been Assistant Warden at St Peter's Church, Hindley in the newly formed parish of Chapelfields (Wigan East) in the Diocese of Liverpool.

Running my farm for the past 34 years I have had to ensure that everything on the farm was done not only to benefit my family but the wildlife and locality whilst still ensuring I adhered to all government legislation. I was a UNISON Union Representative whilst working for the NHS, and as former Chair of the Wigan Local Access Forum, Association Secretary for Hindley District Bridleways and for 38 years Bridleways Officer for Wigan District, I am used to working towards targets to benefit the public and the group for which I stand. Over the last 20 years I have been a dance instructor and dance events organiser.

My contribution to Church life

My involvement with the church has been long and varied. From a small child I became a regular at St Peter's as my Mother took me to church every Sunday and as soon as I was allowed was enrolled in both our Church School and the Sunday School where I stayed until the age of eleven and was confirmed. By then I had already been a member of our Brownie Pack and then joined the Girl Guides.

From there I was in the choir and a bell-ringer. I was part of the congregation every Sunday and walked on our Processions of Faith every June. I was also personal assistant to the then Arch Deacon of Warrington, Dr David Woodhouse (1981 – 1983) and produced the church magazine before I got married.

In 1996 I was asked by the then Vicar Rev Ian Carter to become the Head of Sunday School. Having children and faith does not set you up for running a concentrated 1 hour session with up to 20 children of differing ages and abilities to listen to stories from the Bible. It was both a challenge and a privilege, but not without fun, faith and a deep sense of humility.

After working and bringing up my family I became heavily involved again at church in 2019. It was soon apparent that something needed to be done as Transforming Wigan was thrust upon us and our church parishes were ceased and re-created with up to 7 churches within one Parish. As there was a shortage of nominations I volunteered for the new PCC and eventually became a member of our Deanery Synod.

Since then I have applied myself to every (Church) challenge set before me, at one time being the church Gift Aid Officer to try to sort out our finances after Covid-19. I have attended every Summer Conference to discuss and decide new ways for the church to cover costs and was part of the Greenhouse Gatherings working with other churches to encourage more people to discover and love Christ.

Church is, quite literally, my second home, as I seem to spend an inordinate amount of time either working there or at home doing work *for* there. Through the loss of our Sunday Reader I have become one of a team now undertaking the leadership of Morning Prayers, and liaise with the Chapelfields team regarding wedding banns, etc. I have the honour of taking home communions.

Valuing Local Parishes

My church MATTERS to me, and not just my church, but my whole faith and belief in God. I believe that the Church is at the heart of every community and it's job is to be there offering ministry to those who come into church once, or many times: "[Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.](#)" *Matthew 11:28*. I believe that what is needed is more full-time, parish-based clergy and staff to serve as the core resources in the local communities in which they are physically present. It is my job to do as much as possible to welcome and encourage the word of God for our congregation and beyond by living out my faith through daily acts of love, kindness, and genuine service to others, sharing my story and praying for those around me.

I have been happy to see our congregation grow back (after being shut through Covid-19) and our regular Sunday attendance is approximately 70 (including children). It has been a privilege to see people of other ethnicities join and embrace our services at our humble church – and not only join in, but ask to be included as volunteers in the many teams we have to keep our church and mission running.

I feel that as a long-standing and dedicated member of St Peter's Church I am a very good candidate to represent our congregations within the Liverpool Diocese and beyond in matters discussed that affect our church's progress over the next 10 years at General Synod. I will seek to learn and apply the things that are required by the Church of England to the best of my ability.

I would be honoured to be elected and ask for your vote.

Ruth Killen
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