

PAUL RONSON

Standing for The House of Laity of
General Synod

Nominated by Susan Willoughby
(Secretary Garstang Deanery Synod)

Seconded by Jean Matthews
(Treasurer Garstang Deanery Synod)



I am 55 and live in Lea, Preston.

I moved to the area in November 1996 having grown up in Lincolnshire, in a small rural village. I feel very much at home in Lancashire and am enjoying serving the local communities where I worship in St Michael's on Wyre and St Helen's Churchtown and look forward to being able to represent the Blackburn Diocese by serving on General Synod.

Work Experience:

- I have worked in Accountancy ever since I left school. I qualified with the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England & Wales in December 1984. I became a partner in 1999 in a small general accountancy and taxation practice, based in Blackpool. The firm has two partners and seven staff and deals with family owned businesses throughout Blackpool, the Fylde and Lancashire.
- I also act for many charities in the local area, dealing with issues such as drug & alcohol abuse, domestic abuse, (Preston Domestic Violence) advocacy (ICANN), community foundations and trusts helping local communities (Preston Community Network, Fleetwood Town Community Trust and Aiming Higher) and gender and sexuality (Preston LGBTQ+)
- I also specialise in helping young entrepreneurs starting up in business for the first time.

Church Experience:

I have been involved with the Church of England since I was 12 years old.

- Organist and choirmaster of St Michael's on Wyre, and St Helen's Churchtown (Blackburn Diocese), playing for all the services.
- Treasurer at St Helen's Churchtown
- On the PCC of both Churches – which are a united benefice
- Stewardship officer for both Churches
- Running the Blackburn Diocese Stewardship course "generosity, gift & grace" at both churches.
- Lay chair of Garstang Deanery Synod
- Assisting with the services through leading intercessions and reading

Why am I Standing:

- With my background in finance, as the Church of England emerges from Covid, it is facing huge challenges, particularly with declining numbers and more importantly a falling income, and I wish to use my skills to assist. All parishes have particularly felt the financial stress of Covid and my professional knowledge of managing expenditure, organisational change and budgeting will be invaluable in debating and resolving priorities for the Church in the future.

My Concerns

- **Gender & sexual identity**

I support the equality of all people in all areas of church life, regardless of gender, disability, ethnicity or sexual orientation. The Church of England should be open to all at all levels as we are called by God to preach the Gospel to the world. The Living in Love and Faith initiative is a step forward in the right direction and I look forward to listening and engaging with others with different views by being able to contribute to its development and progress.

- **Ethical Investment**

The Church of England must look at its finances in particular with regard to the investments so that we are supporting and helping communities and people across all nations. Our investment policy must be one that is ethical and seeks to uphold the values of the Church. We should not hold investments in companies that are exploiting people and our natural resources.

- **Climate Change**

Climate change is a genuine emergency and I welcome the commitment by the General Synod to become carbon neutral by 2030. The challenge now is how to practically achieve this and particularly how it can be funded.

- **Vision & Strategy**

Mission has to be at the very heart of who we are and the local parish churches are the grass roots of the Church of England and that is where mission, vision and strategy will produce the greatest results. **(I support the Save the Parish Campaign)** Covid 19 has shown that the church can communicate with people in many new ways, through online worship, social media and the internet. In a constantly changing world the Church needs to adapt and take all opportunities to keep pace with today's modern world.

We need to put more resources and imagination into children's work and encouraging them to become more involved in our churches and parishes.

However, vision and strategy can't happen unless we become financially stable. We need a clear vision to enable us to find a way of sharing resources so that the Church can flourish across the whole nation and by all the different streams of the Church.

- **Links with other denominations**

I am pleased to see further links have been made with the Methodists and we must work together to improve our links with other denominations for closer contact and dialogue with our brothers and sisters in Christ.

- **Safeguarding**

We must ensure our places of worship and that all individuals, particularly children and vulnerable adults can be involved in our Churches and be in a safe environment where they can flourish. We must change and strengthen our safeguarding arrangements.

Thank you for reading the above statement and if you wish to discuss anything at all I can be contacted on 07725 805144 or via email at paul@ccwchartered.co.uk
Alternatively write to me at 18 Ash Coppice, Lea, Preston, PR2 1RY

If you are intending to vote for me, please put me high on your list, preferably number one. Chiefly please do use your vote! Votes must be done electronically by Friday 8th October 2021