

## Dr Neill Burgess

### Headlines

- **A committed Anglican for 40 years**
- **Worships at St Martin's, Whinney Banks, in Middlesbrough**
- **An experienced member of PCCs & Deanery Synod**
- **Since 2015, a member of Diocesan Synod, the Archbishop's Council, the Mission & Pastoral Committee, the Diocesan Board of Finance and the Finance Sub-Committee**
- **Believes the Church of England's top priorities should be:**
  - (1) helping churches recover from the impact of covid**
  - (2) maintaining worship across all parts of the Diocese**
  - (3) reversing the decline in attendance, especially by reaching out to families and young people**
  - (4) managing our finances to ensure the long-term sustainability of our witness & mission**



### Dear Elector

I am writing to seek your vote to represent the Diocese of York in the House of Laity of General Synod.

This election takes place as we are coming out of a difficult time of separation and loss, made all the more difficult by the disruption to worship, fellowship and communion. I recognise the enormous effort made by so many to help others and to keep our churches going, and that many of us are feeling a sense of fatigue.

However, please can I encourage you to make time to carefully and prayerfully consider all the election addresses you have received? I am asking this because I believe the decisions made by the next General Synod will have a major impact on all our churches and on our ability to share the good news of Jesus with family, friends and neighbours.

It is a great privilege and responsibility to represent our Diocese at General Synod and let me assure you that I am only standing after personal reflection and prayer over many months. You will find more information about me overleaf, including several areas where I believe I have relevant experience.

If elected, I commit myself to being a prayerful & faithful member of Synod, devoting time and effort to understanding the issues and seeking the Lord's guidance on how to contribute and how to vote. I will make myself available to all members of the Diocese to answer your questions and to receive your inputs.

Yours in Christ,

Neill

### Contact Details

Please feel free to contact me with any questions you may have.

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I am grateful to the following for proposing and seconding me. I have served alongside them both on Archbishop's Council and other Diocesan Committees for several years.

**Proposer:** Canon Richard Liversedge, Drypool, Hull Deanery

**Seconded:** Canon Rosalind Brewer, St Mark's Newby, Scarborough Deanery

### Personal Background

I am 59 years old and am married to Tina, a former primary school teacher who is now the vicar of St Martin's Church, Whinney Banks, Middlesbrough. We have three adult children.

I was born in Lancashire, then spent six years studying maths at Oxford University (I'm a "doctor" of maths, so please don't ask me any medical questions!). I moved to the north-east in 1987, initially to work in Research & Technology, but after completing an MBA degree I have spent most of my career working in strategic planning and financial forecasting for major manufacturing firms. Most recently, I worked as a consultant to support the development of the former steel work site at Redcar to bring new "green" jobs to the area, e.g. making blades for wind turbines and building one of the world's first carbon capture plants.

I became a Christian through a Methodist Church youth club when I was 15 and joined the Church of England when I went to university. I have always loved God's Word, and a few years ago I completed a Certificate in Theology, Ministry & Mission. I am particularly passionate about worship, and I especially enjoy writing contemporary worship songs and hymns, which I share online through the [threeleggedmusic.com](http://threeleggedmusic.com) website.

### Why Vote For Me?

I have been an active supporter of children's and youth work for many years, serving in youth clubs, beach missions, Sunday schools, "All Age" worship and most recently a "Feast of Fun" holiday hunger project. If elected to General Synod, I will seek to ensure that the church prioritises reaching out to families and young people.

I am an experienced strategic planner and financial forecaster. I have been responsible for making investment cases for major capital projects that have secured thousands of jobs in the north-east. Through my years on PCCs and the Diocesan Board of Finance (and especially on its Finance Sub Committee) I also have a good understanding of the financial challenges facing parishes and the way that Diocesan finances work. Taken together, this means I am well-placed to contribute to the important General Synod debates on strategy and finance.

I have worshipped in Anglican churches of different sizes and traditions, particularly as I have supported my wife during her training for ministry. I understand how much our churches mean to our congregations, and I want to see a continued (and growing) church presence in all our communities.

### (Some of) The Key Issues Coming Up In General Synod

I think it is important for you to know where I stand on some of the big issues that will be coming before the next session of General Synod:

- **Finance:** Even before Covid, the Church of England was living beyond its means. I want to ensure a sustainable future for the Church, and I believe this should start with reducing central costs, encouraging a discipleship that sees giving as an act of worship, and seeking to reverse the long-term decline in attendance. I think we must be realistic and recognise that retaining some of our smaller churches may mean fewer services and/or more services being led by lay people.
- **Vision and Strategy:** Partly a response to the financial pressures, this initiative seeks to help us all to follow Christ and make him known, both by encouraging existing parish churches to reach out beyond their doors and by establishing brand new worshipping communities. I believe that if we want to see change, we must be prepared to do some things in a new and different way.
- **Living in Love and Faith:** This is an important debate, driven by the changing attitudes of society to marriage and sexuality. I want to be part of a church that is welcoming to all, and which upholds traditional Christian views. I am committed to engaging in the debate in a way that respects those whose views differ from my own.

Finally, thank you for reading this election address. If you decide to vote for me, I would very much appreciate the highest preference vote that you feel able to give me.