

## GENERAL SYNOD HUSTINGS FOR LAITY QUESTION 2

As we seek to 're-imagine the Church' what are the changes and developments you would hope to see?

<p>BARRON, Mr Alastair</p>	<p>Accepting my comments about 'activism', as I 're-imagine the Church', I also imagine finding ways of it becoming more visibly involved in our country and, perhaps through the broad global footprint of the Anglican Communion, around the world. I imagine finding ways of reaching out, making the church visible to those who have yet to hear Christ's message.</p> <p>Even whilst remaining apolitical, the Church can have a real role to play in raising and protecting the interests of those less fortunate than many. I welcome, for instance, the Archbishop of Canterbury's recently publically stated views on energy prices, on the living wage, on the refugee situation. I would hope to develop this type of engagement further.</p> <p>I also welcome his engagement with leaders of other faiths and the role that dialogue and influence can play in benefitting those in need in UK and around the world.</p> <p>This approach is consistent with my previous comment about communicating God's love and message. If the church is seen as a visible force for good, engaging with, and influencing at, national and international level leaders then that message is clear to see.</p>
<p>CLIFT, Dr Simon</p>	<p>At a <b>local parish</b> level I long to see the Church as a place where people feel they <i>belong</i> so that in due time they might come to <i>believe</i> in Jesus, and that through an ongoing encounter with Him they might <i>become</i> the people God intends them to be.</p> <p>For this to happen the Church needs to be configured to suit the needs of those outside the church, not just for those already within the fold, with a generous disposition to the outsider.</p> <p>We need a fresh confidence and courage to articulate the Christian story in new and imaginative ways to the people around us who remain hungry for meaning and a reality above &amp; beyond themselves.</p> <p>At a <b>diocesan</b> level strategic decisions on resource allocation must be mission-focussed rather than preserving the status quo.</p> <p>We also need more investment in the training of lay leaders and a releasing of all members of the church to identify and use their God-given gifts and abilities in building the Kingdom of God.</p> <p>This re-imagined Church will be made up of people of all ages, cultures and backgrounds, a genuine <b>foretaste of the new heaven and the new earth</b>.</p>
<p>COULTER, Mrs Alison</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. I would like all Christians to know and understand that their whole lives are worship to God and to be equipped to serve him and to build his kingdom on their frontlines, at work, at home, or wherever they are day to day. Worship is not just for Sundays! I want more people to have this passionate, personal faith.</li> <li>2. I would like to see more focus on the people of God who are the Church, and less resource, time and focus on buildings. This will be a challenge, because we are custodians of a historic legacy. We need a buildings strategy and plan to relieve the heavy burden of building maintenance from smaller congregations.</li> </ol>

	<p>3. I would like to see a growing ministry aimed at young people. Not every Church has the resources to run youth work, but by sharing resources we should provide fun, interactive clubs and Christian groups for children and young people in more places.</p> <p>4. I would like to see more young people given leadership opportunities: young people reach young people, and this will help to grow a generation currently missing from our Church.</p>
<p>DAVIES, Mr John</p>	<p>I hope this question refers to the C of E 'Quinquennial Goals' the third of which is to Re-imagine the Church's <u>Ministry</u>?</p> <p>The word 'ministry' is key.</p> <p>It's not just about 'Messy Church', connect groups, Alpha courses, Debt counselling, Social outreach projects, running community centres and 'Open the Book' and taking church out of Sundays and into the week, just as we did for more than 500 years before the introduction of the welfare state.</p> <p>It's about who does it and who leads it.</p> <p>Even if the current project to increase ordinands by 50% is achieved we still won't have enough priests to lead what needs to be done. Just as in the 16<sup>th</sup> century English reformation, The Laity needs to get out of the pews and do (and lead) what needs to be undertaken.</p>
<p>FRY, Mrs Christine</p>	<p>The Church of England is the largest voluntary organisation in the country with a national network of churches in every community. We need to celebrate this, but not be tied to the patterns and structures of the past.</p> <p>We need to look to reshape our church to our core aims of: bible teaching, fellowship, worship and mission.</p> <p>I work in the Criminal Justice sector. Our local courts system was historically set up to allow local justice to be within a day's horse ride of every citizen!. Local churches like local justice may look different going forward with maybe fewer church buildings, but still vibrant local worshipping communities. and mission activities beyond our church buildings.</p> <p>Over recent years the fresh expressions movement within the Church of England has begun to explore what this may look like, rethinking church in our changing culture and how to connect with people who are not yet members of any church. This has included messy church, cafe church, church planting and even a surfer church on Polzeath beach. I hope to see this continue and develop in the coming years as we seek as a national church to evangelise our nation.</p>
<p>GREENE, Ms Jay</p>	<p>Above all, I want the church to be a warm and welcoming place. There are still congregations which are quite cold, formal, and excluding in their approach to newcomers.</p> <p>This is now a pick and mix society – we may like football internationals on TV but also enjoy playing 5 aside with friends, watching the Tour de France but also cycling round the lanes, orchestral concerts and playing in a local band. It is also true of worship: sometimes we like large highly organised services and at others prefer small, intimate, quiet gatherings. One size fits all really does not work.</p> <p>Many of us have tried hard to get more people to come to church on Sundays and failed. We need new ways of thinking. My favourite definition of mission is "sit where the people sit and let God happen". We need to go out and be where people are, not expect them to come and find us on Sundays. We do need to be free to celebrate and remember the Lord's Supper around kitchen tables as well as in formal church settings.</p>

<p>HUNT, Mr Alan</p>	<p>We seek to 're-imagine the Church' because we want to make the good news of Jesus accessible to people of all ages and backgrounds. But our services, our language, and many of our traditional ways of 'being and doing church', can be obscure, confusing and off-putting to the increasing numbers of people who have no church background. So we should welcome (for example) alternative service styles, the growth of community, school and workplace ministries, and also church planting, which can be very effective in plugging ministry gaps and contacting people who would not otherwise come to a church.</p> <p>Because such developments will often involve significant change, which some find disturbing and even threatening, we must ensure that changes are well and prayerfully considered, and then managed with pastoral sensitivity.</p> <p>Our re-imaginings and changes should not be frustrated by unduly complex procedures and long delays. The 'Reform and Renewal' proposals to simplify our structures are very welcome in this regard. And as we think more flexibly, we should look again at our parish structures. New patterns of ministry will not always map directly or helpfully onto parish structures, and parish governance and administration are excessive burdens in many places.</p>
<p>KIDD, Mr Christopher</p>	<p>It's often said that the church is not a building but the people. However, many still view 'church' as the services that happen within a church building. I believe church is something bigger than a weekly Sunday service. People don't 'go to church', but should be church throughout the week through their relationships.</p> <p>Many churches have a 'you come to us' approach to evangelism. The invitation is to join church as members currently like it. New forms of church need to have at their core a 'we'll come to you' attitude. They seek to serve other people and encourage church to emerge among them. Church is much more than an invitation to 'what we like'.</p> <p>Church is shaped by the context, rather than by: 'This is how we've always done it'. The Church must not change for change's sake, but I believe the Church must always be looking to the horizon for new ways to improve ministry and evangelism. It means sacrificing the idols of comfort and preference. It means always seeking to be relevant to the culture while never compromising the truth. The mission of the church will never change, but our methods must!</p>
<p>LALLY, Mr Daniel</p>	<p>I would like to see a church supporting and encouraging vocations, not only to the priesthood but in all forms. I want to see a Church that is integrating into the educational systems, not shying away but making church fun and appealing. I think that everyone should find the Eucharist exciting and understand more about it, it shouldn't be normal for people to not know about it or to shy away from the Church. It is too normal in today's society to just think of a church as 'pretty' or just a normal building in our streets. The Church needs to be seen to be Evangelising and focussing on its Mission actively and enthusiastically.</p>

<p>MAIN, Mr Paul</p>	<p>I would hope to see some developments I didn't expect - whatever works in each situation and includes worship, prayer and biblical teaching. What I do at least expect is more informal/spontaneous worship, home groups, messy church, café church etc. to attract younger generations.</p> <p>We need a loose but effective system of oversight to avoid problems (which have arisen in the past), while allowing new forms to thrive. Anything which helps bridge the cultural gap between church and secular society is to be welcomed.</p>
<p>MOORE, Mrs Lucy</p>	<p>My dream is that churches genuinely become 'households of faith', as this image of an extended family means so much in a society of isolation and broken relationships. Wouldn't it be awesome to be a diocese known for its delight in every age and stage of life? Where older people feel valued and energised to belong and serve to the very end of their lives, where single people know the church rejoices in having them as part of the family, parents are given the tools to bring up children in the faith, teenagers gloat over the wonderful opportunities opened up to them by the Church and children are loved, learnt from and with in a way that happens nowhere else in society?</p> <p>I think the key is more <i>participation</i>. I would love churches small and large to keep on turning from being cruise ships with passengers into being lifeboats with crews. I would love to see lay people playing a fuller role in mission and ministry in our ordinary extraordinary lives in partnership with ordained ministers who gleefully open up imaginative opportunities, supporting, challenging, enabling, encouraging, and inevitably consoling us and picking up the pieces when it doesn't work.</p>
<p>NASH, Mrs Abigail</p>	<p>The Church, whether local or global, is simply God's people gathered under God's word, listening to Him. With this as the basis and framework for each Church gathering, it means that we can purposefully seek to reach our parishes and neighbourhoods in ways that are relevant and appropriate for them.</p> <p>For each local church this will be different, whether building on relationships that already exist, or establishing new connections. I would hope to see a growing culture of sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ motivated by the love, compassion and kindness that we have been shown by God. We also need to be imaginative in our placement of clergy and lay workers, and risks to be taken so that local mission and ministry can flourish.</p> <p>It is exciting that every Parish in the Diocese has put together a Mission Action Plan, and can only serve to encourage churches to consider how they might be used by God to reach and care for their local communities. This may include planting new congregations, such as already has been done in Bournemouth, as well as using innovative means to encourage existing congregations to grow – spiritually and numerically.</p>
<p>WILSON, Mrs Cynthia</p>	<p>A deeper thirst for knowing the Truth of God's Word. In our services we proclaim many wonderful statements but how much does the average person in the pews understand? A renewed 'Fear of The Lord' amongst all people would move this Nation in a desperately needed new direction away from Secularism &amp; Humanism.</p>