



Guy Torrance candidate for **General Synod** (Laity)

Eligibility: Peterborough Cathedral Roll

Not currently serving on any other Synod.

Not a member of any Church reform or lobby group.

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I first attended the C of E in my local village when a boy. There was no other church, so it had to be broad. I was baptised and confirmed as an adult (18). My next parish was very catholic. I remain above midpoint on the candle. I've served on a PCC, altar-serving, stewarding, fund-raising, and a short period as a verger. I worship at Peterborough Cathedral unless I go elsewhere for convenience. That might be RC, C of E, with, or firmly without, women clergy or almost anywhere else.

I have grown to love the universal, "default", statutory, state nature of the C of E and its 39 Articles. No-one may be excluded, or compelled to attend or believe. Christian Next-in-the-pew may hold views entirely contrary to mine on several matters. That makes conversation afterwards more worthwhile. I tell you this simply so that you know. Vote for me wherever you're at in the C of E. Love of the C of E in all its breadth and diversity prompts me to stand for election now.

The big issue for the forthcoming Synod is Equality. The C of E is tantalisingly close to Equality on several fronts. Equal Marriage for Laity and Clergy alike, is happening but is not keeping pace with wider society and legislation. "Marriage" in the true, usual and literal meaning means Equal Marriage. Too late to debate it now. On a true, usual, literal meaning, neither the BCP Solemnization of Matrimony nor the 39 Articles (esp AA 20, 32, 34) need any alteration to provide for it. A32 requires it. Clergy and laity ("as for all other..") are permitted "to marry at their own discretion..." "Tradition" cannot excuse departure from the literal and grammatical sense of A32, nor used to exclude a partner, nor to end a career.

If we get this right the C of E may even, in years to come, to great rejoicing, pass an Equality Audit. It may even look forward to receiving folk from other churches and new Christians! There is no need to get bogged down in alternative oversight on this issue. For every Minister who declines to perform Matrimony (either at all or in individual cases), there will be several volunteers. Anyone who does not wish to attend a ceremony need not do so.

If a Measure to give effect to the Articles in this way does not pass, and at the first time, the C of E risks losing the power legally to join any couple in Matrimony. Even if the politicians keep their promise, the younger generation do not see Equality as a passing fashion. When they realise that a C of E wedding is possible for them but not their LGBT friends and siblings, they will choose the Registry Office and not come to Church afterwards. Baptisms will dwindle. Hefting will be lost.

All this Equality is too late for me. I have no direct interest here. This is not a convenient time. I cannot stand idly by and watch the C of E harm itself (again), potentially lose universal jurisdiction and sink into obscurity as a museum. I have to do what I can. So should you.

Please give me your vote.

Guy Torrance