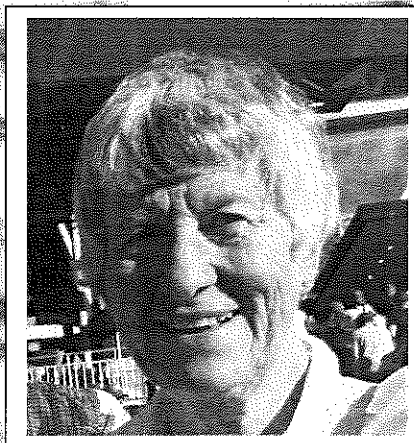


Gill de Berry

Election Address



Who am I?

A retired PE teacher, married for 45 years to an ex-vicar, mother of 3 and granny to 7.

My husband and I retired to Pewsey in 2008. Born and bred in Yorkshire, with a GAP year in the US, I started my teaching career in a comprehensive school in Bradford and completed it with a 20 year stint at St Paul's Girls' School in Hammersmith. I still have links to education and currently am Chair of Governors at a CoFE Primary School - St Katharine's, Savernake. Recently I have mentored other 'chairs' on the SELT course. I came to faith in Christ and met my husband at Bradford Cathedral and together we worked in Uganda (at the time of Idi Amin!!) then in inner city parishes in Sheffield and London. We now worship at St John the Baptist Church in Pewsey, where I am the secretary to the PCC. Over the years I have accumulated a wide experience of parish life within the Church of England and believe in the strength of networking and sharing good, effective practice. I enjoy worshipping God in many ways but really feel most at home in a 'New Wine' church. If you need to label me - I would be a charismatic evangelical.

We are members of 'Open the Book' teams in 2 local schools and see this as a great way of sharing Bible stories. I have several other interests and have supported the Duke of Edinburgh Award for many years and still assess Gold expeditions in the Brecon Beacons. I sing with Salisbury Musical Society and play tennis to keep fit. I love spending time with grandchildren and with friends and have travelled widely in Africa.

Why am I standing for General Synod?

I have been a member of the Church of England all my life and believe that in the next few years important decisions will be made about its future - decisions that I would like to influence. Two of the largest issues are...

Challenge No 1 National At this very moment our church is in danger of becoming completely irrelevant to modern society. There are too often no families, young people or children attending weekly services. Will our church survive another generation? We have to learn from the churches that are full of life and have large congregations; and to be open to what they can teach us. Accepting that there is a problem and sharing good practice through central synod would be a good place to begin. The Government is now making 'British' values part of the school curriculum in order to underpin our society with these ideals. Trust, truth and tolerance are some of these values which have been taught in our church for centuries. I feel it is worth fighting to maintain such an influential position in our society.

Challenge No 2 International. The Anglican Communion is a wonderful worldwide Christian family. I have been fortunate to worship in its churches all over the world - from the US and New Zealand to Nigeria, Ghana, and Uganda. We have a good deal that we all can share and learn from each other. At present the unity of this family is crumbling. Within the life of the next Synod it is in danger of fragmenting altogether. I would like to try and help to restore this international family. A united church could be a formidable witness against the evil forces we see in our world today. The gospel of Jesus has been alive for 2000 years and a Christian church will continue into the future. Will the Church of England and the Anglican Communion?

I would be honoured to represent Salisbury diocese over the next 5 years and do hope I can secure your vote