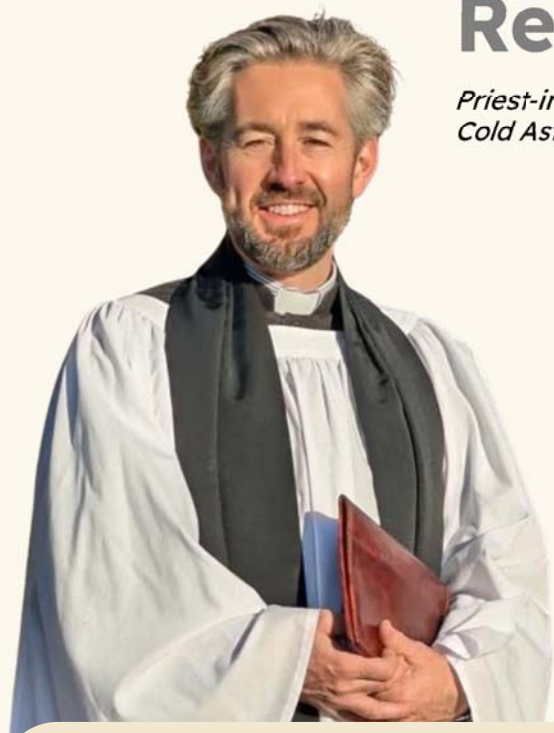


Revd Charlie Styles

*Priest-in-Charge of Northleach with Hampnett and Farmington,
Cold Aston with Notgrove and Turkdean and Compton Abdale with Haselton*



Why I'm standing

Dear colleagues,

I want everyone to have the chance to hear how much God loves them, whether they come to church or not. To do this we need strong local churches with confidence to reach out joyfully. That is my reason for standing, and it is the test I would apply to the business that comes before Synod.

I serve eight churches in the North Cotswolds. Like many of you, I know what it is to hold together small congregations, ancient buildings and a short list of willing volunteers, and to find real joy in it. But I also know how remote national decisions can feel from Collective Worship in a local primary school or the pastoral conversation after the Eucharist. If elected, my first commitment is that the ordinary realities of parish ministry in this diocese are heard in the chamber.

I love the Church of England – and I have real hope that things can be better, together. I believe the whole of the Church of England is genuinely greater than the sum of her parts: that when parish, diocese and national church are rightly ordered around one shared calling, we become something none of us could be alone. That's the case I want to make to you – not a complaint about where we are, but a hopeful, practical vision for where we could go.

I believe that local matters, and that the parish is the essential unit of the Church of England, because it's where the gospel meets ordinary life - where people who would never darken the door of a church encounter someone who will baptise their baby, bury their mother, and sit with them in hospital. The parish meets people exactly where they are. I want to see that conviction restored to the very centre of how we think, fund and organise ourselves – not as one priority among many, but as the thing everything else exists to serve.

That's also why chaplaincy matters so much to me. I've seen how many people – young people especially – are hungry to ask honest questions about faith, doubt, suffering and meaning, if only someone will meet them where they already are: in a school, a hospital, a workplace. Chaplaincy, Schools ministry and outreach are not add-ons to parish ministry; they're the same calling reaching further out. I want Synod to treasure both.

If that vision speaks to your own hope for the Church, I'd be enormously grateful for your vote.

What I would work for

Evangelism & Church Growth

Everyone should have the chance to hear the good news of Jesus. I would ask of every national decision a simple question: does this help a local church share the Gospel?

Local Parish Ministry & Chaplaincy

I grew up within the variety of the Church of England, both urban and suburban. I now serve 8 rural parishes. Too much national thinking is shaped around the larger, the urban and the central structures. I would seek to represent across the range of ministry contexts to ensure our voice is heard.

Vocations & Training

We need to call and form the next generation of clergy and lay leaders, and to train them for confident, outward-facing ministry. This requires encouraged and healthy clergy to inspire and encourage others.

A Safe & Trustworthy Church

Safeguarding matters enormously - the vulnerable need real protection, not more paperwork. I want a safeguarding culture built on relationship and genuine assurance, so that our practices protect people rather than institutions. The church must rebuild trust and that starts with us all working together.

“Proclaim afresh in each generation the faith uniquely revealed in the Holy Scriptures...”

The Declaration of Assent

More about me

- Served parishes in Slough and South Buckinghamshire, and as Rector of Lutterworth in Leicestershire and have seen significant growth, especially amongst younger people.
- Led a globally-active Christian charity as its chief executive and held leadership roles across the charitable and public sectors.
- Helped establish two foodbanks and been actively involved in three church plants, including one ecumenical project with other denominations.
- Served as Trustee of LWPT (a Methodist charity supporting lay preachers, publisher of Preach Magazine), and an organiser of the Pastoral Refreshment Conference (an interdenominational retreat supporting those in pastoral ministry and their spouses).
- Alongside parish ministry, I continue to serve as an itinerant evangelist and have recently joined the diocesan vocations team as an Assistant DDO.

How I will serve you

Alongside parish ministry I have spent much of my working life in governance: leading a national charity, serving on boards, and chairing a multi-academy trust through a period of significant political and structural change. That work taught me to read the papers properly, to ask the unglamorous questions about money, accountability and who carries the cost of a decision, and to keep a body of people with different convictions working together.

I would attend, prepare and stay to the end of the debates. I would report back plainly after each group of sessions, in writing and in person at deanery chapters, so you know what was decided and why. Before contested votes I would ask what colleagues across the diocese think, and I would explain honestly if I felt that I had to vote against the grain.

My faith began in the evangelical church, was enriched by catholic worship and I now serve in parishes of diverse traditions. The clergy of this diocese are a genuine mixture of traditions, and I will work with anyone who wants to see the Church of England confident in the gospel, honest about its problems and generous with those who see things differently.

Much of the coming five years will be spent on hard questions where we will not all agree. I hope to take part in those debates in a way that colleagues who disagree with me would still recognise as fair, and that leaves the Church more able to work together afterwards.



Please get in touch

I would welcome a conversation before you vote, whether or not you decide to support me. Please get in touch.

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