SYNOD ELECTION BIOGRAPHIES – 22 OCTOBER 2026

Rev Russell M Duncan *(Proposer: Revd Matthew Rushton • Seconder: The Revd David Todd)*

After a legal career of thirty five years in Edinburgh specialising in Rural Property and Agricultural Law, formerly with Dundas & Wilson CS and latterly with Turcan Connell, I took early retirement in 2020 to care for my elderly mother and to pursue other interests.

Throughout this period my work involved advising many individuals and families; major charities and trusts as well as corporate bodies on all aspects of property law. At all times client confidentiality and complete discretion were maintained. I developed the key skills of being a good listener; not being afraid of asking difficult or searching questions as well as negotiating and drafting complex legal documents and contracts. It would also involve looking at accounts and financial projections; and liaising with other professionals including chartered accountants, tax advisers and chartered surveyors.

After completing my curacy at The Church of the Good Shepherd, Murrayfield I am now an Associate Priest (non-stipendiary) at St Michael & All Saints Church, Tollcross, Edinburgh. I have a particular interest in pastoral work including visiting the sick and the elderly and welcoming those on the margins of society.

I am in my final year at New College (Edinburgh University) completing a Master of Divinity. My dissertation will focus on the Funeral Rights within the SEC and how they reflect changing theologies of death and ministry towards the bereaved.

I sit on the Endowments Committee of the Edinburgh Merchant Company and previously sat on their Charity Committee.

I am also a Trustee and Chairperson of the Finance Sub-Committee of Scotland's Churches Trust and sit on the Canons Committee of the SEC.

Professional Qualifications: LLB; retired Solicitor and Notary Public; Writer to the Signet.

The Revd Emma Herd *(Proposer: Revd Lesley Penny • Seconder: Revd Fiona Reynolds)*

I was ordained deacon in June 2026 and am serving my curacy at St Peter's Church, Galashiels, and St John's Church, Selkirk. I have been involved in church lay leadership for all my adult life. I live in Peebles with my husband, Graeme, and our three teenage children.

I am a Chartered Accountant with 25 years' experience in financial services, including senior business Leadership and non-executive director roles. Most recently, I was Global Head of Client and Regulatory Reporting for Aberdeen Plc.

I would love to serve the Diocese by bringing accounting and business leadership skills, church experience, prayerful reflection, and careful listening to this committee. Strong financial management, administration, and governance enable the church to tell the good news of Jesus and to care for others.

Church Involvement

2026: St Peter's Episcopal Church, Galashiels and St John's Episcopal Church, Selkirk - Curate

2002 - 2004: St Barnabas Anglican Church, Sydney- involved in Lay worship Leading, including being facilitator at a church weekend away

1983-2026: St Peter's Episcopal Church, Peebles- a member of the Lay worship ministry team and coordinator of the Sunday School and Young People's work since 2006

Qualifications

Currently studying for: BA in Theology, Ministry and Mission, Durham University

2002: Chartered Accountant (The Institute of Chartered Accountants of Scotland - ICAS)

1999: BA (Hons) in Archaeology and History, Durham University

Career History

2013-2026: Aberdeen Plc, an asset management company in Edinburgh - senior leadership of global teams responsible for workplace and facilities management,

customer services, regulatory reporting, financial statement preparation, and asset valuation. I led departments of 100-150 people, managed annual budgets and supplier expenditure of £50 million - £75 million and directed strategy, transformation, and change

2005-2013: Standard Life, Edinburgh, in audit, financial management, strategy and projects

1999- 2005: KPMG, Edinburgh, and Sydney, in audit and risk management

Non-Executive Director Positions

2025-2026: abrdn Fund Managers Limited (regulated by the FCA)

2022- 2025: abrdn Life and Pensions Limited (regulated by the PRA and FCA)

2020- present: Historic Environment Scotland - Board Member and chair of the Audit, Risk and Assurance Committee (ARAC), with responsibility for oversight of governance, risk management, internal control, and financial statement review