

GENERAL SYNOD ELECTION ADDRESS

The Revd Ayoka Olabisi: Assistant Curate, Christ Church Pennington

Faithful to Christ • Safe for All • Committed to the Next Generation



I am offering myself for election to the General Synod because I believe the Church of England is at an important point in its life and witness. Questions concerning trust, safeguarding, human sexuality, inclusion, discipleship and younger generations require prayerful, courageous and responsible attention. I hope to see a Church renewed in its love for Christ, confident in the Gospel, attentive to the Holy Spirit and equipped to make faithful disciples in

every generation.

The central focus of my ministry is helping people come to faith in Christ, encouraging healthy Christian discipleship and contributing to the spiritual renewal of the Church. My approach to ministry and decision-making is rooted in prayer, Scripture, attentive listening to God and obedience to His guidance. I believe the Church must continue to worship God “in spirit and in truth” and remain confident in the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Faith, Human Sexuality and Inclusion: My theological conviction begins with the belief that God is the Creator of heaven and earth and that humanity is created male and female in the image of God. I uphold the Church’s historic understanding of marriage as a lifelong union between one man and one woman, and I believe Christian teaching on marriage and sexuality should be approached faithfully and prayerfully. At the same time, I firmly believe that God’s love is universal and available to all. LGBT+ people, like every other person, bear the image of God and must be welcomed, listened to, kept safe and treated with dignity and compassion. The Church should be able to hold theological conviction and pastoral love together. I would seek to contribute to a Church where disagreement does not become hostility and where Scripture, tradition, reason, prayer and spiritual discernment remain central to our decisions.

Safeguarding and Rebuilding Trust: Rebuilding trust in the Church is one of my major concerns. Where people have been harmed or failed by the Church, trust cannot be restored by words alone. It requires transparency, accountability, effective safeguarding and a culture in which concerns are heard and acted upon. I bring 38 years of nursing experience as a Registered Nurse, including theatre practice and managerial responsibility. This has given me extensive experience of safeguarding, risk management, professional accountability, policy implementation and multidisciplinary working. I believe safeguarding must be embedded within the culture of the Church rather than treated simply as a procedural requirement.

Children, Young People and Evangelism: I am passionate about children and young people and about developing forms of evangelism and discipleship that genuinely connect with their lives. The Church must do more than provide activities for younger people; we

must help them encounter Christ, grow as disciples, discover their gifts and participate meaningfully in the mission and leadership of the Church. As an MSc student in Mental Health and Wellbeing, I am especially interested in how the Church can respond wisely to the emotional and mental-health pressures affecting younger generations while remaining faithful to the Gospel.

Disability and Participation: I also want to see people living with disabilities fully recognised as members of the Body of Christ. Inclusion must mean more than physical access to church buildings. People with disabilities should be encouraged and equipped to use their gifts, pursue their vocation and participate in the worship, ministry and leadership of the Church.

Experience I Bring: I currently serve as a priest and Assistant Curate at Christ Church Pennington, having trained at the College of the Resurrection, Mirfield. I previously served as Trustee Secretary of RCCG Miracle Arena, Blackley, and currently serve as Secretary and Coordinator of the World Day of Prayer, Leigh branch. I am also Founder and Trustee of The Lord's Ministry and Destiny Support Africa International CIC. I am also a governor of Christ Church Primary School. As a Black woman who has worked across different cultures, denominations and professional settings, I have learned the importance of listening carefully, recognising different perspectives and building trust through collaborative leadership. I believe these experiences equip me to contribute thoughtfully and constructively to the life, mission and governance of the Church of England.

My Commitment to Synod: If elected, I will seek God's guidance, listen carefully to different perspectives and exercise my vote with integrity and spiritual discernment. I will work for a Church that is faithful to Christ, safe and trustworthy, committed to evangelism and healthy discipleship, and attentive to inclusion, young people, vulnerable people and those with disabilities. **If entrusted with the privilege of serving on General Synod**, I will bring experience in ordained ministry, healthcare, governance, safeguarding, charitable leadership and cross-cultural engagement, together with a prayerful heart, a listening spirit and a commitment to collaborative service.

I would be grateful for your first-preference vote as I seek to serve a Church that is faithful to Christ, renewed in its spiritual life, safe for all, confident in the Gospel, and equipped to pass a living faith to the next generation.

Thank you for taking the time to read my address and consider my candidacy. I would be pleased to hear from you if you have any questions, would like clarification on any of the views expressed in this address, or would simply like to discuss the issues facing the Church of England. Contact: 07539341277 | ayoka@thelordsministry.org.uk

