General Synod Seeks Diverse Voices

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND
DIOCESE OF NEWCASTLE

The 2026 General Synod elections provide an important opportunity to strengthen the representation of voices **minoritised by ethnicity**. Currently, individuals in this group have been found to be quite underrepresented in the governance of the **Church of England**. For this reason, we are encouraging clergy and lay people from minority ethnic backgrounds who may feel called to serve, to explore this opportunity, learn more about the election process and consider whether this may be a next step in their ministry and leadership journey. Further information is available through the official election resources and partner organisations supporting awareness and participation (see information overleaf).

Why is this important?

Representation matters and the voices of people among us, who are minoritised by ethnicity are valuable to the life of the Church. Standing for General Synod is a form of service and ministry. Therefore, try not to assume that General Synod is for someone else. This appeal aims to widen awareness, encourage discernment and ensure that members of our diocesan communities in the above group are supported to engage in the election process.

Who can stand as a candidate?

Potential candidates may come from a wide range of backgrounds and ministries. Individuals who demonstrate leadership, wisdom, integrity, a commitment to the mission of the Church and a desire to contribute to its future will be considered. This may include the following:

- Almost anyone who attends a Church of England church regularly is eligible to stand as a lay member of General Synod. Use our eligibility checker *bit.ly/EligibilityCheckerGS* to help work out if you are eligible.
- If you are part of a parish church, to be eligible you simply need to be aged 18 or over, confirmed; on the electoral roll; and have taken communion at least three times in the past year.
- Requirements vary for people who have been baptised in another trinitarian church, who worship in cathedral churches or other worshipping communities, or who are members of religious communities or the armed forces. More detail is explained in Part 5 of the Church Representation Rules *bit.ly/ChurchRepresentationRules5*.
- Professionals with gifts in leadership, governance, education, finance, law, healthcare, business or the voluntary sector who are active members of the Church are also welcome to stand as candidate, if they meet the criteria in the first two points above.



Who cannot stand as candidate?

You are not allowed to stand if you are disqualified from holding office under safeguarding provisions, if you work for the National Church Institutions, or in some other circumstances. More detail on who is disqualified is explained in Part 7 of the Church Representation Rules *bit.ly/ChurchRepresentationRules7*.

Resources to help you decide

Diocesan Resource

newcastle.anglican.org/stand-for-synod-campaign-launched

Official Church of England General Synod Elections Information and Timeline:

bit.ly/GeneralSynodElectionsInfo

We are aware that many gifted people from GMH backgrounds may never consider standing for General Synod unless someone personally encourages them. If you desire a thoughtful conversation to discern whether this is a calling that you wish to explore, please contact the following members of the Diocesan Racial Justice Team:



Kelechi Dibie
Racial Justice Development Officer
k.dibie@newcastle.anglican.org



Ric Whaite
Director of Mission & Ministry
r.whaite@newcastle.anglican.org

Nomination Period for the General Synod

The nomination period will be open on 14 August 2026 until 7 September 2026. If you are interested in this opportunity, please send an email to arrange a call with any of the above diocesan staff to begin these conversations as soon as possible.

