

Election Address – Martin Gainsborough

- ✓ Committed to diversity
- ✓ Passionate about the local church
- ✓ A track record of delivering change
- ✓ Works well with others



I am standing for General Synod, hoping very much that we will elect a diverse body reflecting a range of ages, genders, sexualities, ethnicities and churchmanship.

One of the things I am most committed to is working well with others, ensuring a wide diversity of voices are heard, and striving for that unity that is Christ's alone.

I am Chaplain to the Bishop of Bristol, member of the Bishop's Staff team, and Diocesan Canon at Bristol Cathedral. I chair our Racial Justice Task Group seeking to implement Bishop Viv's commitments on racial justice. I served my curacy and first incumbency in inner city Bristol (St Luke's Barton Hill). Until 2018, I combined ministry with the role of Professor of Development Politics in the University of Bristol.

My passions are seeing the local church (parishes, schools and chaplaincies) flourish and the Church speaking powerfully into the public square.

If elected to Synod, these are the two things I would put front and centre of my service.

I served on General Synod during the 2015-21 period. My biggest achievement was tabling the amendment that resulted in the Church of England committing to a more ambitious net zero carbon target date of 2030, fifteen years ahead of the original proposal. I still can't quite believe we pulled it off but it's gratifying to hear our Archbishops laud it as bold and prophetic!

What I have enjoyed most about being on Synod is the opportunity it presents to pay close attention to issues affecting the life of the Church – issues which are important

– to communicate my learning back to the Diocese, and in small and large ways to make a difference to the Church's future.

In addition to my work around the climate crisis, I have spoken in Synod debates about estates' evangelism, homelessness, and national politics – all areas where I have passion and expertise.

Looking to the next Quinquennium (2021-26), I want to see a Synod which is outward-looking, less adversarial and bi-partisan, committed to the poorest and most marginalised in our society, and which strives to model something which reflects well on the body of Christ. We don't always achieve these things so there's work to do.

I am looking forward to Synod coming to a mind following the Church's discernment around Living in Love and Faith. I took part in the shared conversations at the beginning of my time on Synod and they had a profound effect on me: sitting down with people who took a different view to me, making new friends, and committing, by God's grace, to a future in which all may flourish. This is not easy but for me it goes to the heart of what it is to be the Church of Christ that we should strive for this.

At a time of great challenge in our country and wider world, I believe passionately in the transforming power of the gospel. While there's much to do, critical is the witness of the local church rooted in living and breathing communities, prayer and discernment, staying close to scripture, and listening for those prophetic voices wherever they may be found.

I'd love it if you'd consider giving me your vote!

Yours in Christ,

Martin Gainsborough