

DR VICTORIA OMOTOSO

Lecturer in Theology, Global Media and Digital Cultures

Theologian | Author | Researcher

On electoral roll of St Nicholas Bristol

Diocese of Bristol

Proposer: Oliver Hibbert, Bristol Cathedral, Lay Member of City Deanery

Seconder: Alison Edmonds, St. Matthew's Bristol, Lay Member of City Deanery

Listening well. Serving the parish. Equipping the Church. Engaging culture.



Why I am standing

I am standing for General Synod because I love the Church of England and want to serve it faithfully, both here in Bristol and across the wider Church. I believe deeply in its calling to proclaim Jesus Christ, make disciples and serve the world. My work as a theologian, lecturer, researcher and author has brought me into conversations about faith, Scripture, race, culture and identity across churches, universities, Church of England schools, cathedrals, including Bristol, Winchester and St Paul's, as well as wider communities. Alongside this, I have served my local church and wider community in Bristol through teaching, ministry, speaking and prison ministry, including work in racial justice and reconciliation. I would bring to Synod theological expertise, strong listening and communication skills, practical church experience, and a commitment to representing the whole Church.

What I would bring to General Synod

- **An attentive listener:** James reminds us to be "quick to listen, slow to speak" (James 1:19). This is the posture I would bring to General Synod. The Church of England holds together a remarkable range of cultures, traditions and experiences. My work in racial justice, Black theology and cultural imagination has brought me into conversations about theology, race and lived experience, speaking and teaching within and beyond the Church. This work has taught me how much is lost when one account of experience is mistaken for the whole story. I would bring attentive cross-cultural skills to Synod, seeking out those across our churches and communities whose voices are less often heard. I would let what I hear shape how I represent the diocese, rather than assume my own experience speaks for everyone. A Church secure in Christ and grounded in Scripture can listen deeply without losing its convictions.
- **A passion for the parish:** Parish churches are where the Church of England's presence in communities' lives: places of worship, prayer, pastoral care, mission and service. I want to see local churches equipped and supported to flourish in their particular contexts, including those serving communities with fewer resources. I value the Diocese of Bristol's Priority Communities work as part of *Transforming Church. Together*, I have seen this lived out through members of my own church moving to serve alongside the parishes of Hartcliffe and Withywood. For three and a half years I have also served in prison ministry at HMP Bristol, listening to and serving people from a wide range of backgrounds and circumstances. This has deepened my conviction that the Church is called to be present with people who can easily be overlooked or marginalised. The strength of the Church of England lies not only in its national

structures but in the faithful presence of local churches within their communities. If elected, I would want to listen to and represent the experiences of parishes across the diocese, recognising that our churches have different contexts, opportunities and challenges.

- **A heart to equip the Church theologically:** Every believer should have access to resources, teaching and opportunities to engage Scripture from an informed and educated perspective. This is not about turning every Christian into an academic; it is about giving people the confidence and tools to ask good questions, understand context and interpretation, and grow as disciples who know and follow Christ. As project lead, I helped bring together GMH clergy to produce *One Body, Walking Together*, a racial justice Bible study for Church of England parishes. I want to help make theological education accessible and useful to the life of the Church.
- **Engaging contemporary culture:** My academic work sits at the intersection of theology, culture and media. I believe the Church should neither retreat from culture nor simply mirror it. We should understand the world in which we minister, listen to the questions people are asking and communicate the gospel in ways people today can hear and understand, without diluting the truth of Christ. I am particularly passionate about equipping the Church to engage younger generations and contemporary media cultures. My work with Church of England schools through *Christianity as a Global World Faith* has strengthened my passion for helping young people encounter Christianity as a living, global and culturally diverse faith.
- **A Historic Faith:** I believe in the historic Christian faith expressed in the catholic Creeds and affirmed in the Church of England's historic formularies, with Christ at its centre and Scripture as its foundation. The Church must remain centred on Christ and confident in proclaiming the gospel. I hold that Holy Scripture is the standard for the Church's faith, teaching and practice. As a Church of England Christian, I value the riches of our tradition, while holding that both tradition and contemporary culture must be considered in the light of Scripture. We are called to be a distinctive presence in the world.

Serving the whole Church

General Synod is the legislative body of the Church of England and an important forum for debate and for shaping the direction of the national Church. If elected, I would seek to represent the whole lay electorate, not only those who share my views. I would listen, communicate with electors, and work towards unity and consensus wherever possible, while speaking with courage where faithfulness to Christ and Scripture demands it. I would be committed to bringing the experiences and concerns of our parishes and communities into the life of General Synod.

Email: victoriaoomotoso@gmail.com | Mobile: 07428748331

I would be grateful for your first preference vote.