



General Synod Election Address

Revd. BEVERLEY EJIMOFO

I was born in Cardiff, South Wales; my mother and father left Jamaica in the 1950s and settled there, following my uncle who served in the RAF in South Wales during the Second World War.

I was dedicated to God as a baby and regularly attended church as a child and adult.

Relevant experience:

My primary training was in Nursing, although I initially wanted to be a teacher and have gained two teaching qualifications since then. I subsequently worked as a Nurse tutor, Health Visitor, and an In-house consultant for Kent County Council Social Services and, following promotion, the Local Education Department in training and leadership development.

I was involved with the independent church after moving to London in 1987, and I was invited to be a Director and church leader. I learned how to offer pastoral care to a diverse population in several disadvantaged London Boroughs where gun, knife crime and lone parenting were the norms.

I established my own consultancy business in 2000, working primarily with public sector organisations to shape organisational development and supporting personal development; this included an accredited vocational training centre offering a wide range of qualifications. I also established a not-for-profit company in 2006 to help people back into employment. In addition to employing over 120 staff predominantly drawn from the target communities we served, my company positively impacted the lives of over 1,200 young people. Many had been excluded from school or had poor educational experiences; we helped them gain qualifications, find employment and go on to further and higher education.

My work in this area was recognised with two business awards (the Crème of Nature Award, 2008 and the Basic Trust, Business Initiative Awards, 2012).

After almost two successful decades of contribution to training and development, I finally sold my business while looking to serve my community differently. This coincided with my acceptance by the Diocese of Rochester to study theology as an ordinand.

As a volunteer, I have supported both my local (Bromley) and the larger community in numerous ways. For example, I have held appointments as a governor for two Bromley schools, as the Lead Governor for Safeguarding and as a member of the Christian Values Committee. I also established and personally funded an Art Club in Langley Park Girls School in Bromley.

As the first chairperson for a newly established 'Safer Neighbourhood Panel', I was personally asked to continue in the post by the Police Chief Inspector when I was due to retire from the position. I was also one of only 100 individuals invited to be part of the Home Office's 'Ending Gang Violence Team' in 2011. I put together and fundraised to replace the lighting at St Mark's Church by putting together an exhibition and concert celebrating 70 years of the NHS. This featured the Lewisham and Greenwich NHS Choir, Opera Singer Stephan Loges and James Orford, St Pauls Organ Scholar.

I volunteered at the Bromley Winter Shelter, cooking hot meals for homeless people during the winter months. I also attend the Imperial Healthcare NHS Trust board as a Non-executive Associate Director. During the Covid-19 surge, I regularly attended to contribute to situation response planning meetings to ensure staff and patient well-being. I am also a member of the Seacole Group, which offers non-executive directors from Black and minority ethnic backgrounds the opportunity to contribute expertise and knowledge to support the NHS.

I am married to Chidi, a Senior Consultant in Emergency medicine, and we have three daughters. I am enjoying my curacy at St George's and St Barnabas Church in Beckenham and am keen to support the parishioners, sharing the love of God in good times and during life's challenges.

My attributes:

These include an ability to form impartial, independent opinions, the ability to debate, argue and influence in a positive, constructive manner and a keen eye for detail. In addition, I enjoy working with people; I aim for objectivity and diplomacy in my interactions, get along well with others and thrive on finding resolutions to problems. I hope to be able to offer these qualities to General Synod.

I am passionate and experienced in developing and supporting influential leaders; this is a critical issue for the Church today. In addition, my experiences in health, particularly concerning the Covid-19 pandemic, offer invaluable insight into emerging trends and challenges for the Church. I would be delighted to contribute solutions that will help clergy and lay ministers address the growing numbers of people experiencing poor mental health, loss of employment or stable incomes. Finally, I am keen to ensure our broader communities, and those within our parish regard the Church as an important resource; supportive, comforting, diverse and offering hope.

I would be delighted to offer the experience and knowledge gained over the years to support the Anglican Church via the General Synod.