

General Synod Election Address



Dear Brother's and Sister's,

My name is Basirat Adebunke Lawal, but I'm known as 'Ade'.

I am writing to you to ask for your vote in the coming elections to General Synod as part of the house of clergy. I have some knowledge of the synodical process having served for some time at Diocesan Synod and now I am keen to serve at a national level.

Who am I? I was born in London; my parents were from Nigeria. I have always felt at home in Anglicanism, though it has not been without struggle. I attended London Bible College as it was then, having felt called some years beforehand. Once there my call to the ordained life started to gather momentum. I trained in St Alban's Diocese on the St Alban Oxford Ministry Course part-time whilst working as a Lay Minister. I was made a Deacon in 2005 at Lichfield Cathedral and a year later was ordained Priest at St Peter's in Stoke-on-Trent also in Lichfield. I then served my curacy in the same diocese at St Bartholomew's Church with St Albans, from there I went to the Venerable Bede in Leeds. It was at Leeds Teaching Hospital NHS Trust that I turned my attention to Hospital Chaplaincy. Following this I moved to Rochester Diocese first serving at St Mary Magdalene in Gillingham and then at Rochester Cathedral alongside the Rochester Cluster. In July 2021, I became Associate Vicar at St Peter's and St Margaret's Rochester and St Matthew's Borstal.

Currently, in the Diocese of Rochester I serve as an Assistant Diocesan Director of Ordinands having begun as a Vocation Advisor. I am also a UKME Vocation Champion as well as a Spiritual Director and Mentor. I have served as a member of Diocesan Synod since 2018 and this year I was invited to serve on the consultation group for Living in Faith and Love.

My hobbies include reading, sports especially football and formula one racing. I also enjoy working out with my personal trainer, listening to classical music, and seeing friends. I like dabbling with the Cello.

In terms of worship, I am energised and feel comfortable with high church worship. However, having travelled the spectrum in my Christian journey I am appreciative of the different styles of others.

I fully support all orders and levels of ministry and support the inclusion of all irrespective of race, sexuality, and disability. I affirm my commitment to the five guiding principles, the honouring of mutual flourishing and learning together in the face of difference and diversity. I have a passion to see a greater diversity in General Synod and other structures of the Church of England and I am

willing to be part of the solution. I care about a church that looks after its clergy, I care about a church that seeks to save the lost and those without hope, with the good news of the gospel and the message of love in the difficult times we are facing.

The Church has much to give its attention to in the coming quinquennial and I look forward to debates on the following:

- Living in Faith and Love – By creating a forum for discussion, which is a big step forward, the Church can come to a decision about identity, sexuality, relationships, and marriage.
- Amalgamating Parishes and Declining Clergy Numbers – Some research has taken place and it would be good to see this discussed at a national level.
- The Clergy Discipline Measure - The revision of this measure comes up for consideration this year and there is the opportunity to make it fit for purpose.
- Safeguarding – Aiming to be at the forefront of excellence in practice with transparency.
- Meeting its responsibilities regarding climate change and the environment.
- Social Justice and Equality – responding to the need of refugees. the poor and marginalised as well as meeting the challenge of the housing crisis.

Being passionate about the Church of England, I am convinced of its continuing importance in maintaining a Christian presence in society. its future looks promising despite the challenges it faces as it seeks to be more vibrant, inclusive, and relevant in society. The next quinquennial will set definite steps towards achieving this. It would certainly be an exciting time as well as a privilege to be part of this.

In proposing and seconding my supporters see that in my election, I will bring an additional dynamic to the representation of Rochester diocese and the national church. To be a voice for you and the things you care about at a national level, I need to be part of the General Synod. It would be an honour and a privilege to be your first or high preference vote for the coming quinquennial.

Thank you for reading,

Ade