

Diocese of Leeds-General Synod Casual Vacancy Election 2024

CANDIDATE: TABITHA TANNA

(Tabitha.tanna@yahoo.co.uk)

From Wakefield Deanery

Current positions

Member of Leeds Diocesan Synod

Member of the Leeds Synod Agenda setting committee

Member of Wakefield Deanery Synod

Church Warden at St Andrew's Church Netherton (in the Parish of Middlestown with Netherton)

Non - Executive Director of Jonnie Johnson Housing Association
Management Consultant with Salis Consulting Ltd.



Proposer: Mr Alan Quarmby (Wakefield Deanery)

Seconder: Mrs Heather Drayton (Wakefield Deanery)

I have been a member of the Leeds Synod for over five years and the Wakefield Deanery for a longer time. I believe I have the skills and knowledge needed to be an effective member of the General Synod and therefore seek your vote.

My work background has been in the NHS, Local Government and Social Housing where I have held several senior positions. I have a keen interest in sharing the gospel of Jesus with the communities I serve whether its in a work setting or within my local parish. I know how challenging it is to live out the gospel in a secular world and value the support I get from fellow Christians, the word of God and prayer. As a member of the Synod, I will bring a wealth of experience from working in complex settings and being a Board Director, current knowledge of ecclesiastical and social challenges and a sound spiritual framework routed in the word of God.

I am not a 'dyed in the wool' Anglican, I went to a church of England missionary school in Sri Lanka but was exposed to a variety of denominations from charismatic to Brethren. I therefore have a deep appreciate of different expressions of faith within God's eclectic universal church. I was drawn to the Church of England (CoE) many years after arriving in this country when our son became a chorister at our local Cathedral, I felt the presence of God through the liturgy and faithful worship every Sunday. I then decided to become a member of the CoE and serve the local parish. In the last eight years or so this has extended to the Wakefield Deanery and the Leeds Diocese.

I can see what a force for good the CoE has been through the centuries to England and the world. I am keen to support its continued influence in civic society despite voices of decent about what it could do. It seems like we are facing unprecedented

times of turmoil in the world, the country as well the church. It is a time when the CoE needs to shine forth Gods light and declare His word, I am keen to support the Synod to do this.

The CoE faces several challenges - dwindling congregations post pandemic, aging congregations (which are very visible in rural parishes), financial challenges (caused partly by the former issues), calls to disestablish the CoE, implementing 'Living in Love and Faith', disunity within the national and global Anglican communion, a need to reform legal and regulatory frameworks, achieving goals for climate change and supporting local parishes with effective guidance.

In its next session the Synod will be addressing the next stages of 'Living in Love and Faith', the Archbishop's commission on families and households, the Church Commissioners' Response to Links to Transatlantic Chattel Slavery, Safeguarding, the war in Ukraine and several other special motions. All areas that need truthful discussion and a considered response. In the next two years there will be similar areas of challenge that the Synod will be debating. I will commit myself to listening to others without prejudice, contributing my own views, being open to new ideas/views and prayerfully reflecting on how things can be resolved before casting my vote on decisions that need to be made.

With the nation facing a general election in the next 18 months the Synod is likely to be impacted by that not least in relation to any legislative process that may be delayed. There is also the role of the Church in the life of the country and the social and spiritual issues that we face. It is right that the Synod provides spiritual leadership during this time, speaking up for justice and providing guidance where its needed. Together with this it will continue providing support and guidance to Dioceses, Deaneries and PCCs.

There are many situations that have brought division within the Synod in recent years and its clear that the three houses at times hold very different views on key issues. However, the Synod does hold together on major doctrinal teachings. I would like to support the approach that promotes 'that which we hold in common' and build on that. I think the biggest challenge facing the CoE in the next 2 years is that of disunity. The biggest opportunity is for the Synod to respond to the call of Jesus in John 17 to love one another and to experience the unity that He has with the Father. This is the greatest witness to the missional life of the Church. I would like to support the Synod in this, as it navigates through rough waters.

I thank Alan Quarmby and Heather Drayton (from Wakefield Deanery) for proposing and seconding me.

Please give me your vote, I promise to be a fully committed and active member of Synod contributing with prayer and vigour, raising issues when they need to be and being a faithful conduit between the General Synod and the Diocese.