

## Who is organising the Inclusive Synod Campaign?

This campaign is being organised by a coalition of key organisations from across the full breadth of traditions in the Church of England - evangelical, catholic, liberal. We represent the broad mainstream of the Church, those who want our national Church to be for everyone, regardless of gender, age, disability, tradition, race, socio-economic background or sexuality. Members include Inclusive Church, WATCH, One Body One Faith, Ozanne Foundation, Affirming Catholicism, Accepting Evangelicals, Modern Church, the Society of Catholic Priests, the Campaign for Equal Marriage in the C of E, the Progressive Christianity Network and Thinking Anglicans. We are the only campaign for Synod organising across the whole of the Church.

## Who can I contact to find out more?

The 2020 Election Organiser is Nic Tall, who can assist you with any questions you may have.

You can contact Nic at [synod@inclusive-church.org](mailto:synod@inclusive-church.org) or on 01823 323180. He will be able to put you in touch with local election organisers and give advice and support to candidates.



# Planning for the 2020 Elections to the General Synod



OneBodyOneFaith



The Church of England is at an important point in its history. Against a backdrop of falling participation the Church faces significant questions about how it engages with those it is called to serve. Fully integrating women's ministry into the life of the Church, the full inclusion and equality of LGBT+ Christians, responding to environmental concerns, reforming church structures and bureaucracy, being a broad church for everyone in society - how Synod addresses these questions will shape the Church's future. Conservative groups in the Church, who opposed women becoming bishops and do not want equality for LGBT+ Christians, are organising to maximise their influence in these debates. If the broad mainstream of open, forward looking, inclusive Anglicanism is not fairly represented in General Synod we will face more delay and obstruction to becoming a welcoming Church for all.

### What is the General Synod?

The General Synod is the national assembly of the Church of England. It considers and approves legislation affecting the whole of the Church of England, formulates new forms of worship, debates matters of national and international importance, and approves the annual budget for the work of the Church at national level. It is therefore the Church's Parliament and elections to it for the next five year term will be taking place in 2020.

### Who are the members of General Synod?

Synod is made up of three Houses - Bishops, Clergy and Laity. The House of Bishops has all 42 diocesan bishops and 9 elected suffragan bishops. The House of Clergy is largely made up of clergy representatives elected within each diocese by licenced clergy of that diocese. The House of Laity is largely elected by dioceses, elected by the lay members of deanery synods in each diocese. Numbers of clergy and laity vary according to the size of diocese, but there are usually at least three of each per diocese, and each house has around two hundred members in total. These elections will set the tone of debate in the Church for the next five years, and it is vital that we elect representatives reflecting the will of the majority in the Church, supporting inclusion and opposing discrimination.

### When are the next elections?

Nominations of candidates to General Synod will be around July/August 2020. Voting will be in September/October and the new Synod will meet in November 2020.

### Who can stand for election to General Synod?

Clergy - any member of the clergy who is (a) licensed by the bishop, or (b) has permission to officiate and is a member of a deanery synod.

Laity - any lay person aged 18 years or older whose name is on the electoral roll of a parish in the diocese and who has received communion at least three times in the last year. They do not need to be a current member of a PCC or a deanery synod.

### How can we ensure a strong inclusive voice in General Synod?

To ensure a positive result in the 2020 elections we need to start organising now, concentrating on four areas:

#### 1. Have people in place to vote.

- Make sure your parish takes up all of its deanery synod places, and that your deanery synod members have inclusive views.
- If you are a lay person, get onto deanery synod in Spring 2020. This is the only way you will get to vote in the General Synod elections later in the year.

- Make sure you vote! Electoral turnout is around 50%, many potential voters don't engage. If you don't cast a vote for an inclusive, outward looking church you probably won't get one.
2. Think about standing for General Synod
- We need people who care about the future of the Church to stand for General Synod, clergy and laity.
  - If you are not able to run for election, maybe you could encourage someone who would be a good candidate.
  - We need several candidates running in every diocese, both clergy and lay. With a proportional voting system having many inclusive candidates does not split the vote.
  - In 2015 some dioceses only had one inclusive candidate, who topped the poll, but the other places were taken by conservatives. The more inclusive candidates we have standing, the more inclusive representatives we can elect.
  - We need a broad range of candidates with experience across the breadth of the Church to give the widest possible appeal to voters.

#### 3. Help organise in your diocese

- We need people on the ground in every diocese who can help organise for the elections, who can ensure enough candidates are running, encourage people to be on deanery synod, remind people to vote, organise a local meeting to raise awareness, etc.

#### 4. Pray

- For the process, for those considering putting themselves forward, for existing members thinking about standing again, for those wanting to be on deanery synod, and for God's blessing on every aspect of the 2020 elections.

- About what role you could be playing in the synodical life of the Church.
- That God's will for the future of the Church will be enabled by the people who are elected in 2020.

