

Rev'd Natasha Woodward

London Candidate for House of Clergy, General Synod 2021

Nominated by the Rev'd David Neno, Area Dean of Ealing and Vicar of St Peter's Ealing

Seconded by the Rev'd Anne Stevens, General Synod Member (2005-12, 2017-21), Church Commissioner, former trustee of WATCH (Women and the Church) and Inclusive Church, Vicar of St Pancras



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I believe that...

God creates the world and life which is beautifully interconnected and dynamic. That which does not change is not alive.

God in Jesus shows us the truth of who we are, good and bad, and opens up a better way with God.

God continues to send the Holy Spirit to lead us on a journey of change, the journey of life.

Biography

- Intentional Interim Minister at Christ Church Brondesbury, Willesden Area
- Dean of Women's Ministry, Willesden Area
- 15 years of parish ministry Greater London (London, Rochester and Chelmsford Dioceses)
- Previously Assistant Principal of St Edmund's Course in Christian Studies
- Before ordination a Systems Analyst at the Bank of England, and a Two Cities ordinand
- Born in Canada, attended school in Northern Ireland, and Cambridge University

(PTO for the interesting bit)

I am standing for election because...



I believe the Church of England should review the arrangements it has made for those who are unable to accept the ministry of women who are priests and bishops.

The arrangements we have made are unique in the worldwide church. As Dean of Women's Ministry I have had many conversations about how to encourage women in ministry, and hearing concerns about, for example, the very low proportion of stipendiary parish clergy in this diocese who are women (19% v 30% nationally), despite the fact that the majority of parishes in London are open to the ministry of ordained women.¹ I have also heard lament that while the current arrangements were intended by all sides to promote unity, on the ground it can feel as though there is increasing division, with polite separation seeming easier than working together. I have reluctantly concluded that the current arrangements have systemic effects which make it less likely that women will flourish in ministry. General Synod should have the opportunity to review the current arrangements in the light of experience. I will advocate for such a review, and for the experience of women clergy to be a key input into that.

I want to help the Church make a positive response to the environmental crisis.

There are enormous practical challenges facing the church as we attempt to address the problems of pollution, waste, and loss of biodiversity as well as climate change. The goal of a more sustainable future is clear, how we do it is less clear. I will examine synod business carefully to find better ways. To support my ability to address policy and advocate for change I am also studying for a part time MSc in Environment and Sustainability.



I will bring my whole self to synod. That includes experience of 15 years of parish ministry in ordinary London churches with their struggles, joys, diversity, richness and surprises.

I am committed to equality for everyone at all levels and roles within the church, regardless of gender, disability, ethnicity, socio-economic status, mental health or sexuality.

You may agree with me about nearly everything and want to give me your first or second preference vote.

If so, thanks!

In our voting system every single first and preference vote is very valuable.

You may agree with me about one thing, but not others. That's what I expect in our rich and diverse church. Do consider giving me one of your lower preference votes – because of the transferable vote system it is worth expressing a preference unless you think there is no difference between the remaining candidates.

If this means you lend me a vote, thank you too!

Remember your vote needs to be in by noon on Monday 11 October.

¹ For 2019, the most recent year published. *Church of England Ministry Statistics Report*, churchofengland.org