

# Revd Mark Murthen

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**Proposer: Revd Jane Morris, Honorary Curate, St John's Ealing**  
**Seconder: Revd Amatu Onundu Christian-Iwuagwu, Vicar, St Stephen's Bush Hill Park, Edmonton Area Director of Mission and Racial Justice**



Hello, I'm Mark Murthen, thank you for taking the time to read my election address. I am committed prayerfully and diligently to serve all areas of this church that I love and seek your vote for the opportunity to do so for this quinquennium of the General Synod.

## About me

- Married to Lisa with two energetic young children.
- Curacy at Deane Parish Church, Bolton, Manchester Diocese (2014-2017).
- Member of Manchester Diocesan Synod (2016-17)
- Associate Vicar, St James Muswell (2017 onwards)
- Elected to General Synod in 2018 by-election

My experience of General Synod is that there is a vast number of important matters that we need to raise, debate, and legislate for, and I would continue to actively engage in all sessions. However, there are certain issues of critical importance where I believe I contribute at a much deeper level given my life and ministry experience.

## Increasing Racial Diversity in the Church of England

I was born and brought up on a council estate in Tottenham but both of my parents came from the island of Mauritius. Growing up I spent time in both the Roman Catholic church and then in a Black Majority Pentecostal Church. Sadly my personal experience has been of less racial diversity in the Church of England than in these other two Christian denominations.

**There is a lack of diversity in the leadership structures, both lay and ordained.** I have considerable experience helping make a difference in the way we think and act as a church. During my curacy I was trained to lead sessions on Unconscious Bias Training in Manchester Diocese and was privileged to help the Diocesan archdeacons, examining chaplains, and church house staff to think through the implications of our hidden people preferences. I am passionate about people, like me, from ethnic minorities discovering their vocations (lay or ordained) within the Church of England. I also believe in partnering with 'ethnic minority' majority churches, where their current practice is more effective than our own ensuring the mutual flourishing of all God's people.

The whole church, and not just those from minority ethnic backgrounds, needs to act. **We must all own the responsibility to ensure that we have a church that fully reflects the racial diversity of our country.** One of the proudest moments in my career was not only speaking in the momentous General Synod Windrush debate of February 2019 but knowing that my children were watching at home as history was being made.

If I am elected to General Synod I aim to **hold the church's leadership accountable for delivering on the Task Force's From Lament to Action** report.

### Mission to the Unreached

I am passionate about sharing the good news of Jesus the Saviour in a manner that can be heard and grasped by all. I have experience of living and ministering on large diverse **council estates** where I experienced so much misunderstanding about Jesus and the church.

We need **creativity and courage to present the truths of our faith** not only to those without any meaningful engagement with the church; but also to build on the excellent work of food banks and valuable support for the poor and marginalised. Whilst Muswell Hill is not an area of deprivation, the community ministry which I help to oversee, has a long history of responding to needs elsewhere in the borough of Haringey.

The church needs also to **consider its mission to the elderly and vulnerable**, in its care for the body and the soul. The tragedy of COVID in the care homes has surely brought to our attention this area of ministry.

It has also been a privilege to be part of a church family **that values inclusive worship with adults and children of mixed ability**. If we truly believe the gospel is for all, regardless of age, background or ability the church must be devoted to making the church a welcoming place for all to experience the love of Christ.

I believe that I have the necessary skills to build relationships across different ages, different church traditions and different denominations and share wisdom and ideas to reach the unreached.

### Rebuilding after the effects of COVID-19

After the COVID lockdowns of the past two years many churches are feeling fragile. We have missed the joys of gathering physically for corporate worship, sharing the Eucharist, singing hymns, fellowship, and simple hospitality. We recognise that patterns of ministry have changed forever, and we need **wisdom not only to rebuild our work in the parishes, but to do so sustainably for the physical, mental, and spiritual well-being of the clergy**.

Whilst I want to encourage new initiatives, it is important that we are realistic about competing demands on the time and energy of our clergy. And coupled with the reality of increasing financial burdens faced by our churches, we may feel overwhelmed with all that we are asked to do. I am keen that as clergy we **regain our confidence in the transforming power of the Gospel** to affect our personal lives, our communities, and our country.

### Contact Me

There are many other areas that will be of concern this next quinquennium. The areas above are where the experiences God has given me enable me to make a valuable contribution on behalf of us all. Do please contact me if you have any questions about my address or other areas of concern to you. I would love to hear from you.

Thank you very much for reading this and do please consider giving me your first or another high preference vote. God bless you.

Mark