

THANDI LOPES

CANDIDATE FOR GENERAL SYNOD

*Nominated by: Sue Johnson, London Diocesan
President of the Mothers' Union*

*Seconded by: Cecilia Anim CBE, came to UK from
Ghana as a midwife, past President Royal College of
Nursing*

*NB Sue & Cecilia are acting in a person capacity
in nominating & seconding me*



Dear Elector,

It is a privilege to stand for General Synod. I would like to share with you what has led me to ask for your vote in the forthcoming election.

As a mother

I am a mother of five, as well as being a godmother and an “auntie” to a number of others. I would take on the responsibility of this role with the same devotion, eagerness, and open-mindedness as I do for the young people in my care. Together we ensure that Christianity is at the forefront of everything we do and that we are guided through prayer, worship, leading by example and mutual understanding.

One thing that is prevalent among our young people is the overload of media and information from so many different sources that young people often feel lost and misdirected. There is an overwhelming desire for many young people to be accepted and conform. Young Christians often struggle to voice their views and, whilst they are confident in declaring their faith, there is often an expectation that they are overly accepting of issues which are in direct conflict with their faith.

It is our duty to foster confidence and a realisation that young people can be true to the Church’s traditions and to follow Christ’s teaching of love thy neighbour.

As an Anglican

I support the Church in upholding the priestly duty of confidentiality of confession and the need for those who exercise priestly ministry in the Church of England to have been ordained by a bishop; clergy training and support are also vital.

I believe we should be confident in upholding the sanctity of marriage and ensuring that, with the new normal, we are able to keep churches open for worship. A respectful and devotional approach to Holy Communion is central to our teaching.

As we lovingly encourage people to return to church, I want to be part of a move to bring back to worship those who might not currently feel comfortable in doing so.

I also want to support initiatives to bring people to church who are Christians by habit but not necessarily Christians by worship. Worship is one of the fundamental purposes of the church and it holds the key to the Church's mission and growth.

I would look forward to being part of General Synod to ensure the Five Guiding Principles are used to strengthen the Church's adherence to its varied traditions.

As a woman of colour

I was saddened to see the violence that was linked to the social unrest in 2020 and it brought to mind the contrast with the peaceful demonstrations led by Martin Luther King. As a church we should be clear in our stand against racism in all aspects of life and we should support proposals which end racism at all levels of the Church.

It is not possible for a Christian to follow Christ's teachings and yet show discrimination towards another. My personal experience has always been of love and respect by my fellow parishioners and by clergy, but I believe that the Church of England must make a stand to show that we wish to end racism at all levels of the Church, including our parishes.

I am also eager to be part of the implementation of the proposed suite of changes laid out by the Archbishops' Anti-Racism Taskforce earlier this year.

So why would you vote for me?

I am anxious to show that our traditions are relevant in these new times, whilst showing that we can live in harmony with the modern world and the needs of the next generation.

I work as the pastoral manager for a sixth form in the west London suburbs and, before that, I worked as a liaison officer for young adults in halfway homes between prison and society.

I have seen the impact the modern world has on our young people and believe that, with your support, we can make the Church strong by pulling together resources to help young people find their way and to access the strength and stability which our faith gives us. Parish churches, at the heart of communities, are uniquely well placed to do this.

I am well versed in public speaking and have always found a way to make my voice heard. Should you vote for me, I hope to help make your voice heard as well.

We must let our young people grow with the promise of understanding, the promise of Christ's teaching, the promise of community, the promise of diversity and the promise of using kindness to uphold the rich and varied traditions of the Church.

Conclusion

I am grateful that you have taken the time to read this address. If you have any questions, then please email me via thandilopes@hotmail.co.uk. Thank you.

I hope that you feel able to award me your first vote or a high preference vote.

My prayers are with all the candidates standing for election.