

General Synod Election Address 2026

Candidate for the House of Laity, Diocese of London



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Hoxton — Stepney Area
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Doreen Tang

ABOUT ME

I am 51, married, and a mother of three, of two adults son, and my youngest doing her final year in 'A' levels. Outside church I love cooking, and enthusiastically, and I am slowly working my way through the cuisines of the world. I love to walk and in a city this loud, being still in a green space is where I hear God most clearly.

I am committed to the full five years of Synod, and attending in person both the London and York sessions and any additional induction meetings in the first year, and **my parish supports me in this.**

WHAT I WOULD PUSH FOR

CHILDREN IN HOXTON SHOUT MY NAME ACROSS THE STREET

These young people will remember what they told me last week, and that I will pray for them. As Head of Children and Youth at St John's Hoxton and chaplain at St John's The Baptist Primary School in Hoxton, that recognition is the greatest joy of my work.

I pray, worship and teach about God's word to 160 primary school children every week and it is such a privilege that the student council suggest that I am present during playground time to walk around and be ready to pray for anyone who needs a prayer or just a friend they can sit with.

By God's grace our church weekly youth group has grown from 12 to around 22, and a good number of them come on their own, without a parent behind them. I have heard stories about how they would meet each other in coffee shops and do bible study together!

It is also the Church of England at its best and it is built almost entirely by lay people, on the budgets that are cut first when money is tight.

I am standing because the people who do this work are rarely in the room when decisions about it are made. I want to change that.

1. Children and young people treated as core part of our mission and ministry, not an optional extra

Allocation of resources: The Church says the next generation is a priority. In practice, children's and youth ministry is often a fixed-term post, a stretched volunteer rota, or the line item that disappears in a deficit budget.

I would press for national funding decisions to be tested against a simple question: does this reach a child or young person who is not yet here?

2. Support for families where Christian faith is not held in common

I was baptised at twenty-one. I had believed for years before that, but I waited, because my mother wanted us to come to the water together. When she did, she was baptised alongside my brother and me. Years later I married a man who was not a Christian. It took thirteen years of prayer before God brought him to the Cross. In that time I raised our three children in the faith within the boundaries he set, because he did not want them pressed into a decision before they were old enough to make it themselves. Twice I have been the Christian in a household that had not arrived yet. Both times, waiting was the faithful thing to do and both times, waiting was lonely.

Nurturing young disciples: I see it again every week. Several of our young people come to church alone, with parents who do not believe or do not come. Nobody at home asks them how it went. They are doing at fifteen what I did at twenty-one, and the Church has almost nothing to say to them or to their families about how to hold that well.

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WHAT I WOULD BRING

Frontline experience, not theory. I work with children, young people and their families every week in one of the most diverse parts of the country.

Schools and safeguarding. As a chaplain and Kids & Youth Lead, I operate inside safeguarding practice daily. I want processes that genuinely protect children and that unpaid volunteers can actually follow.

Willingness to listen first. You will not agree with everything I have written here, and I will not agree with every candidate's statement you read. I look to win people rather than an argument!

Commitment to the "today" church. I believe the faith we have received is held in trust and our duty to pass on to those coming after us, through our schools, our young people, and those we encourage towards ministry.

Commitment to intercultural mission and ministry. In my parish, intercultural ministry is not an initiative but it is Sunday morning. What I have learned is that there is a diverse congregation can still be led by the same few people who led it. Yet real intercultural ministry means letting that diversity shape worship, leadership and vocations, and I would press Synod to hold itself to the standard it asks of parishes.

Encouraging parents: There are many across London in the same position, often mothers who quietly believe they are failing at something the Church assumes is straightforward.

I would bring all of this lived and ministry experience to Synod: as a large and largely invisible part of our church that deserves practical support and honest recognition.

3. A voice for people who assume they do not have one

Those who feel disempowered: I grew up in Brunei Darussalam, where Christians are a small minority. I was educated at a Christian mission school, a real blessing, and one I do not take for granted. But I also learned early to talk less, stay in line, and not question the rules. I have been in the UK for over twenty-three years, and I still know exactly how it feels to sit in a room and assume the decisions have already been made by someone else.

Deanery synod members, parish volunteers, mothers, young people, and congregations from minority backgrounds often feel the same about General Synod. My commitment to you: **I would use my seat to ask the plain questions that busy volunteers actually want asked, and to report back in language that does not require a glossary.**

WHY I AM ASKING FOR YOUR VOTE

My mother waited until she could come to the water with me. I waited thirteen years for my husband. On Wednesday nights, I stand in a playground in Hoxton and pray for young people whose families have not arrived yet, and may never.

I have been on every side of that waiting. It taught me that the Church's job **in every parish** is not to hurry people, but to be there, funded, staffed and unembarrassed, for as long as it takes. Someone needs to be in the room for the next five years arguing that those young people are worth the money, the training and the patience. I am asking to be one of those people.

Please, give me your first, or highest preference vote to help me make a difference at General Synod.

With heart full gratitude and every blessing in Christ,

Doreen Tang

Proposed: Jedidah Johnson of Hounslow Deanery
Seconded: Noah Kelly of Harrow Deanery