

Revd Isaac Lawrence

Candidate for Election to the General Synod – House of Clergy

Vicar of Scotby, Cotehill and Cumwhinton | Serving within Brampton Deanery

Diocese of Carlisle

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Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

The next five years will be significant for the Church of England. General Synod will make decisions affecting every parish and the future direction of our Church. Above all, we must remain faithful to Jesus Christ while proclaiming the Gospel with confidence in a changing society.

After much prayer and reflection, I have decided to offer myself for election to the General Synod. I do so with humility, recognising that no individual has all the answers, but believing that my experience in parish ministry, diocesan leadership, safeguarding, vocations, theological education and intercultural mission has prepared me to contribute thoughtfully to the life of our Church. I want to serve the clergy of the Diocese of Carlisle faithfully, representing every tradition with honesty, integrity and respect.

My Journey

My Christian journey began in Pakistan, and over twenty-five years ago God led me to the United Kingdom. That journey has given me a deep appreciation for both the richness of the worldwide Church and the unique gift of the Church of England.

Since then, it has been my privilege to serve the Church of England, first in Ripon and then for fourteen years across three rural parishes in Cumbria. Those years shaped my understanding of ministry. I have shared in life's joys and sorrows and learned that the local parish remains the heartbeat of our national Church. Every decision made by General Synod should strengthen the ministry of our parishes and help clergy and congregations to flourish together.

Serving the Wider Church

Alongside parish ministry, I have sought to serve the wider Church in a range of practical roles. I currently serve as Bishop's Adviser on Vocations, National Mentor for Ordinands, safeguarding trainer, trainer in Christianity as a Global World Faith (CGWF), unconscious bias trainer, and Executive Secretary of the Association of Pakistani Anglican Clergy (APAC), which I co-founded with the Archdeacon of Doncaster.

Throughout my ministry I have tried to build bridges: between church and community, between people of different cultures, and between conviction and compassion. That commitment is reflected in my work to establish the Creating Cohesive Communities Conference, to found the Carlisle Passion Play, and to contribute to a range of diocesan and national initiatives that seek to strengthen the Church's witness and serve our communities.

My doctoral research in Practical Theology, exploring belonging and participation within the Church of England, has further deepened my understanding of how people find their place, contribute their gifts and flourish within the life of the Church. I believe the Church must take the initiative in sharing the Gospel, developing leaders and strengthening communities.

Why I Am Standing Now

There are important questions before the Church around vocations, safeguarding, clergy wellbeing, governance and our witness in society. I believe this is a time not for discouragement but for hopeful, faithful leadership. I am standing because I want to help ensure that the decisions made by General Synod equip our parishes, encourage our clergy and enable the Church to proclaim the Gospel with confidence to future generations.

If Elected to General Synod

Before making decisions, I will listen carefully to those serving faithfully in our parishes, because the experience of local ministry should help shape our national life. I want to see parish ministry strengthened and supported, because it is where most people encounter Christ. I want to encourage vocations, discipleship and leadership for the next generation. I believe clergy wellbeing deserves sustained attention, together with fair and compassionate clergy conduct processes. Safeguarding must continue to be a defining priority, ensuring every church is a place of safety, trust and dignity.

I also believe our Church should continue to grow as an intercultural family where people from every culture and background are welcomed, valued and able to participate fully in its life and ministry. My work in Global Majority Heritage ministry has shown me how much stronger the Church becomes when we learn from one another while remaining rooted in Scripture and the historic faith.

Finally, I believe the Church's resources should be stewarded wisely, with national structures serving rather than burdening local mission. I want to contribute to a Church that is faithful in its doctrine, confident in its mission, compassionate in its ministry and attentive to the needs of parishes across our Diocese.

My Commitment

Above all, I want every member of the clergy in this Diocese to know that they will have a representative who listens carefully, speaks honestly and seeks the good of the whole Church.

I hold to the historic faith of the Church of England and seek to exercise those convictions with humility, grace and respect. General Synod is at its best when people with different perspectives are willing to engage with one another graciously and work together for the good of the whole Church. If elected, I will remain accessible, communicate openly and seek to represent our Diocese with faithfulness and integrity.

Thank You

Thank you for taking the time to consider my nomination. It has been a privilege to serve the Diocese of Carlisle over many years, and I would count it an honour to represent you in the General Synod. I would be deeply grateful for your first-preference vote; if your first preference lies elsewhere, I hope you might consider giving me your second or third preference.

With every blessing,
Revd Isaac Lawrence

Nominated by: Revd Ben Philips, Vicar of Lanercost Priory, Rural Dean and Mission
Community Leader, Brampton Deanery

Seconded by: Revd Allison Lee, Brampton Deanery Curate