

General Synod Election Address

Sarah Siddique Gill

I am standing for election to General Synod with a deep commitment to serving the Church of England faithfully, prayerfully, and courageously.

I was born and brought up in a Punjabi Christian family in Pakistan. Before ordination, I worked as a Bible teacher in Gujranwala, Pakistan. I later served in cross-cultural mission and community cohesion projects, including work with churches in Manningham, Bradford, in a predominantly Muslim area. I have always been deeply committed to ministry with children and young people, ecumenical and cross-cultural ministry, and racial justice. My theological and ministerial formation has been shaped by my work in South Asia, South Africa, and the UK.

Through ministry in different continents, I have developed a vocation centred on mission, reconciliation, and building up communities.

I began my ministry at St Paul's Church, Manningham, Bradford, as a Church Mission Society Volunteer Mission Partner. During my discernment process in Bradford, I trained for ordained ministry at the Queen's Foundation for Ecumenical Theological Education in Birmingham. After completing my curacy at St Paul's, Bradford, I served as Priest-in-Charge of Woodhouse Close Church and Associate Minister at Bishop Auckland Parish Church, County Durham. After five years there, I joined the Diocese of Blackburn as Vicar of the United Benefice of St Stephen with St James, Blackburn, serving in a predominantly Muslim context. I am presently Canon Missioner at Leicester Cathedral.

Alongside parish ministry, I have held a number of additional responsibilities, including Assistant Archdeacon in the Diocese of Blackburn; Adviser to the Bishop of Blackburn on UKME/Global Majority Heritage matters; member of the Diocesan Vocations Team; member of the Diocesan Vision and Strategy Leadership Team; and member of the Church of England's National Bishops' Advisers Team.

I have served on several boards of trustees, including Church and Community Schools and Emmanuel Theological College Northwest. I am currently involved with a number of charities, including One Roof Leicester, and serve as co-lead of Leicester Citizens, the local branch of Citizens UK.

Since 2023, I have served as a co-opted UKME/GMH representative on General Synod. That experience has strengthened my desire to help the Church listen more deeply, speak more clearly, and act more justly. Synod needs members who understand parish life, cathedral ministry, estates ministry, intercultural mission, theological formation, and the lived experience of UKME/GMH Anglicans. I would bring to Synod a breadth of experience, a collaborative spirit, and a commitment to the whole people of God.

In my present role, my ongoing engagement in interfaith and intercultural mission, equity, diversity and inclusion, racial justice, children and young people's ministry, and witness among communities on the margins would enrich my contribution to the life of the Church.

If elected, I would seek to contribute particularly in the following areas:

- **Mission and evangelism:** encouraging confident, contextual, and joyful sharing of the good news of Jesus Christ across boundaries, cultures, and generations.
- **Intercultural and interfaith engagement:** helping the Church develop in relationships of trust, hospitality, peace, and reconciliation in diverse communities.
- **Racial justice and representation:** working for a Church in which Global Majority Heritage and UK Minority Ethnic voices are valued, heard, and able to flourish in leadership.
- **Children, young people, and families:** supporting ministry that nurtures faith, belonging, and discipleship from the earliest years.
- **Parish, estate, and cathedral ministry:** bringing together local pastoral experience and wider strategic vision for the mission of the Church.

I am grateful for the encouragement and support I have received from bishops, colleagues, and communities throughout my ministry. I know the Church is at its best when it is rooted in prayer, attentive to Scripture, open to the Holy Spirit, and committed to serving the world with humility and hope.

I offer myself for election because I want to help the Church of England be more faithful in mission, more courageous in justice, more generous in welcome, and more confident in proclaiming Christ in today's changing world. I would be honoured to serve the Diocese of Leicester and the wider Church as a member of General Synod.

Thank you for taking the time to read my election address. Your support would be greatly appreciated.