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Recently, the highlight of my week has tended to be the Friday football game with a group of friends at the local leisure centre. The post-match analysis in the bar invariably turns to my involvement with the Church of England. Their contention: Why would anyone wish to be associated with such an awful organisation?

I am not a cradle Anglican. In fact I only came to Anglicanism in my late twenties as a result of six years of life and work in the grounds of Canterbury Cathedral. Among other things, what drew me in was our church's commitment to create a permissive space for a variety of voices and opinions to hear one another.

Prior to my "conversion", I had attended two Primates meetings as interpreter. Following ordination (2008) I was invited to serve as Rapporteur at the Lambeth Conference. Both experiences have shaped my understanding of Anglican identity as both global and local. This understanding continues to inform my approach in the various responsibilities undertaken on behalf of our church, including my role as Chair of the National Vocations Strategy Group and as member of the executive committee of the Committee for Minority Ethnic Anglican Concerns.

My ministry is essentially shaped by the context of a parish that offers insights in the many social and spiritual fractures of our society. With many households scoring high on the indices of deprivation, St Aidan's offers not only grittiness, but also a real opportunity to explore locally some of the potential priority issues for the next quinquennial of General Synod (poverty, education/employment, mission/evangelism, and the shape of ministry).

My previous experience of ministry in the rural context -as Curate at All Saints Staplehurst (Canterbury)- has highlighted to me the challenge of maintaining a Christian presence and witness in every community. Furthermore, it has confirmed the need of energy and imagination in enabling and equipping lay people for ministry.

As for my fellow football enthusiasts, I want them to know that our Church is not an archaic and irrelevant institution primarily concerned with the preservation of her own privileges. I want them to see that, unlike what is often suggested, our church is not just pale, male and stale, but a vibrant body of diverse individuals and communities actively involved in transforming the nation for good. I want them to understand that what drives us is a commitment to establish vital connections between individuals and communities to God.

The good news is that the next term of General Synod will engage creatively in helping the church fit herself for purpose, ready and equipped to respond to the challenge of being active in all communities around the country. As Archbishop Justin recently suggested, this is a time of opportunity for the church to engage with and

serve our nation, shaping the future of our institution and the communities in which we are located.

What will be the shape of God's church in this country? I would like to suggest that it will be a church that helps the nation redefine/rediscover personhood in more inclusive and integrated terms. It will be a church that engages in the promotion and defence of social justice, boldly challenging the structures of exclusion, and compassionately attending to the needs of those marginalised. It will be a church that confidently initiates dialogue and partnership with other faiths. It will be a church that passionately assumes her calling as steward of God's creation, working in partnerships with younger generations. Above all, it will be a church that strives to invite, equip and release all of God's people into God's mission.

I would like to be one of the sensible people at General Synod, forward looking, somehow radical, and with the faith that God will build his church. I bring a global perspective to my engagement with church and society. I also bring experience of service on Diocesan Synod for Canterbury diocese and, more recently, Rochester diocese. In addition, I have served on School Governing bodies (Staplehurst school 2008-2012; Westcourt School Gravesend, 2013-present). I currently sit on the Board of Trustees for Initiatives of Change UK (<http://uk.iofc.org>) and am an active member of Faith in Leadership (<http://www.faithinleadership.org>). I am an insightful person, sensitive to the needs of others and I am open to reasoned debate and challenge. I see my vocation as that of a bridge builder.

In proposing and seconding my application, the Rev. Canon Chris Dench and the Rev. Mark Griffin believe that if elected I would bring added value to Rochester's representation on General Synod. In order for me to do that, I need you to take me off the bench and give me a chance on the pitch; I need your vote.