

General Synod address 2026

Revd Canon Dr Dominic Black
Vicar of Hull Minster with St Mary's Lowgate

I am standing for election to the House of Clergy in the 2026 General Synod because I want to bring my experience of parish ministry, commitment to children and young people's ministry, safeguarding and unity in diversity across the Church of England to our national church.

Originally from York, I grew up in Green Hammerton, a farming village between York and Harrogate. Following study of Chemical Engineering at Teesside Polytechnic I worked for a few years for Unilever before training for ministry at Cranmer Hall, Durham. I am married to Heather, who is part of the Diocesan Mission and Ministry team, currently leading the Mustard Seed programme and we have two adult sons.

Ordained Deacon in 1998, I have spent all of my ministry in three of the most financially challenged communities in the Diocese. I served for six years in Orchard Park, Hull, first as curate and then leading the St Michael's Youth Project. I subsequently spent 16 years as Vicar of North Ormesby, including serving as Area Dean of Middlesbrough from 2011–2020. Since 2020, I have been Vicar of Hull Minster, leading this large civic church at the heart of Hull. Within the Diocese I am a member of Diocesan Synod and have served on the Diocesan Advisory Committee since 2023, and the Children and Youth Committee since 2008. I have been involved in interfaith relations locally and nationally, as diocesan delegate to the Church of England Interfaith Advisors network, when Area Dean of Middlesbrough. These relationships have been important in recent moments of community tension, including the recent riots in Hull.

I am deeply committed to the Church of England's ambition to become younger and more diverse, to better represent the nation we serve. I have seen this transformation in the congregations I have led. In North Ormesby we welcomed many asylum seekers into our community activities, including some who converted from Islam. This transformed the life of the elderly white congregation, which became full of families and people from several nations. Our worship together was enriched in song and prayer drawn from many different languages and cultures. I supported new Iranian Christians to lead Farsi Alpha Courses. At Hull Minster I have again intentionally sought for us to become a more ethnically diverse church; welcoming many global majority Christians moving to the city for study and work, and encouraging them to lead and serve in a variety of roles. We have also worked to welcome prison leavers, people who are neurodiverse and people with different learning abilities.

I have a particular interest in children's spirituality; my doctoral thesis explored Godly Play, and I have led youth projects in both Hull and Middlesbrough. I want to champion the further development and proper funding of children's and young people's ministry across the Church of England. Having seen too many damaged people in the communities I have ministered in, safeguarding matters deeply to me, particularly the importance of building healthy, trustworthy cultures in our parishes and communities. I

am concerned for clergy wellbeing and am disturbed by the experiences of clergy who have been bullied or badly treated in parishes. Clergy need proper support, and processes such as CDM must be fair, proportionate and humane.

I believe strongly in the Church of England's commitment to place and that the parish is usually the best expression of that vocation. I support the Church of England's commitment to care for creation and ambition for carbon net zero. Having worked across the breadth of the Church of England, I believe we are better together. I believe in a Church that welcomes diversity, serves the whole community and has a preferential option for the poor. I hold to the Church of England's traditional doctrine of marriage but am open to finding a pastoral way forward. I believe that disagreement need not prevent us from treating one another with generosity, respect and charity, and I want to contribute to a Church in which people can disagree well and remain committed to one another.

Although my ministry has been primarily parish-based, I deeply value the contribution of chaplaincy, which can often be undervalued. In Hull I have had the privilege of serving as a volunteer chaplain at HMP Hull, an experience I have found deeply rewarding.

As we face increasingly complex and demanding times, I pray we can move forward as a church without anxiety: not chasing passing fads but focussing on nurturing missional disciples. People deeply rooted in Christ, shaped by prayer and worship, motivated to serve with God's love, and with confidence to share the Gospel in everyday life. If elected, I would seek to listen carefully, speak constructively and advocate for clergy, parishes and communities—particularly those whose voices can too easily be overlooked.