

Revd Canon Dr **Christian Selvaratnam**

Proposed: Revd Kathryn Jackson, St Mary, Haxby and Wigginton

Seconded: Revd Matt Woodcock, St Stephen, Acomb



I hope you will re-elect me as one of your clergy representatives for the Diocese of York on General Synod.

I have served previously from 2010 to 2015 and 2020 to 2026. During my time, I have been on the Ministry Division Pioneer Panel, the Ordained Vocations Working Group, the Vision and Strategy 2020s Working Group, and been an 'Assessor' supporting the Northern Prolocutor to manage the interests of clergy who represent northern dioceses.

Last year, I worked with others on the motion to repeal the document 'Issues in Human Sexuality' as part of the Living in Love and Faith discussions. This year, I helped gather and represent the views of global heritage members of Synod. I was a General Synod member on the Crown Nominations Commission to appoint the Bishop of Leeds in 2026.

About me

I was born in London in 1968. I grew up in Hull and I have lived in York for the last twenty-six years. My wife, Amanda, works at York St John University. Amanda and I have been married for thirty years and we have three grown-up children.

I studied Mathematics at the University of Warwick where I became a Christian through the witness of friends. My first job was as a Church of England verger in Coventry, a serving role that has defined my approach to ministry. Before ordination I served for a decade as a free church minister and I was also the National Director of Alpha UK.

Ordained ministry

I was ordained nineteen years ago in the Diocese of York, after training at Cranmer Hall, and have served in various churches in this diocese and the Diocese of Leeds. I am currently the Dean of Church Planting at St Hild College where I train Anglican ordinands and Baptist ministers-in-training, and deliver other programmes that support the dioceses of the North and the Church of England nationally.

I am an honorary Canon at Manchester Cathedral, a Fellow at St John's, Durham University and an Adjunct Professor at Asbury Theological Seminary. This last role keeps me connected to the global church through teaching opportunities in Europe and North America, and with students from the Global South.

In the Diocese of York, I am the SSM Associate Minister at St Stephen, Acomb in York, which is the parish where I live. I also volunteer as a member of the Diocese of York Racial Justice and Intercultural Ministry Task Group and as an elected member of the York Archbishop's Council.

I love the Diocese of York and the Church of England and have great hopes for our future, though some of the challenges we face are significant. I would love the opportunity to keep using my skills, experience and wider connections in General Synod to make a positive contribution as a representative of our diocese.

My priorities

The Church of England and the Diocese of York face some big decisions over the next few years, and I believe the choices we make now will shape our future for a long time to come. Here are a few of my particular priorities and areas of interest.

Flourishing parishes

The Church of England is, at heart, a collection of parishes. Almost everything we hope for nationally happens when local parishes are doing well. So, our national and diocesan decisions should be tested against a simple question: does this help parishes flourish?

Clergy care

Clergy are vital to the Church's future, yet too often overworked and under-supported. I see it in the ordinands I train and the clergy I mentor. I want us to be kind to our ordained leaders, cut away needless complexity, and give them what they need to flourish. I would keep bringing what I hear into Synod's decisions.

Growth of the church

Helping the church grow and become more effective in mission is part of my calling. Over fourteen years leading one local church, I saw several hundred people come to faith, and sixteen from that congregation have gone into ordained ministry. Ministry is a jigsaw: I hold some pieces, you hold others, and together we can see the fuller picture.

Race, diversity and intercultural church

I am proud of my heritage — a white-English mother, a Sri Lankan father — which shapes how I see racial justice and our increasingly multicultural society. Intercultural church is an emerging diocesan priority and will be a key national question: what it means to be a parish church for the full diversity of people we serve, across ethnicity, class, wealth and political difference. I want other UKME and GMH clergy and laity to see someone like them serving nationally, and to know they have a place in the Church.

Human sexuality

Human sexuality will remain one of Synod's big discussions over the next five years. Finding a way forward for the whole Church of England will take grace, wisdom, diplomacy and a great deal of listening. I have worked behind the scenes to build the friendships and trust across difference that good decisions depend on, and I will keep listening to those on every side, including those who find this painful.

Safeguarding

The next Synod will complete major safeguarding scrutiny reforms and pass the law that sets up a new independent safeguarding body, along with the detail needed to make it work. The Church is safer than it was, but not yet where it needs to be. I want oversight that is genuinely external and objective but retaining safeguarding leadership close to the ground. Doing this well is how we begin to earn back the trust of survivors and the public.

Get in touch

If you have any questions about my views, or about why I'm asking for your vote, please don't hesitate to get in touch at **christian.selvaratnam@gmail.com**. And do tell me about the concerns and interests you would like represented at General Synod.

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