



Natalie Jennings

Candidate for General Synod Diocese of Gloucester

Nominated by: Reverend Canon Graham Morris,
Vicar of Cirencester

Seconded by: Reverend Canon Pauline Godfrey,
Diocese of Gloucester LGBTQI+ Chaplain

Why I am standing

I am standing because I care deeply about the future of the Church of England, and believe that our national conversations need to remain rooted in the realities of local ministry.

I want to bring to Synod the perspective of a parish priest serving small rural communities: **rooted in liturgical tradition, unequivocally committed to inclusion, and hopeful about what we can become.**

As a new voice on General Synod, I promise to **listen carefully to colleagues across the Diocese of Gloucester**, speak honestly, engage generously, and keep asking what our decisions mean for the people and communities we are called to serve.

My experience and perspective

Rooted in rural parish ministry

I grew up in a Somerset village and took part in the Ministry Experience Scheme in Cornwall. I then served my curacy in a large rural benefice in Herefordshire before moving to Gloucestershire.

Synodical experience

Former member of Hereford Diocesan Synod through the duration of my curacy; now an active member of Stroud Deanery Synod.

Inclusion and accessibility

Co-Chair of the Diocese of Gloucester Inclusion and Access for All Group since 2024, and participant in the Church of England's Enabling Leaders programme for disabled and neurodivergent leaders.

A bit more about me

I am the Associate Priest in what will become the Benefice of Minchinhampton Commons and Vale, **serving rural communities on the edge of the Cotswolds**, where the occupational hazards of ministry include being held up by cows as I travel between my parishes.

My faith journey began with **deep roots in my village parish church**. I later worshipped and explored my calling to ministry within another denomination, before feeling **drawn back home to the Church of England** as my vocation to the priesthood became clear. That journey left me with a **deep love for the breadth of the Church of England** and its particular calling to be present for everyone in a place, whether or not they regularly come through our doors.

My faith is shaped by sacrament, liturgy and the rhythm of the Church's year. In leading worship, I try to be **invitational**: taking our traditions seriously while helping people to find their own place within them. I care about making space for different ways of thinking, communicating and participating, and recognising the gifts that a diverse community brings to the Church.

Outside ministry, I can often be found walking my dogs, Bertie and Bella, nurturing my newfound love of gardening, or occasionally rediscovering my enthusiasm for knitting.

What I hope to bring to Synod



*Walkers on a Reflective
Ramble in Cherington*

A national Church rooted in local communities

I believe deeply in the importance of place. One of the things that drew me home to the Church of England was its outward-looking parish ministry: a Church present not only for those who worship with us, but called to know, love and serve the communities around us.

Rural churches and market-town churches can easily disappear from national conversations. They face real challenges - multi-parish benefices, historic buildings, small congregations and limited resources - but they are not problems to be solved. They are places of extraordinary commitment, creativity and connection. **On General Synod, I will speak up for smaller churches, rural communities and market towns, ensuring their experience is heard when decisions are made.**

A Church where everyone can flourish

Our diocesan vision is rooted in Jesus' words: "*I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.*" (John 10.10). I want to see that vision reflected in a Church in which everyone is able **not simply to belong, but to flourish**. I am committed to the full inclusion of LGBTQI+ people in the life of the Church, and to the continuing work needed around racial justice, gender equality, disability and neurodiversity. I want us to become a Church that is better at recognising different ways of thinking, communicating, worshipping and participating - and generous enough to make room for difference, including when we disagree. **On General Synod, I will play my part in taking forward the work already begun through Living in Love and Faith, including the use of Prayers of Love and Faith in standalone services.**

A hopeful Church willing to change

I am hopeful about the future of the Church, but I don't think hope means simply trying harder to preserve everything as it is. I want us to be confident enough in what we have received to experiment, take risks and listen for what God might be doing next.

That means **investing in children and young people, exploring new forms of mission** alongside inherited church, and **taking our responsibility for creation seriously**.

It also means asking difficult questions about what kind of Church we are preparing today's ordinands and curates to lead.

I want to help shape **a Church that is deeply rooted, but not stuck**: one which treasures its inheritance while remaining hopeful about the future.

**Please consider giving me your
first preference vote.**
Voting closes on 13th October.



Ascension Day service on Minchinhampton Common

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me at
associate@minchchurch.org.uk