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2020 Synod Elections: Shaping the future of the Church of England

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Should same sex couples be able to marry in church? How can the church respond to the climate emergency? How do we equip the church for the challenges of mission and ministry in the 21st Century? Do you ever find yourself asking these questions? And do you ever wonder who in the church has the job of answering them?

In the Church of England the big questions of the day are debated by the General Synod. It can seem like a remote body, with little effect at parish level and no place for ordinary clergy and churchgoers, but that is a common misperception. Many significant changes in how local churches operate come from decisions in General Synod, and the policies of the national church are shaped and decided in Synod. Next year will see full elections for the next five year term of the General Synod, and whoever is elected will have a voice in how the church grapples with the big issues and shape its future.

Could you serve on General Synod? Maybe you know someone you could encourage to stand for election. The Church needs a diverse range of people on Synod, different ages, backgrounds and experience to represent the full breadth of the Church. Inclusive Church is leading a campaign to organise for the 2020 elections, working in partnership with other inclusive organisations across the life of the church. We have just launched our main campaign leaflet, saying what will be happening and how you can be involved. Please download it [here](#) [1], and share it far and wide among people you know in the church who have inclusive values.

In 2015 Inclusive Church ran a strong election campaign with many who share our values being elected,

resulting in positive outcomes in some close Synod votes. Remember the 2017 'take note' motion, when Synod narrowly rejected a House of Bishops document on sexuality which LGBTI+ Anglicans had not been consulted on? That was only achieved by the narrowest of margins, and without candidates supported by Inclusive Church it would not have happened.

Our 2020 campaign wants to return an even stronger voice to General Synod. We will advise and support anyone who wants a forward looking, inclusive church and is interested in being on General Synod. There are several seats per diocese, both for clergy and laity, so it's really important that we have enough people willing to stand and give a real choice to voters. Sometimes there are not enough, or even any, inclusive candidates standing, so please consider if this might be a way in which you could serve the church as a whole.

Maybe being on General Synod is not for you, but would still like to vote in the election. We all know how important it is to vote, but who votes for General Synod? While Clergy members are elected by their fellow licenced clergy, the House of Laity are elected by members of local Deanery Synods. If you're wanting to vote for your General Synod rep you're in luck as all Deanery Synods are being re-elected in Spring of 2020, just before the national elections. Parishes are usually delighted to have volunteers for their Deanery Synod places, so if you're interested talk to your priest or someone already on Deanery Synod. Being able to vote for General Synod, whether you are a priest or lay person, is really important, with many elections being decided by just one or two votes.

If you would like to know more about the upcoming General Synod election please download [the leaflet](#) [2] or [the flyer](#) [3] and print them off. Please share them with others in across the Church.

Written by Nic Tall, Election Campaign Coordinator for the IC and partners' 2020 Synod Campaign. You can also contact Nic at synod@inclusive-church.org [4]

Another way you can help our campaign is by supporting it financially. Your money will go straight towards resourcing and paying our election campaign coordinator. Contributions to the costs of the campaign can be made through a dedicated JustGiving page ? www.justgiving.com/campaign/generalsynod2020 [5]

Source URL: <https://www.inclusive-church.org/blog/2020-synod-elections-shaping-future-church-england>

Links

[1] <https://www.inclusive-church.org/sites/default/files/files/General%20Synod%20Elections%20leaflet.pdf>

[2] [https://www.inclusive-church.org/sites/default/files/files/General%20Synod%20Elections%20leaflet\(1\).pdf](https://www.inclusive-church.org/sites/default/files/files/General%20Synod%20Elections%20leaflet(1).pdf)

[3] [https://www.inclusive-church.org/sites/default/files/files/Deanery%20Synod%20Leaflet\(1\).pdf](https://www.inclusive-church.org/sites/default/files/files/Deanery%20Synod%20Leaflet(1).pdf)

[4] <mailto:synod@inclusive-church.org>

[5] <http://www.justgiving.com/campaign/generalsynod2020>