

16th July 2026

Dear friends,

Young Adults at General Synod –2026 Elections

I hope like me you have appreciated the difference that the 5 co-opted young adults have made to our time together at General Synod, both over recent days in York, and in February in London. They have spoken and led worship well, and established themselves within the wider Synod community through networking, fringe events, prayer and reflection. It has been a joy for us to walk alongside them, seeing them grow in their faith, and discern a deepening call to serve the Church in this way.



I am writing to ask you to help us build on this great start by proactively encouraging young adults in your Diocese to stand for the forthcoming elections. We have a vision that the number of young adults would grow through our elections **from the 5 now co-opted to 30 under-30s**. We invite you to join us in praying for this in boldness and confidence.



Many dioceses have already been part of our development programme over recent months, supporting and encouraging their nominated young adults towards the courageous step of standing. We are hearing great examples of confidence built, skills increased, faith grown and decisions supported.

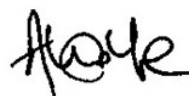
Now in the short time that remains before 7 September, we would love to encourage you to give further thought to who you might specifically encourage to take that step. You will be well placed to make those connections, alongside diocesan staff with responsibility for this area. If helpful, our National Society team are ready to support interested Young Adults in preparing for the process – this can be arranged through completion of [General Synod Young Voices - Registering Interest](#) form, or please contact Stephen Beamond, Head of Younger Leaders directly at stephen.beamond@churchofengland.org

To support you in this, we've shared below a couple of very simple overviews that could easily be used, either to share directly with young adults yourself, or for connections through parishes or diocesan staff.

With gratitude for your ongoing partnership.



Rt Revd Jonathan Frost
Bishop of Portsmouth & Chair of the
National Society for Education



Andy Wolfe
Interim Chief Executive
National Society for Education

Young Voices at General Synod

We listen to children and young people because Jesus welcomed them, God calls them, the Holy Spirit speaks through them, and the Church is incomplete without them. God's mission requires every voice in the Body of Christ to be heard, and children and young people are at the heart of that.

*"Young people
are the hope and
future of the
church. We ARE
going to lead!"*

Listening to young people: what matters most?

Relationships are key: Children and young people are often encouraged into church life by family members, friends, clergy, and church leaders who create welcoming environments and model active faith. Invest in these connections to reach children and young people where they are through building trusted relationships.

Listen and value their voices: Young people need to know their ideas and perspectives are heard, respected, and taken seriously. Make spaces genuinely safe, accessible, and welcoming for participation. Leadership opportunities help them grow in confidence and faith.

Encourage growth in faith: Support young people to explore Christian beliefs, ask questions, and engage with Scripture so they can develop their own faith and values. Some young people may not come from Christian families and may need additional encouragement, pastoral support, and opportunities to belong.

Give meaningful responsibility: Involve children and young people in leadership, worship, decision-making, and church governance (e.g. PCC membership), ensuring their roles are genuine and influential. Encourage participation in areas that match their interests and talents, such as music, singing, reading, technology, children's work, or community action!

Be aware of barriers to inclusion: Consider the practical challenges young people face, such as competing commitments, changing schedules, or moving away for study or work. Think creatively - work with young people to identify solutions and adapt opportunities to support their continued involvement in church life.

Ensure accessibility and inclusion: Adapt activities, responsibilities, and environments so that children and young people with additional needs can participate fully.

Work collaboratively: Partner with neighbouring churches, groups, and networks to share resources, exchange ideas, and create more opportunities for young people to connect and grow, particularly where numbers are small.

Be curious and encouraging: Ask questions, listen well, and help young people feel inspired and confident to take their next step in faith, leadership, and church involvement!



Scan for more on Young Voices at General Synod!

HOW TO GET ELECTED TO GENERAL SYNOD

1 – START WITH YOUR DIOCESE

Every route to General Synod begins locally.

- Find your diocese website
- Identify key people such as the Lay Chair of the Diocesan Synod

These are influential figures who understand the election process

They are well-connected and can help open doors early on.

2 – MAKE THE FIRST MOVE

Don't wait to be invited—reach out. Email or contact the Lay Chair (or similar diocesan leaders)

Introduce yourself clearly (who you are, what you care about)

Say directly that you are interested in getting involved / standing for Synod

Be confident: They may already be expecting young people to get in touch.

3 – ASK FOR SUPPORT

You don't have to figure it out alone.

Ask them:

- How the election works in your diocese
- What steps you should take
- How to build visibility and support

Be honest that you “need some help”—people are often willing to guide you
This is about building a team, not doing it solo.

4 – GET INTO THE ROOM

Ask to attend the next Diocesan Synod meeting; these usually happen before the end of March, or around June
Being in the room helps you:

- Understand how Synod works
- Meet voters and influencers
- Start building relationships

Presence matters.

5 – BUILD RELATIONSHIPS EARLY

Elections are relational, not just procedural. Connect with:

- Lay members
- Clergy
- Existing Synod representatives

Listen as much as you speak

Show genuine interest in issues affecting the Church

If key people support you, you're “off to a flying start.”

6 – RAISE YOUR PROFILE

Once you're known, people are more likely to support you.

- Attend diocesan events regularly
- Get involved in church leadership or initiatives
- Share your perspective (especially as a young person)

Visibility + credibility = electability.

7 – PREPARE TO STAND

When elections open:

- Put yourself forward as a candidate
- Use the relationships you've built
- Ask supporters to help spread the word

Your groundwork is what makes this stage possible.

**GETTING ELECTED
ISN'T JUST ABOUT THE
VOTE—IT'S ABOUT
EARLY CONNECTION,
VISIBILITY, AND
SUPPORT WITHIN YOUR
DIOCESE.**



FIND OUR LINK TREE HERE

