



David Hermitt

Standing for the House of Laity of General Synod 2021

Contact Details

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Nominated by Julie Withers (St Peter's Hale, General Synod 2019-2021) email: jh.withers@gmail.com

"I met David when we were both supporting Bishop Mark to recruit new suffragan bishops as part of the Bishop's Advisory Panel. He impressed me with his openness, perception, wisdom and ability to ask probing questions and make constructive suggestions. David is not afraid to stand up and be counted and I feel that he will be an excellent representative for the laity of our Diocese and is clearly well equipped to help in shaping the church for the better if elected to General Synod"

Seconded by Shirley Jones (Christ Church Alsager, Congleton Deanery) email: jonesshirley.t21@btinternet.com

"I have watched David faithfully serving our church for over 15 years. His move to Cheshire in 2005 was a landmark occasion as the first black headteacher. His work to transform a failing school to become the best in Cheshire is testament to his faith, hard work and dedication. Now that he has retired, I have no doubt that he will make a positive impact in helping the church achieve racial justice."

Why vote for me?

I believe that we are at a critical time in the life of the church. It is vital that we show the world that that we are inclusive. I am committed to equality for everyone, at all levels and in all roles within the church, regardless of gender, disability, ethnicity, socio-economic status, mental health or sexuality. I was encouraged by several members of the synod to stand for election, without their prompting, I may not have stood at all. I bring with me the experience of over 33 years of educational leadership and over 40 years of leading within the local church. I have energy and commitment and a strong desire to make the link between General Synod and the Diocese work.

The General Synod voting by single transferable vote provides multiple opportunities to do this. If you are intending to vote for me, please put me high on your list, preferably number one.

About me:

Becoming a Christian as a child has shaped my life. It means that I have grown in faith amongst a family of passionate Christians. I have had the opportunity to serve in a variety of ministries including church planting, mission projects, chairing the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisory Panel, member of Bishop's Advisory Panel, member of Chester Diocesan Race and Ethnicity Forum and attending Church of England Minority Ethnic Committee. For the last 15 years I have been worshipping at Christ Church Alsager where I am worship musician (Bass guitarist), regular preacher, sound and video engineer as well as leading church groups.

Personally, I am 55 years old and married to Mandy for over 30 years. Our four daughters have grown up within the Church. I have a broad range of church experience which is helpful in the broad Anglican communion. Starting with a black-led Pentecostal church then a medical mission in London. In Sheffield, I was an active member of Walkley Baptist where I served as a musician, youth leader and an elder. My wife and I then moved to Chesterfield to help lead a church plant and later supported the launching of a new parish (St John's Walton).

Professionally, it has been my honour to serve children during a 33 career in education. I had the privilege of attending Church schools that encouraged me to link my faith to what I was studying. I love education and have combined my interest in science, engineering, music and sport. At Sheffield University I studied systems Engineering followed by a Master's in Educational Management and I am currently pursuing a part-time doctorate in Education at Keele University. Starting as a Teacher of Physics, I was promoted several times at a wide variety of rural and inner city schools including becoming Headteacher of Nottingham Emmanuel School. In 2005, I moved to Congleton High School which specialises in Engineering. I retired in 2020 as founding Chief Executive Officer of a large Multi-Academy Trust (The Learning Alliance) which educates over 4,200 children aged 3 to 19 across Congleton, Crewe and Knutsford.

Why am I standing ?

In 2021, the Bishop of Chester approached me to support him in his new role. Firstly, he asked me to join the Bishop Advisory Panel to appoint the two suffragan bishops. Then he appointed me as Chair of the Diocesan Safeguarding Panel to support the vital work in improving safeguarding of vulnerable people in the church and deal with historical failures. My lifelong passion for equality has been turned into becoming a researcher at Keele University and working as an associate of Leeds Beckett University promoting the Anti-racist School Award. In addition, I am a member of the Diocesan Race and Ethnicity Forum and attend The Committee for Minority Ethnic Anglican Concerns (CMEAC).

"From Lament to action" inspired me to take a more active role in the wider leadership of the Church of England. My parents are part of the so-called Windrush generation who were not welcomed into the Anglican Church despite generations of being involved in the Caribbean. This important report and the positive response by the archbishops provide us all with hope that this generation of church leadership will be different and find practical ways to express their remorse and bring about greater racial justice in the church. I feel we should be a role model to the rest of society in matters of social and racial justice.

Where do I stand?

- **Women Bishops** – I am delighted that we are ordaining women as Bishops; it proves that General Synod can address divisive issues and find a way forward.
- **Mission & discipleship** – I am keen to see mission and discipleship placed at the centre of our decision making, thus helping the church to become more outward looking and relevant.
- **Simplification** – I support the continued debate about how we can make our structures more understandable.
- **Inclusive Church** – I support the equality of all people in all areas of church life, regardless of gender, disability, ethnicity or sexual orientation. In addressing the important issue of human sexuality in the forthcoming Synod, I hope we can model holding together different viewpoints, without losing sight of the need for equality. We can agree to disagree so long as we live in love with one another.
- **Racial Justice** – I believe this is an area where the church has fallen tragically short in the past. The very positive response of the archbishops to the call for racial justice at Synod give hope for the future
- **Climate change** - I welcome the commitment by General Synod to become carbon net zero by 2030 – the challenge now is to work out how this is achieved. Recent reports highlight that we must do more.
- **Clergy wellbeing** – During the pandemic it has become even more vital that we support our clergy as they lead us spiritually before God. As with other caring professions, ministers are vulnerable to overwork and burn out. We can do more to support them.

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