

Gregory Smye-Rumsby



**Election to the General Synod, 2026
Diocese of Southwark, House of Laity**

Proposer:

Bilkisu Labaran (Plumstead Deanery)

Seconder:

David Harrison (Charlton Deanery)

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About me

I live in south-east London with my wife, Kristen, and my children, Juliet, Lydia, Asher and Aaron. I am a Chartered Accountant, a keen (if mediocre) musician, and I love to study and teach the Bible.

My priorities if elected

1. Encouraging mission and the re-evangelisation of England.

Mission and evangelism must remain a primary focus. Buildings, the environment and social justice all matter, but they fall within, and are best seen as resulting from, the re-evangelisation of England. I will support Synod action that is in line with this, and question that which is not.

2. Supporting ministry and increasing ordinand training numbers.

Synod has recently backed ordinand training with generous financial support and schemes to increase training numbers, after intake fell by a third between 2020 and 2024. I will support continuing focus and further action on this vital issue.

3. Maintaining the Church's worship and prayer across the diocese and wider Church.

The new Mission and Pastoral Measure is due to come to Synod for final approval in 2027. The Church's central activity is the worship of God through Christ Jesus our Lord, and supporting parish churches is central to that. I am sympathetic to much of the Save the Parish campaign. We *should* be generous towards parishes in poorer areas. That said, as someone who has always belonged to a parish church, I believe a parish is a body of Christians before it is a boundary or a building. Where a congregation could support its own ministry, I would rather help it do so than ask for more from elsewhere, and I'm open to new structures where they serve the mission.

Relevant experience

- Experienced lay leader: 15 years PCC, currently treasurer, previously churchwarden and parish representative, 8 years leading a home group.
- As a partner of a London-based firm of Chartered Accountants, I have experience of senior governance and fiduciary roles in the private, charitable and corporate sectors, as well as a need to regularly grapple with legislation.

A strong interest in Synod issues

- I have proactively monitored issues and discussions closely over the last 5 years, including reading papers and visiting the public gallery of London Synod.
- I am familiar with how Synod works meaning I will be able to hit the ground running.

More about me

My life has broadly been split in half between two Anglican churches. Both churches are very much parish churches, and neither is part of a particular tribe or network within the C of E.

St Paul's, Skelmersdale

I was baptised and married in my home church of St Paul's, Skelmersdale. My parents and grandparents were also married there. While I was a child, there was something you would now struggle to find outside of cathedrals: a thriving male-only choir. The choir master would tour the local schools to recruit 7 and 8 year old boys. We were taught to read (where needed), walk in a straight line, and at each practice we would be publicly scored on our behaviour the previous Sunday. We would sing at the 9.30am and 6.30pm services each Sunday, while the 11.15am family service would have a band in which I would later play bass guitar. Some Saturdays we would have three weddings in a row, getting paid between £1 and £1.50 for each. I grew up with the ASB (I discovered the beauty of the BCP later in life), Anglican Psalter chanting, and a committed church community influenced by the charismatic renewal. My father and grandmother were Lay Readers, as well as my uncle who was later ordained.

St Michael & All Angels, Blackheath Park

Almost exactly 20 years ago, I moved with my wife to south-east London. First to Thamesmead, then Blackheath, Eltham and Lee. Our home over this time has been St Michael & All Angels, Blackheath Park. It has been where our four children have been baptised. I occasionally preach or lead services and have served in most lay leadership roles (as mentioned above). I teach 3-11 year olds in Sunday school and previously helped with the youth group. A lot of my ministry currently revolves around a church "home group" which I have led for 8 years. It has been a joy to lead others in studying the Bible. I believe studying and following the Bible is essential to grow in Christ.

Thank you for reading my election address.

I would be very grateful if you would consider putting me first when you come to vote.

You can also view my short election video [here](#) .

