



# Christopher Swift

Lay candidate for General Synod in  
the Diocese of Southwark, 2026

Nominated by Arjun Swarup (St Luke, Kingston)  
and Jacob Kinsella (All Saints, Blackheath)

## Why I am standing for election

I have five specific concerns which have impelled me to seek election to the General Synod. They are:

### **Five Guiding Principles**

More than a decade has passed since women were admitted to the episcopate, and almost a generation since they were first ordained to the priesthood. The arrangements made for maintaining the unity of the Church following these developments have served us all well. But there is now a danger that their value is overlooked. It is my emphatic view that the Five Guiding Principles expressed in the House of Bishops Declaration should not be weakened. The case for their retention must be expressed powerfully.

### **Seal of the confessional**

The seal of confidentiality associated with this sacrament is upheld by the universal church. There is no evidence that its use in the Church of England is linked to poor safeguarding practice. The confidentiality of confession must not be compromised.

### **Marriage**

The division of opinion within the Church arising from Living in Love and Faith must achieve a resolution which is consistent with its received teaching on the sacrament of marriage.

### **Sanctity of life**

The protection of human life both at its beginning and at its end has come under increasing threat in recent years from changes proposed by the secular authorities. It is of vital importance that all three Houses of the Synod present with the utmost clarity the arguments against these changes – arguments which will otherwise go by default.

## **Parish ministry**

The traditional structure of parish ministry is also under threat. The pastoral link between a parish priest and all his or her parishioners must be maintained. And parishes must be properly funded.

I recognise that there are many other priorities confronting the next Synod, and I would if elected certainly engage vigorously in their consideration. But it is for the reasons set out above in particular that I seek your support. They are matters central to the life and prosperity of the Church and of the people it serves.

## **About me**

I was born in Epsom, just outside the Diocese, but brought up in Kingston-upon-Thames. Apart from my undergraduate years at Cambridge, where I was an officer of the Union Society, and three years in Brussels, I have always lived in London. I moved to Greenwich in 2000.

I attend All Saints Blackheath. I have also for many years been a parishioner at All Saints Margaret Street in the Diocese of London.

My professional life has been in the law, practising at the London Bar and in the City of London, with a period working at the European Commission. I believe that my skills and experience would be valuable in the preparation of legislation and in the other work of the General Synod. I have applied them as a long serving member of the PCC of All Saints Margaret Street and of one of its trusts, on the Marylebone Deanery Synod and on the London Diocesan Synod. I now serve as a trustee of Forward in Faith.

In Greenwich and elsewhere I have been active in local community groups and charities, most recently as Secretary of the Greenwich Society. I have been a governor of various local authority schools in Lewisham and Westminster, one of them a Church of England primary school. I have long been active in the Conservative Party and have stood twice (with a complete absence of success) for Greenwich Council.

I offer my prayers for all the candidates standing in the Diocese.

Please contact me via [christopherswift@btinternet.com](mailto:christopherswift@btinternet.com) if you have any questions.

**I ask for your first preference vote, otherwise a high-ranking preference vote.**