

Peter ADAMS, a St Albans Diocese lay candidate for General Synod

Proposed: Dr Jacob Kurien, Barnet Deanery. Seconded: Pauline Kendall, Lay Chair Bedford Deanery

- **Working as a conflict mediator specialising in community mediation, intercultural relations and peacebuilding.**
- **Church member and PCC member, St Mary's Luton.**
- **Deputy / Lay Chair Luton Deanery since 2011**
- **St Albans Diocesan Synod since 2012**
- **Diocesan Board of Church & Society / Mission & Ministry 2012-18**
- **Diocesan Lay Chair and member of Bishop's Council, 2018-21**
- **Diocesan Committee for Ethnic Minority Anglican Concerns / Racial Justice Action Group since 2012.**



Dear Lay Members of Deanery Synods

Can I first encourage you as Deanery Synod members to be sure to use your vote to elect lay members from St Albans to General Synod. Whoever you vote for!! The voice of lay people is vital in the governance and leadership of the Church. That is why I have served as Deanery and Diocesan Lay Chair, and what led me to stand for GS in 2015. After an active and engaged term I am sensing I still have work to do. I hope the following will give you an idea of what I stand for and encourage you to use that **FIRST OPTION** vote for me!

It has been a privilege to serve you as a St Albans lay member of General Synod over the past 6 years. I have asked many questions, and spoken regularly - on foodbanks, gambling, Roma & Travellers, and the missional importance of deaneries. Based on my work I introduced an amendment on interfaith work noting "the importance of relationships between churches and people of other faiths in maintaining community peace and solidarity." And most importantly, I believe, I have spoken 5-6 times on safeguarding in church. Looking ahead:

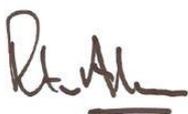
- **I bring a passion to synod to see flourishing churches in multi-ethnic inner-city areas** of our nation, congregations equipped to be God's people to the community around them. That passion has been expressed over the last 14 years I have worked based at St Mary's, the town centre Parish Church of Luton and in my role as director of St Marys Centre for Peace and Reconciliation – In short enabling churches to be community builders, agents of peace in our often conflicted multicultural town. **#CommunityBuilding**
- **I love and am committed to working for the diversity of our world!** I have spent most of my working life in cross cultural relations, conflict mediation and peace-building. My work in Luton has focused on Christian-Muslim relations in the context of the threats to the town from both Islamic and far right extremists. It has involved me in considerable work with the "white British" community as well as other faith communities, and given me a critical understanding of the challenges we face in forging a truly integrated and just multicultural society. I work hard for racial justice in the church and wider society, both in Luton and as part of our diocesan Racial Justice Action Group. The next synod will be key in pursuing **#RacialJustice**
- **Much of my work in peace-building can be summed up simply with the question, "How can we be good neighbours?"** That has always been the deepest expression of my faith. If re-elected to synod I will continue to bring relational strategies and stories to my voice, encouraging churches to be communities of hope who are transforming the wider community they live among. I regularly work with the police and the town hall on Luton wide issues. I work closely with many churches, am a member of the Churches Together in Luton executive, and represent them on Luton Council of Faiths. I loved being chair of governors of Wenlock Junior, the only CofE school in Luton, reluctantly resigning to allow me to attend to other responsibilities. I am vice chair of

Luton Foodbank. My work as a founding member and trustee of FACES, Faiths Against Child Sexual Exploitation with dear Christian and Muslim colleagues has been the most challenging and yet richest experience of my life. In 2012 after three very difficult years in the town I was named by the Mayor as Most Distinguished Citizen of Luton. **#GoodNeighbour**

- **My life in Luton is in contrast to that growing up as a farmer's son in rural Sussex.** I am connected with rural England through extended family who farm, and have a deep love of the countryside, rural life and traditions. This helps me understand the anxieties felt by many towards the changing face of our nation, and the discrepancies between multicultural urban Britain and dominantly white rural/market town Britain. My ability to face in both directions challenges me to contribute to the CofE being a voice for unity in our national life. **#OneChurch**
- **God's world is precious and climate issues need our urgent attention.** This has been important to me since studying botany at university. In November I will be working with Scottish Mediation to provide a community dialogue hub for activists and protestors during COP26, the international Climate Change conference. This next synod will be critical in working out our commitment to be carbon neutral by 2030. I commit to bringing urgent attention to the **#ClimateEmergency**.
- **I love the Church of England and long to see it thriving.** That has been the focus of my work as lay chair of St Albans Diocesan Synod for the last three years, and as deputy/lay chair of Luton Deanery Synod for longer. Installation as an honorary lay canon at St Albans Cathedral for my work in the Luton community has extended my focus to our wonderful Cathedral. Covid has emphasised what I'd already observed, that while we need to be realistic about the role of the church in the 21st Century, the church is embraced when we learn to serve our communities. Whether we live in a small village or diverse multicultural city we must renew our age-old Anglican commitment to the cure of all the souls of our parish. We need strong parishes to sustain that presence, but also new models of church to improve our reach. **#MixedEconomy**
- **I value the diversity of the good old CofE.** I actively seek to worship and work alongside people from a wide variety of Christian traditions, the traditional small village churches like I knew growing up or large evangelical charismatic churches that have been very formative in my life. I have previously worked closely with many churches, Catholics in Ireland, Orthodox in Romania & Bulgaria, and especially both official and underground churches in China. More recently my role as an active lay chair of Luton Deanery has involved working to build unity of purpose across the breadth of traditions represented, and I believe my colleagues would testify to my embrace of all. I believe we need strong Deaneries to hold unity and stimulate local mission. **#MissionalChurch**
- **The opportunity to engage during the past synod across the breadth of our beliefs on sexuality,** and especially hear the painful stories of gay people in our church has been deeply challenging. I believe the best outcome for ongoing debate around sexuality can only be realised as we commit to walking forward together in our difference. The Living in Love and Faith process will demand the full attention of the new synod and challenge us all. If elected I commit to working hard for a church that emerges in unity and a safe place for all. **#LivingInLoveAndFaith**

The next few years will present many challenges to church and nation. I believe our future lies in engaging with them with grace, truth and hope. My background in mediation equips me to respond to challenge and conflict face on, and work for hope and positive outcome for all. Nationalism and immigration and various extremisms, along with the impact of austerity, will continue to be dominant themes in our national conversation. **In summary I believe my experience of life and ministry equips me to bring a positive voice to synod over the next quinquennium as we work for a simpler, humbler, bolder church, actively listening to all, and responding with a gospel of justice, peace and hope.**

Best wishes, and please drop me a note if I can help you at all.



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