

Election Address

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Dear Elector,

I am seeking your **first preference** vote for re-election to General Synod. As you are aware this a time when our church is facing challenges which demand rigorous new and creative ways of planning; we need to work together to drive forward some of the changes that we have started, which I will explain later; firstly, a bit about me.....

My background:

I am a teacher and Learning Manager at Maidstone Grammar School, where I have taught Geography, Economics, Business Studies and Religious Studies for 20 years. I am married to Charles, and we have 4 grown-up 'children; two boys and two girls, and two little granddaughters.

I am originally from Uganda where I trained and worked as a teacher. I also served in the Mothers' Union, Sunday School and at orphanages. This equipped me with transferable valuable skills of working with limited resources and in very difficult and insecure circumstances. During my 21 years in England (Maidstone) I have served as a member of PCC, Church Warden, youth group leader, Archbishop's nominee on Diocesan Synod, member of the national Archbishops' Council CMEAC, where I represent Canterbury Diocese. In 1999, I was elected to General Synod through a by-election. I am also actively involved with Christian national and international organisations including Christian Aid, CMS, Mothers Union, and 'Make Poverty History' campaigns. I have visited many churches in the diocese to speak about the work of Mothers' Union in Uganda, to raise awareness about poverty, and to propose practical ways in which we can help. I have also served as a voluntary advisor to the Anglican Representative at the UN and I have participated in many high level global sessions in the last three years.

In most organisations 10 years of representation is a long enough period for one to 'retire'; with the C-of-E's General Synod however, I have just about mastered the complex procedures and the art of managing detailed texts, written in strange 'English'. Given the current critical issues facing our national church and worldwide Anglican Communion, I am seeking your vote so that I can continue to use my 'global' experience to strengthen our church, at all levels. You may have read about some of my initiatives and participation in synod debates, in 'Outlook' and in 'Church Times', all of which indicate my commitment to serving many different areas of our church, and working hard to ensure fair representation of all groups of Anglicans. I

am sure you will want to know where I stand on some specific issues which the church is grappling with at the moment:

Women Bishops in the Church of England:

I applaud the work of the huge amount of work that was undertaken by the Revision Committee and the level of sensitivity with which very divergent opinions were listened to and taken on board. I acknowledge the fact that the issue of Women Bishops is one on which we as a church will continue to disagree but the decision to remove legal barriers and move forward with consecrating women as bishops is one I endorse. We have had ordained women for many years now and we have valued their ministry; consecration is the right way forward but, we all need to be mindful of each other's needs and we must, therefore, continue to pray for each other and for the unity of the church, which prides in its diversity.

Ecumenical Issues:

Having served as the appointed GS representative to the Methodist Assembly for the last four years I believe even more strongly, that Christian churches and organisations strive to achieve the same broad aims but they use different approaches. Christian churches have similar problems of declining numbers. They also provide similar essential services to local communities. Working together is essential for the survival and growth of Christian churches and we in the Church of England need to take a lead in this area. However we need to acknowledge the significance of collaborative work, in achieving our shared goals.

Engagement in a Multi-faith Society:

Starting with PCC through to General Synod, we need to constantly review our agenda items so that we focus on engaging with the local community. If the local community is multi-ethnic or multi-faith, this should be seen as a new opportunity. We need to look again at what we do that we do not need to do, and what we should be doing but are not. When we discuss issues relating to youth groups, are the youth represented? What do we do at each church service (especially 'Back-to-Church Sunday) that will make a new comer want to come back? Are the changes we make missing the point? Do we continue to assume that people know the connection between Christianity and Easter or Christianity and Christmas?

Please feel free to contact me (preferably via email) about any of the issues I have mentioned or, any others you might be interested in which I have not mentioned.

I now need your **first preference** vote, in order to carry forward this important agenda. Thank you!

Yours in Christ,
N Lumutenga

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