

I am Natalie K. Watson, a theologian, writer, editor and publisher based in Peterborough. For the last 23 years I have been actively involved in the life of Peterborough Cathedral as a member of the worshipping congregation, as a server, chalice assistant, reader, intercessor, and since 2025 also as an Honorary Lay Canon. I lead a Bible Study Group and coordinate the readings and intercessions rota for the main Sunday Eucharist. I am a member of the Cathedral's Community Forum and of Deanery Synod as well as of the group that co-ordinates the diocese's link with the church in South Korea.

After completing my doctorate at Durham University, I spent six and a half years as a lay staff member at Ripon College Cuddesdon, and in Peterborough I have taught students on the Eastern Region Ministry Course. I am passionate about good theological education and the church as a learning community that seeks to be theologically, culturally and politically literate and prepared to invest in the formation and resourcing of its clergy and lay people.

I believe in a church that is confident in the gospel of God's unconditional love for all people and seeks to embody that gospel in all aspects of its life, in its worship, mission, ministry and leadership. The Church of England is uniquely placed to speak as a national institution present in every community in the land. Being entrusted to do so it needs to read the 'signs of the times' and to have the courage to challenge where necessary. If elected to General Synod, I would want to make an informed and active contribution to the Church's work of speaking the word of God in our time.

This requires a high level of accountability and leaders, both ordained and lay, who are theologically, socially and politically literate and are willing to hold to account and to be held to account by those inside and outside.

I am committed to a church that welcomes all and is ready to share God's love and blessing with all who come, a church that genuinely seeks to live in love and faith.

I seek a church in which men and women can flourish equally in all aspects of its life, including all parts of ordained ministry.

My life as a Christian and my work as a theologian has been shaped and enriched by working with lay and ordained members of other Christian denominations, most importantly the Methodist Church and the Roman Catholic Church. I am a member of the management committee of Faith in Europe, an ecumenical charity which is part of CTBI, and regularly write for *The Tablet's* 'Church in the World' and the *Church Times*.

The Church of England and the wider Anglican tradition is unique in its identity as both catholic and reformed and as such makes an important contribution to the global church but is also enriched by working together and standing in solidarity with Christians around the world, including members of the persecuted church and Christians in Palestine and the wider Middle East.

I long for a church that is excited about God and ready to explore in all aspects of its life what it means to be the one, holy, catholic and apostolic church.

Living as we do in troubled times, nationally, internationally and globally, we need a church that is not wrapped in its own debates and issues but is prepared and ready to give an account of the hope we have and willing to get its hands dirty in the struggle for justice for the least among our brothers and sisters and the whole of creation.

At the heart of our faith is the incarnation, God taking on humanity. Therefore I want to work for a church that is ready to engage with humanity in all its complexity, diversity and messiness, embracing the mystery of God among us. As a member of General Synod, I would want to make my contribution to enable the Church to be the Church of God and for all people, to work for the healing of society and the nation, to be listening, open, honest and transparent in its decision-making, to practice what we preach and to preach what we are confident to practice.