



STEPHEN OGBONNA

ST JOHN'S PARK PARISH – ATTERCLIFFE DEANERY

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St John's Park Parish, Attercliffe Deanery, Sheffield

WHO AM I?

I am a father of one, living and serving in Sheffield. I currently work within NHS mental health services while serving as a lay minister, theologian, chaplain and community practitioner within the Church of England.

My journey to the Church of England has been shaped by ministry, migration and the transforming grace of God. Having served churches in Nigeria, lived through displacement, ministered in Italy, and now serving in Sheffield, my theology is rooted in Scripture, informed by the Anglican tradition, and continually enriched through ministry alongside people marked by suffering, resilience and hope.

I hold both a BA (Hons) and an MA in Theology, Ministry and Mission from St Hild College / Durham University, with my MA research specialising in multifaith chaplaincy, migration and personhood.

EXPERIENCE

- **Parish & Deanery Governance:** Active member of St John's Park PCC and Attercliffe Deanery Synod, committed to strengthening the flourishing of local churches.
- **25+ Years Christian Ministry:** Extensive ministry spanning church planting, parish mission, and intercultural discipleship across Nigeria, Italy and the UK.

- **NHS Mental Health & Chaplaincy:** Professional experience in NHS mental health services and healthcare chaplaincy, providing compassionate emotional, spiritual and pastoral care to vulnerable individuals.
- **Refugee & Asylum Support:** Dedicated frontline advocacy, pastoral care, and practical support for asylum seekers, refugees, and communities experiencing displacement.
- **Community & Charity Governance:** Serving as Trustee and Board Member for several charitable and not-for-profit organisations, supporting good stewardship and community development.
- **Theological Scholarship:** Rigorous research in chaplaincy, migration, personhood, and pastoral theology to resource Church leadership in contemporary mission.
- **Ecumenical & Intercultural Engagement:** Building constructive partnerships across diverse theological traditions and cultural backgrounds.

WHY I AM STANDING FOR GENERAL SYNOD

The Church faces significant challenges. We need churches that are confident in proclaiming Christ, compassionate in serving their communities, and united enough to pursue God's mission together despite our differences.

I believe my life experience, pastoral ministry, theological scholarship and professional work equip me to make a distinctive contribution to General Synod. Having lived across different cultures and experienced both welcome and exclusion, I understand how deeply the Church's witness matters. I want to help ensure that national decisions serve and strengthen the life and mission of our local parishes.

MY PRIORITIES

- **Growing healthy local churches:** Supporting parishes to flourish in faithful worship, discipleship, evangelism and community engagement.
- **Supporting clergy and lay leaders:** Ensuring those called to ministry receive the encouragement, resources and pastoral support they need.
- **Mental health and pastoral care:** Drawing upon NHS and chaplaincy experience to strengthen the Church's response to emotional and spiritual wellbeing.
- **Mission among marginalised communities:** Continuing Christ's ministry of welcome, justice and practical hope for those experiencing displacement and hardship.
- **Young people and future generations:** Investing in discipleship, youth leadership development and vocations for younger generations.
- **Good stewardship:** Supporting responsible governance and financial decisions that resource parish ministry sustainably.

LIVING IN LOVE AND FAITH

I hold the historic Christian understanding of marriage as a covenant between a man and a woman. At the same time, I am equally committed to ensuring that LGBTQ+ people experience the Church as a place of welcome, dignity, friendship and spiritual care.

My own experience of migration and exclusion has taught me the importance of listening well, treating every person with dignity, and seeking reconciliation wherever possible. General Synod needs members who can hold deep convictions while engaging respectfully with those who differ, always seeking the unity of Christ's Church.

MY COMMITMENT TO YOU

If you choose to vote for me, I commit to:

- **Listen carefully** before speaking;
- **Represent the Diocese of Sheffield** faithfully;
- **Pray and study Scripture** diligently for debates;
- **Promote mission**, evangelism and discipleship;
- **Work constructively** across theological differences;
- **Speak with conviction** while treating all with dignity;
- **Keep local churches** at the centre of decisions.

Thank you for reading this address. Whether you give me your first or a later preference, I would be honoured to serve with integrity, humility and hope.

With many thanks and every blessing in Christ,

Stephen Ogbonna

Proposer: Charles Benkowitz

Second: Sunday Dawodu