

## Diocese of Oxford – Casual Vacancy Elections for Laity

### ELECTION ADDRESS

**Candidate: Millius Palayiwa**

I have divided the address into 3 parts.

**Part A: Issues facing General Synod**

**Part B: How to approach those issues.**

**Part C: Personal profile**

#### **Part A: Issues.**

I have the knowledge, understanding, ability and compassion to fully participate in the significant/key issues and debates that are facing our church today. I am not a **single-issue** candidate.

I can identify at least **eleven major** issues of debate that face the General Synod. In no particular order, I see these issues as: 1) Living in Love & Faith together with its implications for the unity of the church as the body of Christ; 2) Climate change, the church's "carbon foot print, green issues etc; 3) The Youth, how to bring and grow them into the family of God; 4) Education, church schools, academies and chaplaincies etc; 5) War & Peace, and how as Christians we should respond to conflicts in our communities, nationally and internationally; 6) Racial justice, reparations and related issues of the legacy of slavery, including monuments; Sex, gender, LGBTQ+ matters, together with inclusion and diversity and how to be a welcoming church; 7) Safeguarding and the Prof. Jay's recommendation of "out-sourcing Safeguarding oversight; 8) Artificial Intelligence (AI) and its implications for humanity – its benefits and dangers; 9) Migration and how as a church we should "welcome the stranger;" 10) Interfaith work and harmony; 11) Governance & Finance, struggling parishes, affordability of clergy etc. The above are not the only ones and are not exclusive.

#### **Part B: Approach**

How should we be approaching those issues?

We should consistently ask ourselves, what the purpose of the church is. The church is here to build the kingdom of God. How do we do that.

The question Christ followers need to be asking always is: **What does love require of us?**

This is another way of asking what does Jesus require of us? For the answer, we need guidance from the scriptures. Jesus should be the lenses through which we read the scriptures. As Christians we should be affirming *right belief* (orthodoxy) and *right practice/living* (orthopraxis). That is what Jesus taught and the two go together, being like two blades of scissors: - "Faith without works is dead (James 2. 14 – 26); They will know we are Christians by our love (John 13:35); We cannot say we love God and ignore our neighbour in need (! John 3. 17 – 17).

Jesus did not teach just theology and doctrine alone, He also taught us and showed us how to live:- "Welcome the stranger (Matt. 25:35); Feed the hungry (Matt 25:36); Love your enemies (Matt. 5 : 43 – 44); Give you money to the poor (Mk 10: 21); and *He put flesh on doctrine by becoming the Word made flesh* (John 1:14)"

The church should “Speak out for those who cannot speak, for the rights of the destitute. Speak out, judge righteously, defend the rights of the poor and needy” (Proverbs 31: 8 – 9.)

The example of Christ is how we should approach the debates and the issues, always being “**contemplative, compassionate, courageous**” and **Christ-like** for the sake of the Kingdom of God.

We cannot go wrong if we approach the debates with the mind of Christ.

### **Part C: Personal Profile**

I am a lawyer by background and was educated at the Universities of Oxford (Oriel College) (MA, Law), Inns of Court School of Law (London: Bar Finals), Cardiff (LLM in Canon Law), London (Kings College) (BD – Divinity) and Rhodesia (BA in History). For 15 years I sat on the Solicitors Disciplinary Tribunal (SDT) and was Vice-President of that court until 2020 when I retired.

I have worked as a Chief Officer in a large London Borough, then with International Alert, in international conflict resolution, peace-making and post conflict peacebuilding. In this regards I facilitated the talks between the Government of Sierra Leone and the rebel movement, the Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone (RUF/SL) that culminated with the signing of the Abidjan Peaced Accord on 30 November 1996.

After that I became the International Secretary for Quaker Peace & Service, managing two offices one in London and the other in Genva, working with decision makers and policy shapers to address systemic causes of violence at global level, and trying to create a culture of peace with justice based on nonviolent change.

I then became the Director of the Fellowship of Reconciliation.

**Church-wise**, I was for 10 years the Cathedral Registrar at Christ Church Cathedral, Oxford.

I am on the Diocesan and Deanery Synods, been on the PCC om my Parish church on and off since 1979. I am on the Standing Committee of the Cowley Deanery. I serve on the Diocesan UKME (UK Minority Ethnic) Task Force; the Parish Safeguarding Officers’ Working Group (PSOW). I am the Parish Safeguarding Officer and Date Protection Officer for my Parish church and am on the Partnership in World Mission (PiWM) Council.

For 3 years I worked as the Secretary for Volunteers at the Church Misson Society (CMS).

**Charity and Voluntary Roles.** I have been but no longer, a Trustee and on the Board of governors for Christian Aid, Age Concern/Age UK, Oxford Institute for Christian Counselling, Chair of Peace Roots, School Governor of Christ Church Cathedral School, School Governor of St Nicholas Primary School, Member of the Lord Chancellor’s Advisory Committee, Oxfordshire, Advisor on the Children’s Radio Foundation, President of the UK Friends of Oasis of Peace.

Currently, I am the Treasurer of the International Interfaith Centre at Oxford, the Chair of Oxford Friends of Oasis of Peace, and the Chair of the Britain Zimbabwe Society.

I am happy to answer any questions that Electors may have.

Thank you.  
*Millius Palayiwa*