

To clergy, Pioneer Ministers, Readers, PCC Secretaries

11th November 2019

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

As our country prepares for a General Election on December 12th, we are writing this general letter to the diocese to encourage you to engage with this democratic process in the fullest way possible. Whatever your feelings about the Election and all the events which have led to it, we hope that you will pray, act and contribute as part of your 'everyday faith'.

It is significant that the Election falls within the Christian season of Advent as we wait, with anticipation and hope, for the gift of God's coming among us and the fulfilment of all our longings. Scripture encourages us to pray for all in authority (2 Timothy 2) and to work for the welfare of all in society (Jeremiah 29:7), particularly those who are most vulnerable and least able to support themselves (Proverbs 31:8-9).

Please pray specifically for generosity and gentleness in debates, and wisdom in policy formation. It is our firm belief that we need a renewed vision for society built on shared values such as compassion (recognising that every one of us is created in the image and likeness of God), mercy (refusing to exploit others and seeking their welfare before our own) and kindness (simple acts of care for others). These values are part of our history, but they are in danger of being lost as new forces divide people and fragment our communities. The Church of England has published a special prayer for the election –we would like to suggest that you use this each Sunday and in all your services:



A PRAYER FOR THE 2019 GENERAL ELECTION

God of grace and truth,
send your Spirit to guide us
as we discover your will for our country.
Help us to discuss the issues before us
with courtesy, truth and mutual respect,
and grant that all who stand for parliament
will seek to serve the common good,
through him who came not to be served but to serve,
Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

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And we urge you to participate in this democratic process and do all you can to encourage others to do the same. Perhaps you could offer to host hustings and find other creative ways to bring together people who may have very different views (our buildings and our ability to convene gatherings are a wonderful gift to our communities).

For further resources and ideas, please visit our [diocesan website](https://leicester.anglican.org/info-for-leaders/general-election-2019/) (<https://leicester.anglican.org/info-for-leaders/general-election-2019/>).

Social media can also be a good way to encourage debate and engagement, though we recognise it also has its dangers. Please see the Church of England's [Digital Charter](https://www.churchofengland.org/terms-and-conditions/our-digital-charter) (<https://www.churchofengland.org/terms-and-conditions/our-digital-charter>). You might like to consider signing up to this.

Thank you for all you are already doing to strengthen relationships and grow communities. As you proclaim Christ may you know God's hope and peace.

Yours in Christ,



The Rt Revd Martyn Snow
Bishop of Leicester



The Rt Revd Dr Guli Francis-Dehqani
Bishop of Loughborough