

GENERAL SYNOD – GS 1817

February 2011 Group of Sessions

Report by the Business Committee

Introduction

1. Feedback from the induction seminar for new and returning members was very positive. Comments were also generally positive about the inaugural group of sessions in November. A number of matters have been raised which the Business Committee, once fully reconstituted, will be considering in the course of its forthcoming meetings. These include the length and frequency of groups of sessions and the facilities (including the facilities for speaking and voting) at groups of sessions. If any members have comments they wish the Business Committee to consider, please write to the Clerk to the Synod.
2. There are also some matters to be considered arising from the elections to the Synod in the autumn of 2010. The Business Committee will be establishing an Elections Review Group after its meeting in May with a brief to review the conduct of the 2010 elections and consider the elections related issues such as the question of the allocation of seats between the Northern and Southern Provinces (a matter on which the previous Elections Review Group did some preliminary work). If members have other matters associated with the elections which they think the Elections Review Group should consider, they should write to the Clerk to the Synod detailing their concerns.
3. The Committee introduced two trials at the November group of sessions. One was to stop the 'seating' of Order and Notice Papers and to ask members instead to collect them on their way into the Assembly Hall. This generally worked well and the Committee has agreed to continue the trial in February and July and to review it at its meeting in September. The Committee has, though, asked staff to review the containers and distribution points.
4. The second experiment was the electronic distribution of some Synod papers. There were a number of comments on this innovation, but because of the brevity of the inaugural group of sessions, its impact is at this stage hard to assess. The Committee has decided to continue the experiment for the next two groups of sessions and to review it again thereafter in the light of experience. At this group of sessions, the background material to the ARCIC report *Mary: Grace and Hope in Christ* will be circulated in this way. Comments on this and any other matters are welcome. Again, please write to the Clerk to the Synod with your comments.
5. The Business Committee is planning an opportunity for members to meet members of the Committee at a fringe meeting during a future group of sessions. Please let the Clerk know if there are particular areas you would wish to see covered in the fringe meeting.

February 2011 group of sessions

6. This group of sessions will be relatively short, extending for three days from Monday 7th to Wednesday 9th February. The probability is also that when the Synod meets in July its agenda will be less demanding than at some recent groups of sessions (and Synod may well finish on Monday). The February and July groups of sessions in 2012 promise to be more

challenging, with the prospect of the return to the Synod of both the Women in the Episcopate legislation and the Anglican Communion Covenant, following their reference to dioceses under the Article 8 procedure.

7. For 2011, however, the volume of legislation reduces. In February there will be two items of legislative business: the Clergy Discipline Measure Amending Code of Practice (GS 1808), which was not debated in November 2010 through lack of time, and the Clergy Discipline (Amendment) Measure (GS 1814). The items of legislative business for July are set out in the forecast.
8. The Business Committee has directed under SO 8 that the following motion from Mr John Ward (London) on the Anglican Communion Covenant which the Synod did not debate in November for lack of time should not lapse, and has gone on to make provision for it to be debated at this group of sessions. Underlying the Committee's decision was the consideration that the motion is different from the generality of following motions, because it is intended to give the Synod the opportunity to decide whether to exercise the power conferred by Article 8(1B) of the Constitution in relation to schemes falling within Article 8, under which the Synod 'may by resolution provide that final approval of any such scheme [...], being a scheme specified in the resolution, shall require the assent of such special majorities of the members present and voting as may be specified in the resolution, and the resolution may specify a special majority of each House or of the whole Synod or of both'.
9. There is one significant item of ecumenical business for this group of sessions: the Anglican – Roman Catholic International Commission's report *Mary: Grace and Hope in Christ*. There are several other items of ecumenical business in prospect for July.
10. Other items of business for February include a presentation by the Secretary of State for International Development (at the invitation of the Archbishops as Presidents of the Synod), a report on Parochial Fees Policy (GS 1813) and a report from the Archbishops' Council and House of Bishops with a forward look into the New Quinquennium (GS 1815). There will also be a Presidential Address by the Archbishop of York, a presentation by the Ethical Investment Advisory Group and a presentation on the Weddings Project.
11. The Business Committee has agreed to schedule a take note debate on the House of Bishops' statement of June this year on Marriage after Divorce and the Ordained Ministry (GS Misc 960).
12. There are currently three Diocesan Synod Motions which are awaiting debate by the Synod (in addition to the two DSMs which are awaiting the outcome of the Women in the Episcopate legislative process): from Bradford on Communion before Confirmation of Baptised Adults, from Liverpool on Common Worship Baptism Provision, and from London (just received) on House of Laity elections. The Business Committee has accepted a request from the House of Bishops that the Bradford DSM should not be debated by the Synod until bishops have had the opportunity to consider the Faith and Order Commission's report on Christian Initiation.
13. The House has advised that there is no reason why the Liverpool DSM, which asks for additional texts as alternatives for passages in the Common Worship Baptism Services, should not be debated now by the Synod without having to await the House's consideration of the Christian Initiation report. The Committee has accordingly scheduled a debate on the Liverpool DSM at this group of sessions (GS 1816A and GS 1816B).

14. There are as yet no Private Members' Motions because none of the PMMs that were tabled at the November group of sessions attracted more than the 100 signatures which the Business Committee considers as a suitable threshold for Private Members' Motions being considered for debate.

Venue and Timing

15. The February Group of Sessions will take place **in Church House, Westminster from 3 p.m. on Monday 7 February to 4.15 p.m. on Wednesday 9 February**. Before the start of the full Synod, the House of Laity will meet at 1.45 p.m. (in the Assembly Hall).

Worship

16. A service of **Holy Communion** will take place **in the Assembly Hall at 9.30 a.m. on Tuesday 9 February**. An act of worship will take place at the commencement of the morning sitting at 9.30 a.m. on Wednesday. Outline information about services in the Church House Chapel is given in the Agenda (GS 1812).

Order of Business

17. Members are reminded that if at any time within the group of sessions an unexpected gap opens in the Synod's Agenda, business earlier in the Agenda which has not been reached or completed within the period allotted can be called by the Chair, unless other provision has already been made for it. As there is no contingency business available at this group of sessions, the Chair of the Business Committee may need to seek a variation in the order of business, which would have the effect of moving forward an item of business which is listed later in the Agenda.

Private Members' Motions

18. Private Members' Motions are set out in Special Agenda III (GS 1812, pages 9-11). Notice of any new Private Members' Motions will be published in a Notice Paper. Motions which have been received by **5.30 p.m. on Monday 7 February** will be available at the February group of sessions for signature by members to indicate their support for a debate on them.

Details of the Agenda

Introductions, welcomes, progress of legislation (Monday, 7 February)

19. There will be the usual introductions of new members and other formal announcements. The newly-elected Prolocutors and the Chair and Vice-Chair of the House of Laity will also be presented to the Synod.

Address by the Secretary of State for International Development

20. At the invitation of the Presidents, the Secretary of State for International Development, the Rt Hon Andrew Mitchell MP, will address the Synod on the subject of how greater collaboration between Government and the Church might usefully contribute to Goal 8 of the Millennium Development Goals (partnership for development).

21. The previous occasions on which the General Synod received an address by a Secretary of State for International Development were in February 2004, when the Rt Hon Hilary Benn MP gave a presentation as part of a wider debate on the role of the Church in combating HIV and Aids, and in February 1998, when the Rt Hon Clare Short MP in her presentation acknowledged the development role and reach of churches and faith communities (both in the field of advocacy and service delivery) and the case for greater collaboration between Government and faith communities.
22. The aim of inviting the Rt Hon Andrew Mitchell MP to address the General Synod is to re-engage the Department for International Development with the Church following the May 2010 General Election, and to reassess what further steps are needed and possible to deliver on Goal 8 of the Millennium Development Goals. The intention is to engage the Secretary of State for International Development more broadly in the question of the partnership between faith and development.
23. There have been ongoing conversations since Clare Short addressed the Synod in 1998 with the Department for International Development regarding how the Government, Churches and faith communities might work together in alleviating poverty. These conversations have been recently reinvigorated by the Coalition Government's thinking on the 'Big Society' and its willingness to look at alternative non-bureaucratic ways of alleviating poverty. (The forecast of future Synod business (please see page 9) indicates the possibility of taking forward issues arising from the Synod debate on the Big Society, including Mr Gavin Oldham's following motion.)
24. After the presentation from the Secretary of State there will be an opportunity for questions. The background to this agenda item is provided in a Christian Aid report *Poverty: We're All in this Together* circulated to members with the papers for this group of sessions.

Report by the Business Committee (GS 1817)

25. This will provide the customary opportunity for members to raise points about the content and shape of the Agenda for this group of sessions, or about the Synod's business generally.

Draft Act of Synod Adopting the Anglican Communion Covenant: Following motion

26. At the November 2010 group of sessions, the Synod debated and carried the motion 'That the draft Act of Synod adopting the Anglican Communion Covenant be considered'. For lack of time, Mr Ward's following motion was not moved. The Business Committee has directed that it should not lapse for the reasons given in paragraph 8 above.

Questions

27. Anyone wishing to ask a question of any of the bodies or persons specified in Standing Order 105 must give notice of it to reach the Clerk to the Synod by **5.30 p.m. on Wednesday, 26 January 2011.**
28. Members are reminded that **all questions submitted will be presumed to be for written answer** unless an oral answer is specifically requested.

Legislative Business (*Tuesday, 8 February*)

29. Details of the legislative business at the February Group of Sessions are contained in Special Agenda I (GS 1812, page 8).
30. The focus of the legislative business at this group of sessions is clergy discipline. In July 2009 the Synod passed a diocesan synod motion from London which, amongst other things, called on the Archbishops' Council to seek a report by the end of the quinquennium on whether there was a case for amendments to the Clergy Discipline Measure 2003 or the Code made under it. The Clergy Discipline Commission assessed what changes might be needed and reported to the Council, which approved its recommendations in June 2010. Those recommendations now come before the Synod.
31. So far as the 2003 Measure itself is concerned, the Synod will be asked to give First Consideration to the Clergy Discipline (Amendment) Measure (GS 1814). In addition to making a number of technical changes to the 2003 Measure, the draft legislation will give effect to a resolution of the Synod in February 2009 by amending the 2003 Measure so as to allow disciplinary proceedings to be brought against clergy who support organizations which have been identified by the House of Bishops as having aims which are inconsistent with the teaching of the Church of England on race equality. It will also make changes intended to facilitate the taking of effective action in cases involving child protection issues.
32. As regards the Code of Practice under the 2003 Measure (GS 1808), the Clergy Discipline Commission brings an amending Code to the Synod for approval, with a view to making a number of changes to the original Code on which the Commission conducted a consultation in 2008. (This item of business was included in the agenda for the November 2010 group of sessions but was not reached due to lack of time.)

Ethical Investment Policy

33. Mr John Reynolds and the Revd Professor Richard Burridge – the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Ethical Investment Advisory Group (EIAG) – will make a PowerPoint presentation, which will cover the following aspects of the EIAG's work:
 - engagement work with companies, engagement achievements and what may be achieved in the future through engagement;
 - EIAG's approach to ethical investment policy – where it has come from and where it is going; the emphasis in the EIAG's contemporary policy approach being on more nuanced policies, with strong underpinning in the Bible, theology and tradition of the Church, sometimes building in engagement with companies as well as exclusions from investment;
 - EIAG's new policy on defence investment and emerging policy on alcohol investment;
 - EIAG's future work and desire to continue to engage with Synod.
34. There will then be an opportunity for questions which will be taken by John Reynolds, Richard Burridge and Edward Mason (Secretary to the EIAG). They hope that the occasion will be both informative and interactive. The background to the areas covered in the presentation can be found in GS Misc 975.

Presidential Address

35. The Archbishop of York will give a Presidential Address.

Into the New Quinquennium

36. In this report (GS 1815), the Archbishops' Council and the House of Bishops respond to the Archbishop of Canterbury's Presidential Address at the November group of sessions and propose a direction of travel for the Archbishops' Council (and others) over the next five to ten years. The report is the subject of a take note debate.

Appointment of the Chair of the Business Committee and the Clerk to the Synod

37. Details of the appointments and the motions to be moved will be given in a Notice Paper.

Weddings Project: Presentation

38. The Archbishops' Council's Weddings Project is rolling out from its pilot phase in the dioceses of Bradford and Oxford (in Buckinghamshire), and will finish giving presentations in 33 dioceses around the time of April's Royal Wedding. The presentation to the Synod will tell the story of what couples and churches think and feel about weddings today, unveil a system of practical resources to make it easier for churches to care for couples, and consider what it would take for more couples to stay with the Church after their wedding.
39. First evaluations suggest that where the project has been working, wedding bookings are up by as much as 43%; more than half the clergy are more confident in this ministry, and expressed intention to follow-up after the day has increased by up to 68%.
40. The project team will be giving a presentation, supported by a compilation of research by the Revd Lynda Barley (Head of the Archbishops' Council Research and Statistics Department), showing the difference the weddings project is making. There will be time for questions.

Parochial Fees Policy

41. The report from the Fees Policy Working Group (GS 1813) provides the Synod with the opportunity to debate the information requested by Synod in the debate on a report from the (then) Remuneration and Conditions of Service Committee in July 2008 (GS 1703), and the principles which will inform the drafting of guidance for the Archbishops' Council on the setting of parochial fees and for dioceses on related matters.

House of Bishops Statement on Marriage after Divorce and the Ordained Ministry (Wednesday, 9 February)

42. The Business Committee has accepted a request for a Synod debate on the House of Bishops' statement on Marriage after Divorce and the Ordained Ministry (GS Misc 960) (circulated for last July's Synod). The take note motion will be moved on behalf of the House of Bishops by the Bishop of Norwich.

Liverpool Diocesan Motion: Common Worship Baptism Provision

43. This is discussed in paragraph 12 above.

ARCIC Report *Mary: Grace and Hope in Christ*

44. The report from the Anglican – Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC) *Mary: Grace and Hope in Christ*, published in 2005, is the last of the reports of ARCIC II to come to the General Synod via the House of Bishops. ARCIC III is now being set up.
45. The ARCIC report on *Mary* (which is being re-circulated), the briefing material prepared by the Faith and Order Advisory Group (FOAG) (GS 1818, also circulated), and a draft Synod motion from the Council for Christian Unity (CCU) were considered by the College of Bishops in September 2009 and by the House of Bishops in December 2010. An amendment to the CCU motion on the IARCCUM (International Anglican Roman Catholic Commission for Unity and Mission) agreed statement *Growing Together in Unity and Mission* in February 2008 requested debates on all the reports of ARCIC II. Since then, there has been a Synod Question asking why *Mary: Grace and Hope in Christ* had not yet been brought for debate. Following the recent Papal visit, the CCU proposed that a General Synod debate should take place in February 2011 and the Business Committee has agreed to that.
46. In anticipation of a debate, FOAG provided a collection of studies of *Mary: Grace and Hope in Christ* from various points of view (GS Misc 872). This document, which is distinct from the briefing paper GS 1818 and does not come to any agreed conclusions, will be circulated to members electronically.
47. The motion for debate by the Synod welcomes the dialogue in principle, notes the assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the report given in the briefing paper, including several points where more work is needed, and encourages study of the report, especially with Roman Catholic Church. The debate will be introduced by the Bishop of Guildford as Chair of the CCU and will be preceded by a short introductory presentation by the Bishop of Guildford, and the Rt Revd George Stack (Auxiliary Bishop in the Diocese of Westminster) on behalf of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales.

Farewells

48. There will be farewells to the Bishop of Winchester and to the Clerk to the Synod.

Prorogation

49. The Synod will be prorogued by the Archbishop of Canterbury no later than 4.15 p.m.

+Trevor Dover
Acting Chair,
Business Committee

December 2010

Membership of the Business Committee (*as at 15 December 2010*)

Elected by the House of Bishops

The Rt Revd Trevor Willmott, Bishop of Dover - *Acting Chair*

Elected by the House of Clergy

The Revd Canon Sue Booy (Oxford)

The Ven Julian Henderson, Archdeacon of Dorking (Guildford)

Elected by the House of Laity

Mrs Sue Johns (Norwich)

Mr Gerry O'Brien (Rochester)

Two members of the Archbishops' Council

Professor John Craven (Appointed)

The Revd Canon Glyn Webster (Appointed)

The Secretary to the Committee is the Revd David Williams
and the Assistant Secretary is David Pertaub

Forecast of future Synod business

One or more Private Members' Motions and Diocesan Synod Motions are customarily included in each group of sessions.

The forecast of business provides a forward look to the groups of sessions in 2011. There are always considerable uncertainties when looking ahead in this way, so this should not be read as more than a broad indication of business that may come to the Synod in the future.

In February, the Synod will be debating a report from the Archbishops' Council on the main areas of work for the Council over the next five years. These will include issues to do with ministry and the Church's needs; the common good; and growing the Church, both in terms of numbers and confidence. Connected with that is the debate the Synod held in November 2010 on the Big Society. There are some major issues raised in both reports and the Business Committee is of the view that the Synod would benefit from a range of possibilities for engaging with them and deepening its understanding of them. While nothing concrete is included in this forward look in relation to that, the Committee will be considering how best this might be achieved over future groups of sessions.

In July, there will be the following *regular business*:

Presidential Address
Financial business (including the Archbishops' Council's budget for 2012)
Archbishops' Council's annual report
Church Commissioners' annual report

Legislative business

- Church of England Marriage (Amendment) Measure – Revision Stage
- Church of England Marriage (Amendment) Measure – Final Drafting and Final Approval
- Clergy Discipline (Amendment) Measure – Revision Stage
- Payments to the Churches Conservation Trust Order
- Usual Fees Orders
- Compensation Rules under the Dioceses, Pastoral and Mission Measure

Liturgical business

- Additional Eucharistic Prayers (for use when a significant number of children are present)

Reports

- *The Journey of Christian Initiation*: Report from the Faith and Order Commission
- Anglican-Methodist Covenant: Interim report from the Joint Implementation Commission (2008-2011)
- *Healing the Past, Building the Future*: Report of conversations between the Church of England and the United Reformed Church
- Fresh Directions in Local Unity in Mission: Report from the Council for Christian Unity
- Church schools, marking the 200th Anniversary of the National Society
- Participation of Minority Ethnic Anglicans in the Life of the Church: Report by the Committee for Minority Ethnic Anglican Concerns
- Chaplaincy in the Church of England