

GENERAL SYNOD

July 2010 Group of Sessions

Report by the Business Committee

Introduction and Overview of the Agenda

1. This is the final group of sessions of the quinquennium. The dominant element of the agenda is the Revision Stage of the Women in the Episcopate legislation. Just over half the total time available at the July Synod has been allocated to it. A substantial amount of business was transacted in February, including four diocesan synod motions and four private members' motions, and this has enabled substantial time to be allocated for the Revision Stage without too much pressure on other necessary business.
2. The Agenda includes one Private Member's Motion and one Diocesan Synod Motion (with two other DSMs listed as contingency business) – see paragraphs 4 to 7. The other main items on the agenda are:
 - the Revision Stage and Final Approval of the Additional Weekday Lectionary and Amendments to Calendar, Lectionary and Collects (GS 1724A);
 - other legislative business, principally the draft Ecclesiastical Offices (Terms of Service) Directions 2010 concerning maternity and other leave;
 - Clergy Pensions: Changes to the Clergy Pension Scheme (following the February Synod's endorsement of the Archbishops Council's proposals, and the formal consultation process with scheme members which has followed, in the light of which proposed changes to the rules are being brought to the Synod by the Archbishops' Council for approval);
 - the proposed establishment of the Faith and Order Commission and the provision of Standing Orders to facilitate this;
 - *Our Fellowship in the Gospel*: Report of the Joint Study Group between the Church of England and the Church of Scotland;
 - Review of Constitutions (further report and revised proposals from the Archbishops' Council in the light of the debate at the July 2009 Synod);
 - financial business (the annual budget), and presentations on the Archbishops' Council's annual report and the Church Commissioners' annual report;
 - a Presidential Address by the Archbishop of York.

Dates and Hours of Sittings

3. The Synod will meet from 3.45 p.m. on Friday 9 July to 1 p.m. on Tuesday 13 July. The House of Clergy and the House of Laity will each meet at 2 p.m. on Friday 9 July.

Diocesan Synod Motions

4. Diocesan Synod Motions are normally considered in the order in which they are received and they continue from one quinquennium to the next. They are listed in Special Agenda IV.
5. However, the Business Committee has decided that the Southwark DSM on the Episcopal Ministry Act of Synod (which is first in the list) and the motion from Rochester on the Ordination of Women to the Episcopate (which is second in the list) should not be debated whilst the current legislative process in relation to women in the episcopate continues.
6. Next in the list there is the Coventry DSM on Deanery Synods, which was to have been debated at the February group of sessions, until other business overran. After this, the next two motions – from Bath and Wells on job sharing in ordained parochial ministry, and from Ripon and Leeds on the application of the concept of ‘qualifying connection’ under the Church of England Marriage Measure 2008 – are listed as contingency business for July.

Private Members’ Motions

7. Private Members’ Motions are generally debated in the order of the number of signatures which they receive at groups of sessions; any that are not debated lapse at the end of the quinquennium and new PMMs cannot therefore be put down or listed until the inaugural group of sessions in November. They are listed in Special Agenda III. Only one Private Member’s Motion (from the Revd Richard Moy, on Fresh Expressions Resources) has attracted 100 signatures which the Business Committee considers is an acceptable threshold for PMMs being considered for debate.

Group work

8. Due to pressure of other business (and in particular the need to provide a substantial amount of time for the Revision Stage of the Women in the Episcopate legislation) there will be no group work at this group of sessions.

Forecast of Business

9. The forecast of business annexed to this report provides a forward look to the inaugural group of sessions in November and the groups of sessions in February and July 2011. This should not be read as more than a broad indication of the business expected to come to the Synod at the beginning of the next quinquennium.

Anglican and Ecumenical Guests

10. The Synod will have the opportunity to welcome as observers:

The Most Revd Andres Pöder, Archbishop of the Evangelical-Lutheran
Church of Estonia
Bishop Martin Schindehütte, Bishop for Foreign Affairs and Ecumenism,
Evangelical Church in Germany
The Ven Robin White, Church of Ireland

Synod Worship

11. Holy Communion will be celebrated at 7.30 a.m. on Saturday and Monday in the Central Hall, and there will be a short act of worship in the Central Hall at the beginning of the morning session on Saturday, Monday and Tuesday. Evening worship will take place daily in the Central Hall at 6.20 p.m. On Sunday 12 July, Synod will attend a service of Holy Communion in York Minster, at which the Archbishop of Canterbury will preside and the Archbishop of York will preach. On Tuesday, there will be a service of Holy Communion in the Central Hall, before the closing ceremonies, at which the Archbishop of York will preside and the Archbishop of Canterbury will preach.

Order of Business

12. 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.

Contingency Business

13. The Business Committee has decided that two Diocesan Synod Motions – from Bath and Wells on job sharing in ordained parochial ministry, and from Ripon and Leeds on the application of the concept of 'qualifying connection' under the Church of England Marriage Measure 2008 – should be scheduled as contingency business, to be taken if a further space opens in the agenda. Background papers for the Bath and Wells DSM (GS 1799A and B) and the Ripon and Leeds DSM (GS 1800 A and B) have been circulated.

Content of Business

Introductions and Welcomes (Friday, 9 July)

14. There will be the usual introduction of new members, including the new ecumenical representatives, and the welcoming of the ecumenical guests. The Most Reverend Andres Põder, the Archbishop of the Estonian Evangelical-Lutheran Church, will bring a greeting on behalf of the ecumenical guests. He will also be able to speak about his Church (with which the Church of England is in communion through the Porvoo Agreement of 1996), its emergence from Soviet oppression twenty years ago, and its mission in one of the most secular societies in Europe.

Report by the Business Committee

15. This will provide the opportunity for members to raise points about the Agenda for this group of sessions or about the Synod's business generally.

Elections to the Archbishops' Council

16. Under the provisions of Schedule 1(1) of the National Institutions Measure 1998, the Synod elects six members of the Archbishops' Council – two each from the House of Bishops, the House of Clergy and the House of Laity. The Synod is required to determine the term of office of those elected under this provision, such term not being less than three nor more than five years. In practice the term has been set at five years and there is no proposal to depart from past practice.

17. Those currently elected serve until 31 December 2010. It is proposed that those elected to serve as members of the Archbishops' Council in the next quinquennium should serve for a period of five years from their election to office. This provision, if agreed, will help to ease the pressure on the electoral timetable in the autumn of 2015 and avoid any gaps in membership.

Liturgical Business

Additional Weekday Lectionary and Amendments to Calendar, Lectionary and Collects

18. The Revision Committee for the Additional Weekday Lectionary and Amendments to Calendar, Lectionary and Collects has considered further the point in respect of which this Liturgical Business was re-committed to it at the February group of sessions (i.e. the addition of three verses to the New Testament reading for the Monday of Lent 3). On Friday afternoon the Synod will be invited to take note of the Revision Committee's further report (GS 1724Z). At the ensuing Further Revision Stage it will be in order for members to move amendments to the text of the Liturgical Business which relate to matters contained in the Report (for details, see Standing Order 79).
19. After the Further Revision Stage is completed, the text will be considered under Article 7 of the Constitution by the House of Bishops, which may amend the text. If a reference under Article 7 is claimed by either or both of the Convocations or the House of Laity, separate meetings of those bodies will be held after the close of business on Sunday evening.
20. If the Liturgical Business is approved by the House of Bishops (and, if referred to them, by the Convocations and the House of Laity), it will be considered for final approval on Monday evening.

Clergy Pensions: Changes to the Pensions Scheme

21. At its February group of sessions, the Synod agreed, subject to statutory consultation with scheme members, changes to the Funded Pensions Scheme, including increasing the pension age for future service to 68 and increasing the accrual period for future service to 43 years. The Synod also approved the recommendations of a report on changes proposed in relation to ill-health retirement. Separately, the Synod carried a Private Member's Motion from the Revd Mark Bratton (Coventry) which asked the Archbishops' Council and the Pensions Board to bring forward changes to the rules in relation to clergy pensions to remove the remaining differences between pension benefits for surviving civil partners and surviving spouses.
22. At the July group of sessions, the Archbishops' Council will report back on the consultation exercise in relation to the Funded Pensions Scheme and make its recommendations about the changes to the Scheme (GS 1780). It is envisaged that the Synod will then be asked to approve a number of instruments proposing amendments to the scheme rules in order to implement the scheme changes.

Questions

23. 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 Tuesday 29 June**.

24. Members are reminded that **all submitted questions will be presumed to be for written answer** unless an oral answer is specifically requested.

Presidential Address (Saturday, 10 July)

25. The Archbishop of York will give a Presidential Address, and this will be first item of business on the Saturday morning.

***Legislative Business
Women in the Episcopate***

26. At the February 2009 group of sessions the Synod resolved that the draft Measure and draft Amending Canon which will allow the consecration of women to the episcopate should be referred for revision in Committee. The Revision Committee completed its work at the end of April. Its Report (GS 1708-9Y) was circulated to members in early May.
27. The Revision Committee made a number of amendments to the draft legislation; but the draft Measure in its revised form continues to make provision for those conscientiously unable to receive the episcopal ministry of women by providing for certain episcopal functions to be undertaken in relation to them (if they so request) by a male bishop acting under a diocesan scheme made in accordance with a national code of practice.
28. If the 'take note' motion on the Revision Committee's Report is agreed, the Synod will embark on the Revision Stage, which will provide the last opportunity for the Synod as a whole to amend the substance of the draft legislation before it is referred to the dioceses under Article 8 and returns to the Synod (subject to the outcome of the Article 7 and Article 8 processes) for Final Drafting and Final Approval. Standing Orders permit amendments to be moved in relation to any matter addressed in the Revision Committee's report, thus allowing any decision taken by the Revision Committee in the course of its work to be revisited by the Synod as a whole.
29. The Business Committee has circulated a note to members (GS Misc 942), which describes the process to be followed in July in more detail. Members who wish to propose amendments to the draft Measure or Amending Canon are particularly referred to paragraphs 18 and 19 of the note annexed to GS Misc 942.

Other Legislative Business

30. As regards the proposed changes to the Pensions Schemes, please see paragraphs 21 and 22 above. This business will be taken on Friday, after the Pensions report. Other legislative items of business will be taken on Sunday afternoon.
31. Two pieces of legislation come to the Synod for approval as part of the continuing process of preparing for the introduction of 'Common Tenure' early in 2011: the Ecclesiastical Offices (Terms of Service) (Amendment) Regulations (which make a number of changes to the Regulations approved by the Synod in July 2009, of an essentially technical kind); and the Ecclesiastical Offices (Terms of Service) Directions (which make provision for maternity, paternity, parental and adoption leave, and time off work to care for dependants for those holding office under Common Tenure).

32. Finally, the Synod will be asked to approve the usual Fees Orders (which will be taken under the 'deemed procedure' unless a member requests a debate or, in the case of two of the Orders, proposes an amendment).

Financial Business

33. The 2011 budget (GS 1781) represents the first budget drawn up under the Archbishops' Council's five-year spending plan endorsed by the Synod last year. This budget has been formulated following a round of consultations including the Inter-Diocesan Finance Forum and the Finance Committee.

Faith and Order Commission of the General Synod

34. The proposed Faith and Order Commission will bring together into one body the Doctrine Commission (currently in abeyance), the Faith and Order Advisory Group and the House of Bishops' Theological Group. It represents a streamlining and concentration of the Church of England's theological resources at the national level. Its role is to advise the Archbishops, the House of Bishops and the Council for Christian Unity on theological, ecclesiological and ecumenical questions. Through these bodies, it will serve as a resource for the General Synod and the Church of England generally.
35. The Synod will first be invited to approve the recommendation in a report from the Archbishops (GS 1782), that the Faith and Order Commission be established in place of the Doctrine Commission, the Faith and Order Advisory Group and the House of Bishops Theological Group. This motion will be moved by the Archbishop of Canterbury.
36. Annex B to this report contains a report from the Standing Orders Committee proposing amendments to the Synod's Standing Orders, consequentially on the acceptance of the proposal made in the report. If the Synod approves the recommendations in the report from the Archbishops, the Chair of the Standing Orders Committee will move motions on behalf of the Committee to make those amendments, which are set out in the First Notice Paper.
37. Annex A to GS 1782 sets out the proposed constitution of the new Faith and Order Commission. The motion inserting the new Standing Order will provide for that amendment to have immediate effect, and so a third and final motion will be moved, by the Archbishop of Canterbury, approving the constitution of the new Commission for the purpose of that Standing Order.

Legislative Business (Sunday, 11 July)

38. See paragraphs 26-32.

Our Fellowship in the Gospel: Report of a Joint Study Group between the Church of England and the Church of Scotland

39. This report is the fruit of informal conversations between representatives of the Council for Christian Unity/Faith and Order Advisory Group and the Committee for Ecumenical Relations of the Church of Scotland. It introduces the two Churches to each other, sets out the baptismal basis of our fellowship, and suggests ways in which we can consult and co-operate as established churches with a national mission and a territorial ministry. Given the insuperable difference of polity – the Church of Scotland being a Presbyterian church – the recommendations are modest but nevertheless serviceable.

40. A summary of the full report is circulated (GS 1792) and the full report is available on request. A similar summary was put to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in May. The report will be introduced by the Bishop of Guildford as Chairman of the Council for Christian Unity and one-time member of the group that produced the report. The Church of Scotland will have a new representative on the Synod, who is a past Moderator of the General Assembly. The Synod will be invited to take note of the summary report and to approve the recommendations.

Review of Constitutions

41. In July 2009, the Synod rejected the Archbishops' Council's proposals for overhauling its committee structure and passed instead the following motion:

‘That this Synod

- (a) decline to endorse the proposals set out in GS1737; and
- (b) request the Archbishops' Council, after consultation with the boards and councils concerned, to produce revised proposals which:
 - (i) provide for the participation of elected Synod members in deliberation and policy-formation as well as in scrutiny and accountability; and
 - (ii) reflect the individual remits and sets of stakeholders of each area of activity.’

42. Following further discussion at the Archbishops' Council, the Archbishop of York wrote to the Chairs of all the Council's committees in November and invited them to submit proposals for lighter, nimbler structures. In the light of their responses the Archbishops' Council has now drawn up revised proposals, set out in GS 1793, and is submitting them to the Synod for consultation pursuant to SO 119. A final decision will be taken by the Council in September in the light of the debate this July.

Coventry Diocesan Synod Motion: Deanery Synods

43. This motion was scheduled for the February Synod, but not debated because of the pressure of other business. Background papers from the Coventry Diocese (GS 1773A) and from the Secretary General (GS 1773B) have been re-circulated.

Archbishops' Council: Annual Report

44. The Archbishops' Council's annual report for the year ending 31 December 2009 (GS 1794) highlights the variety of work undertaken by the Council and its Divisions during 2009. The format has been changed to make the report more attractive and more easily accessible. On this occasion, the Council's annual report will be the subject of a presentation (under SO 97), including the opportunity to ask questions.

Church Commissioners' Annual Report

45. The First Church Estates Commissioner will make a short presentation about the Commissioners' investment performance in the last year and what this means in terms of the money they can make available to the Church in 2011-13. He and the Third Church Estates Commissioner will then answer questions.

Women in the Episcopate (Monday, 12 July)

46. See paragraphs 26-29.

Liturgical Business

47. See paragraphs 18 to 20.

Private Member's Motion: Fresh Expressions

48. Background papers from the Reverend Richard Moy and Bishop Graham Cray, Archbishops' Missioner and Team Leader of Fresh Expressions have been circulated (GS 1795A and GS 1795B).

Women in the Episcopate (Tuesday, 13 July)

49. See paragraphs 26-29.

Farewells

50. There will be several farewells on this occasion.

Closing Eucharist

51. The Archbishop of York will preside at the Eucharist in the Central Hall and the Archbishop of Canterbury will preach.

Prorogation

52. The Synod will be prorogued by the Archbishop of Canterbury no later than 1 p.m. The Synod is expected to be dissolved on or shortly after 14 July to enable the conduct of the elections to the new Synod for the quinquennium 2010 to 2015 to begin.

Other Work of the Business Committee

53. The Committee received a relatively small amount of correspondence following the February Synod, but some members offered comments by way of their responses to the General Synod questionnaire (see paragraph 54 below). Some points were made in relation to the handling of debates, and these have been considered by the Panel of Chairs. Other comments suggested that provision should be made for debates on time-critical issues, that crèche facilities should be considered, and that some of the technical facilities should be enhanced (such as the display of motions and amendments – for which arrangements are still being trialled and reviewed). As to provision for debates on time-critical issues, the Committee considered that the present facility of an emergency debate agreed by the Presidents was sufficient.
54. The Business Committee is pleased with the relatively high response to the General Synod questionnaire, which was begun by 315 out of 468 members, and fully completed by 291 members, between 2 February and 5 March 2010. The information thus gained (and presented in GS Misc 958) will provide a valuable resource for the newly elected General Synod. At its next meeting in September, the Business Committee will consider how best to present this information to the new Synod, and to facilitate a discussion about the nature,

purpose, and working arrangements of the Synod – at the same time drawing in the views of bodies such as the Archbishops’ Council and the House of Bishops, as well as individuals and bodies outside the Synod. Meanwhile, Synod members are invited to write to the Clerk to the Synod with their thoughts about how this exercise can best be progressed, and with any observations on the results of the survey.

55. The Committee has drawn up a recommended code of practice concerning the declaration of interests by members of the General Synod in debates (circulated as GS Misc 955). It has done so because it believes that, with the increasing scrutiny of those engaged in public life, members of the Synod – as a body with legislative and other functions set out in its Constitution – should conform to the Seven Principles of Public Life. The code provides for the making of an oral declaration, when members contribute to Synod debates, of any interest which might reasonably be thought to influence what they say and do which is relevant to the issue under debate. The code of practice will also be circulated to all newly elected Synod members in October as part of their induction materials.

On behalf of the Business Committee

Kay Garlick

May 2010

Membership of the Business Committee

The Revd Prebendary Kay Garlick (Hereford) - *Chair*

Elected by the House of Bishops

The Rt Revd Trevor Willmott, Bishop of Dover

Elected by the House of Clergy

The Ven Alan Hawker, Archdeacon of Malmesbury (Bristol) - *Vice-Chair*

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)

Mrs Rosalind O'Dowd (London)

Appointed by the Archbishops' Council

Professor John Craven (ex officio)

The Revd Canon Glyn Webster (York)

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

Forecast of future General Synod business

One or more Private Members' Motions and Diocesan Synod Motions are customarily included in each Group of Sessions. However, the Private Members' Motions in Special Agenda III which have not been debated in July will lapse at the end of the quinquennium. Any Diocesan Synod Motions which have not been debated will continue to be included in Special Agenda IV, and will be debated at the November 2010 or subsequent groups of sessions.

The forecast of business provides a forward look to the groups of sessions in November 2010 and February 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.

Legislative business

- Order under s.11 Ecclesiastical Offices (Terms of Service) Measure making consequential amendments etc to other legislation
- Amendments to the Code of Practice under the Clergy Discipline Measure
- Measure amending the Clergy Discipline Measure

Reports

- Anglican Covenant
- Faith and Order Advisory Group report on Christian Initiation
- Parochial Fees Policy
- ARCIC report on *Mary: Grace and Hope in Christ*
- Local unity arrangements: report of CCU review
- Relations between the Church of England and the United Reformed Church
- Participation of minority ethnic Anglicans in the life of the Church
- Ethical Investment: presentation by the Ethical Investment Advisory Group
- Forward Look into the New Quinquennium

May 2010