

The General Synod of the Church of England has today approved a package of measures as the next steps to enable women to become bishops in the Church of England.

In the debate in the morning session the Synod welcomed the package of proposals outlined in the report of the Steering Committee for the Draft Legislation of Women in the Episcopate (GS 1924).

The Steering Committee's package of proposals follows the mandate set by the Synod in July and includes the first draft of a House of Bishops declaration and a disputes resolution procedure. This debate invited Synod to welcome the proposals and the five guiding principles, already agreed by the House of Bishops, which underpin them.

Proposing the package of measures the Right Reverend James Langstaff, Bishop of Rochester said: "These measures look to the day when the Church of England as an ecclesial entity will have made a clear decision to open all orders of ministry to women and men without distinction, whereby all those so ordained are true and lawful holders of the office which they occupy."

The following motion was carried this morning with 378 votes for, eight against and 25 abstentions:

'That this Synod, welcoming the package of proposals in GS 1924 and the statement of principles endorsed by the House of Bishops at paragraph 12 of GS 1886, invite the House of Bishops to bring to the Synod for consultation in February a draft declaration and proposals for a mandatory disputes resolution procedure which build on the agreement reached by the Steering Committee as a result of its facilitated discussions.'

In its afternoon session, the Synod also voted to progress the legislation to its next legislative stage of revision at its next meeting in February.

As a result of the votes carried today, Synod has agreed to dispense with the normal Revision Committee process and move straight to revision in full Synod which next meets in February 2014, thereby clearing the way for a possible vote on final approval later in 2014.

ENDS

Notes:

"Women in the episcopate- guide to the Papers" <http://www.churchofengland.org/media/1872571/gs%20misc%201061%20-%20women%20in%20the%20episcopate%20-%20guide%20to%20the%20papers.pdf>

The Report of the Steering Committee for the Draft Legislation of Women in the Episcopate (GS 1924) can be found here:

<http://www.churchofengland.org/media/1872454/gs%201924%20-%20report%20of%20the%20steering%20committee%20for%20the%20draft%20legislation%20on%20women%20in%20the%20episcopate.pdf>

The

House of Bishops Report "Women in the Episcopate - New Legislative Proposals" (GS 1886) can be found here:

<http://www.churchofengland.org/media/1771468/gs%201886%20-%20women%20in%20the%20episcopate%20-%20new%20legislative%20proposals.pdf>

The text of the specific measures voted upon (GS 1924, GS 1925, GS 1926) can be accessed from this page:

<http://www.churchofengland.org/about-us/structure/general-synod/agendas-and-papers/november-2013-group-of-sessions.aspx>

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