

General Synod has today approved a motion, moved by the Archbishop of York, to "re-evangelise" England, including the creation of a new Task Group.

The Archbishop of York, Dr. John Sentamu, introducing a debate on intentional evangelism, called on Synod to put evangelism at the top of its agenda, saying: "next to worship, witness is the primary and urgent task of the Church."

"Compared with evangelism everything else is like re-arranging furniture when the house is on fire," he said.

"Making disciples is at the heart of our Christian faith and our Anglican tradition."

Taking forward the "spiritual and numerical growth in the church" through evangelism is one of the goals highlighted by the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, in his first Presidential Address to the General Synod in July 2012.

Synod voted to support: the creation of a national Task Group on Evangelism in the Church of England, a call to prayer around the evangelism agenda, support for a programme of action around the seven disciplines of evangelism and a call to every PCC, diocese and deanery Synod to allocate more time to initiatives for making new disciples.

It also supported amendments to extend the membership of the Task Group and to urge every local church to prayerfully find a new way of evangelising in their own context.

"We need... to be intentional in our evangelism in this next period of our life as the Church of England, not for a five or ten year period but for a generation or more," the paper submitted to Synod and prepared for the College of Bishops and the Archbishops Council, recommends.

Details of the Synod motion can be read here:

<http://www.churchofengland.org/media/1872415/gs%201917%20->

The Archbishop of York's speech, in the debate, can be read here:

<http://www.archbishopofyork.org/articles.php/3001/archbishop-speaks-on-intentional-evangelism>

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