

The Archbishops of Canterbury and York, as Presidents of the General Synod of the Church of England, have

year.



The group of sessions will be held in London from Monday November 13 to Wednesday November 15, the Synod Business Committee has confirmed.

The committee has also published the Outline of Business for the next meeting of Synod, which will take place in York from Friday July 7 to Tuesday July 11.

The July meeting will include a substantial item on the proposals, which emerged from the Living in Love and Faith process, to enable same-sex couples who have marked a significant stage of their relationship such as a civil marriage or civil partnership to come to church to give thanks, offer prayers of dedication to God and to receive God's blessing.

Following a landmark debate at Synod in February, a series of implementation groups have been set up to take the proposals forward including refining a set of draft texts known as Prayers of Love and Faith; working on new pastoral guidance for the Church of England and examining what pastoral reassurance will be required to ensure freedom of conscience for clergy and laity.

It is anticipated that the November group of sessions could provide an opportunity for Synod to consider any aspects of that work not completed by July.

The Bishop of London, Sarah Mullally, and the Bishop of Truro, Philip Mounstephen, the co-chairs of the steering group overseeing the implementation groups, said: "The working groups set up by the College of Bishops to take forward the decision of General Synod on a way forward for the Church of England on identity, sexuality, relationships and marriage have been working at pace and are making good progress.

"We hope that work to refine the texts of Prayers of Love and Faith, together with aspects of the work of the Pastoral Guidance and Pastoral Reassurance groups, will be in place before the meeting of Synod in York in July.

"We will be bringing a report to Synod updating in more detail on the progress that has been made.

"Recognising the complexity of the matters being considered, we anticipate that time could be made available at the November meeting of Synod for any further work required."

Notes to editors

- Synod meets in February and July each year and in November at least once in every five years, usually.
- The most recent November group of sessions was in 2021, the inaugural meeting of the current Synod.
- Potential dates for November meetings of Synod are agreed by the Business Committee in advance with the other Synod dates and the presidents then determine each year whether or not to proceed with a November meeting that year.
- The Business Committee has also advised members that next year's first group of sessions will be between **Friday 23 February 2024 and Tuesday 27 February 2024**.

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