

**Report of Proceedings 2014**

**General Synod  
November Group of Sessions**

**Volume 45 No. 3**



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## **FULL SYNOD: FIRST DAY MONDAY 17 NOVEMBER 2014**

THE CHAIR *The Archbishop of Canterbury (The Most Revd and Rt Hon Justin Welby)* took the Chair at 2.00 pm

*Dr Philip Giddings (Oxford)* led the Synod in an act of worship

### **Introduction of New Members**

*The Chair:* In a moment I am going to read out the names of the new members of the Synod. Please would they stand in their places when I mention their names and remain standing so that we are able to greet them all with applause at the end.

The new members are: the Rt Revd Robert Innes (Bishop of Gibraltar in Europe), replacing the Rt Revd Geoffrey Rowell; the Rt Revd Richard Frith, in his new incarnation as Bishop of Hereford, replacing the Rt Revd Anthony Priddis; the Rt Revd Paul Bayes (Bishop of Liverpool), replacing the Rt Revd James Jones; the Ven Sarah Bullock, replacing the Revd Jeremy Fletcher; Mr Paul Tapp, replacing Mrs Judith Ayers, Exeter; Mr Martin Sewell from Rochester, replacing Mr Jim Cheeseman; Air Vice Marshal Malcolm Brecht, Armed Forces Synod, replacing Colonel Peter McAllister; the Ven Michael Kavanagh, Chaplain General of Prisons, replacing the Ven William Noblett. May we greet them all? (*Applause*)

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the three outgoing Church of England Youth Council representatives: Sam Magorrian, Charlotte Cook and Heather Pritchard. May we thank them together? (*Applause*)

### **Progress of Measures and Statutory Instruments**

*The Chair:* I am required to report to the Synod as follows: the Ecclesiastical Offices (Terms of Service) (Amendment) Regulations 2014 have been laid before Parliament and will come into force on 30 November 2014.

The Ecclesiastical Judges, Legal Officers and Others (Fees) Order 2014 has been laid before Parliament and will come into force on 1 January 2015.

The Payments to the Churches Conservation Trust Order 2014 has been laid before Parliament and will come into force on 1 April 2015.

The Church Representation Rules (Amendment) Resolution 2014 has been laid before Parliament. Paragraphs 16 to 20 of the Resolution will come into force on 1 January 2015. Paragraphs 1 to 15 will come into force on the same date as the coming into force of Amending Canon No. 32.

All the remaining provisions of the Church of England (Miscellaneous Provisions) Measure 2014 which are not yet in force will come into force on 1 January 2015.

The Bishops and Priests (Consecration and Ordination of Women) Measure 2014 has been laid before Parliament and received the Royal Assent. Section 1(1) and (so far as not already in force) section 4 of the Measure came into force on 14th November. In the event that the Synod resolves later this afternoon to make, promulge and execute Amending Canon No.33, it is intended that the remaining provisions of the Measure be brought into force from today's date.

That concludes the formal business.

THE CHAIR *Mr Geoffrey Tattersall (Manchester)* took the Chair at 2.06 pm

## **Report by the Business Committee (GS 1967)**

*Revd Canon Susan Booys (Oxford)*: I beg to move:

'That the Synod do take note of this Report'

This is a short group of sessions and an historic one with a number of particularly important items on the Agenda. In a very short time the Canon that will include women in the episcopate of the Church of England will be promulgated.

The nature of our Orders touches on our relationships with other churches, and so it is significant that we shall also have an important debate on the Anglican-Methodist Covenant tomorrow. Since tomorrow will also be the first time that Synod has been addressed by a senior Muslim speaker, it is not an exaggeration to say that the whole of this short Synod has an historic significance. All this in a November Synod which is not something we would even expect at this point in a quinquennium.

The Business Committee is aware that this is the third year running that Synod has met in November for reasons other than an inauguration. We know that there is a significant cost to dioceses, the national Church and individual Synod members in terms of the time, resources and commitment that is required to hold a Synod and attend Synod meetings. To take account of this, we have already made clear that the February group of sessions will be relatively short. That is to say a three-day group of sessions from Tuesday 10 February to Thursday 12 February. This Synod has its share of legislative business, perhaps less historic than the Canon for enactment but nonetheless very important for our life together. Later this afternoon, there will be a take note debate on the draft Guidelines for Professional Conduct of the Clergy.

One feature of this Synod is the continued integration of our work and worship as we meet together. The timing for worship this afternoon has been brought forward to sit between that take note debate and Synod questions and this evening's session will therefore close with a blessing.

On Tuesday the particular focus of our prayer and worship will be for those who are persecuted for their faith, of whose plight we hope to gain greater understanding through the presentation on the persecution of religious minorities in Iraq and Syria tomorrow morning. We will have an opportunity to hear from a range of very distinguished speakers, and proper time has been allowed in the Agenda to enable

them to address us and to take questions from members of Synod afterwards.

In my own diocesan synod on Saturday, I was privileged to listen to a presentation from an imam whose words impressed us and deepened our knowledge and understanding. I feel sure that the words spoken here tomorrow will be widely reported within those countries and communities currently experiencing persecution, and I know that you will be aware of our responsibility as we seek to learn together from the questions we pose to our panel.

In every report I have brought to you I have mentioned our ongoing work on changing the culture of Synod. We received a great deal of helpful feedback at the July Synod fringe and afterwards in letters and emails, and we have provided a very brief annex to our report. We are planning more detailed work when we meet in March and I anticipate that further outcomes of this work will be in evidence in July.

In particular, we are now looking ahead to the next quinquennium when a new Business Committee will need to take this work forward. To that end we planned some work that will help prepare the way for continuing developments into the next quinquennium so that what we see as a gently gathering momentum will not be lost.

The Continuous Praying Presence initiative continues to embed itself in our life together as a Synod. I know that many of our cathedrals and parish churches are supporting us in prayer using the prayer card that has been published on the website, and as ever we are indebted to the Chaplain and to all those who are leading worship and upholding us in our work and in prayer.

During this Synod I understand that the Lambeth team are inviting people participating in that Praying Presence to be photographed holding their prayers, and in this way our prayers will be shared through the Lambeth Palace Twitter feed. You are most welcome to join in this initiative. I do not know if there is yet a proper word for praying on Twitter and I think perhaps I should inaugurate a competition to find such a word.

Before I close, may I say just a further word about the cost of Synod? Many of the costs that the dioceses and the National Church meet for a group of sessions are necessary and unavoidable. However, there are some costs which we could reduce fairly easily. From a paper prepared for Business Committee, I note that the cost of printing and postage of the papers for the July 2014 Synod alone was nearly £20,000. The printing and postage for this group of sessions is likely to come to around £12,000. Synod members can obviously help to reduce this cost by signing up at the front desk to receive their papers in electronic form. I know that this is not possible for everyone, but if you could receive papers electronically and have not yet signed up, I would warmly encourage you to save the odd penny by doing just that.

I should conclude by thanking my colleagues on the Business Committee for their commitment and hard work. I know our thanks go especially to the staff who support us and you. It is on them I know that the greatest burden falls when there is an extra Synod, so in moving that Synod do take note of this report may I invite you to thank them in the time-honoured way.

*The Chair.* This matter is now open for debate. We will have a speech limit of five minutes to start off with. It is in order for members to refer to matters which are not on the Agenda which, in his or her opinion, the speaker believes should be, but speakers should not get into the substance of the subject but should confine themselves to the place in the Agenda or the subject.

*Mrs Mary Judkins (Leeds):* I want to say a huge thank you to the Business Committee, the Archbishops' Council and MPA for putting the plight of persecuted religious minorities on our Agenda for tomorrow, and thank you that you heard my plea in July for this urgent debate.

It is to our shame that Christians and their leaders in Syria, Iraq, Egypt and Lebanon have frequently complained that they do not feel supported by the Church in the West. We quite rightly support religious freedom for all, but Paul in Galatians 6 calls us to do good for all people, especially those of the household of faith. If we do not care for our own brothers and sisters in Christ, what confidence might people have that we would also care for them? Is the refusal to provide for Christians specifically an excuse not to acknowledge our obligations?

So our priority has to be tangibly to support fellow Christians who are suffering simply because they are Christians through those funds which specifically support Christians.

I was on the phone with Baroness Berridge, the Chair of APPG on International Religious Freedom this morning. She too is very grateful that this is on the Agenda and hopes to be attending tomorrow. She quoted a small agency who actually help Iraqi Christians both in Iraq and here. Tented camps have been sourced by the Barnabas Fund to provide shelter for more than 4,500 Christians at a stroke. I wonder could parishes help support the costs? Could each diocese establish a dedicated team and website support for suffering and persecuted brothers and sisters in the faith?

I applaud the work that individual bishops have done on behalf of our persecuted brothers and sisters, but I pray that as a result of tomorrow's presentation and question time, the plight of Christians suffering terrible persecution for their faith, not only in the Middle East but, for example, the couple recently burnt in a brick kiln in Pakistan, will be part of the weekly prayers in our worship, a presence on our websites, our giving and on the Agenda of the House of Bishops, so thank you once again.

*Revd Canon Dr Christopher Sugden (Oxford):* I would like to add to the welcome for the opportunity that this Synod gives to us to register our deep concern for, and solidarity with, fellow Christians in the Middle East suffering horrendous persecution, and to add thanks for the well-crafted briefing paper on the importance of religious freedom and the contribution of senior spokespeople.

Our brothers and sisters in Christ are being murdered, tortured, enslaved and made destitute in Islamic countries even as we gather here. Captured Christian teenage girls are being sold for \$25 a piece in the slave markets of Mosul; 200,000 Christians are living precariously in Kurdish Northern Iraq; in Syria the Christian community is threatened with a similar fate. We are, quite rightly, having a presentation with opportunity for questions. I hope we can also move to action.



The United Kingdom, through its Government, has played its own part in the destruction of the Christian community in Iraq through broken promises in the 20th Century. We need to acknowledge the part we have played in their suffering over the years and seek their forgiveness.

Funding for ISIS comes from people in Qatar and Saudi Arabia, albeit from private sources. Since the UK has many alliances and business deals with these states, can our Government do all in its power to support the process of starving ISIS of funds sourced through these countries?

One tangible expression of our repentance would be to welcome those who need asylum into our homes and churches and press the Government to give them entrance visas. One family per church would meet a major need. When I suggested this in a sermon in our church in August, I had three offers immediately at the end of the service for such a welcome. This will be an important expression of the compassion of Jesus Christ. Can we do real, solid, tangible good to our suffering brothers and sisters? Thank you.

*Miss Emma Forward (Exeter):* This report begins with the words: “November Synod groups of session are only held for the purpose of conducting urgent and time-critical business.” I am glad to see that this principle comes first as we meet over these two days. The Report goes on to remind us that this is the third year in which we have held extraordinary November meetings.

As we reach the end of this quinquennium, it seems sensible to look from the perspective of those who may consider standing for General Synod for the first time. For most, one of the first questions would be: what is the level of commitment required? Our honest answer must be that in the quinquennium just ending the reality has been that General Synod meets not twice but three times a year. Next year we will have our inaugural sessions again and that will be the fourth year in a row that a November commitment has been required of our members.

For a very significant portion of lay people, the strain of this extra commitment may be too much to ask. I think it is wise for the Synod to consider what sort of people this may exclude: those with families; those who work full-time; those who are not able to leave home and stay away more than a couple of times a year; those who have very limited holiday; those who do not have the financial flexibility to spend money on trains and hotels and then wait to be reimbursed. Realistically, in many cases this means younger folk in their 20s and 30s. Of course, this is the age bracket that all of us are desperate to see in the pews but who we struggle to keep on a Sunday because of all the other demands on their time, let alone to serve on the PCC or anything else. Of course we all understand the importance of the business that has brought about these extra sessions in the recent past, but is it not the case that almost all of our business has a claim of being of special importance and urgency, and rightly so if the General Synod is functioning as it should?

My request to the Business Committee is that we honour the principle of keeping the November sessions to an absolute minimum, otherwise Synod may be unwittingly

pricing its younger working members out of the market.

*Mr Tom Sutcliffe (Southwark):* This Business Committee Report may not seem contentious but I have two concerns. First, what is said about more praying and extra services. We certainly need help carrying out our functions so prayers have a place but, as a former choirboy and choirman who was paid to go to church for almost two decades, I suggest Synod is neither a Billy Graham parade nor a festival of worship. It is a legislative body, an annex of Parliament and it provides for the benefit of the Archbishops and the country a sounding board of what laity and clergy believe about being the Church of England.

Archbishop Davidson in Parliament in 1919 empowered the Church Assembly because there needed to be a body that added commonsense and wisdom from lay women as well as lay men to the male clericalism of the Convocations. General Synod costs a lot to assemble. We have just been hearing what it costs to furnish us with information about what we are actually supposed to know about. We should address only matters and areas over which we exercise actual responsibility. The Business Committee quotes members' opinions about having more active piety around and people like it. This is a body where mention of the word 'God' in a speech earns enhanced applause. As active Christians we feel worshipping is what we should do. I think the Business Committee has come up with an inappropriate answer to an inappropriate question posed to the wrong people.

A word about those shared conversations that resolved the women bishops' issue. Firstly, the very phrase "shared conversations" is a tautology; talking to oneself may be a symptom of madness. The way out and ahead on women bishops was perfectly obvious and speedy. I proposed a review committee and appeals process in 2010 which was not debated because only 39 members, including Archbishop Rowan, stood to give it support. The whole point of this General Synod is hearing what others say. Synod is not a form of public relations; it is challenged by real issues. My 25 years here have been dominated by the issue of women in Holy Orders now about to be put to bed, as it were. Praise God! But what about 25 members standing to permit discussion of amendments and 40 members for votes by Houses?

My second concern is what ought to be our business here. How the Church speaks truth on matters is very challenging and deserves more careful consideration. Take so-called equal marriage; a misleading, annoying phrase. Children are far less common for gay couples for obvious reasons. That is good for limiting the population explosion and moderating global warming, but are children getting equal treatment if denied a parent of each gender?

My cousin, John Ward, put down his Private Member's Motion about civil partnerships nearly three years ago. It quickly achieved its 100 endorsements. Justice delayed is justice denied. John's topic is now going mouldy thanks to the Business Committee's poodle-like discretion.

Our mechanisms need urgent re-examination. A 30-minute long documentary on BBC 24 Hour News a few days ago brilliantly explored Rojava's virtuous, sympathetic mix of Syrian Christians, Kurd and Arab Muslims and its determined defensive fighting against

ISIS. We may be revolted by persecution but we are drenched in this matter by the news. Rupert Shortt spoke on his book *Christianophobia* at York 16 months ago.

I believe we need reform. We need a thorough consideration about frequency of General Synod meetings and content of business. Would the level of legal fees be better handled by an empowered Grand Committee, for instance?

This is not for the Business Committee to ponder. It should be undertaken seriously and urgently by the Archbishops following the example from the successful Women Bishops' Measure using a large, quick committee of opposing views reporting back quickly. Our appetite for innovative reform of big theological issues may be temporarily sated. The mixture of traditional views and current day pastoral practice on human sexuality cannot and need not produce a hurried consensus since, as with *Humanae Vitae*, the views propounded by church leaders are widely ignored. Anyway, orientation and human sexuality are matters for individual consciences.

So just one meeting of General Synod every other year would perhaps be about right, perhaps lasting a whole week. We cannot legislate for heavenly virtue. General Synod is not a model of Christian life. That is to be found at the grass roots in the parishes and cathedrals, as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be. The role of Synod needs reassessing.

*Canon Timothy Allen (St Edmundsbury and Ipswich):* Chair, most of us will, I guess, be delighted that after so many years of debate, delay and dispute on women bishops, which have so damaged the public image of the Church of England, today's next step towards bringing women into the House of Bishops will, as Sue Booy has just reminded us, be purely formal and short. But it is a pity that in planning our Agenda, the Business Committee failed to recognise that enacting the Canon is not the end of the urgent process of transforming the House of Bishops to make it representative of England's whole population, men and women. It is urgent because non-Church people in England are repelled from approaching the Church by the self-evident discrimination illustrated by the present wholly male House of Bishops. Today, by enacting the Canon, we will merely enable the removal of that impediment to mission. It is vital now that the Archbishops as Chairmen of the Crown Nominations Commission should actively use their formidable powers of process, control, leadership and forceful persuasion - I am putting it very politely - to ensure that the CNC moves boldly with all speed and determination to the appointment of as many as possible of the best of the Church of England's excellent senior women as diocesan bishops, preferably with seats in the House of Lords.

It would have been wise of the Business Committee to have put on our Agenda a brief report from the Archbishops on their plans to bring about this rapid and radical transformation of the House of Bishops. Gradualism and 'business as usual' will simply not do. The time for debate is now over. Now is the time for speedy, decisive action.

But, Chair, all is not lost since there is a perfect opportunity in the next but one Agenda item, the Presidential Address, for Archbishop Justin to tell us what is his plan of action to bring women speedily into the House of Bishops. There is a closely related matter on which I hope Archbishop Justin will also respond, for it is not only women who were

excluded in a discriminatory and prejudiced way from the House of Bishops, so too were - and still are - those gay men who do not hide their sexuality in the closet. Those who are honest and frank enough to live openly in a civil partnership, while behaving in the chaste way required by Church law, are it seems from all the evidence *de facto* excluded from the House of Bishops even when they are eminently qualified to be a bishop. To make bishops of women required today's change in the law of the Church, but it is not law, it is simply prejudice, which keeps out of the House of Bishops these men who are gay, chaste and honest. Such prejudice and discrimination is wrong, even when it is dressed up as a necessary tribute to certain homophobic elements of the Anglican Communion. Such prejudice and discrimination will increasingly be seen to be wrong by much of the nation which the Church of England seeks to serve, especially the younger people who have shown, for example, by their sympathy for Alan Turing, the gay wartime code breaker, that they utterly reject the persecution of homosexual people. Thank you, Chair.

*Mr Jacob Vince (Chichester):* Like many, I am sure, I am grateful for the opportunity of a presentation on the subject of violence against religious minorities in Iraq and Syria. This is long overdue and I do not think anywhere near enough attention has been given, particularly to our Christian brothers and sisters, who are not only victims of violence but plain old persecution of the Saints.

Whilst I welcome this presentation, I am concerned that a speaker who represents the majority religion in these countries should be invited to speak on the panel, the Muslim Shaykh Fuad Nahdi, but more so due to his alleged history of working with activists and groups tied to the Muslim Brotherhood, who not so long ago were in charge when Coptic Christians in Egypt were suffering from violence against them.

In Item 32 of GS 1967, it suggests that the Business Committee with the Archbishops' Council and MPA on this matter ---

*The Chair:* Mr Vince, are we not moving away from the shape and content of the Agenda?

*Mr Jacob Vince (Chichester):* Not at all, because I am talking about Item 32 of 1967 and the discussion of the Business Committee with the Archbishops' Council and the Mission and Public Affairs. Not only that, several others have moved much further away than what I am actually doing here, Sir.

*The Chair:* You need to be concise.

*Mr Jacob Vince (Chichester):* I will try and do so. Item 32 of GS 1967, which is the Business Committee Report in front of us, suggests the Business Committee consulted with the Archbishops' Council and the Mission and Public Affairs on this matter. Could Synod be advised as to who suggested those on the panel and why a speaker representing the majority religion in the region was chosen?

The Church of England General Synod, as the name suggests, is a gathering of the Christian church walking together in the way of the Saviour of the world, God's only son, Jesus: the way, the truth and the life. We should be very wary of anything that would

give or could give the impression that we were not fully committed to this ideal. Thank you, Chair.

*Mr Adrian Greenwood (Southwark):* Thank you for calling me. I want to look ahead to our last two sessions, February and July 2015.

When we started this new quinquennium we were presented with three quinquennial challenges in the well recorded and well remembered GS 1815. The first of those was regarding growth - numerical growth, spiritual growth and growth in the kingdom - and amongst many occasions when we have considered this matter there was the debate in July 2013 when we exhorted our bishops to spend a substantial amount of time over the next two years, that is until next summer, considering their strategy for the re-Evangelisation of this country and setting up the Archbishops Taskforce; job done possibly. The second one was to do with the Common Good and we had an absolutely fantastic time in July with Jim Wallis and many others and the conversations. The third one was re-imagining Ministry, something which I fear has disappeared off our formal agendas.

There may be lots going on behind the scenes but it is not apparent to me, so I would put in a very, very strong plea that in preferably both but certainly one of our next two groups of sessions we devote significant time to that topic and particularly to the phrase which has been tripping off my tongue ever since it was coined “turning the rhetoric of lay involvement into reality”. We are still doing the rhetoric but where is the reality? We have spent 14 years and incalculable amounts of energy, effort and cost getting to the stage where in a few moments we will raise our hands and the final piece of the jigsaw will be put in place. We have spent barely no time at all talking about how we liberate, release, empower, whatever verb you want to use, the millions of Christian lay people, men and women, who I would suggest, ladies and gentlemen, are waiting - waiting - to be released for mission and ministry in this country.

Can we please have at least one, preferably two? Even if we are saying, “We don’t know the answers”, let us ask the laity and perhaps you will get some ideas. Thank you very much.

*Revd Preb Stephen Lynas (Bath and Wells):* I hope I will cheer you up, Chair, (a) by not taking too long and (b) referring to paragraph 9 of the annex to the Business Committee Report which is before us, and that is to do with social media and Synod.

I have just done a very efficient and effective piece of market research. Out of 19 people I can see from where I am standing, no less than six of them have got their heads down and there is an eerie glow bathing their faces because they are looking at telephones, mobiles, tablets, laptops or whatever they have got. In the ten years I have been on the Synod that has been a huge change in our culture, so I welcome what is said in paragraph 9 about the effective training for new and existing members of Synod and we are looking forward to the next quinquennium, as Sue Booy has reminded us, to ensure they are suitably equipped to understand Synodical process, et cetera.

Some of you will remember when you joined Synod you got a copy of this green booklet called a survival guide and most of you have survived, as have I. I wonder if the

Business Committee could inform us, perhaps in reply to this debate or otherwise, what they actually plan to do to help new members of the next Synod ensure that we have even more faces bathed in eerie glows and even more communication with the world outside about what is happening at this Synod. We need to help people, not just to come and spend their two days or four days or five days at a session and go back and report to a deanery synod, we need to help them to communicate while they are here, so that people can understand what is actually going on and I look forward, as I think many of you do, to the Business Committee helping us with that for the next quinquennium. Thank you.

*Revd Paul Cartwright (Leeds):* Thank you. Chair, I welcome the agenda which the Business Committee has put together, especially the item under Special Agenda 4, the Diocesan Synod Motion about the Spare Room Subsidy. It is good to see that one of my colleagues from West Yorkshire and The Dales is taking some positive action in challenging that Spare Room Subsidy which has become a millstone around so many people's necks. Speaking with several friends who work for housing federations, they tell me that the old housing stock - the stock which was often put together for large families - does not cater for the situations they find themselves in now and that so many people have to pay a subsidy. It is good to see that the Church is looking outwards and challenging unjust situations in society, but I wonder whether we should also concentrate on maybe trying to put our own house in order and maybe we can do what we can to relieve poverty which is being experienced by so many people in the areas where we are from.

The Church recognises there is a need for change and I wonder if I could draw your attention to a Private Member's Motion which I recently submitted and which I would like to invite you all to support to enable the Business Committee to add this to a future session. Quite simply, if you were to support my Private Member's Motion, you would allow greater flexibility in the setting of fees for the occasional offices by allowing General Synod to set a band of fees, an upper limit which would give greater flexibility to local dioceses to set a realistic and affordable range of costs for the occasional offices which are offered by the Church in local areas.

Again I commend the work of the Business Committee in allowing such discussions to take place but I ask that consideration to be given to allow a greater discussion about things which are set by the Church, things which we are able to directly influence as well as challenging the unfair policies and practices which are occurring externally. Thank you.

*The Chair* imposed a speech limit of three minutes.

*Mrs April Alexander (Southwark):* Thank you, Chair. Southwark Diocese, I would propose, holds the record for having a motion being parked. I am not sure if it was 11 years or 12 but certainly it was regarded at the time as somewhat unusual and the guidance, as I recall, is along the lines that it should only happen in exceptional circumstances and by discussion with the people who wish to propose the motion. As I recall, those discussions faded into nothing in the last nine or ten years and I wonder if they have been revived in the current circumstances. We are simply told that the Business Committee has decided, and I do wonder whether enough consideration is

given to just how important it is to delay these Private Members' Motions and hope that we do not have any more examples.

May I also support Tim Allen. I have asked the question along the lines that Tim Allen was talking about with regard to bishops in the question time this afternoon, but I would like to say here *apropos* of what he was saying, that there is a risk this particular issue may be lost in discussions covering civil partnerships and same-sex marriage. I hope that does not happen. It is an issue that we have to face and face soon. Thank you.

*Mr Paul Hancock (Liverpool):* A question really for Canon Booy's. Paragraph 3 talks about the February sessions. Could you perhaps expand on the reasons for scheduling a shorter group of sessions and for the timing, Tuesday to Thursday? Thank you.

*The Chair:* I see no one else standing so I call on the Chair of the Business Committee to reply.

*Revd Canon Susan Booy's (Oxford):* Thank you, Synod and Chair. I think five minutes is going to be something of a challenge but I will do my best to meet it. I would like to begin by thanking Mrs Judkins and Canon Sugden. It was good to hear from you both, people who understand the issues, and to hear positive suggestions for the way in which the whole Church, parishes and nationally, can support in practice and prayer.

Emma Forward, I cannot really add to what I said in my introductory remarks. We do have this actively under consideration. These issues were raised with us in July and we will be talking about them in March and we are keen to look carefully at the commitment of lay people and to make it possible for people to attend Synod.

Mr Sutcliffe, thank you. I know that I, and members of Synod, enjoyed your wide-ranging speech. I would want to say that bringing the sacred into the secular seems to me to be something that is important throughout the whole of my life and I think for most of us prayer underlies what we do and we are trying to make that more apparent in the context of Synod. The Business Committee feels that prayer supports rather than interrupts our business. Your speech was so wide-ranging that I think I will gallop to the end and say that I think that legislating for heavenly virtue is beyond the Business Committee but we will continue to reassess the role of Synod with your help, I am sure.

Mr Allen, I am sure the Archbishops have heard you. It is very good, I think, to use this debate on the agenda to raise issues that concern many people here and to be sure that those issues are kept alive and heard before us. Whilst much of what you ask falls outside our direct remit, I am delighted to see the debate on the agenda used in this positive way.

Mr Vince, I would want to just stress that Fuad Nahdi has not been invited as a representative but as a guest of the Synod. He has a track record of speaking out against violent extremism and is somebody with whom the Church of England and the Archbishops have worked with over the years very positively. It is really important that we have as wide a range conversation with people of all views and all experiences, and it would be sad if we refused to speak with or listen to people who had been associated with other people with whom we disagreed. This is an issue that extends beyond the

Church and across the whole of public life. I am delighted that we are going to hear from a Muslim scholar who is extremely knowledgeable and a great ally of the Christian Church. I hope you will all welcome him tomorrow.

I am returning now, Mr Greenwood, to the continuing debates on GS 1815 and the strategy for growth. The Business Committee very much hopes and plans for a debate very soon on discipleship which will be based on work commissioned from the Ministry Council. We hope that we will be scheduling this in February but, if not, it will be scheduled as soon as possible. I would want to add a note of thanks here because it would not be possible for me to be standing here in front of you if it were not for the commitment of the laity in my team and for their hard work, their generosity and their expertise in Ministry.

Mr Lynas, we had a conversation as we came in and you knew that I would not be able to answer your question later so I am delighted to be able to speak to you now and say that when we meet in March the Business Committee will have under active consideration the best possible introduction for new members of Synod. We would welcome your input and that of anybody else who would like to be involved both in drafting that material and also in helping to bring new members of Synod to understand our ways. It is perhaps worth saying here that if you know you are not going to be standing for the next quinquennium, you are somebody who can help particularly because when we are introducing new members to Synod we need them to be introduced by people who might not have an axe to grind, so if you know you are not coming back and would like to help, come and talk to one of the Business Committee.

Mr Cartwright, I am glad you are using the system for PMMs and Mrs Alexander also spoke to the use of PMM and DSMs. Items are generally parked because they are under active alternative consideration and the Business Committee thinks it would be unhelpful to have parallel processes. I am advised that there is no requirement to consult dioceses about the progress of their DSMs but I am aware that is something which nevertheless happens. With regard to Private Member's Motions, I draw members' attention to the comments in the Business Committee Report.

Mr Hancock, we had a long discussion about the appropriate days for a February Synod. I think that the general opinion on the Business Committee was (a) that Synod should be shorter and (b) that actually travel was easier for a Synod that extended from Tuesday to Thursday. If we were wrong, we would be delighted to hear from you. That will feed into the conversations which I mentioned when I was replying to Ms Forward. I believe that the light is still green and I have got to the end of the questions. Thank you very much indeed.

*The motion*

*'That the Synod do take note of this Report.'*

*was carried on a show of hands.*



THE CHAIR *The Archbishop of York (The Most Revd & Rt Hon Dr John Sentamu)* took the chair at 2.50 pm.

### **Legislative Business: Amending Canon No. 33 (GS 1926D)**

*The Chair:* We come to the enactment of Amending Canon No. 33 which received final approval from the Synod at the July 2014 group of sessions. I am glad to be able to report to the Synod that the Royal Assent and Licence to make, promulge and execute the Amending Canon has been given

The decision taken in July was reached in the light of the declaration which was made by the House of Bishops in May and includes the five guiding principles. It was also made following the agreement of the House of Bishops the text of draft regulations establishing a grievance procedure and the office of the independent reviewer. The House of Bishops is scheduled to meet immediately after the close of business this evening to make those regulations since it cannot do so until the Canon has been enacted. As the Synod knows, Sir Philip Mawer has agreed to serve as the first independent viewer. He is the Synod's former Secretary General and has also served as Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards.

There are three final steps that we now need to make. First, under Standing Order 66 the Registrar will read the instrument of enactment to the Synod, then without there being any debate I shall put the motion appearing on the Order Paper to the Synod for decision on a show of hands. A simple majority will be required. Then, thirdly, if the motion is carried I shall invite the six officers of the Synod to sign the instrument of enactment. Therefore I call upon the Registrar to begin by reading the instrument.

*The Registrar:* Constitutions and Canons Ecclesiastical maturely treated upon by the archbishops, bishops, clergy and laity of the General Synod of the Church of England. In their Synod begun at Westminster in the year of our Lord 2010 and in the 59th year of the reign of our sovereign lady Queen Elizabeth II, by the Grace of God of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and of her other realms and territories, Queen, Head of the Commonwealth, Defender of the Faith being a Canon entitled Amending Canon No 33 which received Her Majesty's Royal Assent and Licence on the tenth day of November 2014. We, being the Presidents, the Prolocutor of the Convocation of Canterbury, the Prolocutor of the Convocation of York and the Chair and Vice-Chair of the House of Laity of the said Synod, do hereby declare and testify our consent to the said Canon entitled Amending Canon No. 33. And in testimony of such our consent we have hereunto subscribed our names as hereafter following. Dated the seventeenth of November in the year of our Lord 2014 and in the 63rd year of the reign of our sovereign lady Queen Elizabeth II.

*The Chair:* I move Item 500 that the Canon entitled Amending Canon No. 33 be made, promulged and executed.

*The motion*

*‘That the Canon entitled “Amending Canon No. 33” be made, promulged and executed.’*

*was carried on a show of hands.*

I invite His Grace, the Archbishop of Canterbury, to join me for the signing of the instrument of enactment, after which it will be signed by the Prolocutors of the Loyal Houses of Convocation and the Chair and Vice-Chair of the House of Laity. This is a legal process. I would be grateful if you kept a dignified silence. *(After a pause)* The Registrar will now counter-sign and date it. *(After a pause)* The Canon will now be sent for Proclamation in the dioceses and synods in the usual way. That completes this item of business.

*The Archbishop of York* led the Synod in an act of worship

THE CHAIR *The Revd Canon Dr Rosemarie Mallett (Southwark)* took the Chair at 2.55 pm

*The Chair.* Good afternoon, Synod. We now come to Item 4 on the agenda and may I call upon His Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury to give his presidential address.

## **Presidential Address**

*The Archbishop of Canterbury (The Most Revd and Rt Hon Justin Welby):* Good afternoon again. I just want to start by saying to Tim Allen, I am afraid I am going to disappoint you. I have not rewritten my Presidential Address since your intervention earlier about what I should talk about, but no doubt we will have a chance to talk about it later.

During the last 18 months or so, I have had the opportunity to visit 36 other Primates of the Anglican Communion with my wife, Caroline, in their own homes at various points; 35 together, one by myself. This has involved a total of 14 trips, lasting 96 days in all. I, incidentally, calculated that it involves more than 11 days actually sitting in aeroplanes and something like two standing next to the carousels wondering if your luggage is going to appear. In case you think the age of miracles has passed, I have not lost a single bag, though one of my colleagues did.

This seemed to be a good moment, therefore, to speak a little about the state of the Communion and to look honestly at some of the issues that are faced and the possible ways forward. First of all (and this needs to be heard very clearly) the Anglican Communion exists and is flourishing in roughly 165 countries, despite reports to the contrary. There has been comment over the last year that issues around the Communion should not trouble us in the Church of England because the Communion has, for all practical purposes, ceased to exist. Not only does it exist but almost everywhere (there are some exceptions) the links to the See of Canterbury, notwithstanding its Archbishop, are profoundly valued. The question as to its existence is, therefore, about what it will look like in the future. That may be very different, and I

will come back to the question.

Secondly, Anglicanism is incredibly diverse. To sit, in the space of a few months, in meetings with the presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church, the Primate of Australia, the Primate of South Africa, the Moderator of the Church of South India, the Primate of Nigeria and many others is to come away utterly daunted by the differences that do exist. They are huge, beyond capacity to deal with adequately in the time for this presentation. Within the Communion there are perhaps more than 2,000 languages. I have not counted, but there are 407 in Nigeria alone and perhaps more than 500 distinct cultures and ways of looking at the world. Some of its churches sit in the middle of what are literally the richest parts of the globe and have within them some of the richest people on earth. I have had my first experience of meeting billionaires. They are very like millionaires only richer, in case you were wondering. The vast majority are poor. Despite appearances here, we are, to use Pope Francis's phrase, "A poor church for the poor". Many are in countries where change is at a rate that we cannot even begin to imagine. I think of the man I met in Papua New Guinea who is a civil engineer trained in Scotland and whose grandfather was the first of his tribe to see a wheel as a small aircraft landed in a clearing in the forest near his home. At the same time there is a profound unity in many ways. Not in all ways.

Having said what I have about diversity, which includes diversity on all sorts of matters, including sexuality, marriage and its nature, the use of money, the relations between men and women, the environment, war and peace, distribution of wealth and food and a million other things, underpinning us is a unity imposed by the spirit of God on those who name Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour. This diversity is both gift and challenge, to be accepted and embraced as we seek to witness in truth and love to the good news of Jesus Christ.

Thirdly, the potential of the Anglican Communion under God is beyond anything we can imagine or think about. We need to hold on to that. There is a prize, the quest for which it is worth almost anything to achieve. That prize is visible unity in Christ, despite functional diversity. It is a prize that is not only of infinite value but also requires enormous sacrifice and struggle to achieve. Yet, if we even get near it, we can at last speak with authority to a world where, over the last year, we have seen more than ever an incapacity to deal with difference and a desire to oversimplify the complex and diverse nature of human existence for no better reason than we cannot manage difference and dealing with the other. Yet, in Christ we are held together. In Christ, the barriers are broken, peace is held out to us as a gift established which needs living. In Christ there is hope of a life that provides hope for peace in our world.

Fourthly, the Communion is extremely active. Let me give you a few examples. In Mexico, a small community abandoned by all, of people who had lost their homes and were living in the badlands, where a priest, an Anglican priest, totally unoccupied apart from a full-time career in a professional area and running another parish, as well as being unpaid, was sent by his bishop to start a church in this community, something he thought likely to cost him his life. But there he went, to the very poorest of the poor, and a community now exists established with numerous baptisms, growing spirituality and a love and concern and compassion for one another that speaks of the living presence of Jesus among them, and brought us to tears when we saw it. Another example is a

conference in Oklahoma City in which, from people around the Episcopal Church with patience and courtesy to one another, there was discussion over the issues around the use of firearms and the meaning of the Second Amendment, the right to bear arms, in practice in modern day USA. In the South Sudan, after a day spent burying the dead of a great massacre, the Archbishop of the Sudan, Daniel, stood up with extraordinary courage and called for reconciliation. Those from the rebel group would, of course, already have opposed him. Those from his own group would not necessarily have been impressed with such compromise. To do that puts all of our struggles into a real perspective. In England, a Church in the middle of an extraordinarily mixed area of religious faith, faithful to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, active in its worship, lively in its preaching, yet being the centre and focus of religious leadership in the area so as to enable difference to be handled with beauty. There are so many others that merit a presentation of their own. Every trip was full of them every day.

We live as Anglicans in a community that exists around the world, that is deeply engaged with its world almost everywhere, that is diverse and argumentative and fractured but yet shows in so many places, both known and unknown, the power and love of Christ through His spirit at work in our world.

We live in a Communion which merits celebration and thanksgiving as well as prayer and repentance, a flourishing Communion but also a divided Communion. I do not want to sound triumphalist. There are enormous problems. We have deep divisions in many areas, not only sexuality. There are areas of corruption, other areas where the power of the surrounding culture seems to overwhelm almost everyone at one point or another. Our divisions may be too much to manage.

In many parts of the Communion, including here, there is a belief that opponents of one view or another are either faithless to the tradition or, by contrast, that they are cruel, judgmental or inhuman. I have to say that we are in a state so delicate that without prayer and repentance it is hard to see how we can avoid some serious fractures.

In an age of near instant communication, because the Communion exists and is full of life, vigour and growth, of faith and trust in Jesus Christ and love for him, everything that one province does echoes around the world. Every sermon or speech here is heard within minutes and analysed half to death. Every careless phrase by some random, wandering Archbishop or other in an interview is seen as a considered policy statement. What is true of all provinces is ten times more so for us in the Church of England and especially us in this Synod. We never speak only to each other. The weight of that responsibility, if we love each other in the world as we should, must affect both our actions and our words, flourishing, divided, and then a Communion under threat.

There is persecution in the Communion in many, many areas. We are a poor and a persecuted Church. We are well aware of that. We have heard about it this morning and we will hear more tomorrow, and we need to remember it constantly. In very many parts of the world, particularly parts of Africa and the Middle East but also South East Asia, persecution comes from Jihadist attacks which have killed many, many Anglicans, other Christians and, in largest number, Muslims over the last few years. Not a day goes by without some report being received of the suffering and persecution of the churches around the world and of cries for help and requests for support. Not a day

goes by without something that should break one's heart at the courage and the difficulties involved.

There is immense suffering, not only persecution, in the Communion. Two weeks ago in Ghana we were briefed by the Chief of Staff of the UN Mission combating Ebola; its terrible spread indescribable. A 'black death' sweeping through three dioceses of West Africa is by itself a catastrophe of historic proportions. The suffering of the people in the afflicted countries, the courage of their medical services, the way in which the Church is putting itself on the line day by day makes the blood run cold and one's heart surge in admiration. We must help, we must pray and we must call for more help. In the South Sudan the human-created food shortage threatens to turn into a terrible famine, perhaps the worst for two generations. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo the war continues with the utmost cruelty, with sexual violence a routine weapon of war. The list could go on and on and on, especially in the Middle East, Palestine and Israel, the Levant and the Euphrates Valley.

Where do we go then? What do we do? Where does this extraordinary, fractious, diverse, argumentative, wonderful, united, ferocious, peaceful, persecuted, suffering body that is the Anglican Communion go, and what is the impact on us here in the Church of England?

First, as I have said, nothing we say is heard only by us. Secondly, we should rejoice in being part of this monumental challenge of this great quest, of this generational search for the prize of being a people who can hold unity and diversity and love in difference. It is almost unimaginably difficult and most certainly cannot be done except with a wholehearted openness to the Holy Spirit at work among us. It comes with prayer and us growing closer to God in Jesus Christ and nothing else is an effective substitute. There are no strategies and no plans beyond prayer and obedience.

Thirdly, the future of the Communion requires sacrifice. The biggest sacrifice is that we cannot only work with those we like and hang out with those whose views are also ours. Groups of like-minded individuals meeting to support and encourage each other may be necessary, indeed often are very necessary, but they are never sufficient. Sufficiency is in loving those with whom we disagree. What may be necessary in the way of party politics is not sufficient in what might be called 'the polity of the Church'.

In this Church of England we must learn to hold in the right order our calling to be one and our calling to advance our own particular position and seek our own particular views to prevail in the Church generally. Whether in England or around the world, we must speak the truth in love. In practice, that has to mean the discipline of meeting those with whom we disagree and listening to each other carefully and lovingly. It means doing that as much as when we meet with those with whom we do agree, whether it is during sessions of General Synod or other times. It means celebrating our salvation together and praying together to the God who is the sole source of our hope and future together. It means that even when we feel a group is beyond the pale for its doctrine or for its language about others or us, we must love.

Looking at my postbag, I know what a challenge that is. Love one another. Love your neighbour. Love your enemy. Who in the world is in none of these categories? All of

us prefer being with those whose tradition we know and in which we were brought up. I am as much part of that as anyone else here, but I have gained equally in my own walk with Jesus Christ through being willing to meet with others whose traditions I did not find sympathetic, and learning to be as transparent with them as I am with my closest friends. I have learnt as much from them as from anything else I have ever done.

For the practical future of the Communion, I have not called a Primates' meeting on my own authority, although I could, because I feel that it is necessary for the Anglican Communion to develop a 'collegial' model of leadership as much as it is necessary in the Church of England and I have, therefore, waited, for the end of the visits to provinces. If the majority view of the Primates is that such a meeting would be a good thing, one will be called in response. The agenda for that meeting will not be set centrally but from around the Primates of the Communion.

One issue that needs to be decided on, ideally by the Primates' meeting, is whether and, if so, when there is another Lambeth Conference. Contrary to rumour, it is certainly achievable, but the decision is better made together carefully than in haste to meet an artificial deadline of a year ending in "8". A Lambeth Conference is so expensive and so complex that we have to be sure that it is utterly worthwhile. It will not be imposed but be part of a collective decision. The underlying point to be established is how the Anglican Communion is led and what its vision is in the 21st Century in a post-colonial world. How do we reflect the fact that the majority of its members are in the global south? What is the role of the instruments of Communion, especially the Archbishop of Canterbury? What does that look like lived out in practice? These are great decisions that must be taken to support the on-going and uninterrupted work of ministering to a world in great need and in great conflict. Whatever the answer, it is likely to be very, very, very different from the past.

So the good news: the Communion exists and is doing wonderful things. The bad news is that there are great divisions and threats. I doubt one person in this room finds either of those that surprising. The challenge is that there is a prize of being able to develop unity and diversity and, also, with deeper and deeper ecumenical relations, to demonstrate the power of Christ to break down barriers and to provide hope for a broken world. We must grasp that challenge. It is the prize of a world seeing Christ loved and obeyed in his Church, a world hearing the good news of his salvation. So let us here in the Church of England, above all in its General Synod, be amongst those who take a lead in our sacrificial, truthful and committed love for the sake of Christ for His mission in His world. Thank you.

THE CHAIR *The Bishop of Manchester (Rt Revd David Walker)* took the Chair at 3.23 pm.

### **Legislative Business:**

#### **Draft Care of Churches and Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction (Amendment) Measure (GS 1919B)**

*The Chair.* We now come on to Legislative Business, Items 501 and then, potentially, 509, 510 and 502. For these items you will need GS 1919B, which is the draft Measure,

and GS 1919Z, which is the Report of the Steering Committee. There is also a financial comment on this item. You will find that at paragraphs 6 and 7 of the Financial Memorandum which is the Seventh Notice Paper. I am going to call upon the Dean of the Arches and Auditor as the Chair of the Steering Committee to move Item 501. He may speak for not more than ten minutes.

*The Dean of the Arches and Auditor (Rt Worshipful Charles George QC, ex officio):* I beg to move:

‘That the Synod do take note of this Report.’

Members of Synod, this Measure completed its revision stage last July and then stood committed to the Steering Committee in respect of its final drafting. There are now four drafting Amendments, three highlighted in bold type in GS 1919B, and there is also one omission which cannot be so highlighted. Each of the drafting amendments is explained fully in Annex A to GS 1919Z. I can assure members of Synod that all are very minor though necessary amendments. There are also two special amendments which will be the subject of separate votes if this take note motion is carried. I move that the Synod do take note of this Report.

*The Chair.* Thank you. This Item is now open for debate.

*Canon Tim Allen (St Edmundsbury and Ipswich):* Chairman, as a PCC member, as a DAC Chair and as a member of the Church Buildings Council, I have multiple and strongly felt reasons to desire simplification of the faculty system. In small, rural parishes like my own, churchwardens are overstretched so that simplification of faculty procedures would be very welcome. In some of the weaker parishes, a faculty and other church bureaucracy will be the last straw, the PCC will give up and the church will close.

As I think the Dean of the Arches would accept, this Measure is not a major piece of simplification. It is certainly not the ‘Great Reform Bill’ but there is one part of it, section 5 on ‘Powers to Prescribe Matters not Requiring a Faculty’, which could be really useful. Chair, I say “could be really useful” because its effectiveness would depend on the approach which the Rule Committee takes to drafting the detailed secondary legislation which will implement it. My fear is that the lawyer-dominated Rule Committee would be so legalist and cautious in its approach to exempting types of work on a church from the full and onerous faculty procedures that there will be little lightening of the load on hard-pressed PCCs and churchwardens.

I am very encouraged, Chairman, to see present on the podium Anne Sloman, who was until recently Chair of the Church Buildings Council, and, in the gallery, James Halsall, who is Secretary of the DAC which I chair in Suffolk. They are not lawyers but experienced practical church buildings people who have been appointed to join the Rule Committee when it is drafting the key A and B lists. If the Rule Committee follows their advice, all will be well.

Finally, Chairman, may I draw the Synod’s attention to the sub-section marked (h) on page 3 of the Measure which provides, “the sale or other disposal of any article of

architectural, archaeological, artistic or historic interest” should be subject to the full faculty procedure. This is most important because the sale of church treasures is likely to become an increasingly central and controversial subject in the period ahead. As the Church’s financial position at diocesan level and at parish level weakens and, in the light of some recent Chancellor’s judgments, allowing, for example, Benjamin West’s great painting from St Stephen’s, Walbrook, in the City of London to be sold for millions to America, it seems likely that there will be increasing pressure on the CBC to relax the present law and CBC policy on sale of treasures.

At present, these aim to prevent in most circumstances the sale on the open market of the artistic treasures which are held by churches, essentially, as trustees for the nation. There is a real danger, Chairman, that if the line against open market sales of treasures is not held by the CBC and by the Chancellors, there will be a tidal wave of exports of church treasures to rich museums in America and elsewhere, just as, between the Wars, lorry loads of treasures from English country houses were bought up by wealthy American collectors. It would be a national scandal if the Church of England authorities allowed this to occur at time when the general public has never been more interested in the history and artistic heritage of our churches. The CBC, its incoming Chair and its new supervising Bishop, face a heavy responsibility to hold the line. Thank you, Chair.

*The Chair.* I see no one standing. I, therefore, invite the Dean to reply to the debate. He has got ten minutes.

*The Dean of the Arches and Auditor (Rt Worshipful Charles George QC, ex officio):* A little less will do. I am grateful to Tim Allen for his, as usual, thoughtful contribution. I am sorry he does not regard this Measure as a ‘Great Reform Bill’. It is, in my view, a major step forward but, for the time being, it is sufficient simply to concentrate on the Special Amendments which are, as I have already indicated, very minor matters, and nothing in this Measure has anything whatever to do with the sale of treasures, the importance of which to the Church is appreciated by all concerned. I beg to move.

*The Chair.* Thank you. I now, therefore, put Item 501 to the vote.

*The motion*

*‘That the Synod do take note of this Report.’*

*was carried on a show of hands.*

*The Chair.* We therefore now move to the two Special Amendments that have been proposed by the Steering Committee which are set out on our Order Paper at Items 509 and 510. So I call upon the Dean of the Arches to move Item 509. Again, he has got ten minutes.

*The Dean of the Arches and Auditor (Rt Worshipful Charles George QC, ex officio):* A Special Amendment, as members will know, is an Amendment which is considered necessary or desirable either because the Measure is not sufficiently clear or because (as is the case with both proposed Special Amendments) a criticism has been brought to the attention of the Steering Committee which was not previously considered by



Synod or by the Revision Committee.

Synod members with a keen memory may recall that at the First Reading stage there was a suggestion from the floor of Synod that parishes should be able to permit the grazing of churchyards by livestock without the need for a faculty and this was repeated in a submission to the Revision Committee. Clause 5(1) of the Measure empowers the Rule Committee to prescribe a list of matters for both Provinces which do not require a faculty, but as the draft Measure presently stands it would not be possible for the Rule Committee so to prescribe in the case of grazing churchyards. This is because the proposed s.18B7(e) excludes, “any matter which would, if undertaken, affect the legal rights of any person”; and grazing, of course, would affect the legal rights both of the churchyard owner and of the grazier and of the incumbent.

Accordingly, so that the Rule Committee may have jurisdiction to prescribe (subject to conditions) the grazing of churchyards by livestock as a matter not requiring a faculty, the first Special Amendment adding a new Section 18B(7A) at page 3 of the draft Measure is needed. If the Special Amendment is carried, and if the Rule Committee does so prescribe, the likelihood is that the Rules would provide that any such grazing licence would need to be in a standard form previously approved by the registrar or chancellor which would adequately protect the rights of all concerned. Some of you may consider this to be a legal mouse but, whilst the faculty system is being modified and simplified, on behalf of the Steering Committee, I commend this small change to you.

*The Chair.* Thank you. This Item is now open for debate.

*Revd Simon Cawdell (Hereford):* I wish to thank the Steering Group very much for bringing this item forward. I raised the issue of grazing licences at first consideration and later submission and I am very grateful that they have gone into considerable detail in order to make the ecological management of our churchyards more possible. It is always good to see listening in action and, to be honest, I had no idea that in raising it I had strayed into so thorny a thicket. I am not sure I am quite so grateful to a diocesan colleague who suggested to me that this amendment demonstrates that Hereford Diocese is at the ‘cutting edge’ of churchyard technology!

Nonetheless, I have seen the benefit of grazing sheep on churchyards amounting to thousands of pounds a year in savings to hard-pressed PCCs in maintenance, and this amendment enables a clear and safe legal route for this to happen. I strongly commend the practice which, with the passage of this legislation, may happen with little or no legal cost. Simplification indeed, and thank you. Synod members may rejoice that in passing this Measure another historic moment will be achieved as across the nation’s churchyards sheep may safely graze.

*The Chair.* I see nobody else standing. I was told over lunch that apparently this excludes grazing by elephants and giraffes but sheep definitely are included! The Dean will now respond to the debate.

*The Dean of the Arches and Auditor (Rt Worshipful Charles George QC, ex officio):* I am glad to know we give pleasure to some and that Simon Cawdell is satisfied. As one

of the leading text books says: “If only incumbents would exercise the right of grazing they would often find a solution to the problem of the maintenance of the churchyard as well as deriving some small profit from the operation. One sensible incumbent,” the passage continues, “grazed his donkey in the churchyard tethering it by a long rope to a different tombstone each day.”

I beg to move the first special amendment.

*The Chair.* Thank you. We now move to voting on this item.

*The amendment was carried on a show of hands.*

*The Chair.* We now move on to Item 510 and again I invite the Dean to introduce the item with the usual speech limit.

*The Dean of the Arches and Auditor (Rt Worshipful Charles George QC, ex officio):* As some members of Synod may be aware, chancellors can, and not infrequently do, hear petitions where matters involving doctrine, ritual or ceremonial arise, whereas on appeal from the chancellor such esoteric theological issues are excluded from the jurisdiction of my courts, the Court of Arches and the Chancery Court of York, and they go instead to the Court of Ecclesiastical Causes Reserved, which comprises three bishops and two senior judges. Such appeals seldom occur, the last one being more than 25 years ago concerning the Henry Moore stone altar in St Stephen’s, Walbrook.

The second special amendment does not seek to alter the existing division of functions but solely clarifies that in deciding which appeal court has jurisdiction to hear the appeal the determinant is whether the appeal itself to any extent relates to matter involving doctrine, ritual or ceremonial rather than whether the initial petition so involved.

It sometimes happens, as indeed it did in an appeal heard by the Court of Arches in 2012, that while the original petition and hearing before the chancellor involved doctrine, ritual or ceremonial, the appellant makes it clear that the appeal solely relates to other matters. In such case there is clearly no justification for convoking a hearing of the Court of Ecclesiastical Causes Reserved and the matter can and should proceed before one or other of my own courts. All the second special amendment does is to clarify that this is what should occur, the existing legislation, the 1963 Measure and the 1991 Measure, being internally inconsistent. This is all set out in greater detail at pages 4 to 5 of GS 1919Z, but I would invite Synod to proceed on the basis that this special provision, whilst desirable and indeed necessary, is of a highly technical nature and will not in practice affect the way the system has operated in recent years.

On behalf of the Steering Committee I commend to you the second special amendment.

*The Chair.* Item 510 is now open for debate but I see no one standing. Mr Dean, do you wish to make any response? I do not think you need to. We then come to a vote on this item.

*The amendment was carried on a show of hands.*

*The Chair.* That now brings us to the final approval stage, Item 502.

*The Dean of the Arches and Auditor (Rt Worshipful Charles George QC, ex officio):* I beg to move:

‘That the Measure entitled “Care of Churches and Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction (Amendment) Measure” be finally approved.’

Can I just take Synod back to autumn 2012 when the Archbishops’ Council approved the recommendations of the Faculty Simplification Group which had been set up to review the operation of the faculty system and bring forward proposals for its simplification? The Simplification Group did this on the basis of widespread consultation, not merely with chancellors, registrars and DACs but also with parishes which had recent experience of how the faculty system worked. The Simplification Group reported that the system generally worked well but that there were some unnecessary complications. These complications, which led to unnecessary expense and delay, could be remedied in a way which would simplify the process from the point of view of parishes seeking to maintain and sometimes alter their buildings and churchyards and in a way which would overall reduce costs and delay. Some of these improvements were matters of good practice, achievable without legislation and, for example, a new on-line system for the making and processing of faculty petitions is to be introduced next February. Some were matters purely for the Rule Committee and we made a start on this with the Faculty Jurisdiction Rules 2013 which Synod approved with only one minor amendment in July 2013. Others of their recommendations however needed primary legislation and that is what this Measure is all about: to simplify and speed up the faculty processes. It is not, I fear, the end of the legislative process because if the Measure becomes law there will then be a need for further revisions to the Faculty Jurisdiction Rules to give effect to the provisions in this Measure. That delight is likely to be yours in July 2015, although work is already underway on the new rules which cannot be brought forward until the draft Measure comes into force.

At the heart of the new Measure is removal of unnecessary restrictions together with standardisation where this is sensible. Thus, for example, clause 4 of this Measure sweeps away the long-criticised restrictions on what can be done in disused burial grounds so that Church of England disused burial grounds come into line with those of other denominations.

Clause 1 sweeps away the separate diocesan guidance concerning trees in churchyards, replacing it with a single set of guidance from the CBC. At the heart of the draft Measure, as it was at the heart of the Simplification Group’s recommendations, is the new clause 5 sweeping away the old and inevitably inconsistent diocesan minor matters lists and replacing them with a standardised list (or more likely lists plural) of matters which whilst not necessarily so small as to be *de minimis* can properly be undertaken without the need for a full faculty petition and full notification procedures.

Many items will go on to the national list E, prescribed in new faculty rules, broadly replacing and extending the existing diocesan minor matters lists. Other matters will go on to list B which will require the approval of the relevant archdeacon after such

consultation as he considers appropriate with the DAC or its members or officers. This will replace the existing archdeacons' faculty jurisdiction.

The proposed new system has been subject to very widespread consultation and, as I told Synod in July, one of the most positive aspects is the understanding and co-operation the new proposals have received from archdeacons and from DACs.

There are other matters in the Measure, the widening of the membership of the Rule Committee under clause 3 to include for faculty purposes two DAC representatives, as referred to by Tim Allen earlier; an extension of the Dean and Auditor's powers to make interlocutory orders and to give directions in cases of excessive delay (clauses 9 and 7); and a power for diocesan bishops, after consultation with the Dean and Auditor, to extend the duration of office of a chancellor (clause 8). I earlier explained to you the content of two new special amendments.

Hitherto, the provisions of this Measure have proved for the most part uncontroversial and I now commend them to you for final approval. By approving this draft Measure you will ensure that the Simplification Group's work is carried forward to the benefit, we would hope, of parishes throughout both provinces.

*The Chair.* Item 502 is now open for debate.

*Revd Canon Simon Butler (Southwark):* Chair, in thanking the Dean and the Simplification Group for all their work, it caused me to pause to reflect upon the question of implementation rather than the question of simplification. Hard pressed archdeacons and many others who are responsible for the implementation of this legislation will be aware that there are a number of places in the Church of England, chiefly more recently the Diocese of Gloucester, where faculty applications are not always implemented correctly. It seems to me that it is quite important as we go through a process of simplification in the next few years that care is given to ensuring in the maximum possible way that parishes and PCCs can have access to information that helps them as greatly as possible in doing the right thing so that the messes that occur and that archdeacons spend so much time trying to sort out can be minimised. Perhaps in that respect the bracing judgments of the Chancellor of the Diocese of Gloucester might be called upon to provide an 'Idiot's Guide' to the application for faculties in the future.

*The Chair.* I see no one standing to speak. I therefore call upon the Dean to respond to the debate.

*The Dean of the Arches and Auditor (Rt Worshipful Charles George QC, ex officio):* It is very good to know that this Measure appears not to be controversial. I welcome Canon Butler's intervention. So far as implementation, the new on-line system will make it much simpler and also if people will go on to the CBC website they will find very simple and readily comprehensible guidance. The trouble is, as the Chancellor of Gloucester repeatedly says, you can summon people to meetings, you can be as clear as you like, but some people seem to go away with their ears closed. That being the sad position, we must merely hope for the future that the new system, which will be simpler, will not give rise to some of the problems which have arisen in the past. I beg to move.

*The Chair.* Thank you. Under Standing Order 36(c) the vote on the final approval of a Measure must be taken by division by Houses, unless I give permission and the Synod gives leave to dispense with that requirement. It is important to have accurate figures for the voting in each House on the final approval of a Measure so that these figures can be made available to the Ecclesiastical Committee and to both Houses of Parliament. I therefore order a division by Houses.

*The motion*

*‘That the Measure entitled “Care of Churches and Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction (Amendment) Measure” be finally approved.’*

*was carried after a division by Houses. The voting was as follows:*

	AYES	NOES
<i>Bishops</i>	17	0
<i>Clergy</i>	102	0
<i>Laity</i>	101	0

*One abstention was recorded in the House of Clergy.*

*The Chair.* The Care of Churches and Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction (Amendment) Measure now stands committed to the Legislative Committee. That concludes this item.

THE CHAIR *Mr Aiden Hargreaves-Smith (London)* took the Chair at 3.52 pm

## **Draft Church of England (Ecclesiastical Property) Measure (GS 1921B)**

*The Chair.* We come now to Item 503, the Draft Church of England (Ecclesiastical Property) Measure. This is a draft Measure for final drafting. Members will need the draft Measure GS 1921B and the report of the Steering Committee GS 1921Z. I now call upon the Ven Clive Mansell, Archdeacon of Tonbridge, the Chair of the Steering Committee, to move Item 503. He has up to ten minutes.

*Ven Clive Mansell (Rochester):* I beg to move:

*‘That the Synod do take note of this Report.’*

Chair, members of Synod, I shall be very brief. The Report of the Steering Committee describes a handful of very minor changes to this draft Measure, which either improve the drafting or take account of small points raised in Synod at the revision stage. You will see perhaps from the Report itself that the most notable of these is the change in the short title of the Measure. Members will see that the Agenda refers to the final approval motion of the “Ecclesiastical Property Measure”, omitting the words “Church of England”. This is to reflect a point made by Mr Clive Scowen and accepted by the Steering Committee following discussions with its legal advisers. I beg to move Item 503.

*The Chair.* Item 503 is now open for debate. I see no one standing, so I put Item 503 to the vote.

*The motion*

*‘That the Synod do take note of this Report’*

*was carried on a show of hands.*

*The Chair:* That concludes the final drafting stage and we now come to the final approval stage of the draft Measure. I call upon the Archdeacon of Tonbridge to move Item 504. Once again he has up to ten minutes.

*Ven Clive Mansell (Rochester):* I beg to move:

*‘That the Measure entitled “Ecclesiastical Property Measure” be finally approved.’*

Chair, I will take a little longer on this occasion to say a bit more about this draft Measure. Members of Synod, this short and technical Measure is the result of a Private Member’s Motion that the Revd Christopher Hobbs brought to Synod for debate in July 2012. It attempts to strike a balance between desirable deregulation of PCCs’ activities and ensuring that transactions are carried out in accordance with the law. The aim is to enable PCCs to manage their assets without unnecessary red tape while maintaining protection for PCCs which may lack the necessary resources and expertise to handle property transactions effectively and also protecting the wider Church against the risk that vesting land in PCCs could make it easier for assets to be lost to the Church of England. The Archbishops’ Council’s view of where that balance should be struck was slightly different from Mr Hobbs’s original proposal. Therefore the draft Measure before the Synod today does not exactly reflect the original Private Member’s Motion. Nevertheless, this draft Measure would not have been prepared but for the 2012 motion. It acknowledges that the present restrictions on PCCs are in places unnecessarily onerous and it is a modest addition to the agenda of simplification and removal of administrative burdens imposed by legislation on Church bodies.

The Measure makes a number of small changes to the Parochial Church Councils (Powers) Measure 1956 and to the Incumbents and Churchwardens (Trusts) Measure 1964, reducing the role of the diocesan authority in relation to property transactions carried out by the PCCs and by charitable trusts with incumbents and churchwardens as trustees. It extends the length of a lease that can be granted by a PCC without reference to the diocesan authority from one year to seven years, in line with general controls on disposal of charity land, and it removes the requirement for diocesan involvement in any decision by the PCC to bring legal proceedings, for example if it were necessary to evict a tenant for any reason.

The proposals contained in the Measure retain the requirement for the titled property to be vested in the diocesan authority but will remove the need for the authority’s consent in any case in which the consideration paid on the transaction falls below a threshold specified in an Order made by the Archbishops’ Council with the General Synod’s approval, and in such a case the diocesan authority will be required to take the

necessary legal steps to give effect to the transaction.

A number of amendments were proposed at the revision stage at the Revision Committee. Some of these were small amendments seeking to improve the drafting or clarify certain points, and those changes have been adopted. Others sought to make further substantial amendments to the 1956 Measure, removing the requirement for property to be invested in the diocesan authority. We had a very useful debate on that point in York in July. There were members of Synod who were anxious to remove the existing requirement for all property to be vested in the dioceses, which they perceived as a substantial burden on PCCs, but a number of concerns were expressed about the proposed amendment. These related in particular to the ability of some small PCCs, as well as many high street solicitors, to deal with complex issues of ecclesiastical and charity law without support from the diocese. After a good debate, all three Houses voted to retain the requirement for vesting in the diocesan authority. In my view, that was the right decision.

We believe that the draft Measure strikes a sensible balance between achieving a degree of deregulation and giving parishes great flexibility, while continuing to protect parishes against accidental or deliberate misappropriation of significant charitable funds. PCCs exercise their responsibilities not only within their local congregation but within their dioceses and the whole Church of England. Together we seek to support one another in the carrying out of those responsibilities.

An important point also made in the debate in July is that dioceses need to act in the best interests of parishes, responding promptly and effectively to requests for advice and assistance relating to transactions for which their consent is required. The Archbishops' Council acknowledged this and the need for additional guidance for dioceses and parishes to support them in fulfilling their respective responsibilities. The aim is for us together to operate processes that ensure proper accountability and responsibility without being so cumbersome that they drain energy away from the task of mission.

I commend to the Synod and move Item 504 'That the Measure entitled "Ecclesiastical Property Measure" be finally approved.'

*The Chair:* The motion on Item 504 is now open for debate. May I remind members that under Standing Order 61A the motions for the closure, the speech limit or next business are not in order in this debate, but I retain the discretion under Standing Order 21C to alter the normal speech limit of five minutes.

*Mrs Julie Dziegel (Oxford):* Chair, as I have mentioned to the Synod more than once, I have been involved in legal work for many different property transactions in my role as a parish treasurer. They have been interesting and dull, tedious and exciting, highly emotional and just poor paperwork, but there have been a lot of them and a lot of variety. The scout hut lease was definitely the worst. I believe the Ecclesiastical Property Measure before us for final approval today will relieve PCCs of a significant amount of tedious paperwork with shorter leases, legal proceedings over property such as those with troublesome tenants, and I have been there, and lower value property transactions. These transactions will still need legal assistance but PCCs will be able to

deal with them on their own with a suitable solicitor of their own choice. The diocesan authority will no longer need to be involved, making everything considerably simpler, in fact quite normal, and certainly easier for high street estate agents to understand.

However, for the higher value transactions and longer leases it will still be necessary to involve the diocesan authority which will ensure that the Church of England assets remain carefully used and protected. These transactions are rarer of course and more complex. With such transactions even larger PCCs have a lot of expertise and 30 or so fellow members of my PCC are a talented and committed bunch, but we still need legal advice with particular knowledge in charity and ecclesiastical law. In these circumstances, involving the diocesan authority's legal advisers is just sensible, not onerous. My only fear with this Measure is that budgeting constraints may make it tempting for dioceses to cease to provide assistance to PCCs regarding the property transactions in which the diocesan authority is no longer involved. I have hugely appreciated the advice and support of Caroline who represents my diocesan authority with the relatively straightforward licences to occupy, there have been lots of those, as well as the house purchase from a charitable trust which resulted in us acquiring an asset worth £75,000 more than we paid for it and the scout hut lease which nearly resulted in me losing my wits. I would urge dioceses to please continue to offer advice to PCCs with all sorts of property transactions, including perhaps having a list of solicitors with expertise in charity and ecclesiastical law as well as property law available on diocesan websites. It is important, though, that we do approve this Measure to reset the balance between efficient use and sensible control of the huge blessing that is our church property. Thank you.

*Mr Adrian Greenwood (Southwark):* I too want to welcome this piece of legislation which is very much in the mode of simplification which we are all in favour of. We have heard earlier about the fate of Private Member's Motions; I think we should record a deep vote of gratitude to Christopher Hobbs for bringing this forward as a Private Member's Motion and here we are at final approval.

For the record, could the Chair of the Steering Committee confirm again that the beneficial ownership of the property that we are talking about remains with the PCC?

The main part of the legislation is new clause 5A and this is the clause which allows a specified amount to be set for the consideration below which formal consent from diocese is not required. I wonder if the Chairman of the Steering Committee can tell us how negotiations are going to set that level and when a draft Order might be brought forward for approval, because that is, in a sense, what makes this new piece of legislation work. Thank you very much.

*The Chair:* I see no one else standing so I call on the Archdeacon to reply.

*Ven Clive Mansell (Rochester):* Thank you for those two contributions to the debate. Julie Dzeigel has been a great supporter of this draft Measure and brought to our discussions something of the background experience and wisdom you heard a bit about in her speech just now. I think she has been involved in more property transactions than many other ordinary PCC members and, I dare say, Synod members, and I am very grateful to her for that support. I think the two points she made involving diocesan



advisers is sensible and there is a lot of background knowledge and wisdom there which is really helpful and encouraging dioceses not through budgetary pressures to cut back on support they give to parishes around these areas is also a point well made.

Thank you, Adrian Greenwood, for your welcome for the legislation and your words of appreciation to Christopher Hobbs for bringing the original Private Member's Motion. Yes, the beneficial ownership of property remains with the PCC. This legislation does nothing to change the beneficial ownership at all. As to negotiating to set the level which will be prescribed in the Archbishops' Council's Order, I think that has got a way to go yet. I understand the Council is yet to set a timetable for producing a draft Order for consultation before it is laid before Synod but I think I want to try and emphasise those two points: there is a consultation to be involved in setting the appropriate levels and you may recall that in the debate in July we flagged up the fact that the relevant part of the draft legislation has a degree of flexibility to cover different sorts of transactions and maybe different geographical areas where the transactions are related to. So there will be consultation.

Secondly, it has to come before Synod so Synod itself collectively approves the proposed levels set out in the Archbishops' Council's Order, so Synod, whether it be ourselves or maybe at the end of the consultation process our successors at the start of the next quinquennium will be those who approve it for us. Thank you, Chair.

*The Chair:* Under Standing Order 36C the vote on the final approval of a Measure must be taken on a division by Houses unless I give permission and the Synod gives leave to dispense with that requirement. It is important to have accurate figures for the voting in each House on final approval so the figures can be made available to the Ecclesiastical Committee and both Houses of Parliament. I therefore order a division by Houses.

*The motion*

*'That the Measure entitled "Ecclesiastical Property Measure" be finally approved.'*

*was carried after a division by Houses. The voting was as follows:*

	AYES	NOES
<i>Bishops</i>	20	0
<i>Clergy</i>	75	0
<i>Laity</i>	90	0

*One abstention was recorded in the House of Laity.*

*The Chair:* The Ecclesiastical Property Measure now stands committed to the Legislative Committee. That ends this item of business. Thank you.

THE CHAIR *Canon Ann Turner (Europe)* took the chair at 4.12 pm

**Legislative Business:**  
**Draft Amending Canon No. 35 (GS 1964A)**

*The Chair:* Synod, we now turn to draft Amending Canon No. 35 (GS1964A). This Amending Canon contains only one paragraph and I invite the Chair of the Steering Committee, the Revd Robert Patterson, Bishop of Sodor and Man, to move Item 511.

*The Bishop of Sodor and Man (Rt Revd Robert Paterson):* I beg to move:

‘That paragraph 1 stand part of the Canon.’

I anticipate that this matter will feature on the front page of most newspapers tomorrow and innumerable synodical tweets. Canon B 12 paragraph 3 states: “No person shall distribute the holy sacrament of the Lord’s Supper to the people unless he” - or she - “shall have been ordained ... or is otherwise authorized by Canon or unless he has been specially authorized to do so by the bishop acting under such regulations as the General Synod may make from time to time”. The Synod gave its support to the Southwell and Nottingham Diocesan Synod Motion at the November 2012 group of sessions that would allow decisions to be taken at a local level as to who may be authorized to administer the Sacrament. Provided the bishop agrees, the decision could be taken in future by the incumbent priest in charge or (during a vacancy) rural dean, with the support of the PCC or in the case of a school Eucharist where it is desired to authorize a child to administer communion with the support of the head teacher.

The method of achieving this is to amend Canon B 12, paragraph 3 by way of amending Canon No. 35 and then subsequently to amend the regulations specified in that paragraph. This Amending Canon makes this minor change to paragraph 3 of Canon B 12, which I have just read, by removing the reference to the bishop being the only person who may authorize individuals to distribute the Holy Communion. No proposals for amendment of the Canon were received by the Revision Committee.

If you approve this amendment, once it takes effect, this Synod may amend the regulations to provide for authorization to be given by individuals other than the bishop. Until the Canon B 12 is amended, regulations can be in draft form only. Just three suggestions for the amendment of the illustrative regulations were sent to the Legal Office. These suggestions are being considered and will be put to the House of Bishops in due course. If the Amending Canon is made, the Synod will of course have the opportunity to scrutinise draft regulations before they are made and will therefore be able to debate the substantive issues further at that time if it so desires. I beg to move that paragraph 1 stand part of the Canon.

*The Chair:* The motion on Item 511 is now open for debate. I remind members that the subject of this debate is the Amending Canon and not the regulations proposed to be made under it.

*Mr Clive Scowen (London):* This has been prompted by the Bishop's reference to the regulations and three representations that were made. Could he clarify for us that the time has not expired for making any representations that folk might want to make on those regulations and that any further representations that are sent in will be considered and perhaps the date by which that should be done?

*Revd Hugh Lee (Oxford):* One of the wonderful features of the legislative package for Women in the Episcopate was that the whole package was worked out and presented to us at once. Now I can see why sometimes that is difficult, but that is what caused or was one of the reasons for causing the previous package to fail, because people said they could not see it all at once. Can we have some way in which, in general, the norm will be for us to be given the whole package at once rather than this piecemeal process which means that we are in the dark about what we are voting for?

*The Chair:* I see no one else standing. I therefore ask the Bishop to reply.

*The Bishop of Sodor and Man (Rt Revd Robert Paterson):* The answers to the two questions are fairly simple. Yes, Mr Scowen, you may continue to make representations on the regulations. The House of Bishops in December will consider them and again in May, but the ideal would be for you to get any recommendations you might wish to make in by December.

The answer to Mr Lee's question is that is the way it is done and if you want to change the system, then you must change the system, but we can only work with the system as it is.

*The motion*

*'That paragraph 1 stand part of the Canon.'*

*was carried on a show of hands.*

That completes the revision stage for draft Amending Canon No. 35. The Steering Committee has indicated by a notice on the second notice paper that it considers a final drafting stage to be unnecessary and that Item 506 will not be moved. Therefore the draft Amending Canon now stands referred to the House of Bishops under Article 7 of the Constitution of the General Synod. That concludes this item of business.

THE CHAIR Mr Geoffrey Tattersall (Manchester) took the chair at 4.21 pm

## **Legislative Business:**

### **Draft Scheme Amending the Diocese in Europe Constitution 1995 (GS 1968)**

*The Chair:* Colleagues, we come now to Item 508, the draft Scheme Amending the Diocese in Europe Constitution 1995. For this members will need the scheme itself, GS 1968, and the explanatory memorandum, GS 1968X. We have one approval motion, Item 508. I call the Bishop of Gibraltar in Europe to move Item 508 standing in his

name.

*The Bishop of Gibraltar in Europe (Rt Revd Robert Innes):* I beg to move:

‘That the draft scheme amending the Diocese in Europe Constitution 1995 be approved.’

Mr Chairman, it had not been my intention to try to break the record for the shortest period between introduction as a new member of this Synod and making a maiden speech, but in scheduling this item at this point the Business Committee appears to have at least put me in the running.

It falls to me as the new diocesan bishop to bring to this Synod two sets of amendments to the constitution of the Diocese in Europe which have been approved by our diocesan synod and which now require the approval of this Synod. Often it would not be necessary to detain the Synod with such matters, only that the nature of the proposed changes is such that an affirmative vote is required in the General Synod before they can take effect.

Synod members will no doubt recall that two important items of legislation were given final approval at the July group of sessions earlier this year. I am referring specifically to the Church Representation Rules (Amendment) Resolution and draft Amending Canon No. 32. The reason for the proposed changes to the constitution of the Diocese in Europe is very simply to bring the Diocese’s constitution into line with the law as it now stands and so to ensure that it accurately reflects the current position as it exists in other dioceses of the Church of England.

Members will have considered the terms of the draft scheme contained in GS 1968 as well as the helpful comments from the Legal Office in GS 1968X.

Let me now touch briefly on the amendments contained in paragraphs 1 and 2 of the schedule to the draft scheme which is on the back page of GS 1968.

When it is enacted the effect of a paragraph 1(4) of Amending Canon No. 32 will be to remove from Canon H 2 the current limitation on the number of proctors in the Lower House of the Convocation of Canterbury to be elected from the Diocese in Europe which is currently set at two. In a similar vein the effect of paragraph 3 of the Church Representation Rules (Amendment) Resolution 2014 will be to remove from Rule 36 of the Church Representation Rules the current limitation, which is also set at two, on the number of members of the House of Laity of the General Synod to be elected from the Diocese in Europe. This means that from the beginning of the next quinquennium the representation of the Diocese in Europe Synod will be calculated on the same basis as other English dioceses. In other words, the number of persons to be elected from the Diocese in Europe will be not fewer than three laity and three proctors. As a matter of principle, the diocese will be in no better and no worse position than any other diocese. The constitution of the diocese reflects the historical position and so currently provides specifically for the election of two clerical and two lay representatives.

Paragraphs 1 and 2 of the schedule of the scheme before you now are therefore

intended simply to bring the constitution in line with the revised Canon H 2 and the amended Church Representation Rules by removing that limitation.

Turning now to paragraph 3 of the Scheme, Synod members may be aware that there is no absolute requirement in the Diocese in Europe to have deanery synods. Rather, for a variety of reasons, an archdeaconry can have either an archdeaconry synod or deanery synods and in fact of six of our seven archdeacons in the diocese there is an archdeaconry synod. Under the terms of the diocese's constitution, membership of the Houses of Clergy of both archdeaconry and deanery synods is confined to licensed clergy. Thus, clergy with permission to officiate are not currently eligible for membership of an archdeaconry synod or, where they exist, a deanery synod.

These provisions in the diocese's constitution are inconsistent with the position in the rest of the Church of England and the proposed amendment at paragraph 3 of the scheme is intended to remedy that inconsistency and regularise the position.

Now just to complete the picture, I should remind members that Canon H 2.4(e) provides those eligible to vote in proctorial elections to the Convocations include "clerks in holy orders who are members of a deanery synod and have written permission from the bishop of the diocese to officiate within that diocese". Canon H 2.5 further provides that amongst those eligible to stand in proctorial elections are clergy who "would have been elected to vote under paragraph 4(e) of Canon H 2.4 had they been members of a deanery synod". With the agreement of the diocese in Europe, the Revision Committee for the synodical government legislation made amendments to Amending Canon No. 32 altering the effect of Canon H 2.4(e) so that, in relation to the Diocese in Europe, it referred to clergy with PTO elected to the deanery or archdeaconry synod. The Revision Committee made a corresponding amendment to Canon H 2.5. All these amendments were incorporated in the Amending Canon in the form in which it was finally approved by the Synod at the July group of sessions.

These amendments could not, however, in themselves provide a full answer to the difficulty I have just described. Paragraph 3 of the Scheme before you addresses that problem. Its effect is to amend the composition of both archdeaconry and deanery synods in the Diocese in Europe, so that both will include not only all the licensed clergy serving in the archdeaconry or deanery but also clergy with permission to officiate, resident or worshipping in the deanery, elected from such clergy on a proportionate basis in the same way that clergy with PTO are elected to deanery synods in any other diocese.

The effect of paragraph 3 will therefore be to bring the position of clergy with PTO in the Diocese in Europe into line with the position of such clergy in other dioceses so far as voting and standing in elections to the Lower House of the Convocation of Canterbury are concerned.

Synod members may have some sympathy with me if I hint that I might not have chosen to make my maiden speech on such a technical, legal matter. However, I am very happy to be able to bring to the Synod this latest example of the ways in which the Diocese in Europe has been actively working for some time now to ensure that ecclesiastical law is comprehensively applied to the fullest possible extent throughout

our diocese, both in principle and in practice. Given that we are active in 50 different national, legal jurisdictions, that can be something of a challenge to say the least, but we are committed to fulfilling our responsibilities to the wider Church just as we are committed to making a significant and distinctive contribution to the life of the Church of England from the unique perspective and experiences of Europe.

In commending the scheme to the Synod, may I simply reiterate that its objectives are to remove inconsistencies and to ensure congruity so that the relevant provisions of the law will have the same practical effect in the Diocese in Europe as they do in other dioceses.

Chair, I formally move the motion at Item 508 standing in my name, that the draft scheme amending the Diocese in Europe Constitution 1995 be approved.

*The Chair:* Bishop, we noted your rapid movement during the course of the afternoon. Thank you very much indeed. Item 508 is now open for debate.

*Canon Dr Jamie Harrison (Durham):* It is a particular pleasure to support this draft scheme, not least because my good friend, the Bishop of Gibraltar in Europe has given his maiden speech in this area. He cut his teeth at Cranmer Hall and in Durham and I was the GP in the parish where he was the vicar, so we go back a long way. I think what was surprising in the summer, for those of you who remember the debate in July, was certain consternation, not least amongst those representing the Diocese in Europe, in relation to these proposed changes.

It seems important to make the point here that many of us did welcome the increase from two to three in both representation of clergy and laity from the diocese. In a sense, this is clarifying something which was an anomaly and those speeches which were trying to derail this process seemed, to my mind, somewhat unfair, if appropriate to ask the question. For this draft scheme, should we receive it (and we are asked to do so), it brings back to us proper participation and engagement, not least for those with permission to officiate in the diocese, as well as representing laity, as we have heard, across many nations. In that sense, it is good to see some flexibility, fairness and common sense at work in the Synod and we should take note of that.

Also, the scheme reminds us how much we are integral here in this body and in the Church of England in relation to the Diocese of Gibraltar in Europe with its many branches and connections. I have certainly valued worshipping over the last few years in Brussels, in Budapest, in Cannes and we know the diocese goes on to Vladivostok. Of course, the places of worship include a mixture of local people, people visiting, people on tourist trips, passing through for a year or two, or finding that is their place of long-term worship and residence. In a time when we see so much suspicion in our nation, not least in our relationships to the European Union, it seems helpful that we should be welcoming and debating this matter today. We are not allowed to amend it, but only ask that we would vote with confidence and with significant support to this amended constitution.

*The Chair:* I see nobody else standing. Bishop, would you like to respond?

*The Bishop of Gibraltar in Europe (Rt Revd Robert Innes):* I would simply like to thank Dr Jamie Harrison for his comments. We are certainly used to flexibility in the application of the law to our very different contexts and we look forward to welcoming him to worshipping in other of our locations in the future.

*The motion*

*‘That the draft scheme amending the Diocese in Europe Constitution 1995 be approved.’*

*was carried on a show of hands.*

THE CHAIR *Mr Geoffrey Tattersall (Manchester)* took the Chair at 4.36 pm.

## **GUIDELINES FOR THE PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT OF THE CLERGY (GS 1970)**

*The Chair.* Synod, we move seamlessly to Item 5, Guidelines for the Professional Conduct of the Clergy, and a ‘take note’ debate. Synod will recognise that this is a draft revision of document GS 1970 prepared by the Convocations. It is, therefore, not a Synodical document and the Synod’s role on this occasion is to take note of the Guidelines and to comment on them before they return to the Convocations for possible further revision. With that introduction, I call upon the Venerable Christine Hardman, Prolocutor of the Convocation of Canterbury, to speak to the motion and she may have up to ten minutes.

*Ven Christine Hardman (Southwark):* I beg to move:

*‘That the Synod do take note of this Report.’*

In July 2003 my predecessor as the Canterbury Prolocutor, Canon Hugh Wilcox, brought before Synod a new document entitled, ‘Guidelines for the Professional Conduct of the Clergy’. The 2003 Guidelines were the result of three years’ very hard work by a Joint Committee of the Convocations, chaired by Hugh himself. I feel privileged to be standing before you today to introduce the draft revised Guidelines document GS 1970, which is itself the fruit of much painstaking work over the past four years by a Joint Convocations Working Party with Stephen Trott as its Secretary and David Houlding as its Chairman. I would like to set on record my thanks to David, Stephen and the whole group, whose task has perhaps been longer than they might have expected when they took it on.

The draft Guidelines before us now are not a completely new document; they are a revision of the 2003 version. From the start, it was recognised that the Guidelines would need to be kept under review and amendments brought forward as necessary from time to time. In introducing the earlier draft to General Synod in July 2003, Canon Hugh Wilcox stressed that the Guidelines were not legislation and could never be the last word on the subject. The document should always be a live document not one set in stone.

The Working Party set up by the Joint Convocations in January 2010 to undertake a revision of the 2003 document was clear about the desire to preserve and honour the principles underlying the original Guidelines. In particular, there was a determination to keep the essential essence of the Guidelines as being based not on canon or ecclesiastical law but on the Ordinal itself. Dr Francis Bridger in his “Theological Reflection” (which I urge you to read if you have not done so) shows us the need to have a theology of professionalism which is rooted in vocation. We should not allow the word ‘professional’ to be hijacked by those who would see it as managerialism or a list of competencies. Dr Bridger refers us back to look at the proper meaning of ‘to profess’, ‘to make profession’. These Guidelines are rooted in an understanding of what it means to be a deacon, priest or bishop in a theology of vocation. The Guidelines are not a rule book, but they express an aspiration for the very highest standards to be expected of those who serve as deacons, priests and bishops in the House of God.

At the same time as preserving the principles of the Guidelines, there was, of course, a recognition of the urgent need to take account of the changing context in the world and in the Church.

Since 2003 there has been a lot of change. With the introduction of Common Worship, the Ordinal itself has seen changes. In society generally we have a greatly increased awareness of the need for rigorous safeguarding policies and frameworks in all our institutions. In just the last decade the use of the internet and social media has changed our landscape. In the Church we now have the Clergy Discipline Measure and the significant changes brought in by the Ecclesiastical Offices (Terms of Service) Measure. Most importantly of all, as a Church we are having to learn from past failures and commit to doing our very best to ensure that our safeguarding policies and systems are as robust as they can be.

In the light of all this, one of the areas that the Working Party has paid most attention to is safeguarding, as it was very conscious of the importance of reflecting best practice in this crucial area. The draft before you takes account of expert input from professional staff working in this area. In addition, there will be a further meeting of the Working Party to take account of the points raised in this debate, and the Chairman of the Working Party assures me that representatives of Minister and Clergy Sexual Abuse Survivors will be invited to attend that meeting.

Closely related to all this is Section 3 of the draft entitled ‘Reconciliation’, which touches on the sensitive area of the absolute confidentiality of the Confessional. The Working Party was well aware of the tensions between the traditional understanding of the absolute confidentiality reflected in the Canons and the responsibility of the Church to protect children and vulnerable adults from harm. Indeed, both the Chichester Report and Archbishop Sentamu’s Preface to the Cahill Report raise the issue of the Confessional.

It is really important to remember that the Guidelines can only express the law as it currently stands. The Guidelines cannot change Canon Law, but what the Working Party has done is to take advice from the legal officers of the Synod and done its very best to reflect the legal position as it stands in a way it believes is more helpful than the



2003 version.

Most importantly, you will see that Section 3 is qualified by a note referring to the decision of the Archbishops' Council in September to initiate further theological and legal work on the relevant Canon governing the ministry of absolution in consultation with the House of Bishops. This decision is outlined more fully in GS Misc 1085, which is attached as an appendix to the draft Guidelines before you. My fellow Prolocutor, Cherry Vann, and I, who are both members of the Council, wholeheartedly support this further work and believe it must proceed as a matter of urgency.

Earlier in this speech, I said that I felt privileged to be standing before you to introduce these draft revised Guidelines. This is why I feel that. Even though the revision has had its challenges, the Guidelines are just too important to be quietly consigned to history because it is difficult. The Guidelines are important for the clergy themselves, the Church as a whole and for our standing in the society in which we minister. Our clergy deserve to have clarity about what is expected of them in terms of the highest standards of ministry and to which, of course, regard may be had in any disciplinary proceedings. They deserve clarity. Society as a whole now expects all professions to be open to scrutiny and to be accountable. We need to be open to such scrutiny or we damage our mission and ministry in this country. The Church itself needs something like these Guidelines because, as Dr Francis Bridger notes, the misconduct of one minister is not just a matter for that minister but reflects upon the standing of the Church and affects the trust people can place in the Church as a whole. Members of the Working Party will be listening very carefully to the comments made in this debate, and I particularly hope that we will be hearing some speeches from lay members of this Synod because the greatest impact of the conduct of the clergy is on those whom they serve.

I, accordingly, move the motion standing in my name and ask Synod to take note of the Guidelines. The next step would be for the Working Party to take account of comments made in this debate before, hopefully, bringing them back to the Convocations next year so they can approve a final version for publication.

*The Chair.* This matter is now open for debate.

*Revd Mark Ireland (Lichfield):* Can I draw your attention please to paragraph 2.2 under Pastoral Care? Just by way of introduction, can I just express our warm thanks to the Working Party who have not only worked very hard but also, I think, listened very hard to points that were raised at Convocation in July and we are very grateful for that. But there is an area that I am still uncomfortable about in paragraph 2.2, which is this:

“In their ministry, pastoral care and working relationships, the clergy should offer equal respect and opportunity to all”.

Now that sounds a little bit like motherhood and apple pie, what could be controversial there? But look at the next sentence:

“They should be unbiased in their exercise of pastoral care and be seen to be impartial, especially when providing pastoral care to one party in a dispute between two or more

people”.

I have been in parish ministry for 30 years and, like probably every other priest in this room, I have been drawn into situations where there has been a conflict between two members of the congregation or two people in the community. Sometimes in that dispute it is the gospel thing to do to take sides, because in the Ordinal we are called to be shepherds to tend the flock that is committed to our charge (as it says in 1 Peter). Part of that tending the flock is particularly to look out for the weak and for the vulnerable.

I can think of a situation that I had to deal with where one church member was taking another church member to law in a way that seemed to me entirely vexatious and ridiculous and bullying and the other church member was in weak health and elderly, and, in that situation, to simply say, ‘I am not going to get involved, I am going to be impartial’, would have been neglecting my Gospel duty to challenge that behaviour which was not in accordance with the Gospel. The person concerned whose behaviour I challenged was very angry with me, said I was taking sides and sadly left the Church, but I believe it was the right thing to do.

If we leave this wording unamended, then it surely gives an opportunity for such a vexatious person in the future, if they have read the Guidelines for the Clergy, to take out a CDM against a minister who may actually be speaking out for the weak against the strong. Exercising discipline is part of the responsibility that we are given as priests and shepherds in God’s Church and it would be very sad if we produced some Guidelines that actually make it harder to do what is one of the hardest and most difficult parts of our work, and yet a good shepherd surely is called to look out for the weak and guard them against those who would bully them. Thank you.

*Revd Philip North (London):* I want to speak about the confidentiality of the Confessional and urge us to think very carefully before jumping into any action that might alter current practice as described in these Guidelines. I speak purely from experience. I worked for six years at Walsingham, a place where Sacramental Confession is integral to the ministry. I have read hundreds, probably thousands, of confessions, many of them from people I did not know, many from young people, many bringing major issues and problems in their lives. I have never once heard a perpetrator of child abuse or, indeed, of any serious crime confess that crime in the box. I have, however, on countless occasions found that the utter secrecy of the Confessional has provided the safe space where survivors of abuse can speak about their experiences often for the first time.

It is a place where a suitably trained priest can explore the feelings of guilt or shame that being a victim can evoke. It is often a place where the journey to healing can begin and it is so because it is confidential. Once the seal of the Confessional is gone in one area it is gone for good. If one is duty-bound to disclose crime when confessed by a perpetrator, surely one must also similarly be bound to disclose it when confessed by a victim? And then to guard against a remote contingency, an invaluable pastoral tool will have been lost. I would urge that certain steps are taken before we reach a decision on this.

First, we need to be sure that there is, in fact, a problem to solve here. Are there cases when abuse has continued because a priest has failed to disclose something heard in the Confessional? Second, we need to listen to those who celebrate the sacrament, penitents and confessors, and so understand it fully, or there is a danger that decisions are made by lawyers, theoreticians and those whose ecclesiastical tradition means that this is not a practice they especially understand. Third, and above all, we need to hear the voices of survivors who have found the Confession to be the place where they could recall profoundly traumatic experiences, a place where healing could begin. We must hear those voices.

I am at times infuriatingly obsessive about safeguarding. I am trained to within an inch of my life and I raise it constantly. I value safeguarding so highly because I know at least something of the profound life-long, psychological and emotional damage that abuse inflicts. I know that simply because I have so often been shaken to the core of my being by the traumas recounted to me in the Confessional. It is a place where people can speak. We must think very carefully before we lose this precious gift.

We still have huge amounts of hard work to do on safeguarding as a Church. Good practice still varies too much from parish to parish. It can be too easy for a parish to adopt a diocesan policy without examining the full implications. There is an important debate to be had about whether we should centralise safeguarding provision or continue to allow each diocese to have its own policies and staff. I fear that in a desire to be seen to act, by diluting or abolishing the seal, we may lose something which can offer genuine support and care to those who are living with the consequences of this terrible crime.

This is my final speech to Synod and so it will be up to you to make this decision, but please, please do not rush into something that we may later very deeply regret.

*Mrs Mary Johnston (London):* We have here distilled clerical expertise from a range of experienced practitioners, their collective know-how pooled, revised, scrutinised and revisited over four years. After four years of hard effort and expense in response to a serious need, it is high time for action. I hope you will take note of this Report.

When I joined the Working Party only recently, and finding the draft basically complete, I decided to approach it from the standpoint of how clergy conduct affects lay people. Now about confidentiality, understandably attention is now focused on Sacramental Confession. It is a rarity in our Church but, nonetheless, a valued pastoral resource, as Philip North has just outlined to us so vividly. That is to be a subject of a specific review and you have got the details of that in GS Misc 1085. Far more common are the informal conversations when individuals confide in the clergy, looking for pastoral support or guidance, grateful to unburden their hearts with all manner of personal troubles, including serious wrong-doing.

These confidences uttered outside the formality of the Confessional also have to be treated with wisdom and discretion, not shared with anyone without very good reason. In our contemporary culture, social media encourages a breath-taking lack of privacy in everyday life and a careless lack of discretion which can wreck lives. As it increasingly becomes the norm to reveal to the world the minutiae of young and not so young

personal lives, it may become necessary to teach ordinands not just the need for confidentiality but actually what it means to be discreet.

I hope clergy reading these Guidelines will pause to ponder over Section 1 about their calling. Most clergy are in positions of leadership. They will be in charge. As Francis Bridger sets out so succinctly in his reflection, “Sole leadership can all too easily slip into dominance”. But the clerical role model is not managerial, not a project manager and certainly not a managing director. As Mark Ireland has reminded us just now, it is a shepherd and, even in biblical times, shepherding hardly ranked as high status. The model is one of humility, of diligence, care and kindness, with plenty of scope for quiet contemplation. Wherever clergy exhibit these qualities, as they so often do, it is both a wonderful witness and a huge source of encouragement to the rest of us.

Sadly, we do hear too often of some clergy behaving very differently, not so much towards lay people but to their fellow clergy, banding in cliques; ignoring, even ostracising, outsiders; ridiculing some other priests; making tasteless cruel jokes about others; all this and more with a degree of rudeness which, frankly, appals lay people who sooner or later learn about these incidents from bruised recipients. Of course, such behaviour is not the norm and we are blessed with countless good caring shepherds. But instances of clergy being unkind to one another has a dreadful impact on lay people. Most are bewildered and dismayed. Some walk away in disgust. But the process reminded me how sacrificial are the entire lives of our priests and ministers for their willing response to God’s call and their exceptional dedication in a challenging environment, we must all be grateful. So, thank you, clergy, all of you.

*The Chair:* Bishop of Durham to speak for five minutes.

*The Bishop of Durham (Rt Revd Paul Butler):* I want to speak primarily in my role as co-chair of our Joint Safeguarding work with the Methodist Church. I am deeply grateful to the Working Group for the way in which they listened very carefully to the input from our previous National Safeguarding Adviser, Elizabeth Hall, and others in the production of these Guidelines. This means that they are hugely better than the 2003 Guidelines in regard to safeguarding matters. I am also very grateful to the Working Group and the two Prolocutors for the way that they responded behind the scenes to the continuing concerns around the question of the Confessional and the 1603 Canon.

I endorse everything Father North said, plus everything that survivors who tell a different story say, which is why we need to do a thorough review. This has led to the inclusion of the note and the GS Misc at the close of the document, which, in turn, mean, Synod, I am fully supportive of Synod taking note of these Guidelines. Without the note and the GS Misc I may not have been able to say that. They are not perfect, indeed they probably never can be; however, they are so much better, not just in relation to safeguarding, that we would be foolish not to take note of them at this stage.

There are adjustments that can be made without too much difficulty following this debate through the Working Party considering points made today and meeting with survivors through MACSAS to address some of their continuing concerns. For example, in Section 2 there is a failure to address the important question of power relationships, but actually 12.2 does speak about this, so some judicial cross-

referencing within the document would strengthen it without needing any major rewriting. There is still a concern about clergy colluding with one another for mutual protection which should be addressed. The duty to report abuse (not only sexual) can also be clarified further with some relatively simple rewording.

I also think that a paragraph on clergy responsibility, to help the PCC and Church congregation understand that the whole community has a responsibility in ensuring that the Church is a safe place for all, would be a useful addition in Section 2. This would make it clear to all that the responsibility is not only that of the clergy. In Sections 2 and 5 some reflection on the Code of Practice for general practitioners could be useful both in relation to safeguarding and to the healing and deliverance ministry.

My final point would be to also check whether or not the Guidelines are adequate when clergy themselves are subject to abuse, as does on occasions happen. What is the professional conduct of clergy when they find themselves the subject of abuse?

One small further point not related to safeguarding will be in 4.6 to say 'schools and colleges', not just schools. This would ensure sixth form and further education colleges are not lost from our sights in these Guidelines.

I hope that Synod will take note of this excellent piece of work and look forward to some helpful final revisions before I trust the Convocations adopt them next year.

The Chair imposed a three minute speech limit.

*Mrs Anne Martin (Guildford):* I just want to pick up under "Mission" on page 11 of the Guidelines, 4.5, which says: "The clergy should recognise, affirm and encourage the ministry and witness of lay people in their workplaces and communities." I appreciate the acknowledgement of the importance of lay mission within their workplaces and their communities, but as this is written it implies that that is where the mission of the laity lies. I would much rather that it said quite clearly that clergy "should recognise, affirm and encourage the ministry and witness of lay people", whether that could just be altered by adding "including" or "recognising the work in workplaces" or a separate "and recognising their role in their workplaces and their communities", that could be sorted, but I think it is important that it is in the document that the clergy recognise the ministry of lay people.

*Mr Tim Hind (Bath and Wells):* Following on from that theme, I think it is quite clear that a lot of this document has been written in a context and the context is to give guidelines to clergy, which is wonderful, and I want to affirm this document. It is well written and I think that the way in which it is constructed is good. But it is very much when it comes to the laity what clergy do to the laity: they affirm the laity, they support the laity, they do this and that. We are moving into different times now where we will be expecting a larger amount of collaborative ministry, and if that is the case then it has to be also inclusive of words that subtly change the language so we can talk about how the laity support the clergy, how the laity affirm the clergy in their role and how the work that the laity do and the clergy do together forms a whole. I would like to see some subtle changes. If we are going to change the way in which collaboration works, we have got to change the language that describes it.

*Revd Paul Benfield (Blackburn):* I would like to ask the Working Group to have another look at paragraphs 11.7 and 11.8. This is the section dealing with a case of clergy marriage breakdown. I am a little concerned in paragraph 11.8 where it suggests that clergy should contact their bishop. In what capacity are they approaching their bishop; as pastor or as someone who may have to exercise discipline over them? It does seem to me rather a crucial point there. It is perhaps made worse by the introduction of the word “therefore” as the third word of 11.8, because it seems to relate back to taking legal advice as though contacting the bishop might in some way be a substitute for that. I think perhaps there could be a better drafting of that area, please.

*Mrs Anne Foreman (Exeter):* As a lay person, it is with some trepidation that I speak on these Guidelines, specific as they are to the clergy. Nevertheless, since the Guidelines refer to their being offered to clergy “and all who share in their ministry” then I will cast trepidation aside and say my piece.

The Foreward to these Guidelines speak of them as “a source of counsel, advice and comfort” and I sincerely hope they are that, though I think I have some reservation about paragraph 2 which I think more logically belongs elsewhere. It is about having guidelines and mentioning disciplinary procedures in the same document.

On a first reading, two things struck me. First, I was really glad that the Guidelines are rooted in the Ordinal which, as someone who has the privilege of participating in ministerial development reviews, is helpful and fits since in Exeter Diocese ministerial development reviews take the Ordinal as their focus.

Second, although the Foreward, as I said, speaks about these Guidelines as a source of counsel, advice and comfort, I really wonder if they will be received as such or whether they will feel either somewhat weighty, and hence another task for our hard-working clergy, particularly those who are not part of a team, or is the content so obvious as to be put to one side? This, after all, is the vocation of our clergy.

I appreciate that the updating of the Guidelines reflects in part the necessary changed approach to the issues of safeguarding, but no amount of guidelines, however carefully formed, will make incompetent people competent or will make those with an unsafe motive safe. I think the laity has a real responsibility to step up here, as touched on in paragraph 14, to support our clergy and play its part in ensuring that they are free to exercise their priestly ministry with confidence and trusting in their own judgment.

I should like to take this opportunity to say a heartfelt thank you to the exceptional men and women who make up the clergy of the Church of England. You are appreciated and valued.

I wonder if the Working Group would consider whether these guidelines should be made available much earlier in the discernment process to potential ordinands.

Lastly, I wanted to say how pleased I was to see the word “appropriate” used in the Guidelines in paragraph 2.7 because sometimes, as I know from my own experience in working with young people, the only appropriate response is an arm around the

shoulders or indeed a hug, and it would be a sorry state of affairs if anxiety about guidelines prevents this simple human response.

*The Chair.* Mr Martin Sewell to make a maiden speech.

*Mr Martin Sewell (Rochester):* At the start of this month I retired after 30 years working in child protection, so I am fairly versed on the dark side of what we are talking about when we discuss safeguarding. As I look at principle 12.5 about the breaching of confidentiality in here, I am very sensitive to it because on one occasion I have had to do it myself. Lawyers and doctors do have to break confidences in the interests of child protection.

One of the features of my practice has been that we found out what child protection was about 30 years ago with the Butler-Sloss Inquiry. It was a superb piece of work. Since then we have had 30 child death reports because we keep on making the same basic errors. People who are in the police or in the social services, the lawyers, all sorts of professionals, go to multiple meetings and make the same errors time and time again.

The strength of a system - we have good leadership, we have good structures, we have good systems going - lies in the weakest link, and that is the most inexperienced. What I see here is that when a priest has concern that he may have to breach confidence, he "should discuss it with the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser". I do not think that is good enough. This is not the occasion on such a vital issue for 'amateur hour'. Almost certainly most of the priests who will be making these decisions will have some knowledge but will have not had the experience of the transient, the predatory, the highly manipulative abuser. The least we can say is that if you think you might have a problem you "must take the advice of your Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser". It seems to me that is an absolutely basic point. It is four words to go at the end of paragraph 12.5. I shall be putting it and I hope that we will take it very much on board.

*Revd Canon Dr Christopher Sugden (Oxford):* Chairman, we all stand fully with the Church of England's concern to address properly and robustly the issues of child abuse. Concern about ending confidentiality should not be understood in any way to diminish this because there is the law of unintended consequences. We stand against cover-ups, but if the absolute confidentiality of the Confessional is breached, then to whom else will a burdened soul turn? If they know that the priest is legally bound to disclose any such information about child abuse to the authorities, no such person will ever turn to a priest for help again. If they want to give themselves up, they will, directly to the police, without any promise of support. If the confidentiality of the priest is breached, then there is literally no one to whom such a person, hopefully on the road to repentance, can turn. This is to deny vital pastoral support as the Spirit of God works to bring people to repentance. That is not to say that a priest should do nothing. A priest can make any absolution conditional on such a person reporting what they have confessed to the authorities. If they will not demonstrate such route of repentance then their sins are retained.

Ending the seal of the Confessional is very likely to decrease the number of child abusers whose crimes come to the notice of the police. What we are talking about is the ministry of the Confessional, not the work of the priest in absolution. The

confidentiality of the Confessional should remain absolute. It is in granting God's absolution that the safeguards should be applied. Please could the Convocation Working Party, as it further considers the ministry of absolution, receive evidence not only from priests but also lawyers, especially defence lawyers, and counsellors about the role of confidentiality in the Confessional. Thank you, Synod.

*Revd Thomas Seville CR (Religious Communities):* I want to change tack a little. Like many, I have been very impressed by this document, especially on what it covers and the extraordinary work that has gone into producing this document. I would ask for a vital expansion - what I hope will be taken as an improvement because I think an oversight and a very significant one has happened. It is something which I hope most clergy, most laity indeed, would regard as vital in their Christian calling: prayer. It is touched on in these Guidelines but only in passing. It is touched on in section 7, which is where I hope there will be some expansion.

The question - and I welcome very much the use of the Ordinal - "Will you be diligent in prayer ...?" begins that section, it begins that question in the Ordinal, but there is nothing about prayer in that section. It is all about learning and teaching. I think this is really very strange. It is almost as if you are giving guidance to somebody who wants to be a musician but you never mention the playing of an instrument. I am quite serious. It must be an oversight. I do not think this is deliberate at all. The focus has been on other matters.

It is doubly strange, given the priorities which Archbishop Justin and also the Pope have set for the Church in the 21st Century. The first for both of them is prayer. I quote Archbishop Justin and I apologise: "Prayer matters and prayer changes things. History shows that a renewal of prayer can result not just in churches transformed, but whole societies too."

I do urge for a much more positive treatment of prayer and a much more expansive treatment of prayer in these Guidelines, especially for those of us who are clergy and who have legal obligations in this area. The variety which is open to us as clergy is considerable, even for me as a monk, and I have got a fair bit on my plate. Prayer is missional. It is putting ourselves in the presence of God; his mission, his love, his purpose. It is about putting the Church - and that may be the church with just a few people gathering with the clergy to say the morning or evening office - it requires a pattern of morning and evening prayer. That may be the office or it may be something else. If we want to see things changed, it starts with prayer, and I do ask that something about prayer, corporate and individual, be included in these Guidelines.

*Mr Gavin Oldham (Oxford):* Francis Bridger says on page 30 of the Report: "... the foundational value for all Christian ethics is the uniquely Christian gift of *agape*." St John tells us that the nature of God is unconditional love; that is *agape*. As the Guidelines say, this is the foundational or core value of our Christian faith, and they set out the behaviours by which this value could be measured. But there is no measurement, no call to establish 'Investors in People' or to install annual surveys to establish whether these behaviours are thoroughly embedded in the Church.

In my business in the Share Centre we have five core values, not one: respect for



others, empowerment, clarity, enterprise and long-term stability. We have developed in consultation with our staff the behaviours by which our adherence to these values can be measured. We have been part of a nationwide Investors in People process for over ten years. We work within this standard to measure progress year-on-year, asking people anonymously how they are managed, how they manage, how customers are treated, whether training and delegation is appropriate, et cetera. Why do we not do this throughout the Church of England, when so many people work in an organisation, when so many lives are affected, when so many people have to work remotely? All the more reason to bring in a measurement process such as Investors in People. This was declined when we brought in the Clergy Discipline Measure and it is not even mentioned in these Guidelines. Core values are not worth the paper they are written on if they are not borne out by behaviours and behavioural standards must be owned by the people who uphold them. Honest and regular assessment of those behaviours is essential, otherwise we run the risk of delusion and self-righteousness. We can only be a channel for the magnificent outpouring of unconditional love if we live out the behaviours that it alone can foster within us.

*Mrs Penelope Allen (Lichfield):* I bring to you the voice of abused children. This is not a prepared speech. I am a retired teacher of personal, social and health education and I have been disclosed to and I have taught children who have been abused. In fact, I have taught in a school where one-third of the children have been on the at-risk register.

As teachers we have a code of conduct that we are required to follow. I believe seriously that the people looking at a code of conduct for clergy should also look at the code of conduct for teachers because, after all, clergy move in schools as well as in their churches and their communities.

I was really hoping to see in this document some evidence or some deep thinking about how we deal with the abuse that has taken place and how we are going to look at that in the future. Those people who have been abused will be looking to this body to take very seriously the role of clergy and how they behave. They will be looking to see if we have been conscious over the use of pornography, if we have been conscious about what happens with other staff in churches as well as the clergy themselves and other laity within church settings. They will also be looking to see that we are showing some form of acknowledgement of the serious consequences on their lives.

There will of course be problems about disclosure for people like prison chaplains and hospital chaplains. There are certain aspects of Church work that I feel may be impeded by the requirement to disclose if the confidentiality issue is not addressed for all walks of Church life. But, I do feel that where people have informal conversations, where people are disclosing evidence of abuse of children, that has to be taken very seriously. In schools we have child protection officers, who actually talk in a great deal of depth with the young person concerned before that goes forwards. That is done as a safeguard both for the adult that is being accused and for the safeguarding of the child, so that the appropriate evidence may be produced in those cases.

Please have a very serious think about the confidentiality issue because those people who have been abused will be wanting to know what we are going to do if we know - and I am talking about congregations here, too - adults and clergy in our congregations

are abusing young people. Having said all of that, I acknowledge that some clergy themselves are vulnerable adults.

*Revd Canon Simon Butler (Southwark):* Last Friday, in my capacity as a trustee of a local charity I attended a disciplinary hearing of a member of staff. Earlier in the year I had to issue a verbal warning to an employed member of my church. At both of those times I had guidelines within which to operate and policies as well. This document before us, which has been so helpfully prepared, is not the document that should outline the details of a disciplinary policy, but it ought, it seems to me, to give guidelines to the clergy when exercising pastoral discipline. Section 11 of the Report mentions this. It asks of us: "Will you accept and minister the discipline of this Church ...?" Section 11 of the Report then has 12 sections following it, none of which mention the ministering of discipline but only the accepting of it. It seems to me - and I raised this in the Convocations earlier this year - there could be helpfully some expanding of that section just to identify some of the issues that ought to be around when clergy think about ministering discipline.

In situations that I have had to deal with in the parish - and I wanted to pick up where Mark Ireland left off really - one of the things that has enabled me to avoid the capacity for as much self-deception as I have in exercising pastoral discipline is the ability to talk through what I am doing with somebody else. In many situations that could be a churchwarden or it could be perhaps the area dean, but that could be padded out a little, giving encouragement to clergy where it is appropriate, to consult and to ensure that their exercise of discipline is fully in accordance with the vows that we make and the spirit in which we live out our vocations.

It seems to me that there is a definite connection between discipline and discipling. It seems to me that when exercised in Christian compassion and love, discipline is salvific because our aspiration is not to punish but to help others to grow into the fullness of Christ. I would like to see a little bit more on the exercise of discipline in these guidelines.

*Mr John Freeman (Chester):* Point of Order, Chairman. After this speaker I propose a motion of closure on this item.

*The Chair:* We have just a little bit more time and I am minded at the moment to just run on a tiny bit, but I think I might want your interruption later.

*Ven Cherry Vann (Manchester):* I warmly welcome this Report and I would like to add my grateful thanks to the Working Group for all the work that they have done. The Guidelines as we have them represent a labour of love and have taken far longer than any of the Working Group would have anticipated at the outset. A lot of excellent work has been done to bring the Guidelines up-to-date and to ensure that they reflect the very different context in which clergy are now ministering and serving. They are of course a work in progress. There is still work to be done. I urge Synod to support the work that has been done and trust the Working Group to take on board the points made in this debate. Guidelines in the making are better than no guidelines at all. We need them for the reasons set out at the bottom of page 5.

Contributions today have rightly focused on some of the more sensitive and complex areas that the Report addresses, but the Report covers a broad range of issues pertinent to the ministry of the clergy. I shall be supporting these draft Guidelines and I urge members of Synod to do the same.

*Dr Philip Giddings (Oxford):* I strongly support this document but I want to draw attention to one of its implications. In the world of the professions, guides and codes are growing apace, but there remain 24 hours in a day and seven days in a week. I know too many clergy who suffer from stress but do not admit it. There are a couple of references in this document to stress and one to the importance of the management of time. There are very many injunctions in this document which seem to me to invite clergy to do yet more with the time that they have available to them without even the inclusion of the adjective 'discretionary' time. We do need to go with this, but those who have the responsibility for the care of clergy, which includes many laity, need to ensure that clergy are given appropriate help with managing their time and managing their stress. I hope that we will support this with that in our minds.

*The Archbishop of York (The Most Revd & Rt Hon Dr John Sentamu):* Thank you for giving me the opportunity to just address the whole question of the Confessional. If you read my preface to Judge Cahill's independent report, my comments come out of listening to those who alleged abuse. It is not me dreaming it up or making it up, and when you listen to their story of how the Confessional was used to them by another priest who is abusing, it is not actually good news, so you have got to listen from that way. I am not suggesting that it should be looked at because of my tradition, as Fr Philip North suggests, this is not a question of tradition. It is a question of what the Church of England as being both Catholic and Reformed is about, and whether really we should do some theological work, so for those of you who are concerned about the Confession we have got to think of a good paper written by William Fittall, GS Misc 1085, which people should read pretty carefully and therefore contribute to the theological conversation. I went into a territory I never, ever wanted to go into but I listened to those. Friends, sometimes eating food was very difficult. So, however sacred this thing may be, if you listen to the experience of those who alleged abuse you come away saying simply, "Lord have mercy, Christ have mercy", and I am one of those by the way who still hears confessions, so do not misunderstand me, and still value that particular ministry. If a church now simply does not want to reveal the theological work, exploration, discovery, where we are going, I am afraid you are going to find it very, very difficult to bring about the healing. The good thing I will tell you, particularly one person for whom that was a very difficult thing, they say they were glad they were being listened to, they were glad their case has been heard. By the way, they do not want to claim compensation from the Church of England, but the Confessional damaged them.

*Mr John Freeman (Chester):* On a point of order, Mr Chairman. I beg to move:

'That the question be now put.'

*This motion was put and carried.*

*Chair:* I call on the Ven Christine Hardman to reply to the debate.

*Ven Christine Hardman (Southwark):* You will forgive me if I do not mention everybody by name who has spoken. Five minutes is a short time to respond to such an excellent debate with so many really very good speeches made.

Mark Ireland, and I would like to take you together with Simon Butler, I think he made some important points about the exercise of discipline and I hope the Working Party will think about that. Particularly to Mark Ireland, I think what the section was trying to do was suggest that when you have a strong view on who is weak and who is strong in a dispute, you should not be offering pastoral support to both parties or trying to, but even the person who appears to be bullying, for example, does need pastoral support from somebody in a dispute. Nobody is outside the love of God.

I am very grateful to Philip North, Mary Johnston, Chris Sugden, Penny Allen and the Archbishop of York for some superb speeches which help us to understand the complexity of the issue of confidentiality, particularly in regard to serious crime, and I am sure that a transcript of those speeches will be available - I hope it will be - to the group who will be charged to having the theological review of that issue, so thank you very much indeed for that contribution to this debate.

I would also particularly like to thank Mary Johnston who, together with David Houlding, served on the first working party for the Guidelines, so they really do deserve to be let off for good behaviour next time.

I am very grateful to the Bishop of Durham for his very helpful, detailed speech which I know has been noted by the Secretary of the Working Party showing how there might be some quite relatively straightforward changes that could be made to that section that will be very helpful and improve the quality of the Guidelines, so thank you very much for that speech.

There were speeches from Anne Martin and Tim Hind about the importance of the ministry of lay people. This is a subject unbelievably close to my heart and if there are ways in which the document can be stronger on that, I hope the Working Party might consider it. I think Anne Martin's suggestion was a particularly simple one which could be executed.

Paul Benfield, point noted, I would imagine, by the Working Party on the Marriage paragraphs, 11.7, and 11.8.

Martin Sewell, I could not have agreed more with the point you made about if you think you might have a problem, you have got a problem in this regard and you must seek advice. As a former archdeacon, I know just what chaos is caused by people who think they might have a problem and then do not take the proper advice so I really support and hope the Working Party will look at your suggestion of going from "should" to "must" on that one.

I am also very much in support of Thomas Seville's point on prayer which appears in the Ordinal's injunction to us, but then does not appear in section 7. I hope that might be relatively helpfully and easily amended.

Cherry Vann, thank you. We both share the same view on this, the importance of having these Guidelines out there, and, Philip Giddings, thank you for your concern for the clergy. There are incredible demands placed upon the clergy and we do not want to add to those with these Guidelines. I hope it will not have that effect.

I was particularly pleased at the number of lay people who spoke in this debate. There were eight of you, if I have got it right. It is your voice that has not yet had a chance to be heard and it is the most important voice, so thank you very much for the excellent standard of speeches you have made and I hope that this Synod will send the draft Guidelines on with goodwill by taking note of them, so that further work can be done and we get them out as quickly as possible for the clergy. Thank you.

*The motion*

*'That the Synod do take note of this Report.'*

*was carried.*

*Chair:* The matter will now return to the Working Party of the Convocations, with a view to formal consideration by the Convocations in February or July next year. That concludes this item of business and we will now move to a short period of worship before questions.

*Mrs Anne Foreman (Exeter)* led the Synod in an act of worship

THE CHAIR *Mr Aiden Hargreaves-Smith* took the Chair at 5.57 pm.

## Questions

*The Chair:* We come now to Item 6, Questions. For this item members will need the yellow booklet containing the questions, a little patience and a degree of self-restraint. Roving microphones are being used, as on previous occasions, and so it will be helpful if members who are not close to a microphone would wait until a roving microphone is brought to them before putting their supplementary question. May I once again remind members that the clue to a proper supplementary question is in the name: it must be supplementary, that is it must be relevant to the original question and to the answer given, and it must be a question. This is not an opportunity for making points or comments. So we come now to the questions starting with questions to the Crown Nominations Commission.

### Crown Nominations Commission

1. *Mrs Anne Martin (Guildford)* asked the Chair of the Crown Nominations Commission: In view of the fact that the Prime Minister now always accepts the first name of the two submitted to him by the Crown Nominations Commission for the appointment of a Diocesan Bishop, will procedures be reviewed to consider whether only one name should go forward, and whether it would be appropriate to re-interview if for any reason the chosen candidate cannot be appointed?

*The Archbishop of York (The Most Revd & Rt Hon Dr John Sentamu)* replied on behalf of the Chair of the Crown Nominations Commission: After the changes announced by the then Prime Minister in 2007 there was a consultation exercise within the Church of England on a number of consequential issues, including whether the Crown Nominations Commission continue to identify two names. The conclusion, which Synod endorsed in the debate on '*Crown Appointments*' in February 2008 (GS 1680), was that the requirement of Standing Order 122 for the CNC to identify two names should not be amended. This was because of the practical difficulties of trying to reconvene the Commission in the event of the preferred candidate being for any reason unable or willing to take up the appointment. The Archbishop of Canterbury and I continue to keep the operation of the CNC under review with the central members.

2. *Mr Adrian Greenwood (Southwark)* asked the Chair of the Crown Nominations Commission:

- (a) What procedures are followed when one or more of the 'central six' members (elected by General Synod) of the CNC are not able to attend meetings concerning a particular vacancy;
- (b) how are 'substitutes' identified and who chooses them;
- (c) since the start of the current quinquennium, on how many occasions have individual members of the 'central six' not been able to be present and have therefore been replaced by a 'substitute'; and
- (d) are attendance records kept and can they be published?

*The Archbishop of York* replied: When one of the six central members cannot be present, Standing Order SO122 provides for the Chair of the House concerned to nominate a member of the same House as a deputy at the meetings of the Commission for the particular vacancy. I understand that they endeavour to replace the absent member on a 'like for like' basis as far as it is possible. Since November 2010 the Commission has considered 18 vacancies (including Southwell and Nottingham) of which nine have had substitutes for one or more central members. Records are kept for the membership of the Commission and I will arrange for these to be put up on the notice board. (*See Annex A at the end of this document*). It may be that you need to make reference to this document. We have been particularly busy at the moment. Again, we are really trying to work hard and get through because a lot of vacancies appear at one time and the timetable sometimes makes it very difficult for the central members to be there at all the Crown Nomination Commission meetings that the Standing Order allows for substitutes. But the list is going to be put on the notice board so that you can see who has actually been attending those meetings.

3. *Mr Adrian Greenwood (Southwark)* asked the Chair of the Crown Nominations Commission: Has the Crown Nominations Commission considered the implications for its policies, processes and practices of the many calls, including those made in Parliament, for women priests to be 'fast tracked' (a) into episcopal office, and (b) onto the benches of the Lords Spiritual in the House of Lords?

*The Archbishop of Canterbury (The Most Revd & Rt Hon Justin Welby)* replied as Chair of the Crown Nominations Commission: The guiding principle is to appoint the best person to each role but, consistent with the Equality Act 2010, there will be positive

action. We are ensuring that women candidates have the preparation needed to participate equally in selection process. We have had discussions about use of language, about reading CVs through different lenses, and amended some key documents. Were the unusual situation of a dead heat between a man and a woman to arise, we would be able to choose the person from the under-represented group. The proposal to accelerate women diocesan bishops into the Lords has received much cross-party support but requires parliamentary legislation. Legislation has been proposed to what is called “the normal channels” and discussed with representatives of the three largest parties who have indicated that they are in principle in favour. Following a conversation last Friday evening, I have reason to believe that it is likely that legislation may be introduced after the Christmas recess.

*Mr Adrian Greenwood:* Thank you, your Grace. Is the process still, at heart, a process of discerning and seeking the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and is the Diocesan Statement of Needs still the primary yardstick for assessing who is the best person for each role?

*The Chair:* I think, Mr Greenwood, you are asking for the Archbishop’s opinion, so the question is out of order.

*Mr Adrian Greenwood:* Right.

4. *Revd Dr Joanna Spreadbury (St Albans)* asked the Chair of the Crown Nominations Commission: Has the Commission considered why one name consistently appears in the media as having been under consideration by it and whether, where such reports appear, the Commission might in the interests of fairness release the names of all those who were, in fact, on the shortlist for the appointment concerned?

*The Archbishop of Canterbury replied:* Those who take part in Crown Nominations Commissions or who are involved in the process for selecting suffragan bishops are bound by requirements of confidentiality, something we repeat at each CNC at the beginning of the process. There are strong arguments both for transparency and for confidentiality. It is a question which is discussed from time to time and the Archbishop of York and I keep it under review, as he has already said. It is, however, precisely because selection processes are meant to be confidential - in the interests of all concerned - that it is so damaging when reports appear in the press purporting to give inside information and naming an individual. The harm is done, whether these are true, false or wholly speculative. It is unkind, hurtful and unjust to the person concerned and simply should not happen.

*Revd Dr Joanna Spreadbury:* Thank you. Given the damaging reports that you refer to, what steps will be taken to revise the CNC process, both to call to account members who breach the declaration of confidentiality they make and to prevent undue influence in the process, even, say, by the Archbishop of Canterbury; even, say, in the interests of the Anglican Communion?

*The Archbishop of Canterbury:* We will continue to keep the way that we operate under close review and to ensure that it is carried out in line with the Equality Act, wherever that applies.

## Faith and Order Commission

5. *Dr William Belcher (Gloucester)* asked the Chair of the Faith and Order Commission: Are there any plans to consider proposing to the Synod fuller recognition of the Anglican Church of North America by the Church of England? If so, what is the proposed timescale? If not, why not?

6. *Mrs Susie Leafe (Truro)* asked the Chair of the Faith and Order Commission: In the light of the investiture of the Most Revd Dr Foley Beach as Archbishop and Primate of the Anglican Church in North America and the warm welcome he received as a “fellow primate of the Anglican Communion” by primates representing over 50 million Anglicans worldwide, what steps have been taken by the small group established to explore the relationship between ACNA and the Church of England, by the Council for Christian Unity (Questions November 2012)?

*The Bishop of Coventry (Rt Revd Dr Christopher Cocksworth)* replied as Chair of the Faith and Order Commission: With permission, Mr Chairman, I will answer Dr Belcher and Mrs Leafe together. Some preliminary and exploratory work was done through the Faith and Order Commission in 2010-12 which stressed the context of Anglican Communion relations. The Archbishops drew on this in GS Misc 1011 issued in December 2011. They then requested that specific work be undertaken regarding possible recognition and acceptance of the orders of the Anglican Church of North America under the Overseas Clergy (Ministry and Ordination) Measure 1967. The group established by the Council for Christianity Unity to offer advice to the Archbishop through the Faith and Order Commission produced a report reviewing the general criteria to be used in such cases. That is available on the Church of England website. A further supplementary paper advising the Archbishops was sent to them earlier this year. The Archbishops have concluded that it would be premature to come to a settled view on these matters at this point but are keeping them under close review.

*Mrs Susie Leafe:* Before the Archbishops came to that opinion, had there been any constructive direct engagement with ACNA as recommended in 2010 and 2012?

*The Bishop of Coventry:* Yes, there was a careful process of consultation with representatives of the Anglican Church of North America, the Anglican Church of Canada and the Episcopal Church that were conducted by the small group that had been set up, first, to consider these matters generally and then this particular matter in hand.

7. *Revd Canon Dr Christopher Sugden (Oxford)* asked the Chair of the Faith and Order Commission: In the light of the Synod resolution of February 2010 to recognise and affirm the desire of those who have formed the Anglican Church in North America to remain within the Anglican family, has the ACNA Catechism (published in 2013) been evaluated by the Church of England and, if so, has it been found to be compliant with the Christian faith as the Church of England has received it?

*The Bishop of Coventry* replied: The Anglican Church of North America Catechism has not been evaluated by the Faith and Order Commission or, as far as I am aware, by the



Church of England.

*Revd Canon Dr Christopher Sugden:* Thank you, Bishop. Given Archbishop Justin's most valuable overview of the importance, wonder and diversity of Anglicans, will the Faith and Order Commission in the spirit of his address please plan to review the ACNA Catechism and its contribution to expressions of Anglicanism and publish their findings?

*The Bishop of Coventry:* For your information - I hope, Archbishop, it is okay to say this - we have looked at the Constitutions and the Canons of the Anglican Church of North America in our process of advising the Archbishops. I am sure if we are asked to look at the Catechism, which I agree is a very interesting document and it does have a helpful, genuinely catechetical role in terms of not just the question and answers but the whole sort of setting, we would be delighted to do that.

8. *Revd Charles Read (Norwich)* asked the Chair of the Faith and Order Commission: A recent survey published in the Independent indicated that 2% of Church of England clergy hold to a non-realist view of God and some recent speeches in this Synod have advocated a doctrine of the eternal submission of the Son to the Father. Is it part of the remit of the Faith and Order Advisory Committee to advise on whether such views are within the range of Anglican doctrine and, if so, how is this done?

*The Bishop of Coventry* replied: The Faith and Order Commission has not been commissioned to do work on either of these subjects.

*Revd Charles Read:* So who could commission the Faith and Order Commission to do such work?

*The Bishop of Coventry:* Thank you. That is a very good question. It has a straightforward answer. We can be, as the Commission, commissioned by the Archbishops, the Houses of Bishops or the Council for Christian Unity.

## Church Commissioners

9. *The Bishop of Gibraltar in Europe (Rt Revd Dr Robert Innes)* asked the Church Commissioners: The decline in the bee population is one of the most serious environmental issues facing the UK, and on 4th November the Government published a 'National Pollinator Strategy'. As one of England's largest landowners, and in the light of the 5th mark of mission, can the Church Commissioners endeavour to demonstrate leadership in this issue both in regard to the land it manages directly and the land managed via its tenants?

*The First Church Estates Commissioner (Mr Andreas Whittam Smith, ex officio)* replied: I thank Dr Innes for his timely question in relation to the National Pollinators Strategy. The Bishop of St Albans and the Commissioners' Head of Rural Asset Management recently met with the Secretary of State for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, Liz Truss, to discuss ways in which the Church Commissioners, and indeed the wider Church, might be able to help to support some of the work set out in the Strategy. The Commissioners are considering some measures that could be introduced to the management of their rural holding, and which might be relevant to the dioceses which

are also, collectively, significant landowners. Bishop Alan is also considering other wider-reaching possibilities including ways in which the Church might demonstrate leadership on the topic, linking also to the management of churchyards and gardens. We hope to be able to bring further news of progress in the coming months.

10. *Revd Canon Robert Cotton (Guildford)* asked the Church Commissioners: Will the Church Commissioners clarify the decision-making process by which an additional sum of over £2 million has just been approved, for expenditure between 2014 and 2016, for the ministerial development of Bishops, Deans and a select number of clergy with “high potential”?

*The First Church Estates Commissioner* replied: At the invitation of the Archbishops, Lord Green of Hurstpierpoint was invited to chair a Task Group to review the provision of leadership development for senior clergy, and the way individuals are identified and developed for future leadership roles in the Church. The Group presented proposals to the Archbishops’ Spending Plans Task Group (of which I am a member) in June 2014. After thorough discussion, the Task Group agreed expenditure of £2.083 million from the £12 million set aside for Research & Development funding, under the broad headings which had previously been agreed both by the Archbishops’ Council and the Board of Governors of the Church Commissioners. The decision was reported to both bodies at their September meeting, which they noted without demur.

*Revd Canon Robert Cotton:* Thank you. Given that a further £800,000 per year will be required in about two years’ time, if General Synod is going to be approached for at least some of those funds, what plans are there by the Spending Plans Task Group to involve General Synod in a full discussion of the Green Report sooner rather than later?

*The First Church Estates Commissioner:* I cannot answer for the future agenda of Synod, but what I can say is that, as you will very well know, there are a lot of new plans in the making at the moment and this will involve very important decisions for the Church Commissioners and I intend, perhaps at the next meeting of Synod, to request the Business Committee to give me, or us, an entire session to put these points in front of Synod and ask for support.

*Revd Canon Jane Charman (Salisbury):* In agreeing to authorise £2.3 million to be spent on a cohort of 150 bishops and deans, and clergy who may become bishops and deans, were the Church Commissioners or the Spending Plans Task Group made aware that the Church is responsible for providing CMD for around 18,000 lay and ordained members and that there is currently no national budget for this work?

*The First Church Estates Commissioner:* If I could continue from my previous answer, I think you will find that plans are developing to increase the amount of training across the Church, both clergy and lay people, and these sums will in due course be significant and I more than almost anybody have been urging the Church to take training extremely seriously.

11. *Revd Hugh Lee (Oxford)* asked the Church Commissioners: Given that “the EIAG positively recommends investment in companies with responsible employment practices, best corporate governance practice, conscientiousness with regard to human

rights, sustainable environmental practice and sensitivity towards the communities in which the business operates”, can the Church Commissioners give examples of companies in which it has large investments that meet these criteria, and how can this information be more widely known in dioceses and parishes?

*The First Church Estates Commissioner* replied: I am not going to name names, but I can tell Synod that the Commission’s investment is determined by the policies agreed by the Board on the recommendation of the Ethical Investment Advisory Group. In quoted equities, the list comprises several thousand companies. On behalf of the National Investing Bodies the EIAG engages with businesses with which it wishes to discuss ethical, environmental, social or governance practice. If dissatisfied with its engagement with any company, the EIAG may recommend to National Investing Bodies that a company is made ineligible for investment. In recent years it has made such recommendations with regard to Vedanta Resources and News Corporation. In both instances the Commissioners acted upon the recommendations.

*Revd Hugh Lee*: How is the balance struck between investing in companies that meet the recommendations of the EIAG and investing in companies that give a high financial return?

*The First Church Estates Commissioner*: This is a seamless process as far as the Commissioners are concerned. The former Secretary of the Church Commissioners now is on the investment staff and in making investment decisions, whether securities or property or whatever, it is part of the process that we consider the ethical dimension. It is not something we add on afterwards. It is something which goes from the word go.

## Pensions Board

12. *Ven Dr John Applegate (Manchester)* asked the Chair of the Pensions Board: I understand that the Pensions Board has recently introduced “target rents” for the CHARM rental scheme so that they are fair in relation to the local property market, together with a scheme for incrementally moving existing rents to their new targets. Is the Chairman of the Pensions Board aware of the hardship and feelings of unfairness felt by some retired clergy, widows and widowers - principally in the north - facing small annual decreases in their rent to significantly lower target rents and will the Pensions Board move more quickly to the target rents they regard as fair in order to alleviate the financial hardship faced by those with rents that are significantly higher than their target?

*Dr Jonathan Spencer (ex officio)* replied as Chair of the Pensions Board: Target rents are one of the changes to the CHARM rental scheme which we presented to General Synod in July this year and which received a warm welcome. In making these changes, our main concern was to protect those existing tenants on relatively lower incomes who will face rent increases, and who might otherwise have suffered financial hardship, rather than those who will benefit from rent reductions. That is why we are changing the rent payments gradually with only small annual increases or decreases. This may not be welcome for those paying over target rent. We will keep the position under review as we see how the numbers of people joining and leaving the scheme affect the overall rental income position. Should that provide scope to speed up the transition for people

paying over target rent, we will do so. But we are unable to increase the level of subsidy provided.

*Ven Dr John Applegate:* Thank you, Dr Spencer, for the answer and I warmly welcome the idea of charging fair rents, but is not the implication of your answer that retired clergy widows and widowers on unfairly high rents will continue to subsidise those on unfairly low rents for the foreseeable future? Is there any north/south divide in this?

*Dr Jonathan Spencer:* There is not a north/south divide. The number of tenants paying over the target rent is about 150 in the Northern Province and 260 in the South and the numbers of people paying above or below are roughly equal. Although I do not have the figures, I would expect there to be many more widows whose rents will be increasing than will be decreasing. In any case, there is not a cross-subsidy because there is such a big subsidy from Vote 5 and from the Pensions Board itself. The total cost of the CHARM rental scheme is about £12 million a year. Rents only provide about half of that, so there is no effective cross-subsidy here.

### **Central Readers Council**

13. *Dr Edmund Marshall (St Albans)* asked the Chair of the Central Readers Council: What plans are there for reviewing the content and operation of the Bishops' Regulations for Reader Ministry (2000)?

*The Bishop of Sodor & Man (Rt Revd Robert Paterson)* replied as Chair of the Central Readers Council: The whole question of the future of Lay Ministry is currently under active discussion and review by the Ministry Council and in dioceses, and it is felt that it would be inappropriate to proceed with revision of the *Bishops' Regulations for Reader Ministry 2000* until the way forward has been more clearly delineated. Diocesan Bishops are already interpreting the existing regulations to meet the evolving situation.

### **Ethical Investment Advisory Group.**

14. *Revd. Hugh Lee (Oxford)* asked the Chair of the Ethical Investment Advisory Group: What are the terms of reference of the Ethical Investment Advisory Group and do they exclude the Group from considering economic or financial issues along with ethical ones (for example, whether fossil fuel companies are financially sound investments, as their current share values are partly based on reserves that collectively contain five times as much carbon as the atmosphere can safely absorb and will therefore become valueless)? If the terms of reference contain such an exclusion, what steps would need to be taken to remove it?

*Revd Professor Richard Burridge (University of London)* replied on behalf of the Chair of the Ethical Investment Advisory Group: The Ethical Investment Advisory Group's Constitution and Terms of Reference are available for inspection on the Church of England website. They were last amended in January 2014 to reflect better the way in which the EIAG and its Secretariat operate for the National Investing Bodies ("NIBs"). The Constitution confirms the EIAG's purpose as "being to support the NIBs to invest ethically in a way which is distinctly Christian and Anglican". It specifies that the EIAG's advice is not to be considered as financial or investment advice. Responsibility for the

investment decisions rests with each individual National Investing Body as each one faces different priorities in meeting the liabilities they have to their beneficiaries (whether they be pension scheme members or the wider Church). As such, the EIAG has no mandate to consider the 'soundness' of investment in any company from a financial perspective. To amend this EIAG Constitution would, of course, require collective agreement both among the EIAG and by the NIBs who fund it.

*Revd Hugh Lee:* When the EIAG advises, the share prices of a company are likely to fall because the Government and/or society is likely to take an ethical stance on some issue, is this then regarded as ethical advice or is it regarded as financial advice and, therefore, disregarded by the NIBs?

*Revd Professor Richard Burrridge:* Thank you, Mr Lee. If I understand your question correctly, share prices may well fall after we have given advice. That was clearly the case in Vedanta. After the Church of England disinvested from Vedanta, gave our advice, the share price fell significantly, which is why they have come back to us regularly to try to improve their practice to get us back on board again. Our advice is given to the NIBs. The NIBs then decide that in their Investment Committee, whereas, as the First Estates Commissioner said just now, it is a seamless process that is going on in that way. So I do not think you can distinguish the advice in the way that you are wanting to do.

15. *Dr Paula Gooder (Birmingham)* asked the Chair of the Ethical Investment Advisory Group: In the light of the 2014 General Synod resolution on Climate Change and Investment could you advise Synod on the progress the EIAG has been making to publish the report of its review by the end of 2014 as requested?

*Revd Professor Richard Burrridge (University of London)* replied: I reported during the February 2014 Synod that the EIAG has undertaken to publish a new policy on Climate Change and Investment as soon as feasible before the debate, once it has been agreed by the National Investing Bodies ("the NIBs"). Since February, the EIAG has continued with its work reviewing its advice to the NIBs on climate change and investment, despite severe difficulties because of staffing changes. It remains the EIAG's intention to complete this work before the end of this year, 2014, as requested. However, as I also said in February, the NIBs committee schedule means the policy cannot be internally approved and published by them until the first half of 2015. While this policy review continues, the NIBs and the EIAG continue to implement the existing Climate Change policy, in particular as regards engagement with policy makers on international public policy and engagement with companies on matters such as their carbon emissions management, deployment of capital to fossil fuel extraction and lobbying activities.

*Dr Paula Gooder:* Would you feel able to share with Synod what, if any, conclusions your review has come to on the question of disinvestment?

*Revd Professor Richard Burrridge:* Thank you. We have been exploring that very carefully over the last six months and, of course, following the decision of Oxford Diocese, at least as reported, to go fossil free on Saturday --- I do know what that does to some of its clergy, or keeping the lights on! I think it meant with regard to their investments. But, as I said, in the February 2014 debate, all options were being

considered. I said in February 2014 that I thought it was unlikely that the review would recommend disinvestment from all fossil fuels. That quotation from last February has been misquoted in the press quite a lot in the last couple of weeks as being a recent statement. However, it remains the case that all options are being reviewed. I suspect it is unlikely that the final review, when it has been through the NIBs, will recommend disinvestment from all fossil fuels. But while the process is going on, obviously it remains private. It is my intention to bring that policy to this Synod as soon as we can get the EIAG's work finished and get it accepted by the NIBs for publication.

### **The Archbishops' Council**

16. *Dr Paula Gooder (Birmingham)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: In the light of the 2014 General Synod resolution on Climate Change and Investment could you advise Synod what progress (if any) has been made in reconstituting the Shrinking the Footprint Working Group, so that it reports direct to the Council, to monitor, facilitate co-ordination and promote the responses of all parts of the Church of England to environmental challenges?

*Mr Philip Fletcher (ex officio)* replied on behalf of the Presidents: The Environment Working Group meets for the first time on Wednesday. It is chaired by the Bishop of Salisbury with support from the Bishops of Dudley and Kingston and an initial membership with a strong track record in the field. There is some room for appointing further members when any gaps in the expertise of the group have been identified. The group has identified a number of areas of work already underway which it will support and develop, and has begun to identify work streams that will be pursued through its members. These will include further explorations in theology and spirituality as well as practical action. It has taken a lot of work to get the structure and agenda of the group right, but there is a tremendous sense of energy behind it and no doubt Synod and the Archbishops' Council will hear much more on this subject.

17. *Dr John Dinnen (Hereford)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: How is the Archbishops' Council ensuring that the C of E is supporting the vital work of the World Council of Churches Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel (EAPPI)?

*Mr Philip Fletcher* replied: Following the July 2012 General Synod debate on EAPPI, the Mission and Public Affairs Division set up a dedicated EAPPI web page on the Church of England's website, providing background on the programme as well as details as to how people can volunteer and book speakers. Staff of the MPA Division regularly meet returning volunteers and are in contact with the Quaker Peace and Social Witness co-ordinating office as to how the programme might be developed further. A practical result of this collaboration was the step taken in 2013 for volunteers to have the option during their time in Israel and the Israeli occupied Palestinian territories to spend a few days with an Israeli Jewish family.

*Dr John Dinnen:* Thank you very much, Mr Fletcher for the excellent - or thank you to the Archbishops' Council for the excellent - web page which you have mentioned in your answer. In the light of the heightened conflict in Gaza this year and the annexation by Israel of some land in East Jerusalem and the overwhelming vote in the House of

Commons on recognising Palestine as a State, is the Archbishops' Council considering further financial support for EAPPI?

*Mr Philip Fletcher.* We are not considering support at the moment extending beyond what is already in hand, which is largely through the activities of the MPA staff.

*Miss Vasantha Gnanadoss (Southwark):* Given that the Archbishops' Council is accountable to General Synod, will such progress reports on matters approved by Synod be made in a timely and direct manner to Synod in future, or will members need to continue to ask questions to receive a minimum reply, as happens now?

*Mr Philip Fletcher.* That is a more general question than I am competent to give a completely general answer about. What I would say is that this question and answer session is a crucial part of the process of Synod, including ways in which the various instruments, including the Archbishops' Council, can keep the Synod up to the moment on all sorts of issues. But very much we aim (I speak here as chair of the MBA Council as well) to ensure that Synod is kept informed and, please, keep us up to the mark.

18. *Mr Andrew Pressland (Peterborough)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: How is the gathering of data from churches being used to work towards the Archbishops' Council's objective of numerical growth in our Church?

*Mr Philip Fletcher* replied: Robust data are essential to inform plans to foster numerical growth and measure their effectiveness. Parishes are increasingly using such information to improve their own mission planning. Research and statistics have transformed data from churches into information that parishes can use easily (such as Parish Spotlights). Dioceses are increasingly using the data to inform and develop their own strategic plans, including plans aimed at promoting numerical growth. The data have also underpinned much of the Growth Research funded by the Church Commissioners which has enabled us to identify interventions associated with growth. The findings have been disseminated widely through the *From Anecdote to Evidence* report. More follow-up is under way.

However, data are only robust if parishes contribute. In 2014, a fifth of churches failed to provide an annual return. Without statistics it is impossible to provide meaningful information as a basis for these churches to take appropriate action for growth.

19. *Mr Robin Hall (Southwark)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: The 2012 Ministry Statistics Report, published by the Archbishops' Council, reveals that more clergy left active ministry in 2012 (classed by the report as "other losses") than the combined number of clergy who retired or died in service. Considering the cost of training clergy and their value to the mission of the Church, what steps are being taken to enquire of these clergy their reasons for stepping away from ministry and how might we learn from them?

*The Bishop of Sheffield (Rt Revd Steven Croft)* replied on behalf of the Presidents: The Ministry Statistics report gives details of those who have left stipendiary ministry. We should remember that this is not the only form of 'active ministry'. Early analysis of new data suggests that 61% of leavers retired; 17% changed role; 17% resigned; 3% died,

and 1% left for other reasons. The numbers resigning are approximately 1% of the total stipendiary population. It is clear that a loss from Stipendiary Ministry can also be a gain to Sector Ministry, Self-Supporting Ministry or Active Retirement and not a 'stepping away from ministry'. It is important to learn from people leaving ministry, and dioceses are encouraged to complete exit interviews whenever this is the case. However, perhaps the more striking finding is the relatively low percentage of leavers relative to patterns among other professional groups.

20. *Revd Canon Perran Gay (Truro)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: In the light of the resignation of the Secretary to the Liturgical Commission and Worship Development Officer after less than a year in this half-time role, can the Liturgical Commission reassure Synod a) that this post will be re-appointed as a matter of urgency and b) that serious consideration will be given to restoring it to a full-time post, so as to be a more effective resource for the National Church Institutions in fostering the 'spiritual growth' that is a primary element among the Archbishops' Council's Quinquennium Goals?

*The Archbishop of York (The Most Revd & Rt Hon Dr John Sentamu)* replied: I share the Liturgical Commission's regret at the early loss of Mr Tim Hone, though in my case it is tempered by the fact that he is leaving to take up a significant post at York Minster. The Archbishops' Council decided in 2010 to reduce the budget from a full-time to part-time liturgical post. While we review the entire budget every year this is not an area where, realistically, we are going to be able to spend more given the financial pressures on the dioceses and the other unavoidable costs that we have to meet. There is no reason why a recruitment process cannot start soon, though obviously it is sensible first for senior staff and Acting Chair and Chair designate of the Commission to consider first how best the Commission should be supported within the available budget.

*Revd Canon Perran Gay:* Given that funding in this area was previously reduced from approximately one and a half full-time equivalent posts to one full-time officer and then, as your Grace has reminded us, to a half-time position, can an undertaking be given to Synod that there will not be yet another reduction in funding in the next quinquennium?

*The Archbishop of York:* You are wanting me to prophesy? It would be a mad person, when it comes to money, to prophesy. All I can say is the half-time post is available and should be advertised.

21. *Revd Dr Joanna Spreadbury (St Albans)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: If the post of Worship Development Officer and Secretary to the Liturgical Commission continues to be funded as only a half-time post, can we therefore conclude that worship and prayer is a low priority in the life of the Church of England?

*The Archbishop of York* replied: Certainly not! The renewal of worship, prayer and spiritual life are high priorities for the Church of England itself and its life and there is a contribution that can be made nationally by promoting liturgical good practice through the availability of web-based resources. But I want, gently, to resist the implication that high priorities necessarily imply more staff resource at Church House. While there are other areas of work that can only be done or are most effectively done nationally, the centre of gravity in relation to liturgy has to be local in parishes and in cathedrals.



*Revd Dr Joanna Spreadbury:* How will the Archbishops' Council then ensure the worship offered by the Church of England is of the highest standard, and equips the Church for mission now and in the future if so much is seemingly left to chance locally and there is not greater national impetus beyond a liturgical webmaster?

*The Archbishop of York:* In my own Diocese of York, I can say what we have received from the centre we are trying to make live. The guarantee is that you have common worship and you have common liturgy and remember, Synod, that because you commission, you tax. In one of the Synods of the House of Bishops, had the Synod not decided to ask for additional Eucharistic prayers, for a service where children are present, additional material for the baptism service, there would have been more staff time for promotional training work. Synod, you did this! The onus is on you, Sir, Madam, and everybody else - us - we passed it. If we did not, the material would have been there and there would have been time to promote it. So if you want more promotional material, particularly when those three rights come on stream, could we take a break from always demanding new rights? I speak freely with a lot of prejudice, but there you go!

22. *Mrs Christine McMullen (Derby)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: Since the post of secretary to the Liturgical Commission will soon be vacant again, what additional support can the Archbishops' Council offer the Liturgical Commission to resource its current work of training and resourcing clergy to engage with, and maintain good liturgical practice in, the parishes?

*The Archbishop of York* replied: The money budgeted for this work remains in place and I have encouraged the Acting Chair of the Commission to think creatively over how best it should now be applied. Again, as I have said, given all the financial pressures on parishes and dioceses it would be unrealistic to expect that the Council is going to be able to levy more on the dioceses to fund additional work in this area.

## House of Bishops

23. *Mr Gavin Oldham (Oxford)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: In recognition of the role that reason plays in all aspects of modern life but particularly in the education of young people, and in order to support the call for apologetics in Intentional Evangelism, would the House of Bishops consider issuing new doctrinal guidance on the relative emphasis to be placed on Reason and Tradition in Anglican teaching of the Christian Faith?

*The Bishop of Coventry (Rt Revd Dr Christopher Cocksworth)* replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: The question of the proper relationship between reason and tradition and how both of these relate in turn to scripture is one with intrinsic significance for theological method, especially in the Anglican tradition. The contribution of Richard Hooker in this area remains valuable and continues to be discussed today. Were the House to decide that it would be a timely subject for renewed consideration in the Church of England, the Faith and Order Commission could be expected to welcome the opportunity to address it.

*Mr Gavin Oldham:* Should I take that answer as a qualified "Yes"?

*The Bishop of Coventry:* What I am saying is I think the Faith and Order Commission would welcome the opportunity, if we were asked, to consider the relationship between scripture, reason and tradition, and the proper ordering and inter-relationship of those. There is a great deal out there in terms of statements on that from the World Council of Churches and from the Anglican Communion, but I think it is a really important question, not just for Anglicans but for others, as I have said.

*Revd Mark Ireland (Lichfield):* Given that the Intentional Evangelism Report identified apologetics as a hugely under-resourced area in theological education, has the House of Bishops considered how to address that under-resourcing of apologetics in theological training?

*The Bishop of Coventry:* Certainly there is attention given to the question of apologetics and how we can improve that. I am not conscious of a particular discussion about further resourcing of that in theological education, but I do not think I am the right person to whom to address that question at this particular point.

24. *Revd Richard Hibbert (St Albans)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Further to the Archbishop of York's "Inquiry into the Church of England's response to child abuse allegations made against Robert Waddington" which was published last month, what processes are being followed in light of the Observations (Chapter 15) and the Recommendations (Chapter 16), so that the Church of England, its dioceses and parishes, can continue to strive and uphold best practice?

*The Bishop of Durham (Rt Revd Paul Butler)* replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: As indicated in the Archbishops' Preface to the Cahill Report, we are reviewing very carefully the recommendations made. It should be noted that these recommendations arise from a specific case and our overall goal is to ensure that our safeguarding activity is effective at every level of church life, most significantly on the frontline in local parish activities. Many of the Cahill recommendations are anticipated in the policy work, practice guidance and training that we are now taking forward. A new full-time National Safeguarding Adviser for the Church of England, Graham Tilby, has been recruited and that announcement was made this morning. The forthcoming Safeguarding legislation will impose additional obligations on bishops, clergy and church officers to 'have due regard' to national safeguarding policies. This will be reinforced by the Quality Assurance process that we are piloting in 2015. We have asked the National Safeguarding Panel to review the Cahill Report and give their views at their next meeting on 9 December.

*Revd Richard Hibbert:* I am grateful to hear that the Cahill Report recommendations will be reviewed at that National Safeguarding Panel meeting in December. What other resources will you be taking into account at that meeting?

*The Bishop of Durham:* On 9 December it is very specific. The request is 'to look at the Cahill Report and tell us what you think of it'. The on-going review of the recommendations will involve discussions at the Joint Safeguarding Liaison Group and every other area, including the diocesan safeguarding advisers, diocesan secretaries and so on. We cannot make rapid responses to these recommendations. They are too

serious to make quick responses to.

25. *Revd Canon Philippa Boardman (London)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: How is the House of Bishops reflecting on the impact of the participation of the eight senior women among their number and what plans are there to make use of this learning when the first bishops who are women take their place in the House?

*The Bishop of Rochester (Rt Revd James Langstaff)* replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: It is still early days because the eight regional representatives joined the House of Bishops for the first time less than a year ago. But the experience, at least from the perspective of the House, has been wholly positive to the extent that it would now seem very odd, I think, if both genders were not present at those meetings. I am also sure that the presence and experience of the regional representative will be valuable to the first women who join the House as full members, whether as diocesans or elected suffragans.

26. *Dr William Belcher (Gloucester)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Following the indication in GS Misc 1079 (June 2014) that the appointment of a Conservative Evangelical bishop, who holds to a complementarian view of headship, would be made within a 'matter of months', what are the causes of the apparent ongoing delays in making such an appointment?

27. *Mrs Mary Durlacher (Chelmsford)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: In view of the Archbishop of Canterbury's welcome assurances in his closing speech to the Women in the Episcopate debate in July, that the House of Bishops would "act on its words" to ensure the appointment of a complementarian Conservative Evangelical bishop, (paragraph 30 of the Declaration), what progress has been made?

*The Bishop of Rochester.* The Archbishops said that they were 'consulting others with a view to ensuring that the aspiration [to appoint a headship evangelical bishop] is met within a matter of months'. Those consultations have involved a number of diocesan bishops and also other bodies within the life of the church and have now led to a proposal which has entered the necessary formal decision-making processes. It would not be helpful to go into the detail publicly just at the moment while those processes are engaged. But I can give an assurance that what are referred to in the question as 'apparent ongoing delays' are, as of now, apparent and not real.

*Revd Professor Richard Burridge (University of London):* Thank you for that answer, Bishop. Given the reference here to 'a complementary view of headship' and the point I made in July that no less an evangelical than Tony Thiselton lists over 80 books on 1 Corinthians 11, and the meaning of headship and that complementarianism comes from the Southern Baptists, in appointing a bishop for a particular view, what processes will be included to ensure that those views are both faithful to scripture, which is really very important, and of course also cognisant with the Christian faith as the Church of England has received it?

*The Bishop of Rochester.* I think the matters that Professor Burridge raises are beyond my remit, in the sense that it will be for those who actually make the appointment, and clearly there will be a process of appointment similar to other episcopal appointments,

and I am sure some of those matters will be explored. Where we are at the moment is seeking to have a framework for an appointment to be made rather than the making of the actual appointment though we hope the two will follow on from each other fairly swiftly.

*Mrs Mary Durlacher:* Thank you for your assurance which suggests there will be no more delays. Now that there are no more constraints on the appointment of women to the episcopacy, can we be given some assurance that the appointments of whatever you like to call them, bishops for our constituency, will be treated with a similar sense of urgency?

*The Bishop of Rochester:* I think there are two separate matters in there. One is the undertaking that has been given by the Archbishops and others to ensure that there is at least one such bishop within the College of Bishops, and that is a process where we are seeking to find a framework and have it improved. As I say, I hope that will be clear very soon. There are clearly wider issues to do with the appointment of bishops more generally and those appointments as of now will be informed, I am sure, by the Five Guiding Principles which are in mind in all of this.

*Dr William Belcher:* Notwithstanding Professor Burridge's comments, with the recent Bishops' Declaration now enshrining the need to ensure that Conservative Evangelicals who hold to a headship position are enabled to flourish, how will the Church-wide appointments process follow through on this Declaration to appoint not only the promised Conservative Evangelical headship bishop but also to ensure that this constituency is fully represented at all senior levels within the Church?

*The Bishop of Rochester:* I think that lies beyond my pay grade in terms of this particular matter where I have some responsibility, but clearly the way in which the Five Guiding Principles and the House of Bishops' Declaration is going to be implemented in the years to come will be something which I am sure the Archbishops will have very much in mind, as will the Synod no doubt. Clearly, there are also matters about how particular episcopal appointments are made, and each appointment as it is at the moment is made on the basis of a particular diocesan representation and so forth, and that is the process we have, and we are not able centrally to control particular appointments absolutely fully.

28. *Canon Pamela Bishop (Southwell and Nottingham)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: In light of the generally positive response to the use of facilitated conversations, what are the plans for setting up a proper process, including an agenda and time line, so that General Synod members can discuss/debate issues around human sexuality and the implications for the Church of England in the context of such conversations?

*The Bishop of Sheffield (Rt Revd Steven Croft)* replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: The proposals for Shared Conversations were set out in June 2014 in GS Misc 1083. The planned conversations will be over a two-year period, which began with the College of Bishops in September, and that is followed by a series of regional events at diocesan level. Those are intended to come to a focal point with a substantive facilitated process for General Synod at its residential sessions in July

2016. Discussions are taking place between those organising these conversations and the Synod Business Committee to agree the appropriate scheduling for 2016, bearing in mind that a new Synod will by then be in place. The agenda for all conversations is as set out in GS Misc 1083 and the process at General Synod will be informed by the approach being developed for the Regional Conversations throughout 2015.

29. *Mr Clive Scowen (London)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: What lessons were learnt from the College of Bishops' "shared conversations" around sexuality in September, and has that experience led to any changes to the plans or programme for the next phase of such conversations in the dioceses?

*The Bishop of Sheffield* replied: The shared conversations at the College helped inform the process design for the regional diocesan phase and confirmed the importance of space for discussion in groups of three or four. They also helped underline the importance of clarity over the nature and purpose of the conversations process. They are not in themselves part of the decision-making processes of the Church and are not intended to produce an agreed outcome. The Conversations provide an opportunity to reframe the conversation in the context of the Church's mission and to enable a personal engagement with the issues. We are now looking at ways in which prayer and biblical reflection could be integrated more and to draw more effectively on the resource material which all participants will receive. We have also learnt the value of good physical locations for the conversations and of the need to provide sufficient time for them. My colleagues chuckle.

*Mr Clive Scowen:* How will it be ensured that in the regional conversations, consideration of the relevant biblical material will be at both the foundation and heart of the conversations?

*The Bishop of Sheffield:* Thank you very much. The biblical material features significantly in the preparatory material which will be published over the next few weeks, having been revised and tested through the College of Bishops' conversation. Two of the four essays in that material are new biblical reflections by recognised biblical scholars and it is hoped that the design process also will enable that Bible study and biblical reflection as part of the conversation.

30. *Mr Robin Hall (Southwark)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Which dioceses have already embarked on the process of Shared Conversations on Sexuality, Scripture and Mission?

*The Bishop of Sheffield* replied: Since the College of Bishops meeting in September, discussions are now taking place to bring together dioceses in regional groups for the conversations. These are based on existing, informal regional groups for bishops. The list is subject to minor adjustments and will be made public once complete. The first Regional Conversations at a diocesan level will take place in February and March involving dioceses in the East and West Midlands. Remaining conversations will take place on an approximately monthly basis through to the spring of 2016. It is intended that the centrally organised regional conversations be a catalyst for new and existing conversations within dioceses, deaneries and parishes and a number of these are already taking place. As one example, we piloted a new model for deanery

conversations in the Diocese of Sheffield just last week and intend to learn from that to offer the model more widely across our own Diocese in 2015.

*Mr Robin Hall:* Thank you, Bishop. Would it be right to therefore assume that invitations to groups within the LGBTI Anglican Coalition to join these conversations will also be issued centrally? As February is just ten weeks away, when can these groups expect to be engaged in the process?

*The Bishop of Sheffield:* Thank you. I will need to check on the detail of the central invitation. I would imagine the invitations to all participants will be issued in the next few weeks for that first group of conversations.

31. *Mr Tom Sutcliffe (Southwark)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Considering the Pilling Report's neglect of the challenge posed by bisexuality (as opposed to simple homosexuality) to the Church's pastoral work and teaching on orientation issues, as well as noting the Business Committee's continued parking of PMMs relating to the matter, and in light of the frankness to which Pope Francis committed the Roman Catholic Church in both the recent and forthcoming Synods of Bishops in Rome, will the House of Bishops be considering what timely contribution the Church of England can make to Christian inter-denominational discernment regarding human sexuality?

*The Bishop of Sheffield* replied: The Pilling Group found the questions surrounding homosexuality anything but simple and was unable to extend its work into questions around bisexuality within the time it was given. A study of bisexuality would be challenging at several levels, and to do this before the shared conversations have run their course and questions about the nature of disagreement in the Church have been explored further would not be conducive to good ethical or theological reflection. On the question of inter-denominational work in this area, there is much that could be shared in exploring the science and sociology and some scope for shared work in theology. But there are also ecclesiological questions about how we explore these issues which are unique to us as Anglicans.

*Mr Tom Sutcliffe:* Could you indicate one of the grounds for suggesting that an understanding of bisexuality, however challenging and absent from the Bible's understanding of human sexuality, would lead to bad ethical or theological reflection, assuming as I do that bisexuality is not held by the House to be 'unique to us as Anglicans'.

*The Bishop of Sheffield:* Thank you. I think the wording of my answer was that it would not be conducive to 'good ethical or theological reflection', not that it would lead to bad theological reflection. I think the two things are different. I suspect that with the move from the Pilling Report to the shared conversations now, the agenda for the shared conversations is actually becoming much wider than the substance of the Pilling Report and is specifically not limited by it. So, same sex marriage will be brought into the shared conversations discussions very naturally as something that is happening in society, as I would imagine will be the subject of bisexuality. Indeed, that was the case in the College of Bishops' conversation most helpfully.

32. *Mrs April Alexander (Southwark)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Since I last asked in July this year about progress towards a more tolerant attitude to homosexuality in sub-Saharan Africa on the part of the Anglican Church, approximately half a million more people will have died of AIDS. Absence of prejudice is viewed by Lord Fowler (*Aids: Don't die of prejudice*) as a pre-requisite for controlling the disease. Has the House considered the extent of progress made on this since then?

*The Bishop of Sheffield* replied: I am not clear whether the questioner is asking about progress in combatting AIDS or progress towards diminishing prejudice. I will attempt to answer both points.

The House has not devoted specific time to the fight against AIDS, although many of us, through diocesan companion links with Africa, are acutely aware of the challenges and are doing what we can to support our brothers and sisters in the churches there. It is much harder to address the question of combatting prejudice because the terminology and definitions are contested. The Pilling Report had some wise words to say about the way that expressions of traditional Christian teaching on sexuality are sometimes presented as prejudice, and that this should not be accepted any more than we should acquiesce in the homophobia based on irrational hatreds, which certainly hinders the fight against AIDS in numerous ways.

*Professor Richard BurrIDGE (University of London)*: Under Standing Order 17 regarding unbecoming language, in the question it refers to "controlling the disease". Can we please be clear that Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome is a syndrome and HIV is a virus. Neither is a disease, and in sub-Saharan Africa those who are unfortunate enough to be HIV-positive fall prey to many diseases often acquired through heterosexuality rather than homosexuality. It is very important that we do not use language like "controlling" or "disease".

*The Chair*: Professor BurrIDGE, I think your point strays outside the Standing Orders but I am sure that it has been heard.

33. *Revd Jonathan FraiS (Chichester)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: During the facilitated discussions on sexuality, what place is given to the resolution of General Synod in 1987 that "sexual intercourse is an act of total commitment which belongs properly within a permanent married relationship" and that fornication, adultery and homosexual genital acts are to be met by "a call to repentance and the exercise of compassion".

34. *Revd Jonathan FraiS (Chichester)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: During the facilitated discussions on sexuality, what place is given to Resolution 1.10 of the Lambeth Conference 1998 which stated that "abstinence is right for those who are not called to marriage" and, "while rejecting homosexual practice as incompatible with Scripture, calls on all our people to minister pastorally and sensitively to all"?

*The Bishop of Sheffield* replied: The resource materials produced specifically for the shared conversations do not attempt to add to, or take away from, earlier official documents of the Church and they direct participants to the Pilling Report and to *Some Issues in Human Sexuality* in which the relevant resolutions of the Synod and the

Lambeth Conference are clearly set out. Having been piloted in the shared conversations held by the College of Bishops, the resource booklets will be published in good time for the regional conversations next year.

35. *Ven Clive Mansell (Rochester)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: What discussions have taken place in the House to enable those bishops who sit in the House of Lords to express concerns relating to new Regulations for schools which reportedly could lead to Church Schools or other schools with a Christian or other faith foundation being downgraded by OFSTED solely on the basis of not sufficiently “actively promoting” the Government’s “British values”, and what representations have been made in Parliament or to Government as a result?

*The Bishop of Ely (Rt Revd Stephen Conway)* replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: To my knowledge this matter has not been raised in the House of Bishops. However, the Lords Spiritual are fully briefed on relevant education matters when they arise in the House of Lords, and regularly raise issues themselves, in consultation with officers of the Education Division. The Church of England’s Education Office has itself engaged with ministers and officials of the Department of Education on this matter, and is satisfied that the new regulations themselves should not provide cause for concern. However, the implementation of the regulations by OFSTED inspectors and others will remain under the scrutiny of diocesan education teams and the Education Office itself. Any concerns arising from this will be taken up at a very senior level.

36. *Mrs Anne Foreman (Exeter)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Given that, in the House of Lords debate on the Women Bishops Measure on October 14th, the Archbishop of Canterbury referred to Lord Green’s group as having “... completely reviewed the way in which those who are seen as potential bishops are developed and selected...”, what are the implications of Lord Green’s work for a) the Criteria for Selection for Training for Ordained Ministry; b) the way CMD is delivered by Dioceses; c) the way Ministerial Development Reviews are carried out; and how is the work of Lord Green’s group going to be disseminated to those responsible for a), b), and c)?

*The Bishop of Ely* replied: Lord Green’s review focused on the leadership and development needed by bishops and deans and the way in which those in the pipeline for strategic leadership roles are identified and developed. Funding has been obtained until the end 2016. The intention of the project is that learning for these areas and wider CMD work is obtained through the process of delivering the work and through implementation. Ministry Division with Directors of Ministry and Dioceses will be able to draw in feedback from this work as well as responding to the particular needs of the local church. It is hoped that this Report and the purposefulness with which we are approaching its implementation will ensure that the groups to whom it is targeted will benefit immediately from quality training which responds to their needs and it will also be a catalyst for debate on these issues in the wider Church.

*Mrs Anne Foreman:* Thank you for that answer. In order for it to be a catalyst for debate when will the Report will be made available to members of this General Synod?

*The Bishop of Ely:* The Report is currently being considered in regional meetings of the



College of Bishops and there may be some changes of detail because of those discussions. There will be a further discussion in the House of Bishops in December. The hope is that in January there will be a document which will be issued and circulated widely for consideration.

*Revd Canon Dr Hazel Whitehead (Guildford):* Given the very important nature of this work, what consultation has Lord Green's review group had with those who deal with a), b) and c) on a daily basis and do this as a living?

*The Bishop of Ely:* This piece of work was devised in the first place obviously for the development of bishops, deans and all those who might be considered to have significant impact in future appointments, the responsibility of the Archbishops and the House of Bishops. The consultation was quite widespread within the professional bodies and I am coming next week to meet with Directors of Ministry at a meeting on 25 November.

37. *Mrs Christine McMullen (Derby)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: In the House of Lords' debate on the Women Bishops Measure (October 14th) the Archbishop of Canterbury said that Lord Green's group had 'completely reviewed the way in which those who are seen as potential bishops are developed and selected'. Will this review affect the CNC criteria for nominations and/or the criteria used by Diocesan Bishops when appointing Suffragan Bishops and, if so, when will the review be made more widely available to enable this work to happen?

38. *Revd Canon Philippa Boardman (London)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Has the work undertaken by Lord Green's group to completely review the development and selection of future bishops (mentioned by the Archbishop of Canterbury in the House of Lords on October 14<sup>th</sup>) been discussed and agreed by the Archbishops' Council, and given that it has such significance, when will this work be made available to members of the General Synod for their consideration?

39. *Revd Canon Jane Charman (Salisbury)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: The memorandum 'Recently Established Task Groups' which was circulated to General Synod members in April describes the remit of a number of Task Groups including the Group chaired by Lord Green. Given that this Group has now finished its work and given what the memorandum refers to as the 'connectedness' of that work with the work of the other Groups, how can Synod members access its Report 'Talent Management for Future Leaders and Leadership Development for Bishops and Deans', and to whom should they address any questions and comments about the proposals it contains?

*The Bishop of Ely* replied: With regard to selection, the focus of the Report is preparation for strategic leadership in the Church and not about criteria for appointment. It responds to the challenges set out in "Talent and Calling" but notes that people with outstanding leadership potential for Gospel and Kingdom Impact are not only those in hierarchical positions. The aim is to build a cadre of future leaders who are equipped to lead the challenges of growing and leading a 21st century church in its evangelism and witness. The aspiration for the selection of the future bishops is that they, as well as leaders of mission agencies, theological colleges, large churches and many other roles, will have benefited from the programme. Talent and Calling challenged the church to

reduce the learning curve on appointment and to widen the diversity of the pool for recruitment. This is what we hope to achieve both among women and men. We will produce a summary, as I said earlier, of the Report for general circulation in January - working versions are already in circulation through diocesan bishops and for those who need it professionally. As noted above, the aim is to learn from implementation and comments can always be sent through the Wash House for the Development and Appointments Group (a sub-committee of House of Bishops) to consider.

40. *Revd Canon Dr Hazel Whitehead (Guildford)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Since it was Archbishop Justin himself who told the College of Bishops and their senior women colleagues (meeting in Oxford) that they should follow his example and always count heads in order to assess whether there was fair representation, could the Chair of the House of Bishops please clarify why the membership of the Lord Stephen Green's Group comprised 10 men and 2 lay women - and not a single ordained woman?

41. *Mrs Mary Johnston (London)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Given that no ordained woman contributed to the work of Lord Green's group, how confident are those responsible for CMD that the proposed "talent pool" arrangements outlined in "Talent Management for Future Leaders and Leadership Development for Bishops and Deans" are suited to the particular development needs of women clergy?

*The Bishop of Ely* replied: I would like to take this and Question 41 together. Lord Green's report draws on extensive work on senior clerical leadership over the last ten years. Diocesan bishops for the development and appointments group, at that stage exclusively male as a sub-committee of the House of Bishops, were asked, given their remit, to work with him in drawing on this material and on the work of a series of task groups set up to inform the project. So, for example, on the group reviewing talent management there were two women priests: Ruth Worsley, the Archdeacon of Wilts, and the Revd Elizabeth Adekunle. In addition, the Archdeacon of Colchester was a member of DAG at the later stages of his work. The desktop review included documents such as role specifications, the output of behavioural event interviews and leadership conferences and, indeed, GS 1815, to which ordained women have fully contributed. The report does recommend targeted development for individuals in groups currently under-represented in senior leadership and I am confident that this programme combined with other work which we, the Ministry Division and the Transformations Group are developing in this area will ensure that the development needs of women are met.

*Revd Canon Jane Charman (Salisbury)*: Given the wide implications of the Lord Green report for a number of areas of the Church's work and given the significant questions that the report has raised, which I think are coming towards you through the questions that have been tabled, does the House of Bishops feel that the Lord Green report would benefit from the oxygen of wider discussion, and would the House of Bishops consider asking the Business Committee to schedule a take note debate on the Lord Green report in the February group of sessions?

*The Bishop of Ely*: That is above my pay grade, as another bishop has already said, to determine what should be debated in this Synod. This report produced by Lord Green

was a report to the Archbishops and to the Church Commissioners and the spending review group. Certainly there will be a circulation of a report or a version of the report in January, as I have said, and DAG, the group which I chair, is happy to engage in consultation and conversation around these really important issues because we are seeking a step change in the way in which training and development operates, not just for senior leaders but across the whole Church.

*Revd Andrew Dotchin (St Edmundsbury and Ipswich):* Does this include the consideration of self-supporting ministers as well as stipendiary?

*The Bishop of Ely:* It is not for me at this stage to say what implications Lord Green's report will have in the detail and training across the Church for ordained ministers, whether self-supporting or stipendiary, and that will be a matter for the Ministry Division. All I can say is that what is being proposed here, we hope, will have important ramifications for a step change in training for all clergy and indeed for lay leaders in the life of the Church.

42. *Revd Canon Jane Charman (Salisbury)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Now that it is possible for women to be candidates for the offices of Diocesan and Suffragan Bishop, what plans are there for reviewing the criteria for appointment so that the different experiences of women candidates, and the transferable skills these experiences have forged, are recognised and taken into account?

*The Bishop of Ely* replied: The criteria do not require revision but the CVs of female candidates will need to be read through a different lens, given the lack of opportunity they have had until now to be considered for episcopal appointments. That said, we do need to recognise that we have many women with 20 years' ordained experience which is similar to many male candidates. The present focus is on ensuring that female candidates have the preparation they need to participate equally in any selection process. We do need to treat all candidates as individuals and not fall into the trap of thinking that all women will bring the same skills to episcopal ministry any more than men do.

43. *Revd Julie Conalty (Rochester)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Will the House of Bishops be ensuring there is consultation with the advisors for women's ministry in the dioceses regarding the proposals from Lord Green's group contained in 'Talent Management for Future Leaders and Leadership Development for Bishops and Deans'?

*The Bishop of Ely* replied: Diocesan bishops have already been invited to share the report with their senior teams and others for whom they think it would be useful. We have already had a discussion of these matters in the Ely Bishops staff team which includes the advisor on women's ministry.

*Revd Julie Conalty:* As part of that approach, what steps are being taken to minimise the inherent risks in adopting models of talent development from industry and commerce where women and black, Asian and other minority ethnic individuals are severely under-represented in the boardroom?

*The Bishop of Ely:* There is no attempt or desire at all in this initiative to read over from other kind of organisation any kind of slavish adherence to particular principles. What we wish to do is get the best possible and challenging training for women and men which equips the Church better for the challenges of mission and ministry into the future.

44. *Revd Dr Patrick Richmond (Norwich)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: In November 2013, General Synod passed a motion recognising the priority of evangelism and making new disciples, calling upon every diocesan synod to spend the bulk of one meeting annually and some part of every meeting focused on sharing experiences and initiatives for making new disciples. A year later what consideration has the House given to this motion and its effectiveness?

*The Bishop of St Albans (Rt Revd Dr Alan Smith)* replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: So far the House has not given this motion any specific consideration but with a fresh priority on evangelism promoted by the Archbishops' Evangelism Task Group we expect that the making of new disciples will be given time on the House's agenda in due course. In the meantime, members of Synod will no doubt have reported the content of the motion back to their diocesan synods who of course are at liberty, and indeed encouraged, to take up the proposal and devote the bulk of one meeting a year to sharing experiences of mission.

*Revd Dr Patrick Richmond:* Thank you for that honest and encouraging answer, Bishop. Can I press the second part and ask will the House give any consideration to the effectiveness of such motions. Given that they were led by the Archbishops, passed overwhelmingly by the Synod, will there be consideration of whether it actually has any concrete effect out there?

*The Bishop of St Albans:* Thank you very much. As you know, the Evangelism Task Group is working on the very early stages of its work. It is seeking to create a clear focus around a whole number of areas and clearly, as in other aspects of the Church's life such as the *From Anecdote to Evidence* report, it is vitally important that we keep reflecting on this, as indeed of all these initiatives, to learn from them and see whether they are making any difference so the intention is absolutely to try and keep reflecting and learning as we go along.

### **Secretary General**

45. *Mrs Christina Reese (St Albans)* asked the Secretary General: Is there any longer a bar on a man or a woman who, having been ordained to the priesthood by a bishop who is a woman in another province of the Anglican Communion or in another Church with which the Church of England is in communion, being given permission to officiate under the Overseas and other Clergy (Ministry and Ordination) Measure 1967, so as to make them then to be as a priest in the Church of England, given a Licence or permission to Officiate?

*Secretary General (Mr William Fittall)* replied: The decision taken by the Synod this afternoon means that it is now lawful for women to be consecrated as bishops in England. The rationale for the bar which the Archbishops have operated up to now

under the 1967 Measure has therefore disappeared. The gender of the consecrating bishop will no longer be relevant when applications to officiate are considered.

*The Bishop of Willesden (Rt Revd Peter Broadbent, Southern Suffragans):* Can the Secretary General please help the Synod with the progress that is being made on the review of the Overseas and other Clergy Measure, which I think was set in train a couple of years ago but seems to have stalled?

*Secretary General:* I think the position is that there was a provision included in the Miscellaneous Provisions Measure which quite recently secured Royal Assent after the final approval here and that measure gives a power to make regulations, which we hope will remove the need in simple cases for applications. The work on those regulations has not yet been completed and will need to come to the House of Bishops before it comes into force.

46. *Revd Rosalind Rutherford (Winchester)* asked the Secretary General: What steps need to be taken to ensure that all the components of the legislative package for Women in the Episcopate will apply fully in the Isle of Man and in all the Channel Islands; and can you confirm that these steps have been taken so that the legislation can come into force on the same day as that on which it is expected to come into force in England (17th Nov 2014)?

*Secretary General* replied: The legislation that has come into force today in England cannot come into force in the Crown Dependencies until the usual processes involving the civil authorities of those distinct jurisdictions have been completed. In the case of the Isle of Man, a draft Measure has been prepared for consideration by the diocesan synod at the earliest possible opportunity on 13 January and would then need to be submitted to Tynwald. In the case of the Channel Islands, a scheme needs to be drawn up in consultation with the deanery synods of the Islands, communicated to the States General for comment, approved by the General Synod and then confirmed by Order in Council. I understand that process is about to begin, but it is a little too soon to predict the timescale.

*Revd Rosalind Rutherford:* I think many members will think it is regrettable it is not possible to give a specific date for the Channel Islands, but could you assure Synod that active and practical encouragement will be given to those responsible for the process to ensure that you will take significantly less time than the extra six years it took for the 1992 Measure to be applied in the Islands?

*Secretary General* replied: We have just broken the land speed record in getting legislation through the Ecclesiastical Committee in about eight days and through the two Houses of Parliament very speedily after the recess. In relation to the civil authorities in the Channel Islands, it would be very good if we could similarly create a new record, but I am afraid I cannot guarantee because that is not ultimately in my hands, or indeed the hands of the General Synod.

*The Bishop of Dover (Rt Revd Trevor Willmott):* Would the Secretary General find it helpful to know that letters have gone to the deaneries of Jersey and Guernsey to actually start the process already?

*Secretary General:* That is very encouraging.

*The Chair:* I am afraid we are now reaching the time scheduled for the end of this item. The answers to the unanswered questions are available on the notice board in the Bishop Partridge Hall.

**[Questions 47 – 73 were not reached and were answered in writing]**

47. *Revd Mark Ireland (Lichfield)* asked the Secretary General: Bearing in mind the big reduction in both electoral roll numbers and stipendiary clergy since the introduction of synodical government, and the increasing difficulty of many deaneries in filling their allocated places on diocesan synod, has any consideration been given to removing the requirement in the Church Representation Rules for each deanery (however tiny) to have a minimum of four places (two clergy and two laity) on its diocesan synod?

*The Secretary General* replied: This is not, so far as I am aware, an issue that was raised with the Elections Review Group in this quinquennial exercise nor with the previous or current groups looking at simplification. The next Elections Review Group will be able to consider the arguments if the issue has not been picked up in the meantime.

48. *Revd Christopher Hobbs (London)* asked the Secretary General: Since the House of Bishops has said that same sex marriage for its clergy is inappropriate, what penalties could be imposed under the Clergy Discipline Measure in relation to clergy who nonetheless enter into a same sex marriage, if they consent to the imposition of a penalty by their bishop or are found by a bishop's disciplinary tribunal to have engaged in misconduct for the purposes of the Measure?

*The Secretary General* replied: The full range of possible penalties for misconduct which is proven or admitted is set out in section 24 of the Clergy Discipline Measure 2003 and ranges from a rebuke to prohibition for life from exercising any of the functions of the cleric's Orders.

49. *Revd Christopher Hobbs (London)* asked the Secretary General: Has consideration been giving to restructuring, so that there is in future a Ministry and Evangelism Division, and a Public Affairs and Theology Division?

*The Secretary General* replied: Over the past eighteen months I have, with colleagues, reshaped our theological and ecumenical team and carried out a major reorganisation of the Communications Office. With my support, the Director of the Ministry Division launched a consultation on a substantial restructuring of the Ministry Division last month. I have no plans to reorganise the Mission and Public Affairs Division which, under the leadership of the Reverend Doctor Malcolm Brown and the oversight of the Mission and Public Affairs Council, seems to me to be managing the synergies between the various areas of its work extremely well.

## Board of Education

50. *Mrs Mary Judkins (Leeds)* asked the Chair of the Board of Education: Many members of General Synod will know about the 1277 initiative 'Make them Count'. What advice can the Board give on what we can do to support this as a means of mission and encourage our own churches to at least pray intelligently?

*The Bishop of Ely (Rt Revd Stephen Conway)* replied as Chair of Board of Education: The Church of England was one of the founding members when 1277 Make them Count was formed in 2009, and continues to be actively involved in this initiative which focuses on church based toddler groups. The 1277 website offers a range of ideas and resources to support this, and the 1277 Facebook page offers a lively exchange of ideas and suggestions for those involved with early years.

The Board would encourage all parishes to consider their engagement with *Early Years* initiatives, including church based toddler groups, and to take part in the National Prayer Day for Toddler Groups which is held annually in June.

51. *Mrs Rosemary Lyon (Blackburn)* asked the Chair of the Board of Education: What is the progress of "The Christianity Project" since its launch at Lambeth Palace last year?

*The Bishop of Ely* replied: The Christianity Project is a superb initiative which will transform the teaching of Christianity in RE in schools, ensuring that children and young people are able to develop theological literacy. It lies at the heart of our strategy for improving the quality of RE, and will be available to all schools, not just Church of England schools. Our consultant and team of writers are busily producing material, but this has not yet been completed or officially launched. There will be a period of mass piloting and trialling of materials in schools across the country early in 2015 and we are working in partnership with RE Today to ensure that revised and improved materials are then published and disseminated effectively.

52. *Mrs Mary Durlacher (Chelmsford)* asked the Chair of the Board of Education: Following the National Society's excellent submission to the Government's consultation on the proposed new standards for schools, is the Board of Education able to give any assurance that the new requirements will not jeopardise the long-standing legal protections for church schools to freely uphold their ethos founded on the Christian values which have served our children and our country so well for so long?

*The Bishop of Ely* replied: The Government consulted on changes to the independent schools regulations during the summer. The so called 'Trojan Horse' incidents have led to much discussion of the term 'British values' and, as with many other areas of education policy at the moment, part of that consultation included the introduction of a form of words to strengthen the need for schools to teach 'British Values'. The Church of England Education Office's response to the consultation is now available on its website <http://bit.ly/1zh84g7> and forms part of a call for a wider conversation about the nature of British values. There is nothing in the teaching of British values which can contravene or jeopardise the long-standing protections for Church Schools which are enshrined in law. Church Schools must operate and teach in a way that accords with

their trust deeds, that is, to promote education in accordance with the teaching of the Church of England.

53. *Revd Canon Dr Christopher Sugden (Oxford)* asked the Chair of the Board of Education: Has the Board of Education made a substantial response to the new reported guidelines being used by Ofsted in their evaluation of faith schools?

*The Bishop of Ely* replied: I refer to the answer to Question 52. The Church of England's Education Office has itself engaged with ministers and officials of the Department for Education on this matter, and is satisfied that the new regulations themselves should not provide cause for concern. However, the implementation of the regulations by Ofsted inspectors and others will remain under the scrutiny of diocesan education teams and the Education Office itself. Any concerns arising from this would be taken up at a senior level.

54. *Revd Canon Dr Simon Cox (Blackburn)* asked the Chair of the Board of Education: What response has or will the Board of Education made or make to the Government's 'British Values' Agenda as interpreted by Ofsted in recent pronouncements and inspections of faith schools?

*The Bishop of Ely* replied: Please see the answer to Questions 52 and 53.

55. *Revd Canon Dr Simon Cox (Blackburn)* asked the Chair of the Board of Education: Newspaper reports suggest that Faith Schools are being singled out by Ofsted and criticized for not celebrating other faiths' festivals or inviting in other faiths' leaders. What is the Board of Education doing to promote the requirement of the 1944 Education Act to hold acts of worship of a 'wholly or mainly Christian Character' in the light of Ofsted's approach, which seems to be inconsistent with the Act, and its failure to promote this aspect of the Act in non-faith schools?

*The Bishop of Ely* replied: I refer to the answer to Questions 52 and 53. The National Society's framework for the Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools highlights the need for and expectation of high quality Christian worship in Church schools in accordance with their trust deeds. Additionally, support provided by diocesan education teams will ensure that Church of England schools have access to the best resources and training available. The Education Office will continue to work with officials in the DfE inspection unit and at Ofsted to ensure they understand the need for Ofsted to focus on the duty of all schools to hold daily acts of worship, rather than question the legal duty for schools with a religious character to promote worship in accordance with their trust deeds.

56. *Ven Clive Mansell (Rochester)* asked the Chair of the Board of Education: In the light of reports of the willingness of Ofsted inspectors to downgrade a school at inspection, following the introduction of new Regulations for schools brought forward after the "Trojan Horse" controversy in certain non-Church schools in Birmingham, for failing to "actively promote" certain Government-defined "British values", what steps have been taken by the Church of England at national level to ensure that Church schools may teach in accordance with Church of England teachings and not in any way in contradiction of their trust deeds and, in particular, that Church of England schools



will continue to be able to uphold marriage as a union between a man and a woman, as set out in the Canons of the Church of England, its liturgies and its teaching documents and not be required to promote lifestyles contrary to such teachings?

*The Bishop of Ely* replied: I refer to the previous answers to Questions 54 and 55 on the subject of British Values and Ofsted. The Church of England's Education Office has worked with The Equality and Human Rights Commission which has published guidance on marriage of same sex couples. The guidance makes clear that schools must teach the facts about marriage during relevant lessons in an objective, sensitive and professional way, especially where the national curriculum and statutory guidance applies. It adds that schools with a religious character can continue to teach about marriage according to their religious doctrines or ethos.

## Ministry Council

\*57. *Mr Adrian Vincent (Guildford)* asked the Chair of the Ministry Council: Paragraph 15 of the 19 July 2014 Consistory Court Judgment in the matter of Emmanuel Church, Leckhampton states:

"The Priest in Charge said that she knew about faculties regarding church building, but that: *"At no time in my experience as an ordinand, curate, or vicar have I ever been aware of anyone telling me that I need a Faculty to sell an item of church property."*

What steps are the Ministry Council taking in respect of the content of Initial Ministerial Education, to ensure that such a situation can never occur again?

*The Bishop of Sheffield (Rt Revd Steven Croft)* replied as Chair of the Ministry Council: The Ministry Division oversees the curriculum taught in the pre-ordination phase of IME and works with colleagues in dioceses for the curate phase. Throughout training, ordinands and curates are introduced to canon law and its practical outworking, assisted by publications created in partnership with the Ecclesiastical Law Society which are given to all ordinands. Pre-ordination training focuses on the fundamentals of the relationship of ecclesiology and church law, while training during curacy has a more directly practical aim. The Durham-validated Common Awards include modules at degree and Masters level in this area. Dioceses also equip new incumbents in their new responsibilities both initially and in their continuing ministerial development.

58. *Revd Charles Read (Norwich)* asked the Chair of the Ministry Council: What steps is the Ministry Council taking to encourage vocations to ordained ministry among women under 30?

*The Bishop of Sheffield* replied: The Ministry Council recognises the need to take positive action in cooperation with Bishops, dioceses and women's networks to encourage more young women in their vocation to ordained ministry. The Ministry Division has supported research into vocations among young women since 2012 and now has appointed a researcher to liaise with the Transformations network in supporting diocesan policy development and to resource the Transformations Research and Implementation Group which advises the bishops on research and good practice in

dioceses. Staff in the Division support young women's vocations events sponsored by dioceses and women's networks such as Awesome. The Church of England Ministry Experience Scheme has among its grant-making criteria evidence of active recruitment for diversity. As a result over 50% of the 2014 cohort are young women. The Division provides training for young vocations champions which addresses ways to encourage vocations among young women as part of diocesan vocations strategies.

59. *Mrs Anne Foreman (Exeter)* asked the Chair of the Ministry Council: How many Dioceses are participating in the Young Vocations Initiative and how many young women and young men have had their vocations tested as a result of the Initiative?

*The Bishop of Sheffield:* 41 dioceses have one or more Young Vocations Champions, who are responsible for advocating for and developing their diocesan strategy for nurturing young vocations among women and men. Four dioceses have participated in the first year in the Church of England Ministry Experience Scheme, ending in July 2014, with a total of 6 female and 8 male participants. In the current year, nine dioceses are participating and 16 of the 28 participants are female. Of the total of 42 participants so far, seven have attended a Bishops' Advisory Panel and all were recommended. So far in 2014 the total number of candidates under 30 attending Panels is 112, of whom 25 are female and 87 male. Of these, 23 women and 75 men were recommended.

60. *Mr Nick Harding (Southwell & Nottingham)* asked the Chair of the Ministry Council: Following the findings of *From Anecdote to Evidence* relating to the urgency of the need to work with children, young people and families, are there any plans as part of 'Common Awards' to make training for this essential area of ministry mandatory for all ordinands at all institutions?

*The Bishop of Sheffield* replied: The Common Awards offer a broad-based curriculum for ordinands and other learners to equip people theologically, personally and practically for a wide range of ministerial challenges. The awards currently include three specific modules on working with children. Through partnership with the Institute for Children, Youth and Mission, this provision will be much expanded for the coming academic year. The precise content of an individual's pattern of study is worked out in detail in the candidate's theological education institution, in relation to the candidate's prior experience and envisaged ministry. There is no plan at the moment to make children's ministry modules mandatory as ordinands can learn in other ways too, for example, through placement experience. At the same time priorities for training will be under further review in the light of the outcomes of the various reviews taking place including Resourcing Ministerial Education.

61. *Mr Andrew Presland (Peterborough)* asked the Chair of the Ministry Council: What forecasts of future requirements for numbers and types of clergy (e.g. stipendiary, NSM, pioneers) is the Task Group for Resourcing Ministerial Education using in its work on identifying the right resources for training them?

*The Bishop of Sheffield:* The Resourcing Ministerial Education Task Group is grateful for the work of the Resourcing the Future Task Group in providing the results of its survey of future leadership requirements in the dioceses. The survey was conducted in May 2014 through a questionnaire to each diocese asking about the current strength of

its ministry and its likely future needs. There were 33 responses and they included considerable detail about the numbers, kinds and categories of clergy and lay ministers required in the future. Reference was also made to the annually published Ministry Statistics in order to relate demand and supply from current resources. The Resourcing Ministerial Education Task Group has made use of this information in its review of resourcing and is framing its proposals to meet the aspirations of the dioceses expressed in the results of the survey.

### **Remuneration and Conditions of Service Committee**

62. *Revd Mark Ireland (Lichfield)* asked the Chair of the Remuneration and Conditions of Service Committee: How many clergy have voluntarily surrendered their freehold (whilst remaining in the same post) and transferred to common tenure, and how many clergy still retain freehold? What are the advantages for freehold incumbents of moving to common tenure, and what steps are Ministry Division taking to persuade freehold clergy of the benefits of transferring?

*The Bishop of Manchester (Rt Revd David Walker)* replied as Chair of the Remuneration and Conditions of Service Committee: As at the end of October, figures from dioceses, which may not be complete, suggest that 581 incumbents have voluntarily surrendered freehold and transferred to common tenure; 1,939 retain the freehold, which represents 52% of incumbents. Most of the rights of an incumbent remain unchanged by moving onto common tenure. Advantages for incumbents include legal entitlements to

- 36 days' annual leave and one day off per week;
- pay of not less than the National Minimum Stipend if full time stipendiary;
- access to a grievance procedure.

The significant differences between freehold and common tenure are available on the Church of England website. Whether to opt into common tenure is for freehold incumbents to decide for themselves. Ministry Division are not therefore taking any steps to persuade them to do so. If senior diocesan clergy have opted for common tenure, their lead may encourage others to follow.

### **Mission and Public Affairs Council**

63. *Mr Clive Scowen (London)* asked the Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council: What progress has been made in the last 18 months in equipping young people in our parishes for evangelism, through Mission Academies and other means?

*Mr Philip Fletcher (ex officio)* replied as Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council: Mission Academies have equipped and sent out 750 young people, in 40 regions, to lead their own local mission and evangelism initiatives. New regional academies are being started and others are continuing into a second year. Funding for the pilot was given by MPA, and then match funded by Jerusalem, Laing and Henry Smith trusts, making a total of £95,000. The team is now planning to launch fun-sized academies where as few as three young people can get together and use edited material to dream, plan and initiate local mission and evangelism projects.

64. *Dr John Dinnen (Hereford)* asked the Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council: What response has the MPA or the Archbishops' Council made to the "Kairos Britain" call for action, following the "Kairos Palestine" cry for support in 2009?

*Mr Philip Fletcher* replied: The Mission and Public Affairs Council (MPAC) and the Archbishops' Council have not considered 'Kairos Britain'. In 2010, however, MPAC circulated a background paper to General Synod on 'Kairos Palestine'. In this response MPAC welcomed 'Kairos Palestine' as a thoughtful account of what it means to be a Palestinian Christian, but it concluded that the clear criteria set by the Archbishops' Council for corporately affiliating with any campaign had not been met in this instance. As suggested in 2010, this position does not prevent individuals endorsing the document through the Kairos Palestine or Kairos Britain website.

65. *Mrs Rosemary Lyon (Blackburn)* asked the Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council: Has consideration been given to what more the Church can do to proclaim the benefits of Christian marriage and the traditional family?

*Mr Philip Fletcher* replied: MPA is permanently alert to opportunities to promote marriage and the family and to share the Christian vision of good relationships, commitment and faithfulness. There is no end to what the Church can do to promote these things, since it is mainly by the example of Christian men and women, living their lives faithfully in the wider community, as well as the teaching in our churches, that Christian understandings of marriage and family are communicated. But on behalf of the wider church, we ensure that we respond fully to government consultations where there is a marriage or family dimension, and we work closely with many other church and secular bodies promoting marriage and families. MPA is working with the Weddings Project team to help the Church to support couples and families at their weddings and through the first few years of married life.

66. *Mrs Andrea Minichiello Williams (Chichester)* asked the Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council: Have any representations been made on behalf of Church of England to Her Majesty's Government regarding gender selection abortions and assisted suicide?

*Mr Philip Fletcher* replied: The MPAC in conjunction with the Bishop of Carlisle (the lead bishop for healthcare issues) has published a number of statements and has submitted a number of written responses to government and other consultations in recent months and years, setting out the Church's position on both topics. These issues have also been discussed during meetings with Government ministers as well as by letter. In keeping with relevant resolutions of the General Synod, the Church's opposition both to gender selection abortion and to a change in the law on assisted suicide, has been clearly, consistently and repeatedly stated.

67. *Mrs Andrea Minichiello Williams (Chichester)* asked the Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council: Have any representations been made on behalf of the Church of England to the Equality and Human Rights Commission's 'Call for Evidence' as part of its current research project concerned with freedom of religion and belief in the United Kingdom?

*Mr Philip Fletcher* replied: A response to the Call for Evidence was sent on behalf of the Mission and Public Affairs Council, on 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2014. It is available to be read on the Church of England website, in the Views section.

68 *Mrs Mary Judkins (Leeds)* asked the Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council: At Christmas the Anglican Church in New Zealand, through the good offices of CMS, is celebrating 200 years of the arrival of Christianity in that country. What is the Church of England doing, as part of the Anglican Communion, to contribute to their celebration, and how are the churches in England being informed of this event other than through CMS?

*Mr Philip Fletcher* replied: The forthcoming Partnership for World Mission Conference (19-21 November) will be asked to send greetings and to pray for the Anglican Church in New Zealand/Aotearoa on this important milestone in their history. Worship material from the New Zealand Prayer Book will be used at various points in the conference. Participants will be invited to make this significant anniversary known in their dioceses and agencies.

## **Business Committee**

69. *Revd Preb Stephen Lynas (Bath & Wells)* asked the Chair of the Business Committee: As part of the Business Committee's look forward to elections next year and a new Synod next November, what plans do they have for re-working the excellent *A Survival Guide to General Synod* to update it and ensure new members can participate as fully as possible and as quickly as possible?

*Revd Canon Sue Booy*s (Oxford) replied as Chair of the Business Committee: The Business Committee has formed a sub-group to prepare for the induction of new members and updating the *Survival Guide* will definitely be a part of the work that they are planning. Any offers of help would be gratefully received.

70. *Mr Gavin Oldham (Oxford)* asked the Chair of the Business Committee: In GS 1902-5Y para.98, the Revision Committee for the draft Synodical Government Legislation expressed the view that dioceses should be encouraged by guidance 'to recognise that, in the light of technological advances, there are other means than the traditional hustings meeting to allow candidates to engage with the electorate and to be creative in their use of the range of alternatives to such meetings.' What steps have been taken towards encouraging dioceses to explore the practical possibilities of using electronic media in time for the General Synod Elections in 2015, as pioneered by Bristol and Gloucester in 2010?

*Revd Canon Sue Booy*s replied: The guidance referred to in GS 1902-5Y was that circulated to dioceses by the Legal Office in advance of the quinquennial elections. The current version of that guidance will be updated in a number of respects for 2015, as indicated by the latest report of the Elections Review Group. This will include encouragement to look at alternatives to traditional hustings. The new guidance will be circulated in advance of a seminar for Presiding Officers in Church House on 5 March next year, which will provide an opportunity for dioceses to exchange ideas about the

different possibilities for hustings that exist, including the use of electronic media. I am certain that the Dioceses of Bristol and Gloucester - who have piloted some alternatives to the traditional hustings approach - will be very willing to share their experiences with other dioceses as part of that process.

71. *Mrs April Alexander (Southwark)* asked the Chair of the Business Committee: The You.Gov website says "You should not ask someone for their date of birth on an application form. People selecting candidates...should not be influenced by someone's age." This being the case, is there any reason why we should not stop doing so on applications to stand for elections to General Synod or to any of its sub-committees and can this stipulation be enforced?

*Revd Canon Sue Booy*s replied: The obligation on General Synod candidates to give dates of birth is set out in Rule 20(2) of the Clergy Representation Rules and Rule 39(4) of the Church Representation Rules. This requirement does not infringe discrimination legislation. It is enforceable, since a nomination not providing that information would be invalid. The view has been taken, on the various occasions when the issue was considered in the past, that the provision of a date of birth was preferable to imposing limits on the term for which long-standing members can serve: it puts the electorate in an informed position, allowing them to retain the experience of long standing members of the Synod if they wish to do so. In that respect our rules reflect the position in Parliamentary elections, in which candidates are also required to give their date of birth on their nomination forms.

72. *Revd Dr Patrick Richmond (Norwich)* asked the Chair of the Business Committee: In November 2013, the General Synod passed a motion recognising the priority of evangelism and making new disciples and calling upon every diocesan and deanery synod and every PCC to spend the bulk of one meeting annually and some part of every meeting focusing on sharing experiences and initiatives for making new disciples. What consideration will the Business Committee give to reviewing the effectiveness of such motions, priorities and calls?

*Revd Canon Sue Booy*s replied: The November 2013 General Synod passed a Motion on Intentional Evangelism and supported the formation of an Archbishops' Task Group on Evangelism. The Business Committee hopes to schedule a report back on progress by this Task Group at a future date. This will be one means of evaluating the effectiveness of the 2013 GS Motion. Paragraphs (d) and (e) of the Synod Motion referred the task of evangelism back to diocesan and deanery synods, PCCs and parishes. It is for them to take forward this work at diocesan and parish level. However, since 'Going for Growth' is one of the long-term Quinquennial Goals of the Archbishops' Council, the Business Committee anticipates that the Council will want to bring further updates on the progress of the Church's work on evangelism to future General Synods, probably in the next quinquennium.

### **Standing Orders Committee**

73. *Mr Thomas Sutcliffe (Southwark)* asked the Chair of the Standing Orders Committee: Will the Committee seek views on the desirability of the discretion enjoyed by the Business Committee over the timing of debates on Private Members' Motions

and Diocesan Synod Motions, with a view to its considering whether a restoration of some form of the autonomy and initiative provided by a distinct Standing Committee, or alternatively a specific power provided in Standing Orders to require particular business to have to be debated, might serve the General Synod's role as a sounding-board and discussion chamber better?

*Mr Geoffrey Tattersall QC (Manchester)* replied as Chair of the Standing Orders Committee: The Committee will give the issue raised by Mr Sutcliffe initial consideration at its next meeting on 5th January, with a view to deciding whether it can helpfully engage with it and, if it thinks it can, what process it should adopt for doing so. If Mr Sutcliffe or any other members wish to write to it in advance of that meeting to assist their deliberations, the Committee will be very happy to hear from them.

*The Chair:* That brings our business for the day to an end.

*The Archbishop of Canterbury dismissed the Synod with the blessing at 7.15 pm.*

## **FULL SYNOD: SECOND DAY TUESDAY 18 NOVEMBER 2014**

THE CHAIR: *The Archbishop of Canterbury (The Most Revd and Rt Hon Justin Welby)* took the Chair at 10.32 am

### **Violence against Religious Minorities in Iraq and Syria**

*The Chair:* Good morning. I would now like to open this session, which takes the form of a panel discussion. I would particularly like to welcome our panel members who have kindly agreed to address the Synod. They will be introduced in a few moments but their biographies may be found on the Fourth Notice Paper. The Bishop of Coventry will moderate the panel discussion and I will be chairing the Q and A period which will follow the initial discussion. At the end of the session, the Archbishop of York will be leading us in a short period of prayer for persecuted minorities. I will now hand over to Bishop Christopher who will open the panel discussion.

*The Bishop of Coventry (Rt Revd Dr Christopher Cocksworth):* Thank you, your Grace. Members of Synod, we have been witnessing, first in Syria and then in Iraq, a humanitarian disaster of almost unimaginable proportions, huge numbers of dead and damaged, vast swathes of people displaced from homes and forced from their lands and children denied not only an education but their very childhood. We have heard and read and even seen with our eyes brutality that we thought belonged in the history books. We have seen whole communities gasping for breath after the use of chemical weapons and we have seen decapitated civilians. We have seen religion used as a weapon of war and human beings targeted, persecuted and eradicated because of their faith. We have watched two beautiful countries descend into hell.

Last night, I heard on the radio the mother of Abdul Rachman, recently executed; she said, "The world is broken". Our discussion today gives us an opportunity to learn and listen from each other how this brokenness has come about and how this brokenness is being experienced by minority religious communities. Especially in our minds and hearts today, of course, will be the Christian communities suffering so much in Syria and Iraq as we play our part in the mobilisation of consciences over the persecution of Christians that Pope Francis called for. As Prince Charles said powerfully very recently, the indescribable tragedy that Christianity is now under such threat in the Middle East is part of a bigger picture of the expulsion of Muslims and Yazidis from their towns and cities that their ancestors have occupied for centuries. Our hearts go out to all who are hounded and hunted because of their religious identity.

Moreover, we know that the suffering of religious minorities in Syria and in Iraq is part of a wider denial of freedom of religion and belief that crosses the continents and mocks the universal declaration of human rights and is causing untold hurt and harm throughout the world. As the mother of Abdul Rachman said, "The world is broken but it will be healed in the end". We are here also to think hard about how we can help that healing to begin, healing through concerted humanitarian action, healing through determined prayer and healing through political advocacy. It is a healing that not only has to do with the lands themselves of Syria and Iraq and the lands that surround them,



but in our own land and other European countries as this trauma presses into our own communities and draws people directly into the conflicts and threatens to disrupt the cohesion of our cities and towns.

We are looking, as it were, at those two faces of persecution that the Archbishop spoke powerfully of this morning, the face of pain and petition and also the face of faith and long-suffering and hope. To help us in our learning and listening, we are very privileged to be joined by four colleagues. Two of them are well-known to you, the Bishop of Leeds, Nick Baines; and our dear friend reading the Gospel this morning, our brother in Christ, his Grace, Bishop Angaelos, General Bishop of the Coptic Church in the UK and also ecumenical observer to this Synod. Nick and Bishop Angaelos, your Grace, thank you so much for being part of this.

Two members of our panel are not so well-known to the Synod, though they are very well-known in other circles and that is why they are with us today. We are very grateful to the Reverend Rachel Carnegie, Joint Executive Director of Anglican Alliance. Also, we are very grateful indeed to be joined by Shaykh Dr Fuad Nahdi the Executive Director of the Radical Middle Way and Founding Editor of a pioneering Muslim magazine, Q-News, and also by your colleague who is here, Abdul-Rehman Malik. It is wonderful, Shaykh, to have you with us. I believe that you are the first Muslim to have addressed Synod. We hope you will feel very much at home among us and welcomed. We will be hearing from you later, but I cannot resist quoting some beautiful words that you wrote in the Guardian (I think it was today), "I will enter the Synod in the way I would have entered the home of Jesus of Nazareth, in awe and wonderment, seeking brotherhood and understanding". I think we should all do that; that is a challenge to us all.

Our friends are here today not to be the experts that have got all the answers, not to give speeches, but to take part in a discussion, a conversation that we are going to open up. They are here because they do have some experience and expertise that we would like to hear about and draw from. These are very complex matters. We are here together to work together to help us to pray harder and do better. What I would like to do is open up the discussion by turning to Bishop Angaelos and then I will move to other colleagues on this table and we might get a little conversation going between us or we might then hand back to the Archbishop for some questions.

Bishop Angaelos, we are very grateful that you are here today. We know that you do so much on these matters and that you do have an ear to the ground in a way that probably a lot of us do not have in terms of the Christian communities in Iraq and Syria. Could you tell us something about the reports you are getting from local churches there and how Christians and other minorities are coping with these extraordinarily appalling conditions that they are facing?

*His Grace Bishop Angaelos (Ecumenical Reps):* Thank you. Might I start, first, by thanking this chamber and the Chair and the Business Committee for putting this on the agenda. It is not the first time it has happened. It is not the first time that the heart of this chamber and General Synod has gone out to Christians in the Middle East and I am very thankful that it remains in our hearts and in our prayers. I know that that is one of the things that touches many people on the ground in Iraq, Syria, Egypt and the wider

Middle East. We had a meeting recently at Lambeth Palace hosted by his Grace, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and four leaders of the Churches of the Middle East.

I was very aware that I come with quite a burden of trying to represent that viewpoint of so many millions of people. Out of that and out of my conversation in the last few days with the Syrian Archbishop and the Armenian bishop here and also bishops in Mosul, I wanted to convey a little bit of the feeling there, starting with two comments that came out of those encounters. The first was one of the pastors of the area who said, "Countless people in the region are displaced and are in urgent need of humanitarian aid, including food, shelter and healthcare. They specifically need nurseries, mobile clinics, schooling facilities. Displaced Christians have suffered great losses". These are the real needs that are experienced now by people immediately. Another said, "In my home city of Qaraqosh, Christians have been driven away. They have suffered great losses, including heritage and they face urgent needs".

This is just an example of what people are feeling on the ground. They are feeling vulnerable. They are feeling betrayed. There is a lack of trust within not only their neighbours now, that they have lived side by side with for generations, but their own governments and their own rulers there. Some of them feel abandoned. Having said that, they do not feel defeated because they are still there. There are four main areas of conversation that are being had.

The first is a general sense of keeping them and their issues live in our prayers and in our advocacy because, unfortunately, we tend to be led by media sources now rather than just relying on them for information and they move on very quickly and so people, actually, feel forgotten very quickly. We are neither news reporters, so we do not need to sell newspapers, nor are we politicians so we do not need to be re-elected and so therefore, we can maintain this issue in our minds and in our hearts.

The second is a humanitarian response immediately. They are in immediate need now. Their children are in need now. It is great for us to have wonderful intentions but they need it now and we are thankful to Her Majesty's Government here, as well as the various Church of England and Anglican bodies that have already contributed as well as the international community that has done so.

The third is asylum, of course, and that is a very pressing issue. The views of many Christians there on the ground will differ from Christians who are actually out here looking in. That is that we should not be prescriptive from here, telling people who can and cannot survive in the region, but we should be reactive to their own needs and listening to them specifically. The situation in, for instance, Egypt or Lebanon is very different from Iraq and Syria where, in the former, there is a possible legitimate presence by the request of the people themselves saying, 'We want to stay here. We want to be supported here'. In the latter, some will say, 'Yes, our societies here are maintained and maintainable' and some will say, 'We can't live here anymore. We need to be hosted', and I think we need to respond to that.

The fourth plea, and this is on my behalf personally, is that we stop making distinctions between the Western Church and the Eastern Church because we are one Church and one body and when one part suffers we all suffer and when one part is defiant we are all

defiant. I feel that this division has become cosmetic and artificial and we need to think and feel and react as one Church and I think that would be echoed by my brothers and sisters in the Middle East today.

*The Bishop of Coventry:* Your Grace, thank you very much. You have opened up four major issues there, thank you. Dr Fuad Nahdi, it would be good to come back to some of those issues that his Grace has raised in terms of the experience on the ground of some of the communities that you know about in Iraq and Syria, but could I shift the focus now back to this land and simply ask you how would you say events in Iraq and Syria are being seen by Muslim communities in Britain now and how these events are impacting upon community relations. That would be very good for us to hear. The people here, of course, are embedded in their communities seeking to better their communities. We need to hear from you on the impact this is making to Muslim communities.

*Shaykh Fuad Nahdi:* Thank you. In the name of God, the most beneficent, the most merciful, I bear witness that there is no God but God and that Abraham, Moses, Jesus and Mohammed are his messengers. I would like to greet the Synod in the Islamic greeting of '*As-salamu alaykum*', peace be upon you. All thanks are to God for this opportunity, a very rare opportunity. I thank Him and all those who are involved to give us this opportunity to be here.

I am neither a theologian nor am I an academic. The profession I chose is considered by many as one of the lowest, and that is a journalist, but there is some redemption in it. The vast majority of the Muslim community in this country are paralysed by what is going on. They are looking for prophetic action. They find none. They need to go, in my opinion, not only them but all of us, into the third option, and that is into prayer. What is going on is totally incomprehensible.

It questions a lot of things, but the practicality of it is that the pressure that is being put indirectly, particularly on our young people, to try and explain things, for which they do not have a word to say or do anything thousands of miles away, makes the weaker ones amongst them react in different ways. One of them would be to be frustrated, to be reactionary, to find somebody to blame, rather than look at the situation in a cool and calculated way. But the most awful way is to get engaged in anger and it is anger which they talk about and the anger makes logic.

People in this room are very educated and intelligent people and you know the persecution of Christians in Iraq and Syria and perhaps in the rest of the Muslim world is heinous and totally unacceptable to any sane human being, whether they are Muslims or otherwise. We should not forget that the Muslims have borne the brunt of these extremists and these fanatics and these idiots in that thousands if not tens of thousands have died in the last couple of years. They will continue to die if we pretend to ignore and we do not get engaged in doing the right things. The right thing (like I said in the Guardian) is that as people of faith we can provide something that none of the other solutions which are available can provide.

It is not about political analysis. It is not about talking about that there is oil there or sending troops or doing things, but we need to go back and realise that people have co-

existed. The history of Christians and Muslims co-existing in history is one of the most magnificent ever. We need to re-educate our people. The problem is (I speak as a Muslim) we do not get time to do that because all the pressure on us is to try and justify things which are unjustifiable. Everybody that I know who I would consider a friend and a Muslim has condemned what is going on, but these people who are being condemned do not listen to the condemnation. In my opinion, they do not even listen to God so I do not know why we are wasting our time on them.

I was told that this is a very serious chamber and I should be careful about my sense of humour, but I could not resist sharing with you a small anecdote. Recently in Iraq a Christian couple were driving by and they were stopped by an ISIS member and the question he asked them was, "Are you Muslims?" The Christian said, "Yes". So the man said, "Okay, quote me the Koran". The man quoted the Bible. The ISIS man seemed very happy and said, "Go on". As they drove away, the wife angrily turned on the husband and said, "You're stupid. You lied. If they had found out that we were not Muslims they would have killed us". He said, 'How do you think they would have found out?' She said, "Well, if you quoted something wrong from the Koran". He said, "It is obvious those people do not know the Koran otherwise they would not be killing us".

I come, like I said, humbled. I am not intimidated and I can look you straight in the eye. I feel I am amongst brothers here. I have not come to convert anybody but I have come to find partners in what messages and what targets that God has given all of us in this room. I say the 'impact on our communities', it is us, those who are leaders or role models or whoever it is in the front wearing these fancy robes and all these things, who must show the example about co-existence. We must show compassion but, more than anything, we must provide what is required and that is to take away ignorance. We must fight ignorance but, more importantly, we must also have faith. Faith lies in prayer.

I think that most of these inter-faiths, there should be a moratorium on them. The only inter-faith now that needs to be done is not to discuss endlessly things, but perhaps you all need to sit down and pray together. We pray together in churches and mosques and we pray to the one God who has created all of us. I say we go in it as humans and perhaps we can come out as we like, Christians, Muslims, whatever that we want. Again, I thank God and I thank the Synod for giving me this rare opportunity and God bless.

*The Bishop of Coventry:* Dr Fuad, thank you very much indeed and we will be hearing from you later. Thank you for your humour. This chamber has never stopped our Archbishop using a bit of humour. He has also called all religious leaders (as you have yourself, and we are here corporately religious leaders) to up our game to confront these issues, and your call to prayer lies behind much of what we are doing this morning. Bishop Nick, still in this land, you were involved, many of us will know, in a letter to the Prime Minister, which became a public letter. Could you tell us something about what led up to that and what followed it?

*The Bishop of Leeds (Rt Revd Nick Baines):* Yes, I was in a bad mood, really. The reason I went public with it was simply because so many people were writing to the Prime Minister, to Ministers, to MPs and simply not getting any response, not an acknowledgment and not a response, and I thought we deserved one. This may seem

odd to some people, but what I was trying to do was focus on what are the key questions that we need to be looking at here, recognising the complexity of matters and challenges that the Prime Minister and the Government had to face. I doubt if since the Second World War any Government has had to face that particular complexity of issues at one time.

So I was trying to focus the questions and genuinely ask: What is the overarching vision within which our reaction to particular crises can be helped? Because it seemed that in the absence of some articulation of that vision that we were simply reacting to the latest, loudest voice or whatever. This became clear when we saw the plight of the Yazidis on the mountain in Iraq where, quite rightly, there was some focus on their plight. The focus was there also because there were good pictures. You have got to be media literate about some of this stuff. There were good pictures. There were not good pictures of Christian communities suffering.

What interested me was that after I had published the letter, and it created a bit of a fuss, suddenly the media organisations all seemed to be chasing around finding suffering Christians in the Middle East. I do not say that in order to say I think they got it wrong or whatever, that is the name of the game we are in. People get their information. They get moved by what they see and what they hear in the media, and so for me it is a twin track thing. We have to be politically literate and media literate and we have to raise these issues in ways that are persistent, clear and reasonably intelligent.

It is no good just reacting to the latest issue. I remember in a previous job I did, in relation to the Middle East, back in the 1980s, the seeds of what came in the 2000s were being sown 20, 30 years before and the seeds for what will be in the Middle East in the next 30, 40 years are being sown now. That is what we need to give attention to, not simply reacting to what is happening but to what we are creating and taking a long-term view.

The final thing I would say is that to raise questions about asylum when we know that the voices within the Middle East are, I was going to say, conflicted, but probably diverse is a better word, there are those who are saying, 'Do not denude our lands of Christian presence and Christian witness and if you open the gates for asylum, then you may be creating a long-term problem for us here'. Yet to raise any question of asylum in the UK, where we are simply incapable of having an adult debate about immigration – it's simply too toxic - is a difficult thing to do. So we have got to be clear about how we respond to the voices actually in these countries where the suffering is going on and not simply salve our consciences by having to do something (which it is very easy for us to do) but take seriously what we are being asked to do, which is why it is important that we hear from Bishop Angaelos.

*The Bishop of Coventry:* Thank you very much, Nick. I am sure we will come back to that particular matter of asylum. People (well, all of us really, I guess) feel helplessness in the face of this sort of level of suffering and complexity of causes. Rachel, do you have anything to say to us about what is the best way that parishes and individuals can respond to the humanitarian crises in Iraq and Syria. His Grace, Bishop Angaelos, has reminded us of the urgency of that and winter, of course, is approaching; what can we

do?

*Revd Rachel Carnegie:* Thank you very much, Bishop Christopher, and thank you for the opportunity to be part of this debate. We hear all the time horrifying stories in the media from Iraq and Syria, but sometimes it is the particularities of suffering and cruelty to individuals that both haunt and galvanise us. Most recently for me, it was a friend who had just returned from Kurdistan describing a meeting with a group of traumatised mothers whose daughters had been captured and forced into sexual slavery by IS. These girls had been forced to ring their mothers by phone to describe their torture, thereby amplifying both the terror and the grief. But at the same time my friend also gave stories of hope and generosity in the region, for example where churches in Kurdistan have been reaching out not just to Christian but also to Yazidis to meet their needs.

The facts on the ground are simply devastating. In Syria nearly 200,000 people have died. There are 12.2 million within Syria in need of humanitarian assistance and a further 3.2 million refugees in the neighbouring countries. In Iraq there are 1.8 million people internally displaced, half of which are in Kurdistan, and already nearly 8,000 deaths. Behind these statistics, as we know, are the horrific tales of impact on individuals and families: violent death, trauma, displacement, rape, abductions and executions.

Many communities, as we are discussing today, have been targeted because of their religious affiliations: Christians, Yazidis, and other sects, and also different Muslim communities. There are also vulnerable pre-existing refugee communities. Within Syria there are Iraqis and Palestinians and there are Syrians now within Iraq, and a whole generation of children are growing up not knowing what normality is, living in the midst of conflict, hunger, displacement, in this vortex of extreme ideologies, and, as we know, a bitter winter now approaches.

We find ourselves at this point with a scale of humanitarian demand around the world which is unprecedented, if we add to Syria and Iraq, the conflicts in South Sudan, Eastern DR Congo and elsewhere, but also Ebola in West Africa and natural disasters elsewhere.

For the Syrian and Iraqi context, it is absolutely crucial that all actors in this response pull together, responding both to immediate humanitarian need but also combining that with a comprehensive and strategic long-term strategy. Parishes and individuals in the Church of England have continued to contribute generously to many appeals, representing the mixed economy that we have of responses.

I want to give you a very brief overview of the humanitarian actors related to our context here. In Syria the UK Government through DfID has committed £700 million for Syria and the region, working through the UN and NGOs largely. Christian Aid works through the ACT Alliance in the region and through Orthodox Church charities in the Lebanon and elsewhere, also active are Tearfund, World Vision and many INGOs. Some church agencies such as OpenDoors focus on particularly vulnerable Christian communities.

Meanwhile in Iraq DfID has committed £23 million in aid, including £5 million given in

June to Christians and others impacted in Mosul and in the Nineveh Plains, for air drops onto Mount Sinjar and others trapped by the IS advances, as well as ongoing support to the UN response.

In terms of Anglicans, the Diocese of Cyprus and the Gulf has channeled its appeals for a coalition - this is very encouraging - a coalition of churches (Charldean, Syrian, Armenian and others) who are supporting Christians and non-Christians in Kurdistan and Baghdad. The Foundation for Reconciliation in the Middle East operating through St George's Church in Baghdad also has a humanitarian programme, as do the Christian Aid agencies, Christian Aid, Tearfund and others, who are working in Northern Iraq through partners including local churches. Other organisations like the Barnabas Fund and Aid to the Church in Need are focusing help on Christian communities, providing support and shelter, including an initiative to bring tented camps in for the winter. There are examples also of local faith communities reaching out to provide assistance to other faith communities, for example mobile health clinics run by Christians who are reaching out to Muslims and Yazidis, and Islamic Relief bringing food aid to 1,500 Christian families in Mosul.

These examples are important because they provide insights into an alternative narrative. What is the best way then for parishes and individuals to respond within the Church of England? First of all, debates like this, the importance of listening and learning, so that even when Iraq and Syria fall from the media headlines, we continue to study the unfolding situation, listen to the voices of the local church, listen to other faith groups in our own contexts.

Secondly, to pray. Equipped with a deeper understanding, prayer becomes the foundation of our response. Prayer for victims and perpetrators, prayer for protection, provision, perseverance and prayer for a more positive global narrative, what Archbishop Justin has called 'a more compelling vision of a more remarkable hope'.

Thirdly, to give. Local churches in the region have simply said, "We need prayer and money, with these two we can do something". Gifts can be through the Church's own appeals such as through the Diocese of Cyprus and the Gulf and through the range of appeals by Christian agencies and other international NGOs as well as affirming the generosity of UK taxpayers by supporting our national aid budget of 0.7% of GDP.

Finally, to act. It is far from easy to determine how to act in response to complex conflict situations. Different agencies have proposals for action of solidarity and advocacy, and the key point is that any action must be informed, not least by the voices of those on the ground in showing that there is no further risk. Actions need to build towards peace, reconciliation, a restoration of rights and an end of suffering.

It is crucial that our governments and other international aid agencies strengthen their understanding of the dynamics of faith and promote and protect freedom of religion as a core right in itself, but also a fundamental ingredient of peace-building and stability. Without this, the humanitarian crisis will continue. Thank you.

*The Bishop of Coventry:* Thank you very much for the enormously rich contributions. I am very tempted just to continue the discussion on the bench here, but I think the time

has now come to open things up. Archbishop, may I return to you for the questions.

*The Chair:* Thank you, Bishop Christopher. I will now open this session to questions from the floor. When they are called, if Synod members would be very kind and go to the lectern to ask your questions. Please could you keep the questions brief and to the point and indicate whether it is for a specific member of the panel or for the panel in general. I will call questions in groups of three and after each group of three the Bishop of Coventry will then ask the panel to speak to the questions.

*The Bishop of Southwark (Rt Revd Christopher Chessun):* May I ask if I am allowed a short preamble?

*The Chair:* Since you are the first speaker and everyone will follow your pattern, I will set a speaking limit of about ten seconds, very, very brief please.

*The Bishop of Southwark:* I had the privilege of representing you at the enthronement of the Syrian Orthodox Patriarch, Patriarch Aphrem II at Ascensiontide this year. Travelling back from Damascus to Beirut, I was sitting with a very elderly gentleman whose father had fled Tur Abdin just under 100 years ago, who had been born in Bethlehem and who after the formation of the State of Israel the family felt they needed to journey on because of other pressures and difficulties and ended up in the States. He told this wonderful story that before they went overseas to the States, his father (without a visa) had returned to the place of his birth and, knocking on the door of the house in which he was born, said to the then new householder, "Will you draw water from the well in the house in which I was born?" He drank the water and then was ready to go, as he said to his son, to the 'farthest corners of the earth'. My question is this: there is a vast diaspora of displaced communities all around the world and the need at the moment to mobilise that wider constituency is, I think, part of what Bishop Angaelos was saying about those who feel abandoned and the sense of not feeling abandoned. We have a lot of opportunities through modern communication and networks of movement, global movement being easier now, to mobilise a vast international community. I am interested in what Bishop Angaelos and others think is necessary at that level of response. I apologise for the preamble.

*The Chair:* It was worth every second!

*Revd John Chitham (Chichester):* I have had the privilege of ministering and living in Lebanon, Syria and Jordan and I am married to an Arab Christian so you can imagine the depth of feeling and weeping over this whole subject but perhaps the rejoicing that Lebanon and Jordan are still holding.

In paragraph 31 of the Report, which I have to say was wonderful to read, there are one or two things, cannot Bashar al Assad and indeed Hezbollah be given credit for the fact that they have been living with and helping religious minorities for many decades but, as with our Government, they seem only to get criticism.

Secondly, there is a strange omission of Saudi Arabia from the Report, in the eyes of many the root of religious intolerance in the region, and, I would say, also an omission in paragraph 64 where aid is linked to religious freedom, could not trade be linked to



religious freedom?

Thirdly, I would be fascinated to hear from especially Bishop Angaelos and Shaykh Fuad about the inclusion of the right or the freedom to convert from one religion to another, I have to say not only in the Levantine countries and Muslim countries but also in this country.

*Revd Canon Celia Thompson (Gloucester):* A question probably to Bishop Nick of the panel members. Is anything being done now to put in place processes for ensuring that the perpetrators of such violence are brought to justice in the international courts, however long it might take?

*The Chair:* Thank you. Bishop Christopher?

*The Bishop of Coventry:* Thank you very much and may I begin by paying great tribute to Bishop Christopher for his deep and long-sustained commitment to the ancient Christian communities of the Middle East, especially in Syria. Indeed I know you will say, Bishop, that it was not dangerous to go and take part in the enthronement of the Patriarch, but nevertheless you were in a war zone and you brought back moving reports. Bishop Christopher has met with the Foreign and Commonwealth officers as well so is deeply involved in these matters. Bishop Angaelos, I think this comes to you really, this diaspora in a sense of which you are a part, how can this, as the Bishop asks, be mobilised for good?

*His Grace Bishop Angaelos:* Might I add my voice to yours in thanking Bishop Christopher for his faithful support to Christians in the Middle East generally, in our own work and to others as well.

I think there is a very important need for the mobilisation of Christians outside the Middle East. It is interesting in the terms used. We as a Church - and I was encouraged also to meet the Patriarch of the Maronite Church - do not use the term "diaspora" but the term "expansion" because there has not been the mass migration, whereas in other places it is a diaspora because the vast majority are outside their homelands. That mobilisation is important and I think we have a responsibility. I am very thankful for the experience I have received being here for almost 20 years now and with many friends in this chamber, and across not only the Christian Church but even friends like Fuad and other people that I have known for years, in being able to communicate what I want to communicate on behalf of my community here in a way that it can be heard because what we see quite often is these ex-pat communities trying to communicate but actually it just becoming frantic rants because they come from a place of extreme passion. What we have spoken about recently is trying to empower those communities in delivering their message in a way that not only they are communicating but in a way that is heard and therefore responded to positively. It is an immense power that can be very, very effective but only if directed, because what they will say generally is very legitimate and very valuable but sometimes it is, to coin a phrase, lost in translation quite literally, not only in words and vocabulary but in the way of expression. I think it is very important. Also I would encourage members of this chamber and people whom you might know to listen sympathetically so when you hear people expressing themselves in that way, to cut through the expression and listen to

what is actually being said, listen to the content, because I think what you will find is very valuable.

*The Bishop of Coventry:* Thank you, Bishop. I am sure Synod would like to know about a very short and simple teaching document from the Coptic Orthodox Church on these matters. I do have a few copies here that people might like to pick up addressing the issue of religious persecution. I guess it is essentially written for your own community, but I think it is relevant to all of us, setting the persecution of Christians in the wider framework of the oppression of other religious minorities.

That brings us on to the second question from John Chitham. I think there were four questions that you had there, John. I do not think we can deal with them all. I would like to roll two of them together, if I may, and that is the one about should President Assad and even Hezbollah be given some credit for holding the fabric together of different religious communities living together in one land? Related to that was your point about should there be more of a recognition of the Declaration of Human Rights, Article 18, which does say that it is entirely proper and is a basic human right for people to have freedom to change their religion. Dr Fuad, I just wondered whether you might, it is a tough old one here, but we have seen the whole fabric unravel, this beautiful tapestry of different communities living together as they have for thousands of years, would you like to say something about that and whether you think there was any advantage in what we had before?

*Shaykh Fuad Nahdi:* Your Grace, I am not afraid of going to the deep end and starting with the question of religious freedom. From my understanding of Islam, there is nothing like what they call the punishment for apostasy. The right to choose a religion is the right of every individual and it should be free. Our Holy Book says very clearly *la ikraha fiddin*: there is no compulsion in religion.

A few years ago I did organise a round table of some leading scholars to bring up this issue. The conclusion was the decision about persecuting people who left Islam and went into Christianity. This was a case about an Afghani brother called Abdul Rahman who converted to Christianity and was sentenced to death. They told me categorically that this *fatwah* or this edict was based on politics, not theology. So the unravelling about it is that it is totally obsolete, it is irrelevant and it is against the very essence of the religion. But again, like many other things that have been covered, the issue about co-existence and stuff, I think essentially it is all about fear and not knowing about the other. I think we know little about our own faith but even less about the other. This is a big issue.

I was privileged to be appointed to a Christian-Muslim listening group and in the space of three and a half years we travelled all across Britain. It was a very big learning experience. I tended to spend more time with bishops than imams and in a way became an anglicised Muslim to a certain extent. Perhaps one of the most influential persons in my spiritual life was the late bishop, John Austin, who was the Bishop for Birmingham. One of the experiments that we did, one day I took him up to Darul Uloom, which is a Muslim seminary, and I told him to come in his full regalia. He met the students who were being trained to become imams. The idea was not dialogue; the idea was encountering, for him to sit down and say, "My name is John and I am a

Bishop and I am a Christian and this is what I believe.” At the end of it, the students did not know what to do, but ended up kissing his hands the way they would kiss an imam’s hand. I think that we need more rather than less of that.

Religious freedom is a campaign that I and I know a large majority of people on my side feel passionately that people should have, but let me just put it into context. I do not know how many of you realise that there is a very sizeable Muslim community in Muslim lands who do not have that choice to practise their religion. A lot of churches, Bishop Angaelos will tell you, sadly have been destroyed recently across the Muslim world, but perhaps many more times have been shrines and mosques that have belonged to groups that are not part of this extremist craziness that is going on, whether in Egypt, in Libya now, in Syria and Iraq, shrines and mosques and holy sites that have existed for hundreds of years. In some places I know it is actually Muslims and Christians who have sat side-by-side trying to protect them from these extremists and got killed in the fight because they were holy to both.

Again, I insist when we look at these things, we should go the way that people of faith need to go: look at it in the bigger picture. We do not monopolise victimhood nor are we sitting there saying that we are the only ones. Any persecution is persecution for all. I think that is important.

This idea about apostasy is becoming increasingly challenging to this. One of the phenomena of our times is that for the first time in the history of Islam one-third of Muslims live outside the so-called Dar al-Islam (the Land of Islam) as minorities. This has not happened before but it is happening because something is wrong in the Muslim world and that is why they are here. When Bishop Christopher was talking about another issue, what do Christians do, what do we do for them in the Middle East? Do we just give them passports and let them come here? I do not think that is a good idea for two reasons. Firstly, they should not be forced to make such a decision but, secondly, it is good for the Muslims in the Muslim lands to have Christians amongst them because it enhances their own spirituality and their own understanding of God and gives an opportunity to learn more about the magnanimity and the greatness of God.

*The Bishop of Coventry:* Thank you, Fuad. There is a very nice link, if we may, Bishop Angaelos, when I went to Syria I was impressed with this ‘tapestry’, as I have called it, of people living together. I also found myself having every move that I made observed by the police. There was this strange experience of a semblance of freedom and yet also an element of oppression. There are two elements here, your Grace. Do you see any future for the tapestry of different faith communities living peaceably together in Syria and Iraq and then the second element, not unrelated, is this compulsion in religion. What does it actually feel like to be there as a Christian minority seeking to be faithful to Christ as the Saviour of all?

*His Grace Bishop Angaelos:* What has become very evident is a lot of this is not really Christian/Muslim but radical fringe against everyone else. That is why I would agree with Dr Fuad when he said that attacks are on Muslims as well. In Egypt, straight after the first uprising, the first religious attack was by Sunni Muslims on Sufi shrines and that was catastrophic. This tapestry has been real in some places but is almost a mythical reality in others, because we speak about it but it is actually not there. Unfortunately,

there are not enough voices like Fuad's because while there is an idea of no compulsion in religion we know on the ground this is not always true. There is a very real compulsion and not only is there a compulsion but there is retribution in the wake of that, which is unfortunate.

I think what we need is that we need to challenge our very good Muslim friends to say this is wrong, but also once they speak to support them, because once they speak they become marginalised. We have seen examples of that. I think we need to challenge this idea. I think we are beyond the stage now of using rhetoric and in Egypt we found this very real and likewise in Iraq and Syria. We cannot just talk about this tapestry any more, it has to become real on the ground and we have to call people to account.

In terms of the reality of existence, it can still be a reality if the very silent majority speaks out, because what we have now is a very, very vocal minority that is silencing everyone else. What we have seen is when the Christian voice is added to an encompassing Muslim voice that becomes the majority and it can be very effective.

*The Bishop of Coventry:* Thank you very much indeed. Rachel, I do not think we can attend to all of John's questions but his point about trade as well as aid being linked to religious freedom, can you say a little bit about that and whether you think that is a viable proposition?

*Revd Rachel Carnegie:* Thank you, yes, and I think it is a very helpful addition to the paper. There is a real value in trade and aid being linked to human rights, including of course the right to religious freedoms. I think that we have got opportunities here, for example with our own Government relating to the Iraqi Government, and the political reforms that are going on there to look at the respect for religious freedoms to be an integral part of that, and obviously trade is a leverage in this.

I think the other side I want to put to that is about equitable trading arrangements globally to lift people out of poverty, given what we know of poverty itself creating the very conditions where extremist ideologies can take root and fester. I think that in both senses, both as a tool of leverage but also as a way of addressing the underlying causes of conflict, we need to take our own Government's trade policy very seriously.

*The Bishop of Coventry (Rt Revd Dr Christopher Cocksworth):* Thank you very much, Rachel. Bishop Nick, the third question there from Celia Thompson, can anything be done? What can be done to bring perpetrators of this sort of violence to justice?

*The Bishop of Leeds:* I think the question was about if there are any plans, to which the answer is "probably yes". I think the really hard question is what sanction can you possibly apply to people who have no fear, for whom human rights are meaningless and whom you cannot threaten with death or anything else because in some ways they welcome it. This is a new game. It is not a game obviously, but you know what I mean. How the international courts, which will need to address this in due course, are going to be able to cope with the volume and severity of what has been perpetrated, I think will pose a challenge to the democratic world.

*The Bishop of Coventry:* Thank you, Nick. Just to link those two comments together, I

have been involved in a little initiative encouraging religious leaders to speak out together on these matters, to speak out for the suffering of not only their own community but the community of the other, as it were. We did manage to get a letter published in the national press that was together calling for perpetrators to be brought to justice. But Bishop Nick's qualifications and concerns about how that is done obviously raises all sorts of complex matters. Archbishop, I think we are ready for another set of questions

*The Chair:* Three more questions. Golly, everyone suddenly leaps to their feet! Vasantha Gnanadoss first and Mark Ireland, please.

*Miss Vasantha Gnanadoss (Southwark):* Does the media have a role in correcting some people's perceptions about Muslims? For example, imams do speak up against violence and some have protected Christians but this does not receive the coverage it should do. I speak in the context of a small organisation that discourages violence against Muslims in this country.

*Revd Mark Ireland (Lichfield):* Reflecting on Church history, both in that the Church's use of power has not been good in Church history but also that in history the blood of the martyrs has been the seed of the Church so often. Would the panel agree that our concern as Christians about freedom of religion should not derive simply from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights but from the doctrine of creation, that God himself chose to give human beings free will, even knowing that free will would ultimately cost him the Cross?

*Revd George Newton (Guildford):* A question just to the Shaykh asking a little bit further about the freedom to change religion, currently with a close friend and colleague of mine imprisoned yet again in Pakistan this time not for being apostate but accused of enabling somebody else to become apostate whose four sisters, who I have met, were about to share their testimony at All Saints Peshawar when the bomb went off. It seems in many countries that are Muslim majority there are other *suras*, verses from the Koran, that are taken to mean that when someone becomes apostate they should be killed under Sharia law. Is there any way that this can be challenged on national scales in areas like Pakistan?

*The Chair:* Thank you. Bishop Christopher.

*The Bishop of Coventry:* Thank you very much. Vasantha, thank you for your question. Media matters, Bishop Nick, would you like to respond to that?

*The Bishop of Leeds:* There is a serious question about media, not just media literacy but religious literacy in the media and I think all of us could probably find stories. I heard recently of someone quite senior in the BBC who wanted a story on Christian Yazidis and did not see the irony there. I think Vasantha is right that the media have a responsibility to tell the truth and to present all sides of reality, not just a selective bit that fits a preordained narrative, I think that is right, but I would also want to add that if we are going to put pressure on the media, which we should do to tell those stories, we also need to praise them when they get it right. We are very good sometimes at hammering the mistakes, but not very good at praising what is good. We need to remember in all of this two things. One is social media allow us to constantly tell good

stories, to correct some of the bad stories that are around, and social media are open to all of us. The second thing is let us not forget that journalists are losing their lives in relatively large numbers for going to very dangerous places to try and tell the stories and they can only tell the stories they can tell from where they are and what they see and hear, so at the same time as being critical we need to pray for them and to support them. Otherwise we would be getting nothing out. They risk their lives.

*The Bishop of Coventry:* Dr Fuad, I wonder if I may bring you into this because I am very conscious that in the internet age, as good as one's local imams might be, I am told by my Muslim friends that there is so much happening on the internet, there is so much sort of media influence that is beyond the control of parents and imams locally. Do you have anything to say about this? It seems to be a really deep and difficult problem for us all but particularly perhaps for the Islamic community in terms of those angry people who you mentioned, confused people who may have certain weaknesses that you referred to.

*Shaykh Fuad Nahdi:* Yes, thank you. For us Muslims the biggest issue or problem we face with the media at the moment is Google Search because the internet now dominates the discussion on our religion from the politics to the theological, and there are many consequences about it. One of them is the break-up of authority. The internet, those of us who know anything about it or the little that we know, is an affirming media. You can go and check anything, you can find justification for robbing a bank by using Koranic verses if you use Google, so what you look for, you will find in the media and this is the issue. While it has been a force for good in times like the Arab Spring and similar things, it has also been sending very confusing signals to a very confused generation and we do not know what to do about it.

A friend of mine I have been working with on the *Panorama* programme was telling me the normal budget will be £120,000 for a *Panorama* programme, but ISIS or Al Qaeda just did about \$500 to do a viral which will be about a hundred times more effective than their programme.

The issue about the media, like I have been told, the media is not there to promote God or discuss God because God is very difficult. This is why we have religious programmes at some ungodly hours, and God is very difficult to film anyway. This has been a long-term challenge that increasingly in the last 20 years or so that I have been involved in the media here you find that the so-called "godly slots" get not only more boring but go into the more ungodly hours, and this is something that they will tell you that they are not interested. More people watch *Downton Abbey* than about the antics of whatever is going on. The drama about it is religion has to be associated with violence, a bomb, then you can make a programme about it but if it is something good, that is not the thing. So media plays a very critical role in our lives but unless we convert it into Christianity or Islam, I do not see any much use for it.

*The Bishop of Coventry:* It is a challenge.

*Shaykh Fuad Nahdi:* Yes, a challenge for everybody. This is the thing. One of the prayers our Prophet used to repeat often was protection from two things. One of them was adultery which is understandable, but the other one was against poverty, and when

people asked him he said it is shortest course to adultery. As I am speaking, I am paying by what is happening in the town where I was born in Mombasa in Kenya. This town which used to be idyllic where we lived together, Christians, Muslims and everybody, has been in turmoil in the last couple of months. Yesterday the police went and killed some people who went to the mosque. It is no longer safe and I am worried that the situation is going to get worse so our prayers to those who are behind and part of the role is the media, I would say.

*The Bishop of Coventry:* Thank you very much. Bishop Angaelos, is it the Declaration of Human Rights? Is it the doctrine of creation? How do we root our commitments to freedom?

*His Grace Bishop Angaelos:* I would say that documents like the creation and other documents that safeguard liberties do just that. They safeguard God-given liberties, they safeguard God-given rights. They do not invent them, they do not grant them, they just ensure that we hold on to them. So of course I would very much agree that the basis of everything we do is scriptural and if we look at 2 Corinthians 3:17, "Now the Lord is the Spirit and where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty", so that liberty is very founded in what we learn and teach. That is why we are much more credible as a church when we speak for the liberty and rights of all, just as the great work that is done by the All Party Group on Article 18 at the moment, the idea that His Grace has spoken about, that we all speak collectively for rights, because then otherwise we sound very tribal and we sound discredited. I would never, ever feel comfortable being a protected Christian while a Muslim next to me is victimised or alienated or persecuted. It just does not sit with me as a Christian and I am sure it would not sit with any of us, so absolutely, it is founded in scripture, granted by God, protected by states and declarations but then lived and advocated for by us.

*The Bishop of Coventry:* Thank you. You mentioned, your Grace, the All Party Parliamentary Group for freedom of religion and belief. I think it is worth underlining the interest that there is in Parliament in these matters. That is a very fine group across the parties, headed up by Elizabeth Berridge. She does fine work, and there are other Parliamentarians who are very committed to the cause of religious freedom that George Newton brought to our attention again, and wanted to press. It is worth noting the work that is done at a parliamentary level and across parliaments as well. There was an important meeting in Oslo recently drawing together parliamentarians of different nationalities and different religions wanting to have a concerted action on this. Canada has done a particularly leading part.

Dr Fuad, I think you are being a little bit pressed on the matter of religious freedom. I wonder whether you might give us any advice on how we can talk to our Muslim friends in Britain to help them do some of the advocacy perhaps that we have been talking about here for Christians who find themselves in a very pressurised position, let us say, in Pakistan but not only there.

*Shaykh Fuad Nahdi:* Of course there is always, like Bishop Angaelos says, that minority to talk about. You must remember that the majority of Muslims are here because of this concept of religious freedom and we take pride that we are in a country which gets inspired that we have so much freedom that we would get not much of it in

most of the Muslim countries when we come and practise, and we are grateful and we should be in a situation of gratefulness. I think that the onus of advocating freedom of religion is more on us. I would like to be accused that I am not doing enough on that rather than attacking people I hardly know in the deserts. But the whole issue for our holy book, the Koran, the debate about religious freedom is more about creed. God challenges us, in that he says, "If I wanted to make all of you Muslims, I would have done it but that is not my choice and I give you choices to do", but one of the things is when our writers in the last experiences of the breakdown of the Muslim empire and then the colonialism and post-colonialism you find that most of our intellectuals and most other things have been drawn on to discussing more of the political Islam than the other things and left the co-essence about religion. Actually there is so much in books but it is all about things that have got nothing to do with religion so far as I am concerned, so we pray but we do not know what we are praying for to a certain extent. Difficult concepts and very simple concepts, like the neighbour in Islam is a very important one and one of the outstanding things about it, the neighbour has no religion in Islam but has massive rights, so much rights that the Prophet's wife said the Angel Gabriel used to come and give the rights that we thought in the end he might have the rights to inherit, but today we do not know that so I think that there is need for engagement and this is where I come. When we talk about inter-faith I think these are the issues that need to be discussed. I think we are pussyfooting too much about discussing issues. As I say, I want to go in the inter-faith as a human being and then after discussion I will come out as a Christian or Muslim, whatever it is, but that should be the transformative process of not questioning the other person, it is about my own questioning of my own what I am about and then share it with other people.

*The Bishop of Coventry:* You drew us to the theme of the neighbour. I think I now need to hand over to my neighbour. Jesus told a very powerful story, as you know, about neighbours. Who is my neighbour? The neighbour is the one to whom our heart goes out to because they are suffering deeply. People across the world are suffering deeply in war zones, conflict areas, and some of those are suffering because of their faith. Our heart goes out to them, that is what this discussion has been about. Archbishop, you are poised?

*The Chair:* Angus MacLeay put in a question so I think it would only be fair to ask him to ask it. Angus, if you keep it pretty brief and if the answers could be very brief and then we will have to draw this to a close.

*Revd Angus MacLeay (Rochester):* Question to Bishop Angaelos. It has been quoted the persecuted church saying, "When Christ was all I had then I found that Christ was all I needed". Whilst recognising the desperate need to support the persecuted church how can we, within the Church of England, find better ways to learn from the courageous faith in Our Lord Jesus Christ, so often demonstrated by persecuted and suffering Christians, so that we with the apostle can say with greater confidence, "For me to live is Christ"?

*His Grace Bishop Angaelos:* Thank you. I am often very perplexed at these conversations because I want to draw attention to the persecution, but I am also very, very aware of the victory in that persecution and I would love to take credit for being a very brave Christian but I think we all know that Christ grants grace to us sufficient and



proportionate to the obstacles we face and so I am sure, whether it is in the Middle East or here, if we are fully dependent on Him, then He will grant us the grace and power we need in that situation. There is a paradox between having that faith and then placing our trust in chariots and horses, and that is a balance we all need to draw, but I think we have a responsibility and a right to advocate and use all the manmade facilities and opportunities before us but, first and foremost, place our trust in God and in doing that faithfully and in wanting to be good Christians, whether we are alive or we are dead, we are going to be good Christians. One challenge I always tell my own people is do not fear that a radical can kill you, that is not the worst thing he or she can do to you. The worst thing he or she can do to you is make you hate them because that affects your heart and so if we live in that spirit of Christian love and forgiveness and acceptance and trust in Him.

I close with one verse that is from the Epistle to the Philippians: “These things which happened to me have actually turned out for the furtherance of the Gospel ... most of the brethren in the Lord, having become confident by my chains, are much more bold to speak the word without fear”.

*The Bishop of Coventry:* I think, Archbishop, that would be a good place to draw the panel's comments to an end and you have directed us, Bishop, to the words of Jesus as well, pray for those who persecute you.

*The Chair:* We are now very near the end of the time allocated for this session. I would like to thank Bishop Christopher and our very distinguished panel for their excellent contributions. May I ask Synod to express their thanks to the panel for their contributions? *(Applause)*

I would now like to hand over to the Archbishop of York who will lead the Synod in prayer before we resume the remaining items of legislative business.

*The Archbishop of York (The Most Revd & Rt Hon Dr John Sentamu)* led the Synod in an act of worship.

THE CHAIR: *The Revd Canon Dr Rosemarie Mallett* took the Chair at 12.02 pm

## **Legislative Business:**

### **Draft Diocesan Stipends Funds (Amendment) Measure (GS 1969)**

*The Chair:* Good afternoon, Synod. We now come to Item 507, the draft Diocesan Stipends Funds (Amendment) Measure, which is before Synod for First Consideration. For this, members, you will need the draft measure GS 1969 and the Explanatory Memorandum GS 1969X. Members' attention is also drawn to the correction on the Fifth Notice Paper which relates to the Explanatory Memorandum for this measure and may I also draw your attention to the financial information at paragraphs 8 to 10 of the Seventh Notice Paper. I now call upon the Chair of the Steering Committee, Mr John Booth, to move Item 507.

*Mr John Booth (Chichester):* I beg to move:

‘That the Measure entitled “Diocesan Stipends Funds (Amendment) Measure” be considered for revision in committee.’

Members of Synod, this is a short and technical draft Measure which seeks to update the 1953 Diocesan Stipends Funds Measure. It proposes that DBFs should have the same power to make decisions about the investments held in their diocesan stipends fund that they have in relation to other charitable assets under their control. The draft Measure has not, I suspect, set many pulses racing but, nonetheless, several dioceses have indicated that they would greatly welcome the added flexibility this change would give them. Since the 1953 Measure was passed the investment environment has changed quite significantly. It has become far more common for charities with permanent endowment to choose to invest their assets and to use their returns on a total return basis. This means that in determining how much of the return on capital to invest for future generations and how much to spend now on the charity’s objects, no distinction is made between income returns and capital gains. This approach enables a charity to invest in a diversified range of asset classes, some of which may deliver most, if not all, of their returns by way of capital. The Church Commissioners and the Queen Victoria Clergy Fund are examples of charities that have opted for this investment approach to good effect. Under the 1953 Measure as it stands DBFs may not opt for a total return basis for investment for their diocesan and stipends funds. The current statutory provisions relating to the allocation of money to the capital account and the income account, and setting out the use that may be made of the capital and income accounts, prevents the DBF from passing a total return resolution. Neither can the Charity Commission make a total return order for these funds as it did more generally for charities until 2013. Therefore, as things stand, only income returns on investment may currently be used for the payment of stipends. As a result, dioceses may find that they are locked into an unhelpfully restrictive investment policy because of the need to generate income to preserve their assets and to preserve their ability to make stipend payments. This can be problematic at a time when income returns particularly on less volatile investments are, broadly speaking, quite low, and pursuing a high income return could lead to riskier investment decisions. As a DBF chair myself, I would particularly welcome the removal of this constraint on our investment strategy.

The draft Measure before us would not alter the purposes for which dioceses and stipends funds can be used but it would permit DBFs, like any other charity, to pass a total return resolution and allocate returns between the income fund and the capital fund at their discretion after careful consideration and within certain guidelines. It would thus enable the DBF to invest more flexibly and potentially for higher overall long-term returns. Annex 1 to the Explanatory Memorandum includes an example showing how a DBF’s overall returns might increase following the adoption of a total return resolution. Passing such a resolution is not a licence to spend money now without regard to the needs of future generations. In deciding how much of its unapplied total return to spend in any year a DBF would have a duty to exercise its powers in a way that does not adversely affect its ability to further its purposes both now and in the future. This is clear from the Charity Commission’s general guidance on total return investment and it will also be made clear in the Archbishops’ Council’s guidance on the exercise of this new power if the measure is passed.

However, as the example in the Explanatory Memorandum indicates, it could also offer the opportunity for an immediate increase in spending through the use of unapplied total return. This may arise where the capital returns have outstripped inflation over time so that the real value of the fund has increased. The calculation of the base capital at the date when a total return resolution is passed will reveal how much unapplied total return is unavailable to DBFs. Unapplied total return may be allocated for investment or for spending and it would be possible for a diocese to determine that part of the unapplied total return should be allocated to the income account and used to pay stipends for a period in order to free up other DBF funds for use on, for example, mission projects. The amendment that would be made by this measure does not compel any DBF to alter its investment policy relating to the stipends fund. If a DBF feels its current arrangements are satisfactory, it will be at liberty to continue investing its stipends fund exactly as it does at present. The new provision is purely permissive, enabling a DBF that wishes to do so to invest and to allocate returns more flexibly than at present. The proposal for this measure met with unanimous approval at the Inter-Diocesan Finance Forum earlier this year and I hope it will also meet with the approval of Synod today. I am happy to commend it to you.

*The Chair:* The motion is now open for debate. May I remind members that under Standing Order 51B speeches must be directed to the general purport of the Measure rather than to points of detail.

*Revd Canon Chris Lilley (Lincoln):* Chair, Lincoln Diocese took this proposal to the Inter-Diocesan Finance Forum and were delighted with the response that we found from other dioceses. Like us, they would like to spend some of the capital growth as if it were income and so I would ask Synod this afternoon to support this proposal by sending it to the Revision Committee. It is a permissive motion. No diocese will have to use it but even if you do not want to or do not need to spend capital growth on the stipends fund it will at the very least allow you to review, and probably improve, your investment strategy for your stipends fund. But why does Lincoln particularly want this? As a diocese, we are wanting to invest in growth. We are investing in discipleship, wanting to deepen discipleship across our diocese and in mission to grow the Church. Until the stewardship income increases, we need to fund the additional stipends of discipleship officers and mission specialists working alongside more stipendiary clergy in our parishes. Perhaps I can share with you something of a salutary lesson from Lincoln Diocese as to what has happened and why we need to do this now.

Some 15 years ago Lincoln Diocese devised a scheme called, 'New Era', many dioceses have had similar schemes. 'New Era' worked very well for us for a number of years. We devolved to each deanery the decision-making as to how many stipendiary clergy they would have and each deanery was responsible for raising the funds for it. The immediate result was an increase in percentage of parish share paid. Virtually every deanery produced a coherent deanery plan, many of which included some reduction in the number of stipendiary clergy.

Now Lincoln is a diocese that already had a majority of multi-parish benefices and, over time, we were beginning to see mission plans that were, for example, a group of three parishes who were now wanting to join with another group of three parishes, thus

cutting a post. Those parishes were struggling to pay their share. It made sense to put them together. The trouble was that the parishes then reduced the amount of share they were actually paying because they were getting less of a stipendiary priest's time. So it became a self-defeating process and, as time went on, more and more proposals for cutting posts came to us and we were getting rapidly towards a point of no return. We have now decided that we must change that policy and our new policy is looking again at growth.

We languish, I am afraid, at the bottom of the giving tables at the moment, we hope to improve that over a period of time but, in the meanwhile, we wish to use some of the capital growth on our stipends fund to help kick start the new initiatives in the mission and in discipleship. Please, Synod do give this your warm approval. Thank you.

*Mr Paul Boyd-Lee (Salisbury):* May I say at the start that I commend the principle which is behind this draft Measure. I have been involved with investment management for very many years and have watched the busts and the booms which have taken place in that industry. I can think back, say, to 1987 when one was watching not just the indices in this country but throughout the world dropping by the hour. It was in the days when suspension of indices did not happen in the way as they do today. Indeed, it is a completely different scene today because of electronic trading, not by the second but by the millisecond.

I really wanted to look at the rules and regulations which will be recommended if this Measure should go forward further. I seem to remember that when the Charity Commission was considering this issue, and there was good sense behind it because the financial scene has changed and just working on income dividends and so on is not as realistic as it used to be, but that was some years ago and since that time in the finance industry we have seen dramatic changes. I do not think it is too dramatic to say that we do not really know where we are with world debt and so on today, it is a very uncertain scene indeed.

Whereas it is certainly important that we look at the need of reserves and how many are there and how they should be used for the current work of the Church, or in this case pensions and so on, at the same time we need to build in as much certainties as we can that those reserves are there for the job which they were intended in the first place. Really, the message I want to put forward is that when these Guidelines are looked at for this Measure, that various finance houses are also considered in how they are put together in order to preserve the capital which is needed for the future. Thank you.

*Canon Elizabeth Renshaw (Chester):* Members of Synod, the effect of statutory restrictions on what a diocesan board of finance may do with the Diocesan Stipends Fund is that dioceses are compelled to accumulate capital gains of the Diocesan Stipends Fund in the Capital Fund and only income returns may be used for payment of stipends out of the income account.

As a DBF Chair I also consider this draft Amendment is both sensible and timely. It gives DBFs flexibility for the Diocesan Stipends Fund to be invested on a total returns basis. This would enable dioceses to access substantial sums of money that are presently restricted and to use returns from either the capital or income account whilst

protecting the original capital investment. Charity law now gives us this flexibility and this approach will bring us in line with other charities who already have this flexibility.

At a time when parish share is under considerable pressure, this amendment would offer the potential to allow dioceses to release additional funds for distribution. This could enable a diocese to have more stipendiary clergy than it could otherwise afford and to enable them greater flexibility to use their resources to further mission and ministry within their dioceses. I hope Synod will support this amendment and will also agree that this is a further step in the right direction towards additional simplification. Long may it continue. Thank you.

*The Chair:* I see no one else standing and so, therefore, I call upon Mr Booth to reply.

*Mr John Booth (Chichester):* Thank you. First, may I thank Chris Lilley for the Lincoln perspective and, as he says, the Inter-Diocesan Finance Forum was very much moved by the Lincoln DBF Chair setting out the case from their perspective. I think in cases where diocesan investments have been held in, for example, agricultural land, possibly over very many generations, there will often be a large surplus on the capital account but a relatively low level of income, so this is a really good example of why this Measure makes sense. I think more importantly still, the principle of intergenerational equity is well-illustrated here because, of course, it may be the present generation that is suffering from inequity while a future generation suffers from a sort of surplus of equity.

Second, thank you, Paul Boyd-Lee. I think that, as with so many financial matters, the devil will lie in the detail and it is good to know that we are already consulting with investment professionals as well as, of course, taking the Charity Commission established advice in order to put a policy together for the Archbishops' Council. I think, also, it is really important to stress the importance of qualified trustees at the DBF level who are in receipt of good professional advice both from the legal and financial angles.

It may interest Synod to know that a good deal of academic work has been done on total return investing and a report produced by Schroders who advise a large number of charities, recently renamed Cazenove following a merger, called, 'For Good And Not For Keeps', came to the answer (rather like the Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy) of 3.2. 3.2 is their assessment over a long period of the amount of an endowment that should be spent prudently in any one year if it is to replenish itself in future indefinitely. There are less conservative assumptions and I think a range of between 3 and 4 and a half per cent is roughly what would be considered prudent, but each DBF will have to make that decision for itself.

Finally, thank you to Elizabeth Renshaw, another DBF Chair, and I agree with all the reasons that you set out as to why this Measure would be a very good thing. Thank you, Chair.

*The Chair:* Thank you. I now put Item 507 to the vote. A simple majority is sufficient at this stage so the vote will be taken by a show of hands.

*The motion*

*‘That the Measure entitled “Diocesan Stipends Funds (Amendment) Measure” be considered for revision in committee.’*

*was carried on a show of hands.*

*The Chair:* The draft Measure is now automatically committed to Revision Committee. As stated in page 7 of the Agenda, any member who wishes to submit proposals for its amendment should send them in writing to the Clerk to the Synod to reach her no later than 5.30 pm on Tuesday 23 December 2014. This concludes this business.

THE CHAIR: *The Ven Karen Gorham* took the Chair at 12.26 pm

## **Legislative Business:**

### **Draft Diocesan Naming of Dioceses Measure (GS 1935A)**

*The Chair:* We come now to Item 505 on the Agenda, the Draft Naming of Dioceses Measure. For this Item you will need the Draft Measure GS 1953A and the Report of the Revision Committee GS 1935Y. This is a draft Measure for revision and, only if the take note motion is carried, will we proceed to the revision stage. I now call upon Dr Edmund Marshall, the Chairman of the Revision Committee, to move Item 505.

*Dr Edmund Marshall (St Albans):* I beg to move:

*‘That the Synod do take note of this Report’*

It may help members of Synod to remind them how this draft Measure has arisen. It was a year ago in November that the Synod agreed without division to a Diocesan Synod Motion calling ‘on the Archbishops’ Council to introduce legislation to enable dioceses of the Church of England to be named by reference either to a city or substantial town or to a geographical area’. That Diocesan Synod Motion had come from the former Diocese of Bradford following their experience of finding that the name of the newly proposed Diocese of Leeds had, under the existing law, to be the same name as the name of the See of the Diocesan Bishop, and a similar Diocesan Synod Motion had come from the former Diocese of Ripon and Leeds.

As a result of the motion agreed by Synod last November, in February this year this draft Measure appeared for First Consideration and was referred again without division for revision in Committee. In the draft Measure, as it then stood, there was provision for the name of a diocese to be either the name of the see of the diocesan bishop or the name of a wider geographical area, but whenever the name of the diocese was the name of such a geographical area then the style and title of the diocesan bishop would also take that name. In other words, the name of the diocese and the name of the diocesan see would continue to be identical, whether that name was taken from a city or a substantial town or a wider geographical area. Under the draft Measure, as it then stood, if the current Diocese of Leeds were to be formally renamed as ‘the Diocese of West Yorkshire and the Dales’, so the diocesan bishop would become ‘the Bishop of West Yorkshire and the Dales’ and that prospect would mean that there was no longer a Church of England Bishop of Leeds.

For reasons beyond the control of the Committee we were unable to meet before September but, by then, we had a better understanding of the issues before us with written submissions made both by members of the Committee and by other members of General Synod. We were advised that the present practice in the Diocese of Leeds, where the formal name of the diocese and the Diocesan Bishop is 'Leeds', is to use 'West Yorkshire and the Dales' as the name of the diocese included on official communications and on the diocesan website. We were advised that this is legally sound as the Reorganisation Scheme which created the new diocese specifically provided that it could be "known as the Diocese of West Yorkshire and the Dales". We considered this to be helpful usage. One issue which the Committee had to consider was whether there was any need for the draft Measure as a whole and, in agreeing that the draft Measure should continue, the majority view in the Committee was that not to continue with the Measure would be discourteous to the two Diocesan Synods who had brought their original motions to Synod and to General Synod itself for referring the draft Measure for our consideration.

The Committee made several small amendments to the draft Measure covering drafting and legal points such as the shortening of the name of the draft Measure itself, a move which everybody applauds, but more significantly, we also made one substantial amendment in enabling the future name of a diocese to differ from the style and title of its diocesan bishop, if that is what the diocese wishes. This amendment, which is permissive and not mandatory, was carried in Committee by six votes to four and then, when the question came up for the amended clause to stand part of the Measure, that question was approved by seven votes to three. In reaching these decisions, the majority view in the Committee was to allow greater flexibility in the future naming of dioceses and diocesan bishops anywhere in England from Cumbria to Cornwall, from Sussex to Suffolk. Such flexibility would enable a better relationship in the mission of the Church, more easily with the communities and areas served by the relevant units of the Church. The Committee considered that this theological principle of facilitating mission should have precedence over the theological view that the name of any diocese should always be the same as the title of the diocesan bishop. For us, effective mission is more important than episcopal identity.

The Committee also considered whether it was good ecumenically for any name of a Church of England diocese to be the same as a name of the diocese of another Christian church, one of our ecumenical partners, particularly the Roman Catholic Church. There are now five instances of diocesan names which are repeated between the Church of England and the Roman Catholic church, namely Birmingham, Leeds, Liverpool, Portsmouth and Southwark. Well done to anybody who guessed all those five just now. There is also Nottingham which appears as a Roman Catholic diocese and as part of a name of a Church of England diocese. From 1829 to 1875 it was legally prohibited for another church to assume the name of an existing diocese of the Church of England, although that did not stop the Church of England in those years from taking the reciprocal action in four of the cases that I have mentioned. But within the Revision Committee, after our discussion, we could see no problem if the same name occurs in the diocesan names of different denominations. Indeed, such coincidence of a name may help to strengthen the sense of unity of Christian purpose between the different denominations.

The Revision Committee completed all this work in thorough and balanced discussions lasting altogether just two hours. Some other members of General Synod, having read our report, have expressed surprise that we got through it in that time. We were ably assisted throughout by Alexander McGregor, our Legal Adviser, and Sion Hughes-Carew, our Secretary, and I am grateful to all members of the Committee who contributed to our work, particularly those who had tabled written submission.

*The Chair.* The motion on Item 505 is now open for debate.

*Dr John Beal (Leeds):* Can I start by thanking Dr Marshall for a very comprehensive introduction to this matter. Indeed, he has enabled me to shorten what I have to say very considerably. I speak as a resident of Leeds in support of the Measure as amended by the Revision Committee, of which I was a member.

Dr Marshall has given a very lucid account of the background and, clearly, we are in new territory. The see, as I understand it, is usually where the bishop has his cathedral, but our bishop has three cathedrals, none of which are in the see city of Leeds. As Dr Marshall has said, we could just leave things as they are, 'Formerly the Diocese of Leeds, known as the Diocese of West Yorkshire and the Dales' and with the Bishop of Leeds as the diocesan bishop. However, that would be, as we have been told, to ignore what General Synod had decided it wanted at the earlier stage of this and, also, it would mean that we were not setting a pattern which other dioceses could follow if they wished at a later date.

Those of you who listen to "Thought for the Day" will have heard Bishop Nick being introduced each time as "The Bishop of Leeds in the Diocese of West Yorkshire and the Dales". If we formally became the Diocese of West Yorkshire and the Dales, it may well be that the Bishop himself and other people in the diocese would want to retain the option of the Bishop continuing to be the Bishop of Leeds. As I said, I am a resident of Leeds and I have to say that it would go down very badly in the City if, having now achieved an Anglican Bishop of Leeds, it was suddenly thought that it no longer warranted such a post. We would continue to have within the area system a Bishop of Bradford, a Bishop of Wakefield and a new Bishop of Huddersfield but we would not have a Bishop of Leeds for the third largest city in the country after London and Birmingham, and I believe it is very important for mission in that City to continue to have a bishop with the title, Bishop of Leeds.

For that reason, I ask you to support the Measure as amended, so that each diocese can decide not only what is appropriate for that diocese in terms of the name of the diocese, but what is appropriate for that community and the mission within that community for the title of the bishop. I ask Synod to vote in favour.

*Miss Emma Forward (Exeter):* Having taken part in the discussions of the Revision Committee on this Measure, I would like to draw your attention to the very serious reservations that exist about this proposed change to our Church. As you can see in paragraphs 10 and 28 to 32, much of our discussion was taken up with the question of whether it was wise to continue with the whole thing. Four out of ten of us would have withdrawn the whole Measure at that revision stage.



I would be inclined to believe that such strong reservations may be representative of the Church at large, especially when we sit down to look at the heart of what this all might mean.

Instinctively, we know that the link between bishop, area and cathedra is integral to our foundational identity and somehow to alter the names of some of these and not the others is about more than just words. It is hard to reject a Measure that has already made some headway through the synodical process. Is that not a discourtesy to the people who have worked hard at it? You need a good, solid reason to say no. For me the bigger challenge is pinpointing the reason why this is so potentially problematic. Is it not just a name? Yet just because someone like me may not be able to articulate why the link between bishop, area and cathedra is so important, it does not mean that it is something we should alter lightly.

There is a mystery, a peculiarity of place associated with the seat of a bishop and the ministry which flows from that. What might be the long-term consequences if we sever the joint name of cathedra and area? I wonder if this sacred connection of name is something that we might only know the value of once it is lost. In the Church of England we have an historic relationship with our land and people that is unique and which I think we sometimes take for granted. For this reason it does not necessarily work to make comparisons with the Anglican Church in other parts of the world.

So, ladies and gentlemen, we should vote with extreme caution and not be afraid to say no, if not to Item 505 then to Item 512 and suggest that alternative options of living with informal or working names for dioceses may be better than that which necessitates changing that which is more crucial to our identity and history than we might realise.

*Canon Timothy Allen (St Edmundsbury and Ipswich):* Chair, hard cases make bad law; a cliché but true in this case. The new Diocese of Leeds, also known as the Diocese of West Yorkshire and the Dales, is a hard case. There is rivalry between the component parts of the new diocese with its multiple cathedrals and multiple area bishops. There are competing claims about naming the diocese and naming the diocesan bishop.

The same was true 100 years ago in 1914 when the new diocese which I represent was formed from East Suffolk and West Suffolk, then two separate local government areas which were jealous rivals. Their rivalry led to the diocese being saddled with the unwieldy portmanteau title of 'St Edmundsbury and Ipswich'. The great attraction so far as I am concerned of the draft Naming of Dioceses Measure as we originally saw it in February was that permission to name a diocese after a geographical area would enable Suffolk people, if they wished, to put this old East Suffolk and West Suffolk rivalry behind them and call the diocese simply 'Suffolk' and its diocesan bishop simply the 'Bishop of Suffolk'.

Sadly, however clause, 1 of this originally simple and useful draft Measure has emerged from the Revision Committee in a mangled and counter-productive form. In order to ease the hard case of West Yorkshire and the Dales, my good (and evidently very persuasive) friend, Dr John Beal has convinced a majority of the Revision Committee to accept that the diocesan bishop of the whole West Yorkshire and the Dales Diocese

should be titled the 'Bishop of Leeds', thus named after just one component part of the larger diocese. Such a perverse and misleading outcome would cause confusion and misunderstanding. To put it in terms that Anthony Trollope would understand, it is as if Bishop Proudie's diocese had been renamed the Diocese of Barsetshire but Dr Proudie himself had become the Bishop of Hoggstock. Any diocesan bishop is charged with the overall shepherding of the whole diocese, even though she, as we may now say, may delegate some responsibilities to her area bishops. She needs a title that makes this clear and which distinguishes her from her area bishops. As was explained in the Revision Committee, to permit the title of the bishop to be different from the name of the dioceses could separate the bishop, the bishop's see and the diocese. This would indeed be a significantly worse position than the status quo. Such hard cases as this do indeed make bad law, and General Synod should, I suggest, not accept this well-intentioned but misconceived revision which has confused the original useful draft Measure. Thank you, Chair.

*The Chair* imposed a speech limit of three minutes

*The Bishop of Willesden (Rt Revd Peter Broadbent, Southern Suffragans):* I want to bring a word to Synod which has become my watch word over the past few months and that word is 'simplification'. It is a great conversation stopper when you tell people that you are charged with chairing the Simplification Group in the Church of England. Most people just laugh actually, but it is the case that in the work that we have been doing as a task group over the past few months, we have found that much of our legislation is dogged by a particular problem and the problem is this: we have a habit of putting into primary legislation that which then takes ages to disentangle.

I want to commend what is being done here as a possible model for the sorts of things that might happen in the future when we draft legislation and when we disentangle it. I take entirely the fact that there is a theological question here which Emma Forward put before us. Once we have resolved that, to have legislation that says, "You are allowed to do this and that is the way that you can then do it", without encapsulating it in legislation, seems to me to be a good model for the future. I do think when we are drafting and thinking these things through, and particularly when Revision Committees are being taxed by folk who come along with all kinds of noble suggestions, we do need to think very clearly about the ways in which drafting goes ahead.

We have models of this. It is perfectly possible these days to call people who are assistant curates all kinds of names, not as insults but as titles, 'associate vicars', 'associate priests', and all sorts of things and there is a clause in the Mission and Pastoral Measure that allows that. It is permissive based on a change to what their title is. This legislation as proposed seems to me to encapsulate the same sort of principle. I would commend to Synod that we are very careful when we sit in our Revision Committees and elsewhere that we do not over-complicate and do not over-prescribe because future generations will probably find themselves disentangling that in due course. I commend the approach taken in the Measure and I hope it will go forward.

*Mr Adrian Vincent (Guildford):* Although I am a member of the Steering Committee for this Measure I speak today in an entirely personal capacity. When the Appointments Committee invited me to be on the Steering Committee, this was the first time I had ever

been invited to be on a Steering Committee or a Revision Committee or anything like that so I was mad keen to do the best job I could, so I went for a residential stay at Gladstone's Library to do some reading up on the subject. In my researches I found that in most cases in the history of the church in England the diocesan bishop had a see or cathedra in a particular city. The bishop's title was of that city and the diocese shared that name. In some cases the bishop did not have a see in any one location and his title was named after the region, for example, Bishop Birinus in the 7th Century who was a regionary bishop without a definite see.

However, I could only find one example where the title of the diocese was of a region whereas the title of the bishop was of the cathedral city. That was the case of St Wilfred. I quote from J R H Moorman's *A History of the Church in England*. Wilfrid was appointed Bishop of Northumbria. Because he regarded the English bishops as somehow unsound in their beliefs or doubtfully consecrated, he went to Compiègne in France to receive consecration at the hands of the Bishop of Paris. On his return in 666, he found the King had appointed St Chad in his place so Wilfrid retired for a time to his monastery at Ripon. On St Chad's resignation he was restored as bishop and settled in York. So whilst St Wilfrid gives the Church of England a precedent for the title of the diocesan bishop being different from the title of the diocese, I do not think we should use this as a model to copy.

The more I have thought about the proposed draft legislation, the more concerns I have about it. What I have done is had a look again at the flexibility we already have within the Church of England's current legislation. Take, for example the Dioceses of Bradford, Ripon and Leeds and Wakefield Reorganisation Scheme 2013, clause 4 of that scheme, and I quote: "A new diocesan bishopric is founded and a new diocese created in the City of Leeds being the see of the bishop of the new diocese. The name of the new diocese is the 'Diocese of Leeds' but it may be known as the 'Diocese of West Yorkshire and the Dales'"

So the Church's current legislation maintains the link of name between the diocesan bishop and his or her diocese, which is important for theological reasons, whilst at the same time stating in legislation that the diocese may also be known after the geographical region, which is important for missiological reasons. I do not think we actually need new legislation. We are trying to fix something that is already working. If we make this change and break entirely the link between the title of the diocesan bishop and the title of the diocese, we might damage the theological link between the diocesan bishop and their diocese. Of course if the Synod votes today to proceed with this draft legislation I will do my best on the Steering Committee to bring to fruition that legislation, but I felt I ought to bring these concerns to the Synod's attention.

*Mr John Freeman (Chester):* On a point of order, Chair. I beg to move:

'That the question be now put.'

*This motion was put and carried.*

*The Chair:* I now call upon Dr Marshall to reply to the debate.

*Dr Edmund Marshall (St Albans):* I express gratitude to the five contributors to the debate, three of whom were members of the Revision Committee and they have amply added to the report that I made earlier. I was particularly warmed by the remarks of the Bishop of Willesden who commended the draft Measure for not being too prescriptive. That got for me to the heart of the matter. There is nothing about this draft Measure which is mandatory. It is leaving it to dioceses to decide whether they want their name to be of a see or a substantial town or a city or a geographical area. It is giving them the flexibility and giving them the opportunity of having a variety of names and different name for the diocesan bishop compared with the name of the diocese.

I commend this Measure as it now stands to the Synod as enabling a degree of flexibility that we have not really known before, although I accept Adrian Vincent's historical researches, which are interesting but rather lost in the distant past, but it seems to me that exactly what we want is now encapsulated in the draft Measure as it stands. I commend it to the Synod.

*The Chair:* I put the motion, Item 505 to the vote. All those in favour please show? It is quite close. I think I will order a division of the whole Synod.

*The motion*

*'That the Synod do take note of this Report.'*

*was carried after a division of the Whole Synod. The voting was as follows:*

<i>IN FAVOUR</i>	<i>105</i>
<i>AGAINST</i>	<i>94</i>

*Ten abstentions were recorded.*

*The Chair:* As it is now lunchtime, the debate is now adjourned until a future time and date; it may well be this afternoon or some other time. Thank you.

THE CHAIR *Professor Michael Clarke* took the Chair at 2.15 pm

## **The Anglican-Methodist Covenant: Report from the Council for Christian Unity (GS 1971)**

*The Chair:* Ladies and gentlemen, could I start by welcoming the President of the Methodist Conference. The Revd Kenneth Howcroft is sitting in the gallery. We are delighted to have you with us, Kenneth, for the afternoon debate.

We are going to start with a presentation from Dr Peter Howdle, the Methodist Co-Chair of the Joint Implementation Commission of the Anglican-Methodist Covenant. He will address us under Standing Order 97.

*Dr Peter Howdle:* Mr Chair, thank you very much for your welcome. Your Graces, members of Synod, it is a great privilege to be here this afternoon to address you on

behalf of the Methodist Church and of the Joint Implementation Commission. It is also a great privilege to just mention that over the last ten years while I have been the Methodist Co-Chair I have been able to work with two very valuable and honoured members, Bishop Ian Cundy and Bishop Christopher Cocksworth, and it has been a great joy and honour to be their colleagues, and I would like to add that it has been a great privilege to work with those men of God.

Allow me to start from a personal perspective on the recent history of our two churches. As teenagers in the 1960s - and I know I do not look old enough - my future wife and I were excited to hear about conversations between the Methodist Church and the Church of England, and that there was the possibility of them becoming one. As we know, that was not to be. At that time my future wife went up to university and, despite being a regular attender at her Oxford College chapel, there was unease about her being a communicant since she was a Methodist, so she never received communion there. Happily, though, 25 years later she was invited to preach in the college chapel and it was a natural assumption that she would not only receive communion but assist to administer it by taking the chalice, so our Churches had changed.

Ten years later we signed our Anglican-Methodist Covenant and that has enabled much sharing and much encouragement. Particularly from a personal perspective, I could give you many examples.

Ten years later, last year, our local Methodist church where we attend formed a single congregational Methodist-Anglican partnership with the congregation of our local parish church. We are the Christian church in our suburb. So in 45 years - a mere twinkling of an eye - I have experienced the movement of God's spirit within our Churches and I would pray that we remain faithful and hopeful and aware of God's calling.

Now during recent years I have heard, and I understand, about the frustrations and the boredom expressed with the Covenant process. Many Methodists have asked where is the Covenant going? What has it achieved? Some say that we have gone beyond 20th century ecumenism and that our post-modern culture does not want that type of approach. I would answer that the Covenant has achieved a lot. The relationship between our two Churches at all levels has changed. There is a culture of encouraging support and co-operation. I know it does not happen everywhere and some Methodists can be very protective of their traditions and reluctant to change but, overall, the change has been positive. We have worked closely together in many ways which are given as examples in our JIC reports, for example, on Fresh Expressions or on issues relating to safeguarding or on extended partnerships in ecumenical areas, shared ministry. However, the Joint Implementation Commission has come to the conclusion that we cannot move any closer unless we begin to try to solve some of the difficult issues for both of us. The Commission perceives that this is a significant moment for our mission in our islands and that there is a change in the tone of ecumenical relationships with a sense of needing to move forward in answer to God's call. We urge in our recommendations the establishment of a coherent framework which will not only sustain our current relationship but which will also enable us to take a really focused look at the key obstacles which prevent us from moving towards a deeper communion. These two key obstacles are dealt with in Recommendation 1 of the report before Synod today. In that recommendation we are asking our two Churches to work together through our faith

and order bodies to bring some mutually dependent proposals for us to consider in the future.

The first is a challenge to the Methodist Church, asking it to consider how it might become an episcopally ordered church within the historic episcopate. The second is directed to the Church of England, asking it to consider how it might in the meantime achieve the interchangeability of ministries by receiving those already ordained in the Church of God by the Methodist Church. The Joint Implementation Commission hoped and prayed that if such proposals were brought and eventually agreed they would allow us to have a much deeper communion between our two Churches.

It is important to report here that when this report before you today was debated at the Methodist Conference in July it was received enthusiastically, and similar resolutions to those you will debate were agreed by large majorities. Obviously there are concerns and the conference recognised that, in relation to Recommendation 1, we are asking at this stage for detailed work to be done and proposals to be brought in due course.

The difficult recommendation directed to the Methodist Church is about bishops. It is important that the Synod hears that on the one hand the Conference, the body in which rests our corporate episcopate, has on several occasions agreed to move towards a personal episcopacy, particularly as a means to enhance the unity and mission of the Church, and the Conference this year recognised that again when it voted for the resolution but, on the other hand, there is still a variety of views in the Methodist Church, which I am sure would not surprise you. There are those strongly in favour in principle and there are those strongly opposed. I suspect, however, that the majority would be content to move forward in this way if the Conference so determined with the intention of enhancing the mission of the Church together with the Church of England.

If the eventual proposal is for the Methodist Church to become episcopally ordered, it will no doubt be a matter of robust debate. I would stress to you, however, that such a move, were it to be agreed, would be permanent and irrevocable. I would also like to stress that when the Church of England is considering any proposals about the reception of existing ministries, although a very significant step, clearly the intention would be that this would only be needed as an interim measure with a limited time span while the Methodist Church became fully episcopally ordered.

One last thought, which I find very exciting, and this involves the Methodist Church worldwide. Although we do not have a Methodist communion analogous to the Anglican Communion, there are, as members of the World Methodist Council, autonomous Methodist Churches in nearly every country in the world with a worldwide membership of approximately 80 million people. The majority of these are episcopally ordered but not within the historic episcopate. If the Methodist Church of Great Britain, still regarded by many as the mother church, were to become ordered in the historic episcopate, I believe that it could begin to transform the relationship of other Methodist Churches with their Anglican neighbours, potentially a very significant opportunity for the worldwide mission of our Churches.

Mr Chair, 45 years ago I would never have imagined that I would be privileged to be speaking to you today. I still feel that excitement about our two Churches moving closer

together. I praise God for what has been achieved and pray that we will continue to listen to God's call and be ready to answer. Thank you very much for your time.

*The Chair:* Thank you, Dr Howdle. I am now going to ask the Bishop of Coventry as the Anglican Co-chair of the Joint Implementation Commission and, of course, Chair of the Faith and Order Commission to move the motion at Item 9 in his name.

*The Bishop of Coventry (Rt Revd Dr Christopher Cocksworth):* I beg to move:

'That this Synod:

- (a) thank the Joint Implementation Commission on the Anglican-Methodist Covenant for its work in its second phase;
- (b) endorse the three recommendations made in its Final Report (appended to GS 1971);
- (c) invite the Appointments Committee to appoint the Church of England co-chair and two Church of England members of the proposed Joint Covenant Advocacy Group; and
- (d) request the Council for Christian Unity and the Faith and Order Commission to work with the Faith and Order Committee of the Methodist Church to undertake the work set out in Recommendation 1 of the Final Report.'

Thank you, Mr Chair. It is a very great pleasure to follow Professor Peter Howdle. Throughout his work on the JIC since 2003 Professor Howdle has invariably shown intelligence, kindness and grace together with a real affection for the Church of England. I cannot claim to mirror Peter's many fine qualities but I can say that I have a real affection for the Methodist Church and if I may say, Peter and Mr President, I regard John Wesley not only as the great remarkable hero of Methodism but also as one of the most inspirational priests of the Church of England. When Rowan Williams asked me to be the Anglican Co-Chair of JIC 2 I said, yes, I will do it for Wesley and his vision of the Church in this nation and across the world. All this makes me very grateful to the Bishop of Peterborough, Chair of CCU, for allowing me to introduce this important debate.

The JIC report which has evolved from a careful consultative process claims that the Covenant between the Church of England and the Methodist Church of Great Britain stands at the crossroads. The affirmations made in 2003 when the Covenant was signed are strong statements of mutual Church recognition. The commitments made at the same time are clear undertakings of common life and a common work towards fuller unity. They can be read at Annex 1. We travelled a long way since 2003 and there is much to be thankful for. Some things in our life together simply need to be affirmed and strengthened; some things need to change and evolve; still others need renewed energy and focused attention. Let me say a little bit more about each of those.

So what needs to be affirmed and strengthened? There is a great deal of practical co-

operation in mission at the local level. There are many moving stories of grassroots working together as Anglicans and Methodists reach out to their local communities. You may have heard some of that earlier, as I did at the fringe meeting. Others are mentioned in the CCU note. In recent years these sorts of local partnerships have been able to take on a more intentionally missional character through covenant partnerships in extended areas, which allow a strategic approach to an area larger than a parish making the most efficient use of people and plant. These developments have been stimulated by the work of MAPUM, the Methodist Anglican Panel for Unity and Mission. In a no-nonsense, low headline sort of way, MAPUM has just got on with the task of helping our two Churches work more effectively together in a host of local situations, enabling the sort of on the ground relationships from which joint working flows and advising on all that is possible for Anglicans and Methodists to do now together for the Gospel in their local situation.

Of course partnership between Anglicans and Methodists is geographically patchy. For all sorts of reasons Methodism is stronger in some parts of the country than others, and in some parts of the country dioceses find themselves having their primary ecumenical relationships taking different directions. None of that worries me. What is of concern, though, is where the potential for partnership between Methodists and Anglicans that would re-grow the Church, re-imagine ministry and re-engage the Church's transformative effect on local communities, where that potential for partnership remains unharnessed through lack of knowledge of what is possible together. Hence one of JIC's three recommendations is to exploit to the full the present possibilities for mission and the powers within our Covenant relationship to work together for Christ in a parish, village, school, city and to make full use of the excellent facility of MAPUM.

So what needs to change and evolve in the Covenant? Here my focus shifts from the local to the national. The Covenant has by no means stood still at national level. The report highlights several examples of joint working: safeguarding, faith and order work, ethical investment, education and discipleship, and the remarkable work on the theology and practice of Fresh Expressions. Another one of our three recommendations therefore calls on the Churches to build on this well-developed pattern of national collaboration by establishing a joint covenant advocacy group. The purpose of this group will be to help the Covenant become more fully embedded within the existing structures of our Churches and to co-ordinate the various streams of work represented by the three recommendations of the report. The JIC does not recommend a third incarnation of its life. We feel we have come to the limits of what we can do but we do believe that this kind of light-touch framework is needed for ongoing monitoring of covenant partnership, advocacy and identification of issues needing attention.

So if some of our life together needs to be affirmed and strengthened and some of it needs to change and evolve, what needs to be given renewed energy and more focused attention? Ever since the Church of England and the Methodist Church began serious discussions about overcoming our unhappy division, indeed ever since the first Presbyteral Methodist Ordinations in 1784 the great impediment towards unity in mission has been the absence of interchangeability of ministry. The urgency of the missionary task in our nation, the strong affirmations of ecclesial recognition made in the Covenant, the experience of working together over decades, the complexities of what has become known as "shared ministry", have all made the question of



interchangeability of ministry between our Churches a matter that we must now face head on and, as we have heard from Peter, face together, for the door that we need to open is firmly locked on both sides and it needs two keys.

One key must be fashioned through the initiative of the Methodist Church. That is why JIC's first recommendation is that the Methodist Church's Faith and Order Committee work on proposals by which the Methodist Church can embrace the historic episcopate in its future life, ministry and mission in a way that the Church of England can recognise.

The other key must be fashioned through the initiative of the Church of England because any such move by the Methodist Church will pose us the question of how those Methodists, Presbyters and deacons who have been previously ordained presbyterally rather than episcopally are to be regarded. That is why in the same recommendation the JIC calls on the Church of England to ask our Faith and Order Commission to bring forward proposals for consideration by General Synod that will address the question of how we might recognise existing presbyteral and diaconal ministries in ways that will be received by the Methodist Church. This must be done with full theological integrity in ways that are consistent with our other ecumenical commitments, especially to the Roman Catholic and Orthodox Churches.

To be clear, the report does not say that we are in a position now to unlock the door. Instead it asks both Churches to ask their faith and order bodies to work together to see what might be done with ecclesial responsibility and credibility to move towards that. Today's Synod is not being asked to approve any theological solutions. It remains possible, indeed, that the faith and order bodies will conclude that there is no way past the difficulties here, but if they conclude they can identify one or more options that deserve serious consideration, those can then be brought to Synod and Conference.

Brothers and sisters, as you have heard, in July the Methodist Conference enthusiastically agreed to see whether a key to their side of the door barring progress to unity and mission and the healing of historic division could be found. It was not an easy task for them. It was a costly decision to make, to take this next step. We are now being asked to see whether we can find a corresponding key from our side by inviting our Faith and Order Commission to help us explore how we might reconcile existing ministries. Our hope is that our Churches can together discover a way to open this door that has been barred for so long and so be released to share in a new way in the mission which John Wesley set his original hearers in the Church of England, to reform the nation, particularly the Church, and to spread scriptural holiness over the land. Mr Chair, I beg to move the motion in my name at Item 9 on the Order Paper.

*The Chair:* The motion is now open for debate. A large number of people have expressed a desire to speak. The five-minute limit speech will run for the time being but I am warning you now that is likely to have to change during the course of the debate but I will give you warning.

*Revd Canon Dr Dagmar Winter (Newcastle):* I think this is a "John the Baptist moment" really for us as Churches, that we must decrease and Christ must increase. Of course we do not want a merger with a reduction to some bland common denominators but play to our strengths. I support and warmly welcome this report and wish God speed as

we grow towards Christ, grow to visible unity, grow to interchangeable ministry, but I also want us to encourage that we continue to do everything we already do and do more locally because so much is already possible.

In my rural patch we share and alternate services once a month. Anglicans love the Methodist Covenant service, are really enriched by this in their faith journey, and I believe they appreciate worshipping with us as well so we are each enriched by the other and we invite each other to speak at each other's services and events, but together we also do outreach, occasional missional services and share pastoral concerns. It is a great witness, it is greatly received by the local population as well. Occasionally we take funerals together because families are mixed Methodist-Anglican. It would be daft not to do it.

The idea that Christ were any less present in the other denomination seems ludicrous and I think it is this that must spur us on, that Christ must increase amongst us, so let us go with this, but honour the distinctive shapes of ministry that we have and yet go the path towards interchangeable ministry as well. Thank you.

*Revd Dr Roger Walton (Ecumenical Reps):* Thank you for calling me, Chair. Roger Walton, Ecumenical Representative from the Methodist Church, Chair of the West Yorkshire District and proud to be an Ecumenical Canon of Bradford Cathedral. I want to say first of all that the reception of this report at the Methodist Conference was indeed enthusiastic and warm and in some ways I was surprised how warm it was. I was not present at the Conference when the JIC interim report was brought in 2011, so I watched the debate on the live stream which meant I also saw all the twitter comments from inside the Conference and around the Connexion, and it was a very mixed picture that appeared from the two sources. Whilst in some parts of the country there was excitement at the ecumenical developments the Covenant had brought, for others it was hardly noticed in their ecumenical relations and it had made no difference. This of course represented the different patterns and strengths of our denominations in different areas, different speeds of take-up of the opportunity as well as personalities, churchmanship and theology. At that point Methodists were divided in their views.

Three years on, the reception of the final report was heartfelt and enthusiastic, hardly a voice or a vote or a tweet against it. It made me wonder why, and this is what I reflected. First of all I think that final report came at a time when people have seen what we can do when we plan strategically and resource together at a national level. What has happened in terms of safeguarding through our joint work is remarkable. Our churches are safer spaces and places than they were, training has been done on an industrial scale and the culture has dramatically altered. Equally what we have seen in Fresh Expressions has been extraordinary and visible in every part of our Connexion. The fact that we planned and resourced these things together has had a great impact.

Secondly, I think the development of covenant partnerships and extended areas and the thinking that lies with that has made an impact also. Those in Cumbria, Cornwall, Nottingham and Leeds have continued to pioneer new possibilities and have found themselves empowered for mission because we have expressed this in our partnership and many other places have experienced the same kind of strategic planning but without the label. In Keighley in West Yorkshire we had a shared church beginning to

run out of its ecumenical steam. We came together, district and diocese, circuit deanery and parishes, and began to think together how we would respond to the needs at the centre of this important and needy town.

What appears to be emerging is something that none of us could have imagined. It looks like an ecumenical minster approach in which the centre of Keighley and the surrounding areas are served by a team offering different kinds of ministry and mission. The combined staff are energised and the varied patterns and mission are bearing fruit. We recognise that in some areas this is the only way we can be effective for Christ.

Thirdly, I think the JIC vision of unity commended itself to the Methodist people. Many local Methodists still fear some kind of absorption or becoming part of a new Church in which their spirituality and their heritage is lost, but the four-fold vision does not see a single church structure but sister Churches that express their unity in Christ, in common profession of faiths, sharing of sacraments, reconciled and interchangeable ministry and mutual recognition of oversight in personal, communal and collegial forms. This is a very attractive form of unity.

Perhaps the most important thing is that the JIC Report has given us simple, clear challenges. They are not new. They have been at the heart of the relationship for the whole of my adult life in ministry, but they are clearly set out. We need to reconcile and recognise ministries. We need to tackle the issue of episcopacy in the Methodist Church in a way that can be owned by Methodists and the Church of England with integrity.

What is more, the simplicity of the way in which these recommendations are made to us made Methodists think, 'This is important, it is urgent and we should do it now'. We have been doing the Covenant for ten years, we have been talking for 50. We need to go deeper. My own sense is this is a '*kairos* moment' that ought to be seized and I hope, like the Methodist Conference, the Synod will embrace it.

*The Bishop of Carlisle (Rt Revd James Newcome):* As a representative of one of the areas of ecumenical development specifically mentioned in the Final Report, I want to thank the Commission's members and Roger Walton too for that very interesting and encouraging analysis we just heard. I also want to speak very enthusiastically in support of recommendations 1 and 2 as they apply to the Church of England.

First, with regard to the interchangeability of ministries that was so emphasised by the Bishop of Coventry, as we develop ecumenical mission communities across the County of Cumbria, which include the United Reformed Church as well as the Methodists and Anglicans, it is certainly the case that the lack of progress on this front over the last ten years, as the Report indicates, is proving to be an obstacle to deeper Communion. Nobody pretends that this is straightforward, but I agree wholeheartedly with the suggestion by the Methodist Faith and Order Committee, quoted in the Final Report, that one of the most pressing tasks now facing the Covenant is to develop an ecumenical ecclesiology as the foundation for an integrated structure of oversight and the reconciliation of ministries.

As so often with ecumenicism, there needs to be movement from the top down as well

as from the bottom up. There is a lot of activity on the ground and we are excited by it but, without some corresponding advances at national level, the local protagonists (myself included) will become increasingly frustrated.

Second, when it comes to planning together for mission and worship for the deployment of ministry and the use of resources, that is exactly what we have been doing in Cumbria over the last year or two with the development of joint strategies for out-reach to many millions of tourists as well as the local population, a strategy for ministry in ecumenical groupings and for the more strategic use of our several hundred church buildings. Without that ecumenical ecclesiology called for by the Report, we can only ever go so far and we find ourselves wasting hours of time and a great deal of effort on trying (not always successfully) to resolve practical issues such as housing and finance when we embark on joint appointments.

I welcome the proposal in paragraph 19 of the Report that we should develop arrangements for an interim period in order to embrace fully the ministry of those presbyterally-ordained in the Methodist Church. This would represent a welcome advance until such time as the interchangeability of ministries becomes a reality. Of course, there are objections to all of this from those who fear that closer union with the Methodists will simply drag us further down. We have heard plenty of those from members of some of our Cumbrian churches and the objections are not just in one direction. But as the CCU reflection points out, we have a shared calling to faithfulness and deepening discipleship, and there is a biblical imperative to engage in mission together regardless of the outcome.

I am grateful for the JIC's Final Report which offers encouragement and support to those of us who are already some way down this particular track. I also share the Commission's sense of frustration that more progress has not been made nationally in recent years. In particular, I applaud its renewed emphasis on the vision for fuller visible unity, not as an end in itself but as a means to the end of shared mission and holiness. In his Presidential Address yesterday, the Archbishop of Canterbury talked of visible unity in Christ despite functional diversity. I do hope and pray that as Anglicans we may be able to find ways of working with our Methodist brothers and sisters that celebrate diversity without allowing it to stifle our essential unity.

*Revd Canon Kathryn Fitzsimons (Leeds):* I would like to thank Peter for his presentation and I would like to offer my support for moving this Covenant process on. Until recently I was Urban Officer in the City of Leeds and I worked very closely with the Methodist district and other ecumenical colleagues to be a voice in the city, a Christian voice speaking inter-conversations.

I have recently moved into a UPA parish where we have a very close relationship with the Methodist Church. We probably do quite well. We have regular joint services. We use the most appropriate building for whatever mission initiative we are undertaking. We share pastoral work in the parish between our reader and the Methodist lay worker. We are looking at joint discipleship activities but, nevertheless, there is still confusion within our Church congregations, confusion about our relationship with Churches Together. It is sometimes hard to hold those boundaries. There is also a sometimes unspoken fear of losing identity and this identity is held, in my perception, within the

building and within the form of worship.

In addition to working in Gipton, I am soon to be taking on the Anglican Methodist LEP which Peter referred to, a congregation that has had Anglicans and Methodists worshipping together for the last year. As I reflect on taking on this congregation, the question that I am trying to find an answer to is: When is it appropriate to develop an Anglican identity? When is it appropriate to develop a Methodist identity? What is the way forward for a congregation which is working so closely together?

I believe that the discussions around interchangeability of Orders and the episcopate at national level will help us at a very local level respond to this question of the identity of the local church. It is vital that we have resources and are able to think about this in a bigger framework. I urge Synod to support this motion enthusiastically, as did our Methodist brothers and sisters. Thank you.

*Revd Thomas Seville (Religious Communities):* I welcome this report warmly, having been, as a member of the Faith and Order Commission, one of its sometimes rather critical accompaniers of quite some time. However, I do urge the Synod to pass it and especially to endorse those two recommendations.

I welcome, in particular, the image of the two keys. I do not know who was the originator of that, but it is a very useful image and I look forward to hearing one sound of the two keys locking the locks. One sound, please.

I speak to the second of the two recommendations. In the Final Report, certain Anglican Methodist agreements and also Anglican Lutheran agreements are referred to as things from which we may learn. I hope the intention is not to confine the intention of the Faith and Order bodies of our two Churches, because there may well be other ways. There may be other more adventurous, simpler ways. I am not going to reveal my hand on that one until we have got down to the business, if this motion is passed, which I hope it will be. Those are pathways which have been tried and there are things in them which some people would welcome and others not.

I think there may be some other, more exciting, ways of tackling this question. However, it is vital that we do it, that Methodist ministry is recognised with integrity and that there is no fudging of the issue over ordination rights and things like that. It needs to be a proper reconciliation, Church by Church. I am beginning to reveal my hand.

I do worry a little about some of the theology which is the background of the Report and I have a plea that in any ecumenical treatment of unity we do not reduce things to function. There is a very fundamental reason why we search for reconciliation among Christians for the full and visible unity of Christ's Church. That is that disunity among Christians is sinful, it is contrary to the will of God. It is contrary to holiness and it should bring us to repentance and be unswerving in our desire to remove those blocks which prevent Christians from coming together. Whenever you have an unreconciled ministry (and that goes within our own Church I think) there is a failure of charity, there is sin, and we need to strive unswervingly to remove those obstacles. So, please, a stronger version of why we search for unity, unity and charity, unity with God. That is what we are about, I hope.

Finally, a concern about the language used about God in the Report. I hope it was just a slip. I have protested to other Faith and Order Commission members on this, but we sang this morning that our God is “awesome”. That is good colloquial stuff, quite demotic and great, but God’s mystery is acknowledged. I do worry seriously (and it is not the only place in our ecumenical endeavours where it occurs) where you talk of the persons of the Trinity not as if they are the great incomprehensible, deep mystery of God but ‘a smoochy threesome’. It will not do. It is a disgrace. It is irreligious. Please, let us have some discipline in our language about God.

*The Bishop of Peterborough (Rt Revd Donald Allister):* I speak as the Chair of the Council of Christian Unity, so you would expect me to be in favour. I am. I speak also as a member of the Faith and Order Commission and look forward to being part of this work, if you entrust it to us. I was privileged to be at the Methodist Conference in July and to speak to them. I was also privileged to be heard graciously and lovingly and welcomed hospitably. I am grateful to them for that.

I was also privileged to witness the way in which the Methodist Conference was willing to go so far so willingly in a direction that was very, very challenging for them. It was humbling to be in that debate and to see the enthusiasm with which this proposal was accepted by the Methodist Conference that made me want to come back to Synod and say: Look, how far the Methodists are willing to go to be closer to us and to share with us more deeply. Look at that and think hard about how we respond to it.

I am also grateful to Professor Peter Howdle and to the Bishop of Coventry for the way they have presented today and for the work they have done, and others have done, on the JIC Second Report, which is clear, practical, helpful and focused. But this is an ecumenical debate and ecumenism for many people is boring, it is bureaucratic, it is tedious, it is wordy, it goes on forever and never gets anywhere. Let us put that right, friends. Let us get somewhere. Let us move it along. Some of us are trying very hard to move ecumenism from the image of being just bureaucratic to being much more relational. That is what the JIC is doing. That is what we are beginning to talk about in this motion. It is another reason we should go for it.

Father Thomas has said very clearly why we should really be moving in this direction. This is about the nature of God and the unity of the Godhead and it is about the mission of God. Jesus calls Christians not just to have the unity which is ours already, but to express that unity in our love for one another and in our missional co-working for the sake of the world, for the sake of reaching the world for Christ. It is that important.

I would emphasise, as we have already heard, that this is not a proposal for full unity of the Churches. Nothing like it. It is a proposal for doing the work to help us, if we can, receive each other’s ministries. What a joy, what a good result that could be. A limited one but a good one. There is a little phrase in 1 Corinthians that worries me sometimes as we think about ecumenism. It is about the eye saying to the hand, “I have no need of you”. Please do not let us be the eye who says that to the Methodist hand.

*Dr Philip Giddings (Oxford):* Mr Chairman, when the First Report for the first quinquennium was debated in this chamber, I was unwise enough to observe in the

debate that there was no lay member on the Anglican team. In consequence, I have been a member of the JIC in its second quinquennium, but the only lay member on the Anglican side.

I was present at that wonderful service when we made our Covenant commitment to each other. I took it very seriously and I believe that as a Church we do take our Covenant commitments seriously. It saddens me slightly at the lack of progress that we have made in the life of this Covenant and in the last five years. I am, of course, acutely aware of things in this chamber which have made progress more difficult and which we hope we can now resolve together, but there is one particular aspect which I have found very frustrating.

As colleagues in Synod will know, I am a member of the Archbishops' Council. Not once in all my time in that Council (and I have been on it since the beginning) have we discussed the JIC and its work and the Covenant. We made as Churches a solemn commitment to one another to begin to share our decision-making but we seem determined not to share it where it would really matter, and sharing things which are difficult where it really matters is surely the test of a strong and growing relationship.

I think we should listen carefully to what the Bishop of Carlisle said about the need for a national lead on this. Why has this body never met together with the Methodist Conference? I am aware that there are meetings between groups of bishops with district superintendents and Methodist equivalents and so on. That is very good, but we need to do something more than that to symbolise our commitment to one another and to make those key decisions together in the national life of the Christian Church in this country that the world might believe.

We all know what is happening to the figures about the number of Christians in this country. We all know the financial pressures and the human resource pressures which we are under. Surely - I nearly said surely to goodness - surely, we should consult together in a real, organised and structured way so that we make common decisions towards our common objective that the world might believe and that we might contribute to the creation and building of the Kingdom of God in this country together. Yes, there are difficulties. When were there not difficulties? If we look at the New Testament, there were difficulties from the start. Unity does not suddenly appear out of nowhere. We need to do more praying together. We need to do more trying to decide together. I hope that the Advocacy Group, and however this work is taken forward, will bring to us again and again the challenge to organise our decision-making at national and regional level in a way in which we take this Covenant seriously and decide together not apart.

*Revd Professor Paul Fiddes (Ecumenical Reps):* Paul Fiddes, representing the Baptist Union of Great Britain. Rejoicing in the stage to which the Anglican Methodist Covenant has now come, I am very grateful for this opportunity to offer a perspective from another ecumenical partner. I would like to offer a theological comment on the word 'covenant' itself. Covenant has been at the heart of what it means to be 'church' in my tradition and that of the English congregationalism which is now part of the United Reformed Church. Right at the beginning of the 17th Century, early Baptists were affirming that for people to gather as church means to be in a covenant with two dimensions, with each other and with God, and that relations between Churches can also be understood

as 'covenant'. So it is that God's eternal covenant of Grace becomes actual and visible in time and space. It is Christ, the covenant maker, who gathers people and Churches together not merely their own choice.

In the historic experience of my own Communion and in the pages of scripture from which the idea of 'covenant' comes, we can see that 'covenant' can become either an exclusive or an inclusive reality. It may be seen, in an enclosed way, as a privileged situation for particular people or it can become the basis for reaching out and embracing many others; a covenant, as the writer of Genesis puts it, with all living beings.

My own tradition, I fear, has not entirely avoided the danger of the exclusive approach, though it has been inclusive at its best. Scripture witnesses to the divine desire for covenant to include the whole diversity of Creation beyond even the amazing variety of Christian confessions. I simply ask that as the Anglican Methodist Covenant develops into closer unity, opportunities are taken to draw other Christian confessions into a shared life and mission as much as possible, not of course in the same way and to the same degree as at this historic moment but still offering partnership and hospitality.

It is a mood of expectation I am appealing for and here I am addressing my own union of churches through you as much as Synod. I do welcome the references in the Report to a range of other partners, as in paragraph 38, especially with regard to "Fresh Expressions". The Report also rightly draws attention to the potential for working in mission unity and holiness offered by the Covenant Partnership in extended areas. This structure might surely be used, even stretched with imagination, to include other partners. In fact, the Report tells us in paragraph 32 (as has the Bishop of Carlisle) that this kind of partnership is already happening in Cumbria.

It is good to hear the word 'Covenant', this theological word used so frequently in our conversation together. May it reflect the desire of the Triune God to make relationships and to make a Communion as universal and visible as our God wants it to be.

*The Chair* imposed a speech limit of three minutes.

*Revd Anne Hollinghurst (St Albans):* Yesterday, updates on meetings were being swapped and prayers shared between the gathering that was happening at Methodist Central Hall and the gathering here, as my Methodist colleague from central St Albans and I exchanged text messages and news. She is an Area Superintendent as well as Minister at the city centre Methodist church and I am vicar at the city centre Anglican church and our churches are developing a special relationship. We are working increasingly closer together.

Our shared context for mission means that I have more in common with her than with many of my deanery Anglican colleagues ministering in very different contexts. She comes to pray with my team many mornings. Together, we are initiating the development of chaplaincy to the Crown and Magistrates' Courts. We are collaborating, along with other city centre churches, on a fair trade Christmas pop-up shop in our city centre. We are exploring developing a shared older youth work. I am promoting their coffee mornings and ministry amongst the elderly because we struggle with capacity to offer that at my own church. We share in each other's special services and we have, for



a number of years, shared in the Lent and Holy Week journey, and so our congregations are becoming friends. If my Methodist colleague were to turn up and preside at our mid-week Eucharist, she would be entirely accepted by my congregation as part of the team.

I describe some of this not only because good news stories have been invited, but to say that in my experience mission and context are everything. This is true of my previous experiences working in the inner city and sharing resources or as part of a formal LEP in higher education chaplaincy. In all of these contexts, working together in mission only makes sense and we are able to do a lot together currently. But our mission together would be so enhanced if our structures were less cumbersome and if, from the Anglican point of view, we could move towards the interchangeability of ministries. Given that the Anglican-Methodist Covenant has affirmed just how much we share in common, including an apostolic expression of mission and ministry, I think the time has come to test whether we are serious about this goal as the Report urges. It will take some further detailed work to explore how this can happen, but I want to encourage Synod today to give a clear “yes” to this work happening.

I think sometimes we get it the wrong way round. We think that mission has to be squeezed into our structures whereas it is the structures need to enable the mission. Let’s remember the Church exists for the mission of God. Some words I often like to use by Archbishop William Temple: “The Church is the only society that exists for the benefit of those who are not its members.” Thank you.

*Mr Robin Lunn (Worcester):* Speaking in favour of the motion. My main reason for wishing to contribute in the debate this afternoon is to urge that this process has some dynamism and that we use some of the experiences gained from the 2013-14 Women in the Episcopacy legislation to achieve an outcome that has the enthusiasm of both Churches. The point about dynamism is very important as these discussions have tended to dawdle somewhat over the last ten years. I remember in the first York session I attended in July 2005 a very constructive and lively debate, particularly between the late Bishop Ian Cundy and that energetic Synod contributor Dr John Hartley. What many speakers in that debate urged was that a sensible timescale was put on the discussions to ensure that they did not lose momentum, and that has been a common refrain that we have heard at the more recent debates on this subject. I am very pleased at what is in this Report as I want us to reach a state of ever closer union, acceptable to both parties.

Several suggestions as to how this can be enhanced is, firstly, a reconstitution of the groups of Synod members to discuss some of the more challenging points just as we did on women in the episcopacy. That way we can talk freely and understand what the issues are as well as comprehending what is happening in different parts of the country as well as our own. One could encourage the Methodists to do a similar thing if they are not already.

Secondly, we are talking much about organic union at the local level. Can I suggest that we do the same thing at deanery and circuit level and that it feeds back to dioceses in the wider Methodist areas. Rather than this happening in an *ad hoc* manner, we request all our dioceses to put this into practice. In many respects, it is both top down

and bottom up at the same time. Crucially though it gives the process some urgency.

Thirdly, that we set a timescale. To state the obvious, this concentrates minds and I think we need to hear from the Joint Advocacy Group what timescale they have in mind. As the Covenant was signed on 1 November 2003, I do not think I can be accused of rushing things and I really think we need to energise the process. Would aiming for full agreement by the end of the decade be in any way controversial, particularly with regular reviews built in? I personally do not think that it would be and I hope others share this view.

Fourthly, I completely echo what Dr Giddings said in his excellent intervention, the Archbishops' Council should be discussing this matter.

Let us enthusiastically support this motion today but now add the dynamism to make it is not a subject that we discuss every couple of years but one we wish to bring to a successful conclusion. So yes to ever closer union and make 2015 the year when major progress is made on this issue. Thank you.

*Mrs Debrah McIsaac (Salisbury):* When I gave my maiden speech here I talked about the Covenant and an analogy to families and I told you all that I had over 140 first cousins by birth. I hope that I get a bit of a sharp intake of breath but, as I mentioned to you then and I do again, there was not much else to do on the Canadian Prairies on those cold November nights!

I come from a Methodist background, that is what we had in rural Saskatchewan, and so it was with great delight that I too could tell you some of the some moving good news stories at a grass roots level. I think that pursuing this with dispatch and diligence will lead to a healthier, livelier and more mission-oriented Church. Yes, it must be based on sound theology and ecclesiology, but I hope we will look for a removal of obstacles, not reasons or even excuses, to not go forward.

On the interchangeability of ministries, there is an extensive network of really good, exceptionally well-trained local lay preachers and a history of training and investing in and supporting lay ministry and of working in a collaborative, co-operative way between those who are ordained and the lay folk. I hope that we will receive it and endorse this enthusiastically and make it a significant moment where this week we can have two very good news stories.

*Mr John Freeman (Chester):* Thank you for calling me. I wholeheartedly support this Report, having been a Methodist Sunday school superintendent in the past. We have a very successful ecumenical partnership with our local Methodists who had to abandon their building because it became too expensive to look after. It works very well. Every sixth evensong we have a Methodist service and every sixth 10.30 service we have a Church of England service. All the people turn up to them both and it does not do any harm to anybody. Two Sundays ago we had the circuit superintendent who gave us a rousing Methodist sermon, well worth hearing, and those who did not turn up missed something. This Sunday when I go back to report to them what we have been up to today, we have the local new Methodist circuit chairman who will be presiding at our communion service and I have already emailed him to give a rundown of what we have

been up to these two or three days, and also we are fortunate in having the Head Brother of the Melanesian Brotherhood, who will also get a minute or two to talk to our congregation. We are doing our best. I commend it all to you. It is great and it works, folks, so give this Report your wholehearted support.

Whilst I am on, last night in Questions we learned that the Graham Tilby has been appointed as Church Safeguarding Officer for the Church. At our Diocesan Synod last Saturday our new safeguarding officer pleaded for the Church of England to have somebody in that role. She no doubt threw her hat in the air, but it is essential on this point we have one policy governing all dioceses, with nobody backsliding. If one out of the 43 fails then it becomes a problem, so remember that, you people looking after safeguarding. The Methodists are much better than us at safeguarding training, so watch it folks you are going to get more thorough training next time around. We have made a winner there. Thank you, Sir.

*The Archbishop of York (The Most Revd & Rt Hon Dr John Sentamu):* Members of Synod, I want to turn to that point by Father Thomas on the nature of unity. It is not functional. Often in our fleshly way and sinful way we think we can make unity. We think we can live and pray for it and work for it. Actually, unity is a given. We are invited to participate in the grace of the blessed Trinity. Christ prayed his prayer in John 17; the Father heard that prayer. All that we can do in obedience is to really be people who demonstrate it, live it, show it. Unity is not something to work towards; it is something that we in obedience enter, participate in, rejoice and work hard at in terms of being close to one another. So when we talk about unity, let's not please go back into functionalism.

Therefore the worry that people may have about the interchangeability of ministry, again ministry comes from Jesus. All ministry comes from Jesus and by the grace of the Holy Spirit he donates his Spirit that we may minister in his way. This word 'interchangeability' also has problems with it. I arrived in this country from Uganda in 1974 and went to train at Ridley Hall. A federation was starting. I lived in Westcott House and ate in Wesley House, and what was interesting is that in all the three Colleges, depending on who was celebrating, it was either a Methodist rite - and the only thing I did not like about Methodism is they did not have alcohol in their wine, that was the only thing I grumbled about, everything else was all right - but there was no question in that federation that you were not receiving the Eucharist. There was no question that the Word was not being preached.

Dear friends, let us take these recommendations forward so that we may by grace in obedience to Christ's prayer and his command show ourselves as living in unity. Of course Church structure is concerned in a way. What was Methodism all about? What was John Wesley all about? It was about the evangelisation of this country. Do we not together as a Church and as a body want to be more committed to joyous evangelism, where the Gospel of Jesus Christ is being preached, where people get to know him and really, friends, if that is what Methodism was about, what was the Church of England all about? I thought again it was about making sure that the Church in England continues to serve everybody in our community. So what this is all about in the end is could we resolve it quickly so that we can get on with the most important job, the re-evangelisation of England, together, walking in one step, because Christ has already

made us one by faith and baptism in Him and we will never be separated. Friends, I do not want to go to Heaven alone. I want Methodists to be there too and the rest of you. God bless you.

*General Synod Member:* On a point of order, Chair. I beg to move:

‘That the question be now put.’

*This motion was put and carried.*

*The Chair:* I will invite the Bishop of Coventry to sum up.

*The Bishop of Coventry (Rt Revd Dr Christopher Cocksworth):* Thank you very much, Chairman, and thank you very much, members of Synod, for a really stimulating debate and thank you, Archbishop, for your wonderful conclusion.

May I just refer to a number of the interventions, to thank, to begin with, Dagmar Winter for talking about a ‘John the Baptist moment’. I thought that was very helpful and your beautiful, in a sense, definition of ecumenism that Christ is present in the other Church. Once you have come to that point then you are on a road that in a sense can only lead you in one direction. Roger Walton, thank you very much. Again, you talked about a ‘*kairos* moment’ that was very, very inspiring and your analysis of that development in the Methodist Church from the interim Report that we brought a few years ago to now was fascinating. May we thank you for your contribution not only now but to our whole relationship.

Thank you to the Bishop of Carlisle. You thanked the Report for its encouragement and support. I would like to thank you for your pioneering ministry. We feel we have just been watching you and then writing a few words that will catch up with you really. Thank you for referring us to the biblical mandate.

Kathryn Fitzsimons, thank you for that interesting concentration on the question of identity of the local church and the way you described how it would be clarified by addressing some of the matters of ministry that the Report is wanting us to face head on. I thought that was very helpful.

Father Thomas Seville, I thought I had coined an expression a while ago ‘ecclesial imagination’. I think that is what we need when we are in a missionary situation. We need an ecclesial imagination that digs deeply into the fundamental character of the Church and then sees how that fundamental character is to be worked out today. I very much warmed to your more adventurous, simpler, exciting sort of models. I have a little idea of what might be in your mind. I want to hear much more and I know that the Faith and Order Commission will be grateful for that. You are absolutely right that we must not reduce ecumenism to function. It is a theological issue because it is about God and God’s call and our fear of the Lord that we do not fall into sin. Sorry, I had not noticed any ‘smoochy threesomeness’ in the Report. I think Paul Fiddes gave us a much better way of using Trinitarian theology to understand better what we are needing.

Thank you to the Bishop of Peterborough, not only now for your support but throughout.

“I have no need of you.” We have much need of you. I think again that is the character of ecumenism. We simply cannot say that to brothers and sisters in Christ.

Philip Giddings, thank you for your contribution to the JIC, and thank you for your powerful challenge to make decisions together and not only make decisions together but pray together to really honour the commitments of the Covenant. I know that is on your heart and has been all along and we are grateful for it.

Paul Fiddes, if I may say thank you. It was fascinating to hear you reflect on the concept of covenant from the Baptist and Congregational traditions and hear how they may be turned inward in an exclusive sort of way or they may be turned outward in an inclusive sort of way. Yes, you are right, what we are doing here we hope will be something to which other partners can be drawn.

Anne Hollinghurst, thank you for those on-the-ground examples of collaboration and for the way that structures must serve mission. That is the way round I think, according to the nature of the Church.

Robin Lunn, thank you for your desire to inject more dynamism. We do feel there has been a bit of dawdling. I think you are right about the timetable, that we need a timetable. I guess that will be the first task of the Advocacy Group, to keep both Churches focused on this task and not to let it go and come to some conclusions, on the question of whether these particular issues can be done and the keys found.

Thank you Debrah McIsaac for your reflections and experience from Canada. That was really good to hear.

John Freeman, “It doesn’t do anyone any harm”, I thought that was lovely and being together and doing together does work.

Archbishop, your Grace, thank you for reminding us that unity is in a sense given. It is given in the prayer of Christ, it is given in the identity of Christian life and being drawn into the unity of God, and we are to obediently enter into unity and then to live it. You mentioned John Wesley. I had a wonderful quote, Archbishop, but I have left it on my table. I think you said enough about Wesley and his commitment. That is what he was about: re-growing the church and re-evangelising the land. That is a calling, perhaps even more so today. Thank you, Chair.

### *The motion*

*‘That this Synod:*

- (a) thank the Joint Implementation Commission on the Anglican-Methodist Covenant for its work in its second phase;*
- (b) endorse the three recommendations made in its Final Report (appended to GS 1971);*
- (c) invite the Appointments Committee to appoint the Church of England*

*co-chair and two Church of England members of the proposed Joint Covenant Advocacy Group; and*

*(d) request the Council for Christian Unity and the Faith and Order Commission to work with the Faith and Order Committee of the Methodist Church to undertake the work set out in Recommendation 1 of the Final Report.'*

*was carried on a show of hands.*

THE CHAIR *The Ven Karen Gorham (Oxford)* took the Chair at 3.35 pm

## **Diocesan Synod Motion on the Spare Room Subsidy (GS 1965A and GS 1965B)**

*The Chair.* We come now to Item 10 on the Agenda, a Diocesan Synod Motion on the Spare Room Subsidy. For this debate you will need GS 1965A and GS 1965B. A large number of people have put in to speak in this debate so I want to outline how I am going to play it. We will have some opening speeches with a five-minute speech limit and then I am going to ask Sam Margrave to speak to and to move his amendment. That will be followed by a debate on the amendment before we conclude with a debate on the original motion.

I invite Mr Fletcher now to come and speak to and move the motion.

*Mr Ian Fletcher (Leeds):* I beg to move:

'That this Synod, noting the rise in the number and seriousness of reported concerns about the impact of the Spare Room Subsidy (the 'Bedroom Tax') on the vulnerable and others, call on the Mission and Public Affairs Council:

- (a) to evaluate the findings of research into the effect of removing the Spare Room Subsidy across the country; and
- (b) to promote with Her Majesty's Government and partners from the social and housing sector ways of ensuring access to suitable local housing for all, especially for those who are vulnerable without increasing levels of debt.'

Good afternoon, Synod. This motion comes to you from Airedale Deanery Synod in the historic Diocese of Bradford. It is the first Diocesan Synod Motion to reach you in the name of the new Diocese of West Yorkshire and The Dales. The motion reflects real concern from those working among the poor and marginalised in Bradford about the impact of the Spare Room Subsidy, better known perhaps as the 'Bedroom Tax'. The motion reflects that all are responsible for all. It relates to the common good and the holding of Government to account. You will recall our meeting in July in York.

We are well aware of the need for Government to balance its books. We do not pretend

that there is no need for welfare reform. We are not opposed to change and indeed we are supportive of it. We are however opposed to change that disregards the needs of the poor and vulnerable. We are extremely concerned about the Bedroom Tax. The Government stated in the House of Lords on 10 November that this policy will save £500 million per year. We are not at all convinced of that when all costs are accounted for. We do not believe that the Bedroom Tax is really of actual financial benefit to the Exchequer. We are convinced that those who suffer as a result of it are often the least able in our society.

Many of you will have examples in your own areas of people who are suffering from this tax. One idea behind the tax was to encourage more effective occupation of properties. Many of us here today may be empty nesters; our children have left home. Some of us may have downsized; others may not. But in order to downsize there needs to be suitable smaller accommodation. In Bradford, we went through a spell of demolishing one-bedroom properties, with the result that one-bedroom properties are few and far between. If as a tenant I am not exempt from the tax and I cannot find another property, I have to pay the Bedroom Tax. The Joseph Rowntree Foundation states that 100,000 tenants have been unable to move home and that half of these are in rent arrears. I am informed that where people have moved, the opportunity has been taken to uprate rent charges on both the new property and the property they have left, with extra cost to the Government as a consequence.

One person in our area is aged 50-plus. He lives in a three-bedroom property with his non-dependent son. He has lived in the same property for over 20 years where he brought up his family. He has alcohol issues and low self-esteem. His son is in some aspects a carer but he has to pay the Bedroom Tax. He is left with £1.59 per day for food, clothes and everything else and is in debt to a pay day loan company. Another person aged 45 lives in a two bedroom property. She has lived there for ten years. Her partner fulfilled suicide. She is agoraphobic and potentially suicidal herself. She has low self-esteem and after paying the Bedroom Tax is left with £4.55 per day. Debt advisers are finding that framing any workable budget for some of those who are paying Bedroom Tax is impossible. This is without taking account of the level of debt often from pay day loans that some have amassed. Many of us can balance a budget by spending less but there is a limit below which we cannot survive.

One consequence is that we are seeing a massive rise in churches providing hot food for people who cannot afford food and in the use of food banks. Bedroom tax is not the only factor at work in creating poverty but it is a particular issue.

In Bradford Metropolitan District, and remembering that pensioners are not affected, the figures for August 2014 show 2,807 people are paying bedroom tax with an average cost of £15.11 per week each. 1,489 children live in the affected households. In our political system children have very little voice and yet we know that bringing up children in poverty detrimentally affects their entire life and reduces their healthy life expectation and increases the likely costs to the NHS. Pay day loan companies often aim their advertising at children which is a tactic that should not be permitted. Incommunities, our local social housing provider, reports that 1,536 of their customers are now affected by Bedroom Tax, with an average charge of is £15.31 per week each. 994 people have moved, many of whom were long-standing members of the local community. As a

consequence, Incommunities have an extra 730 houses that have become empty as a result of the Bedroom Tax with a consequent loss of income. They estimate this has cost them £3 million in rent loss and cost. Incommunities have submitted 1,500 claims for discretionary housing payment, the majority of which have been successful. While discretionary payments enable local authorities to protect vulnerable people from some of the unintended consequences of the Bedroom Tax, the Government has given no guarantee that it will continue and it is critical for it to continue. Incommunities estimate that only 100 of their customers have found work as a consequence of the tax. Fifty per cent of Incommunities' clients are in debt where no debt previously existed. I am told that on Wednesdays there is a queue out of the court doors when cases of rate arrears are heard. Many of these are folk who do not understand the court system and brilliant work is done by Bradford Court Chaplaincy to help people in this situation.

In Bradford, the Bedroom Tax bears particularly harshly on disabled people, both because they often need adapted property but also they have particular need of support mechanisms. It also bears harshly on single parents who want their children to visit on a regular basis and on carers who look after either grandchildren or elderly parents during the day. It contributes through increased stress to mental illness problems. The change in the make-up of communities caused by longstanding members moving out appears to have contributed to a clear rise in anti-social behaviour. I am told by Incommunities that there has in the last year been a ten-fold increase in evictions by them for this type of behaviour. Most of those who have moved home are aged 45 to 55 with an average tenancy of 11 years; the 'salt of the earth' one might say. Two-thirds of those have moved to the private sector. These are the very tenants who tend to bind local communities together.

A Report by the Ministry of Justice last week says there have been over 30,000 evictions so far this year up to the end of September. Social housing providers blame this on the Bedroom Tax. Shelter says that 90,000 children will be homeless this Christmas.

Our motion does not go as far as calling for the abolition of the Bedroom Tax, but it highlights concerns and looks to a review of the effects of this particular aspect of welfare reform. We ask whether it penalises the most vulnerable. We ask whether now it has been seen in action, it actually achieves the benefits that were expected of it or whether it penalises the most vulnerable and has no actual benefit to the Exchequer. We believe all people should have the opportunity of affordable access to suitable local housing and that this should especially relate to the most vulnerable. Thank you.

*The Chair:* The motion is now open for debate with a five-minute speech limit.

*Revd Charles Razzall (Chester):* Thank you, Chair. Imagine a woman walking down a rainy street in another northern town approaching a tired looking priest in a red tie, who wishes to go off immediately on his retreat and then take his wife for a couple of days to their lovely house in Trafalgar Square. She says, "Do you remember me, Father Charles, you baptized my Tyrone just a few weeks ago, and I am in a bit of trouble." I say, "Oh dear, (give us a break God) what do you want?" She says, "Well I have been subject to the Bedroom Tax and Cheshire East Council seem to have messed up all my paperwork with the discretionary housing payment to help me with it and I don't know



what to do.” Well, I did something, what I could, but she said, “I feel like I am on edge of a cliff.” To be on the edge of a cliff or a precipice is well-known in high finance. Our dear friend John Spence years ago when he was with Lloyds Bank had to apologise for Lloyds Bank selling precipice equity schemes to wealthy investors. He ‘fessed up. Here is a precipice on which many people are now living; this Bedroom Tax.

Whilst as Ian has said, there is some great consensus on parts of the current Government’s welfare reform programme, particularly as far as Universal Benefit is concerned, this is a precipice for many. Why? Well, let’s look at one or two issues briefly. The Government points to the unfairness of a situation where private tenants’ housing benefit is constrained by reference to household size while social sector tenants have not been so constrained. There is some substance to that argument. However, the rules are not aligned and the housing benefit for private tenants under the local housing allowance scheme is capped at levels related to household size that are generally much higher than those in the social sector. This policy takes no account of why social sector tenants are allocated the homes they occupy. Tenants exercise a degree of choice, do they not, in the private sector, that is what the private sector is, but many social sector tenants had little choice in towns like Crewe when they were allocated their home. Most private tenants see their home not forever. Social sector tenants have long lived in a context of secure tenancies and a home for life.

There are many other fundamental criticisms of the policy: restriction of housing policy for a spare bedroom seems to be sometimes a purely arithmetic exercise. There are problems, as I have indicated, with discretionary housing payment as a solution to the problem. It is a local discretion and Cheshire East Council are normally very good, but local authorities are cautious. Application procedures are often intrusive and there is no standard set of rules across the country. The awards tend to be short term and, as I have given in my example, often prone to frequent renewal requirements.

There is more that could be said, but there is a deeper theology too. I talked about home, space, my home in Trafalgar Square (Not here, do not worry, in Scarborough opposite the cricket ground) but it is a home and the Christian Church should take seriously the concept of ‘home’, of a place that people make their home. This policy is a precipice policy. I hope that those of all political persuasions - as Ian has indicated, we are not demanding the abolition of this, just to look at it - that those of all political persuasions, from Bambury and the Dioceses of Suffolk and St Albans and Salisbury, even our dear friend John Spence in his role as a Conservative Councillor on Essex County Council, perhaps all of us, please all vote for looking at this seriously and supporting this motion. Thank you.

*Mrs Lois Haslam (Chester):* Ian Fletcher has given us a lot of figures and I want to give you some examples of the effect that it is having on one family, one of a number in my parish. I worship in a parish adjoining Stockport station. It is an urban parish of 16,500 people but certainly not the poorest part of the town. The housing is very mixed. This one family, having worked abroad for a number of years, returned to England with two young children. They endured eight months with relatives in order to find some roof over their head. The tensions between the two families were increasing and they needed to move out. They were offered a council house. It was in such a poor state, such a dirty and poor condition, that the previous four families who had been offered

that house refused the offer. With nowhere else to go, this family accepted it. A clause in their contract states that it was theirs for life so long as they were good tenants and did not break any of the terms. The policy at the time this estate was built was to build a house of a reasonable size so that tenants could bring up their families there and become part of a community. This family have been in that house for 17 years, but for the first time they are now in rent arrears because of the Spare Room Subsidy. They are having to use their credit card to buy food, which has to be paid back of course the following month and that means borrowing for the month after as well. They have worked hard to make the house habitable and are now fearful of being compulsorily moved out. The family are not a drain on the community. One son now 24 has a degree, is working away and living in digs. The other son is now at Sheffield University and the wife has gained an OU degree but is struggling to find work. The husband has a long list of health problems. Following his work capacity assessment, it has been accepted that he is unfit for work and he has been granted ESA. They qualify for discretionary housing payment. Since the Spare Room Subsidy was introduced both have suffered mental health problems requiring medication and medical treatment. They do not want to move and there are no smaller properties available to move into. At the last local election, I challenged a councillor who was canvassing and he said they were 7,000 one-bedroom properties short.

This family have contributed to the local community. To give a few examples: the wife has volunteered for many years in the local primary school; she takes responsibility for the publicity from our parish, a church where she is a regular worshipper; and she goes a mile further to care for a very elderly neighbour who would otherwise need social care services. This family have to pay the Spare Room Tax.

In contrast, I am a widow, I live alone, I own my own home, so I get a 25 per cent reduction on my Community Charge. I gratefully accept it as it helps me balance my budget, but the Spare Room Subsidy affects the poorest in our communities. It is a very unfair tax and I strongly support this motion.

*Mr Peter Collard (Derby):* Thank you, Chair, for calling me. When I first read this I thought it sounded very reasonable and it was well proposed, but then I was talking to my daughter who is just now buying her first house. She moved down to the London area five years ago after university and has quite a reasonable job. When she moved down, though, she could not afford a two-bedroom flat, she could not afford a one-bedroom flat, instead, she had to share a house with three others. The thought struck me that here is someone who is paying taxes, which go towards paying for the benefits, and is it fair that someone on benefits should have accommodation that is at a higher standard than my daughter could afford for herself? I think herein lies one of the problems with this issue.

There is another issue as well, I think. I have a close relative. She has got a first class honours degree. According to the benefits system, she is disabled. She is actually very good at gaming the system, but I do not see the disablement as it shown. Now, I have a problem in that she is taking money that should really go to the truly disabled. There are those who truly cannot help themselves and that need help and we do not pay them enough, but unfortunately there are those who will game the system and they are taking money away from those that do need it.

In some ways there is a bigger issue and that is are we, as the Bride of Christ, failing to do our bit? Are we trying to take the splinter out of the Government's eye when in fact we have a plank in our own eye? Bringing people to a full relationship with God is what we as a Church are really about. Doing that transforms their life. The evidence is that when people come into a full relationship with God their lives are transformed, their physical lives as well as their spiritual lives, and if we are not doing this, who will? So I would like the Synod to consider whether we should not spend more of our time bringing people into a full relationship with God rather than trying to do what the politicians have actually done for themselves because these issues were discussed in Parliament not too long ago.

I leave you with those thoughts. Thank you very much, Synod.

*Revd Andrew Dotchin (St Edmundsbury and Ipswich):* Thank you, Chair. Many of the speakers today this afternoon have spoken about personal stories and I think the one I would like to share is about the law of unintended consequences. It is not just the Bedroom Tax that hits people. I am currently working with a young mother who is a lone parent. She has a teenage daughter and twins who are ten. She is by herself, lives on an estate in one of the most highly deprived areas in Suffolk and her teenage daughter has a severe mental health condition. She has been in a secure unit for nine months. We do not have a secure unit for young people in Suffolk so her daughter now lives in Cambridge. Adding to her worries, her daughter is now going out of her teenage years and she is losing the benefit of having that child at home. She is absolutely petrified of someone coming along and saying, "Your daughter does not live in your house any more" - and there have been whispers of this - "We will reduce your income and we will take away your spare room". It is not malicious, it is not meant that way, but this is what happens and in the meantime a frightened young mother tries to scrape together the pennies to travel from Ipswich to Cambridge once a week for the last nine months to visit her daughter in distress.

*The Chair:* Sam Margrave to speak to and move your amendment.

*Mr Samuel Margrave (Coventry):* Thank you, Chair. I am a local councillor and also a director of one of the country's larger housing associations, so I have got a quite a lot of experience of this area. To pick up Mr Collard's comments, actually most people in benefits are in work, so it is important to consider that and, equally, I think it needs to be said, although not to do with my amendment, that we should not judge whether somebody is disabled enough to receive benefits, they do, and I did take some offence at those comments.

But to speak about my amendment, my reason for my amendment is simple. The motion as it stands is a noble one. It calls for us to both lobby the Government and to explore the issue. Now I believe that the facts already speak for themselves. Nevertheless, I think the Church needs to do something. We are an institution with wealth and land, and I feel with my amendment that we should be committing to exploring what opportunities there are for us to help with this situation. Whether it be in my own diocese where a church was sold to a developer, the developer then turned it into flats and then it was sold back to a housing association or whether it is when we, as

an institutional investor, choose to build private rented sector properties, we could maybe get a deal where we could include some social housing, maybe one bedrooms. It is about using our weight in the marketplace and combining that with our conscience. I would like us to explore our opportunities because there are always opportunities to make profit and do good. I think, as a Church with a lot of wealth and a lot of land, that we can do that.

In regard to the financing of my suggestion, I understand that point (a) of the motion actually could potentially cost £10,000. I do not know where the finance department get their figures from but, anyway, I have not been told yet what it would cost for my proposal but I would offer to do a report for free if needed to be done because I feel that we need to explore the opportunities within the Church that we can deliver in our communities, whether that is through the Church Commissioners, whether it is through others. Discipleship, I believe, is going on a journey, a journey of action, so today I would like us to take up the cross and to follow Christ and to display the action that is so desperately needed to help with the housing crisis. We have taken on Wonga so let us take on the shoddy landlords. Let us deliver some housing for our communities. Let us make a difference because for once we have got a motion before us that not only questions the Government but, equally, gives us an opportunity to actually do something tangible that can make an impact on people's lives.

Synod, having ad libbed slightly, I would ask that you support my amendment and that we actually do something, something that we can see that will make a real difference to all of the stories that you are going to hear today, so I thank you for your time and I ask you to vote for my amendment, and I formally move my amendment.. Thank you.

*The Chair:* Thank you. I ask Mr Ian Fletcher to respond to the amendment.

*Mr Ian Fletcher (Leeds):* Thank you, Sam, for that amendment. I am in some sympathy with what you are suggesting. However, it does deflect from the focus of the motion which we have put before Synod and therefore I am going to ask Synod to reject the amendment as you have suggested it.

My other reason for doing so is that I feel that the amendment is rather too vague. Sam suggests that the Church should "do something". As an elected member from the historic diocese of Bradford, I can say to him that we did an affordable housing scheme at Dent. We were one of the first dioceses to do such a thing, and the Church is doing things. That affordable housing scheme at Dent is an example of the sorts of things that are happening so I do not want anybody to go away thinking that the Church is doing nothing or I am against the Church doing things, but what Sam has put forward is rather too vague. I would point you towards the website Faith In Affordable Housing which is there to, among other things, advise parishes on how to take forward the sort of schemes that Sam has mentioned. It gives comprehensive advice. It says it is comprehensive, and I believe it, on how to take those schemes forward.

So my response to Sam is to say thank you very much, but I do want to maintain that focus which does build on what we said about Common Good back in July in York. It does do the things - or I think it does the things I said it does - of holding Government to account for its policies. I think it is the sort of thing that the Church should be doing so I

ask you to reject the amendment, please.

*The Chair:* We now have a debate on the amendment and I encourage you to restrict speeches to the amendment.

*The Chair* imposed a speech limit of three minutes.

*Revd Amanda Fairclough (Liverpool):* I am a Church Commissioner, although I am not representing them. I actually represent the House of Clergy on the Assets Committee as the statutory clerk in holy orders elected by you because in my day job I am a practising chartered accountant. I consider myself the one-eyed man from the country of the blind and I frequently find myself challenged to reconcile my theological opinions with my responsibilities as a trustee.

Sam's amendment on the face of it seems very reasonable and hard to disagree with because it feels like good Christianity, so therefore I have a heavy heart as I resist it but I have sound reason for doing so. The Assets Committee protects the capital that the Church Commissioners manage of £6.1 billion and maximises the return thereon. We invest professionally under the Ethical Investment Advisory Group guidelines and that comes at a cost, a cost which is identifiable and justifiable, but what might be the cost of the investment changes suggested? Could it just be capital diminution? Could it be income reduction as well? What about the longer-term cost? Because let us be clear. We are a charity and the returns that we get fulfil our charitable objectives. Our assets provide income to pay pensions and fund the work of the wider Church and we are a very good charity because we are doing God's work with our financial resources, spending our income to build the Kingdom. If we choose to invest capital to fill one object, we risk losing sight of the bigger picture. It muddies investment decisions and risks diminishing returns. We risk helping a few needy people at the expense of helping far more, even failing the whole people of God so overall we may get a worse result, less Kingdom-building. The best way to bring about a bias for the poor and all those on the margins is to spread the Gospel of Christ. It may seem distasteful to say this but we need money to do that and the more money, the better. Please, Synod, allow the Church Commissioners and the other NIBs to continue to invest ethically and wisely, and to manage their investment returns with responsibility. Let us then offer that income back to the Church to apply to use in God's service. Let that income grow ten-fold, thirty-fold, a hundred-fold as the Kingdom grows with it because that is what we can do, how we can best use our assets to help the poor.

*The First Church Estates Commissioner (Mr Andreas Whittam Smith, ex officio):* Thank you, Chair. This amendment obviously springs from a warm heart and rightly emphasises the Church's mission to the poor. It is clearly aiming at the Church Commissioners because we are the people with the suitable property assets. What I think may not be widely understood is the Commissioners are heavily involved in the house-building industry. This arises because we have considerable holdings of agricultural land, some of which comes right up to the edges of settlements. At the moment we are bringing forward 47 separate sites for housing development. These are situated all over the country from Durham to Kent, from Hereford to East Anglia.

Now the important point is that local authorities insist that the promoter, that is us, make

available a significant amount of affordable housing in return for being granted planning permission. Broadly speaking, affordable housing can be one of three things: it can be socially rented housing, owned and let by local authorities, and very similar to old fashioned council housing; it can be affordable rented housing, owned and let by housing associations at rents that are generally below eight per cent of the open market price; and, thirdly, it can be low cost housing for sale where the initial sale price is between 40 and 70 per cent of the open market value.

If we go back to the Commissioners' 47 sites, we find that in total they will provide 25,000 homes and of these 25,000 nearly 6,000 will be transferred to local authorities for the provision of affordable housing. On the remaining 19,000 houses that will be offered on the open market by the builders whom we have licensed to exploit our sites, we normally take a share of the sale price. So the result is that we both earn an acceptable return which means that we meet our fiduciary duties and, to quote the words of the amendment, "provide accommodation that has a bias to the poor".

I hope the mover of the amendment will be reassured by what I have said. I am not sure whether he had in mind that we should in any way change our charitable objectives but I just should say for the sake of completeness that is not in our mind to do anyway at the moment. Thank you.

*Mr Robin Hall (Southwark):* Thank you, Chair. I am pleased to see this diocesan synod motion before us today and further pleased that we have the amendment here before us. Synod, since the Coalition Government took office and the spare room subsidy became the law of the land, 378,614 people in England alone have seen their housing benefit cut and I could have rounded that figure up or down a bit, but to do so glosses over the fact that these are real people as we have heard already in this debate, and I am sure we all know that 378,614 one- and two-bedroom social or affordable housing units have not been built in the last four years.

Synod, all this amendment does is commit the Church institutions just to explore how we can use our property and assets to provide more affordable homes. That is taking a lead on an issue of national policy. Just as we challenged the usury of the pay day lenders and put our money where our mouth is, so we can do so again, yet again, the established Church taking a bold stand on matters of social policy, social justice.

Isaiah 58 tells us not just to feed the poor of our communities but also to bring the poor into our homes. Perhaps that is not very empowering language but our modern response to this command surely is to use our resources to fill the vacuum of social and affordable housing that we already have in this country. I ask you to support the amendment. Thank you.

*Mr Simon Baynes (St Albans):* Chair, I am a member of the Church of England Pensions Board and its Investment Committee. I am also a member of the St Albans DBF and the Inter-Diocesan Finance Forum, but this afternoon I am speaking in a personal capacity and not as a spokesman or agent to the Pensions Board, the DBF or the IDFF. What I have to say is certainly pertinent to our pensions investments and is also likely to prove true for Church investments where DBFs or parishes act as trustees. For many years I have worked as an independent pensions trustee and I think it might

be helpful if I explain to Synod that, whilst this amendment is clearly well intentioned and looks helpful, actually it is not. Trustees of pension schemes and other trust funds have a primary duty to act in the best interest of the beneficiaries. We are required to act in such a way so as to ensure that we optimise the outcome for the beneficiaries. In the case of pensions this means that we ensure that all pensions are paid in full and on time, and this is an onerous fiduciary responsibility. It is particularly onerous as a responsibility when the pensions scheme is under-funded. Madam Chair, members of Synod will be well aware from previous debates in Synod that the Church's pension schemes are under-funded and we have a multi-year recovery plan in place to achieve full funding. Our recovery plan and the high level investment strategy that derives from that have been approved by the Pensions Regulator and we have a duty to ensure that our investment portfolio, including our property portfolio, produces optimal returns taking into account all relevant factors such as risk, and of course we do this having taken professional advice and in line with the recommendations of the Ethical Investment Advisory Group.

I would not wish Synod to think we can invest in any way we like. It really is not as simple as that. We are legally required to take professional advice. If we were to pass a resolution to bias our investments as Sam Margrave is asking, then we might be accused of not acting in the best interests of the beneficiaries. We could be in deep trouble with the Pensions Regulator. I have sympathy that Sam Margrave is trying to help the poor and, as Christians, we should all try to help the poor, but this is not the way to go about it. To develop our property portfolio to provide suitable accommodation which has a bias to the poor is asking for a claim of maladministration before the Ombudsman.

Chair, Sam Margrave is requesting a simple amendment but it is not simple. It is fraught with difficulties. I ask Synod to reject the amendment and please pass the main motion unamended. Thank you.

*The Chair.* I put Item 13 to the vote, the amendment in the name of Sam Margraves.

*This motion was put and lost on a show of hands*

We now continue with the debate as unamended.

*The Bishop of Manchester (Rt Revd David Walker):* Thank you for calling me. What is the point of the Bedroom Tax? I have heard it justified on three grounds: that it is a moral good, that it is a practical good and that it is a fiscal good. Members of Synod, would that it were demonstrably any one of those three.

At a practical level it is argued that reducing the benefits of those who have a spare bedroom in their home will encourage them to move to a smaller property and make more large family homes available for rent. That would be desirable. It is a practical argument, so it stands or falls by its practical outcomes. People are not moving into smaller homes, not because they are unwilling or because they prefer to pay the tax, but simply because those smaller homes are not there for them to move into. Current estimates suggest only one household in about twenty has been able to make that move. Councils and housing associations will tell you they do not have those properties

lying empty available.

The second justification is financial. We are told we need to tighten our belts in the aftermath of the recent recession, our welfare budget is too large and that this is a justifiable way of reducing it. Members of Synod, until a few days ago I had some lingering sympathy for this viewpoint, not a lot but a little. Then at the weekend I read the latest statistics. These show that since the last election reductions in tax and welfare support for the lower income half of our nation are almost exactly matched by the gains of the higher income half. We are not actually saving money through instruments such as this but simply redistributing resources from the poorer to the richer half of our population. At the same time, as we have heard, housing associations are reporting inexorably rising levels of arrears among those whose housing benefit has been reduced by the Bedroom Tax. Despite the often admirable efforts of their staff to help tenants manage these changes, there are real risks that the number of social evictions will grow sharply over this next year or two. Members of Synod, evicted families do not disappear from the face of the earth, they still need housing somewhere and there are not the smaller homes for them to move into.

Finally, I want to challenge the argument this is a policy to which you can look to deliver fairness. It is not fair on those children whose dads can no longer share custody of them. It is not fair on the disabled person who needs extra space to keep the equipment required for their quality of life. It is not fair on children who need to find new schools, facing the financial costs of new uniforms and the social costs of making friends to replace those left behind. Those of us at the Children's Society fringe this lunchtime heard much of the plight of the poorest in our schools. But it is more than not fair, it is not just and for Christians that is a more powerful virtue. The language of fairness is too often that of the spoilt child. Remember the man who comes to Jesus - Luke 12 - and says, "Tell my brother to share the inheritance"; he gets short shrift. Members of Synod, let us go for justice, not just for fairness.

*Revd Canon Suzanne Sheriff (York):* I am absolutely delighted that this is on the agenda. It is essential that we are aware of these situations if we are going to be a church of the poor and have a mission to the most poor and vulnerable in our society, but we need to keep current in our concerns. This issue has hit the press, it has captured the imagination and we understand what it is about, but what about other issues that are in the same category? For instance, benefit sanctions. It is the single cause that is sending most people to food banks. If somebody who is claiming Jobseeker's Allowance or even Employment and Support Allowance does not manage to comply with all the requirements, they can have their benefits cut by 50 per cent or even withdrawn completely and this can be from four weeks up to a maximum of three years. Sometimes it is because somebody has missed an appointment with their adviser, maybe a bus breaks down, sudden crisis with the children or a hospital appointment. Sometimes it is because somebody has not tried hard enough to find a job. As often as not, the person who is claiming does not even realise what they have actually done. The adviser, who is supposed to be the person who helps and supports the claimant, is actually the one who has to bring in the sanction. So they have no support. All of a sudden, there is no money for food, there is no money for heating, and this is for families who are already at a low ebb and working on a minimum income.



These sanctions include not only those who are looking for work but also the sick, the disabled and single parents with children as young as five. It leads to all sorts of terrible consequences, people getting involved with pay day loans, illegal loans and, of course, a general bad experience with mental health. I am delighted that this debate is happening today and that we are going to take action. Please vote for this motion but, when you do, do not think it is job done because this is the tip of an iceberg.

*Sister Anita Smith OHP (Religious Communities):* Like other speakers, I am here because of concern for lives ground down by the relentless pressure of a society in which they cannot cope. These are generally not very articulate people. Their reading skills are not equal to the small print of regulations. Dare I ask, how are yours? I found 65 words in one sentence and it was difficult to discover the main verb.

So a few examples of people who need an advocate in the public arena. These are people who have all been to the food bank where I work. A man having to pay the Bedroom Tax who liked to have his grandchildren to stay but he, of course, is also trapped by other things. He buys his electricity by a 'pay as you go' meter, the most expensive way to pay; whereas I, and I dare say most of us, pay dual fuel by direct debit, a much cheaper way to do so.

Secondly, a woman on a zero hours' contract who had had only four hours' work in the past week. She is counted as 'employed' but she was clearly needing her food parcel. That is ridiculous as well as being unjust.

Thirdly, an example which left me feeling in need of some anger management. Just over a year ago, an older man in some distress came because his so-called spare room was for his son. The son was at that very time serving Queen and country in Afghanistan. He was expected home for Christmas but an officious official had said, "Well, he could stay at the barracks". I lost my cool, I think would probably describe my reaction to this outrageous statement. Happily, we were able to find money and to solve the immediate problem but, of course, it did not heal the wound and it is not a long-term solution.

The Beveridge Report (surely, the foundational document of our Welfare State) does not talk about poverty. It talks about "want". These are people in our parishes who are in want and they need us to speak for them. Let us do so loud and clear.

*The Very Revd Andrew Nunn (Southwark):* Unashamedly, I want to say I am opposed to this iniquitous tax and I would like to see it repealed. In my parish we have some of the most expensive residential accommodation in the country within the iconic Shard. The apartments there are priced between £30 million and £50 million each and you can look down from there upon some of the most impoverished communities within the country.

Take the story of a single mother from Walworth with three grown-up children. She works part-time as a cashier at Iceland but had to take time off work on statutory sick pay due to chronic lung disease. She has been a council tenant for 17 years but has recently been informed that, as she has two unoccupied bedrooms, she will have to pay the tax or move. She applied to transfer to a smaller property under the Smart Move

Scheme but was told that she is ineligible for the Scheme because she now has rent arrears of £2,662 which were built up when she was in depression. Our local MP, Harriet Harman, has done wonderful work on her behalf with the local council and a solution has been found to her particular problems which makes it look all okay, except that so much of the budgets of our local councils are being diverted in order to smooth out the problems that the Bedroom Tax has caused.

Within the borough of Southwark, £3.7 million has been given from low income families back to the Government since this tax was introduced. Southwark Council has paid £1.5 million on supporting people who need extra funds in order to pay the tax, which is 44 per cent of the Emergency Housing Allocation Budget for the Council. The overall Emergency Housing Budget, of which the Bedroom Tax is a part, has trebled since April 2013. The Department of Work and Pensions initially allocated £1.2 million but the total spend to date is £3.3 million. This is a policy that is simply not working. It is the politics and the economics of 'Alice in Wonderland' and it is those least able who are paying the bill and those who have for years lived in their home who are having to move to relieve the budget. Neither of these things is just and we believe in a God of justice. I will be supporting this motion. I just wish it was even stronger. Thank you.

*General Synod Member:* On a point of order, Chair. I beg to move:

'That the question be now put.'

*This motion was put and carried.*

*The Chair:* That is clearly carried. Can I ask and invite Ian Fletcher to come and reply to the debate?

*Mr Ian Fletcher (Leeds):* Thank you. Can I thank everybody who has contributed to this debate. It is clear that there are stories out there, too many stories, of people who have suffered as a result of the Bedroom Tax and I think this motion is about those people. It is about the vulnerable people in our society who are suffering as a consequence of what is being asked.

Charles Razzall spoke about a case that he was particularly familiar with and he used the description of "precipice", and in a way the Bedroom Tax does operate like a precipice. We are lured into it. It is a small amount each week. If you look at the weekly amount, it is not a lot but it all adds up and it takes people to the brink of that precipice.

Lois Haslam again gave us examples that she was aware of. Peter Collard talked about the fact that there are some claimants who maybe one wonders why they are claimants. We have a system which is always going to have instances where we may think that there is some abuse. That is not a reason to downcry everybody else. There will be cases, but most of the people who are affected by this are genuine and suffering cases.

Andrew Dotchin spoke about the daughter with severe health problems and, again, one of the things that we have seen from this tax is that it contributes to mental health problems. People who are all right in the normal context of being all right, with this

landed on top of them, suffer from mental health issues. Bishop David Walker, Bishop of Manchester, spoke about the effects of the Bedroom Tax, the fact that people can only move if there is something to move to and the fact of more evictions coming along. He talked about it being not fair, not just, and I think that probably all of us can agree with that.

Canon Sue Sheriff widened the debate a little. She talked about other welfare reforms and particularly ones which are hard hitting. We deliberately, I think, kept this motion to the Bedroom Tax and at the time it was put forward the Bedroom Tax was the one which was on people's minds. Undoubtedly, sanctions are an issue. Where you change from one benefit to another and you are expected to survive without anything while the system catches up, it seems to be okay at chopping you off but not too good at putting you onto the new benefit. There is an iceberg there, I agree with Sue. And, Sister Anita, concern for lives ground down. Finally, we heard from Andrew Nunn who likened this, I think, to 'Alice in Wonderland'.

I would ask you, please, to support the motion that we have put in front of you. Thank you.

*A General Synod Member:* On a point of order, Chair, would you accept a motion for a division of the whole Synod?

The Chair: There needs to be 25 people standing to have a division of the whole Synod. Yes, there are 25 people standing, so I order now a division of the whole Synod on Item 10.

#### *The motion*

*'That this Synod, noting the rise in the number and seriousness of reported concerns about the impact of the Spare Room Subsidy (the 'Bedroom Tax') on the vulnerable and others, call on the Mission and Public Affairs Council:*

- (a) to evaluate the findings of research into the effect of removing the Spare Room Subsidy across the country; and*
- (b) to promote with Her Majesty's Government and partners from the social and housing sector ways of ensuring access to suitable local housing for all, especially for those who are vulnerable without increasing levels of debt.'*

*was carried after a division of the Whole Synod. The voting was as follows:*

<i>IN FAVOUR</i>	<i>249</i>
<i>AGAINST</i>	<i>0</i>

*The Chair:* Our thanks to the former Diocese of Bradford for bringing this to our attention, and this concludes this item of business.

THE CHAIR *The Bishop of Birmingham (Rt Revd David Urquhart)* took the Chair at 4.42 pm.

## **Farewell to the Bishop of Newcastle (Rt Revd Martin Wharton)**

*The Chair.* We come to Item 11, Farewells. I invite the Archbishop of York to speak.

*The Archbishop of York (The Most Revd & Rt Hon Dr John Sentamu):* Members of Synod, Bishop Martin is from Lancashire hence his love of cricket (though I have to point out that Yorkshire won the County Championship this year with Lancashire second from bottom!)

After school in Ulverston, then university at Durham and Oxford, Bishop Martin began his ordained ministry at St Peter's Spring Hill, Birmingham and then St John the Baptist, Croydon. Next, he took on ministerial training roles at Cuddesdon, then in Bradford, and in 1992 he became Area Bishop of Kingston-upon-Thames. He was my Area Bishop for five years. In 1997 Bishop Martin was appointed the 11th Bishop of Newcastle. The last 17 years are arguably the best innings as 11th man since John Snow's 59 against the West Indies in 1966!

Bishop Martin is loved in Newcastle Diocese as a pastor, visitor and friend to clergy and laity alike. And the feeling is reciprocated. "It is", says Bishop Martin, "the most beautiful diocese in the Church of England".

Typical of the shared ministry in the diocese is the fact that his wife, Marlene, has always visited clergy and families on moving in. Marlene has often offered wonderful hospitality at Bishop's House - the Bishop's head would pop round the door to tell her, "I've just told them they are staying for lunch".

Bishop's House is inevitably on the circuit for gentlemen of the road. A familiar visitor came one day in some distress having been told by social services that day that his mother had died. Bishop Martin sat with him for a very, very long time. "Everything else could wait", he said. It is clear that he recognises the value of cups of tea and coffee as an essential part of his episcopal ministry - with his team in the office at the start of the day or out and about in the diocese, or with a bacon and egg butty at his favourite transport cafe on the A1 down to Bishopthorpe.

In public life, Bishop Martin's contribution has been very significant, both nationally and within the diocese. It was he who was instrumental in the founding of the Northumberland Church of England Academy from the conception phase in 2005 to fruition in 2009. He has served as a Vice President of the Newcastle Community Foundation. He has been a strong advocate for Newcastle and for Northumberland.

He was rightly honoured in 2011 with the award of a CBE for services to the Church of England and the North East community.

Bishop Martin is a team player, developing a highly collaborative and non-hierarchical culture within the Diocese. He has led a programme called, 'Generous, Engaged and Open', deploying short-term teams and task groups to get jobs done. Having visited his

diocese at least five times, all this actually works. There was a 2% increase in church attendance across the diocese between 2000 and 2010.

A teenager turned up at Bishop's House one day with a £100 note to say thank you to the diocese for its youth service that had helped him achieve so much. There are 15 salaried youth workers employed by Newcastle Diocese and its parishes.

Bishop Martin knows about how to reach people. Preaching once about Hugh, Bishop of Lincoln, Bishop Martin finished with the phrase, "If you want to be heard, lower your voice". This axiom might be a good summary of his own philosophy and practice of ministry, always in a very lowered voice. He also likes to quote Bishop John Robinson, "We can have as high a doctrine of ministry as we want, as long as our doctrine of the Church is higher. And we can have as high a doctrine of the Church as we want, as long as our doctrine of the Kingdom is higher. Ministry serves Church serves Kingdom".

Bishop Martin is so self-aware. He has unassuming but marvellously effective ways of working. Always ready to give people a long lead (knowing that if they take it too far they will tie themselves in knots without any assistance from him). He has an incredible gift of discerning what is about the Kingdom and what is merely 'churchy'. But he never shows impatience. If he disagrees with anyone, his dissent is not the noise of a resounding gong but is grounded in what it is to be human. Those who look for 'churchmanship' allies in arguments will not find an ally in him because Bishop Martin is a disciple of Jesus Christ and has no 'churchianity' in his bones whatsoever. I knew that in five years in Kingston. For him, it is Jesus Christ and his Gospel which takes priority over everything else.

Do not be misled by appearances when you see Bishop Martin in his unique sitting posture - he is neither asleep nor zoned out - any moment he will interject a comment which hits the nail on the head - witty, compassionate, sharp and to the point. Colleagues have learned not to be taken in by his relaxed attitude. Beware also - he reads everything. After all, he is a Myers-Briggs personality type expert. But he has the kind of expressive face that gives everything away. I recall his look of horror when I deliberately broke a clay pot as an illustration when I spoke at the Cathedral for the diocese's 125th Anniversary in 2007. It was all over his face, "What on earth is Sentamu doing?" His face said it all.

When I arrived in Newcastle earlier for this Anniversary service, the traffic was so horrendous I abandoned my car and took a taxi, which had the right of way in every part of the City. The taxi driver recognised me and said, "You were in Birmingham, weren't you?" "Way aye man," I said. "Why has everything got to be in London?", he complained. "Well, I don't know," I said. "Take the Millennium Eye, listen, it is now called the London Eye. It has not got a ring to it. If it would have been in Birmingham it would have been called the Brummie Eye. A little bit of a ring. But it is far better if it came to Newcastle. It will be the best. It would now be called the 'Way Aye Eye'!". When arriving at the Cathedral and telling them this story I knew I was at home in Geordie land, a land which has now been home to Bishop Martin and Marlene for 17 years. And that taxi driver said, "He's the best lad we've ever had, you know."

And then there's football. Newcastle United has been a high priority, sitting in the stand

next to his St James' Park friend, Peter. Peter returned the favour, finally coming to church for Bishop Martin's farewell at the Cathedral where he presented Martin with a Newcastle shirt signed by the players. "Haway the lads!" There he goes.

Not just the lads. Bishop Martin has been very supportive of women in ministry and salutes the women clergy in the Diocese, many of whom serve, he says, in "parishes most people wouldn't want to park their car in". Dagmar Winter is one of those.

Bishop Martin is the third longest serving bishop in the House of Lords. From the bishops' benches he has highlighted a wide range of matters, so often from a North East perspective. He has spoken out on wind farms; on unemployment; on education as a tool for social mobility; on the need for research into asbestos-related cancer, mesothelioma (a big concern on Tyneside); on discrimination by landlords following the immigration laws, and on probation reform. Ahead of the pack, in 2008 Bishop Martin was speaking about credit unions, loan sharks and debt. In one debate he described the need to give people the means to meet their potential as "liberating the Billy Elliot factor".

I ought really to switch off this microphone because in January this year Bishop Martin co-sponsored an amendment to a Government Bill to restrict the use of amplified noise equipment in the vicinity of the Palace of Westminster. He could be very direct when it came to the situations of those most in need. In June 2010 he asked, "Does the Minister really believe that the deportation of unaccompanied child asylum seekers to Afghanistan is in each child's best interests. If she does, perhaps she could tell us why". The Minister really could not respond. Bishop Martin has been passionate in his fight to let asylum seekers work while their case is being determined.

Bishop Martin is the last of the smoking bishops. It is widely known in the House of Lords that if you need to talk to Bishop Martin, if he is not in the robing room, he can nearly always be found in the smoking shed in Black Rod's Garden. Taking one of his 'fresh air' breaks, once Bishop Martin was accidentally locked out from his own Diocesan Synod. Sadly, the scent of rum and maple tobacco is already fading in Bishop's House. Bishop Martin and Marlene, you are going to be very much missed.

I thank you on behalf of Synod for all you have done so far in the service of Christ and pray for great happiness as you move on into retirement. You have been looking forward to watching more cricket and seeing more of your children and grandchildren. I pray that the next steps will bring you greater blessing as you head over the Tyne to Durham. May God bless you both.

*The Chair.* That completes the business for this group of sessions and I, therefore, call upon the Archbishop of Canterbury to prorogue us.

*The Archbishop of Canterbury (The Most Revd and Rt Hon Justin Welby)* prorogued the Synod at 4.54 pm.

## **Annex A**

### **QUESTION 2**

#### **Membership of the Crown Nominations Commissions from November 2010**

##### **CROWN NOMINATIONS COMMISSION**

Central members in bold. \*Denotes Chair of panel

##### Salisbury

The Archbishop of Canterbury\*

The Archbishop of York

Mr Paul Boyd Lee

**Mr Aiden Hargreaves Smith**

**Prof Glynn Harrison**

Revd Canon John Holbrook

**Mrs Mary Johnston**

Mr Robert Key

Very Revd June Osborne

Revd Vanda Perrett

**Very Revd Colin Slee**

Mr Richard Southwell QC

**Revd Canon Peter Spiers**

**Revd Canon Glyn Webster**

Ms Caroline Boddington

Sir Paul Britton

### **2011**

##### Durham

The Archbishop of York\*

The Archbishop of Canterbury

Ven Stuart Bain

Revd David Brooke

**Revd Canon Tim Dakin**

Revd Canon John Dobson

**Mr Aiden Hargreaves Smith**

**Prof Glynn Harrison**

Dr Jamie Harrison

**Mrs Mary Johnston**

Canon Anne Lindsley

**Revd Canon Peter Spiers**

**Revd Canon Glyn Webster**

Canon Fran Wood

Ms Caroline Boddington

Sir Paul Britton

##### Lincoln

The Archbishop of Canterbury\*

The Archbishop of York

Miss Rachel Beck

**Revd Canon Tim Dakin**

Canon Niccy Fisher

**Mr Aiden Hargreaves Smith**

**Prof Glynn Harrison**

**Mrs Mary Johnston**

Revd Canon Gavin Kirk

Revd Canon Chris Lilley

**Revd Philip North**

Ven Jane Sinclair

**Revd Canon Peter Spiers**

Mr Cameron Watt

Ms Caroline Boddington

Sir Paul Britton

Winchester

The Archbishop of Canterbury\*

The Archbishop of York

Prof Joy Carter

**Revd John Dunnnett**

Ms Chris Fry

Rt Revd Peter Hancock

**Mr Aiden Hargreaves Smith**

**Prof Glynn Harrison**

Revd Canon Clive Hawkins

**Mrs Mary Johnston**

Mr Ken Shorey

**Revd Canon Peter Spiers**

**Revd Canon Glyn Webster**

Revd David Williams

Ms Caroline Boddington

Sir Paul Britton

**2012**

Chichester

The Archbishop of Canterbury\*

The Archbishop of York

Mrs Lorna Ashworth

Revd Alastair Cutting

Dr. Brian Hanson CBE

**Mr Aiden Hargreaves Smith**

**Prof Glynn Harrison**

**Mrs Mary Johnston**

**Revd Preb Charles Marnham**

Ven Douglas McKittrick

**Very Revd Andrew Nunn**

Canon Rebecca Swyer

Mr. Jeremy Taylor

**Revd Canon Glyn Webster**

Ms Caroline Boddington

Sir Paul Britton



### Canterbury

Right Hon Lord Richard Luce\*

Revd Canon Clare Edwards

**Mr Aiden Hargreaves Smith**

Mr Raymond Harris

**Professor Glynn Harrison**

**Mrs Mary Johnston**

Mr David Kemp

Most Revd Barry Morgan

Rt Revd James Newcome

**Very Revd Andrew Nunn**

Rt Revd Michael Perham

Revd Canon Mark Roberts

Mrs Caroline Spencer

**Revd Canon Peter Spiers**

**Revd Canon Glyn Webster**

Rt Revd Trevor Willmott

Ms Caroline Boddington

Sir Paul Britton

Revd Canon Kenneth Kearon

### **2013**

### Blackburn

The Archbishop of York\*

Rt Revd Richard Chartres

**Ms April Alexander**

Revd Canon Dr Simon Cox

Canon John Dell

**Revd John Dunnett**

Mr Ian Garden

Rt Revd John Goddard

**Mr Aiden Hargreaves Smith**

Professor Helen Leathard

**Revd Canon Dr Judith Maltby**

**Very Revd Andrew Nunn**

**Miss Jane Patterson**

Ms Alison Wynne

Ms Caroline Boddington

Sir Paul Britton

### Manchester

The Archbishop of York\*

Rt Revd David Urquhart

**Ms April Alexander**

Mr Phillip Blinkhorn

Revd Canon Sarah Bullock

Canon Dr Peter Capon

Mr Geoffrey Dent

**Revd John Dunnett**

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