

# **Report of Proceedings 2013**

## **General Synod July Group of Sessions**

**Volume 44 No. 1**

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# Contents

## **Full Synod: First Day Friday 5 July 2013**

Introduction of New Members	1
Presentation of the Prolocutor of York	2
Welcome to Anglican and Ecumenical Guests	2
Address by the Bishop of Skálholt	3
Progress of Measures and Statutory Instruments	4
Report by the Business Committee	5
Approval of Appointments	12
Presidential Address	17
Legislative Business:	
Clergy Discipline (Amendment) Rules 2013	23
Clergy Discipline Appeal (Amendment) Rules 2013	23
Amending Code of Practice under the Clergy Discipline Measure 2003	23
Legal Officers (Annual Fees) Order 2013; Ecclesiastical Judges, Legal Officers and Other (Fees) Order 2013	23
Scheme Amending the Diocese in Europe Constitution 1995	23
Welcome to Young Anglican Observers	24
Questions	24

## **Second Day Saturday 6 July 2013**

Progress on Meeting Challenges for the Quinquennium	54
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## **Third Day Sunday 7 July 2013**

Legislative Business:	
Faculty Jurisdiction Rules 2013	71
Draft Church of England (Miscellaneous Provisions) Measure	81
Safeguarding: Follow-up to the Chichester Commissaries' Reports	94
Welfare Reform and the Church	120

## **Fourth Day Monday 8 July 2013**

Women in the Episcopate	141
Legislative Business:	
Draft Dioceses of Bradford, Ripon and Leeds and Wakefield Reorganization Scheme	195
Financial Business:	
The Archbishops' Council's Draft Budget and Proposals for Apportionment for 2014	218
Farewell to the Bishop of Exeter	232
Church Commissioners' Annual Report	235

## **Fifth Day Tuesday 9 July 2013**

Address by Bishop Angelos	241
Statement by the Chair of the Appointments Committee	243
The Work of the Elections Review Group: First Report by the Business Committee	244
Legislative Business:	
Draft Amending Canon No. 32	260
Draft Conventions (Elections to Upper House) (Amendment) Resolution	266
Draft Clergy Representation (Amendment) Resolution	266
Draft Church Representation Rules (Amendment) Resolution	266
The Work of the Elections Review Group: Electorate for the House of Laity and Online Elections: Second Report by the Business Committee	267
Farewells	276
Index	283

## **Full Synod: First Day Friday 5 July 2013**

THE CHAIR *The Archbishop of York (The Most Revd and Rt Hon Dr John Sentamu)* took the Chair at 4.15 p.m.

*The Archdeacon of Rochdale (Ven. Cherry Vann)* led the Synod in prayer, remembering especially Canon Bob White who was unwell, and Mrs Janet Atkinson and Dr Cherida Stobart who had recently died.

*The Chair:* I would like to say a few words before we commence the formal business of Synod.

Beloved in Christ, thank you for your prayers, cards and emails. I am not yet out of the woods but God has been gracious to me. I will know whether I need further treatment when I see the consultant surgeon towards the end of this month, so all I can say is, as you hear it on *Strictly Come Dancing*, 'Keeeeeep praying!' If you see me leaving the hall it is not because I disapprove of any speech, rather than I need to inspect the plumbing more frequently than usual, or, as they say in Afghanistan, 'I am going to answer the tea'!

I also ask members to pray for Denise Inge, the wife of Bishop John of Worcester. She has a tumour as big as a tennis ball, which has attached itself to three of her vital organs. We pray that it may shrink and therefore make surgery possible.

### **Introduction of New Members**

*The Chair:* In a moment I will read the names of the new members of the Synod and I ask them to stand in their places as I mention their names and remain standing so that we can greet them all with applause at the end.

The new members are: Rt Revd Jonathan Meyrik (Suffragan Bishop of Lynn) replacing the Bishop of Grimsby (Rt Revd David Rossdale); Very Revd David Ison (Deans) replacing Very Revd Vivienne Faull; Mr Andrew Mackie (Third Church Estates Commissioner) in succession to Timothy Walker; Revd Canon Wealands Bell (Lichfield) replacing Revd Paul Farthing; Canon Michael Chew (Blackburn) replacing Professor Helen Leathard; Revd Ernest Chitham (Chichester) replacing Revd Stephen France; the Archdeacon of the Meon (Ven. Gavin Collins) (Portsmouth) replacing Revd Tim Jessiman; Revd Ruth Crossly (Carlisle) replacing Revd Simon Austen; Revd Charlotte Gale (Coventry) replacing Revd Martin Gorick; Revd Canon Dr Tudor Griffiths (Gloucester) replacing Revd Dr Sandra Millar; Revd Ruth Hind (Ripon and Leeds) replacing Revd Janet Kearton; Revd Karen Hutchinson (Guildford) replacing Revd Canon Barbara Messham; Revd Canon Richard Mitchell (Gloucester) replacing Revd Canon John Witcombe; Revd Malcolm Rogers (Liverpool) replacing Revd Dr Timothy Stratford; Revd Stephen Saxbee (Chelmsford) replacing Revd Dr Timothy Bull; the Archdeacon of Craven (Ven. Paul Slater) (Bradford) replacing Revd Canon Samuel Randall; Revd Canon Dr Simon Taylor (Derby) replacing Revd Canon Jackie Searle; Revd Rowan Clare Williams (York) replacing Revd Canon Glyn Webster; Ven. Ian Whitley QHC RN (Forces Synodical Council) replacing Ven. Martin Poll.

May we formally welcome them in the name of our Lord. (*Applause*)

It also gives me great pleasure to welcome Heather Pritchard and Samuel Magorrian, the newly elected representatives of the Church of England Youth Council attending this group of sessions under SO 113A, and Charlotte Cook, who has been re-elected. May we please greet them most warmly. (*Applause*)

It is also my pleasure to welcome the bishops attending during vacancies in See. I remind members that they have speaking but not voting rights; and as they are not members of the Synod they do not form part of the quorum of the House of Bishops. They are: the Bishop of Jarrow (Rt Revd Mark Bryant) for the diocese of Durham; the Bishop of Bolton (Rt Revd Chris Edmondson) for the diocese of Manchester; and the Bishop of Taunton (Rt Revd Peter Maurice) for the diocese of Bath and Wells. May we welcome them. (*Applause*)

### **Presentation of the Prolocutor of the Convocation of York**

*The Chair:* The Lower House of the Convocation of York has elected as its Prolocutor the Venerable Cherry Vann. I invite her proposer and seconder to present her.

*Revd Canon Pete Spiers (Liverpool):* I am delighted to present to the Synod the Archdeacon of Rochdale, the Venerable Cherry Vann, as the newly elected Prolocutor for the northern Convocation. (*Applause*)

### **Welcome to Anglican and Ecumenical Guests**

*The Chair:* Nine churches or groups of churches appoint ecumenical representatives to attend each group of sessions for a period of three years, with a right to speak (if called by the Chair of the debate by prior arrangement) but not to vote. The nine churches have recently been asked to consider who will represent them for the three-year period from July 2013 to February 2016, and there will be two new faces at this group of sessions.

The position in relation to the nine churches is as follows: Revd Professor Paul Fiddes (Baptist Union) is continuing; Bishop Dr Joe Aldred (Black-led Churches) is continuing; Very Revd David Arnott (Moderator of the Church of Scotland General Assembly in 2011) is new; Revd Dr Roger Walton (Methodist Church) is continuing; Revd Jan Mullin (Moravian Church) is continuing; Very Revd Archimandrite Vassilios Papavassiliou (Orthodox Churches) is new; Revd Robert Byrne (Roman Catholic Church) is continuing; Revd Graham Maskery (United Reformed Church) is continuing; His Grace Bishop Angaelos (Council of Oriental Orthodox Churches) is continuing.

Other churches are invited to send Anglican and ecumenical guests to observe a particular July group of sessions on a rota basis.

May we please welcome the two new members who have been elected to the General Synod since the November 2012 group of sessions. (*Applause*)

In addition to our nine ecumenical representatives who are with us at each group of sessions, in July we always have some additional Anglican and ecumenical guests. Unlike the nine ecumenical representatives, they attend on one occasion only and do not have speaking rights. I will ask them to stand and invite members of Synod to greet each of them in turn as I introduce them.

First, we welcome the Rt Revd Trevor Williams, Bishop of Limerick and Killaloe.  
(*Applause*)

Bishop Trevor served as a curate in Maidenhead, St Andrew's and St Mary's in the diocese of Oxford from 1974 to 1977 before moving to Northern Ireland to become Assistant Chaplain at Queen's University Belfast. From 1981 to 1988 he was a religious broadcasting producer for BBC Radio Ulster, following which he served as Rector of St John's Newcastle, County Down. He served as leader of the Corrymeela Community, a Christian group committed to promoting peace and reconciliation in Northern Ireland from 1994 to 2003. He was appointed Canon of St Patrick's Cathedral in 2002 and in 2003 served as rector of Holy Trinity and St Silas with Immanuel in north Belfast in the diocese of Connor. He was consecrated Bishop of Limerick and Killaloe in 2008. In addition to serving Ireland as a diocesan bishop, Bishop Trevor retains an active interest in working for reconciliation in Northern Ireland.

We also welcome Bishop Kristján Valur Ingólfsson, Assistant Bishop in Skálholt, from the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Iceland. Bishop Kristján read theology at the University of Reykjavík and following his ordination served as rector of a parish in northern Iceland. After a few years he went to the University of Heidelberg to study for a doctorate in theology, concentrating on liturgy and hymnology. On his return to Iceland he served as Director of the Academy in Skálholt, a combined retreat and ministerial development centre, then as a university lecturer in liturgical studies, and later as rector of Thingvellir, the place where the first Icelandic parliament met more than 1,000 years ago. This was combined with being Director of Liturgy and Hymnology of the Bishop of Iceland's central staff. He is a liturgical scholar and composer of hymns.

Bishop Kristján was consecrated Bishop of Skálholt in 2011. Skálholt is the site of the first Icelandic bishopric, established in 1056. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when Iceland was ruled by Denmark, the Danish authorities moved the seat of the diocesan bishop to Reykjavík and the ancient See of Skálholt became a suffragan See; it happens in Iceland as well as in England! We greet him most warmly. (*Applause*)

I now invite the Bishop of Skálholt to greet the Synod.

### **Address by the Bishop of Skálholt**

*The Bishop of Skálholt (Rt Revd Kristján Valur Ingólfsson)* (Evangelical Lutheran Church of Iceland):

Your Graces, distinguished members of the General Synod, I am grateful for and deeply honoured to have this opportunity to address the General Synod of the Church of England on behalf of guests and ecumenical representatives, to express our thanks for the invitation and to bring greetings and pledges of prayer from our churches. It is especially a great honour for my church, a tiny sister in the big family of Christian Churches.

Last Sunday I had an opportunity to take part in Holy Communion in the Church of Hallgrímur in Reykjavík, where the Archdeacon of Germany and Northern Europe, Ven. Jonathan Lloyd, performed the licensing of Revd Bjarni Thor Bjarnason as a minister in a congregation in Reykjavík, which belongs to the Church of England and is named after

our only saint, St Thorlak, who, by the way, studied in Lincoln in the middle of the 12<sup>th</sup> century. It was an important event in our common church history and a significant milestone on our way towards a closer communion of the Churches that belong to the Porvoo community.

An important statement in the Porvoo Agreement reads: ‘We acknowledge that one another’s ordained ministries are given by God as instruments of his grace and as possessing not only the inward call of the Spirit but also Christ’s commission through his Body, the Church.’ The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Iceland has been a member of the Porvoo Communion from the very beginning. As a former teacher of liturgy I see in the Porvoo statement guidelines that help us make our liturgy richer and more in harmony with good tidings – or *góð tíðindi* as we say in Icelandic.

It is important to mention that Christianity was introduced to Iceland by Ireland and Scotland before the settlement in the 8<sup>th</sup> century. People from there and from here took part in the settlement itself, because the settlers and Vikings took slaves from these areas, mostly women, who then took care of the upbringing of the children and therefore brought to Iceland not only Christianity but also their cultural heritage. We have many things to be grateful to them for. Since the Reformation and until 1874 the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Iceland was the one and only church on the island. Nevertheless, 78 per cent of the population are members of the Lutheran Church and 85 per cent of Icelanders belong to Christian churches.

In the year 1000 the Althing, the parliament in Thingvellir, ruled that Christianity should be formally accepted as the confession of all the Icelanders. I am very happy to tell you that we had to wait only a little more than 1,000 years for our first female bishop; Bishop Agnes, our leading bishop, was consecrated last year and she sends her best greetings to you. In her first sermon as a new bishop she said that one of her main goals was to attract greater numbers of people to the Lutheran Church of Iceland. She said: ‘Those who have left the Church in recent years have chosen to do so for various reasons. ... Now we need to set the goal to increase Church membership and find ways to do so. ... We should do that with joy and interest, not just to raise the number but because of the good message that we are entrusted with.’

Your Graces, distinguished members of the General Synod, thank you again for your invitation, thereby allowing me to experience what the Porvoo Agreement states: ‘Communion between Christians and churches should not be regarded as a product of human achievement. It is already given in Christ as a gift to be received and, like every good gift, unity also comes from the Father through the Son in the Holy Spirit.’  
(*Applause*)

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

*The Chair:* I am required to report to the Synod that the Church of England Marriage (Amendment) Measure has received Royal Assent. Sections 2 and 3 of the Measure came into force on the day it was passed, i.e. 19 December 2012, and section 1 came into force on 1 June 2013.

The Clergy Discipline (Amendment) Measure has received Royal Assent. Section 9(1) of the Measure came into force on 1 July, so far as it relates to paragraph 10 of the Schedule, and its remaining provisions will come into force on a date or dates to be appointed.



The Diocese in Europe Measure has also received Royal Assent. Sections 2 and 3 of the Measure came into force on 1 July 2013 and section 1 will come into force on 1 January 2014.

The Parochial Fees and Schedule Matters Amending Order 2012, the Legal Officers (Annual Fees) Order 2012 and the Ecclesiastical Judges, Legal Officers and Others (Fees) Order all came into force on 1 January 2013.

For the convenience of members, the matters that I have reported will be set out in a Notice Paper.

That concludes this item of business.

THE CHAIR *The Bishop of Birmingham (Rt Revd David Urquhart)* took the Chair at 4.50 p.m.

### **Report by the Business Committee (GS 1889)**

*The Archdeacon of Dorking (Ven. Julian Henderson):* I beg to move:

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

A number of metaphors have been used to describe our previous group of sessions in November and there is no doubting the seriousness of the emotions that those images have expressed. Eight months later we find ourselves meeting again as representatives elected by our dioceses to try to discern the will of God for this part of his Church. While reflecting on last November we have used language such as ‘What went wrong?’ or engaged in conversations about electoral reform or the disconnect between the majority opinion in the dioceses and the views of members of Synod, or voting tactics, abstentions and whether a two-thirds hurdle is right for Final Approval.

However, I suggest that it is more important to ask the deeper questions: What is the head of the Church trying to tell us? What are we to learn from Him, having observed due synodical process and prayed and worked, and yet failed to achieve legislation for something which Synod agreed some years ago was the right way to proceed? Did we not hear His voice clearly? Where was His guidance? What is the Spirit saying to the Church in this struggle? Does he guide His Church? What happened to our prayers? Do we still believe that He is sovereign and working out His purposes?

Beyond those spiritual enquiries there is the more general question which concerns the kind of fellowship of disciples that Jesus is calling us to be, and to that end tomorrow is given over to something entirely new for Synod – an extended time for facilitated meeting, listening, talking and praying, intended to create a time for recovery and preparation for the debate on Monday. There is no legislation before Synod this July on the subject of women in the episcopate, but there is a motion before us to help us gauge the level of support or otherwise for the proposal from the House of Bishops. It is an opportunity to take the temperature, to learn what might be the right next steps and to find not so much the mind of Synod but the mind of Christ for his Church. Rightly, that is the dominant issue before us on our Agenda, but it is not the only one.

As I thought about the varied Agenda that we have before us over the next few days, it told me something about the sort of Church that we are and aspire to be. First, we are a Church that prays together. The advantage of a residential synod is that we can share together in more times of worship, praying, listening to the reading and explanation of God's word, celebrating the gospel in the sacrament of Holy Communion, and simply being rooted in the rhythm of shared worship. To that end, I encourage more of us to stay for the evening worship at the end of the afternoon rather than race off to dinner. I know that some have to slip away to arrange things, but that exodus always feels extremely odd and says something about the importance or otherwise that we as a Synod attach to corporate prayer.

Having said that, may I be a little more direct – this is the last time I shall be introducing the report of the Business Committee – and say that it would be good if we could all make an effort to be together in the Minster on Sunday morning, rather than some going in other directions. If we cannot join in worship, then there is little hope of resolving our differences; and if the cathedral style is not the preference of some members – it does not have to be – I would urge them still to come as a way of celebrating what Jesus Christ has done for us as well as signalling our commitment to him and to our shared work as a Synod.

Second, we are a Church that engages across theological divides. As I have said, we will have an opportunity tomorrow to listen and talk to one another in groups and as a Synod outside of the public eye. Our conversations and groupings tend to be with the like-minded, and although there is nothing wrong with that, it is not healthy if that is all we do. Therefore, at meal times, instead of looking to sit and eat with those whom we know, why not be brave and share a meal with someone new?

Third, we are a Church that aspires to be strategic about mission. Our debate on the quinquennium goals is a healthy half-time opportunity to see where we have got to. This is not a time to be hard on ourselves and to be made to feel guilty, but rather to attempt to be strategic about how we use a five-year term. Instead of drifting in a rather reactive way to all that is going on around us, it is good to set goals and work proactively to implement them. We all know the saying: 'If you aim at nothing, you'll hit it every time.' In a rather different way, the debate on the proposals from the Dioceses Commission will force us to ask questions about priorities and strategies for effective mission and evangelism and whether the current arrangements for the three dioceses concerned should be changed.

Fourth, the Agenda suggest that we are a Church that is accountable. Ultimately we are answerable to God but one day we will give an account of how we have served, yes even as a Synod. Until that day we try to hold one another to account. Looking back, our Agenda includes reports on the work of the Archbishops' Council and the Church Commissioners and, looking ahead, decisions on the budget for 2014. Those items give us an opportunity to scrutinize and assess the money we that invest in mission and ministry year on year, helping us to ask whether we have the appropriate, right priorities and are good stewards of all that God has so generously showered upon us.

Fifth, our Agenda also tell us that we are a Church concerned for the vulnerable in our society. Two key debates in the Agenda reveal our concern to discuss the issues which

those most at risk in our society have to face, the anxieties of those whose voice is not loud enough to be heard. The safeguarding debate will provide us with an opportunity to discuss what good practice ought to look like and how as a Church we might respond to our failings in the past. The welfare debate will turn our attention to the climate of austerity and cuts and will allow us to express our views on the hardships currently faced by many.

Sixth, we are a Church that is ordered. There is a certain amount of Legislative Business before us during this group of sessions and, as with all such matters, our laws are not in place to constrain or limit us but rather to free us to be fair and just in our dealings with one another. Similarly, the review of election procedures and the approval of appointments are part of the good ordering of Church life that aims to consult and listen.

The Business Committee therefore offers Synod an agenda that reflects these key characteristics of being Church today. We pray that it will serve us well, that we shall enjoy being together for five days and that as a result the good news of salvation in Jesus Christ will be more widely spread and believed.

I commend the Agenda to the Synod.

*The Chair:* The motion is now open for debate. I remind members that this is an opportunity to make brief comments relating to the Agenda and the Report of the Business Committee, not to start other agendas, but we would like to get in as many points as possible.

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

*Revd Andrew Dotchin (St Edmundsbury and Ipswich):* My comment concerns other activities of the Business Committee in relation to the stall-holders at this Synod. The guidelines suggest that all stalls are expected to be attended all the time, but I am saddened to notice that some people will be here for only part of the time. If at future groups of session an organization is not able to be present all the time, I hope that its space will be offered to others, because part of the joy of a residential Synod is the discourse that we have with other groups that have an interest in our Church.

*Revd Jonathan Frai (Chichester):* I welcome this Agenda but fear that I am sailing very close to the wind because you, Mr Chair, asked members not to develop new agendas, but I want to speak to an omission and I therefore crave your indulgence.

Two years ago celebrations were held to mark the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Authorized (or King James) Bible, which gained wide cultural interest. Last year was the 350<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Prayer Book, which generated interest both from within the Church and with regard to what else happened 350 years ago, with the Great Ejection and that moving service of reconciliation in Westminster Abbey between the Anglican and Free Churches. This year there is a third anniversary, that is of the 39 Articles first promulgated 450 years ago. There are three references to it in our canons: Canon A5, where Anglican doctrine may be found; Canon A2, which may be received happily by everyone – I used

to think that it was just for clergy; and Canon C15, of course, is the Declaration of Assent, under which the clergy affirm their loyalty to such historic formularies. I draw this to Synod's attention during this debate on the Agenda simply to give three extracts as suggestions of help for us in our deliberations this weekend. First, it strikes me that Article VI is useful for us: 'Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation' – we have already heard of salvation – 'so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required ...' –

*The Chair:* Revd Frais, it would be helpful if you simply give us the numbers of the Articles and we can read them for ourselves, because I am sure we are all very familiar with them, and then perhaps you would make your point so that it can be referred to the Business Committee.

*Revd Jonathan Frais (Chichester):* I apologize, Chair. Article VI is a call to be sure on development. I had intended to refer also to Article IX on sin – a call to be questioning about other sources to which we move for help – and Article XX, where the Church is the gathering round the Word and the call to be careful when we seem to add to that.

It seems a shame that in our Agenda we have missed the opportunity to refer to an anniversary that has resonance within Anglican history. It strikes me that there is wisdom from the past about an ethic of restraint, a doctrine of care, a priority of clear teaching from the Bible, and keeping the faith, and I wonder whether there is still some wisdom from this source that would benefit us all.

*The Dean of Portsmouth (Very Revd David Brindley):* It seems to me that there is increasing concern on the floor of the Synod about the shape of debate and how speakers are called. The structure of the debate on women bishops in November, which seemed to alternate speeches for and against, gave the false impression both to Synod and those outside that there was an even split within the Synod. In reality we know that the vast majority were and are in favour, with varying shades of support. In a commendable effort to be fair to all, the impression was given of a Synod that was, in reality, more divided than actually it is. That is due in part, I believe, to the increasing reliance by Chairs on written requests to speak, which militates against spontaneity and debate. Speakers have to decide hours in advance of speaking what line they will take. If that is the structure that our debates take, it is much more difficult to respond to points that are made.

Added to that is the impression that some members are much more likely to be called to speak than others. It may be that there are good reasons for that. Perhaps they fill in their bits of paper more effectively, are considered more witty and glamorous or are more recognizable by the Chairs, but it seems to me that during a group of sessions some people are called to speak several times and others, although they stand frequently, are never or very rarely called.

The time is therefore clearly right for a review, as the diocese of London motion suggests, but I hope that in this group of sessions the Chairs will take note that we would like to hear some new voices in the debates rather than the same voices saying the same things. We want to hear the voices of new people, because their opinions are just as viable and important and they should be heard as much as those who speak frequently.

*Revd Hugh Lee (Oxford):* I look forward very much to the facilitated conversations tomorrow, but I know that many people have expressed anxiety with regard to what it will be like, what we will be doing and why, and so on. I was therefore delighted when, at a very late stage on our arrival in this chamber, we received the paper entitled ‘General Facilitated Discussions’, the second paragraph of which reads: ‘Members of Synod will receive a briefing during their Friday evening plenary on the structure and purpose of the day.’ I have looked at my Order Paper and I cannot see that. It would therefore be very helpful if the Business Committee could tell us when that briefing will take place and by whom. The paragraph continues: ‘They will receive a briefing paper’, and again it would be helpful if the Business Committee could tell us whether *this* is the briefing paper or whether there is another yet to come.

On a different, but perhaps slightly related, matter in terms of information that we receive, I had understood that the new Rules stipulate that only individually addressed items are permitted to be put in our diocesan trays. I was therefore very surprised to receive in my tray something that was not individually addressed. In addition, on my way into the chamber I received a card that has the Church of England logo printed on it, so I wonder whether this has the approval and imprimatur of the Church of England or whether it comes from a particular group within the Church of England. Again I would welcome some guidance on this from the Business Committee.

*Mrs Mary Judkins (Wakefield):* Although I agree with the analysis of the Church by the Chair of the Business Committee, especially his first point about worshipping in the Minster, I am disappointed with the debate after lunch. I am sure that Paul Benfield will enthral us with his contribution on the Draft Church of England (Miscellaneous Provisions) Measure, but since I have been a member of Synod, because I live nearby I have always invited folk from the diocese to come and share in that magnificent worship in York Minster, have lunch here so that they get some sense of the atmosphere, and then to sit with them in the public gallery so that they can hear a debate.

In most years the Sunday afternoon debates have been on matters concerning some sort of public interest and have been listed as such. Sadly, that is not the case this year and I have therefore not invited anyone, which is a great shame especially when we shall soon be looking for new people to stand for election, because they need to know that standing for General Synod is not on one ticket; it is not just on women bishops or same-sex marriage. Yes it is about the stuff that we usually have on Sunday afternoon, much of which has to do with our country and our communities, and it is a pity that the debates have not been tabled in a different order.

*Revd Richard Hibbert (St Albans):* I welcome this report and the creative aspects of the Agenda. However, I believe that the Business Committee has omitted something that should have been brought to our attention for debate. There is a GS Misc paper 1054, *Making New Disciples: the Growth of the Church of England*. The spiritual and numerical growth of the Church of England has been at the heart of our previous Archbishop and is at the heart of our present Archbishop. It is referenced in *Challenges for the Quinquennium* but it is important that it should form more than just part of that debate.

We welcome opportunities to discuss major issues such as safeguarding and welfare reform in our society but the trouble is that we are lost if we are not influential in society. Paragraph 12 of *Challenges for the New Quinquennium* includes a quotation by Archbishop Temple: ‘If we have to choose between making men Christian and making social order more Christian we must choose the former. But there is no such antithesis. Certainly there can be no Christian society unless there is a large body of convinced and devoted Christian people to establish it and keep it true to its own principles.’

The making of new disciples should be a key part of the General Synod’s own concerns. I therefore urge the Business Committee to consider how this paper can be brought to Synod’s attention at the earliest convenience. The making of new disciples for our presence in every community is a core issue for our influence across society and I encourage the Business Committee to bring this matter back at the November group of sessions so that we can debate the importance of making new disciples.

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

*The Chair* called the Bishop of Dorchester for a maiden speech.

*The Bishop of Dorchester (Rt Revd Colin Fletcher)*: I am sure that at the moment many of us are thinking a lot about Egypt. It is not the fault of the Business Committee in any sense, because none of us could have predicted what would have happened in Egypt over the past few days, but we have with us Bishop Angaelos, representing the Coptic Church, and I hope that during this group of sessions we shall have a chance to pass on our prayers to our brothers and sisters of the Coptic Church and the Muslim faith, and of many other faiths, in Egypt.

*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 Archdeacon of Dorking*, in reply: I do not imagine that any agenda will ever satisfy all the concerns and issues represented by such a large body as we find ourselves to be. The Business Committee does aim to create the right kind of balance in the issues that we put together, to allocate appropriate amounts of time for each of those matters and in order for the Synod to be a good Synod.

Jonathan Fraiss did sail very close to the wind, I think, but he made his point. We have all heard about the 450<sup>th</sup> anniversary and therefore it does not need to go on a future agenda. I hear the comment about the ‘making new disciples’ issue and the need for growth. It is referred to in the quinquennial goals and the plan is that there will be an opportunity in forthcoming Synods to deal with each of those quinquennial goals one by one. The opportunity for that discussion and debate will come a little bit further on, therefore.

The problem of legislative business after lunch on Sunday is a real problem. It is a question of trying to work the balance of items on our agenda in such a way that the right amounts of time fit. The Business Committee battles with this when it meets to talk

it through. This time round, I agree, it has meant that we have legislative business on a Sunday. We do not normally do legislative business on a Sunday but, given the other constraints this time, it has proved necessary. I apologize to Mary and her potential guest who never made it.

The issue of debates and the chairing of debates is not a matter for the Business Committee. It falls really to the panel of Chairs and it is a chance for me to thank them for what they do; the extremely difficult job of sitting here and inviting different speakers to address the particular matters on the agenda. It is the custom that there should be balance in the debates, and therefore there normally is, by custom, a to and fro, back and forth, for and against, in the speeches. There is nothing in the Standing Orders to that effect but it falls to the Chairs to try to create a balanced debate. Do bear with them, and do pray for them, because it is very difficult to see out there who is standing and to be sure how people will speak when they do come to the microphone. It is not an easy task for them.

With regard to the groups tomorrow, members have an initial paper in front of them now and there will be a short briefing tonight at the close of Questions. There will then be a further briefing tomorrow by the facilitator of those groups before our groups commence. There is further information coming down the track, therefore.

With regard to the material in pigeonholes and the item that does not have an address or name saying who has put it there, it should not be taken as coming from the Synod, but we will look at how those matters are dealt with and make sure that items left in trays are individually addressed.

With regard to stallholders being present all the way through Synod, I think that is something that we can commend and encourage but I am not sure we can necessarily say that the people who come and put up a stall have to be here all the way through. We will take that matter away and look at it. I think it would be sensible if those who book a stall commit to being here all the way through. That makes a huge amount of sense.

Finally, we hear the plea of Colin Fletcher with regard to the circumstances in Egypt at this time. In a sense, I can say that Colin has expressed our concern. We will see whether there might be an opportunity for some report on that but at the moment we express that corporate concern as to the future of those very delicate and sensitive issues happening in Egypt at this time.

My hope is that we shall do our business together and our meeting with one another in a prayerful spirit over these next few days, with an eye always on the call of Christ for us to go and make disciples of all the nations.

*The motion was put and carried.*

*The Chair:* May I take this opportunity on behalf of Synod to give a personal vote of thanks to Julian for all his work as Chair of our Business Committee. As members will be aware, he is moving on to a new ministry quite soon and may not be seen in this guise in this Synod in the same way again. Perhaps in the spirit of his advice to us, we could stay in a moment of expectant prayer but also thanksgiving for all that Julian has given us in the leadership of our business.

THE CHAIR *Mr Geoffrey Tattersall (Manchester)* took the chair at 5.20 p.m.

## **Approval of Appointments**

### **Appointment of the Clerk to the Synod (GS 1890)**

*The Archdeacon of Dorking (Ven. Julian Henderson):* I beg to move:

‘That the appointment of Dr Jacqui Philips as Clerk to the Synod be confirmed with immediate effect.’

The Chair of the Business Committee is grateful and thankful to the Synod for their kindness a moment ago. I am looking forward to exchanging the Surrey hills for the Bowland Fells.

The Secretary General’s note of GS 1890 sets out the background to the motion on the Order Paper at Item 6. Eagle-eyed members of the Synod will have spotted that the Agenda indicated that one of the Presidents was to have moved this motion. This was because in 1998 and in 2011 similar motions were moved by one of the Archbishops. Diligent researches have revealed, however, that in 1998 the Archbishop was speaking as Chair of the old Standing Committee, of which the old Business Committee was then but a mere sub-committee. Moreover, in 2011 there was not a Chair of the Business Committee and so one of the Presidents stepped into the breach.

There is about to be, as members are aware, a further vacancy for the Chair of the Business Committee. I very much regret I shall not have the opportunity to work with Dr Jacqui Philips in this role but I am at least here long enough to invite the Synod to confirm her appointment as Clerk to the Synod.

As GS 1890 sets out, we ran an open competition, which attracted 18 applications. Three members of the Business Committee plus one of the Prolocutors, the Secretary General and the HR Director were members of the selection panel. We conducted two rounds of interviews and were unanimously agreed that Dr Jacqui Philips should be appointed. Her previous experience is set out in paragraph 5 of the note.

Being Clerk to the Synod is only one of the responsibilities of her post, but for those of us in Synod it is certainly the most important and it is the role that requires our collective agreement.

Coming to work for the Church of England involves quite a steep learning curve but it was clear from the Business Committee meeting in May that Jacqui has climbed the curve with commendable speed.

*Mrs April Alexander (Southwark):* I have not met Dr Philips but I know a woman who has. I understand that we are extremely fortunate to have secured her services and I look forward to meeting her and welcoming her.

I do wonder, however, how she has approached this session. Her new colleagues will probably have said, ‘It’s only a formality.’ Did she believe them? If they were right then



I do wonder whether Dr Philips should be put through this approval process three months after she has started work.

Could this session be an introduction rather than an approval, or, if it is necessary for us to approve, could we do so by email at the time of the appointment? My preference would be for the former. We trust the skills of those who make these appointments. We are delighted to read about the background of the person appointed. However, I suspect I am not alone in Synod in being very willing to give up this rather strange approval process – to the relief, I am sure, of any future appointees.

*The motion was put and carried.*

### **Appointment of the Chair of the Appointments Committee (GS 1891)**

*The Archbishop of York (Dr John Sentamu):* I beg to move:

‘That the appointment of Canon Margaret Swinson as Chair of the Appointments Committee from 5 July 2013 to 30 June 2018 be confirmed.’

An effective Appointments Committee is like an effective Business Committee, essential to the smooth operation of the General Synod and its various legislative and other committees. Whereas the Chair of the Business Committee is visible during the group of sessions, the Chair of the Appointments Committee necessarily has to operate much more behind the scenes.

Discussions about who is best qualified to serve on a Steering Committee or to represent the Church of England at an ecumenical gathering takes place in a setting where the Appointment Committee’s members can speak candidly and in confidence. It has always been important that the person interested to Chair the Appointments Committee is someone in whom the whole Synod can have confidence to be fair-minded and operate with integrity.

I want to pay tribute to Prebendary David Houlding who, over ten years, has been extraordinarily conscientious as Chair of the Committee. He has shown that it is possible to combine a clear allegiance to one part of the Church of England with a passionate commitment to the welfare of the Church of England as a whole. David, we are in your debt.

Mrs Margaret Swinson’s extensive experience since she joined the Synod 28 years ago is set out in paragraphs 3–5 of GS 1891. Chairing the Appointments Committee is not an easy task but the Archbishop of Canterbury and I, together with those who consulted, were clear that Mrs Margaret Swinson would have the necessary skills and qualities. In addition, although there is no rule about these things, after having someone from the House of Clergy in this role for the past ten years, it will not be such a bad thing to have someone from the House of Laity for the next few years.

*The motion was put and carried.*

**Appointment of the Chair of the Finance Committee of the Archbishops' Council (GS 1892)**

*The Archbishop of York:* I beg to move:

‘That the appointment of Canon John Spence as a member of the Archbishops’ Council from 1 October 2013 until 30 September 2018 be approved.’

Since the creation of the Archbishops’ Council in 1999, successive Archbishops have used one of the six appointed places on the Council to bring on to it someone with the necessary background and experience to be our lead person on financial issues. With the First Estates Commissioner and the Chair of the Pensions Board, the Chair of the Archbishops’ Finance Committee forms an important triumvirate, both in relation to strategic financial issues affecting the Church of England and the co-ordination of the work of the three national trustee bodies. They also have an important role to play as members of the Joint Employment and Common Services Board.

Six years ago, Andrew Britton succeeded Michael Chamberlain; later in this group of sessions he will be presenting the annual budget to us for the last time. I shall not invite Synod to express its appreciation of him today, in case that lulls him into a false sense of security before he has addressed members for the last time, but I hope that we shall find a moment at the end of that business on Monday to show our appreciation to Andrew Britton.

Andrew, like Michael Chamberlain before him, had the great advantage of coming to this floor with the experience of having chaired a diocesan board of finance. While that is not a mandatory qualification, one of the many things to commend Canon John Spence is that he has chaired the DBF for one of our largest dioceses, Chelmsford, for the past five years. In addition, as members will see from paragraphs 6–8 of GS 1892, he has an impressive range of experience, including as governor of the Church Commissioners and for several years as Chair of the Audit Committee. His recent appointment in the Birthday Honour’s List as a Companion of the British Empire for services to business illustrates the range of his commitment and the esteem in which he is held.

The Archbishop of Canterbury and I believe we are very fortunate that he is willing to take on this onerous role.

*Mr Gavin Oldham (Oxford):* I have had the privilege of working with John Spence as a Church Commissioner over several years and seeing him in action, both as a governor and as Chair of its Audit Committee. He is the most outstanding candidate for this role and we are very fortunate to have him coming into it. He has real integrity, real professionalism and real judgement, and a tremendous commitment to get on top of the task, which is no easy matter.

I hope Synod will give him its strongest support. He certainly comes with my strongest commendation.

*Mr Peter Collard (Derby):* I seek clarification. Section 8 refers to ‘the appointment of Canon John Spence as a member of the Archbishops’ Council’, yet the appointment is to the Chair of the Finance Committee. Is that correct?

*The Chair:* As I understand it, the Chair of the Finance Committee has to be a member of the Archbishops’ Council. However, that is a matter the Archbishop can deal with in his reply.

*The Bishop of Chelmsford (Rt Revd Stephen Cottrell):* Of course, in the Chelmsford diocese we are a bit furious about this – because John Spence is indeed an outstanding person.

I would like to echo Gavin Oldham’s comments. I am a little bit upset for the diocese of Chelmsford but absolutely delighted for the kingdom of God. Amongst John’s many, many gifts, he will demonstrate that one does not need to have sight to have vision.

*The Archbishop of York, in reply:* I would like to thank Mr Oldham very much for that endorsement. We have had experience of working with Canon Spence on the Board of the Church Commissioners. Whenever he was the person responsible for audit, he spoke with clarity. The Bishop of Chelmsford is right. Canon Spence is blind but he masters his brief very well and speaks as if he has just read it. That is a good thing.

In terms of the synodical process, strictly speaking Canon Spence has been appointed to the Archbishops’ Council to make up the numbers to six. The Archbishop of Canterbury and I determine who will be the Chair of the Finance Committee. We decided that we would inform members of the particular part he is to play upfront. We did not want Synod to discover later on that he was Chairman of the Finance Committee. Although that is not your business, it is the business of the Archbishops to say which part he will chair. He is appointed to the Archbishops’ Council and he will bring incredible gifts to that body.

*The motion was put and carried.*

*The Archbishop of York:* Before we move on to the next item, could I seek the indulgence of the Chair in asking Synod to congratulate Canon Spence on being awarded a CBE in the recent Queen’s Birthday Honours List. (*Applause*)

### **Appointment of the Chair of the Church of England Pensions Board (GS 1893)**

*The Archbishop of York:* I beg to move:

‘That the appointment of Dr Jonathan Spencer as Chair of the Church of England Pensions Board from 1 January 2014 to 31 December 2018 be approved.’

As I said a moment ago, the importance of the triumvirate, the Chair of the Archbishops’ Council Finance Committee, the First Estates Commissioner and the Chair of the Pensions Board, will perhaps help to explain why changing the occupancy of these roles one at a time makes a lot of sense. As Lady Bracknell observed in a different context, to lose one is a misfortune; to lose two looks like carelessness!

Dr Jonathan Spencer has served as Chair of the Pensions Board for the past five years. The pensions world is one where it is important to take the long view. His predecessor, the late Allan Bridgewater, served for 11 years. The Archbishop of Canterbury and I are delighted that Jonathan Spencer is prepared to give us a few more years yet before standing down.

While the present valuation of the clergy funded pension scheme appears to be coming to a merciful and dramatic conclusion, there remain many uncertainties ahead with pensions over the next few years, not least with the Government's major reform of the state pension system due to take place in 2016. In addition, the Pensions Board is about to launch a consultation document on the operation of the retirement housing scheme. Jonathan Spencer has done an excellent job since his appointment in 2009 and this is a moment where continuity in the Pensions Board would be very welcome.

Before anyone raises it, there was a typing error in the agenda. It said 2019, rather than 2018, which would be giving him six years if it went that way. Members have the correct text in front of them on today's order paper.

*The motion was put and carried.*

#### **Appointment of the Auditors to the Archbishops' Council (GS 1894)**

*Mrs Mary Chapman (Archbishops' Council, ex officio):* I beg to move:

‘That the appointment of BDO LLP as Auditors to the Archbishops' Council be approved.’

The Archbishops' Council has been well served by BDO, its auditors since 2008. I have chaired the Council's Audit Committee since last autumn and can confirm that the Committee was pleased with BDO's work on the 2012 annual report and accounts. Nevertheless, it is good practice to review appointments of advisers regularly and to re-tender from time to time.

The Council's external auditor appointment was re-tendered earlier this year. The process and outcome of this work, as a result of which a modest cost saving has been achieved, is set out in GS 1894. Key factors supporting the selection panel's recommendation to reappoint BDO were the technical strengths shown by the BDO team and their engagement with key charitable sector bodies. Both these areas will be particularly important as the Council works to implement the recommendations of the new accounting and reporting framework for charities, which is expected to take effect from 2015.

The Archbishops' Council accepted the recommendation that BDO should be reappointed as its external auditors. The Council also agreed that the appointment should be reviewed after five years but it could be up to ten years until a re-tendering would be carried out. I should add that the appointment can be re-tendered earlier should the Council decide so to do.

I will be pleased to answer any questions members may have on the recommended appointment, which I commend to Synod.

*Canon Peter Bruinvels (Guildford):* It seems a very good strategy to have it reviewed after five years. What would happen if the current incumbent were to retire early? Is this appointment conditional on that incumbent staying in post? Nobody can be held to stay permanently in any particular role. Clearly the Archbishops' Council is very happy with the current incumbent but senior partners come and go. Would that result in the appointment being reviewed earlier on that ground rather than on another, to do with the delivery of the audit?

*Mrs Mary Chapman, in reply:* Mr Bruinvels raises an important point. Indeed, if the lead partner of the incumbent were to have been working on the business for ten years, it would be time for that person to stand down. Because we were aware of that at the time that we carried out the process – and I think the paper does say something to this effect – we asked all the companies that we saw to give us a clear indication of how they would address that issue. BDO has already identified the individual who they propose should take over the work of the Archbishops' Council, if we get to that point, and will introduce the individual to us. We will have a period of handover should it become necessary.

*The motion was put and carried.*

THE CHAIR *Mr Aiden Hargreaves-Smith (London)* took the Chair at 5.45 p.m.

*The Chair:* We come now to Item 11, the Presidential Address by the Archbishop of Canterbury. I call upon His Grace to give his first presidential address to the Synod.

### **Presidential Address**

*The Archbishop of Canterbury (The Most Revd and Rt Hon Justin Welby):* The Chair could almost have said my first address to the Synod, such is the length of my experience here!

Before I begin, I would like to thank all the staff at Lambeth and around the NCIs, and at Bishopthorpe and the Anglican Communion Office, who have been so effective and kind in dealing with the frightening and unsettling impact of a new Archbishop. Transitions are always very complex, and taking on a new Archbishop is as demanding as it gets. However, there has invariably been a warm welcome and extremely hard work, for which I am most grateful. Chief amongst those who have led the way through the process is Chris Smith, the Chief of Staff at Lambeth. After more than ten years of faithful service, working night and day and every weekend – he is the biggest menace to my capacity to have a quiet evening in on a Saturday night because I get an email from him – after more than ten years of never stopping he is moving on to other things later this year. His contribution has been largely behind the scenes, but he has served the Church of England and the Anglican Communion not only for a long time but with huge effect and our debt to him is more than we can imagine. On your behalf I would like to thank him.

As you know too from public announcements, Bishop Nigel Stock, Bishop of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich, has with great generosity and considerable sacrifice, I would imagine, agreed to become the Bishop at Lambeth, in a new configuration for

the role, working alongside the new Chief of Staff. I could not be more grateful to have such a wise and experienced person, who will enable my many weaknesses to be compensated for more than adequately.

One of the things about this job is that you tend to carry a lot of baggage – physical, metaphorical – probably more than I know. We arrived yesterday, the car having broken down en route – there is a nasty metaphor there – but we did arrive and we found ourselves with a ton of baggage to carry from one end of what seemed to be a much bigger campus than last year to the other. It reminded me – as I was staggering along with what seemed to be enough robes to rival Wippell’s – that we come to this session of Synod with a certain amount of baggage; and it is good to find ways of getting rid of it.

A friend of ours – of my wife and mine, from our days when we lived in Paris – worked for many years for an American company but living in Paris. We went to stay with them about six or seven years ago – he is now ordained; there is no connection – and he was still laughing about an experience at Kennedy Airport the day before. It was a February and the weather in New York had been very bad, and he had arrived and everyone was in a grump and the flights were late, and when he got one from the front of the check-in the person in front of him was incredibly rude to the poor check-in operator. John, our friend, is always gracious and polite, and when he got to the front he said, ‘I’m embarrassed to be a passenger when people treat you like that. I don’t know how you were so patient.’ She said, ‘Well, sir. I shouldn’t really tell you this. There’s sort of bad news and good news. The bad news is he’s sitting next to you on the flight to New York. But the good news is I’ve sent his luggage to Tokyo.’ (*Laughter*)

There are a number of obvious applications to that, one of which is we could do with some people like that at the beginning of a Synod session – for the baggage to go somewhere else.

You do not want a lot of baggage in a revolution. We live in a time of revolutions. The trouble with revolutions is that once they start, no one knows where they will go. Of the most serious type, the physical type, the practical type... Bishop Angaelos, Head of the Coptic Church in the UK, whom I met in Egypt last week, and who is sitting with us today, knows exactly about revolutions. While we were in Egypt, we heard much talk of what would happen this week – and we have seen. The grace and leadership of Christians in that country is something to behold.

We live in a time of many revolutions in this country. As the Synod meets today, we are custodians of the gospel that transforms individuals, nations and societies. We are called by God to respond radically and imaginatively to new contexts – contexts that are set up by revolutions. I want to thank Synod, and to say what a privilege it is to share with you in the ministry of shouldering the heavy burden of facing these changing contexts and grappling with them in this Synod, now and over the years to come, and to thank you for your commitment in your work here you show to Jesus Christ and to his Church. It is genuinely a privilege to be among you.

The revolutions are huge. The economic context and position of our country has changed dramatically. With all political parties committed to austerity for the foreseeable future, we have to recognize that the profound challenges of social need, food banks, credit

injustice, gross differentiation of income – even in many areas of opportunity – pressure on all forms of state provision and spending, are all here to stay. In and through the Church we have the call, and potentially the means, to be the answer that God provides. As Pope Francis recalled so memorably, we are to be a poor Church for the poor, however and wherever poverty is seen, materially or spiritually.

That is a revolution. Being a poor Church for the poor means both provision and also prophetic challenge in a country that is still able and has the resources to reduce inequality – especially inequality of opportunity and life expectancy. If you travel north from parts of Liverpool to Southport, you gain almost a year in life expectancy for every mile you travel. We are debating these questions in this Synod. But prophetic challenge needs economic reality as its foundation, or it is mere wishful thinking; and it needs provision as its companion, or it is merely shifting responsibility.

The social context is changing radically. There is a revolution. It may be, it was, that 59 per cent of the population called themselves Christian at the last census, with 25 per cent saying they had no faith. The YouGov poll a couple of weeks back was the reverse, almost exactly, for those under 25. If we are not shaken by that, we are not listening.

The cultural and political ground is changing. There is a revolution. Anyone who listened, as I did, to much of the Same Sex Marriage Bill Second Reading debate in the House of Lords could not fail to be struck by the overwhelming change of cultural hinterland. Predictable attitudes were no longer there. The opposition to the Bill, which included me and many other bishops, was utterly overwhelmed, with amongst the largest attendance in the House and participation in the debate, and majority, since 1945. There was noticeable hostility to the view of the Churches. I am not proposing new policy, but what I felt then and feel now is that some of what was said by those supporting the Bill was uncomfortably close to the bone. Lord Ali said that 97 per cent of gay teenagers in this country report homophobic bullying. In the USA suicide as a result of such bullying is the principal cause of death of gay adolescents. One cannot sit and listen to that sort of reality without being appalled. We may or may not like it, but we must accept that there is a revolution in the area of sexuality, and we have not fully heard it.

The majority of the population rightly detests homophobic behaviour or anything that looks like it – and sometimes they look at us and see what they do not like. I do not like saying that. I have resisted that thought. However, in that debate I heard it, and I could not walk away from it. We all know that it is utterly horrifying to hear, as we did this week, of gay people executed in Iran for being gay, or equivalents elsewhere. With nearly a million children educated in our schools we not only must demonstrate a profound commitment to stamp out such stereotyping and bullying but we must also take action. We are therefore developing a programme for use in our schools, taking the best advice we can find anywhere, that specifically targets such bullying. More than that, we need also to ensure that what we do and say in this Synod, as we debate these issues, demonstrates above all the lavish love of God to all of us, who are all without exception sinners. Again, this requires radical and prophetic words which lavish gracious truth.

The three quinquennial goals of growing the Church, contributing to the common good and reimagining ministry are utterly suited to a time of revolution. They express

confidence in the gospel. They force us to look afresh at all our structures, to reimagine ministry, whether it be the ministry of General Synod, or the parish church, or a great cathedral, or anything between all of those three. For that reimagination to be more than surface deep, we need a renewal of prayer and the religious life. That is the most essential emphasis in what I am hoping to do in my time in this role. If you forget everything else I say, which you may well do – probably will do – please remember that. There has never been a renewal of Church life in western Christianity without a renewal of prayer and religious communities in some form or another, often different. It has been said that we can only imagine what is already in our minds as a possibility; and it is in prayer, individually and together, that God puts into our minds new possibilities of what the Church can be.

The quinquennial goals challenge our natural tendency to be inward-looking, calling on us to serve the common good. That covers many areas, and between us all, not singly, we are able to face the challenge. May Synod rise to that. The second of my personal emphases within that goal is reconciliation, within the Church but, most of all, fulfilling our particular Anglican charism to be reconcilers in the world, in our communities, in families, even, dare I say it, amongst ourselves. Even if we do sometimes conduct our arguments at high volume and in public, to be reconcilers means enabling diversity to be lived out in love, resisting hatred of the other, demonization of our opponents.

The common good goes much further than that. Our unique presence across the country enables us to speak with authority both in Parliament and here, and in every church and cathedral and synod and gathering place across the country. Our extraordinary presence across the world as Anglicans enables us to speak with intelligence from around the world. As Anglicans we are called to reconcile incredible differences of culture in over 150 countries. What an extraordinary heritage we have under God. So we seek to be renewed here and across the Communion, and to find the reconciling presence of God. This Synod meets in an era of revolution, but we have together the means and the courage to seize the opportunities that revolution brings.

The quinquennial goals aim at spiritual and numerical growth in the Church. That includes evangelism, the third of my emphases. The lead has been set by the Archbishop of York. Here again we need new imagination in evangelism through prayer, and a fierce determination not to let evangelism be squeezed off our agendas. At times I feel it is rather like me when I have to write a difficult letter, or make an awkward phone call – even things like ironing my socks become more attractive! We treat evangelism too often in the same way. We will talk about anything, especially Miscellaneous Provisions Measures after lunch on Sunday; and we struggle to fit in the call to be the good news in our times through Jesus Christ. The Gospel of Jesus Christ is indeed *the* good news for our times. God is always good news; we are the ones who make ourselves irrelevant when we are not good news. When we are good news, God's people see growing churches.

Attitudes to hierarchy and authority have changed, and continue to change; there is nothing new in that. The more they do, the more we are perceived, often wrongly – but genuinely – to say one thing, about grace, community and inclusion, and to do another.



And yet with all these revolutions, which raise such huge challenges to us in our lives as the Church, we see clearly that God is working a wonderful and marvellous revolution through the Church in the wind of the Spirit, blowing through our structures and ideas and imagination.

There is a new energy in ecumenism, not least shown by Pope Francis. There is a hunger for visible unity. Many churches across England are growing in depth and numbers. People are looking for answers in a time of hardship, and when we show holy hospitality and the outflow of grace we are full of people seeking us. There is every cause for hope. This Synod had a shock, depending on your view, good or bad, last November; but there is here assembled, in weakness or confidence, in all sorts of fear and lack of trust, people with the faith and wisdom who in grace will seek the way to the greater glory of God.

In some things we change course and recognize the new context. Revolutions change policy. In others we stand firm because truth is not set by culture, nor morals by fashion. However, let us be clear, pretending that nothing has changed is absurd and impossible. In times of revolution we too in the Church, in the Church of England, must have a revolution which enables us to live for the greater glory of God in the freedom which is the gift of Christ. We need not fear. The eternal God is our refuge and underneath are the everlasting arms.

There have been many times when the Church of England felt that change was in the air or this was a moment of crisis. Because we are not an organization, let alone a business, or even an institution, but in reality the people of God gathered by the Holy Spirit to walk together in a way that leads to the greater glory of God, there are bound to be many crises and turning points.

Let us not imagine for one moment that because we are in revolutionary times what we are going through currently is more dangerous, more difficult or more complicated than anything faced by the generations before us. We are in the hands of God; the eternal God is our refuge and underneath are the everlasting arms. We need not worry, but we must give all that we have and we are, for the uniquely great cause of the service of Jesus Christ.

How we journey here is essential, and that is why during these next few days, certain things are being reimagined: not least what we do tomorrow. What is clear to all of us is that there exists, as we gather – and let us be honest about it – a very significant absence of trust between different groups; and, it must be said – and the evidence of this is clear, though sad – an absence of trust towards the bishops collectively.

One thing I am sure of is that trust is rebuilt and reconciliation happens when whatever we say, we do. For example, if, while doing what we believe is right for the full inclusion of women in the life of the Church, we say that all are welcome whatever their views on that, all must be welcome in deed as well as in word. If we do not mean it, please let us not say it. On the one hand, there are horrendous accounts from women priests whose very humanity has sometimes seemed to be challenged. On the other side, I recently heard a well-attested account of a meeting between a diocesan director of ordinands and a candidate, who was told that if the DDO had known of the candidate's views against

the ordination of women earlier in the process he would never have been allowed to get as far as he did.

Both attitudes contradict the stated policy of the Church of England, of what we say, and are completely unacceptable. If the General Synod, if we, decide that we are not to be hospitable to some diversity of views, we need to say so bluntly and not mislead. If we say we will ordain women as priests and bishops we must do so in exactly the same way as we ordain men. If we say that all are welcome even when they disagree, they must be welcome in spirit, in deed, as well as in word.

Lack of integrity and transparency poisons any hope of rebuilding trust, and rebuilding trust in the best of circumstances is going to be the work of years and even decades. There are no magic bullets. How we travel, and our capacity to differ without hating each other and to debate without dividing from each other, is crucial to the progress we make.

Integrity and transparency depend utterly on a corporate integrity and transparency before God, above all in our prayer and liturgy. I sometimes wonder if one of the drivers of our lack of trust is that we have lost from our experience and our expectation two of the great moods of liturgy: of lament and of celebration. The ability truly to lament, to rage at circumstances, at loss, at decline, at injustice, at our own sin or the problems we face, is one that enables us to find afresh the mercy and grace of God. Lament is a liturgical mood that builds our capacity to trust God in the face of change, and then we trust each other. Encountering the face of Jesus Christ in pain, grief or anger transforms us.

Equally, the capacity to celebrate, to lift our hearts and voices in true and passionate praise and thanksgiving because the presence of God is known among us, restores our perspective. Not only does it renew our faith and strengthen weary limbs in the long journey we are undertaking, but also the act of celebrating that which we share together cuts across our great barriers and differences. We celebrate because who cannot be overwhelmed by the love of God?

Take for example the two Anglican dioceses I saw a week ago in the Middle East, in Jerusalem and in Egypt. In the midst of terrible and confused situations, with unspeakable human suffering, tension and fear, they shine with brilliant light. And they are part of us. In each of them there is a profound commitment to the common good of the populations in which they live as a minority – populations of whichever faith and ethnicity. In each of them there are more schools, hospitals and clinics than there are churches. In each of them the bishops have established confident and effective relationships with other Churches, with Muslim leaders and with governments, which enable them to speak frankly and truly and with great courage. We need to remember that, as what they do there affects us, lifts our hearts, shows us the grace and glory and power of God, even more so what we do here affects them and every other Church in the Anglican Communion. We have great responsibilities.

We should do no less, be no less effective, no less bold than our brothers and sisters in Christ in those dioceses; in Nigeria, in Pakistan, in places of persecution and suffering, of revolution, change and disruption. The eternal God is our refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms.

Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your people and kindle in them the fire of your love.  
Amen. (*Applause*)

*The Chair:* Copies of the Archbishop's address will be available from the information desk as well as online. That concludes this afternoon's business.

**CLERGY DISCIPLINE (AMENDMENT) RULES 2013 (GS 1907)  
Rules made under the Care of Churches and Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction Measure  
1991 and the Clergy Discipline Measure 2003**

Under Standing Order 69 the draft Clergy Discipline (Amendment) Rules were deemed to have been approved by the General Synod, no member having given notice of a wish to have the Rules debated.

**CLERGY DISCIPLINE APPEAL (AMENDMENT) RULES 2013 (GS 1908)  
Rules made under the Care of Churches and Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction Measure  
1991 and the Clergy Discipline Measure 2003**

Under Standing Order 69 the draft Clergy Discipline Appeal (Amendment) Rules were deemed to have been approved by the General Synod, no member having given notice of a wish to have the Rules debated.

**AMENDING CODE OF PRACTICE UNDER THE CLERGY DISCIPLINE  
MEASURE 2003 (GS 1909)  
Amending Code of Practice for approval**

Under Standing Order 69 the draft Amending Code of Practice was deemed to have been approved by the General Synod, no member having given notice of a wish to have the Amending Code debated.

**LEGAL OFFICERS (ANNUAL FEES) ORDER 2013 (GS 1910)  
ECCLESIASTICAL JUDGES, LEGAL OFFICERS AND OTHERS (FEES)  
ORDER 2013 (GS 1911)  
Orders made under the Ecclesiastical Fees Measure 1986**

Under Standing Order 69 the draft Legal Officers (Annual Fees) Order, and the Ecclesiastical Judges, Legal Officers and Others (Fees) Order, were deemed to have been approved by the General Synod, no member having given notice of a wish to have the Orders debated.

**SCHEME AMENDING THE DIOCESE IN EUROPE CONSTITUTION 1995  
(GS 1912)  
Scheme for Approval**

Under Standing Order 69 the draft Scheme Amending the Diocese in Europe Constitution 1995 was deemed to have been approved by the General Synod, no member having given notice of a wish to have the Scheme debated.

*(Adjournment)*

THE CHAIR *The Bishop of Willesden (Rt Revd Pete Broadbent)* took the Chair at 8.30 p.m.

### **Welcome to Young Anglican Observers**

*The Chair:* Before we start – and it is not just a formality but something important, which we want to do and do regularly – we welcome our Young Anglican Observers. It is very good to see you. (*Applause*)

Secondly, we are to have a briefing from David Porter on our business tomorrow. We aim to take that at 9.55 p.m. It means that, although under SO 14 I could extend the session if I had Synod's general consent, I would not be minded to do so and I am sure that you would not want me to. We will get to where we have got to by that time and I will then hand over to David Porter.

Finally, it was good to have news of Andrew Nunn, who was taken ill in our last session. He is back from hospital and is apparently okay, although not with us in the chamber at present.

### **Questions**

Questions asked in accordance with Standing Orders 105–109 were answered as follows, those for written answer being marked with an asterisk.

#### **Business Committee**

1. *The Archdeacon of Walsall (Ven. Christopher Sims)* asked the Chair of the Business Committee: Given that it is now two years since Synod overwhelmingly voted to ask the Archbishops' Council and House of Bishops to work together on 'a national mission strategy that will support dioceses, deaneries and parishes in their own church growth and mission planning', why has time not been found in this group of sessions for a full debate on GS Misc 1054?

2. *Revd Michael Booker (Ely)* asked the Chair of the Business Committee: Given the overwhelming vote in July 2011, why has the report of the task group appointed by the Archbishops (GS Misc 1054) not been scheduled for a full debate at this group of sessions?

*The Archdeacon of Dorking (Ven. Julian Henderson)*, in reply: With permission, Chair, I will take the second question together with the first.

As explained in the report by the Business Committee and as I intimated in the Business Committee debate earlier today, time is at a premium at this group of sessions. However, at the request of the Archbishops' Council and the House of Bishops, the Business Committee has scheduled a debate on the quinquennium goals, which include the growth of the Church. The Business Committee was not asked to schedule a debate on GS Misc 1054 but the Archbishops' foreword to GS 1895 signals a desire to bring forward in November a motion for consideration on evangelism and church growth. Although I shall no longer be a member of the Business Committee in September, I am sure that it will take that request very seriously.

*The Archdeacon of Walsall:* There is a question mark. It is over the horizon at the moment but it will appear very shortly.

I thank the Archdeacon of Dorking for his reply in saying that there is a desire in November to bring a motion on evangelism and church growth for consideration, especially so in the light of his opening comments in the debate on the Business Committee report and the contents of the presidential address, calling us to prayer and evangelism. However, I have some anxieties over the words ‘desire’ and ‘consideration’.

I believe that as a Synod we have been guilty of ironing our socks for too long. Scripture says, ‘How beautiful are the feet of those who preach good news.’ My question is this. When formulating the wording of a motion on evangelism and church growth, can the Business Committee express it in such a way that it creates a mission action plan for the Church of England?

*The Archdeacon of Dorking:* I am sure the Business Committee will have heard that request.

3. *Revd Stephen Pratt (Lichfield)* asked the Chair of the Business Committee: Given the Archbishop of Canterbury’s personal emphasis on the priorities of prayer and evangelism, will the Business Committee consider setting aside time at the next group of sessions for focused corporate prayer for the renewal and growth of the Church?

*The Archdeacon of Dorking:* As no one will question the value and importance of corporate prayer, especially in the light of Archbishop Justin’s comments this afternoon, the Business Committee will consider this suggestion when it meets in September to settle the agenda for November, and will consult with the Chaplain to the Synod, Revd Canon Gavin Kirk.

4. *Mrs Mary Judkins (Wakefield)* asked the Chair of the Business Committee: In the light of the criticism to which many of those who voted against the draft legislation on women in the episcopate last November have been subjected, and the similar experience of others following debates in the Synod on controversial matters in the past, will the Business Committee give consideration to whether there are any steps it can take to encourage within and outside the Synod respect for, and better understanding of, the different viewpoints held by its members on such matters?

*The Archdeacon of Dorking:* The Business Committee does not have the powers to impose or require good and respectful behaviour outside of Synod and not much more within. However, the protocol for the group work which is being undertaken at this group of sessions lays down clear suggestions for how Synod members should listen to each other’s points of view and help enable a process for mutual understanding. Synod members are encouraged to continue with that attitude of mutual respect and recognition for differing viewpoints in their discussions both inside and outside Synod. We shall be praying to have that effect tomorrow.

*Mrs Mary Judkins:* I did not expect the Business Committee to have those powers but, after Archbishop Justin’s address, is it possible for someone, some group, MPA for example, to do some work on reconciliation in diversity for use in our churches?

*The Archdeacon of Dorking:* Let us see how tomorrow goes, because that is important and it may signal a number of ways in which that could be played out. Once we have experienced a facilitator in a group which is diverse, we may then learn how that could work better in some of the places where we serve in our parishes.

5. *Revd Professor Richard Burrige (University of London)* asked the Chair of the Business Committee: What consultation, if any, was undertaken by the Elections Review Group with the university representatives about the proposals to abolish their constituencies, particularly in the light of their repeated offers to assist in the review process?

*The Archdeacon of Dorking:* Before I respond, it would perhaps be right to acknowledge and congratulate Richard Burrige on winning the prestigious 2013 Ratzinger Prize. (Applause)

Now to the question. The Elections Review Group did not consult the Synod members representing university constituencies individually. However, in January 2011 the then Clerk wrote to all diocesan presiding officers, inviting their views on the 2010 election process. A number of responses were received in response to that, including some from General Synod members. Synod members therefore had an opportunity to contribute to the Group's developing thinking. In any event, the role of the group was of course merely to develop proposals, which cannot proceed unless implemented in legislation. So there will be ample opportunity for those who support the retention of the university constituencies to argue their case in the course of the legislative process, including during the Revision Committee and revision stages.

*Revd Professor Richard Burrige:* I thank the Archdeacon for his congratulations. It is good to know that the Roman Catholic Church still values theologians! (Several members: Oh!)

My supplementary question is purely about the matter of process. Of course, we are not consulted individually. Given that I wrote on behalf of the group to the Review Group and we were told, 'We will consult you and your colleagues about what might be done. Your offer of help is much appreciated', why has that consultation not taken place? It might have helped to avoid some of the errors that then came out in the report.

*The Archdeacon of Dorking:* I am aware of the need for consultation and the Review Group did gather all sorts of material from a number of different sources; but, once the group started to work and to engage with the issues of university constituencies, it became very clear quite rapidly that there was a strong case in one direction, and therefore the issue of consulting more widely was not felt to be a sensible or necessary thing to do. I know that Professor Burrige has a different point of view and will express that in the debates that are scheduled for Tuesday.

6. *Revd Professor Richard Burrige (University of London)* asked the Chair of the Business Committee: What consideration, if any, was given by the Elections Review Group to the proposals regarding reform of the university constituencies put forward by the university members themselves during the last reform of Synod (when these seats

were preserved but not reformed), and repeated subsequently in correspondence with the Chief Legal Adviser and Joint Registrar of the Provinces of Canterbury and York?

*The Archdeacon of Dorking:* The proposals for the reform of the university constituencies advanced in the course of the last round of synodical government reform were reported to the Elections Review Group. As its report (annexed to GS 1901) makes clear, for a number of reasons it nonetheless considered abolition strongly preferable to reform. However, if the Synod does not favour abolition, the group has made its own proposal for reform. Like that made previously by Professor Burridge, the group's proposal involves the use of the database produced by the Association of University Theology and Religious Studies Departments (AUDTRS) but in a different way, which it believes would better avoid the kind of practical difficulties of administration that arise under the current arrangements.

*Revd Professor Richard Burridge:* Given that the proposals for the reform that were reported to the Elections Review Group were themselves coming from the universities who wished to be reformed, why was that not made clear in the report, and indeed the other proposals we put forward that got round many of the difficulties that you advanced? Why was it not mentioned that we were actually asking for it?

*The Archdeacon of Dorking:* The issue of the reform of the universities constituency (a) was played out in this Synod quite seriously a while ago and (b) those discussions were reported and listened to carefully by the Review Group. It is because of the current anomalies in the present system that they felt that they needed to go for the abolition rather than the reform. That is where we have got to, but we will have a chance to debate this here, on Tuesday.

### **Crown Nominations Commission**

\*7. *Mr Malcolm Halliday (Bradford)* asked the Chair of the Crown Nominations Commission: There are (as at the time of asking) six vacancies, or pending vacancies, in diocesan bishoprics (Durham, Bath and Wells, Exeter, Liverpool, Hereford and Guildford) requiring consideration by the CNC. Will the Commission please publish the dates of its meetings for these and indicate which diocese each meeting is intended to address?

*The Archbishop of York (Dr John Sentamu)* replied as Joint Chair of the Crown Nominations Commission: The dates for meetings of the Crown Nominations Commission are on the Church of England website. Dates are: 8 May, Durham; 6/7 June; 18 July, Bath and Wells; 3/4 Oct; 18 October, Exeter; 6/7 November; 12 November, held for Leeds pending the decision of Synod.

2014: 9/10 January, possible Leeds second meeting; 22 January, Hereford; 25/26 February; 6 March, Liverpool; 1/2 April; 25 Jun, TBC; 21/22 July; 11 September, TBC; 15/16 October; 3 November, TBC; 2/3 December.

Dates for other vacancies will be confirmed once dates are in place for the Vacancy in the See of Gibraltar in Europe. The See of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich will be vacant with effect from 21 October 2013.

8. *Revd Canon Dr Simon Cox (Blackburn)* asked the Chair of the Crown Nominations Commission: In the light of the Pilling Report, *Talent and Calling* (GS 1650), and the current and projected composition of the House of Bishops, especially in regard to diocesans, what advice and guidance is being given to the central members of CNC in their task of selection?

*The Archbishop of York* replied as Joint Chair of the Crown Nominations Commission: Whilst the Pilling Report did not cover diocesan appointments, its recommendations did relate to the diversity of Church tradition within the senior leadership of the Church.

Commitment to the breadth of tradition in the House of Bishops reflecting the diversity of tradition in the Church has been expressed by General Synod through the Act of Synod, through Pilling, and in recent debates on women bishops. Central and diocesan representatives operate within this framework and exercise their vote in the light of this aspiration. The representatives themselves have diverse Church tradition backgrounds, as do diocesan representatives. Dr Cox would know this well, as an elected member of the recent Blackburn CNC.

Both the Archbishop of Canterbury and I are committed to a breadth of tradition in the Church and in the House of Bishops. As our appointment processes are participative and democratic, this is not something we can deliver alone.

*Revd Canon Dr Simon Cox*: I thank the Archbishop for the response on behalf of the Crown Nominations Commission. Has consideration been given then to how we can deliver this, if it cannot be delivered alone?

*The Archbishop of York*: Simply because there is a Crown Nominations Commission, made up of 12 people – six from General Synod, six from the dioceses and the two Archbishops. If that group of 14 cannot do it together collectively and collaboratively, I do not know who else will – because that is the way the system works.

*Revd Canon Dr Simon Cox*: I am sorry, Archbishop. That was not the question I asked. I asked if consideration had been given to how we *can* deliver this?

*The Archbishop of York*: Exactly in the way I described. It is delivered by six members of the Crown Nominations Commission appointed and elected from the General Synod, six members in the dioceses elected by the Vacancy in See Committee, and the two Archbishops sit on it. The Prime Minister's Appointments Secretary and the Archbishops' Appointments Secretary deliberate in the first days, sorting out the broad description. Secondly, they go through the names of those who will be shortlisted for interview, as well as having looked at all their papers. Then over two days, beginning with the Eucharist, they continue their deliberations, do the interviews and eventually meet, sit and vote.

I do not know how far you could improve on that, because I think it works well at the moment. It is democratic and representative and the role of the Chair is not to tell others how they will vote. Each one does their own voting. It is a secret ballot. So I do not know how you could improve it.



9. *Dr William Belcher (Gloucester)* asked the Chair of the Crown Nominations Commission: Given that one of the great strengths commonly assigned to the Church of England is that it represents a 'broad church' of theological persuasion, what consideration has been given by the Commission when making nominations to diocesan sees to the fact that there is currently no conservative evangelical representation in the House of Bishops?

*The Archbishop of York* replied as Joint Chair of the Crown Nominations Commission: I would like to refer Dr Belcher to my answer to the question posed by Simon Cox in relation to breadth of theological persuasion.

The House of Bishops includes members from a very wide range of Church traditions, including several who would be happy to describe themselves as evangelical by conviction and conservative in theology.

I suspect that Dr Belcher is referring to evangelicals who do not ordain women. I can only repeat that both the Archbishop of Canterbury and I are committed to a breadth of tradition in the Church and in the House of Bishops, but cannot deliver this alone.

*Dr William Belcher (Gloucester)*: Thank you, Archbishop, for that response. In view of the Pilling Report, which you have mentioned, which reported six years ago now and identified a significant underrepresentation of conservative evangelicals, and the fact that the last conservative evangelical bishop was appointed 16 years ago and has now retired, will the Commission commit in some way to redress such an imbalance in the House of Bishops, hopefully within the current Synod quinquennium?

*The Archbishop of York*: All I can say is that the House of Bishops includes members from a very wide range of Church traditions, including several – not just one – who would be happy to describe themselves as evangelical by conviction and conservative in theology; but there are some who do not recognize them because they are happy to ordain women.

I thought that a conservative evangelical was somebody for whom Scripture had a great hold on their life: the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ and the giving of the Spirit, and being called through evangelism and checking all things with Scripture. There are people in the House who are like that and I know some think that they are not conservative. I cannot help you any more because I am not the one who does not see them as conservative.

*Revd Canon Simon Butler (Southwark)*: Noting the presence of the Bishop of Peterborough and the Bishop of Blackburn-designate here at Synod, would the Archbishop say that it is a relatively recent innovation that conservative evangelicalism has been defined by a complementarian view of biblical headship?

*The Chair*: Archbishop, I do not think you have to venture on that one. That was an expression of opinion being asked for – very naughtily!

*The Archbishop of York*: Buy me a pint in the bar and I will talk to you! (*Laughter*)

*Revd Canon David Banting (Chelmsford):* Archbishop, you say that nothing more can be done. Since you specifically named the issue which I suspect is behind this and the previous question, there is at least an Act of Synod in place at present which says that the conservative integrity is to be no bar for preference. Therefore, should not the Registrar rule any comment made by any member of the Crown Nominations Commission on that ground as unwarranted and, in the Church of England's terms, illegal? That would be a real plus if the Crown Nominations Commission was working with that legal constraint, which our Act of Synod gave us 20 years ago.

*The Chair:* I am afraid that I have to protect the Archbishop from being asked to give legal opinion, which I am sure he would love to do, but I think probably not at this stage. Could we have someone who is not asking for an expression of opinion to ask a supplementary question?

*Mrs April Alexander (Southwark):* I wonder whether the Archbishop would be able to confirm that conservative evangelicals are well represented on the Crown Nominations Commission.

*The Archbishop of York:* Yes.

*The Chair:* A model, if I may say so, of a supplementary response!

### **Dioceses Commission**

10. *Mr Malcolm Halliday (Bradford)* asked the Chair of the Dioceses Commission: In the Dioceses Commission's Annual Report of 2008, it stated that it had 'received a paper from the Archbishops of Canterbury and York setting the scene for its work' but that paper has not been published. The Synod motion subsequently proposed to be moved on behalf of the Wakefield Diocese entitled 'Nature and Structure of the Church of England National Debate' was 'parked' by the Business Committee on legal advice until after the Commission's draft scheme proposing to create a new diocese of West Yorkshire and the Dales had been considered by Synod, which it will do on Monday. Therefore, will the Commission, so that all facts are available before members, please publish immediately the Archbishops' paper and indicate how its steer may have influenced the Commission's final proposals in relation to the reorganization of the West Yorkshire dioceses?

*The Archdeacon of Nottingham (Ven. Peter Hill)* replied as Vice-Chair of the Dioceses Commission: The Commission is happy to make this paper available. A link to it is on our web page and copies are available at the information desk.

The paper set out general observations about the context in which the Commission would be working. It did not refer to specific dioceses by name, but it did suggest that it would be wise not to seek to arrive at a theoretical view of the optimum size of dioceses but, rather, to look at particular areas of the country where present arrangements were problematic or presented opportunities for missional change. This very much accords with our decision to open up a series of consultations in Yorkshire in the autumn of 2009.

### Faith and Order Commission

11. *Revd Stephen Coles (London)* asked the Chair of the Faith and Order Commission: Can the Chair of the Faith and Order Commission explain why it was thought either necessary or appropriate to write, without seeking any outside consultation, and then publish the report *Men and Women in Marriage*, before the group chaired by Sir Joseph Pilling and charged by the House of Bishops with considering the whole range of human sexuality, which has taken extensive soundings from beyond its ranks to enrich its reflection, had the opportunity to report either to the House or to this Synod?

*The Bishop of Winchester (Rt Revd Timothy Dakin)* replied on behalf of the Chair of the Faith and Order Commission: The production of *Men and Women in Marriage* and the work being undertaken by the House of Bishops' Working Group on Human Sexuality are two distinct exercises. The purpose of writing *Men and Women in Marriage* was to summarize and expound the Church of England's doctrine of marriage, in view of the current debates about marriage in Parliament and in wider society. The purpose of the Working Group is to contribute to the continuing process of reflection in the Church about same-sex relationships. Because they were drawing on the Church of England's teaching, it was not necessary for those responsible for producing *Men and Women in Marriage* to await the report of the Working Group.

*Revd Stephen Coles:* In the light of what the Archbishop of Canterbury said to Synod earlier this evening, referring to the context in which any contribution from the Church of England to the national conversation about matters of sexuality is made, can the bishop help the Synod by telling us how, given the confidence in his answer, it is possible to keep such a contribution as this report not only in a compartment that does not leak into the reception given to the Working Group's report later this year but also one that can even have the simple purpose he has explained?

*The Bishop of Winchester:* To reiterate the answer I gave, I think the exercise was to explain what the teaching of the Church of England is. The process of Pilling will continue and that will no doubt include a number of perspectives and viewpoints, and then we will await the discussion that follows.

12. *Revd Clare Herbert (London)* asked the Chair of the Faith and Order Commission: Has the Faith and Order Commission any specific plans to seek to secure the debate of GS Misc 1046 *Men and Women in Marriage* by both the House of Bishops and the General Synod so that the teaching contained within it can be tested as an expression of the mind of the Church of England?

*The Bishop of Winchester:* In line with the precedent set by the previous House of Bishops' teaching document on marriage in 1999, which was not debated in Synod, the Commission has no plans to try to secure a debate on *Men and Women in Marriage*. The report does not seek to change the teaching or practice of the Church of England with regard to marriage, but simply to summarize and expound the Church's existing official teaching on this subject, as set out in the Book of Common Prayer, Canon B 30, the *Common Worship* marriage service, the service of prayer and dedication after a civil

wedding service and the 1999 House of Bishops' document to which I have already referred. The Private Member's Motion on marriage, which has secured more than 100 signatures, will no doubt provide an opportunity for a wide-ranging debate in due course.

*Revd Clare Herbert:* For clarification, since *Men and Women in Marriage* contains material not found in the formally recognized documents such as the Book of Common Prayer and others cited, such as *Common Worship*, and since it has not yet gone through those various formal procedures commonly used to imbue it with authority, should it perhaps not yet be regarded as an expression of the formal teaching of the Church of England?

*The Bishop of Winchester:* I think this is a bishops' document which people are invited to explore and consider, as other documents produced under this kind of process have been offered in the past.

### **Fees Advisory Commission**

\*13. *Mr Stephen Barney (Leicester)* asked the Chair of the Fees Advisory Commission: What steps has the Fees Advisory Commission taken, since it was reconstituted last year, to address the question of how diocesan registrars can be remunerated for the work they do, on a basis that is fair to all parties?

*Mr Geoffrey Tattersall (Manchester)* replied as a member of the Fees Advisory Commission: The new Commission is aware that, for some years, the fairness and efficacy of the system by which diocesan registrars are remunerated has been the subject of debate. It has therefore taken a fresh look at the issues, paying particular attention to the annual retainer received by registrars for undertaking certain specified duties. As reported in GS1910-11X, an independent review team has gathered evidence and made recommendations for reform, on the basis of which the Commission is proposing a number of changes to the present arrangements. Members of Synod are encouraged to contribute to the consultation on these proposals, which is open until 1 September 2013. The consultation paper, together with the reviewers' report and a dedicated email address for responses, can be found at <http://www.churchofengland.org/about-us/structure/churchlawlegis/consultations.aspx>.

### **Church Commissioners**

14. *Revd Canon Perran Gay (Truro)* asked the Church Commissioners: If the Dioceses Commission's draft reorganization scheme for West Yorkshire goes ahead, will the funding from the Church Commissioners for the West Yorkshire cathedrals under Section 21 and Section 23 of the Cathedrals Measure be assured on the same basis as for other cathedrals for the foreseeable future?

*Mr Andreas Whittam Smith (First Church Estates Commissioner, ex officio):* In January, the Archbishops' Council's Finance Committee Chair and I wrote jointly to the three West Yorkshire diocesan bishops making clear that, if the reorganization scheme proceeds, grant support for the Church's ministry in West Yorkshire and the Dales will be no less than that which would be paid should the current dioceses remain separate entities.

Regarding cathedrals specifically, we expressed the Commissioners' intention that 'grants to the cathedrals of Bradford, Ripon and Wakefield would be made on the same basis as for any other English cathedral, regardless of whether they are located in one or three dioceses'. 2014 distribution levels have now been set on that basis. The same will apply to 2015–16, but no commitments can be made to any of our beneficiaries, including cathedrals in West Yorkshire or elsewhere, about expenditure in the 2017–19 triennium, which will depend on the actuarial position at the end of 2015.

*Revd Canon Perran Gay:* Looking beyond the present triennium, if not a commitment, what comfort can the Church Commissioners give to community leaders in West Yorkshire that there will be no significant withdrawal of support for the institutions at the heart of our communities in which such spiritual capital is invested?

*Mr Andreas Whittam Smith:* The Commissioners, often working with the Archbishops' Council, depending on what sort of expenditure it is, consider all those sort of factors across the whole Church. There is a working group set up to do that. At the same time, members of that working group go to individual dioceses to meet the bishop and his colleagues, so that we become pretty well informed on those subjects.

15. *Dr Rachel Jepson (Birmingham)* asked the Church Commissioners: Do the Church Commissioners still invest in the French multinational company Veolia, and, if so, for what reasons?

*Mr Andreas Whittam Smith:* The Commissioners maintain a very small investment in Veolia Environnement (valued at £54,414 on 27 June) as part of a diversified global equities portfolio.

Clearly, the fundamental reason for any investment is to seek the maximum return for the Church. However, we seek to achieve this working within our ethical investment policy and the Ethical Investment Advisory Group has been engaging with Veolia since 2009 about business activities in the Occupied Palestinian Territories involving the provision of services to settlements. These engagements have achieved considerable success, with Veolia either selling or declining to re-tender for various settlement-related businesses and indicating its intention not to pursue new activities of this kind.

*The Archdeacon of Birmingham (Ven. Hayward Osborne):* Are the Commissioners aware that, although Veolia have certainly stated that they are withdrawing from those particular activities in the Holy Land which have been of concern to the Ethical Investment Advisory Group, others groups that are watching the situation closely have real fears that that activity will simply be transferred to subsidiary or associated firms of Veolia. Will the Commissioners therefore bear that in mind when making their decisions about continued investment?

*Mr Andreas Whittam Smith:* We will bear that in mind. I have to say that two staff members of the Ethical Investment Advisory Group work in our offices and we work closely with them; so if anything of importance of this kind is going on, they will certainly tell us.

*Revd Hugh Lee (Oxford):* Mr Whittam Smith has said that the fundamental reason for any investment was to maximize the returns of the Church of England. Is not an investment also to further the cause of the organization in which you are investing? It is effectively doing that, and that has to be taken into account by anybody making an investment, or ought to be as a mere matter of ethics and Christian ---

*Mr Andreas Whittam Smith:* There is a famous judgement on this, I believe, which was the Bishop of Oxford's action against the Commissioners many years ago. However, it makes it pretty plain that our primary duty is, prudently and with regard to ethical considerations, to maximize the return for the Church. That is difficult enough but that is precisely what we do.

16. *Dr Edmund Marshall (St Albans)* asked the Church Commissioners: Will the Commissioners publish a booklet giving a descriptive review of the Orders that have so far been made under Section 47 of the Dioceses, Pastoral and Mission Measure 2007 and Section 80 of the Mission and Pastoral Measure 2011?

*Mr Andrew Mackie (Third Church Estates Commissioner, ex officio):* The use of Bishops' Mission Orders is primarily a matter for bishops and diocesan mission and pastoral committees.

The Commissioners do routinely draw attention to BMOs at their various seminars and training sessions, on their website and via a regular *Resourcing Mission Bulletin*. We will consider whether any of this material might be useful as a stand-alone booklet.

*Dr Edmund Marshall:* As there have now been more than 100 Bishops' Mission Orders across the Church, will the Commissioners, as a National Church Institution, issue such a booklet as a means of effective dissemination to all dioceses of best practice to be achieved by these Orders?

*Mr Andrew Mackie:* The fact that the BMOs are primarily a matter for bishops and diocesan mission and pastoral committees, coupled with the fact that complete information is not available to us, together with the fact that we do routinely publish or draw attention to BMOs on our website and in various other publications and training sessions, means that that may not be easy. However, as I have said, we will consider whether we can produce a booklet on this.

\*17. *Dr Edmund Marshall (St Albans)* asked the Church Commissioners: How many Orders have been made since 6 July 2012 under Section 47 of the Dioceses, Pastoral and Mission Measure 2007 and Section 80 of the Mission and Pastoral Measure 2011 in each diocese respectively?

*Mr Andrew Mackie:* As there is no requirement in the Measure for dioceses to send copies of Bishops' Mission Orders to the Church Commissioners, I cannot give a complete answer.

However, we have been made aware of BMOs being either established or in the process of being established in the dioceses of:

Birmingham	Bradford (at least two)
Bristol	Canterbury
Chelmsford (at least two)	Chester
Chichester (at least two)	Coventry
Derby	Exeter (at least two)
Gloucester	Guildford
Leicester	Lichfield
Lincoln	Liverpool (at least two)
London (at least eleven)	Newcastle
Norwich (at least two)	Oxford (at least two)
Peterborough	Ripon and Leeds
Rochester	Salisbury (at least three)
Sheffield (at least three)	Southwark (at least two)
Truro	York

\*18. *Mrs Anne Foreman (Exeter)* asked the Church Commissioners: In which dioceses have Bishops' Mission Orders (BMOs) been made and how many BMOs are there in force in total?

*Mr Andrew Mackie:* As dioceses are not required by the Measure to send copies of Orders to the Commissioners, I cannot give a complete answer.

However, we have been made aware of at least thirty-six BMOs in force in the dioceses of :

Birmingham	Bradford
Bristol	Canterbury
Chester	Chichester
Derby	Exeter
Guildford	Leicester
Lichfield	Lincoln
Liverpool	London
Newcastle	Peterborough
Ripon and Leeds	Rochester
Salisbury	Truro
York	

### **Pensions Board**

19. *Mr David Kemp (Canterbury)* asked the Chair of the Pensions Board: Does the Pensions Board have any plans to review the CHARM retirement housing scheme?

*Dr Jonathan Spencer (Chair, Church of England Pensions Board, ex officio):* Yes. The Board will publish a consultation paper seeking views on possible changes to the CHARM rental scheme on Monday 8 July, following a fringe meeting here at 18.45 hrs on Sunday 7 July in the Exhibition Centre.

*Mr David Kemp (Canterbury):* What are the key issues for the Board in conducting this review?

*Dr Jonathan Spencer:* Twofold. We are committed to improving the service we offer to those who have given many years of loyal service to the Church and we must also recognize that the scheme has to be sustainable and affordable for the future.

20. *Revd Canon Dr Simon Cox (Blackburn)* asked the Chair of the Pensions Board: In what ways will the recent decision, approved by the Synod, to opt into the second state pension scheme and HM Government's decision to scrap the scheme in favour of a single state pension affect the pensions of those in the Church of England Funded Pension Scheme; is the money already paid over effectively lost, and when will the clergy be informed of the consequences of these two decisions?

*Dr Jonathan Spencer:* The Government's decision to end the second state pension and move to an enhanced flat-rate state pension does not affect the clergy pension scheme. Participation in the enhanced state pension and payment of associated national insurance will be mandatory. Second state pensions earned by clergy between 2010 and 2016 will be transferred into the new scheme, but the transitional arrangements have not yet been published. When the necessary detail is available, we will advise the Remuneration and Conditions of Service Committee of the likely impact for that body to consider what advice needs to be given to the Archbishops' Council on possible changes to the clergy pension scheme. Until that has been done, there is little more that can be said

I should add that any impact on clergy close to retirement is likely to be slight because of the way pension is built up during their membership.

### **Archbishops' Council**

21. *Mr Colin Slater (Southwell and Nottingham)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: What additional expenditure has necessarily been incurred as a direct consequence of the decision in November by this Synod not to give final approval to the proposed legislation to enable women to become bishops – and from which budget heading(s) have these costs been met?

*Mr Andrew Britton (Archbishops' Council, appointed)* replied on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: The estimated extra expenditure for the Women in the Episcopate Working Group and the facilitated discussions is £30,000. This includes travel, accommodation and subsistence, and the fees for those facilitating the February, April and July discussions. These costs have been met mainly from the Legal Office budget.

22. *Mr Robert Hammond (Chelmsford)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: What guidelines are in place for Church House staff using social media, particularly Twitter, when referencing their national Church role and work but expressing what are stated to be personal views, and what procedures are in place for ensuring these guidelines are adhered to?

*Mr Andrew Britton:* All employees of the National Church Institutions are expected to observe the published policy and guidelines on the use of social media. These are not designed to restrict the use of social media and they acknowledge that traditional distinctions between personal and professional conversations are becoming increasingly blurred. Nevertheless, they make clear that staff must not say anything that would put at



risk their reputation for professional neutrality and ability to give impartial advice to the bodies they serve.

*Mr Robert Hammond:* Given that some of the Church House staff, including members of the Communications Department, do enter into lengthy exchanges which blur personal and professional views, would Mr Britton answer the last part of the question, namely what procedures are in place for ensuring these guidelines are adhered to?

*Mr Andrew Britton:* Should there be a serious breach of the guidelines, the people concerned would be subject to the normal disciplinary procedures.

23. *Mr Thomas Sutcliffe (Southwark)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: Does the Archbishops' Council issue guidance to its staff on the need to avoid behaviour which might be considered partisan in relation to controversial legislation which is before or about to be considered by the General Synod, all of whose members regardless of their alignments or opinions it is their job to serve?

*Mr Andrew Britton:* I referred in the answer to the previous question to the specific policy on the use of social media. In addition, the employee handbook refers to the professional standards expected of all staff and prohibits public comment on church business without prior permission. It is the responsibility of all staff to avoid partisan behaviour.

24. *Mr Andrew Presland (Peterborough)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: To what extent does the Council expect that the three pieces of work on lay ministry and discipleship referred to in paragraph 51 of *Challenges for the Quinquennium: Progress Report from the Archbishops' Council and the House of Bishops* will enable dioceses, deaneries and parishes to become better at equipping and encouraging their lay members to serve their local communities simply as Christians (as identified in paragraph 49 as a growing focus of interest), without needing any Church of England licence or accreditation?

*The Bishop of Sheffield (Rt Revd Steven Croft)* replied on behalf of the Presidents:

In commissioning these three pieces of work, the Council regarded them as paving the way for further work to encourage lay ministry and discipleship in all their forms. This includes those who serve simply as Christians and who are not licensed or formally accredited. In its discussions, the Council paid particular attention to this category and will encourage work on ways to develop such service across the Church of England as a whole.

*Mr Gavin Oldham (Oxford):* Given that the opportunity was missed to include clergy and bishops in the consultation on lay training and lay ministry earlier today, how do the Education Division and the Ministry Division intend to seek the views of clergy and bishops, to ensure that they will accept wholeheartedly a wider role for lay ministry and lay training?

*The Bishop of Sheffield:* I think the debate this afternoon to which Mr Oldham refers was called and initiated by the House of Laity. The bishops regularly review documents

and reflection on ministry, and I anticipate would be reviewing these pieces of work as they are completed. I do not have knowledge of how clergy represented in General Synod would be consulted, but we will bear that in mind as the work goes forward.

### House of Bishops

25. *Mr Clive Scowen (London)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Two years after Synod voted overwhelmingly for the development of a national mission strategy, has the House of Bishops yet found time to give serious attention to the work of the Archbishops' Task Group on Making New Disciples (GS Misc 1054) and to how the House of Bishops might give leadership on the priority of turning round decades of numerical decline by making new disciples of Jesus Christ?

26. *Revd Philip Plyming (Guildford)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: What discussion has the House of Bishops had on the national mission strategy explored in GS Misc 1054, requested by this Synod in July 2011, and what further discussion is planned prior to the Synod debate on evangelism and church growth scheduled for November this year?

*The Bishop of Sheffield* replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: With permission, Chair, I should like to take this question and that from Mr Plyming together. *Making New Disciples* has been considered thoroughly by the Archbishops' Council and the House of Bishops' Standing Committee. Synod will also be debating, as we have heard, the review of the quinquennium goals, including a strong focus on growth. The three goals themselves are strategic mission objectives.

There is new material to consider all the time and I hope Synod agrees that a mission strategy should not be a rigid or prescriptive document but should reflect new thinking, new contexts and the movements of the Holy Spirit.

A bishop's role as a leader in mission is at the heart of how the House conducts its business, and growth is a priority for us all. If the Business Committee allows, I hope that our next Synod agenda will give serious time to mission and growth, and I know the bishops will play their part in that, as they do, day in day out, in their dioceses.

*Mr Clive Scowen*: In the light of Archbishop Justin's remarks this afternoon, will the House as a whole devote significant amounts of time at its meetings in the coming year to considering the work of the Task Group on Making New Disciples, and to how the House of Bishops corporately might create a climate in which evangelism can become the normal priority of the whole Church?

*The Bishop of Sheffield*: My hope would be that that would be the case. However, Synod members will have seen the paper addended to the discussion paper on the quinquennium goals, in which I have recognized there some of the challenge of creating time for that focus and discussion. However, I am sure those responsible for framing those agendas are attentive to the Synod debates we have had thus far and will have tomorrow evening.

*Revd Philip Plyming*: Given that the motion in July 2011 specifically asked for the House of Bishops to work with the Archbishops' Council to develop a national mission

strategy – ironing socks notwithstanding! – could the bishop confirm whether the House of Bishops as a whole has considered the material in GS Misc 1054 and, if not, whether it intends to do so before any future debate on evangelism and church growth?

*The Bishop of Sheffield:* There are two halves to the question. The House meeting as a synodical house has not, as far as I can remember, considered the final document. A preliminary version of the document was considered by the College of Bishops at its meeting last September. The meeting of the diocesan bishops with the Archbishops in April of this year did consider the document and it was brought to that meeting as informing conversation and discussion.

*Revd Simon Cawdell (Hereford):* In this regard would the bishop like to expand on the work being presently done on the *Pilgrim* courses that are being produced?

*The Bishop of Sheffield:* With the Chair's permission, the bishop will be content to do that! A group of bishops and others are working at producing some new teaching resources, teaching and learning the faith, under the title *Pilgrim*. The first three books will be published in September this year, and there is a big poster in the foyer which will give you more details.

With permission, I have not answered Mr Plyming's forward-looking question. At the moment, the House of Bishops is not scheduled to meet as a House between now and the November Synod. However, we are hopeful that time will be found in the College of Bishops to prepare the way for the Synod debate in November.

27. *Miss Prudence Dailey (Oxford)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: What consideration has the House of Bishops given to the provisions of Canon C 7, in particular with regard to the requirement for candidates for ordination to have a sufficient knowledge of 'the doctrine, discipline and worship of the Church of England as set forth in (inter alia) the Book of Common Prayer'?

*The Bishop of Sheffield* replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: The House monitors the quality of theological education in the courses and colleges through its inspection processes, which are administered by the Ministry Division on the House's behalf. The quality of the formation of ordination candidates is central to this process of inspection, which includes examination of the learning and teaching provision to enable ordinands to know and understand the doctrine, discipline and worship of the Church of England. Inspectors have regard in particular to the use of the Book of Common Prayer in the liturgical and educational work of the theological institution. I am pleased to acknowledge the generous help and support of the Prayer Book Society in providing every ordinand with a copy of the Book of Common Prayer and, recently, the further generosity of a copy of an authoritative commentary upon it.

*Miss Prudence Dailey:* I thank the bishop for that but, given the continued existence of evidence that, despite the efforts of the Ministry Division, some ordinands still possess at best rudimentary knowledge of the Prayer Book, will the House of Bishops give consideration to their responsibility as bishops under Canon C 7 to satisfy themselves that ordinands do indeed have the requisite knowledge before they ordain them?

*The Bishop of Sheffield:* I refer Miss Dailey to the answer. The mechanism we have to do that at present is the regime of inspection of theological colleges and courses. All the reports come to every member of the House of Bishops. They are reviewed regularly by the bishops on the Ministry Council acting together. We will pay particular attention, at your request, to what is said about the Prayer Book, and it is for all my fellow bishops to do the same as they read those inspection reports.

*Revd Canon Gavin Kirk (Lincoln):* Has the House of Bishops given consideration to implementing the liturgical learning outcomes from the 2008 report *Shaping the Future*?

*The Bishop of Sheffield:* I am not aware that the House of Bishops, acting together, has given attention or debated those particular learning outcomes. However, as members of Synod will know, a great deal of work is currently going on collaboratively across theological training institutions on the development of the Common Awards, which will begin to be taught from September 2014. That would be one place to gauge the effectiveness and whether those learning outcomes are being attended to.

28. *Mr John Freeman (Chester)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Has the House considered whether the Church of England should have one professional body to oversee a uniform policy of safeguarding young people and vulnerable adults so that we have one policy applying to all dioceses?

*The Bishop of Southwell and Nottingham (Rt Revd Paul Butler)* replied as Chair of the Joint Safeguarding Liaison Group: The Church of England's work in this area is led by the Joint Safeguarding Liaison Group, jointly chaired by David Gamble for the Methodists and myself, and supported by the National Safeguarding Adviser Elizabeth Hall. The Church is introducing both legislative and non-legislative changes to ensure a more consistent and uniform approach to implementing and enforcing national safeguarding policies across the Church of England.

The proposed audit of diocesan safeguarding, which we will begin this autumn, is intended to review practices and provision across the dioceses and make recommendations where this does not meet national requirements. We do have a suite of separate single policies agreed by the House of Bishops for vulnerable adults, children, domestic violence and safer recruitment. There will always be local additions needed to these. As part of the audit we plan to evaluate how well the current policies are being implemented and how our systems work before proposing any further changes.

*Mr John Freeman:* When would your proposed audit be expected to reply, rather than getting kicked into the long grass?

*The Bishop of Southwell and Nottingham:* Regarding the proposed audits of each individual diocese, the timing of doing all of them has yet to be worked out, but we plan to begin in the autumn. This is particularly an audit of the safeguarding provision, which includes the professional expertise of safeguarding advisers, for example. So it will be some time next year, we hope.

*Revd Mark Steadman (Southwark):* In conducting the audit, are there any plans to extend this to other bodies and institutions, such as theological colleges or religious communities?

*The Bishop of Southwell and Nottingham:* At present, the proposal is to look at dioceses but the Joint Safeguarding Liaison Group has noted the need also to conduct conversations with theological colleges and other institutions, and we have already begun conversations with the Ministry Division about how that is best done.

*Mrs April Alexander (Southwark):* Will this audit cover the difficult question of ‘blue files,’ which were referred to orally by the Commissioner after the Chichester report was published?

*The Bishop of Southwell and Nottingham:* There is no proposal to revisit the work done in 2005 around ‘blue files’. As I believe Synod is aware, there is a great deal of work that is being done on ‘blue files’ and there are further questions about that; but it is an area that we have to become more rigorous on than we have been.

29. *Revd Charles Razzall (Chester)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: What clinical therapeutic provision is available for clergy and their families subsequent to their suffering serious mental health problems?

*The Bishop of Dudley (Rt Revd David Walker)* replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

The precise nature and extent of such provision does vary between dioceses. However, all bishops take care for the well-being of their clergy and clergy families in this and in other respects. In many if not all cases we have access at diocesan level to expert psychiatric advice and therapy. That can usually be called upon directly and confidentially by the clergy themselves, and it is meant to supplement and not replace what the National Health Service provides.

Many dioceses implement, or have access to, their own occupational health provision and, at the behest of this Synod, the Archbishops’ Council has recently agreed occupational health guidelines to assist dioceses in the implementation of these occupational health schemes. In addition, the Archbishops’ Council staff and RACSC, the committee I chair, liaise with agencies such as St Luke’s Healthcare for the Clergy – I met with them about three weeks ago – which is exploring various ways of assisting in these matters. They have recently launched and trialled in a small number of dioceses to date the provision of an online diagnostic service for clergy, particularly focused on mental health issues.

*Revd Charles Razzall:* Given the increasing pressure on stipendiary clergy and their families, indicated in the last certified illness figures which showed that 32 per cent of certified absence was due to stress or mental health problems amongst the stipendiary clergy, and given the sad fact that mental health provision is at best patchy or at worst a national disgrace, is there any network of residential provision across the Church or any such provision planned?

*The Bishop of Dudley:* There are a number of organizations, such as Sheldon, which do provide residential support and help for clergy in those situations. I would say that the percentage of time off through sickness that is due to mental health issues is broadly similar for the clergy as for other, what we call ‘non-manual professions’ – where you are not getting back injuries from heavy lifting and the like. Actual figures for clergy, the number of days off, when compared with other, as similar professions as you can get, are not particularly high. We know that there is always a level of under-reporting, particularly among people who are not having to clock in or clock out somewhere. The question referred to ‘serious mental health problems’. If that were the case, I would expect it to be reported and to go through these systems.

Synod did agree some years ago to set up the guidance on occupational health. That was signed off by the Archbishops’ Council just a few weeks ago, and I hope dioceses will continue to implement that.

*Revd Eva McIntyre (Worcester):* Is the bishop aware of the provision made by the Roman Catholic Church at St Luke’s in Manchester, and would there be any mileage in pursuing something similar for ourselves?

*The Bishop of Dudley:* I look forward to hearing more about that, and perhaps we could have a conversation afterwards. If there are good examples of practice elsewhere, then let us find out about them and let us see what we can learn from what others are doing.

30. *Revd Canon Gordon Oliver (Rochester)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: What is a clergy ‘blue file’, what is it for, and what is its status in relation to the Data Protection Act?

*The Bishop of Dudley* replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: A ‘blue file’ is the equivalent of a personnel file for members of the clergy. It is held by or on behalf of the diocesan bishop (traditionally, believe it or not, in a blue cardboard folder) and its purpose is to assist the bishop in exercising his legal and pastoral responsibilities. The file will typically contain biographical details and a record of the cleric’s ministry, development and training. Where there are issues relating to capability, discipline or safeguarding, these will also be recorded.

Personal information in blue files is subject to the Data Protection Act 1998. This is recognized in the guidance issued by the House of Bishops on the management of these files. The most recent guidance was approved by the House in March of this year and is freely available to view or download from the Church of England website.

*Revd Canon Simon Butler (Southwark):* Will the House consult the Records Management Society to ensure that record-keeping is consistent and lawful across the entirety of the dioceses of the Church of England?

*The Bishop of Dudley:* The question is as to whether the records kept are kept lawfully. I am sure that is something the legal people will be constantly reminding us about and advising us on. As to which particular organizations we will consult, I think that is a matter beyond the scope of this gathering.

*Revd Prebendary Stephen Lynas (Bath and Wells):* The bishop is probably a bit too busy leaving Dudley at the moment to worry about this, but is he aware that the excellent teams of bishops' PAs and bishops' chaplains across the country are currently engaged in an exercise to ensure that individual clerics give their permission for their data to be held within the terms of the Data Protection Act, and by the time he gets to Manchester that exercise should be concluded right across all the dioceses?

*The Bishop of Dudley:* I thank the questioner for that helpful bit of information, which I am now fully apprised of.

*Revd Professor Richard Burridge (University of London):* Further to that exercise, is there guidance being given to inviting clergy to sign away their rights under the Data Protection Act, and what are the consequences for any clergyman who does so with regard to their blue file?

*The Bishop of Dudley:* I hope that everybody is aware of their rights under the Data Protection Act. Certainly clergy do seem to call upon that Act from time to time. It has to be said that the vast majority of information in a blue file is stuff that either came from the original cleric themselves or it is stuff that was sent to them; so it might well include things like their register of ministers and things like records of letters sent out following ministerial development reviews. I think that clergy would probably not be surprised by the kind of things that are in their blue file. It is the stuff you would expect to be in there.

31. *Revd Canon Giles Goddard (Southwark)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Does the House draw any conclusions for its future practice from the public furore that followed the publication of the FAOC report *Men and Women in Marriage*?

*The Bishop of Winchester ((Rt Revd Timothy Dakin)* replied as a member of the Faith and Order Commission: The Faith and Order Commission's proposal to produce a new document explaining the Church of England's teaching on marriage was agreed by the House of Bishops' Standing Committee last year. The draft text produced by FAOC was shared with the House of Bishops in December and revised by the Commission to take account of points made there. It was never the intention that this should be a root-and-branch review of the doctrine of marriage as reflected in Canon B 30. It is a re-statement of the Church of England's teaching on marriage.

*Revd Canon Giles Goddard:* As Clare Herbert noted earlier, this report did contain new material not elsewhere in the Church of England's expressions of its understanding of marriage and it had not gone through the usual channels to give it authority. Why was this not made clearer on this publication?

*The Bishop of Winchester:* Good question. I do not know. Perhaps I should say that I shall write to you.

32. *Mr Thomas Sutcliffe (Southwark)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Who proposed the names of the consultative group established by the House of Bishops to

consider new legislation for the consecration of women bishops, and why were so few opponents of the legislation rejected in November 2012 included?

*The Archbishop of York:* The House of Bishops decided to establish the Working Group on 11 December 2012 and authorized the Archbishops to determine and announce the membership before Christmas, so that the group could start work early in the New Year. The then Archbishop of Canterbury and I announced the membership on 19 December. Of the ten members of the group, two had voted against the last Measure in November, one a catholic and one an evangelical. Given that 73 per cent of the Synod had voted for the legislation and 95 per cent of the dioceses, this seemed to us to be reasonable. At the facilitated conversations in February, 6 of the 15 invitees had opposed the last Measure.

33. *Revd Canon Tony Walker (Southwell and Nottingham)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: What consideration has been given to holding a debate on the five ‘elements of vision’ enunciated in GS 1886, paragraph 12, to allow the General Synod to affirm or deny that these are indeed principles that the whole Synod will support and hold together, and that can become a basis for moving forward towards enabling women to become bishops?

*The Bishop of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich (Rt Revd Nigel Stock)* replied as Chair of the Working Group on Women in the Episcopate: The House of Bishops, and indeed the Working Group, saw the five elements of the vision as underpinning each of the four options identified by the Working Group. The effect of any motion specifically endorsing the wording of paragraph 12 would have been to open up the possibility of amendments to something underpinning the options – in effect, making Synod a drafting committee of 470, which did not seem a particularly good way forward. What the Synod needs to do is decide on the options and the process; but I believe that tomorrow’s informal discussions and Monday’s debate are of course opportunities for talking about *all* of GS 1886, and that includes paragraph 12.

*Revd Canon Tony Walker:* If the five elements of vision lying behind options one to four are not put up for formal approval, what steps might be taken to ensure that these principles are accepted by the wider Church, including our dioceses, deaneries and parishes?

*The Bishop of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich:* I cannot believe that the principles behind the options will not get a good airing in any debate. They were arrived at by a group of people after discussions with a very wide range of opinions within the Church. They are there as our best shot at something which Synod can gather around. If Synod is not going to gather around them, then I think that will become apparent. Once Synod does, then the whole principle will follow the normal patterns of legislation and then, inevitably, there will be a consultation with dioceses.

34. *Revd Canon Tony Walker (Southwell and Nottingham)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Given that the House of Bishops is encouraging Synod in GS 1886 to put grace over law so that trust can flourish, what other examples might be given of the Church operating by trust rather than law that might reassure members of Synod who find that church life is increasingly dominated by law (e.g. Ecclesiastical Offices (Terms of Service) Measure, Clergy Discipline Measure, et cetera)?



*The Bishop of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich* replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: It might be precisely because the Church of England already has far too much legislation and is operating in an ever more regulated context that there is so much interest in seeing here whether we can model a better way. Most things within church life operate most of the time on the basis of trust rather than law. In terms of specific examples, in fact the Episcopal Ministry Act of Synod and what are termed the Vacancy in See Committees Regulation (though they are not secondary legislation) are both given effect by Acts of Synod and Acts of Synod create no enforceable rights or duties. They do however represent the declared mind of the Synod and seem to operate mostly as the Synod intended.

*Revd Canon Tony Walker*: I thank the bishop for his positive endorsement of the successful use of Acts of Synod. Given that a lot of church members of all shades of opinion are weary with the slanging matches we have experienced on this issue in the past, what else can be done to win over those who are suspicious about being asked to trust, especially when, as Archbishop Justin said earlier, there have been horrific stories of trust being abused on both sides?

*The Bishop of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich*: I think that will become apparent as we move forward, but there are specific things that can be done, such as a positive declaration by the House of Bishops that that is their intention – which is a bit different from answering questions, which seem to be how promises were elicited in the past. ‘Are these going to be there?’ ‘Yes they are.’

I think a very positive statement by the House might help in that. I think there are other ways. You might see there is an amendment on Monday that there is a mandatory signing up to making these things work and that we are willing to submit ourselves to mediation where it does not. There are all sorts of ways where a non-legal way of ensuring trust can be put into the system, we hope.

*Mr John Ward (London)*: Would the House study and perhaps prepare a report on the space for grace and the flourishing of trust in the Edmonton episcopal area, where Bishop Peter, despite holding sound conservative views on the ordination of women, nevertheless allows progressive parishes to flourish?

*The Bishop of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich*: We are very happy to take note of that and I think that very interesting things happen in the London diocese. They have a system that actually is based on trust, and I think we need to take a lesson from that. Thank you for the question.

35. *Mr Clive Scowen (London)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Why did the House of Bishops choose in advance of this group of sessions to recommend one of the options set out in the annex to GS 1886 as to the form which draft legislation for admitting women to the episcopate should take, thereby appearing to pre-empt the outcome of the facilitated discussions between Synod members which are due to take place on 6 July?

*The Bishop of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich* replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: The House of Bishops had to bring a motion to the Synod that contained a particular proposition. It would in principle have been possible for the House to make clear that the motion was merely a starting point for the debate; but at our meeting in May it became clear that most of the House supported option one, for the reasons set out in GS 1886. As a result, paragraph 33 records that the motion ‘reflects both what the House believes to be the natural starting point for the debate and what most of its members currently favour as the most desirable outcome’. So you do know the view of the House, which I think needs to be honestly stated, but I think that we can also say that the House is still listening.

*Mr Clive Scowen*: May we take it therefore that the House will be willing to reconsider its proposal, currently in the motion for debate on Monday, in the light of tomorrow’s conversations, so that the Synod can respond to what the Holy Spirit might say to us?

*The Bishop of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich*: I think all of this will emerge during the discussions and the debate. The whole process is open to the process of amendment and the opinion of the Synod as they are guided by the Holy Spirit.

*Revd Prebendary David Houlding (London)*: In anticipation of the question I want to ask, may I thank the Archbishop of York for his kind remarks to me earlier. I am delighted with Margaret Swinson’s appointment. However, in the spirit of what he said, may I ask the bishop to confirm, as the previous Bishop of Manchester and Archbishop Rowan himself did on several occasions, that the Church of England in the whole matter of the ordination of women to the priesthood and episcopate remains in and continues a process of open reception in relation to the wider universal Church? Further, would he affirm that those of us who want to see a resolution to the present conflict nonetheless remain loyal Anglicans?

*The Bishop of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich*: As Prebendary Houlding knows, he and I might agree on what the process of open reception might be but I think he is tempting me to an opinion on what it is.

I think the whole spirit of the five principles indicates that is what the House is trying to achieve and that is what the last Bishop of Manchester used to call ‘squaring the circle’. The five principles do indeed try to underpin that.

36. *Revd Jeremy Fletcher (York)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Two years after the Synod asked for additional texts to be made available for the baptism service, the House of Bishops has determined that the draft texts which have been prepared ‘are not yet ready’ to be sent to parishes for experimental use. Could the Chairman of the House of Bishops describe the criteria the House uses to determine the readiness of liturgical texts to be tested by parishes, and how the texts before the House in May fell short of those standards?

*The Bishop of Gloucester (Rt Revd Michael Perham)* replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: Some members of the Liturgical Commission were present for the discussion at the House in May. The question before the House was whether the texts prepared by the Liturgical Commission were sufficiently mature to be issued for

experimental use under Canon 5 A. There was a warm welcome for some elements, including the proposed prayer over the water, but many members were unhappy about the proposed wording of the decision and the profession of faith and, by a clear majority, the House declined to authorize experimental use until the Liturgical Commission had done further work on these.

*Revd Jeremy Fletcher:* Given that a reference back from the House to the Commission adds an enormous amount of delay into the proceedings – the House is not meeting until later this year – could the House and the Commission have a conversation with each other about whether there are perhaps some informal ways in which these texts might be discussed among themselves, so that when they come to the House formally they can be sped on their way to the parishes that are looking forward to receiving them? It will not be for this process but maybe for a future process, where there are further conversations that could take place informally to stop the delay that this has caused.

*The Bishop of Gloucester:* The House began to move in that direction before the discussion of these provisions by inviting its members to write in, before the meeting of the House, with their difficulties with the text. It has to be said that not enough of us did it and some of us still raised new points when the House met. Yes it would be good if there were more informal discussion, so that when matters came to the House some of these issues had already been resolved. Having said that, because our liturgy enshrines our doctrine, it clearly is right that the House of Bishops should take care to ensure that texts that are approved for liturgical use are doctrinally satisfactory.

*Miss Sally Muggeridge (Canterbury):* I am appalled that we are still doing this. I spoke at length on this two years ago when we had the debate and I sought and found great co-operation in terms of changing the Church of England website, which was appalling in how it presented ---

*The Chair:* I am looking for a question mark, please.

*Miss Sally Muggeridge:* I would like to ask why it has taken so long, which we have had some answer on; but I do not think there is an explanation, when there is so much need – and when we have Mumsnet, which is full of young people who know nothing about how to approach baptism for their children – why it has taken so long and should it take two years?

*The Bishop of Gloucester:* I do not think I can answer that entirely, because most of the process is before the matter comes to the House of Bishops. You would have to address that question to the Liturgical Commission; although I think, as with all liturgical texts, they have taken care. However, I need to repeat that as far as the House of Bishops is concerned this is the first time that the material came to us when we met in May, and we shall be considering a revised text, I hope, the next time we meet, so the House of Bishops is not delaying the matter unnecessarily.

37. *Miss Vasantha Gnanadoss (Southwark)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Will the House of Bishops be giving a number of senior black, Asian and minority ethnic clergy the right to attend and speak at its meetings as participant observers until such

time as a proportionate number of black, Asian and minority ethnic bishops are appointed?

*The Bishop of Gloucester:* The appointment of the Regional Representatives was to address a specific need, namely the fact that under Canon C 5 there remains a legal prohibition to women becoming bishops. While the House did consider carefully whether it would be creating a precedent by changing its Standing Orders to admit women as participant observers, it concluded that the gender-based legal bar created a unique situation. The problem of the shortage of BME clergy in senior appointments is a separate and no less important issue, which is better dealt with by bodies such as Turning Up the Volume, the group chaired by the Bishop of Rochester tasked with increasing BME senior clergy appointments.

*Miss Vasantha Gnanadoss:* As a member of TUTV, I am aware that its work is a long-term process. The House of Clergy spoke of a ‘change of culture’ when inviting senior women to attend. Is a change of culture not equally necessary and urgent in order to lead a multi-ethnic Church effectively?

*The Bishop of Gloucester:* I can see that a change of culture is needed in that respect also, but I repeat that the particular issue we were addressing was a unique one. BME senior clergy can be appointed to bishoprics and become part of the House of Bishops. It may not be happening at the speed which some would like but it can happen. It is impossible for a women to be appointed to the House of Bishops as a bishop at the present time, and that is why we considered this to be a unique issue.

38. *Revd Rosalind Rutherford (Winchester)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Why will the process for electing the first eight Regional Representatives with rights of attendance at sittings of the House of Bishops take over six months to complete (i.e. from the decision in mid-May until the term of office begins on 1 December)?

*The Bishop of Gloucester:* When this issue was discussed, the House felt that the eight Regional Representatives should not simply be guests of the House but able to have full speaking rights, which is the position with Provincial Episcopal Visitors. For this to happen, the House needed to amend its Standing Orders. Accordingly, the House decided at its specially-convened meeting in February to make the necessary changes to its Standing Orders at the earliest possible juncture, being its meeting in May. There would then need to be adequate time for regional electors to be appointed and for elections to take place. The next scheduled meeting of the synodical House of Bishops is not in any case until 9–10 December, when the Regional Representatives, the participants, will be attending.

*Revd Rosalind Rutherford:* I think a lot of people outside this chamber have recognized that the action of the House of Bishops in allowing Regional Representatives to join meetings is a constructive response to a slightly anomalous situation, but an even larger number of people say, ‘If Synod is meeting in November and the House of Bishops might be meeting then, and might even be talking about the very issue that has led to this situation, would it not be possible to revisit the timing and see if those representatives could be in place by the beginning of November?’ – that is, five months for an electorate of 100.

*The Bishop of Gloucester:* That might be possible. I will make enquiries.

39. *Canon Christine McMullen (Derby)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Many of us are delighted and heartened that eight senior women will be elected to attend the House of Bishops. Will they attend complete meetings of the House or only the parts of it devoted to the matter of women bishops?

*The Bishop of Gloucester:* Yes, the eight Regional Representatives will attend for all items at all meetings of the synodical House of Bishops and have the right to speak.

*Revd Hugh Lee (Oxford):* The bishop has made a good point about these being synodical meetings of the House of Bishops. I understand that the House of Bishops does usually meet during the sessions of General Synod. Would it not also be possible for the women to be present at those meetings? That is why there is the urgency, because there are two meetings at this session and meetings in November; moreover there is the College of Bishops' meeting in September, I believe.

*The Bishop of Gloucester:* It is not true that the House regularly meets during meetings of the Synod, though it is true that recent circumstances have caused that to happen quite a lot. When the House does meet in that way, it is a full synodical meeting of the House. From the point that those women participant observers are in place, they would be present at any such meeting, even were it called at very short notice.

As far as the College of Bishops is concerned, this is not ruled by the synodical Standing Orders of the House and it is up to the Standing Committee and others concerned to decide whether to invite women to be present at that meeting, as some will be for part of the College this September. We do not need legislation on that, therefore, and I can assure you that the House of Bishops' Standing Committee is not opposed to such an idea and would act on it if ever it seemed to be helpful, and no doubt it sometimes will be.

40. *Mrs April Alexander (Southwark)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Why is the eligibility of women to attend the House of Bishops and to belong to the electoral college so narrow as to exclude, for example, all sector ministries, women in academia, the Chaplain to the Speaker of the House of Commons, the Archbishop's own Chaplain and Bishops' chaplains, all of whom, if elected, would offer an extremely valuable perspective on the matters in hand?

*The Bishop of Gloucester:* The rules provide that female deans and archdeacons are *ex officio* members and that other vacancies may be filled by nominations of senior women clergy. The only constraints on this are that the candidates must:

- be female;
- be ordained priest;
- have five years' experience in ordained ministry, including diaconal ministry; and
- hold a position considered by the diocesan bishop to be one of responsibility in the diocese.

The list of possible positions of responsibility that follows is non-exhaustive and is intended to allow flexibility. In particular, ‘in the diocese’ refers to the area covered by the diocese, not to explicitly diocesan posts. As far as I am able to see, therefore, none of those persons who are listed by the questioner would necessarily be excluded.

*Mrs April Alexander:* I will rephrase the question. Why are the rules such that deans and archdeacons are singled out to be *ex officio* members?

*The Bishop of Gloucester:* Because they are the senior members of the clergy.

41. *Mrs Anne Foreman (Exeter)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Has the House of Bishops considered how they will hear the views of senior women clergy at any House of Bishops meetings held prior to the election of the eight women Regional Representatives?

42. *Mrs April Alexander (Southwark)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: In view of the disappointment felt by many that a period up to 1 October is allowed for elections of women to attend the House of Bishops, what would prevent that date being brought forward by two weeks and the appointments taking place with immediate effect, in order to secure places for women at the House of Bishops when that House discusses the outcome of this Synod with all its implications for women in the Church of England?

*The Bishop of Gloucester:* With permission I shall answer this with number 42 from April Alexander. Apart from a brief meeting during Synod to consider amendments, which will be too early for elections of Regional Representatives to have taken place under the present timetable, there are no scheduled meetings of the House until December. As I have already said, from 16 to 19 September the College of Bishops, which comprises all suffragan and diocesan bishops, will meet. This is not a meeting where synodical business will be dealt with, but on 19 September a whole day has been set aside for a major discussion of women’s ministry with a group consisting of a senior woman cleric from each diocese. This is being organized in conjunction with the Transformations group on women’s ministry.

*Mrs April Alexander:* Am I right in supposing that ‘women’s ministry’ in this context means priestly ministry and episcopal ministry?

*The Bishop of Gloucester:* Yes, indeed. It does.

43. *Revd Dr Emma Ineson (Bristol)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: On what principles did the House of Bishops frame the rules for the welcome election of eight senior female clergy to attend meetings of the House? In particular, why did they decide:

- (i) in forming the electoral colleges (and therefore the pool of potential candidates) to give priority to archdeacons and deans over senior female incumbents and effectively to exclude such incumbents who do not have diocesan responsibility;
- (ii) not to widen the franchise so that all female clergy with at least five years’ experience of ordained ministry could vote and stand for election;

- (iii) that (male) bishops should have the right to select members of the electoral college; and
- (iv) that, unlike any other synodical election, the ‘first past the post’ method of election should be used?

*The Bishop of Gloucester:* This is in the nature of a special, emergency and transitional arrangement pending the arrival of women in the House as bishops. It seemed to the House reasonable, therefore, to look in the first instance to those clergy already exercising significant responsibility at diocesan level or in cathedrals.

The arrangements will of course be kept under review, though the hope is that the need for them will quickly fall away as a result of the requisite legislation being passed by Synod.

*Revd Jane Morris (London):* Is the House of Bishops aware that this formula leaves them open to accusations of including only those women known to them and already working closely with them, and perhaps that group is unlikely to be representative of the wider group of experienced women clergy in the diocese, and will the House consider the questions raised by Dr Ineson?

*The Bishop of Gloucester:* My own view – I am not allowed to express my own view but I will try – is that bishops know their clergy sufficiently well to know who would adequately represent the women clergy in the electoral college from which these eight people will be chosen, and of course the eight people will be chosen by women, not by bishops.

*Revd Canon Simon Killwick (Manchester):* Could I ask the bishop to make a response to point (iv) of the question, about the method of election? It does seem to me to be quite a valid point and one that would be interesting for the Synod to hear the response to.

*The Bishop of Gloucester:* I probably cannot give an entirely satisfactory answer. This was a decision made, I think, within the Church House Secretariat but it was one that no bishop has challenged; so it is the system that we are employing.

*Canon Peter Bruinvels (Guildford):* My question is also to do with point (iv). We assume the eight are elected. Their term could be quite a long time. How will they handle, waiting for the first women bishops to be appointed, by-elections? Presumably, if it is first past the post, there will not necessarily be re-counts. Have they looked into the method of replacing those who maybe become bishops or retire?

*The Bishop of Gloucester:* Because this is a kind of emergency and short-term legislation – at least, many of us pray it will be short term – some of the detail of what might happen in all sorts of eventualities has not been as carefully laid down as it might for full synodical elections; but this is something that depends both on trust and common sense. I think it is clear that if someone stood down there would be a fresh election – a by-election.

There are some rules set down. I do not think they do deal with every eventuality, but it seemed important to get on with this rather than to put it through the kind of careful scrutiny to which the Synod is accustomed – which might mean that we did not have these people brought into the House as participant observers for another 18 months or so.

*The Chair:* I think probably the House of Bishops is missing the expertise of Colin Buchanan!

We have reached five to ten. The answers to the remaining Questions will be available on noticeboards and around the place.

*Questions 44–90 were answered in writing.*

*The Chair:* We now move to Canon David Porter, the Archbishop of Canterbury's Director for Reconciliation, who will explain to us what we are doing tomorrow.

*Canon David Porter:* Good evening, Synod. It is my first visit to Synod. I do not know if it is the sunshine, but I have to say that you are looking more friendly and cuddly than my darkest thoughts two nights ago at three o'clock in the morning! It is good to be here with you and to put a face on the process for tomorrow.

I will ask the 24 facilitators who are sitting at the back to stand for a moment, so that you can see that they are real and are human beings. (*Applause*) I want briefly to draw your attention to four things about our process tomorrow.

Can I underline the commitment of the facilitators we have brought together to serve you tomorrow? They are facilitators trained by various community and faith-based organizations. They are committed to being impartial, to help you have the conversations you need, and not to force any agenda or force a particular line. I hope that you will find them of that calibre as you meet with them tomorrow. We are delighted to have them with us, and I just want to reinforce that. Over a third of them are non-Anglican. I hope you will not hold that against them, but it does show the breadth that there is in our churches of people capable of facilitating such conversations.

The day is set within a process that begins with asking you questions about what the journey to today has been like, and what lessons we can learn from that as we go forward. This is set out in the sheet you received when you arrived, saying what the purpose of the facilitated conversations was.

We then want to help you talk about the route forward, not in terms of the minutiae of the argument but in terms of the consequences of the decisions before you; and to do that in a way that invites you to reimagine a different sort of conversation.

We are all taking risks tomorrow and we are very mindful of that. As facilitators we are taking risks. Most of us would have preferred to have you for three days of process, to engage in such conversations; but we are living with the reality of your structures as Synod.



We are inviting you to take risks, to enter into a process that maybe you are uncomfortable with, and quite quickly to get into conversation that will be challenging. We trust that in that space of risk and reimagining we might see different ways of having difficult conversations with each other.

In that regard, can I draw your attention to the St Michael's House protocols, which were in your pack when you arrived? We would ask you to keep to those as our working agreement for tomorrow. Your facilitators will introduce a couple of other comments around tweeting and the use of social media when you are in small group work and we would ask you to respect that – to respect the process that we are inviting you to enter into.

Finally, just to reinforce the limits of what is possible in one day of facilitation. This is not a mediation; it is not a negotiation. We cannot complete that with only four or five hours of small group work. However, it is about conceiving a different conversational framework.

If it helps you to engage in a difficult conversation, in a challenging conversation, then we will have done our job; but it will only be as good as the energy that you are willing to put into it, and we invite you to do that with us.

We go straight to the groups first thing tomorrow morning, so we will not have another opportunity to address you together until we meet in this hall at four o'clock in the afternoon when, through the use of drama, we hope to invite you to a different sort of conversation that engages you at a different level. In this we hope that we will engage the spirit of God moving amongst us in our conversation.

We look forward to working with you tomorrow and we trust that you will enjoy your day.

*The Chair:* That concludes the business of Synod for today.

*The Archbishop of York dismissed the Synod with the blessing at 10 p.m.*

## **Second Day**

### **Saturday 6 July 2013**

THE CHAIR *Revd Dr Rosemarie Mallett (Southwark)* took the Chair at 8.30 p.m.

#### **Progress on Meeting Challenges for the Quinquennium: Progress Report from the Archbishops' Council and the House of Bishops (GS 1895)**

*The Chair:* Good evening, Synod, and welcome back to formal business after a day of engaging conversations, active listening and enjoyable drama. I call upon the Bishop of Sheffield to introduce the motion standing in his name. This is a 'take note' debate.

*The Bishop of Sheffield (Rt Revd Steven Croft):* I beg to move:

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

At the beginning of the five-year life of a Synod we agreed together three priorities for the life of the Church of England: to contribute to the common good, to grow the Church; to reimagine the ministry. They are interlinked. They are meant to influence the life of the national Church, the dioceses and the life of parishes. This evening's debate is an opportunity to focus on those goals once again. We are at the halfway point. We need to look back and we need to look ahead.

Synod is offered tonight an opportunity to delight in the beauty of the Church and to rejoice in its wellbeing. I pray the debate will be conducted in the key of hope, that we will encourage one another with stories of what is going well and accounts of God's grace. I hope the debate will help us all catch a bigger picture of what God is doing across this amazing and wonderful community we call the Church of England.

*(PowerPoint presentation)*

My thanks go to Nick Clarke in the Communications Office and the network of diocesan communication officers who put that presentation together with me.

Our three challenges are all responses to the grace of God. They are all ways of engaging in God's mission and they are all important. A few weeks ago I visited a food bank in the north of Sheffield. It is one of the many developed by churches and other agencies in response to the growing need of the poorest in our society. The team explained that it was offering community and human contact and dignity, as well as food parcels. Most of us here can tell similar stories.

Disciples of Jesus living out their faith make a huge, often hidden contribution to the common good, so do local churches, so does the national Church. The needs around us have become even greater in the last two years – of which we will hear more tomorrow evening. The Christian voice continues to be needed and heard in local and national debate. The Ministry Council has adopted the language of 'transforming ministry' in preference to 'reimagining ministry' for our work going forward. It has a more outward

focus and implies action as well as reflection. We have seen a significant rise in the number of younger vocations to ordained ministry. In 2011, the last year that we counted, 113 candidates were under 30. That is the highest figure since 1992 and the evidence is that rise continues.

We need to see more diverse vocations from people with different ethnic backgrounds. We have good plans in place for this for the next two years. We need to see a much more diverse leadership in the Church as a whole in terms of ethnicity. The work of the Turning Up the Volume group is critically important for us all.

The development of the Common Awards with the University of Durham is a significant step forward in the formation of ordained and lay ministry. The Ministry Division will develop further support for dioceses in the next year or so, to support planning for new patterns of ministry, self-supporting ministries and support for incumbents.

The area of growing the Church and making disciples is, I think, the most challenging of the three goals. It is absolutely vital, as we seek to fulfil the call of Christ. As I have said in the annex to the paper that members have, the Church all over the world is having a similar conversation about the challenge of passing on the Christian faith in a global secular culture. We urgently need to deepen that conversation in our own Church. The Synod debate that we look forward to in November will provide further opportunity for that to happen.

We need to recover simple, deep disciplines of learning and teaching the faith, to make disciples in annual rhythms and patterns in every parish throughout the land. We hope and pray that the new *Pilgrim* resource, to be published on behalf of the House of Bishops in September, will support this movement further.

The growth in fresh expressions of church over the last decade has been remarkable. Across the six dioceses where there has been detailed research, people in fresh expressions of church now make up on average ten per cent of those attending church. The average growth rate of the teams being sent out is 250 per cent. Over 70 per cent of the 14,000 people involved in those dioceses were previously de-churched or non-churched.

Our ecumenical partners have seen similar if not greater fruit, and part of the fruitfulness has been the ecumenical working, particularly with the Methodist Church. The next five years must see a deeper and more sustained engagement with all of these opportunities.

Serving the common good, transforming ministry, making disciples are the right goals for this Church of England at the present time and for the future. We need to pursue them with passion, with hope, with resources and with courage.

*The Chair:* I open the floor to debate the motion.

*Revd Professor Paul Fiddes (Ecumenical Representatives, Baptist Union):* I very much welcome this report, with its intention of showing that growing the Church and serving the common good are not at all in conflict but mutually supportive. This is really

important and very well expressed. I am intrigued, however, by a paragraph that seems to stand on its own, paragraph 17. Deep cultural change, it asserts, is achieved by developing a narrative which supersedes old ways of thinking. Such a narrative, it goes on to say, must draw on the traditions and beliefs of the Church. This large narrative will, the paragraph suggests, provide a firm ground for smaller, individual narratives of growth, stories of Church growth that will otherwise not convince and compel.

Nothing more is said, at least directly, in this report about this narrative, which is surely the story of the whole Church in society. It is a story that must be rooted in the story of God, the great story of the Trinity; that is, a story of a father who sends out a son on mission into the world, a story which is opened up to ever new depths and ever new hope for the future through a spirit of love.

I encourage the Council and the House of Bishops to reflect on what this narrative might be that is referred to in paragraph 17. What is this story of the Church of England, the story of its place in our society which can renew old ways of thinking? I would humbly suggest that if it is grounded in the story of God then to tell it properly it has to include other expressions of the Christian Church in England. Though they are not established, they have their own way of witnessing in the public square, as paragraph 7 hints.

To tell this story properly it also has to be related to God's activity in faiths other than the Christian one. I am sure the Bishop of Sheffield intends this with what he calls the discipline of 'prayerful discernment and listening'; when he calls for 'careful attention to what God is doing already in each different place, community and context'. The question is how the story of the Church of England relates to these other stories in the life of God and what difference that might make to growing the Church and serving the common good.

Of course, the report refers to learning from an ecumenical partner about the place of the bishop in evangelism, but I observe that the word 'church' in this report seems to mean only the Church of England. Telling the narrative which is grounded in God will surely mean speaking of the way that growing new churches can relate to local covenants with other Christian churches, and the Church of England has done remarkable, innovative thinking about local covenanting.

It will mean speaking of the way that evangelism will be shaped through engagement with ecumenical partners in fresh expressions. The bishop has done this in his presentation to us tonight.

It will mean speaking of the way that serving the common good must be effected by engaging in local interfaith councils and, as far as possible, sharing in worship together.

Of course, it will be said that all this is implied and I look forward to hearing this story in the next report. Meanwhile, I express my warmest appreciation for the story so far.

*Revd Canon Dr Simon Taylor (Derby):* I welcome the opportunity to speak to these quinquennial challenges in a maiden speech, as I serve the diocese of Derby as the continuing ministerial development officer. In this capacity I followed with great interest all three priorities, but especially that of reimagining ministry. I welcome in particular

the emphasis on lay ministry, the identification of incumbency as an area in need of support, and the young vocations that we have heard of. However, none of these areas is much more than a recognition of the needs of the Church for its current approach to ministry.

It is more than a little disappointing to see reimagining ministry as a top-down exercise, coming from the Ministry Division to the dioceses and parishes. Ministry is something that we receive as a gift and as a calling. The first question is where is the Church gifted and called? As the challenge of reimagining ministry goes forward it will be good to take the opportunity to see what different parishes and dioceses are doing at the grassroots, and in surprising and new ways.

In Derby we are actively looking at how we are being a presence in every community, finding excellent and imaginative examples of different places and people providing a presence of worship, witness and service. I had the privilege last week of being at a licensing service in the diocese of Bristol, where I formerly served, when teams of laypeople were commissioned alongside the new incumbent to work as a ministry team.

I am sure there are many more examples from the Church of England and, indeed, from our ecumenical partners. If we are to meet this challenge of reimagining ministry, one of the tasks is surely to find out with what ministry God is already gifting the Church.

Above all, I fear that there has been little space for imagination in the work so far. That requires space: space for prayer; space for listening for what ministries God is calling out from the Church; space for imagination; space to take risks, to try new things, to make mistakes, to learn, to make different mistakes.

It is a shame that the language of reimagining ministry has been dropped. New vocations and common awards are very important but they speak of a continuation of present ways of offering ministry. If this Synod and the National Institutions could tell stories of imaginative and transformative ministry, could open space, space for listening for the call of God and space for using our imagination in taking risks and trying new things, then we really would have a transforming ministry and be better equipped to make disciples and to serve the common good.

I hope that as this report goes forward we will hear these things, and I thank the bishop and all involved for the work that has been done so far.

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

*Sir Tony Baldry MP (Second Church Estates Commissioner, ex officio)*: Recent press reports have borne headlines such as ‘Christians Could be a Minority in Ten Years’, ‘Britain Losing its Faith in the Church Census Shows’ and ‘Young Muslims on Rise as Christian Population Shrinks’. Indeed, newspapers seem unsure whether the story is the marking time of the numbers of those in England calling themselves Christians, the advance of secularism or the rise of Islam.

The fact is that the peak year for attendance at Anglican services as a proportion of the population of England was 1904. One could argue therefore that the Church of England has been in decline for well over a century, but this is an argument that does not get anyone anywhere particularly helpfully. The reality, I suspect, is that, however one cuts the numbers, there is an inescapable truth that the Church of England probably has no more than 20 years to reassert its position as the national Church of England.

Positively, irrespective of tradition, one in three Anglican congregations is growing. The Church Commissioners are funding research to try to identify what makes churches grow but I would suggest that more needs to be done. We need to find a campaign that can unite every tradition in the Church of England and a campaign that gives churchgoers the confidence and licence to take the Christian message and the Church of England into the wider community.

Would it not be possible in the South of England for the Church to rally round the banner of the mission of St Augustine and in the North of England to rally similarly round the banner of St Cuthbert? Thousands and thousands of people are doing voluntary and community work every day through the Church of England and as a consequence of their membership of the Church of England; for example acting as street pastors, providing support for the homeless, bereaved, sick, providing comfort for the elderly and the lonely and helping to provide education for large numbers of our nation's children.

Archbishop Temple once observed that the Church of England is one of the few organizations that exists for the benefit not of its own members but for the community as a whole. The reality of the past 20 years, however, and the continuous debate about the role of women in the Church of England is that this debate has tended to put everyone into tribes. Indeed, I sometimes think that General Synod is not so much a parliament but a gathering of the tribes of the Church of England. To flourish in our mission to evangelize England we have to find a way of uniting.

Whether one is a liberal conservative, a conservative liberal, a conservative evangelical, a charismatic evangelical or an Anglo-Catholic or of whatever tradition, it must be possible for us all to come together under the banners of St Augustine and St Cuthbert to promote the mission and the growth of the Church of England. Any such mission would have to be bishop-led, but we in the laity must put our collective shoulder to the wheel.

We do not have to be paralysed by decline and having to manage decline or, as *The Times* put it in a leader yesterday, to become a 'melancholy, long withdrawing roar'. Recently more than 2,000 clergy and churchwardens filled St Paul's Cathedral to celebrate the launch of Capital Vision 2020, the diocese of London's plan for the next seven years. In the North we have seen the Archbishop of York's Towards the Re-evangelization of the North project. However, I would suggest that we need a sense of urgency. We need to identify where growth is taking place and we need to work out how in England in the 21<sup>st</sup> century we proclaim the faith of Christ crucified to our communities, friends, families and neighbours without them wilting with embarrassment. It is a different challenge, but it is no less and no more of a challenge than that for the original followers of St Augustine or St Cuthbert.

*Miss Rachel Beck (Lincoln):* I thank the Archbishops' Council and the House of Bishops for an inspiring report. There are so many areas that could be highlighted but I want to focus especially on paragraphs 25–7, which stress the strong missional dimension of chaplaincy, both the traditional forms of chaplaincy and the ever-growing diversity of forms of chaplaincy.

The first industrial chaplain, Ted Wickham, was charged by Bishop Hunter in 1944 to build bridges between church, industrial society and people, and, if necessary, to establish new forms of church. As an experienced industrial missionary said to me recently, chaplains were therefore at the forefront of fresh expressions over 50 years ago.

The role of chaplains today can still be seen as bridge building, which chaplains often do by being alongside people in their everyday lives and in their own context and environment. Surely the role of chaplaincy is growing ever more important, with the increasing percentage of people having no traditional church experience, not even a dim and distant Sunday School experience.

The diocese of Lincoln has a strong background in chaplaincy, with the first industrial chaplain being appointed in the 1960s, but the majority of chaplaincy now across the diocese is provided and supported by an ecumenical charitable company called Lincolnshire Chaplaincy Services. This body recently produced its annual report entitled *Faith at Work*, and I was staggered by the breadth and diversity of the chaplaincy provided: lay and ordained, employed and voluntary, full-time and part-time, university, college, industrial, retail, workplace, agricultural, environmental, waterways, the police service, the fire and rescue service, the courts, Humberside Airport – and the list goes on.

When talking to some of these chaplains over the last week I was blown away by their stories of how people feel comfortable to engage in issues of life and faith with them, regularly asking questions which they said they would never dream of going to the local church to ask or explore. Quite often this was because the local church was an unknown environment to them. The chaplains explained that they do not usually know the influence these conversations have. Research shows, however, that these encounters often leave people feeling able to explore their own local church or to take the next step on in their faith journey. That is why the first sentence of paragraph 27 really stood out to me: 'Many of the stories told by those who come to Christ include the ministry of a chaplain in some form or at some stage.' I am not surprised by this but I am so pleased to see it recognized and articulated in this report and I think it is so important for us to remember the crucial role our chaplains play in the mission of our Church.

*Revd Anne Hollinghurst (St Albans):* Overall, I think this is a very encouraging report. It highlights the real progress that has been made and also lays out where there is still significant work to do. I simply have a few questions around paragraph 23 on fresh expressions of church. Fresh Expressions has been a transformative movement (as the report expresses it) over the last decade and more. Those of us who have been to the fringe meetings today with Beth Keith and George Lings can be left in no doubt of that.

Fresh Expressions has seen a wonderful explosion of creativity in so many ways. That Fresh Expressions has been such a success story that we are now considering calling it

mainstream has to be a positive development. However, I would ask for a little more clarity on what we mean by embedding fresh expressions. I am not quite sure how we will do that. Perhaps the work on that is still to be done. How do we measure it? How will we take account of the post-denominational flavour of many fresh expressions? I suppose a particular concern – and I suppose the ecumenical dimension that has been raised already – is how our own process of embedding fresh expressions will work out with our ecumenical partnerships, which, as we recognize and have been reminded, are behind many of our fresh expressions?

I am aware that the Church of England is going to reduce its contribution quite significantly to the Fresh Expressions of church. We have heard today that the Methodists, meanwhile, are taking to conference a proposal to commit some £90,000 and a full-time post for the next five years and I am aware that some of my Methodist friends are concerned as to what the Church of England move might be signalling. That might not be a fear they need to have, but I think it is understandable that that fear is there. We have also heard that ecumenical involvement is growing apace: the Church of Scotland is getting involved with a full-time post and £70,000; the Salvation Army committing to as much as the Church of England and a half-time post.

Fresh Expressions has been a transformative movement over the last decade and many of us hope it will continue to be so. I hope that going mainstream and becoming embedded means that many of the rich insights will find a broader and not a reduced platform to feed into our thinking about the other strands of mission and evangelism, including, indeed, reimagining ministry.

*Mr Gavin Oldham (Oxford):* There are several things I am really pleased to see in this report. First, I am delighted to see the Resourcing Christian Community Action website endorsed in section 38 and the ensuing paragraphs on serving the common good through community action. We are shortly to introduce a facility that will enable dioceses to enter their own project details on to the site to showcase local initiatives. It is being piloted in the diocese of Oxford and it will be rolled out across the country. It is a great way to share best practice, so keep an eye on *howtohelp.net*, which arose from our Synod debate on the Big Society in November 2010. In my view, in a secular society evangelism flourishes best when it is hand in hand with community action.

Secondly, I am delighted to see initiatives, shown in bold in section 51, about empowering the laity. I am lay chair of Wendover deanery, which put forward a motion to the Oxford diocese in March to request a coordinated programme of lightweight lay training courses across the diocese. It was passed, but not without opposition, and courses are being publicized for September. Empowering the laity is absolutely fundamental to the future of the Church, and especially the rural Church, but when I asked Julian Hubbard at Church House last autumn whether there was any general provision for lightweight lay training courses he was unaware of it. That is why I am delighted to see action by both his division and the Education Division to focus on lay discipleship as a ministry.

There are two vital issues. First, most laypeople cannot take long-term commitment for readership training or licensed lay ministry but at present there is no provision for preparing for the host of roles that they undertake. The availability of short,



predominantly online, courses could transform this situation, giving new confidence among laypeople on the basis of simple certification. Secondly, it is unfortunate that the session on this topic at the House of Laity on Friday afternoon did not take place on the floor of this Synod, embracing both clergy and bishops. Much of the opposition that we experienced in the diocesan motion was clergy-based, but clergy need to understand that we can be partners in service, that we are not a threat to their roles. There is much to do but I am grateful for the initiative in this area.

*Revd Mark Ireland (Lichfield):* I welcome this paper as a significant step towards the kind of national mission strategy that I called for in a Private Members' Motion two years ago, particularly in its affirmations in paragraphs 9 and 10. The whole mission of the Church is broader than the specific area of evangelism; it involves God's work of reconciling the whole of creation to himself, something we are all called to participate in. Our capacity to participate in God's mission will get less and less, however, unless we can crack the difficult issue of how to make new disciples. That is why the affirmation in paragraph 10 is significant. It is the responsibility of the Synod, the House of Bishops, the Archbishops' Council and the Church Commissioners to support, encourage and incentivize a wholehearted commitment to evangelism and growth.

The focus on making new disciples has been the particular work of the task group of which I have been a member. That task in itself is quite scary because we are all finding it hard to make the case for faith and to make new disciples in an increasingly secularist, materialist, individualist world. Indeed, that is as true of the global south, it would seem, as it is of our own Church. I guess there have been times for us all when we have been tempted to pursue ironing socks! It is not uniformly hard work, however. There are times and places where God's Spirit does break through in surprising and unexpected ways. When a 17-year-old teenager went missing in our parish, large numbers of her fellow students instinctively came to the local parish church to light candles and to pray for her safe return.

As one who has been taking funerals for decades, I have only recently become bold enough at the end of a service, when so often there is the 'Thank you, that was a lovely service, vicar' kind of response, to say, 'Before we go, it may be that this service has raised some difficult questions for you about life and death, whether there is anything after death and issues of forgiveness. If it has, please do not go away without having a word with me on the way out. I have a little booklet that I would love to give you.' I did that very nervously the first time. I was amazed when three people stopped me on the way out and said, 'What is that booklet? Please could I have a copy?' On each occasion I have done this since, people have been glad of the opportunity to pursue it and to take next steps. All of us can be a part of this process. We cannot just wait for debate in November.

I commend to members of Synod the Pimm's approach to evangelism, which on this warm summer evening I think is actually Jesus's approach to evangelism. We see Jesus giving priority to the work of prayer. Archbishop Justin mentioned it last night as a vital part, a starting point for anything we do, but we should also recover the confidence to invite people and not assume that people will not be interested and therefore we should

not invite them. We should take the invitation to mentor people and to stick at it, because in due time we shall reap a harvest.

*Mrs Anne Foreman (Exeter):* The Business Committee invited us to share the experiences we have had in our dioceses when looking at this report and that is what I would like to do. The Exeter diocese is a diocese with a strategy. There is nothing unusual, I would suggest, in that, but Exeter's strategy, which is a commitment to mission and to growth, is being implemented and there is a real and evident commitment to it being implemented.

One of the practical outcomes of this commitment to mission has resulted in over 2,000 new people engaging with the Church in our diocese. How? GS 1895, paragraph 35, refers to the Church deploying human and financial resources to facilitate its missionary task. Enter, on cue, the diocese of Exeter's Million for Mission Fund. One million pounds was released for local mission from reserves. This reflects, in GS 1895, that 'fresh moves of the Spirit tend to start at local level'.

What was needed to release this £1 million? It was a finance director with a heart for mission and an inspirational diocesan missionary in Canon Anna Norman-Walker, not forgetting the lead from our diocesan bishop and the support of diocesan synod. The release of such funds was not without controversy, but *Making New Disciples* (GS 1054) suggests that the Church has to pioneer new approaches amongst the ever-increasing proportion of the population that has never had any contact with Church, new approaches that will awaken in them the possibility of God. How wonderful is that – to awaken in people the possibility of God?

Applications to our mission fund centred on five areas of growth: growing congregations; growing resources, which included adapting buildings – it is wonderful how much more you can do when you have a loo in your church; growing spiritually; growing in the world; growing lay ministry. The evaluation which considered these individual projects has shown that it is helping them deliver their mission action plans. The evaluation has also indicated that the biggest impact of all these projects has been with young families and that new worshippers have been added to congregations.

The working out of the Million for Mission Fund chimes, I think, with the seventh discipline that the Bishop of Sheffield annexed to the report, that 'the evangelization we attempt is not in word only but supported by our actions and our service of the common good...'. It mentions too that there is untidiness and messiness. The Million for Mission Fund in Exeter can well cope with that and rejoice in the untidiness and messiness if the result is 2,000 extra people who have been awakened to God.

*Revd Dr Patrick Richmond (Norwich):* When Brian Wilson undertook some research to do the projections that we have not been doing previously it showed that, because so many of our faithful members are going to glory, we need to run to stand still. We need to make new disciples just to make up for those who have gone to the next world. The language of growth is particularly challenging but we certainly need to make new disciples.

I was delighted to hear about the success of fresh expressions this evening. I noticed, however, that many of those going to fresh expressions might be termed the fringe, the

relational fringe. What does this mean about their discipleship? What commitment do they have? I would encourage the Archbishops' Council to sponsor further research, so that we can measure real discipleship. Many fresh expressions are not self-sustaining, with finance being one of the most important elements. Many fresh expressions – it looked to be about 50 per cent – are being sponsored and led by ordained clergy. We need to have a measure of real discipleship. We need to make discipleship a priority. We need to recover something that I think has dropped out of the three goals for the quinquennium that were mentioned by the Archbishop at the beginning. He mentioned focus, the need for strategic prioritization.

The Church Commissioners are providing wonderful subsidies, but some dioceses, I believe, have divided them, to subsidize parish share across the piece, across the board. We need to focus them in the areas of strategic need, one of which has to remain children and family ministry. Why? Because those who are born of non-religious households tend to stay non-religious. That is why the rise of Islam is in the newspapers: it is a fertile community; they are having children. We need to keep hold of the children we already have.

The cognitive science of religion has shown that children are born believers. It is also true that people will regain faith in later years, if they had it to begin with, but we cannot invite people back who never had that faith. To build on a foundation is far easier.

I would encourage the Church Commissioners and the Archbishops' Council to focus resources on strategic areas, particularly children's work and work with families, because we are under burden. In my parish and many others people feel that they are called on to do so many different things. To have a real focus on the areas of our present and future Church would be a huge asset. I am delighted that there has been a review. I would encourage the Archbishops' Council to keep up the good work and to search for that strategic priority that will give our Church a future.

*The Chairman:* After the next two speakers, I will test the mind of Synod on a motion for closure of this debate. That will allow sufficient time to debate the following motion from Mr Dunnett if that is the will of Synod.

*The Bishop of Sodor and Man (Rt Revd Robert Paterson):* I am very grateful for this report. I think it is a magnificent piece of work. I have the privilege of being Chair of the Central Readers Council. Readers were formed 147 years ago, or reformed, not to be quasi vicars but to be lay evangelists, to take the Church into the no-go areas of the Victorian world. They remain laypeople. They are not half vicars; they are lay people who can bring God into the conversation.

It says in paragraph 50, 'As already noted, lay education and ministry are largely determined locally in dioceses and parishes' – which is great – and it goes on to say, 'However, there is a national role in collating the broader picture and setting a tone.' That is particularly important for bodies such as Readers. There needs to be some collaborative action between dioceses and the encouragement of diversity in lay public ministry. That is absolutely necessary right across the Church of England. It is still a

struggle and it is making it difficult for those of us who are trying to share the benefits that some places have received with those who need it in another place.

I have just one other remark. The absolute priority, of course, is not ministry. Ministry is the servant of discipleship, discipleship giving the Church a renewed motivation, a renewed confidence to call people to Christ, and by the demonstration of God's love in people and in action then helping those who have been called to Christ and responded to Christ in the life of the Christian disciple every day of their lives.

*Revd Paul Cartwright (Wakefield):* I am very grateful to the bishop for this report and for the snazzy video presentation that we have seen. We do things really well, making us look as though we are getting things right. Of course, it is about transforming ministries and serving the common good. Through transforming ministries we are given the challenge that there needs to be an outward as well as an inward focus. For me, the outward focus implies action.

I welcome the report's reference to the fact that we have had so many young vocations over the past years. I think the work of the Young Vocation Champions has helped to influence that. I am pleased too that vocations from black and minority ethnic communities are on the increase. However, what happens once our black and minority ethnic minority Christians become ordained? There seems to be a blockage to progression through.

I hope the House of Bishops will take on board the good work but also extend it to see ways in which we can help to develop young priests to become bishops. We have spent a lot of time referring to bishops today in many different ways. It has been a good use of time, but we are not there yet. In the snazzy presentation almost every alternate slide had a visible minority face on it. However, it needs to be more than slides. I hope that we go away not just turning up the volume. It is good to have reports and it is good to have action plans, but we need to put this into action.

I ask that the House of Bishops and the Archbishops' Council actively try to move this along, as we are with the women bishops debate, to make sure that all people lacking within the House of Bishops are catered for, so that where people are missing we are able to put people in place.

*Mrs Kay Dyer (Coventry):* I am very excited about paper GS 1895, especially the annex, which some people may not have read. I have found a word on page 15 that I think is the answer to my prayers: 'apologetics'. It might sound very old fashioned but I think it solves the problem I have.

My daughters, who are in their late twenties and who were brought up as Christians, went off to university and came out, along with many of their friends who were also brought up as Christians, believing that there is no higher power of any sort that they need to know about. The paper states that the discipline of apologetics removes obstacles to faith in hearts and minds and prepares the ground for the initial proclamation of the gospel. What I need help with is reclaiming disciples back from things in society that have pulled them away.

If the suggestion is that we offer a lead in the area of apologetics, that Christians can have this discipline, this systematic resource, given back to them, I have hope that we can reclaim a generation that started off on the right track. It is a generation that is very enthusiastic, which if on our side would bring in even more new disciples.

I make a plea for some help with this. The paper does admit that the discipline of apologetics is massively under-resourced in theological education and research and in the life of the Church. I would urge that we have it back, because I have great hope now that I may get my daughters back to understanding and loving the faith they were brought up in.

*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 Bishop of Sheffield,* in reply: I thank the Synod for a debate which has been rich and textured and hopeful, and challenging in different ways. I look forward to returning to the comments that were made, reflecting on them and feeding them in with others to on-going conversations.

It has been good to hear affirmation of so many different things: of the importance of listening locally; of chaplaincy; of local mission stories; of work with children and young people; of incarnational mission; and to have the affirmation of apologetics. Hopefully, *Pilgrim* will help a little there. That resource has directly come out of the quinquennial priorities, funding provided by the Archbishops’ Council and the work that was done in consequence for that.

It has been good to hear some serious challenges to direction, in terms of trimming course or where things might move in the future. I am particularly grateful to our ecumenical representative for challenging us appropriately on the way we thread ecumenism in collaboration with other Churches through the thinking that we do, in the way we tell our narratives and our stories and in the work that we do. I heard there a plea to take that dimension of our work more seriously.

It is good to be challenged on the need to continue to reimagine ministry. We do not intend to stop doing that, even though the vocabulary has shifted slightly. We intend to do that locally. That is happening. Through the Ministry Division a few weeks ago, we had a great consultation looking at ways forward on self-supporting ministry, I think with people from every diocese represented. The Church Commissioners, looking at future funding, are engaged in a process of active listening, with visits to bishops and their senior teams all across the country, as we look to discern how best to shape future investment and funding for the future.

It is good to hear challenge and pleas for action on greater diversity of ethnicity in our leadership as that moves forward. It is good to hear questions and challenge about the future funding of fresh expressions, our national work, and what exactly embedding

means and so on and so forth. There are conversations going on at the moment. I am not, for reasons Synod will understand, fully in the picture on that, but there will be those who have listened who will seek to take that forward and provide answers, I hope, to Anne's questions in due course.

It is hoped to return to each of these three goals in future debates in the next year: to evangelism and growing the Church in November, when many of these themes can be developed further; to the common good in February; and to re-imagining ministry and a special focus, I would suspect, on lay ministry in the summer in a year's time.

To return to where we began, the three goals for this five-year period are all about God's mission. They are interlinked, they are responses to the grace of God which we have received and which we celebrate. We need to continue to tell the story of what God is doing, clearly and boldly. We need to encourage one another. We need to think more deeply about each area, what in some ways we have only begun, both in our conversation this evening and in the last two and a half years, but especially to think more deeply about the challenges of evangelism and of growing the Church. We will need to keep coming back to them again and again and keep them in focus in the coming years.

I urge Synod to take note of this report.

*The motion was put and carried.*

*The Chair:* I now call upon Mr Dunnett to move his following motion.

*Revd John Dunnett (Chelmsford):* I beg to move:

‘That this Synod, noting:

- (a) that the Bishops of the Roman Catholic Church spent three weeks in October 2012 considering the new evangelization; and
- (b) the observations of the Bishop of Sheffield in section 2 of his paper annexed to GS 1895,

encourage the House of Bishops to devote a substantial amount of time over the next two years to considering a strategy for the re-evangelization of England and how they might lead the Church in that task.’

In 1854 Hudson Taylor arrived in China as a missionary and began to preach the gospel and practise medicine. Before long, a Chinese man known as Mr Ni was led to faith in Christ. Overjoyed, he at one point asked Hudson Taylor, ‘How long have you had these good tidings in England?’ He is reputed to have replied, ‘Many hundreds of years.’ At which point Mr Ni thought for a moment and then replied, ‘My father died seeking the truth. Why did you not come sooner?’”

Like many here this evening, I welcome our earlier debate and I am grateful to the Bishop of Sheffield and others for their contributions. I applaud the initiatives listed and referred to in GS 1895 and I look forward to a possible debate in the November group of

sessions on evangelism and Church growth. However, it is because men and women are still dying without knowing the good news, here in England as well as in China, that I believe Synod will do more this evening than simply take note of these things.

In 2 Peter 3:9 we are assured of our eschatological hope: that Jesus will return and that the not-yet status of this is not the tardiness of God but, rather, it is patience borne of his desire that men and women should not perish but through repentance and faith be part of that eternal kingdom. In writing these words, Peter invites us, like other New Testament writers, to grasp the missionary challenge of the moment with urgency – something this motion enables us, I believe, to affirm.

May I offer Synod comments on three elements of this motion and what I believe it offers us this evening? First, the call to re-evangelization. The November 2010 Presidential Address of Archbishop Rowan noted that, with respect to the quinquennium in which we find ourselves, ‘Three main themes have emerged with absolute clarity. We are called, first, to take forward the spiritual and numerical growth of the Church of England...’. By January 2011 and the publication of GS 1815 this had been reworked into a more measured and, dare I say, watered down format – I refer to paragraph 10 – and in the process had lost some of the directness and punch of the original.

This following motion reintroduces the language of evangelism, and a note of urgency is echoed by GS Misc 1054, in paragraph 9, for example: ‘Evangelism/evangelisation is core to the vocation of every Christian and every church community.’ In paragraph 49: ‘The urgent missionary task facing the Church is to make new disciples for Jesus Christ...’. Yes, I endorse and I agree. We are to pursue the common good of all people in the myriad of ways that have been referred to this evening, at least in part, but we are not doing so in a completely New Testament way unless we articulate as part of that the good news of the love of God in Christ. This motion allows Synod to endorse that.

Secondly, the word ‘strategy’. For the last 20 years I have played hockey for an Essex club. During those years two things have been repeatedly apparent. First, my spirit remains willing but my legs are getting slower. Secondly, we need people in that club who can pick a team, who can arrange a meet time and place each Saturday, who can allocate players to positions, who can say something helpful before the game and offer congratulations at the end – none of which stifles the creativity of any individual or undermines the individuality that we love to see flourish in the team, but all of which strategy together increases our chances of winning three points on a Saturday.

Before joining CPAS I was for 18 years in parochial ministry in Wakefield and Chelmsford dioceses. It will not surprise you to learn that I was often not – and still am not – keen on top-down plans or bureaucratic exercises. However, we do need a strategy, as one member of the Evangelical Group on the General Synod (EGGS) put it in a paper for our meeting last night, which brings ‘an inspiring vision of the future, clear leadership from the top, a few key goals to change the culture, high-quality training and consistency of purpose’. Patrick Lencioni in his book *The Advantage* defines strategy as a collection of decisions made to give the best chance for things to thrive. We need those decisions.

Thirdly, the sentence or phrase that makes reference to the House of Bishops and their agenda, ‘substantial amounts of time over the next two years’. We are enormously grateful to the Bishop of Sheffield for the annex to GS 1895. I was both humbled and impressed by the honesty and bluntness of some of the comments. ‘The agendas of bishops’ meetings and other meetings are dominated by questions of gender and ministry and human sexuality, leaving little quality space for deeper engagement with evangelization’; ‘many discussions of growing the Church and evangelization at senior level in the Church of England are superficial, skate over the surface of the issues and make little progress’. We appreciate the many demands upon the agenda of the House of Bishops, but if the evangelistic task is the primary task of this age then it must be the primary and continuing item on all our agendas, and this motion enables us specifically to ask that of our bishops in the House.

This is not in any way intended or offered as a criticism of our bishops. We thank God for them and we pray for them. However, it is a chance for us as a Synod to signal to them what it is that we pray for and what it is that we look for from them. This is a call for leadership, a call for leadership and action, a call for leadership which starts in prayer and discussion, all of which only starts when things are put on the agenda.

In conclusion, the first recommendation in the 1945 report *Towards the Conversion of England* reads as follows: ‘The state of the Christian religion in this country urgently calls for definite action. That definite action is no less than the conversion of England to the Christian faith.’ Somewhat more surprisingly, just a few years ago an article in *The Economist* read as follows: ‘What is needed in the UK is an inspiring missionary leader for a Church which has lost whatever grip it had on an increasingly pagan country. Today it is not Africa but England that needs to be evangelized.’

The Synod can help that challenge to be addressed even tonight by supporting this motion.

*The Chair:* I call on the Bishop of Sheffield to speak.

*The Bishop of Sheffield:* I am not resistant to John’s motion. It is very hard to resist something when you are quoted in support of it in the motion itself. I do not think the majority of the House of Bishops would be resistant either. Indeed, a great deal of time is already planned in over the next few months. We will have a session at the College of Bishops on children and young people. We will have a joint meeting on the theme of the Synod of Bishops in Rome with our Roman Catholic colleagues immediately after the November Synod.

I welcome this encouragement – I want to underline the word ‘encouragement’ – to us to give more time to this task, to reflect strategically and to develop appropriate action with others, as I am sure members would want to see.

I would encourage a wider understanding of what you have written in two ways. The first is that the motion describes a strategy. I would not like that to be understood as a single document or having the aim of producing a single document. I have here in my hand a copy of *Towards the Conversion of England*. I have been carrying it round with me this week in the hope that I might find time to re-read it; but I have carried it, so



hopefully something will have rubbed off. It is an inspiring document, but a similar document now would not be the answer to where we are, nor would any single document be the answer to where we are. We need a multiplicity of strategies and ways forward.

It is a complex conversation that we need to have, one the Church all over the world is having, and we will not find single, immediate answers to take us forward. That does not mean we should not be strategic. I believe firmly and profoundly that we should. Secondly, we need an on-going process, a coordination going forward, and I hope very much that will emerge from discussions and conversations over the next few months going into and out of our Synod debate in November.

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

*Revd Canon Gary Jenkins (Southwark):* Come with me, a mile to the east of Tower Bridge, to the parish of St James, Bermondsey. Come inside the elegant classical interior and you will see a huge painting at the east end entirely dominating the building. It is nearly 33 feet high, it is entitled *The Ascension of our Saviour* and under it is the text 'Lo, I am with you alway'. I sit there week by week meditating on that, as I lead worship in that church, and it seems to me that that picture and that text have a message which is directly relevant for us today.

The text, of course, in the Authorized Version comes from the Great Commission. It is a promise, 'Lo, I am with you alway', but it is a promise attached to a commandment, the commandment to 'Go make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit'. When I see it, it says to me that there is something of first importance for us to do as a parish church, which is to make disciples of the people of our parish. As we do that, so the Lord be with us.

If that is true for the parish church, it is true for the national Church too, and that is why I warmly support John Dunnett's motion. I think it is there not to lay a further weight upon bishops but to encourage them to see as first importance giving a lead to us as a Church in devising a strategy and leading us in the re-evangelization of our nation. We are the Church of England. Our great priority must be the gospel for England, proclaiming Christ and making disciples of this nation. As we do, so we have his promise that he is with us.

*Revd Richard Jackson (Chichester):* Thank you, Chair, for calling me for my maiden speech.

I am the mission and renewal adviser in the diocese of Chichester and I spend a significant amount of my time going round helping parishes with mission, but I find that every time I visit parishes I spend a lot of time defining precisely what I mean by that term. In some parishes, frankly, it means little more than a form of sanctified hanging about. In other parishes, it means simply standing in a pulpit and preaching. Of course, we recognize that mission is much more than either of those things but at its heart in our particular situation, in our particular culture, must be the call to evangelize, the call to make new disciples, to call people to living faith.

My anxiety about many our conversations is that we use mission but we do not necessarily understand what we mean by it. The strength of John's motion, which I warmly endorse, is that it puts at the forefront of our thinking the call to re-evangelize our nation. Although top-down initiatives are usually of marginal effectiveness, I think there is something that the House of Bishops can do in setting a tone for the rest of the Church. If this does not necessarily ensure a vast number of new policies, in some sense that is not the crucial thing. What seems to me important is that it sets a tone that we are saying very clearly and unequivocally that our priority at this time is the re-evangelization of our nation.

I also spend a lot of time reading mission statistics – something not for the fainthearted. I do not recommend it. The clear statistical evidence, despite the gloss that we put on it, is that the trajectory in many cases still remains remorselessly downwards. That will only be remedied by a Church rediscovering its evangelistic heart and putting evangelism at the heart and centre of its mission.

*Mr Tim Hind (Bath and Wells):* Evangelization is so important and I want warmly to welcome this motion. However, evangelization is most easily done when we have a receptive audience, and at the moment I believe that our credibility as a Church is a little bit impaired.

While I endorse firmly what is being suggested, I would utter a word of caution about some of the words in the motion. Those words are, 'over the next two years to devote a substantial amount of time' because over the next two years the House of Bishops will have to deal with the women bishops issue. If I may be somewhat flippant, they are all men and cannot do two things at once!

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

'That the question now be put.'

*This motion was put and carried.*

*Revd John Dunnett, in reply:* First, I am very grateful that the Bishop of Sheffield was able to receive this following motion as offering encouragement. That is the intent of the motion. I thank him for that.

I would agree with him that there is no single answer or strategy. I would also wave proudly my copy of *Towards the Conversion of England* – available at a good price, if you get it on eBay at the right time.

Secondly, I thank Gary Jenkins for his expression 'the first importance' of getting the gospel for England. I warm to that and I think it is in accord with this motion.

I enjoyed Richard Jackson's phrase about mission being more than sanctified hanging about and just pulpit preaching. In particular, I welcome his comments on the need for the House of Bishops to set the tone in this particular endeavour.

I endorse entirely Tim Hind's cautionary note about the need for a receptive audience. Eighteen years of parish ministry teaches me that that is entirely true.

*The motion was put and carried.*

*The Archbishop of York dismissed the Synod with the blessing at 9.55 p.m.*

## **Third Day**

### **Sunday 7 July 2013**

THE CHAIR *Professor Michael Clarke (Worcester)* took the Chair at 2.30 p.m.

*The Chair:* When I was asked to predict how many members might be present I was seriously wrong, so congratulations! I shall not ask them to declare themselves but I imagine one or two members will have ice creams of various sorts secreted about their bodies and will have casual examination, but let us proceed with the business.

### **Legislative Business**

#### **Faculty Jurisdiction Rules 2013 (GS 1887)**

#### **Rules made under the Care of Churches and Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction Measure 1991**

*The Chair:* For this item members will need GS 1887, the Faculty Jurisdiction Rules themselves and the explanatory memorandum GS 1887X. I have also been asked to draw attention to the financial comments in the Seventh Notice Paper, to which Andrew Britton will not speak.

Because notice of an amendment to the Rules has been tabled, we shall proceed under the preliminary motions procedure. I shall call on the chair of the Rule Committee to move that the Faculty Jurisdiction Rules 2013 be considered. If that motion is carried, I shall call Mr Adrian Vincent to move his amendment at Item 508. The chair of the Rule Committee will be invited to reply. If he does not indicate that he supports the amendment, the amendment will lapse unless 40 or more members stand to indicate that they wish the debate to continue. When the amendment has been dealt with I shall invite the chair of the Rule Committee to move the motion that the Faculty Jurisdiction Rules 2013 be approved.

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

‘That the Faculty Jurisdiction Rules 2013 be considered.’

It is encouraging that the timing of the men’s singles final at Wimbledon has not entirely prevented a healthy attendance to debate, and I hope in due course approve, the Faculty Jurisdiction Rules 2013.

I move consideration as Chair of the Rule Committee, whose task it has been to update the Faculty Jurisdiction Rules 2000 to incorporate at the same time two other sets of rules and, in so far as possible without primary legislation, to try to simplify the faculty system in line with the recommendations of the working group on simplification of the faculty jurisdiction, summarized in GS Misc 1048, which I am sure all members will have read, which last December received the endorsement of the Archbishops’ Council and to whose work, especially that of its doughty chair, Anne Sloman seated behind me, I pay tribute.

The Church of England is an ordered Church and the maintenance and improvement of its plant, especially its church buildings, to the glory of God, and the conservation of what is best in its historic and architectural character, is the function of the faculty jurisdiction. Its principal elements are contained in primary legislation, mainly the Care of Churches and Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction Measure 1991, with which obviously the Rules have to comply.

There are those, both clergy and laity, who find the system a troublesome encumbrance. However, at page 11 of its report the working group noted that it had been pleasantly surprised that its research had revealed widespread support for the faculty system accompanied by a widespread desire to improve and simplify it. That is what the Rules before Synod are all about. I emphasize however that today is not the occasion for discussion of the principle of the faculty jurisdiction; rather, it is whether these draft Rules are fit for purpose. Dry – some might say dull – as is their subject matter, the content of the rules is important. For those applying for faculties and those charged with processing and determining petitions for faculties the provisions are critical.

While the report of the simplification group has been the immediate trigger for these Rules, there was in any case a need to revise the old Rules. Although made only 13 years ago, the old rules now have a dated look. Their wording is distinctly lawyerly and, unlike the rules that now govern civil and criminal procedure in the secular courts and our own Clergy Discipline Rules, they do not prioritize active case management to ensure that matters are handled in a proportionate manner with due regard to the twin aims of expeditious and cost-effective determination of issues which are essential for fair outcomes to be achieved.

A comparison of the new Rules with the 2000 Rules will show that the Rules have been completely rewritten in what we believe is a considerably more readable way, with shorter sentences and an avoidance of legalese. Both the text of the Rules and more particularly the accompanying forms have been drafted so as to be, we hope, readily comprehensible and user-friendly; and I take this opportunity to congratulate the draftsman, the Revd Alex McGregor, to whom the Rule Committee and I believe the whole Synod is much indebted.

As the Synod will be aware, currently in each diocese there is a list of minor works that can be carried out without seeking a faculty. The simplification group recommended that the list be standardized at national level by the Rule Committee, the aim being where appropriate to extend its scope and thus reduce the burden on the parishes. That will require primary legislation, which is already in hand.

At present there is also a list of fairly routine works, determination of which in unopposed cases is currently delegated to archdeacons but which has to be formally publicized and referred to diocesan advisory committees for advice. The simplification group recommended that routine matters ordinarily should be capable of being undertaken without the need for a faculty, which would mean removing the requirement for mandatory publicity and mandatory DAC consultation. They would instead be approved by archdeacons, involving a more informal procedure and consultation with DACs only where the archdeacon considered it appropriate. That change will also require primary legislation, which again is in hand, but until then we are left with a continuance of the archdeacon's faculty jurisdiction for the items listed in Schedule 2 to

the Rules before Synod on pages 42 and 43. I urge members to be not too concerned about the precise contents of Schedule 2. It will all change when the amending Measure comes before General Synod I hope in November.

The simplification group also recommended that the Appeal Court should have a power to intervene in cases where there appear to be inordinate delays in dealing with petitions. That again is beyond the scope of these rules but is likely to be contained in the forthcoming Measure. I shall not go through all the changes, most of which are set out in the Explanatory Memorandum GS 1887X.

As recommended by the simplification group, a priority has been to simplify the forms associated with the faculty jurisdiction, the aim being to make them easier to complete. On page 44 of the Rules members will find a convenient index to the forms. The key faculty application form, namely form 3A at page 51, may look similar to its predecessor, but I can assure the Synod that numerous changes have been incorporated. In particular, as recommended by the simplification group, in future much of the standard material relating to the church concerned will be contained in Form 1A, at page 45, which will need to be prepared only once by a parish and when submitted will be retained electronically by the DAC so that it need not be re-submitted unless the relevant standard information has changed in the meantime.

In the petition form some additional information is now sought. For example, in questions 9 and 10 on page 55 we have asked for copies of any replies to the consultation responses from the statutory amenities societies and the local planning authorities. This is intended to prevent later time-consuming requests for such information from the chancellor.

The court's new duty to manage cases expeditiously and cost effectively is supplemented in rule 1.4(2)(i), on page 6, by a requirement to make effective use of technology, and the methods of service of documents, including the petition form, now include service by electronic means (see rule 16.4 on page 34) with provision for electronic signatures in rule 19.7 at page 38. The aim is that the petition form can be downloaded, completed online, submitted and then saved.

As the simplification group recommended, the old requirement in rule 13.4 of the 2000 rules for newspaper advertisement of petitions likely to affect the character of certain listed buildings, which have been costly for parishes and scarcely, if ever, produced any response, is replaced by a requirement for publication on the diocesan website of a notice giving a description of the work and the date by which any objection must reach the Registrar – see rule 8.9 on page 22. Rule 17.1(2)(e) at page 35 provides for the holding of a hearing and the reception of evidence by telephone and any other method of direct oral communication.

Although not specifically recommended by the simplification group, an opportunity has been taken to simplify the procedure for petitions to be determined by the written representations procedure, and that is dealt with in rule 13.2(1) on page 29. Where deficiencies in the contents of the Rules or in their application have been identified in practice or in recent judicial decisions, we have revised the Rules to make the position

clearer. Examples include: detailed provisions relating to interim faculties in Part 14 (pages 29–30); clarification in relation to site inspections under rule 10.2(2)(b) on page 25 and rule 19.1 on page 37; a requirement in rules 10.4 and 10.5 (pages 25–6) that witness statements and experts' reports must normally be provided in advance of the hearing and, under rule 11.2(1) on page 27, will, unless otherwise directed, stand as the evidence-in-chief of the witness, with evidence given orally under oath or solemn affirmation; and, under rule 11.2(4) on page 27, a new power for the court to limit cross-examination. All this reflects modern civil procedure.

If and when a Measure is approved to provide for further simplification, the Rules will need to be further amended to take advantage of such changes, and if the Draft Church of England (Miscellaneous Provisions) Measure to be debated this afternoon is approved and comes into force, then rules 8.10 (page 22) and 12.2 (page 27) relating to demolition or partial demolition will become redundant.

The new Rules are a little longer than the 2000 Rules, but I ask Synod to bear in mind that in addition to covering new matters they now incorporate what was previously included in the Faculty Jurisdiction (Injunctions and Restoration Orders) Rules 1992 and the Faculty Jurisdiction (Care of Places of Worship) Rules 2000.

This has necessarily been a bird's-eye gallop over a complex set of rules, which I commend to the General Synod for its consideration.

*The Chair:* Item 507A is now open for debate. I remind members that it is probably better to reserve substantive points for the second part of the debate. At the moment we are concerned only with whether the Rules should be considered.

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

*The Dean of Portsmouth (Very Revd David Brindley):* I am chair of the diocesan advisory committee for the care of churches in a diocese with a typical range of buildings – Saxon, Norman, late mediaeval, Victorian and 20<sup>th</sup> century – and a prime concern of our DAC is to encourage and enable buildings to be developed and used for community engagement, mission and pastoral work. The work of DACs is not dusty and negative. It connects richly and positively with the debate last evening on the challenges for the quinquennium; our buildings are a mission resource. For example a church on the Isle of Wight houses a post office, a church in the city of Portsmouth is a base for Sure Start, and another has completed a £1.5 million project to construct a new entrance and community facilities opening on to a shopping precinct. The DAC has offered support, guidance and advice to help solve the problems.

I am sure that DACs will welcome these new Rules, which consolidate and simplify, but if and when we enact them there is still further work to be done. The first is to improve the flow of information to parishes and others involved. The ChurchCare website is superb and I urge members to look at it, if they have not done so already. Not enough people are aware of it and use it. It contains huge amounts of clear help, and we need to urge archdeacons and others to make it better known and encourage people to use it. In addition, we need to seek other ways in which to help parishes to access this simplified set of procedures.

The aspects of the Rules that offer simplification are welcome, especially in areas of work where alterations to a building are reversible, but we need to be aware that they have implications for the work of archdeacons. In my experience on DACs, archdeacons show great care and sensitivity in their work in this area but the demands on them, which are already considerable, will increase and we must ensure that they receive proper training and support. This work is about mission, not just about dull rules; it is about liturgical development, community involvement and pastoral care as much as about conservation and heritage.

I therefore urge the Synod to give its support and hearty endorsement to the importance of faculty jurisdiction and to this review and revision that we are now undertaking.

*Mr Tim Allen (St Edmundsbury and Ipswich):* One of the most worrying problems for many small rural parishes, like my own in Suffolk, is the increasing difficulty of persuading members of the congregation to take on the onerous responsibilities of churchwarden. They are deterred by all the bureaucracy involved, not least the complex bureaucratic burden of the faculty system that puts people off volunteering to become churchwardens. The same complex bureaucratic burden also deters and delays PCCs in making the physical changes to their church buildings that they know are needed to promote their mission and ministry in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. As one speaker said yesterday, it is amazing how much more you can do with a church when you put a loo in it!

It therefore came as very good news when the Archbishops' Council called for a simplification of the faculty system. The faculty simplification group was led by Anne Sloman, chair of the Church Buildings Council, who set about the simplification task with the energy and good judgement that members of the CBC have learnt to expect from her. Rare among top people in the Church of England, Anne lives and worships in a tiny rural parish and is thus well aware of the particular problems posed by the over-complex faculty system in a rural context. The whole Church owes thanks to Ann and her colleagues on the faculty simplification group, and to the Dean of the Arches and his colleagues on the Rule Committee, for the worthwhile simplification that will be brought about by these new Rules.

I draw Synod's attention especially to the shortened and easier-to-follow forms, which, together with the now-to-be-permitted use of electronic communication, will reduce the burden on churchwardens and others with responsibilities for church buildings.

Members may remember that on Friday our friend Mary Judkins chided the Business Committee for scheduling such boring business for this post-York Minster slot. She told us that this year she had resolved not to invite her usual party of guests who habitually attend the service, take lunch and then sit in the public gallery to be entertained during the afternoon by interesting Synod business. If Mary is here, I would say to her that had she invited as her guests a party of churchwardens they would have been impressed and delighted by these valuable simplification rules.

Moreover, the Rules are just the first part of a larger simplification process. As the Dean of the Arches mentioned, this process will continue in November when the Synod will be asked to consider a Measure to make further changes to the Faculty Jurisdiction Rules, including provision for certain types of repair work on church buildings that at present

are subject to the full, formal faculty procedure to be approved instead by the DAC and the archdeacon in a simpler and less legalistic fashion. I am glad to say that such a simpler procedure has already been pioneered, indeed invented, by the DAC that I chair in St Edmundsbury and Ipswich. We have found it a worthwhile simplification, which works well, and I should say in relation to the Dean of Portsmouth's comments that it is welcomed by the archdeacons and the parishes.

I hope that the simplified Rules will meet with general approval in November, but for the time being I urge that we consider and approve them as a first step.

*Mr Chris Pye (Liverpool):* On a point of order, Chair. I beg to move:

‘That the question be now put.’

*This motion was put and carried.*

*The Dean of the Arches and Auditor,* in reply: I am grateful to the Dean of Portsmouth for his comments. There is an obvious need for good practice. Archdeacons will share greater responsibility and there will be a particular role for chancellors to ensure that there is adequate assistance and education in the matter.

I am grateful to Mr Allen for what he told us. If we go some way towards helping churchwardens and preventing people being deterred from partaking in the Church's work, we will have achieved much.

I commend these Rules to the Synod.

*The motion was put and carried.*

*The Chair:* The Dean of the Arches has caused a little movement in the southern province, but it will be interesting to see that take place!

*Mr Adrian Vincent (Guildford):* I beg to move as an amendment:

‘Page 54, Section c, paragraph 4.c: *leave out* “privately or by way of gifts” and *insert* “by someone other than the parochial church council or wholly from funds which have been given to the PCC for the purposes of the proposals”.’

The Faculty Jurisdiction Rules have been simplified to make them easier to understand. I have never filled in a faculty application form so I thought that as a complete amateur I would be a good person to test whether I could understand the rules. I happily sailed through them until I came to question 4.c on page 54: ‘Are the proposals wholly to be paid for privately or by way of gifts?’ I have understood private donations to be gifts, so I wondered what was meant by ‘privately or by way of gifts’.

I emailed the Legal Office for an explanation. The reply was that ‘privately’ refers to an individual or organization paying for the works to be done and ‘by way of gifts’ refers to the PCC paying for them out of fundraising. Therefore, with the help of the Legal Office, this minor amendment was drawn up to make the meaning of the question a little more explicit. With his big brain, the Dean of the Arches might say that the current wording is



fine and that any fool can understand the difference between private giving and gifts. Well, this fool did not understand it, so making the wording a little more explicit would help.

If 40 members are asked to stand to enable the debate to continue, I would be grateful if they would do so. If not, I do not think we will need any further speeches but could simply express our views on which option we prefer.

*The Dean of the Arches and Auditor:* We do not accept this amendment, for three reasons: first, it seems to us that the present wording is perfectly plain; second, it has been in the Rules since 2000 and so far as I and my colleagues are aware has not given rise to any confusion in the past; and, third, if simplification is the aim, to use six words rather than 25 would seem to be the better course.

*The Chair:* That is a clear statement! Do I see –

*Mr Gavin Oldham (Oxford):* On a point of order, Chair. Would a more pragmatic solution be to put a note at the bottom of the page explaining the difference?

*The Chair:* That is not a point of order. Good try! Do I see 40 members standing? There are 40 standing. The debate on the amendment will therefore continue, though I am eager that we move as quickly as possible to the substantive debate on the Rules.

*Revd Canon Simon Butler (Southwark):* On a point of order, Chair. I beg to move:

‘That the question be now put.’

*The Chair:* I would like to hear two contributions of not more than two minutes.

*Mr Gavin Oldham (Oxford):* I shall be extremely brief. From a pragmatic point of view I suggest simply that a note be put at the bottom of the page to explain what is meant by the word ‘gifts’ rather than change the wording of question 4.c.

*Revd Canon Jonathan Alderton-Ford (St Edmundsbury and Ipswich):* I wish to support the amendment. Many people are now filling in these forms without technical expertise and if the aim is to help people participate, the more help we can give them the better. Whether it is done by additional rubric or explanatory notes, I believe that it really would be helpful.

*Revd Canon Simon Butler (Southwark):* On a point of order, Chair. I beg to move:

‘That the question be now put.’

*This motion was put and carried.*

*The amendment was put and carried.*

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

‘That the Faculty Jurisdiction Rules 2013 be approved.’

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

‘That the question be now put.’

*The Chair*: I would first like to hear some contributions on the substantive issue, Mr Freeman, after which I will come back to you.

*Dr Chris Angus (Carlisle)*: First, I should declare an interest as one of the two representatives of the House of Laity on the Rule Committee who has therefore been involved in the process.

As the Dean of the Arches indicated, the work came about as a result of the report from the simplification working group, which was tasked to make recommendations to streamline the process. The group undertook quite extensive consultation with many parishes, DACs and the Ecclesiastical Judges Association. Five main messages came back from that consultation: too much bureaucracy for minor works; the length of time taken to obtain a faculty; the importance of sufficient information being provided from parishes to DACs and back from DACs and registrars to the parishes; the need for a simpler petition form in plain English; and a move to online working.

As the Dean of the Arches indicated, the group also looked to establish four different routes for different categories of work: route A, which effectively would be the existing route for *de minimis* items; route B, to be used for works of a relatively routine nature, which would not need the full faculty procedure but would involve the DAC where necessary under the jurisdiction of the archdeacon; and route C, a fuller but simplified faculty procedure, leaving route D for emergencies.

As has already been noted, part of the implementation of those key recommendations will require revisions to the Measure, which are now under way, and this new set of rules has now been proposed at the request of that task group in order to meet its recommendations.

In making the revised Rules we were aided by the fact that three members of the task group actually served on the Rule Committee, so they made sure that anything we did would actually bring about simplification. Effectively we replaced three sets of existing rules as well as bringing the rules into line with the Civil Procedure Rules and the benefits that would accrue in terms of sensible provisions covering the conduct of cases.

The Rules have been completely re-drafted. I believe that they are extremely well organized, approachable, readable and very clear. They appear lengthy but cover all the forms, which take up quite a lot of the paper, the situations that most of us hope will not arise – the parts that we need to read are relatively brief – and handle all the simplifications requested by the task group other than those that are contingent on a change to the Measure. They allow for electronic forms of working and communication and will be accompanied by a version of the simplified petition form, a working

prototype of which will be on show later in the faculty simplification fringe session that has been organized, hosted by the Church Buildings Council.

The Dean of the Arches has outlined the simplifications brought about by the revised rules. I commend them to Synod and urge members to give them their full support.

*Mr Paul Hancock (Liverpool):* I thank the Dean of the Arches and all those who have worked on producing these revised Rules, because I have a vested interest: I am a member of a DAC and at the moment have faculty applications going through.

However, I would like to request some clarification on electronic signatures. In our church, where I have recently become a churchwarden, matters have rather become stuck in the mud and people have not done things that they should. Consequently, in order to get things moving we have appointed three people to spearhead three faculties rather than one person having to deal with them all, and I wonder whether the ability in future to use electronic signatures would extend to more than one person in a parish. I hope that it will, because in a parish where things have become a little bogged down several people can end up doing it.

*Revd Canon David Felix (Chester):* I want to speak to the role of the DAC, and I speak as a consumer rather than a member of its services. I want to address in particular paragraph 11 of GS 1887X and the relevant rule contained in it.

I suggest to the Synod that although there have been some changes in the work of the DAC it is still not customer focused, and in support of that I begin my story as follows. A year ago our PCC decided to introduce into our church an electric clock-winding system. We obtained a quotation from one of the leading manufacturers, a company that had been looking after our church clock for many years. I said to the DAC's secretary, 'What is the procedure, please, and what do I need to do?' He said, 'You need to come to me, send us your quotation and we will pass it on to the diocesan clock adviser.' 'Can I have the name of the diocesan clock adviser, please', I asked, 'so that I can talk to him before it comes to you, which will at least speed up the process?' 'Oh no, we can't give you that', said he. I would like to know what real threat is posed to national security by not knowing the name of the diocesan clock adviser! Anyway I went home, opened the file and there was the so-and-so's name; I will talk to him directly in due course.

I suppose I should not have been surprised, because a year or so previous to that there was a lengthy ding-dong between my parish and the DAC with regard to the faculty. Members may well say, 'That should not have happened or could not have happened', but indeed it did. The ding-dong was that for three or four months the DAC kept knocking back our application without giving us an opportunity of actually appearing before it and answering the questions once rather than having the ding-dong. However, perhaps I should not have been surprised at that either, because our previous architect on the DAC was not successful in the competitive tender that was necessary in order to go through the HLF grant-making process.

In my submission, the DACs can be, should be and are the actual interface between the parishes and the faculty process and so should be as customer focused as possible. I

therefore welcome the subtle change in the wording from ‘DAC certificate’ to ‘notification of advice’, for I was seeking advice, not a certificate. After all, advice is advice, but more often than not the certificate that we received in the past was very much an indication of approval; and as you have the approval you would not pass the first phase.

The draft Rules before us today are a welcome change to the process, but I respectfully suggest that they do not go far enough. If at some point in the future the role of the DACs could be reconsidered, whether by rules, Measure or code of practice, at least they will be seen to be more open, accountable and transparent and they will be able hear the views of the parish rather than playing this game of email ping-pong.

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

*Revd Mark Steadman (Southwark)*: As has been said, these revised Rules are timely and welcome and I look forward to voting for them. We have much to be grateful for in the work of our registrars and chancellors throughout the Church. They give of their time and expertise in ways that often go beyond the call of duty and certainly the level at which they are remunerated. It is therefore good at this time to recognize that work.

In these revised Rules I am grateful for the introduction in the new Part 1 of an overriding objective that mirrors that to be found in the Civil Procedure Rules. That overriding objective to ensure that cases are dealt with swiftly and justly is a useful statement or principle, but of course, as with any statement of principle, how it is applied, used and interpreted will be the test of its effectiveness.

Although it is clear to me that the court will be able to ensure that parties to cases abide by the principle, it is less clear from the Rules how the duty of the court, expressed in rule 1.4, will be monitored and upheld. One issue that often results in criticism of the faculty jurisdiction concerns the amount of time that seemingly simple, straightforward matters take, and that was identified in the consultation. I heard recently that one church had to wait for over six weeks for a response from the chancellor to a matter that appeared to it, and to the heritage bodies with whom it had worked well, uncontroversial and straightforward. I am sure there are other examples. I suspect that it is a common concern, and although it is right that on occasion chancellors need time to ponder the trickier, more complicated petitions, nevertheless it is important for the credibility of the system that matters are handled as swiftly as possible and that any unavoidable delay is flagged up and explained to the parties.

I wonder therefore what mechanisms, formal or informal, will exist for monitoring the implementation of the duty under rule 1.4 and whether the Dean of the Arches or the Ecclesiastical Judges Association plans to issue guidance as to best practice in this area. The care of our church buildings and their sustainability as places of worship, centres of mission and points of focus for local communities is a vital aspect of our life, and I hope that these rules will better serve all those objectives and sustain the credibility of our work in this area.

*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 Dean of the Arches and Auditor*, in reply: I am grateful for all the contributions.

Chris Angus explained the four routes, and we are well on our way with the new legislation to achieving that.

With regard to Mr Hancock's concern about electronic signatures, it is up to a PCC to decide who is to sign the application form and that person's signature can then be accepted electronically, and if the PCC decides that several people should sign the form, several signatures can be accepted electronically.

Canon Felix expressed concern about his problems with the DAC. It is no part of the function of the Rule Committee to make rules relating to DAC procedure. However, Anne Sloman and I will attend the DAC conference in Rochester in September and either she or I will raise Canon Felix's point at that time.

I am glad that Mark Steadman generally supports the motion. It will not be easy to monitor the new duty to act expeditiously but certainly education will be provided for chancellors, and that has already been made the principal agenda item for the next conference of the Ecclesiastical Judges Association.

I therefore urge the Synod to approve the Rules.

*The motion was put and carried.*

*The Chair*: I have taken advice and have given myself permission to suspend Standing Orders for a moment, if that is necessary, while someone gives us an update from Wimbledon.

*A member*: Murray has taken the first set 6:4. (*Applause*)

*The Chair*: Thank you very much. I shall put Standing Orders back in place and announce that, having been approved, the Faculty Jurisdiction Rules 2013 will come into force on 1 January 2014.

THE CHAIR *The Bishop of Willesden (Rt Revd Pete Broadbent)* took the Chair at 3.17 p.m.

**Draft Church of England (Miscellaneous Provisions) Measure  
(GS 1866A)**

**Draft Amending Canon No. 31 (GS 1877A)**

**Draft Measure and Draft Amending Canon for Revision  
(First Consideration at the July 2012 group of sessions)**

**Report by the Revision Committee (GS 1866Y-1877Y)**

*Mrs Caroline Spencer (Canterbury)*: I beg to move:

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

We have now arrived at this most eagerly awaited item of business in this group of sessions – the largest Miscellaneous Provisions Measure ever. Sadly however it is

probably not that revolutionary. Indeed, if it were, it would have been ruled out of court because we are not supposed to have revolutionary Miscellaneous Provisions Measures. I secretly wondered whether to eschew Tokyo as a destination for the baggage and announce that instead I have despatched it to SW19, but since we have just had an update we do not need to get into our cars and go.

The fact that provisions contained in a Measure or canon are described as miscellaneous does not mean that they are straightforward. It just means that they are a collection of important but unconnected provisions that do not warrant a separate Measure all of their own, rather like the bits that are left at the end when sorting the toy cupboard. You cannot decide where they really belong but they need a home, so you end up putting them into a basket of miscellaneous odds and ends; we have all been there, and here we are again.

The Revision Committee met on four occasions to consider both the content of the original draft Measure and Canon and a large number of proposals for amendment. Twelve members of the Synod submitted proposals for amendment and a further proposal came from the Council for Christian Unity.

Unusually, the largest number of proposals for amendment came from the Steering Committee itself, not because it had identified a host of problems in the original drafts but rather that since first consideration of the Measure and Canon a year ago the staff had continued to identify additional points of law that needed to be tidied up; and here, in our capacious toy cupboard, we had an ideal opportunity to do that.

In the time available to me now I can present only highlights of what at times was a complex and very detailed exercise. Thank God for my two Sat Navs seated behind me in the shape of Alexander McGregor and Saira Salimi, whom I salute; they are amazing.

The draft Measure introduced to the Synod contained a number of provisions aimed at simplifying legal processes and removing unnecessary bureaucracy – good stuff, I hope members will agree. One of those provisions is the simplified procedure for appointing the priest in charge as incumbent. Following proposals from members and from the Steering Committee the provision was improved in various ways. We also agreed some minor amendments to tidy up other provisions in the Patronage (Benefices) Measure 1986, which now appear in Schedule 2.

Another proposal for simplification came from the Dean of the Arches and Auditor, who drew attention to the outdated, bureaucratic procedural requirements relating to faculties for the demolition of churches. In the light of his submission the Steering Committee proposed substituting section 17 of the Care of Churches Measure with a new, streamlined provision which, while maintaining the same degree of protection for churches under the faculty jurisdiction, strips out a lot of unnecessary bureaucracy, about which members have just heard. The Revision Committee readily accepted that proposal, the result of which is a section – now contained in clause 13 of the Measure – that is less than half the length of the provision that it replaces.

Other red-tape cutting amendments made by the Committee include amendments to the Church Commissioners Measure relating to the appointment of Commissioners and to

the Mission and Pastoral Measure relating to delays in the coming into force of pastoral schemes, and the insertion into that Measure of a new provision to enable documents to be served electronically if desired.

The most difficult issue for the Committee arose from a proposal by the Revd Hugh Lee relating to the Overseas and Other Clergy (Ministry and Ordination) Measure 1967. Mr Lee had proposed that a provision be inserted in that Measure to make it unlawful to decline to grant permission to officiate in a province of the Church of England on the ground that the priest or deacon in question had been ordained by a female bishop elsewhere in the Anglican Communion or indeed in one of the Porvoo Churches. This raised a substantial question of policy for the Committee and it took time over two meetings to consider it.

A number of members of the Committee had a considerable degree of sympathy with the underlying intention of Mr Lee's proposal and would have preferred the existing policy in this area to be other than it is. The Committee nevertheless took the view that a Miscellaneous Provisions Measure was not the right sort of legislative vehicle for addressing such a substantial question of policy. We were also advised that amending the Measure in the way proposed by Mr Lee would mean that it would become Article 7 business, with the result that the Measure as a whole would become subject to the special procedural provisions that entitle the House of Laity and the Convocations to require references and enable the House of Bishops to make any amendments to the legislation that they see fit. That would be a very strange situation in the case of a Miscellaneous Provisions Measure. We therefore decided not to pursue Mr Lee's proposal in this context.

The Committee however agreed two major amendments concerning investment powers. One of them, now to be found in clause 4, confers an express power on the Church Commissioners and the Church of England Pensions Board to enter into derivative contracts when exercising their powers of investment. In fact it has always been considered that both of those bodies already had the power to buy derivatives under their existing powers of investment, but recently certain financial institutions have questioned that. The express legislative provision about derivatives agreed by the Committee will put the matter beyond doubt. We found it helpful to learn that in its guidance the Charity Commission expressly acknowledges that it may well be appropriate for a charity with a large portfolio of assets to make use of derivatives.

The other financial amendment concerned the investment powers of cathedrals that have permanent endowments. Nearly all other charities are able to apply to the Charity Commission for authority to invest on a total return basis. If a charity is unable to invest on that basis there is a risk that it will weight its investments in favour of income-producing assets, to its long-term financial detriment. Cathedrals are not charities for the purpose of the Charities Act. They are therefore unable to benefit from the authority to invest on a total return basis contained in the legislation that applies to charities generally. The amendment agreed by the Committee would enable cathedrals to organize their investments on the same basis as other charities. This is a highly technical area and members may wish to consult paragraphs 122–7 of the Committee's report for a fuller

explanation; but the result of the amendment will be that cathedrals will have the same flexibility as other charities when taking decisions about investing their endowment. Amending Canon 31 occupied much less of the Committee's time than did the Measure. No major amendments were proposed by members. The Steering Committee however proposed amendments to add a few more miscellaneous corrections to existing canons and to correct provisions relating to deaconesses, Readers and lay workers to make them consistent with common tenure.

The result of revision is a Measure that is more than half as long again as it was on first consideration. While that is unusual, I hope the Synod will agree that the Committee was wise to take advantage of the opportunity afforded by the Measure to make useful corrections and improvements to a wide range of existing legislation. Had it not done so, a considerable time might have elapsed before another opportunity arose.

I commend the Measure, as revised by the Committee, to the Synod.

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

*Mr Clive Scowen (London):* I am confident that I shall not need five minutes. In the first consideration debate I was not alone in raising concerns about what one might call the architecture of the draft Measure, some of which the Dean of the Arches then pursued with the Revision Committee. I am grateful to the Revision Committee for the changes they have made to the architecture, which quite rightly have moved some important provisions from the Schedule of Minor and Consequential Amendments into the body of the Measure.

However, there are still several respects in which the architecture could be improved. I hope members will agree that this is not a mere anorak point, because the architecture matters from the point of view of readability and being user friendly particularly to those who do not spend their entire lives reading Measures and Acts of Parliament. Since these changes to the architecture would not involve any amendment of the substantive text, I have refrained from moving amendments today. Instead I hope the Steering Committee will act on the points that I am about to make and bring forward changes at the final drafting stage.

The main problem is that in four cases amendments of the same piece of legislation are split between the body of the Measure and Schedule 2. Clause 4 makes amendments to the Church Commissioners Measure 1947 and the Clergy Pensions Measure 1961, but then clause 4(3) states that Schedule 2 contains further amendments to those two Measures. It would be much more user friendly if all the amendments to those Measures were set out in clause 4 rather than having some of them hived off to the Schedule. The same point occurs in clause 10 with regard to amendments of the Endowments and Glebe Measure 1976, and in clause 12 with regard to the Patronage (Benefices) Measure 1986.

I urge that we bring all the changes to the 1976 Measure into clause 10 and all the changes to the 1986 Measure into clause 12. Not only would that be tidier but it would also make it easier to read, follow and understand. Indeed, I question whether in a Measure of this sort we actually need a Schedule of Minor and Consequential



Amendments at all, and I therefore suggest that it would be preferable to put everything currently in Schedule 2 into the body of the draft Measure.

Finally, clause 4 is headed ‘Amendment of Church Commissioners Measure 1947’, but in subsection (2) there are changes to a completely different Measure – the Clergy Pensions Measure 1961. My question is: can this heading be changed to include reference to both Measures when we come to final drafting?

*Dr Graham Campbell (Chester)*: – and a member of the Steering Committee but speaking now in a purely personal capacity.

I would like to draw Synod’s attention to clause 9, which makes the chair of the Dioceses Commission an *ex officio* member of the General Synod. Obviously it allows the Archbishops and their advisers to choose the best person for the job, and there is an excellent reason for having him or her as a member of the Synod. However, members will recall that the House of Laity declined to co-opt Miss Chadwick at the beginning of this session and I therefore felt slightly uncomfortable about this proposal. There is a very good reason for doing it and possibly an equally good reason for not doing it.

Already there are 12 *ex officio* and appointed members of the House of Laity and this brings the number to 13. The Committee included the clause but at paragraph 74 of its report drew attention to whether, perhaps at the same time as the Elections Review Group looks at the entire composition of the House of Laity and the way it is elected, the position of appointed and elected members of Synod should also be subject to review.

*The Dean of the Arches and Auditor (Rt Worshipful Charles George, ex officio)*: I have only three points to make and therefore can be brief.

First, I want to express a broad welcome for this Measure and congratulate those involved in the drafting of it. A perusal of its contents shows the very wide range of matters with which it deals. I suspect that no one in this hall, with the exception of those on the platform, would claim familiarity with all the various Measures. This is a masterpiece of drafting that has brought together all the points in one piece of legislation, clarifying so many matters.

Second, so far as simplification of the faculty jurisdiction is concerned, for which I have particular responsibility, clauses 2, 7 and 13 are highly important in getting rid of encumbrances on speedy delivery and overall simplification and are to be much welcomed.

Third, I simply highlight the need for a consolidation of the Care of Churches and Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction Measure 1991. That will be a substantial piece of work, but now that we have these changes and are to have further changes in a miscellaneous provision in November, I would ask whether before too long time can be found for such a consolidation Measure, without which I am afraid much of the simplification work that we are doing will not be readily comprehensible by those who have to deal with these matters.

*Revd Canon Jonathan Alderton-Ford (St Edmundsbury and Ipswich)* – and a member of the Dioceses Commission.

It is right and proper that the Synod should take a view on the chair of the Dioceses Commission but should also bear in mind that in addition to meeting on four occasions per year it is also involved in between 12 and 20 other meetings, from which we gain considerable expertise and great wisdom. The present chairman travels an average of about 8,000 miles on our behalf, and although the membership of this august body comprises many brilliant people, we may not have someone quite as good as that to do the job. Therefore, it is wise for us to have the option of selecting someone suitably talented from outside of this place, bearing in mind that a certain degree of objectivity might well be needed.

*Mrs Caroline Spencer*, in reply: I thank everyone who has contributed to the debate, and especially those who have sat through it. I too had not expected that so many members would be present.

I thank Mr Scowen – ever our useful details man – for his commendations. The Steering Committee assure me that they will take on board his suggestion of moving everything into the same place. We talked about it at some length and decided to put major items into the body of the Measure and what we considered minor items into the Schedules. Those who will have this draft legislation by their beds for bed-time reading from here to eternity have my admiration, but I do not think it will be a large body of people.

Mr Campbell knows quite well that we talked at some length about the chair of the Dioceses Commission. As he rightly says, should we get that far, in paragraph 74 we have recommended that actually it is not just an issue about the chair of the Dioceses Commission but also about *ex officio* members of this body, whatever House they are in, and we have flagged up a need for *ex officio* membership in all its many forms to be reviewed, but that was not our task.

To the Dean of the Arches, thank you so much for your commendation of our work. I have to say that there is at least one person on the platform who did not understand every single thing, or does not now know what was in it, but I promise you that I did at the time. The legal team tell me that they will think about a consolidation Measure, as will the Archbishops' Council.

I hope I have answered Canon Alderton-Ford's point, but I thank him very much for making it; that is really what we thought.

Finally, I would like to pay tribute to the Revision Committee, which I chaired, because most of them have now done their work, provided all members put up their hands – and they had jolly well better or they are locked in here until they do! I had not expected it to be as much fun and as interesting as it was, and that was due to the way in which every member of the Committee really engaged in the process, with, as I have said before, the real help of the staff, who were amazing. It would not have been nearly such a productive experience without the work of the Revision Committee. Of course, the Steering Committee members were pretty good too, and they are about to do more work on it right now, so thank you to them as well.

I urge the Synod to vote for the motion.

*The Chair:* Mrs Spencer found her way to paradise by way of Kensal Green, which is a very good thing because it is in my area!

*The motion was put and carried.*

*The Chair:* Where no notice has been given of any amendments to particular clauses and no members have indicated that they wish to speak against those clauses, I give my permission under SO 55(c) to those clauses being taken *en bloc*.

Under SO 55A it is for the Chair to determine the order in which clauses are to be considered. I have decided that it would be best to consider them in the order in which they appear in the text, save that clause 21 should not be considered until after the Schedules, to enable debate on the substantive amendments to Schedule 2 before the consequential amendments to clause 21, and Schedules 1 and 3 should be taken together before Schedule 2.

As this is the Revision Stage, we will need to use the 40 member procedure under SO 56, with which I am sure members will be familiar. Where an amendment is moved by someone other than a member of the Steering Committee and is not simply a consequential amendment on an amendment that has already been passed, the mover will have no more than five minutes to speak to it. I will then call a member of the Steering Committee to speak for not more than five minutes in reply. If the Steering Committee does not support an amendment, it will lapse unless 40 members stand in their places to indicate that they wish the debate to continue or a vote to be taken.

### **Clauses 1–11**

*The Chair:* No notice has been given of amendments to these clauses and no members have given notice of any intention to speak against them.

*Revd Paul Benfield (Blackburn):* I beg to move:

‘That clauses 1–11 stand part of the Measure.’

*The motion was put and carried.*

### **Clause 12**

*Revd Prebendary Douglas Dettmer (Exeter):* I beg to move as an amendment:

‘Page 9, line 31, *leave out* “has passed a resolution stating that it approves the proposal that the priest in charge should be admitted” and *insert* “has passed a resolution stating that this section should apply to the proposal”.’

This amendment is offered very much in support of clause 12, which cuts red tape and saves resources. The special procedure that does this is a very welcome development.

However, draft clause 12 as it stands does depart from the subtle practice in Church of England parochial appointments up to now, according to which the PCC as such is not normally involved in considering or assessing particular individuals, apart perhaps from those rare cases where the PCC is itself the patron of the benefice. Instead, of course, the Patronage (Benefices) Measure provides for local consent to a candidate's appointment to be given or withheld on the PCC's behalf by its two chosen representatives.

The appointment of an incumbent is effectively a human resources matter of a special kind and, in an elected body with the particular context and dynamics of a Church of England PCC, is not necessarily the most fruitful place to discuss, or indeed debate, the merits and demerits of individual candidates – or, in this case, the qualities of the serving priest in charge as the sole candidate for the post in question.

A discussion in the PCC about whether, in the words of draft clause 12 as it stands, the priest in charge should be admitted to the benefice might well be straightforward, and indeed deeply affirmative of the priest concerned. Equally, however, it could be quite otherwise, especially, for example, if the priest's ministry in the parish so far had required him or her to question existing methods or propose fresh approaches which challenged existing networks of influence.

For both priest and parish the stakes are high in such a situation. That is just as true, if not more so, in rural areas where multi-parish benefices are the norm. In a rural benefice like my own of eight parishes, or more, a choice by just one PCC, even perhaps a relatively small group not representative of the mind of the benefice as a whole, would have an absolutely decisive effect on the outcome, similar to the effect in a different context that a single PCC can have at present in passing Resolution A or B in a multi-parish benefice.

Materially, the amendment I am proposing does not change any of this in the final analysis. As indicated in their report, the Revision Committee considered and rejected by seven votes to three a proposal that the PCC should choose two representatives to consent to the appointment under the shortened procedure. That seems to me to be correct, as the selection of what in my own benefice would be 16 representatives of the PCCs starts to sound like something other than a shortened procedure.

The point of this amendment is the form of the resolution to be discussed by the PCC. The wording I suggest here would depersonalize the question put to the PCC for its decision, which now would not be a proposal that the priest in charge should be admitted but, rather, in effect a proposal that the patron and the bishop should be authorized to use the short-cut procedure without further impediment, should they choose to proceed with it – in the austere language recommended by the Legal Office when I suggested this amendment, 'that this section should apply to the proposal'.

That sounds like a step backwards in terms of intelligible language, and in some ways it is. My original suggestion for this amendment was that 'the PCC should resolve that the special procedure should be used,' which I would have thought would get me a gold star from the Plain English Campaign! The Legal Office advised the present wording and I have learnt not lightly to ignore legal advice.

In any case, whenever this process is used it will be used under the guidance of a bishop, archdeacon or rural dean, who will be explaining the process to the PCC, and this in fact provides an ideal peg on which to hang an explanation of exactly what the PCC would be asked to do.

Practically speaking, the two amount to the same thing but the revised wording would signal as strongly as possible that the PCC's responsibility is simply to give the go-ahead for the appointment under the special procedure, not to hold a debate about the merits or otherwise of the priest concerned. If such a personal discussion is needed, the appropriate place for that is the full process under the Patronage (Benefices) Measure, to which recourse may always be had.

*Revd Paul Benfield:* The Steering Committee does not support this amendment. Section 12 of the Measure is concerned with the shortened procedure for making a priest in charge of a benefice the incumbent of that benefice, avoiding all the normal procedures of the Patronage (Benefices) Measure.

The shortened procedure can only be used when the bishop, the patron, the priest in charge and the PCC are all content that the shortened procedure should be used. This amendment concerns the resolution to be passed by the PCC to signify its consent.

As drafted, clause 12(3) requires the PCC to pass a resolution stating that it approves the proposal that the priest in charge should be admitted to the benefice. To ask a PCC to pass a resolution stating that this section, section 12 of the Miscellaneous Provisions Measure, shall apply is to ask it to pass a resolution the effect of which can only be explained to the PCC by saying, 'If you pass this, it means that our priest in charge will become incumbent; that Mr X or Ms Y will become our vicar or rector.' It seems far better to state clearly in the resolution of the PCC that the priest in charge should be admitted to the benefice, rather than requiring it to pass a resolution referring to a section of the Measure that its members are most unlikely to have even heard of, let alone seen or read.

Whilst it is true that in no other situation does a PCC have a vote on whether a particular person should become incumbent, it is inevitable that in considering whether a particular priest in charge should become incumbent the PCC must, directly or indirectly, consider that particular person. Disguising such a decision in a resolution concerned with a section of a piece of legislation would not, we believe, be helpful.

In the interests of clarity, therefore, the Steering Committee does not support this amendment.

*The Chair:* The Steering Committee does not support the amendment. Therefore, unless 40 members stand in their places to indicate they wish the debate to continue, the amendment will lapse. If members wish the debate to continue, they should now stand.

There are not 40, I am afraid, and therefore the amendment lapses.

*Revd Paul Benfield:* I beg to move:

‘That clause 12 stand part of the Measure.’

*The motion was put and carried.*

### **Clauses 13–20**

*Revd Paul Benfield:* I beg to move:

‘That clauses 13–20 stand part of the Measure.’

*The motion was put and carried.*

### **Schedules 1 and 3**

*Revd Paul Benfield:* I beg to move:

‘That Schedules 1 and 3 stand part of the Measure.’

*The motion was put and carried.*

### **Schedule 2**

*Revd Paul Benfield:* I beg to move as an amendment:

‘Page 18, after line 32, *insert* –

“(6) In paragraph 2 of Schedule 1, for the sentence beginning ‘Nominated Commissioners’ there is substituted the following sentence –  
‘Nominated Commissioners shall hold office for such period as the person or persons making the nomination may determine.’ ”

The sentence beginning “In this paragraph” is omitted.’

This amendment is concerned with the appointment of Church Commissioners. It inserts a new sentence into the relevant schedule of the Church Commissioners Measure 1947 to effect two things.

At present, the nine nominated Commissioners, that is, three Commissioners nominated by Her Majesty and six Commissioners nominated by the Archbishops, have to be nominated for a fixed number of years, with the year commencing on 1 April. This requirement has been found to be inconvenient in practice. This amendment provides that the nominated Commissioners shall hold office for such period as the persons making the nomination may determine. That period is no longer defined by reference to a year, so that the deleted sentence is no longer necessary.

For those few members of the Synod who do not have copies of the Church Commissioners Measure 1947 readily to hand, I will read the deleted sentence. It reads, ‘In this paragraph the expression “year” means a period of 12 months commencing on

the first day of April.’ That is otiose, now that the period of office is not by reference to a number of years but to such period as the person nominating may determine.

*The amendment was put and carried.*

*Revd Paul Benfield:* I beg to move as an amendment:

‘Page 19, line 38, *leave out* the new section 11(3) and *insert* –

- “(3) Any Church which is a member of Churches Together in Britain and Ireland or is affiliated to the Evangelical Alliance or is a member of the governing body of Affinity may give notice to the company secretary of Churches Together in Britain and Ireland or the company secretary of the Evangelical Alliance or the director of Affinity, as the case may be, that it desires that this Act shall apply to the Church and the notice shall specify the appropriate authority or authorities for the purposes of this Act.
- (4) The person to whom the notice referred to in subsection (3) of this section is given shall publish in the *London Gazette* a notice signed by him –
- (a) stating that the Church is a member of Churches Together in Britain and Ireland or is affiliated to the Evangelical Alliance or is a member of the governing body of Affinity, as the case may be;
- (b) stating that this Act will apply to that Church as from the date of publication of the notice; and
- (c) specifying the appropriate authority or authorities for the purposes of this Act; and thereupon this Act applies to that Church as from that date and has effect as if an entry in respect of that Church and the appropriate authority or authorities so specified were made in Schedule 2.”

This amendment substitutes a new section 11(3) of the Sharing of Church Buildings Act, to update it to take account of reconstitutions and name changes of various ecumenical bodies.

It was noted at paragraph 143 of the Revision Committee report that the British Evangelical Council had changed its name to Affinity, which would make further changes necessary. However, at the date of the last meeting of the Revision Committee information had not been received from Affinity about its structures and their current arrangements for gazetting churches. This information has now been received and so the clause has been redrafted to incorporate those arrangements necessary to include Affinity.

There is also one other minor change, in that the clause has been amended so that notice under subsection (3) must now be given to the company secretary of Churches Together in Britain and Ireland or the company secretary of the Evangelical Alliance, rather than to the secretaries of those bodies. This change has been made at the request of those bodies.

*Canon Margaret Swinson (Liverpool):* – and also Moderator of Churches Together in Britain and Ireland.

I would very much like to thank the Steering Committee and the Church of England for their assistance in ironing out the discrepancies and difficulties which have arisen from the changes, not only those which resulted in Affinity but also the various changes in the constitution for CTBI. It has been very helpful and, as Moderator, I would like to put my thanks on record.

*The amendment was put and carried.*

*Revd Paul Benfield:* I beg to move as an amendment:

‘Page 23, after line 38, *insert* –

“*Churchwardens Measure 2001*

15. For section 5(7) of the Churchwardens Measure 2001 (No. 1) there is substituted the following subsection –

‘(7) The Church Representation Rules contained in Schedule 3 to the Synodical Government Measure 1969 (No. 1) may provide for the procedure to be followed at a meeting of the parishioners for the purposes of this Measure and, subject to any provision in the Rules, the meeting has power to adjourn and to determine its own rules of procedure.’”

Sections 4 and 5 of the Churchwardens Measure 2001 make provision for the election of churchwardens at a meeting of the parishioners. Those sections make express provision for the procedure to be followed in relation to the nomination of candidates, for the convening and giving notice of a meeting of the parishioners and for chairing the meeting. However, they do not contain provision that otherwise sets out the procedure to be followed at a meeting of the parishioners. In particular, provision is not made for the conduct of elections; so, for example, nothing is said as to whether they are to be by ballot or by show of hands or what method of election is to be used – for example, first past the post or any alternative method. Instead, section 5(7) provides that ‘The meeting ... shall have power to adjourn, and to determine its own rules of procedure.’

Rule 13 of the Church Representation Rules formerly provided that elections of churchwardens were to be ‘conducted, announced and notified in the same manner as elections under Rule 11’; in other words, the rule that governs the election of representatives of the laity to the parochial church council. That provision of the Rules was problematic for a number of reasons, principally because it was in conflict with section 5(7) of the 2001 Measure, which confers the power to determine rules of procedure on the meeting of parishioners itself and therefore excludes the possibility of the provision being made in the Church Representation Rules that purports to override the power of the meeting to determine its own procedures.

Additionally, there were difficulties regarding the compatibility of the particular provisions as to elections contained in the Rules with the relevant provisions of the 2001



Measure. That incompatibility was addressed by the Church Representation Rules (Amendment) Resolution 2009 by replacing Rule 13 with a new Rule, which provides ‘Elections of churchwardens shall be conducted at a meeting of parishioners in accordance with the provisions of sections 4 and 5 of the Churchwardens Measure 2001.’

The effect of that provision is that, subject to the express provisions of those sections concerning procedure, it is left to the meeting of the parishioners to determine its own rules of procedure for conducting elections, as section 5(7) of the 2001 Measure always envisaged. However, since that amendment to the Church Representation Rules was made in 2009, the Legal Office has received a number of communications from diocesan registrars and others to the effect that it would be helpful if the Church Representation Rules were to make procedural provision for the conduct of elections of churchwardens, on the basis that this would be of assistance to many parishes.

The proposed amendment would address that concern by making it possible for the Church Representation Rules to make provision for the procedure to be followed at meetings of parishioners. Any such provision in the Rules would of course need to be consistent with the express provision of sections 4 and 5 of the 2001 Measure as to eligibility, nominations and the convening of meetings.

This amendment is merely permissive, giving power to Synod to amend the Church Representation Rules in this way. Any proposed changes would of course have to be brought before Synod for its approval.

*The amendment was put and carried.*

*Revd Paul Benfield:* I beg to move:

‘That Schedule 2, as amended, stand part of the Measure.’

*The motion was put and carried.*

## **Clause 21**

*Revd Paul Benfield:* I beg to move as an amendment:

‘Page 14, line 32, *leave out* “17(1) and 19” and *insert* “18(1) and 20”.’

This amendment is simply a consequential drafting amendment, dependent on earlier changes. I do not think that I need to say any more than that.

*The amendment was put and carried.*

*Revd Paul Benfield:* I beg to move as an amendment:

‘Page 14, line 39, *leave out* “15, 16 and 18” and *insert* “15, 16, 17 and 19”.’

The same applies to this amendment. It is consequential on earlier amendments.

*The amendment was put and carried.*

*Revd Paul Benfield:* I beg to move:

‘That clause 21, as amended, stand part of the Measure.’

*The motion was put and carried.*

### **Long Title**

*Revd Paul Benfield:* I beg to move:

‘That the Long Title stand part of the Measure.’

*The motion was put and carried.*

*The Chair:* That completes the revision stage of the draft Church of England (Miscellaneous Provisions) Measure. The Measure now stands committed to the Steering Committee in respect of its final drafting.

### **Draft Amending Canon No. 31 (GS 1877A) Clauses 1–16**

*The Chair:* We now turn to the draft Amending Canon No 31. Notice has not been given of any amendments or any intention to speak against any of its provisions. I therefore give my permission for paragraphs 1–16 of the canon to be moved *en bloc*.

*Revd Paul Benfield:* I beg to move:

‘That paragraphs 1–16 stand part of the Canon.’

*The motion was put and carried.*

*The Chair:* That completes the Revision Stage of draft Amending Canon No 31. The Canon now stands committed to the Steering Committee in respect of its final drafting.

*The sitting was suspended at 4.05 p.m.*

*The sitting resumed at 4.20 p.m.*

THE CHAIR *Revd Dr Rosemarie Mallett (Southwark)* took the Chair at 4.20 p.m.

### **Safeguarding: Follow-up to the Chichester Commissaries’ Reports (GS 1896)**

*The Chair:* In a moment I will be calling upon the Bishop of Southwell and Nottingham to move the motion standing in his name. The bishop’s speech will be prefaced by a statement from representatives of survivor support groups, which he will read. I draw Synod’s attention to the fact that seated above the non-voting area there are representatives of survivor support groups who are attending the debate.

May I indicate to Synod members that pastoral support is available for those who wish to receive it, as a result of any issues raised for them by the debate. Safeguarding advisers are available here at Synod to answer general questions about safeguarding. The National Safeguarding Adviser Mrs Elizabeth Hall and colleagues will be available at the Safeguarding stand in the Exhibition Centre for those who have any queries on this issue. She and her colleagues are wearing sashes with their names on them, so that they are easily identifiable. A private room has been set aside on the campus in James College for confidential meetings. Details are to be found in the fourth notice paper. We recognize that this topic may be particularly distressing. If so, please speak with someone at the Safeguarding stall. Alternatively, you can call the NSPCC confidential helpline, the number of which will be projected on screens throughout the session.

I now call upon the Bishop of Southwell and Nottingham to read the statement and then to move the motion standing in his name.

*The Bishop of Southwell and Nottingham (Rt Revd Paul Butler):* The statement comes from the Stop Church Child Abuse Group. It is not comfortable, but I am honoured that these brave survivors have trusted me to read it on their behalf.

‘It is an indication of where the Church of England is in hearing the voices of those who have been caused irreparable harm within the Church that survivors are not allowed to speak for themselves. Survivors are not allowed to share their vision for safeguarding the vulnerable and responding to those who have been abused at this important debate. We have been told it has to do with “other” debates taking place over the coming days and the danger of setting a precedent.

If this resolution had been thought through at all, if survivors had been consulted and brought into discussions about its content and purpose, and plans had been made accordingly, then there would have been no need for precedents. Why are the victims always the last to be consulted about how they are to be responded to?

Because of the lack of consultation, survivors are confused about this resolution and this debate at this time; an apology normally comes after the truth is known, when responsibilities have been placed where they belong and the harm caused has been set down, reckoned and acknowledged. An apology made without the costly engagement of reaching out to the victims, listening to what happened to them and the suffering endured, would be meaningless.

Is this resolution for a general apology a first step to something more? If so, what? Is this apology the beginning of a process that will reach out to victims, so that they may at last set down the responsibility for the truth they carry – a truth that no one has wanted to hear, a truth denied and covered up and for which they have been vilified, judged and condemned if they spoke of it?

Will this resolution and apology lead to truth and restorative justice for all who have been abused within the Church, and ultimately to reconciliation for the Church? For there can be no reconciliation without the truth, the whole unmitigated truth, being revealed. Or is this a game, another in the decades of

games played out in the public, to present a Church responsive to its past failings and moving forward in harmony with survivors, until the next time, the next case that reveals further abuse, cover up and denial, and the inadequacy of ineffective procedures?

Many victims of rape and abuse perpetrated within the Church have not survived. Our brothers and sisters died in despair, longing for compassion and justice. Many victims suffer with mental health difficulties directly attributable to the abuse they endured. Many are in prisons, homeless, unemployed, in ill health and socially isolated. Many countless others continue to struggle to find a reason to survive each day. Many survivors have not come forward through fear, shame and a deep mistrust of the Church. They too must be acknowledged and it is only through engaging with survivors that they trust that their on-going suffering can really be heard.

Whilst survivors welcome this resolution and this debate, reconciliation is not something that can be attained without engaging in the costly journey towards truth and justice, reaching out to the victims and listening to their stories and the truth of what happened in this Church in the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries, and responding compassionately to the often unendurable and incomprehensible suffering they carry. Without this process, any apology is inappropriate and seems to many survivors merely designed to bolster the Church's public image. If the Church is proposing to apologize for its failure to listen and to act properly, then why and how the Church acted as it did must be investigated and the whole truth must be shared, acknowledged and then apologized for.

Survivors believe that only an independent public inquiry will uncover the truth of how many have been abused and continue to suffer; of the privileging and protection of offenders and the denial, silencing and vilification of the victims and their families; of the collusion and cover-up and attempts to pervert the course of justice; and of the on-going institutional and cultural dynamics within the Church that continue to enable abuse and to cover up and deny the abuse perpetrated by clergy and others, at the cost of safeguarding the most vulnerable within the Church.

Once such an inquiry has reported, once individual cases have been acknowledged, and once the Church has begun to learn how to respond appropriately, maybe then the apologies, general as well as to individuals and their families, will carry some meaning.

If the Church through this Synod is willing to walk with us on this costly journey, then there may be a purpose and there may be hope for survivors and for the Church in this resolution and this apology being debated today.'

Chair, with your permission I would like to have 30 seconds of silence before I move on.

*(Synod kept silence.)*

I beg to move:

‘That this Synod

- (a) endorse the Archbishops’ statement in GS 1896 expressing on behalf of the Church of England an unreserved apology for the failure of its systems to protect children, young people and adults from physical and sexual abuse inflicted by its clergy and others; and for the failure to listen properly to those so abused;
- (b) invite –
  - (i) the House of Bishops and the Archbishops’ Council to pursue as a matter of urgency the programme of work set out in GS 1896 to enhance the Church of England’s safeguarding arrangements; and
  - (ii) the Business Committee to schedule First Consideration of the necessary draft legislation as soon as the responses to the consultation document have been assessed, with a view to its securing Final Approval in the lifetime of this Synod; and
- (c) invite the House of Bishops and the Archbishops’ Council to report back to the Synod by February 2014 on what action is to be taken to secure the more effective delivery of the ‘Responding Well’ policy across the Church in the interests of survivors.’

The Commissaries’ reports will, I suggest, be seen as landmarks in the Church of England’s responding to abuse committed by its clergy and other leaders. This can be the pivotal point when we turn from having a default position that is to defend the institution, even at the cost of failing to respond appropriately to those who have been abused, to one where we will listen to the survivor and begin from there.

The Commissaries exposed serious failures in the diocese of Chichester but in doing so exposed much wider institutional failings, which affect every single diocese. For far too long the institution, and notably those in most senior positions, either disbelieved the stories that survivors told us or believed them but tried to hide the truth away or remove the offender elsewhere, vaguely hoping that ‘the problem’ would go away.

We can make all the excuses that we like about society being different in previous decades, or our understanding of abuse now being so much better. We can note that our policies were different then and we followed those policies. These take nothing away from the fact that we failed to listen properly, however. We did not acknowledge the wrong done and we protected the institution at the expense of the person abused. We cannot do anything other than own up to our failures. We were wrong. Our failures were sin just as much as the perpetrators sinned. By failing to listen or act appropriately, we condemned survivors to live with the harm when we should have been assisting them into whatever measure of healing might be possible and justice against those who had perpetrated it.

We therefore owe Bishop Gladwin and Judge Bursell a big debt. However, they are the first to acknowledge that the real debt is owed in particular to the survivors who have persisted tirelessly in raising the realities. They have struggled for years to have their voice heard. They have put up with institutional resistance time and again. In doing so, we have repeatedly re-abused them. Yet they have persisted and, at long last, they are beginning to be believed. I honour them for their staggering persistence.

We are sorry that we failed you for so long. We acknowledge that we have not yet got there in responding properly. This is only one first step on the way. I understand why survivors will struggle to trust us that the journey will continue. You have been let down so often. However, I hope you will be able to recognize that it is a significant point in our journey.

The motion recognizes that this is only a step on the journey, because it points to the raft of legal changes that we believe are required to improve the Clergy Discipline Measure and other matters in regard to how we respond well to abuse perpetrated by church leaders. Some are technical changes; others are significant, including the proposal to abolish any time limit on the admissibility of complaints that concern child sexual abuse.

Since these proposals affect the clergy specifically, they are already out for consultation. I would urge all Synod members to respond to that consultation. Once it is complete, the final version will be brought to this Synod. What the motion requires is that this work is expedited with due speed. For many, it will feel that it will take far too long. However, the motion should assure everyone that this Synod treats the necessary changes, all initially based on the Commissaries' recommendations, with the seriousness required.

The motion also recognizes that, while 'responding well' is a good policy, we have a long way to go in implementing it in every diocese. Here we give a clear timeframe within which we will all work to bring this full implementation about. Good policies are useless unless they are effectively implemented.

The matters in clauses (b) and (c) will not be enough on their own, however. We will have to do more, for we must move to a vision where all those abused by clergy or other church leaders feel able to come forward if they want to do so; to tell their story; to be deeply listened to; to hear an apology and to be supported into a measure of healing if at all possible, and justice will be sought.

We also want to move to the Church of England, along with other Churches, being part of the long-term solution to the scandal of child abuse in our society. For some survivors the Church, usually in its local setting, is already a place of refuge, recovery and healing. We must work towards all Churches being such places. This will be a long journey but it must be part of our calling.

This twin, longer-term task will mean doing much more than is contained in this motion. We cannot take too long in determining these next steps and we can only find them by listening to survivors and gaining their wisdom, but it is a task that the compassion and justice of God demands of us.

I conclude by saying again, 'We failed big time.' We can do nothing other than confess our sin, repent, and commit ourselves to being different in the years ahead. This difficult journey is one we must make for the sake of the survivors, our wider society and the kingdom of God.

*The Chair:* I open the floor to debate on the motion.

*Professor Glynn Harrison (Bristol):* I had intended to make a speech urging the Commission to remove the 12-month limitation under the CDM for vulnerable adults as well as sexually abused children equally. It needs to go and I need to write to the consultation. Instead, I want to share some words of a clergyman friend that we as a Synod need to hear. I quote:

'I was sexually abused by my parish priest when I was 13. Earlier this year, the priest was convicted and sent to prison. As I reflect on that whole journey now, I would like to ask the Synod for three things.

First, please do not underestimate how damaging is sexual abuse. Like many victims, I buried the abuse in my memory and yet it had a profound effect on my growing up and on my sexual development. It was only years later that I was able, slowly, sporadically, to come to terms with what this first sexual experience did to my feelings of identity and self-worth. Sexual abuse goes far deeper than one ever imagines.

Second, please do not underestimate how costly it is to come forward and bear witness to abuse. When I chose to give evidence, nothing could have prepared me for the experience of going to court. Being cross-questioned on every area of my life was a humiliating, crushing experience – in many ways every bit as bad as the original abuse. Those who come forward need our encouragement, support and prayer.

Third, please do not underestimate the importance of responding well. On the day the priest was convicted, the diocese concerned put out a press release apologizing to his victims on the day. It was, however, not for a further three months and only after a number of personal requests from myself that I received a letter of apology from the diocesan bishop. In a way I had not expected, the gap between the public statement, and the personal contact was profoundly painful and suggested that the diocese did not grasp the significance of what had taken place.

I am learning to forgive as I have been forgiven, to rediscover the joy of being an adopted son of God, but a key part of that journey has to be the presence a Christian community provides, which recognizes the seriousness of the abuse in the first place, the cost to coming forward, and the importance of responding well.'

Synod, over my professional life I have often witnessed the tragedy and long-term consequences of sexual abuse and yet I do not think that one ever really gets used to – one should never really get used to – our human potential for self-deception,

destructiveness, wickedness, and the scale of the challenge to us as a Church of responding well.

This experience reminds us that the legislative changes being proposed are crucial but the cultural changes more so. I therefore make these pleas. First, there are any number of secular approaches we can learn from about procedures; there are legislative changes that we can take off the shelf, and we must do that. However, I welcome the language of the bishop in proposing this motion. We are a Christian Church. These are spiritual issues of darkness, of wickedness, deceitfulness of the heart, and redemption. I would urge that we nest these proposed changes in a broader gospel narrative.

Second, we need a revolution in accountability among our pastors and leaders. There are too many isolated and lonely clergy. Yes we have spiritual direction; yes we have appraisals; but we need a culture change that ensures that shepherds, even the top shepherds, are shepherded themselves, in a way in which iron sharpens iron and deceitful hearts are held to account.

As our colleague's story illustrates, we have much to learn about responding well. Let us get the procedures right but, most of all, let us respond by getting our culture changes and our hearts right.

*Revd Catherine Nightingale (Deaf Anglicans Together Representatives):* I support this apology. I think it is important that the Church recognizes these survivors and their difficult stories, and everything they give up in telling those stories. We need to recognize them. We need to show how the Church as a collective of people can care for them.

I would like to support the extension of the time limit on complaints for those who have suffered sexual abuse, because that makes people feel safe to tell their story and to say what has happened. Sometimes that may be 20 years after the event. It would be better for the time limit to be dropped completely, so that there is no limit on when people can come forward to tell these stories.

I would also like to support the time limit being dropped for vulnerable adults who have suffered sexual abuse. Vulnerable adults often have complex communication needs and may need much time and support to tell their stories. I therefore support the time limit being dropped for both groups – for children and for vulnerable adults.

It is important that we listen to these people's stories. It is also important that anonymity is preserved in a complaint. In the past, I have been involved with people who have suffered abuse. There was a particular instance of abuse by a clergy person, where the victim felt unable to express their story if their anonymity was not preserved. In the end, one person did come forward and bravely told their story, but the clergy person then tried to find them and the victim eventually had to move house. The perpetrator is still looking for this person, is still trying to find them and is asking other people where they might live now. I therefore support anonymity. This clergy person was allowed to remain robed and in collar during this time. I would also support that de-robing should happen at such a time, so that a person can be recognized. During the investigation, I would welcome the possibility of people refraining from robing.



I commend this motion. I think that we need to put it into practice and we need to look forward to the future.

*Revd Mark Steadman (Southwark):* This is an important debate, arguably *the* most important debate of this group of sessions.

As we reflect on our failures in safeguarding young people and vulnerable adults, it is right that we begin to apologize and to express our penitence, but we need to recognize that it is just a beginning. We have to do better in listening to survivors and victims. We need to find a way as a Church and as a Synod to hear those stories, however painful and uncomfortable that may be, and then to seek justice and reconciliation. It may be that we seek to do this through an inquiry or perhaps through a truth and reconciliation process, such as the one seen in South Africa at the end of apartheid. It is vital that we resolve to do better and that we actually do better.

We must see safeguarding as a key expression of our mission to declare the kingdom of God in which all have a dignity and all, in their innocence, vulnerability or weakness, are safe and able to flourish in discovering and rejoicing in their faith. Our safeguarding processes must be robust because they say something important about who we are as a community of faith. There can be no room for complacency. Yes we must adapt our structures and systems rapidly but, more than simply affecting structural change, we must continue to change the culture of our churches. Too often there is complacency and an attitude that ‘This won’t happen here.’ We must expect better of each other and be properly accountable, in a way that realizes that this helps to define us as God’s pilgrim people.

We must also be prepared to share our learning with the wider world, not least with Government. It is deeply regrettable that the recent changes to the DBS disclosure procedure means that no longer will copy certificates be sent to registered bodies such as churches. This means that the whole vetting and barring process becomes more complicated to administer and less safe. I know that many are grateful to Elizabeth Hall and her team for rapidly issuing new guidance. However, it does nothing to diminish the question of whether even the Government has yet grasped the issues of safeguarding and the need to help bodies such as the Church, who are trying to do better, to be supported in that work.

*Mr John Freeman (Chester):* May I start by offering my sympathy, support and encouragement to the support group for those who have been harmed by the Church, and also to commend the report to Synod.

In reply to my question on safeguarding, note was made of the various documents that guide the House of Bishops and dioceses over safeguarding matters with regard to children, vulnerable adults, et cetera, with diocesan variations. Diocesan variations make me twitchy. It leaves the Church open to a maverick diocese doing its own thing, albeit with best intentions, but which could blow a gasket – to the detriment of the Church as a whole.

I would like the Bishop of Southwell and Nottingham to reconsider the merits of one, all-embracing, comprehensive set of rules that applies to all dioceses, administered from the centre, so that we all know where we are going and, if any of us stray from the straight and narrow, we will all be judged by the same set of rules. I give that to him to ponder.

Way back in the early 1950s – before most members of Synod were born – I experienced a head teacher who ended up in jail for inappropriate behaviour with his pupils and secondary school pupils expelled for their inappropriate behaviour with younger children. I have seen a bit of it over the last 60-odd years, therefore, and I commend the report to Synod.

*Revd Canon Dr Hazel Whitehead (Guildford):* I am the person responsible to the Bishop of Guildford for ensuring that all safeguarding training is delivered well and that those who need to undertake it are invited, reminded and cajoled into attending.

Over the last 18 months or so, this has involved clergy, those applying for PTO, LLMs, pastoral assistants, youth workers, and a whole range of other people. Our trainers have managed close to 1,000 people and there is a continual stream of new candidates. This is very costly in terms of time, money and energy, and it is a cost that is well spent. However, it is the bishop who is ultimately responsible for this important work, which my department does in his name.

Paragraph 13 of the report spells out very clearly what must happen regarding advisers and training. The annex explains in great detail how the bishop might have more power in bringing CDMs. Nowhere can I find our being told about the responsibility of the bishop in his – or, dare I say, her – role. What I am seeking in this debate, therefore, is assurance that all bishops will be held to continual and rigorous account regarding their own conscientiousness in ensuring both that the training provided in their diocese is excellent and also that they deal robustly, professionally and urgently with any safeguarding cases that come to their attention.

*Mr David Kemp (Canterbury):* I speak as the Chair of the Diocesan Child Protection Management Group. I am there not as an expert but as an ex-diocesan secretary I have some experience of how the Church works. I have journeyed in the Church over 20 years, from hearing a bishop say that an offender ‘won’t do it again’ to today, when we are better but still travelling.

I work with our two vastly experienced safeguarding advisers, who know how safeguarding works and who take no prisoners. I believe that we make an effective team – but we dare not be complacent.

When the first Chichester report came out a year ago, we decided to use it to talk about a ‘Chichester window’ – a period of time during which we could push the safeguarding agenda and no one dare argue. Last autumn, we carried out an internal review of our policies and procedures, made some changes, planned other work, and concluded that we were in a reasonable place; not complacent, but reassured. We also used the Chichester window to set up compulsory safeguarding training for all licensed clergy during 2013,

so that the leaders in every church community are trained in safeguarding. The bishop and his staff were the first to be trained.

Every licensed cleric has been invited – with a capital ‘I’ – to a four-hour safeguarding training session. If they did not come to the one to which they were invited, they were invited to the next one, and the bishop has made it clear that wilful failure to attend will be regarded as a disciplinary offence. The system, now that we are halfway through, is being well received, with some clergy asking why this training had not been made compulsory before.

We have now set up an external review of our processes. A safeguarding adviser from another diocese is reviewing us over the summer, to report in September. She has complete freedom to go anywhere, ask anything. No doors are closed – even the bishop’s. However, I worry when I am told that we are a guinea pig in terms of an external review.

I am grateful for this report but I think that it lacks urgency. Twelve months since the first Chichester report and we are still ‘planning’ a national audit? How much headline safeguarding resource does the Church of England have nationally? Half a person! What sort of message does that send as far as the Church of England is concerned with regard to taking safeguarding seriously? I think that we can do better – much better – and I urge the House of Bishops and the Archbishops’ Council to up their game, *now*.

*The Archdeacon of Chichester (Ven. Douglas McKittrick):* It is shameful that the Church has let down those who are survivors of sexual and physical abuse by clergy and laity. The diocese of Chichester was an example of this. Failure to listen; failure to investigate allegations thoroughly; failure urgently to deal robustly with allegations through the proper, joined-up authorities.

The Church of England must now get its house in order with regard to safeguarding. It is a household matter of paramount importance. Without question, we owe this to all survivors of abuse. In addition, it is a paramount Christian responsibility. It is also a matter of urgency. Children and vulnerable adults *will* be safe in our Christian communities. It is therefore essential that Synod unreservedly supports the motion before us.

I welcomed the Archbishop’s visitation to the diocese of Chichester. I am grateful to the Commissaries Bishop John Gladwin and Judge Bursell QC for their thorough, uncompromising work examining our safeguarding procedures. The lack of implementation of what were robust diocesan safeguarding policies in part of our diocese was and is unacceptable. The Chichester diocese has wasted no time in implementing the Commissaries’ recommendations. The Church of England must now, with urgency, do likewise.

I want to pay tribute to the Bishop of Chichester, Martin Warner, who within days of becoming the diocesan bishop not only made it absolutely clear that this shameful matter will be given priority but also set about immediately in the pursuit of excellence across the diocese in matters of safeguarding and, crucially, made it known to survivors and the

wider public that Chichester diocese had failed survivors. He said those all-important words that needed to be heard, 'We are sorry.' Bishop Martin has been exemplary in his leadership in this matter.

In order for safeguarding policies to work properly, in order that they will really provide protection, there needs to be proper team-working. Things need to be joined up between diocesan senior staff, the safeguarding officer, the police, the social services and the education authorities. Safeguarding policies cannot be implemented by one body. In order for safeguarding policies to work, there needs to be consistency across dioceses, and this will be a major inquiry for the proposed safeguarding audit. Is there consistency? Is there excellence in practice? If not, why not?

For safeguarding policies to work there needs to be proper financial and human resources. I am grateful to the Archbishops' Council for acknowledging this need, as seen in the seventh notice paper. However, every diocese needs a full-time safeguarding officer.

Chichester diocese is grateful to the Archbishop's Commissaries for recommending amendments to the current Clergy Discipline Measure and Rules. It does not please me to say this but I need to say that the diocesan independent safeguarding group in Chichester were bewildered and dispirited at how formal complaints were handled at the most senior levels of the Church of England. This is an area that requires scrutiny.

Finally, in recent years Chichester diocese had robust safeguarding policies in place, as Baroness Butler-Sloss made clear in her report. However, tragically and shamefully, their implementation failed in certain parts of the diocese. Now Chichester can possibly help the national Church in its urgent work of creating consistent policy across the Church of England. We need consistency in the Church. We need excellence. Nothing else will do. No more failure. Dioceses gave a clear message to abusers: 'There is no place for you here.' Every diocese must be a safe place.

I urge the Synod to support this motion.

*Mrs Mary Johnston (London):* Some ten years ago I was asked to join a group of General Synod clergy devising guidelines for the professional conduct of the clergy, my task being to lend a lay perspective to their discussions. The Chair was Canon Hugh Wilcox, who has long since retired, but I know that a number of the clergy from that group are still on Synod today. I distinctly recall that one issue that seriously exercised my clergy colleagues was sacramental confession, specifically the responsibilities inherent in the seal of the confessional: how, when, if ever, to break that exceptional confidence. When I saw the final bullet point of paragraph 13 I felt reassured that in this current distressing context the practice of confession is to be studied. I sincerely trust that for those priests who are to offer this highly specialized and valuable ministry, wherever they are being prepared, thorough training is already mandatory. I do not know that, but I hope it is.

If I may, I would like to suggest that confessors now be equipped to recognize any bogus, manipulative, supposedly penitent individual who is deliberately bent on harming not only others but the priest himself or herself by inflicting on the unwitting confessor not physical but mental or psychological abuse. There will be numbers of priests here

amongst us who are experienced confessors. Perhaps this is one area where members of the various Catholic bodies represented in this Synod, affirming Catholics and traditional Catholics, can come together to offer the wisdom of their practical experience for the well-being of the Church. I know that there are priests within ACIS who are ready and willing to contribute their expertise.

*The Bishop of Hereford (Rt Revd Anthony Priddis):* Could I begin by thanking Bishop Paul and, through him, Mrs Elizabeth Hall and the Joint Liaison Safeguarding Group for not only for what Bishop Hall has said but for all the work they do, and I pay tribute to that. Might I also pay tribute to the courage of the survivors, who have been so vital and crucial in our being able to have this debate and in getting to the place where we are, but also, if I may say so, for their courage in being prepared to be here this afternoon. Perhaps along with that we could recognize that the statistics would suggest there is quite a significant number of people elsewhere in this chamber who have themselves been abused and been survivors.

I want not only to support this motion that is before us and the particular points in the General Synod paper that we all have and have read but also to refer to three aspects of it. Two of them have been referred to already by Bishop Paul. The major statement refers to the failure of the systems within our Church. Bishop Paul said, quite rightly, ‘Good policies are useless unless they are effectively implemented.’ I would like us – I hope all – to go back to our own churches, parishes, benefices, deaneries and dioceses with that in our ears.

We do have good policies nationally. Of course they need updating and of course they need further work – they will always be ‘work in progress’ – but, as Bishop Paul has reminded us, they are of no use unless we implement them, unless *we* make sure that they happen – all of us. This is not just any single person or any single group; it is everybody. It needs the commitment of us all. I welcome the fact that we are going to pay more attention as to how we not only sign up to these policies but put them into practice.

Secondly, perfect policies, perfectly implemented, would not stop abuse, sadly. It is necessary for us to have the best policies we can and it is necessary for us to have them implemented in the best way. I welcome all the speeches that have said there is no place in any of us for complacency. There never will be; there never has been.

However, we always need more than policies. We need DBS. We need training at levels 1 and 2 for all the clergy and others. We need what we have consistently in our Church called ‘informed vigilance’. You may come up with a better phrase, but it is getting at the right area. We need each of us to be informed, we need each of us to be vigilant and, I regret to say, at times we need to be suspicious. People who have a tendency to abuse or have abused or will abuse or want to abuse are very often not only devious but clever, and we know that grooming, although rather a technical word that people may not like, refers not just to grooming children but to grooming us, grooming adults, grooming institutions. We know it is true within the Church and, tragically, it has been revealed very clearly within the BBC, as with other institutions. Informed vigilance must go with our best policies.

My third point picks up on something else that Bishop Paul said. He said that, for some survivors, church is already a place of welcome, refuge and healing. I think those were his words. I wrote them down when he was saying them. I do not say that out of any sense of complacency but, rather, that while it is entirely right and necessary for us to have these issues before us, it is also right for us to hold a vision and to be recalled and reminded of the vision of us as God's people, as God's Church at our best, what we are called into.

We are probably unique as an institution, in that we cross all age groups, nationalities, gender, sexual orientation. We include within our numbers not only, of course, children and vulnerable adults but people who have been abused and survivors, and we also in some of our congregations have people who have been convicted of abuse. Of course, for them there is a formal agreement. We are this unique mix, and that is very, very powerful and crucial for us to hold on to because it gives us the calling that we have to be God's people, sinners forgiven, people redeemed, community being healed, and a place therefore that can welcome and live out, please God, that healing and forgiveness that we all receive and do so in the best possible way.

Part of my hope will be that we can get to a stage where we not only keep best policies, implement best policies, have informed vigilance, but do it joyfully, not as a tick-box, not as bureaucracy, not as something as a necessary hoop, not as, 'Oh, dear, yet another burden', but as something joyful, as best practice, as part of God's love, God's care, and, please God, the love and the care that we, his people, his Church, live out in his name.

*Mrs April Alexander (Southwark):* While recognizing that the report is a response to problems in one diocese, I would like to ask the Bishop of Southwell and Nottingham and his team whether they might consider broadening the scope of their recommendations.

Two matters from my personal experience illustrate a couple of issues I wish to raise that have not been raised before. I recognize the power of personal evidence from a speech we have already heard, but I had not realized until now how difficult this would be. I must say that I do not regard myself in any way as a survivor. The courage, persistence and steadfastness that the survivors who are with us today have shown have not been required of me, and I would make no claim that they had, but I do want to illustrate these issues, as I have said, from my own experience.

Approximately 30 years ago I was attacked in my own kitchen by a very elderly, male neighbour who had come in for a cup of tea. I rang my husband, who left work for home at once, but after that I did not mention it for a full five years – even, I think, to myself. I then found myself in conversation with a woman I did not know but who had lived in the area for many years. Quite unprompted she told me a good deal about that neighbour of which I had no idea. What I now recognize and did not then is that she gave me permission – to use the bishop's expression – to 'lay down responsibility for the incident' and confirmed for me that it had not been my fault. There was never any question of reporting it. There might have been, as we now know, but in this case the neighbour had died in the meantime.

We now know that the tendency to bury memories is very common. I would like to suggest that the 12-month limit for reporting is totally inappropriate in all cases of sexual offence. This incident was not in a church context but the principles are the same. I also wonder whether we should avoid giving the impression that we concern ourselves exclusively with vulnerable adults – even if we could define that term satisfactorily – and that we should have protocols for everyone.

I have found it difficult to ponder this, but I would suggest that at the time of any such attack and in the aftermath any woman is vulnerable by definition, or it would not have happened, even if this vulnerability is taken to be temporary. It is equally clear to me that many who are in a pastoral relationship with a priest will be vulnerable at that time by virtue of bereavement, stress or any other matter. Might I suggest initially that, while extra protection against an attack is clearly appropriate for vulnerable adults, however defined, once that attack is reported all adult complainants should be treated similarly. Maybe that would involve treating all complainants as vulnerable adults, for the reasons that I have explained.

The second experience was also about 30 years ago and is quite different. A young curate came to my parish. He was a part-time chaplain at the local secondary school. He was extremely attractive and charismatic but he and I did not see eye to eye. The flashpoint was always the same. He wanted to include my son, then aged 12 or so, in expeditions, including overnight trips, when he was the only adult present. I could not interest the vicar or even my contemporaries who were mothers with children of that sort of age in my concerns. I soon came to realize that these mothers were head over heels in love with him themselves. My son was the only child excluded from these outings. When this curate was convicted five years later of five offences against schoolgirls who had been underage at the time of those offences, my friends in the parish could only assume that there had been a miscarriage of justice. More extraordinarily, more elderly women in the congregation thought the same.

I have only concluded in the last couple of years, and with some difficulty, that what I had witnessed was a mass grooming of parents and of a congregation. On reflection, I now know it. I saw the process but did not recognize it for what it was. There has been a recent case in America where something similar occurred and I now find, in discussion with other people, that it is a recognized phenomenon. Extraordinarily, the family of one of the girls in question had taken this curate to Spain on holiday with them, and in her case the offences took place there. Incidentally, there was never any word from the diocese, and I am still not certain whether any of the girls in our parish were similarly abused.

*Revd Hugh Lee (Oxford):* I thoroughly endorse everything that is in this motion and has been said. That very moving story from April is difficult to follow. I urge us not only to be urgent about this – it is something about which we can be urgent because we all agree, I hope, and so there is no need for delay or Synod procedural business to stop us getting on with it – but also to go further in three particular respects, two of which have already been referred to more than once.

First, the report refers to vulnerable adults. I know how that has arisen, because we started looking at children and, of course, children are vulnerable and it is appalling that these things happen to children and we do not listen to their stories. Then we started thinking, 'Who else?' and we started thinking about vulnerable adults. All abuse is wrong, however, regardless of to whom, and we should be dealing with all sorts of abuse. If we are still clinging on to this word 'vulnerable' I put it to you that anybody who has been abused is injured and therefore is vulnerable. There is no point in the definition. It should be 'all adults'.

The second matter concerns the time limit. I am not a lawyer but, if I understand it correctly, in civil law there is a time limit but in criminal law there is no time limit. If I have committed murder 40 years ago, I have still committed murder and I am still liable to be tried for that murder. There has to be no time limit in our Clergy Discipline Measure for any sort of abuse. If somebody has abused somebody else, that needs to be uncovered whenever it is possible for the victim, the survivor, to be able to speak. It takes years, as we have just heard, for people to be able to speak.

Thirdly, the report refers to physical and sexual abuse. They are very serious, but so is emotional abuse. People can be incredibly hurt without being touched. We have heard of all the things that go on on the internet, but it is not only those things; it is all sorts of bullying and harassment. We should just refer to abuse. Yes, we should say, 'including physical, sexual and emotional abuse', but any sort of abuse that is in any way connected with the Church or condoned by the Church or not reported by the Church and not dealt with by the Church is wrong, is sin, as we have already heard, and should be dealt with. I urge that we go further than the report already does.

*Revd Canon Suzanne Sheriff (York):* I want to reflect slightly on the statement that we heard at the start, slightly on the report and slightly on the discussion that has followed. I sat up there, not participating in this debate, because it did not seem as if it directly involved me. I have never been abused by anyone in the Church; I have never abused anyone, I hope, within my position; and I hope I have never colluded with anyone who is abusing. I guess there are quite a few of us who have been thinking, 'Not me', because there have not been that many people standing in this debate when compared to some of the other matters we have discussed. Partly maybe it is because of shame. Partly maybe it is because of embarrassment, lack of experience or lack of knowledge. However, I heard in that earlier statement a need for us to make it much more personal.

With one or two exceptions, a lot of the things that have been said have mentioned 'The Church this' or 'The Church that', as if it is them who has done it rather than us. As General Synod, and for most of us as elected representatives, we are the voice of the Church throughout England. We cannot afford to say, 'The Church this' and 'The Church that' and definitely not 'them'. We have to talk about 'us'. Corporately, we have to take responsibility for this, because we are all part of the Church and at this time we are part of the voice of the Church.

It is a horrible thing to stop holding it at a distance and to make it personal. It means recognizing, as we have heard, that there could be people in the chamber who have been abused, that there are also – just from the statistics – people in this chamber who have abused. That is uncomfortable. We all know and love our fellowships. With these



safeguarding things we will go through the motions, but we need to do it with a real awareness that the person in our church, the clergy in the next-door parish, our organist, our youth worker, our whatever, could just as well be an abuser. If we are to take this seriously, we have to believe that the inconceivable is possible. It is a very fine balance. We want warmth and love and trust and acceptance within our fellowships. We do not want suspicion. We want to be pure and lovely in our thoughts to one another. However, if we are willing to put our money where our mouth is when it comes to reports like this, then we must wake up to all the things we are hearing in the press. It does not mean it is happening to a fellowship out there; it means it can happen to a fellowship that we are part of. It does not mean it is only the lay leaders or the clergy that you read about in the papers; it means that it can be somebody close to us.

I felt deeply shamed by the first statement and deeply sorry that I and we have not taken this seriously in the way we should have. I am sorry that we did not talk more. I am sorry that we have referred too often to ‘them’ and not ‘us’. I hope that in the support I am sure we will give we will stop holding it at arm’s distance and we will make it much more personal than that.

*Revd Canon Simon Butler (Southwark):* I had not intended to speak in this debate but feel moved to do so. In doing so, I want to add a word into the conversation and I want it to be heard as the word that it is. The word is ‘and’. Alongside all of the procedures and practices that we have talked about, alongside CDMs, putting in proper boundaries, dealing appropriately and correctly when a situation arises in a parish, we need to add effective pastoral care of the alleged perpetrator. This is where I want to make it clear that this is an ‘and’ rather than a ‘but’. I want to associate myself entirely with the words of David Kemp about needing to increase the pace of activity in driving forward this agenda *and* we need to ensure that effective pastoral care of those who are alleged to have abused, or indeed have abused, is robust and clear and genuinely pastoral.

I say this from personal experience – and I have to be careful here because we do not want to get into identifying situations. I have in my ministry been involved in a safeguarding case in one of the churches for which I was responsible. It involved two young members of the congregation and a member of the parochial church council. The matter was drawn to our attention and we dealt with it entirely appropriately. The police were involved, the safeguarding officer and team were involved extremely effectively and all the right things were done. Somebody in the team was also deputed to offer pastoral care to the abuser, the alleged abuser – and you will understand why I say that in a minute.

The person was then remanded in custody. At that point I am sure that he became a vulnerable adult. He was lost in the criminal justice system. He was in a prison over 100 miles from anyone he knew. It took us two weeks to track him down. His friends took two weeks to arrange for appropriate bail and for him to be released from prison on bail. In that time, he had time to reflect. Within 24 hours of being released, he hanged himself in his own home. That moment has been for me the most painful and unresolved failure in my pastoral ministry through the 20 years I have been ordained.

The ‘and’ – and this is the key thing – is that at the moment he took his life, he not only harmed himself but inflicted another level of abuse on his victims than they could ever have imagined. Not only did they then have to process what had happened to them but also what he had done to them through his suicide. In asking us to take forward this agenda, I want to ask us to make sure that ‘and’ is there; that we work thoroughly with the criminal justice system; that we work thoroughly with social services; that not only do we ask them to hold us to account but we in our turn hold them to account, so that we can offer not just alleged victims and perpetrators but also victims themselves the fullest care by offering the fullest protection for everybody involved in such tragic circumstances.

*Revd Stephen Pratt (Lichfield):* It is deplorable that the place to which so many people turn to receive help and support as a result of abuse – and in my parish we have quite a few who do that – is also the place where so many find themselves abused. We need to apologize. In fact, we need to go far further than that, and so I wholeheartedly welcome this report. However, as has already been said, some of the recommendations need to be far more urgent than is set down here and they also need to be national.

Each diocese, it seems to me, deals with safeguarding differently. My safeguarding training has come from being a school governor. I have a level of training up to level two, but that is all, and it has not been through the diocese. I believe that the diocese has told all the clergy to obtain safeguarding training through education. I welcome the fact that some dioceses have their own training in place but that should be a national policy. All dioceses should have their own training in place.

Secondly, this training should also be given to churchwardens and to members of the church council. Those people are in positions of authority. They are respected by the church. They can abuse their positions and, therefore, they should also receive some kind of training.

Clergy who move dioceses should be given training as part of moving into a new diocese. When teachers move into a new school they are automatically given safeguarding training and told about whistle-blowing and all the other things. That should happen as part of our diocesan training as well. That leads me to an aspect which is missing here, whistle-blowing. Each diocese should have its own whistle-blowing policy as well.

*The Bishop of Hereford (Rt Revd Anthony Priddis):* Chair, on a point of order. While I appreciate and welcome what the last speaker has said, we are not in a position where we can require for churchwardens what he has asked for. We cannot, even now, require DBS checks for churchwardens. It is an issue which I know has affected the Church and with which we are trying to take issue, but it is not factually possible.

*The Chair:* Thank you, Bishop, but that is not a point of order.

*The Archbishop of Canterbury (The Most Revd and Rt Hon Justin Welby):* The statement we heard at the beginning of this debate was, to all of us, as has been said, absolutely agonizing. What it says, above all, is that, for us, what we are looking at today is far from enough. We are opening a process, continuing a process in many ways, that

will go far further than we can imagine. The reality is that there will always be people who are dangerous who are a part of the life of the Church. They may be members of the congregation. We hope and pray that they will not be in positions of responsibility. The odds are, however, that from time to time people will somehow conceal sufficiently well.

Many here, as the Bishop of Hereford said, have been deeply affected. As well as the survivors who have so rightly brought us to this place, many other people here have been deeply affected and badly treated. We face a continual challenge and reality. This is not an issue we can 'deal with'; it is something we will live with and must live in the reality of, day in, day out, for as long as the Church exists, and seek to get it right.

The actions that we are developing must be ones that are persistent. It has been said that they must be persistent by bishops. We wholeheartedly agree with that – all of us. We cannot in 20 years be finding ourselves having this same debate and saying then, 'We did not quite understand.' There has to be a complete change of culture and behaviour.

In addition, there is a profound theological point. We are not doing all this – we are not seeking to say how devastatingly, appallingly, atrociously sorry we are for the great failures there have been – for our own sakes, for our own flourishing, for the protection of the Church, but we are doing it because we are called to live in the justice of God and that we will each answer to him for our failures in this area. That accountability is one that we must take with the utmost seriousness. As Bishop Paul said in his opening speech, this is part of a journey. It is the next step. The answer to that profound, terrible and penetrating question from the survivors' groups, 'Is this it, or is this a beginning?' must be, 'Yes, it is only a very beginning.'

We not only have to deal with processes but we have to deal with culture. Culture change is by far the hardest to do. Many parts of our society are trying to deal with culture change in the way that large organizations, groups of people, clubs, whatever it is, behave. It is very trying to find a way of facing those issues, therefore we require enormous determination to do so, so that we have a culture that looks first to justice for survivors, to clarity, to transparency, to admission of where we have failed, and this change must be done with the survivors, not to them. We have spent very, very many years doing things to them. We must only act with them.

That will mean much more than we imagine, as we sit here listening to what we are listening to and reflecting dark and desperate acts in the past. Practically, a change of culture will require resourcing – not a post, let alone half a post, but very dramatic increases in resourcing. Practically, all issues in our common life will come up for consideration. We have spoken of the confessional. We must also speak of the indissolubility of orders. We have spoken of dropping time limits, and that seems to have broad acceptance. Most of all, however, we must speak of a process that is done carefully, urgently, determinedly, extensively, and with those whom we have so harmed over the years.

*The Chair:* I would ask Prebendary Stephen Lynas to move his amendment.

*Revd Prebendary Stephen Lynas (Bath and Wells):* I beg to move as an amendment:

‘In paragraph (b)(i) after “safeguarding arrangements” *insert* “, ensuring that such arrangements are communicated effectively to those responsible for safeguarding in parishes”.’

I am a bishop’s chaplain and a member of the Diocesan Safeguarding Group. Our concern so far in this debate has largely been focused on clerical abuse, but there are other levels of abuse and safeguarding that need to be taken into account. Effective safeguarding is not just about what is sorted out in London at Church House, nor is it just about what a diocese puts in place, important as that is. Safeguarding is also about what happens in parishes. Each parish probably has an appointed person for safeguarding already, because parishes are the frontline places where the work with children and young people and vulnerable adults is done. PCCs are the employers of youth workers, junior church assistants, Messy Church volunteers. It is the PCC, as the employer, that may well be liable if something goes wrong. It is the PCC that may discover its insurers are not happy because it has not been following proper procedure.

The safe recruitment of people who work in parishes as volunteers and staff is absolutely critical in safeguarding. Therefore, I am trying to amend our main motion to point clearly to parishes as well as the dioceses and the national Church. As Bishop Paul said earlier, we need to have a different culture in the years ahead. That different culture needs to be in parishes as well.

GS 1896 contains a long list of non-legislative things that we ought to do. It contains references to a large amount of material that will be prepared from London and sent out to the rest of us. I want to flag up a concern here. In our rush to take action nationally, I do not want us to be tripping over things locally because we have not communicated properly to the parishes.

Mark Steadman has already referred to the mess over the changes to DBS (the entity formerly known as CRB). Everybody in the Church of England, from our National Safeguarding Officer down to the smallest parish’s safeguarding representative, is dealing with how to get these forms verified, how to get the results and checks back to the diocese. It is a mess. As we have heard from Bishop Anthony, even now we do not really know whether churchwardens and PCC members should or should not have DBS checks under the new regime. That is not the Church’s fault; it is the Government’s fault. We are playing catch-up with things that have been introduced at three weeks’ notice. If those at the top of this system are struggling to get information together, how will that play out in a small, rural parish? It will take months for the correct information to reach people and be put into place.

One of the documents that members of this Synod will not have seen but which will have been circulated to dioceses is a new set of guidelines about safe recruitment. It is a pretty hefty 46-page document. It is a bit interim in nature, because things are not yet certain, but I have to say, having read it through, that it does show some signs of having been prepared in haste because of the lack of clarity about the new government requirements.

Can we please insist that what is sent to the parishes is made as simple and as clear as possible, so that lay volunteers can understand what they need to do? Can we please arrange it so that this material is couched in terms of best practice and encouragement to

do it properly, rather than instructions from head office that people may just put in a drawer and take no notice of? There is a danger that the stuff will be put in a drawer, not be read and not get used, and we will end up with more mistakes being made. As we have heard in this debate, mistakes are very costly at every level. The parishes do not need gold-plated advice but they do need practical advice that they can use with people who are, in the end, volunteers and who cannot, as Bishop Anthony has said, be disciplined in the way that clergy can. Parishes need to know what they have to do. They need to know that they can go straight to their full-time diocesan safeguarding adviser when they need help.

My amendment wishes to encourage the Church to make all new advice that is issued parish-oriented, so that the key parish safeguarding reps can pick it up and use it. We are at the mercy of the Government's slightly chaotic timetabling but, for goodness' sake, let us help parishes by keeping it as simple as we can at the point of delivery; let us ensure that what we do send them is supportive and user friendly.

I hope that Synod will vote for my amendment. All I want to do is to help the parishes rather than to frighten them.

*The Bishop of Southwell and Nottingham:* I thank Stephen Lynas for the amendment, which we are happy to accept in the spirit in which it is offered, because it makes it quite clear that how this works through is not defined and we are very grateful that it is not defined.

We absolutely agree with him that materials must be suited and fitted to serving in the parishes. One of the struggles is that the Government is not making some of its stuff simple to communicate. We work hard at making it as clear and as simple as we can and we encourage feedback. A good example would be the new safer recruitment document that is out. We know it will have to change, because government policy is not finalized in one or two areas, and so feedback on it so that the finished document is suitable at parish level would be much appreciated. I am happy to accept this amendment.

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

‘That the question now be put.’

*This motion was put and carried.*

*The amendment was put and carried.*

*The Chair:* We resume the debate on the amended motion.

*Mrs Caroline Spencer (Canterbury):* I speak in response to the speech we heard earlier. It was being suggested that priests went elsewhere to get training if they could. I am the Chair of the Canterbury Cathedral Child Protection Management Group. I am very fierce and I insist that everybody, all the paid staff and most of the volunteers, come to training in safeguarding. Lots of them say to me, ‘I don’t need to; I’ve been trained by my

school.’ I say to them, ‘The day your school says that they do not need to train you because you have been trained by the cathedral is the day I will let you off.’

There is a reason for that: cathedrals and parish churches are not schools. Schools these days are gated communities. You cannot get into them without ringing the bell and being let in, signing in the visitor book and having a big badge on you that says ‘Visitor’. In parish churches and cathedrals we open wide the doors and say, ‘Please come in.’ We have no idea who is coming through those doors. We know that we are honeypots for people who might have less than totally 100 per cent wonderful aspirations at what they will do when they get inside our doors. The way to address that, particularly these days when we cannot check everybody formally through whatever the government service is calling it this week, is through training. That is how we have the informed awareness that we were referring to.

I am not so delighted to report to you that, usually, when I send out the invitations to people each year to come for training I get a sack of hate mail from people who say, ‘How dare you ask me to do this? I don’t need this. I’ve been a parish priest for a thousand years and I know all about this. Go away.’ This year, because of the problems of our sister diocese in Chichester and because of things that have happened in the BBC and elsewhere, I did not have a single letter of that sort. Indeed, everybody lined up and came. In particular, we are quite clear that we need to have joined-up arrangements with the school which educates our choristers, and the head of the junior school, the choir houseparents, the chaplain all sat in the front row and participated, and afterwards they said how grateful they were.

It is not until every single person we can reach understands what the issues are, is aware of what they are seeing and is then prepared to report things they see of a suspicious nature, that we have any prospect of offering a safe environment for children and vulnerable adults.

*Revd Neil Sydney Patterson (Hereford):* I had not hoped to make my maiden speech on this subject, but I would like to share with Synod a few details relevant to our aspirations from a case earlier in my ministry. We were in a situation, as I am sure many here have been, of dealing with someone who was a problem, as it were, in our parish; who had not in fact been convicted of any offence but who it was necessary to manage to prevent the risk of harm. I learned a great deal about how people in those situations often live, to others and in their own minds, in a tangle of deceit and self-deceit. I mention it because the person concerned, who had in the past, if not offended, certainly caused serious harm to young people, had been able to exploit his status as an admitted Reader in the Church of England. I notice that there is no mention of Readers and their situations within the report, although I dare say that can be addressed in the future.

He managed to resign his licence before it could be taken from him – sadly – and, in the way that people who have either offended or attempted to transgress moral norms will do, he came back with complaints that he had been treated unfairly. With reluctance, I mention a letter that I know is on the file in the parish and in the diocese that he received from a member of the senior staff at the time, I think about 12 years ago, in response to his situation. I mention this to remind us just how bad we have been. That letter, of course, stated that things had been done by proper procedure and that he had no

cause for complaint but it also included the dreadful phrase – the member of staff concerned is now some time retired – ‘Of course, I always intended to do no harm to your good standing in the town.’

I wonder how many other responses have gone out to people who perhaps did not commit any offence but about whom there were nonetheless serious reasons for suspicion that implied to them – and to victims, if they knew what had been said – that the Church was very much on the side of someone who had been a senior member in parish life and that its interests were to defend them. I mention that with sadness, but I hope that this report represents a chance to move forward and to be more truthful and more open and more seeking the good of those who suffer.

*Revd Canon Jonathan Alderton-Ford (St Edmundsbury and Ipswich):* I hope that we are entering into a new phase of the tragic story of abuse and of the Church. This new phase could be called ‘The demand for total transparency and the right for the victim to be heard.’ This new openness is very painful for everyone, especially the victims, but it is good that people who were abused 10, 20, 30, 50 or even more years ago can now come forward, and there should be no time limit on this. We must ensure that what they tell us is respected and that stories of all types of abuse will be acted upon.

I welcome this report because it gives us the chance at least to keep pace with the rest of society and to play our full part as this tragedy continues to unfold. However, because it is such a difficult subject, I am afraid that, at a time when we need to be as vigilant as possible, completely open and, yes, completely repentant, we will look away and forget it and hope that it will all go away. Why? Why do we do that? I will tell Synod my reason. The hardest thing I have ever done in ministry – and until you do it, you do not know how hard it is – is pick up that phone and say to the appropriate person, ‘I think we have a problem with X.’

I have also had the worst of phone calls, when the diocese calls to inform you that the rising star in your church, who everybody loves, is not the person you thought he was. If we are honest, all our instincts are not to believe the evidence and not to take action because we know of the nightmare that awaits us if we do, a nightmare that may well go on for weeks, months, even years and have the tragic consequences a previous speaker has mentioned. However, it is a nightmare that we must go through for the sake of the victims, because for them that nightmare is the way out of the living hell to which abuse has condemned them, a hell that has gone on for years.

This report has much to commend it but I want to draw attention to one thing. Point 58 on page 15 says, ‘Views are also sought about disqualifying all persons (i.e. not just churchwardens) from being members of the PCC if convicted of an offence mentioned in section 1 of the Children and Young Persons Act.’ I think that we should debar convicted abusers from all significant posts in the church. I would include PCC secretary, PCC treasurer and deanery synod members as well as churchwardens and employed persons. Why? Because we have to be seen to be cleaning up our act, because we have to prove again that we can be trusted. We have to do that in a climate where organized abuse gangs do target churches. In some cases they have been infesting our churches for years.

We also have a lot more work to do on how we care for the abused and how we play a full part in the true rehabilitation they need. We must get serious about caring for the abused in our midst. Much, much more work is needed. We must consider how to care for abusers and those who want to put their abuse behind them. If we are to care for the abused as we should, we know it will not be easy, because all of this is like wading through a sewer, an unending sewer. It is my hope and my prayer that this report is not the end of the matter but the beginning of a new, better, grown-up, compassionate and, above all, healing era for our Church, for our nation and for the victims, but we must get on with it and we must do it right now.

We all know what Jesus says about those who harm children. Matthew 18:6 in the Aramaic version of the Bible says, ‘And everyone who commits an offence against one of these little ones who believe in me, it will be more profitable for him to have a donkey’s millstone hung round his neck and that he be sunk into the depths of the sea.’ Let us make sure that we are not sunk into the depths of the sea.

*The Chairman:* I would like to thank everyone who has spoken and those who have stood to speak and not been called. However, after the Bishop of Chichester I will be calling upon the Bishop of Southwell and Nottingham to respond to the debate and to move the amended motion.

*The Bishop of Chichester (Rt Revd Dr Martin Warner):* First, I would like to echo the comments made by the Bishop of Southwell and Nottingham, the Bishop of Hereford and the Archbishop. I hope that reassuring companions who are survivors here that the shift in culture that will move us towards being a humbler Church, a more compassionate Church, a more humane Church, a Church that understands how to listen, and a Church that has embarked upon a process which begins with apology but which will walk the distance, however far it is, with those whom we have been responsible for and who have abused, is of enormous encouragement to them. In my experience in Chichester it has been vital often for the bishop, as the representative of the diocese and its administration, and therefore sometimes the inheritor of failures, of cover-up, of lies and deceit, to take a lead in encouraging and sustaining and nurturing this culture and also in the personal engagement with those whom we have damaged and hurt, in some cases irrecoverably.

I want to comment on how we, bishops together with clergy, might be called as a whole Church and also institutionally to live accountably within society. One of the things that I think is missing from this report and its proposals is an emphasis on the necessity for us being in partnership with the other statutory and voluntary agencies that bear primary responsibility for the safeguarding of young people and of vulnerable adults throughout society. I would hope that the National Liaison Committee that we have for safeguarding might consider in the future ensuring that it draws into its membership those who come from, at national level, the police, social services, probation, the NSPCC, the Royal College of Paediatrics, the Children’s Commission, the Association of Independent LSCB Chairs, CEOP, survivors groups primarily, those who have huge experience and a breadth of knowledge at national level, who would enrich and should be present in our national forum that we share with our Methodist brothers and sisters overseeing safeguarding.

I hope that would model for us at diocesan level something of a similar partnership. I hope we will move towards having a single policy that is the same for all dioceses. I also hope that in our safeguarding advisory groups – which I think are an essential



ingredient in that – there will be representation from all of the agencies at local level that I have already mentioned. It seems to me that it is here that we are held to account, it is here that we create a forum from which we can continue to learn and it is here that we, as bishops with clergy for whom we bear responsibility, might be held to account for what we are doing and what it is that we continue to learn from them.

In the time that I have been in Chichester I have learnt an enormous amount from the team that I inherited, which was already very committed, but also from those who have been tireless in promoting and calling the Church to attention for its failures in the past. I would like Synod to hear their names, particularly Alana Lawrence and Phil Johnson. I would also like to commend the work that Colin Campbell has done as a journalist, which has been tenacious and fearless, and I would like to commend the other survivors with whom it has been my privilege to meet.

Secondly, there is something about being humble, being determined, being willing to sit with others at a time and in a place which is deeply uncomfortable, no less for them, of course, than for us, but I have heard from survivors that what they have missed most has been access to the practice of their faith and I would hope and pray that our intentions and demonstration of a different future will enable them to return joyfully to that.

*The Bishop of Southwell and Nottingham*, in reply: I am grateful to the Chair for calling Glynn first, so that we started with a personal story. Glynn, would you please pass our thanks to the person concerned for their willingness for you to share it? On the issue he raised of shepherding the shepherds, which was later mentioned by Hazel Whitehead, we certainly need to ensure that. Catherine Nightingale raised the issue of time limits, which was referred to by a number of people, and the question particularly of time limits in relation to vulnerable adults, or possibly, as Hugh Lee said, all adults. We will certainly look at the possibilities of each. Catherine also raised the issue of anonymity and the vesture question. Catherine's contribution raised a matter that would apply to several members, that it would be enormously helpful if they could send their speeches into the consultation formally, because many of the points they have made will help with the consultation process.

Mark Steadman raised the issue of culture change and it became a theme running through several speeches, including those of the Archbishop of Canterbury, David Kemp and one or two others. Absolutely, this is primarily about culture change, and culture change does not happen overnight. It takes a long time and it takes great determination.

John Freeman raised the issue of national reach. The policies are national but they are not necessarily consistently applied in every diocese and that is one of the things that we will have to look at in the proposed audit.

David Kemp raised the issue of urgency and finance. The paper does make it clear that the Archbishops' Council has already released £100,000 extra funding. Someone is already in post one day a week extra and another person is coming into post a further three days a week extra to take us through this next period. Part of the review is what a proper level of resource at national level is. Also raised elsewhere was the question of what is appropriate at diocesan level. I would agree with the speaker that every diocese really does need a full-time safeguarding adviser. Every diocese must be a safe place.

It was powerful to listen to Archdeacon McKittrick talking of his experience of the visitation and of all the work that has been going on in Chichester. We are enormously

grateful to those in Chichester for leading the way in some examples, and they will be aware that they are still on the journey with us.

The confessional was raised. There is already published guidance from the Legal Advisory Commission about the law relating to it. However, the law is not entirely clear and the Bishop of Guildford and I have written to the Chairman of the Legal Advisory Commission asking for reconsideration of the issues, so that further guidance can be provided. Given that the Chair of the LAC is Judge Rupert Bursell, I fully expect him to agree to this request.

Our understanding of the seal of the confessional – and I believe the generally accepted view is that a penitent must be genuinely repentant before there may be a genuine confession – is that the person who is genuinely repentant should report his or her behaviour to the police before there can be absolution. Only when absolution has been given and pronounced can there be any true confession to which the seal of the confessional can attach. Often clergy are mistaking confidentiality for the confessional. We must not mix the two up.

Bishop Anthony, we do have to put our policies into practice and informed vigilance must be part of it.

I thank April Alexander for sharing what was obviously a painful personal story. I thank her for taking the risk with us. She referred to the issue of mass grooming, which Bishop Anthony had already mentioned, and that certainly is an area that we need to address in future work.

Hugh Lee asked us to look at all adults and we will do that. I thank Sue Sheriff for stressing the fact that it needs to be made personal by all of us, that the inconceivable is possible. The very finest teachers are often those who abuse; the very finest clergy may be those who abuse.

I thank Simon Butler for his emphasis on the care of the alleged abuser and fullest care and protection for everyone involved absolutely. We know that we have to keep working hard on this area because there are some very deep practical issues surrounding it.

Stephen Pratt raised the issue of training. Others, including Caroline Spencer, also raised this matter. I thank Caroline for pointing out that training has to be not just for clergy but for all our volunteers, because we are dealing with different kinds of places, spaces and communities and people who pass through them. The idea, I have to say, that a diocese is not insisting on the training of its clergy does horrify me.

There is a national whistle-blowing policy that could easily be adapted at a diocesan level. We are deeply thankful to the Archbishop of Canterbury for his support behind the scenes as well as publicly on this issue and we heed his emphasis on working *with* survivors not *to* them.

I thank Neil Patterson for his reference to Readers and the importance of taking them into account. They are, of course, included amongst the persons, but we might need to be more specific.

Jonathan Alderton-Ford, we do need to be more truthful. There must not be time limits, and, he is right, we must go through the nightmares, not avoid them.

I am glad that it was the Bishop of Chichester who closed this with his comments about being a humbler, more compassionate, more humane Church that works with the survivors. The Joint Safe Liaison Group does work very closely with a wide range of

professional partners. However, I take the point and we will look at what might be appropriate in terms of membership of that group and seeking professional advice. Certainly it is something that should be modelled in the dioceses.

I am deeply grateful to members of Synod and I conclude by saying again that we failed big time. We can do nothing other than confess our sin, repent and commit ourselves to being different in the years ahead. This is a difficult journey. This is only the first step. I urge Synod to endorse this motion overwhelmingly to make it clear we have taken the first step.

*Revd Canon Simon Butler (Southwark):* Chair, in view of the public interest in this matter and as a sign of our resolve to our guests today will you order a division of the whole Synod?

*The Chair:* We are minded to do that.

*The Chair sought leave of the Synod to extend the sitting time by five minutes. (Agreed)*

*The Chair:* Before we take the vote, we will have a moment of silence for reflection and private prayer. *(Synod held silence.)*

*The motion was put and carried in the following amended form, 360 voting in favour and 0 against, with no recorded abstentions.*

‘That this Synod

- (a) endorse the Archbishops’ statement in GS 1896 expressing on behalf of the Church of England an unreserved apology for the failure of its systems to protect children, young people and adults from physical and sexual abuse inflicted by its clergy and others; and for the failure to listen properly to those so abused;
- (b) invite -
  - (i) the House of Bishops and the Archbishops’ Council to pursue as a matter of urgency the programme of work set out in GS 1896 to enhance the Church of England’s safeguarding arrangements, ensuring that such arrangements are communicated effectively to those responsible for safeguarding in parishes; and
  - (ii) the Business Committee to schedule First Consideration of the necessary draft legislation as soon as the responses to the consultation document have been assessed, with a view to its securing Final Approval in the lifetime of this Synod; and
- (c) invite the House of Bishops and the Archbishops’ Council to report back to the Synod by February 2014 on what action is to be taken to secure the more effective delivery of the ‘Responding Well’ policy across the Church in the interests of survivors.’

*(Adjournment)*

THE CHAIR *The Bishop of Birmingham (Rt Revd David Urquhart)* took the Chair at 8.30 p.m.

### **Welfare Reform and the Church (GS 1897)**

*Mr Philip Fletcher (Archbishops' Council, ex officio)(Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council):* I beg to move:

‘That this Synod, recognizing that in times of austerity hard choices must be made between competing priorities, and acknowledging that reform of welfare systems is essential:

- (a) affirm the need for a renewed settlement between the state, the churches and civil society in pursuit of social solidarity and the common good;
- (b) call for close attention to the impact of welfare cuts on the most vulnerable, and for support for those not in a position to support themselves;
- (c) decry the misleading characterization of all welfare recipients as “scroungers”; and
- (d) commend those across the churches who are working to support those most in need.’

Much of the impetus for this debate has come from the members of Synod – clergy and laity in touch with local communities across the country and closely associated with the pastoral problems and practical responses that arise daily in parish ministry. I think that we are all aware that the vicarage doorstep is often the place of last resort for people close to destitution.

It is no accident that the churches, including our ecumenical partners, have played a significant role in the establishment of food banks, helping homeless rough sleepers, the street pastor schemes and a host of other projects, of which I have no doubt we will hear good things tonight. The Church has authority to speak about social welfare because we are present on the frontline.

The two papers attached to our report, from MPA and the Church Urban Fund, outline both the nature of the changes that are being implemented and the human impact, so that our debate can be well informed. They present a deeply worrying picture, and I am most grateful to the Church Urban Fund for all the work they have done on this.

In the main report before Synod we have tried to do three things. First, we have considered how the Church came to be generally supportive toward the welfare state, and how that support is theologically well grounded and not mere nostalgia. However, we also note that support for a welfare state is a rather different thing from treating the Beveridge Report of 1942 as the last word on welfare. On the contrary, the tension between the Christian vocation to bring God’s kingdom closer on earth and the persistence of sin in undermining our best intentions means that reforming the structures and delivery systems in a welfare state is a continual necessity in a changing world.

Secondly, we have deliberately linked this debate to the one we had in November 2010 on the Big Society. I will not repeat what is in the paper but we need more theological work on the foundations for Christian social action. We rightly celebrate the willingness of churches and their members to seek to relieve poverty and disadvantage in their neighbourhoods. Some marvellous and sacrificial ministry is being done, which is an example to the whole of society of what neighbourliness means. At the same time, however, the situation which has necessitated such a response – the growth of poverty, especially among children and not least among the working poor – is not something to welcome. Sorting out the relationship of Christian voluntary action and the role of the state, in terms of our vocation as a Church and our theology of society, is a bigger task than we could achieve in a short report, but it is a project which MPA and others are pursuing. For example, I commend to colleagues the report that has just been launched by the Children's Society called *The Heart of the Kingdom*. There is some really mind-bending stuff there.

Thirdly, we have looked back at the Synod debate on the financial crisis, to emphasize that we, as a Church, are well aware of the challenges facing the Government in getting the economy back on track. Simply opposing cuts, whether to welfare or any other area of expenditure, as if some retrenchment were not necessary, would, I suggest, be irresponsible. However, recognizing the need for a degree of austerity, we wanted to apply the moral principles which we endorsed as a Synod in that earlier debate as a yardstick against which the current welfare reforms might be assessed. Is it fair? Is it generous to the most needy? Is it sustainable from one generation to another?

I hope that our debate and the papers that underpin it will demonstrate to a wider society that the Church acknowledges the problems which our nation faces and which Government has no option but to struggle with. Taking personal responsibility and working hard are of course virtues, but that is entirely consistent with receiving welfare payments. Receiving such payments does not mean that one is not hardworking or lacks responsibility. Indeed, the majority of us here tonight are probably beneficiaries of the state welfare system in one way or another. For instance, far more is spent on pensions than any other area of benefit, and most of us can expect to receive a state pension, even if we have workplace pensions as well.

The role of the welfare system in binding us together as a nation – everybody having a stake – is one that is appealing if we believe, as I do, that social cohesion must not be taken for granted and needs building up. Pragmatically, however, we do need to ask whether the better off – and that certainly includes me – should enjoy quite so many benefits, so far treated as sacrosanct, when benefits for the vulnerable are being cut. The principle that we endorsed in our debate on the financial crisis was that the broadest shoulders should bear the heaviest burdens. That is relevant here too. Perhaps more on this as we consider some of the proposed amendments.

The image of benefit recipients as 'scroungers' or as wilfully idle has been much reported. Yes there is abuse in the system, but we should know that the levels of proven abuse are small. What is more shocking is the way in which hardworking families find that employment may be so ill-paid that only state benefits enable them to live decently.

At Synod last year we passed a Private Member's Motion supporting the living wage. If employers took the living wage seriously, the burden on the welfare system could be reduced, so that it was not a hidden subsidy for underpaying employers. More challenges, and responses to them, will be shared as this debate proceeds.

I hope that it is clear, from the way the motion is framed, from the papers you have read and from what I have said, this is not simple 'bash the Government' time; nor do we refuse to face economic facts. We are not against the principle of reform to the welfare system, because no system can be the final word about human flourishing. We do not claim either that the whole responsibility for the welfare of citizens should fall on the shoulders of the state. On the contrary: we would welcome a properly thought-through settlement between the state and the voluntary structures of society, including the Church, as a way of building up communities and promoting neighbourliness.

As a Church, we not only seek those objectives all the time, we have also responded practically to the hardships that the present austerity measures are imposing on people who have nowhere else to turn – effects which are likely to become more severe as those changes take full effect.

We supported the principle behind the Big Society but, three years from its launch, we had hoped for more substance than we have yet seen. We have a vocation to speak for the poor, the vulnerable and the unfortunate. I hope we will use this debate to say very clearly that the trajectory of reform currently being pursued needs to be revisited, and revisited urgently.

*The Chair:* I shall explain how I intend to guide us through the debate. We have four amendments, which I intend to take after the first two or three speeches on what we have just heard. Hopefully each amendment will have one or two responses and then I may be minded to ask for those to be put, so that we can come back to the main motion, amended or not, for a substantial time before we finish.

*The Archbishop of York (Dr John Sentamu):* The concept of the 'undeserving poor' seems to be one which periodically comes to haunt British society. It is a concept to which Government, some in the media, pub conversations, return with pompous self-righteousness whenever times are hard. The 'scroungers' we hear so much about are a convenient scapegoat when it seems expedient to make sure that someone pays the price of the hardship we fear.

Set against this, however, is a more edifying story of social concern amongst our leaders and our neighbours. Lloyd George's National Insurance Act of 1911 and Lord Beveridge's Report in 1942 were the culmination of years of care and concern about the poor and vulnerable in society. Archbishop William Temple said of the Beveridge Report, 'This is the first time anybody has set out to embody the whole spirit of the Christian ethic in an Act of Parliament.' It is unthinkable that people are now trying to undermine and scrap such a policy that has such very good ethics within in.

In 1942 William Temple had published his ground-breaking work *Christianity and the Social Order*, where he sought to apply Christian values to the political issues of his day.

Key to this work was his identification of three principles: freedom, fellowship and service, and how their application might lead to a more just society.

The Church has always been in the forefront of the challenge to speak and act prophetically, to give a voice to the voiceless and hope and help to those in need. We must continue not only to show mercy and kindness but to shine the light of truth on to the debate about welfare, and resist the rhetoric that accuses many of choosing a life of idle dependence to the detriment of society.

It is an insult to claim that poverty in this country is caused by people choosing unemployment. Six out of ten families in poverty have at least one adult in work. We need to remember who caused the economic downturn. Was it those workers on low wages or the unemployed? Or was it the gambling casino culture of a group of wealthy bankers, compounded by reckless lending by financial institutions, and millions of people borrowing beyond their means, including governments? Who was bailed out with large sums of money? Certainly not the so-called undeserving poor.

We need to focus on what we are doing for the working poor, rather than stigmatizing and dehumanizing those going through tough times. Until we pay a proper living wage for a proper day's work, we will always have the problem of some people being unable to provide for their families. Paying a living wage is not about generosity or charity; it is about fairness and justice.

I was glad to receive an invitation recently, which I accepted, to chair the new Living Wage Commission. It will be launched on 19 July. Income inequality is an affront to our perception of ourselves as a healthy and modern society. My own experience as sponsor of the Fairness Commission in York is that in our society we often have real affluence living next door to real deprivation. Research has shown that a wide range of social problems are more common in societies with larger income differences between rich and poor. Mr David Cameron himself has said, 'We all know in our hearts that, as long as there is deep poverty living systematically side by side with great riches, we all remain the poorer for it.'

Britain is sadly among the more unequal of the rich countries. Therefore, cutting welfare benefits and squeezing the voluntary sector can only result in more injustice and misery in our society.

What we need to do is to ensure that fairness is put back at the heart of the decision-making process, whether that is in Whitehall or in our town halls or even in our churches. We all need to do what we can to tackle poverty in practical ways, not ignore it and hope that it will go away.

We, as a Church, need to remind people of what they know in their hearts: that huge inequalities are an affront to justice and a threat to a cohesive society. For me, the road to recovery is a path not of riches but of service, freedom, mutual accountability, mutual resourcing and togetherness. Something that actually is for something. It is rooted in the rediscovery of a vision to rebuild community in recognition of our duties to one another; rediscovering the wellsprings of solidarity.

Together, Church and State must work to regain the big vision for society under God, which Jesus Christ has called us to show in our care for our brothers and sisters. We must live the Beatitudes and cause them to pervade all our communities. Friends, let us do it and let us do it now!

*The Bishop of Ripon and Leeds (Rt Revd John Packer):* I am very grateful for the opportunity for Synod to reflect on welfare reform and indeed for me to be able to do so again, because for the last few years I have had the responsibility amongst the Lords Spiritual of working with welfare reform issues in the House of Lords.

I shall vote for the motion and I am grateful for Philip's introduction, but I am uncomfortable that it is not more strongly worded. The heart of this debate must lie in the care of a society and a nation for its most vulnerable citizens. We have been talking about that this afternoon in one particular and very important area. This is another area where the vulnerable are abused in our society.

I am constantly both encouraged and challenged by the Ezekiel vision, where the fruit of the trees of the nation is for food and their leaves for healing, a reference taken up in the Revelation vision of the leaves of the tree being for the healing of the nations. That builds, in Ezekiel, on the condemnation of those leaders in society who have not 'restored the weak, tended the sick, bandaged the injured, recovered the straggler or searched for the lost', and the promise of the Lord God to deal with that lack of justice – a word lacking in the resolution and I was delighted that my Archbishop introduced it into this debate. That is the context: the context of a need for justice, in which we should be searching for the best response to a period of national austerity.

One particularly commendable achievement on the part of the Government in this respect is the retention of the provision of international aid to the most deprived people of the world. However, that has not been replicated in our own society. At a time of austerity, the Government needs to ensure that the burden of that austerity falls upon those who can afford it rather than those who cannot.

When the Church Commissioners sold our previous see house in Ripon, it was a vast nine-bedroomed house and we thought that it would go as a nursing home or possibly a hotel. 'No,' said the local estate agent, 'there are plenty of people who can afford to spend £2 million on buying the house and then another £2 million on making it habitable.'

I count myself, like Philip Fletcher, amongst those who have not suffered in any way from the austerity package and yet could well afford to do so. The Christian Church has its rich theology of all humanity made in the image of God and of God assuming human flesh. It is from that bedrock that our cry for justice comes. It is in that context that we need to judge the effect of cuts on children through the reduction of Child Benefit, on those who are disabled by the loss of the Disability Living Allowance, or on families forced to pay high rents, for example, who suffer through the benefit cap. The vast majority of those receiving benefits need them to live appropriately in our society, and we should not be deflected from that purpose by stories of an 'easy ride on benefits', to quote the MPA report.



Some buses in Leeds currently have adverts encouraging us to report those who are abusing welfare, under the heading of 'Wel-Unfair'. I am told that only a tiny proportion of the reports made to the advertised phone number have proved justified.

I therefore have some reservations about part (c) of the motion. I believe that phraseology such as that of 'scroungers' or 'shirkers' is always wrong. I do not think that anyone actually does describe *all* welfare recipients as 'scroungers' in any case, because that would involve condemnation of anyone who receives Child Benefit, for example. I would rather that we simply condemned all derogatory terminology about anyone.

I too welcome the efforts being made by churches and others to help those in need but that should not be necessary, in terms of food banks and the like, in a wealthy society. We do not have right the balance between wealth and poverty in this country and it is there that our primary efforts need to be made. Justice for those in need has to be our clear priority.

*Revd Clare Herbert (London):* Two years ago at St Martin-in-the-Fields, in addition to our work with homeless people, we formed a disability awareness task group. We did it because there were members of our congregation and visitors to our church whose needs were not being met in terms of three things: access to our buildings and amenities in those buildings; or their pastoral understanding and support; or a place fully to belong, with theological, personal and spiritual insights valued and given full recognition.

We have developed in three ways. First by creating inevitable lists of boring things to do building-wise, and being on our way to an important access leaflet.

Secondly, by talking and working together, recognizing each other's distinct differences and contributions. I have to say that this has been the single most difficult part of our work. At St Martin's, perhaps as at all successful churches, we are always rushing and it has required us to slow down, to hear, to see, and to recognize each other's personhood, story, need and gift. Just being patient enough to do that has been very difficult.

Thirdly, by hosting with the charity Inclusive Church an annual day conference: last year *Opening the Roof*, using the miracle story of healing by Jesus and support by friends to open a conversation about God and disability; this year, on 19 October, a conference with Revd Dr John Swinton called *Places of Belonging*, in which we will include disabling aspects of mental as well as physical illness and impairment.

I work as a co-chair of this task group with a very gifted congregation member who suffers from a long-term and severely debilitating neurological disorder. Her work alongside mine means that we have some chance of talking with disabled people rather than *to* disabled people or *about* disabled people. She comes to all meetings despite pain and spasm and attends Sunday worship as her only out-of-home activity. To my utter horror, she told me recently that she did not know if she would be able to come to church any more. She relies entirely on the support of personal assistants to help her out of the house, and their fund-raising in her area has been cut. She is in very serious debt as she, like many others, is suffering the cumulative effect not of one but of six recent cuts to her income.

If she were not to come to church, her already severe social isolation would become complete. Yet this person, perhaps more than any other, has helped St Martin's to understand the language and the territory of disability, and has therefore come to create a regional resource for disabled people through our day conferences that is both practical and spiritual in its scope. What she does is of huge significance, yet she is losing income against a background of spiralling costs of living and of desperate concern for whether she will receive sufficient support to be able simply to leave the house and join in the life of the community where, with us, she belongs.

As a task group, therefore, we would ask three things. First, that the Government be lobbied by such as the Synod to publish cumulative impact assessments, stating the combined financial impact of the different reforms. Secondly, that the Government matches the insights of the Dilnot Report with regard to older adults, with far greater understanding of the independent living needs of disabled people who are under 65. Thirdly, that it sets the threshold at which such people become eligible for social care at a lower level than has recently been announced.

Synod members may be interested to read the report of Scope, which is aptly titled *The Other Care Crisis*. If members would like to come along on 19 October or encourage friends, colleagues or members of their congregation to come, we would be very glad to see them – especially before my friend, and many like her, simply disappear.

*The Chair:* I call Sam Margrave to put his proposed amendment.

*Mr Sam Margrave (Coventry):* I beg to move as an amendment:

*'Leave out* everything after "That this Synod" and *insert* " , concerned at planned Government reforms to the welfare system and the impact on the nation's poorest people, and believing that the cuts agenda is ideological rather than based on a sound financial will to reduce the deficit, believing instead that the necessary funding could be found if companies paid their moral share of taxation, call upon Her Majesty's Government to:

- (a) rethink its approach to cutting welfare and public services as a way of reducing national debt by taxing corporations not individuals;
- (b) acknowledge that in a civilised society there is no such thing as the "undeserving poor";
- (c) give attention to the impact of welfare cuts on the most vulnerable, and support those not in a position to support themselves;
- (d) decry the misleading characterisation of welfare recipients as "scroungers";
- (e) commend those across the churches who are working to support those most in need;
- (f) affirm the Christian value of work; and

- (g) focus on job creation,
- and invite the Archbishops' Council to:
- (i) investigate how Church investments might be used to help create jobs for the poorest in England;
  - (ii) document and publish online evidence collected nationally of the impact of cuts in parishes and communities by calling for submissions from Christians across the UK;
  - (iii) research and propose alternative policies to ensure that the State continues to help the poor in the way they need;
  - (iv) hold a national campaign of prayer for those affected by welfare cuts;
  - (v) recognize that the gap between rich and poor in the UK is at its widest since records began; and
  - (vi) support CPAGs petition calling for a national debate on narrowing the gap through action to share ownership and wealth in a co-operative way".'

This morning in our offertory hymn we sang the words 'Christ's living lamp shall brightly burn ... to give the oppressed their right the Church of Christ shall fight.' It is that fight I am asking Synod to debate today.

The issue of welfare is an important one for our agenda at this Synod. Right now, many are suffering in our nation. Some have even committed suicide because of the reduction in their quality of life. This amendment seeks to offer hope to those suffering in our communities and a chance that this debate will lead to meaningful change and action.

That is why I have put forward a comprehensive package of alternative proposals, which would help the poor not just with meaningless words but commitment for us as the Established Church, in conviction, to real, genuine and positive change.

I ask Synod to support my amendment to say that as a Church we are concerned by the proposed cuts to welfare and public services; that these cuts are ideological and not necessary; that corporations like Google and Starbucks should pay their fair share first. It is to state clearly that as a Church we do not believe there is such a thing as the undeserving poor; to affirm the Christian value of work and to focus on job creation, as well as to explore how Church investments might be used to create jobs. I also want to provide the opportunity for parishes and communities to tell their story of welfare cuts and to call for a campaign of prayer for those affected.

If we do not pass my amendment, my fear is that the motion as it currently appears does very little. It seems to affirm and accept that taking welfare away from the most vulnerable is right and that it is needed because of austerity. Yet even the report by the MPA shows that this is a myth; that these changes are not a result of a need to reduce our

national debt but of an ideology – one that seeks to suggest that as well as the deserving there is an undeserving poor.

As Christians we should be on the side of all the poor. There is no undeserving poor. We should not offer words that result in little more than keeping an eye on the situation; we must provide action, and action now.

Politicians can make bad decisions and get it totally wrong. I know; I used to be one. Right now, our political leaders have lost their way and it is our job to help them out of the situation; to offer some moral guidance. An example was the Minister for Welfare Reform Lord Freud, who recently denied that food banks are there because of welfare cuts.

Over time, I have often wondered if, despite Church House being across the road from Parliament, it should be in the same building. All too often, we are settling for the political will of the day. This is not the time to do that. Jesus offers a different vision. He was radical, a revolutionary, inspirational. That is what his Church should be. Today, together, we have the opportunity to do something radical and revolutionary; to make a difference as a Church by putting our faith into action. We have a national voice, so let us be a voice for the nation. Let us be a voice for the poor and vulnerable. I ask Synod to support my amendment and commend it, as written on the order paper.

*Mr Philip Fletcher:* Mr Margrave says that we should be revolutionary, that it is the nature of the Christian faith to be revolutionary. I accept that. The question is if, at the place where we find ourselves, this particular amendment is right.

Many of the numerous individual elements in the suggested amendment are either met specifically by the motion or would be by other amendments coming later, where I feel quite sympathetic. I suggest that the amendment is effectively a whole new motion and weighs, as Sam Margrave has said, into the party political fray in party political terms. It implies a very different ideological, economic and policy approach, as opposed to a different spiritual approach to the issues that confront us as a nation and the issues that confront the elected and accountable Government of the day.

We are not a political party; we are a Church. It is appropriate for us to call on the Government and those elected to represent us for changes, but I suggest that to mount the sort of full, alternative programme that Mr Margrave urges is going beyond what we ought as a Church to be doing. Amongst other things I suggest that, were we to pass the amendment, we would forego the hope of making constructive progress in dialogue with those elected to represent us.

Is the motion too weak? We have other opportunities to strengthen it. I suggest that this particular approach is not the right way and I urge Synod to reject it.

*Mr Robin Lunn (Worcester):* I speak in support of Sam Margrave's amendment. I think that this amendment, amongst other things, draws attention to some of the loose, unhelpful language which Bishop Packer spoke of earlier, used when describing welfare recipients. It is surely incumbent upon us that, as the Church of England, we defend in

the strongest terms those for whom misfortune and circumstances have pushed into the welfare net.

Part (d) of the amendment chimes very well with paragraph 20 of the report, which stresses that a large proportion of benefits and tax credits go to people in work who are on low incomes. 'Hardworking, low-paid people' is a more apt description than 'scroungers' or 'undeserving poor'.

Whatever our views on the policy of austerity, it is difficult not to agree that there are other ways of achieving deficit reductions. I am sure I am not the only one who disagrees with the fact that, when senior government figures speak of 'We are all in this together', their approach was to reduce the top rate of tax for those earning over £150,000 to 45 per cent. This is a different way, which discriminates less against the poorest in society, and the Church should not be afraid to say so.

Many people – and I am one of them – are still proud to call themselves Keynesians. If we look at the policies followed by President Obama in America and President Hollande in France, we can see that there are other ways.

Parts (f) and (g) of the amendment call on us to affirm the Christian value of work and a focus on job creation. Linking this with our motion last November on the living wage, the whole direction of our beliefs is founded on the fact that there need to be jobs for people to migrate into. This is particularly true for those below the age of 25, and those jobs also need to be well spread. In the areas of highest unemployment, the Church of England is always there when most others are not.

The attractions of this amendment are not just to complain or criticize but to come up with some sensible ways in which we can help. To build on what the Church through the Church Urban Fund and other initiatives do is crucial if we are to make an impact, as well as having positive thoughts. It is not just a question of throwing money at a problem but one of having a well thought-through approach.

I would urge Synod to support this amendment to the motion. We must never be afraid to condemn inappropriate language and the disparity between rich and poor. When a British tennis player, Virginia Wade, last won Wimbledon in 1977 the gap between rich and poor was at its smallest. On this golden day in 2013, as we celebrate Andy Murray's triumph, it is at its widest. This is something of which we, the Government and all of society, cannot be proud.

*Mr Philip French (Rochester):* In early 2010, before the election that brought in the present administration, senior civil servants were briefed on economic forecasts from Her Majesty's Treasury and the independent Institute of Fiscal Studies. It was a sobering experience, even a frightening one. There was real concern over the views of the IMF and the credit rating agencies. That year our annual budget deficit reached £171 billion. Whichever party or parties came to power would clearly have to take decisive action.

That situation still pertains. The deficit is now running at about £120 billion every year. The total public sector debt is now around £1.2 trillion. That is near enough £20,000 per

man, woman and child in this country. The debt interest payments alone amount to about £40 billion every year.

In these circumstances, to proclaim confidently our belief that there is an ideological cuts agenda is rather unhelpful. Welfare spending, including pensions, amounts to about a quarter of all government expenditure, at about £160 billion every year. It is bound to rise in any event, not least because, God willing, pensioners live longer year by year. Therefore, no prudent government with Britain's long-term stability and prosperity in mind could reasonably ignore welfare in getting the deficit under control.

To conclude that the present Government's motivation is necessarily malign is unproven and I suggest that it would be unhelpful for Synod to give Government such an easy excuse to ignore what we actually want to say to them. Moreover, to add a tendentious reference to companies paying a 'moral share of taxation' does not help much. Apart from anything else, it does not add up. The combined UK revenues, not the profits, of the three typically quoted companies – Amazon, Google and Starbucks – are around £4 billion a year. At 23 per cent, corporation tax avoided could be, at most, a few hundred million on the profits for those revenues. Real money, certainly, but not the tens of billions needed to make a dent in the deficit.

I put it to Synod that the preamble to Mr Margrave's amendment is inaccurate but it is also unwise. Unwise in that it would alienate the Government unnecessarily, damaging our reputation for thoughtful, well-considered debate. Whatever views we may hold on the substantive points in this long amendment, many of which may hold our attention, I would urge Synod to stick to the main motion, if necessary strengthened by other amendments.

*Mr Andrew Britton (Archbishops' Council, ex officio):* Synod will have noted that the fourth notice paper estimates the costs arising from this amendment, which add up to close to £100,000. We need to meditate on that, but my reaction is that to do this well would cost a great deal more.

I am speaking from my experience of the Church's inquiry *Unemployment and the Future of Work*, when we attempted to tackle many of the same issues as are raised in this very substantial proposition for a research programme. I think that there is a real danger of the Church doing this and doing it unsatisfactorily, losing the opportunity to speak prophetically to the nation, if the thing were to go off at half-cock.

In essence, Synod has to choose between the sort of programme advocated in the main motion or launching something that, to do the job thoroughly, would cost several times as much as the figures quoted in the notice paper. I think that the amendment has every indication of putting in motion a job that would not be well done.

*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 amendment was put and lost.*

*The Bishop of St Albans (Rt Revd Alan Smith):* I beg to move as an amendment:

‘After paragraph (a) *insert* as a new paragraph –

“(–) invite the MPA Council to consider how the Church of England can better contribute to this new settlement, making recommendations to the General Synod by July 2014;”.’

Like everybody else, I welcome the report and this debate on welfare reform. However, I note that the motion as it stands is nothing more than a series of aspirations, which cost us nothing and are unlikely to make any profound differences.

My amendment addresses one very small aspect of our debate. Clause (a) affirms ‘the need for a renewed settlement between the state, the churches and civil society in pursuit of social solidarity and the common good’ but the state has already set out its new position with the changes it has made, although we have not had a debate on the underlying values. There is, as always at General Synod, much talk in these sessions of our being a national Church. Surely we ought to contribute something substantial to that debate but, more importantly, we need to think how we can act.

In my amendment I am not suggesting that we do this alone. As always, we will want to work with our ecumenical partners. Last night we enthusiastically supported the quinquennial themes and challenges, one of which was the common good. My amendment invites the MPA Council to take the lead. I have deliberately left the details wide open and I have deliberately tried to avoid party political points.

It is likely, however, that the ingredients would be things such as sponsoring and encouraging public debates on a regular basis in our universities, in the public forum, on what this new settlement should be like at the beginning of a third millennium. It seems to me that is a really important task, which we need to be addressing realistically within the constraints of what we are facing. It would probably be something about telling the story and celebrating what we are already doing at grassroots as a Church around the country. There are important stories to tell, to celebrate and indeed, I hope, to inspire other individual Churches to work with us. It would probably include identifying what more we can do, working with other Churches and charities on this challenge for the common good.

I hope that Synod will support this amendment as a small way of taking this forward and giving it more teeth and a bit more of a cutting edge.

*Mr Philip Fletcher:* I particularly welcome the point that the Bishop of St Albans has made about working with our ecumenical partners, and thereby reveal that I am very sympathetic to this amendment.

It covers a lot of the ground on which the MPA and others are already working under the ‘common good’ strand of our quinquennial goals. There is a lot going on already. I have

mentioned the Children's Society and the Church Urban Fund. Perhaps I could use the opportunity to inform Synod of a couple of other things that are just coming up. Next Wednesday, a major report on the Church of England and community action from the ResPublica think tank will be launched at Lambeth Palace. It looks at the historic role of the Church in contributing to flourishing communities and in supporting the vulnerable. It will map the present reality of that work, which is far greater than even we sometimes imagine; and it will make recommendations to the Church and to Government about how Church and state could work together more effectively.

The Minister for Civil Society, Nick Hurd, will speak at the launch, as will Stephen Timms from the Labour Party, and the Archbishop of Canterbury. We await the details of the recommendations, but that report is one example of the numerous conversations across the political spectrum with which MPA and other parts of the Church of England have been involved for a considerable time.

My second example is the fringe meeting on credit unions, a piece of work to which we are already committed as part of our contribution as a Church to the welfare of communities that have been neglected hitherto by the mainstream financial services market and are very vulnerable to both payday lenders and the even more disreputable non-regulated end of that very dodgy profession. MPA will put a lot of energy into that work over the coming year, and perhaps beyond.

Neither of the things I have mentioned offers a quick fix and I suspect that most of what we are talking about will take time. The Bishop of St Albans wants to inject urgency. That is fair enough. However, July 2014 will still come along very quickly. We will do our very best to produce good new thoughts and recommendations for Synod by that date, if Synod supports this amendment – as I hope it will.

*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 amendment was put and carried.*

*The Bishop of Burnley (Rt Revd John Goddard):* I beg to move as an amendment:

‘After paragraph (a) *insert* as a new paragraph –

“(–) encourage Her Majesty’s Government to found such reform on the principle of a bias towards the poor;”.’

One of my favourite theologians, Moltmann, said, ‘A nation will be ultimately judged by the way it cares for the vulnerable and the needy.’

It is well attested that the poorer communities in the country are being hit hardest and in the diocese of Blackburn, as research by Sheffield Hallam University shows, Blackpool, as one of the most deprived authorities, will be hardest hit of all.



Here are one or two figures. With the welfare reforms, every working adult who is receiving benefit and everyone who is solely on benefit will lose some £900 a year in benefit. To put it another way, 12,000 households, 20 per cent of the population of that deprived town – it is not all razzamatazz in Blackpool; there is deep poverty behind the Golden Mile – will have £900 less. That means £82 million goes out of a very deprived area's local economy. There may be talk about fracking close to Blackpool. Of course we recognize the environmental aspect, but if you asked anyone they would say, 'We are desperate for jobs.' The poor need the foundation of this welfare reform to be rethought.

Without going into all the details, if one went to the mill towns of east Lancashire and went from Blackburn to Pendle one would see £172 million being taken out of local budgets due to the welfare changes. The poorest areas are hit the hardest. The gap between rich and poor has never been so large. That is the factual situation in terms of the basis of the present reform of welfare being put into practice.

I believe that as a Church we should challenge that basis, because there are other ways. I am not talking about a dependency culture or some magnificent way of sorting it out for the Government. It is the Government's responsibility, in partnership with the Church and civil society, to find the right solution. However, I believe that we will find it only if we embrace a bias to the poor – Church, civil society and nation.

Otherwise, what happens? If members think that the figures are bad enough, they should look at payday loans. In Blackpool and Burnley, one can pay up to 5,000 per cent interest on a payday loan. Thank goodness we have some Christians working in that area to help with debt.

Having a bias to the poor means that we embrace our Scriptures. I love the stuff in Amos 2 (though I have no time to read it to Synod – look it up later) and the wonderful passage on how the rich can treat the poor. I would also want to look at Christ's own total association with the poor and the marginalized. As a priest who for many years has had the privilege of working in UPA areas, can we get rid of this rubbish about living on £53 a week when you have reserves in the bank of thousands? If you do not have any reserves, you cannot do it – not with a family.

We need a bias to the poor. Of course there are consequences. I will probably lose my wonderful heating allowance, as many of us will here. What does God want? Let it go. We have also to acknowledge that the consequence will be for the richer ones amongst us – those who are on a reasonable wage or on benefits *and* a private pension.

I would therefore commend strongly to Synod that, if we take this seriously – and what a good report it is – we will vote for this amendment and motion.

*Mr Philip Fletcher: Bias to the Poor* – I guess that many of us were educated in this field by Bishop David Sheppard's book under that title. I certainly was. For me, therefore, the Bishop of Burnley strikes a chord that is hard to resist. As for Amos and selling the needy for a pair of shoes, if I recall – yes, it is there in our Scriptures. Synod will therefore have guessed that I am also very sympathetic to this amendment.

I would draw Synod's attention to paragraph 36 of the paper at the back of the report – '... the Church's commitment to a welfare state is not mere nostalgia. It is a theological judgement. ... Where the poor and vulnerable carry a disproportionate share of the burden created by the financial crisis, something is wrong.' Yes, yes, yes to all of that.

The motion as we have it, before the bishop's amendment, does not contain the words 'call on the Government'. This was deliberate; it was to avoid any implication that we are just dumping the issue in the Government's lap. However, all that we have already said, and I hope what we will go on to say in this debate, shows that we are also committing ourselves as a Church to action. This amendment would help to underline that we do not want no-go areas in the welfare system.

Before we accept it with acclamation, however, I want to underline the bishop's final point about his heating allowance. A bias to the poor, if it is not a slogan, has to mean something. One of the things it means is a bias away from the well-off. Many of us either already benefit, or hope to benefit very soon, from universal benefits for those in late middle age, shall we say. At present those benefits are ring-fenced. If we pass this amendment, I think we are saying that a triple-locked, inflation-linked pension needs to be looked at again.

*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 amendment was put and carried.*

*Mr Gavin Oldham (Oxford):* I beg to move as an amendment:

'*Leave out* paragraph (b) and *insert* –

“(–) call on politicians to pay close attention to the impact of welfare cuts on the most vulnerable, and call for support for those not in a position to support themselves and, in doing so, to consider whether the ring-fenced provision of universal benefits may be becoming the enemy of targeted benefits;”.’

In 1993 the national debt was £250 billion. In just 20 years it has grown to five times that large, as confirmed earlier. Let no one be unaware of the perilous state of UK public finances.

Over the past few years, public expenditure has hardly been dented – just 5 per cent below its peak – but government revenues are down by 12 per cent. To those who say 'Increase taxes, especially on the rich', we now have the graphic failure of the French Government to tell us that simply does not work.

The problem has not been caused by benefits targeted on the poor and needy, which have made us a humane society and are the key subject of this motion. The word 'benefits', like the word 'love', has come to mean different things for different people. The problem

is with universal benefits, where Government finances all kinds of services on behalf of people who are perfectly able to pay for them themselves – like my bus pass. I use it virtually every day. I would love to pay for it. Like the wealthy receiving winter fuel payments, free health and education and, as Philip said, a triple lock on pensions – introduced by a well-meaning government after World War II. We have accumulated this massive debt over 60 years, due to the provision of universal benefits. There has been a surplus in only seven out of the last 40 years.

Supplying universal benefits to the wealthy is a political not a gospel issue. It helps politicians to hang on to votes and civil servants to hang on to control; but universal benefits have bankrupted several European nations and are now diverting resources from the poor and needy in the United Kingdom.

Government spends £375 billion each year on pensions, health care and education, and £115 billion on welfare. Assuming that just a quarter of the health care and education are paid on behalf of people who could afford to pay for it themselves and just 10 per cent of the welfare budget, that is £69 billion of disposable government spending. To look at it another way, 7 per cent of the population are higher rate taxpayers. If they paid for their universal benefits, the savings to government would be in the order of £27 billion. Either of these figures dwarf the accumulated reduction in targeted benefits of £4 billion, set out in the Church Urban Fund attachment to GS 1897, covering benefit uprating and benefit cap, housing benefit, disability benefit and tax credit. That is why I put it to Synod that universal benefits are becoming the enemy of targeted benefits.

To those who say that people would not claim what they needed, I say that is a good argument for making a better assessment of need. It is not a reason for spraying munificence over everyone.

We are Christians; we are not politicians trying to protect votes. My call therefore is to all politicians and not the Government, asking them to look to the needs of the nation and its poor and needy. Perhaps with this amendment they will realize that a cross-party compact is needed to tackle universal benefits run wild.

*Mr Philip Fletcher:* Given what I have already said, you will not be surprised that I invite Synod to accept this amendment. Also, I particularly welcome the fact that it addresses politicians – the elected representatives, the Opposition and not just the Government – and there are issues around universal versus targeted benefits. Universal benefits have a point sometimes; targeted benefits have a point sometimes. This would make where the Synod stands even clearer, and I invite Synod to accept it.

*Mr Peter Collard (Derby):* My credentials are that I stood in a mock election at school against Tony Blair. I was the Labour candidate!

On holiday some years ago, I bumped into a vicar who had come from Jarrow. Jarrow is renowned for marches and it has not really changed. He said that when he converts people in his church – as he seemed to do quite regularly – he gets them for just a year or two, after which they move out and move to a better area.

It seems to me that we have a parable about the splinter and the plank that we may need to pay attention to. When lives are transformed by Christ, people do not just stay in the gutter: they move out of the gutter. It seems to me that we can either encourage social services to fur-line the gutter or we can do something about getting people out of the gutter. I would ask Synod to consider if we should not be trying to get people out of the gutter.

*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 amendment was put and carried.*

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

*The Archdeacon of Nottingham (Ven. Peter Hill):* Like Sam Margrave, I want action now, but there is a better way. That way is community organizing, as a rapid and productive partnership, which fits with this motion as amended and commits the Church to action in partnership with others.

First, however, let me paint the picture. For many, Nottingham is a fantastic city in which to live and work, but not for all. According to the Office of National Statistics, it is now Britain’s poorest city. Our residents have the lowest disposable household income of anywhere in the UK. On average, it is £16,000 a year; in Nottingham it is £11,000. It is not a work-shy city but it is a low-economy city; people are not paid enough.

That is the background against which Nottingham Citizens was launched, officially ten days ago but it was conceived 18 months ago and has been in action. There are 18 food banks across the city, 17 of them triggered by churches – and increasing and escalating debt. If in your house the kids have not eaten well for three days and someone knocks on the door offering you a loan, they seem like the messiah.

I was at the launch of Nottingham Citizens. It was a vibrant meeting with 1,000 people present – ten times more than any political party would produce in Nottingham on one evening. This organization – its parent is Citizens UK – was triggered by an inner city vicar, Karen Rooms. On that night, with local and national politicians present, they delivered a commitment on the part of both Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire County Council to a living wage next year; a commitment on the part of the new Police Commissioner to a practical response to BME issues, on discrimination in terms of stop-and-search; and commitments from the new health bodies with regard to mental health issues. Local and national politicians are faced down by community organizing.

I commend it to Synod. It is transformative for the common good. It is not only good; I believe that it is a godly thing. I commend the citizens organization to Synod. Get on board, and it is an extremely practical response to this motion.

*Mrs Patricia Callaghan (Deaf Anglicans Together Representatives)*: I would like to support this motion, especially clause (b) about paying close attention to the welfare cuts to the most vulnerable people.

It is one of my grave concerns that the welfare system may be overlooking the most vulnerable, the minority of deaf adults in society. It is true that the majority of deaf people will have some understanding of the welfare changes and to some extent how it will affect them. Sometimes this is done with the help of family, so they do have that understanding.

I would like to give you a true case study, however, of someone with very limited communication skills who was discharged early from a mental health institution, who was given a three-bedroomed house a year ago. Then the 'bedroom tax' came along. It has had a significant effect on this person very recently, as she is now living well below the poverty line, living on very little, with very little chance of getting a job because of her disability and her mental health issues. The person is now very concerned and does not know what to do. It looks as if she will have to move to a completely different area and to try to find support. There are few single-bedroomed properties around, especially those that are adapted for people who need such adaptations. It seems to me that the Government has not taken disabled people into account and the oppression they are feeling from the Coalition Government, these changes having come in within a short time.

For example, deaf people are referred to a specialist job-finding course. When they get there, they find that there is no interpreter. They go to the Jobcentre and find that they have to ring up for something. Obviously they cannot do it, which means that there is twice as much delay. Percentage-wise, there are twice as many deaf people unemployed as there are hearing people; yet they could very easily be labelled as 'scroungers'. That is unfair, when they want to get work but cannot.

Unfortunately, there are serious discrepancies between the services that are available in different areas of the UK. I do not have time to explain how the social services cuts have created a detrimental effect on society, including the most vulnerable deaf people. How can people who do not have access apply online for the benefits and support they need without assistance? It would be good if close attention could be paid, not just to the effect of welfare cuts but also the methodology that is being introduced.

*Canon Zahida Mallard (Bradford)*: I welcome this motion and want to speak in particular to part (c).

What gives me authority to speak? I have worked in the welfare rights field for 20 years, but guess what happened to me last year. In February, after 18½ years of working – hard working, I think – I was made redundant from the public sector, because of the cuts. I did not lack responsibility and I would not say that I was wilfully idle but in July from being a two-income household we went down to a zero-income household.

How did that leave me feeling? I felt on the margin, not worthy, vulnerable, even though I was and am still the same person. That is what welfare reform and cuts have done.

Thankfully, at least one of us now has an income. It started in October but, even now, we are still suffering the consequences of last year. Bills do not stop. The drain suddenly became blocked and it had to be unblocked; emergency repairs, et cetera. Life still has to go on.

Since I have been called, there were some who knew about this last year. On the Friday of last year's Synod I had perhaps £2.50 in my purse. Somebody asked me how I was and they did not walk away from the answer. On Saturday evening in the bar, £10 was slipped into my hand. That person is sitting in this chamber. That is what the Church did for me that night. That is not statistics; that is real life. I therefore want wholeheartedly to support this motion and to ask the Church to stand with the poor.

*The Bishop of Hull (Rt Revd Richard Frith):* I want to add one or two comments from my Hull perspective, in particular about the 'bedroom tax', which affects many thousands of people in Hull and is, I believe, based on four false assumptions.

First, that there is a flow of suitable housing. There is not. For years, councils have been discouraged from building one and two-bedroomed houses. Second, that family life is stable. We all know that regrettably it is not. Third, that anyone can move without trauma. They cannot, and I could provide many anecdotes on this point. Fourth, that jobs are available. They are not.

Already there is a massive build-up of rent arrears. The local council can currently assist with transition funding but will not be able to do so next year. Rent arrears are up 22 per cent in the last three months. In this build-up of arrears, in the removal of people from their networks of support, in the cultivation of a climate in which the poor are increasingly blamed for their poverty, a time bomb is ticking.

I hope very much that this motion will be taken seriously by Government and that genuine analysis of the effect of its policies on the poorest will be made.

*Sir Tony Baldry (Second Estates Commissioner, ex officio):* I have been listening very carefully during the course of today's debate and will certainly reflect on and report back all the various comments and contributions to colleagues at Westminster.

As the only member of Synod in the House of Commons, there are times when I find myself having to explain to the House the position of the Church of England and, as the only member of Parliament in General Synod, I find myself this evening in a slightly different but alternative position.

I think that one of the things we all have to recognize is that there is now something of an agreement and consensus at Westminster. The Shadow Chancellor has made clear that, for example, any incoming Labour Government would match the present Government's public spending settlement for 2015–16. The Leader of the Opposition said as recently as 6 June, 'Planning social security over three years should become a central part of the spending review,' and went on to say, 'I also believe that a cap on social security spending should be part of that process.' All of the major political parties, therefore, are agreed as to the size of the overall welfare budget and the fact that the welfare budget has to be capped.

To put that into context, according to the figures given to me this week by the House of Commons Library, the total spent on welfare is forecast to be £204 billion this year, rising to £218 billion in cash terms for 2016–17 or, expressed in today's figures, £206 billion; so £204 billion today to £206 billion in 2016–17. Therefore, the reality is that we shall have to work out how best to meet the nation's collective welfare needs within the agreed spending envelope.

I suggest that as a Church we need to look to do two things. First, to seek a new settlement with Government as to how the Church of England can help deliver welfare reform. We have had a settlement with the State on education since 1944 and, given the recent discussions between the Bishop of Oxford and Michael Gove, it is a settlement that is set to expand. I suggest that we therefore need to agree a similar settlement with ministers on how the Church of England can better help deliver welfare support.

Secondly, there will be a debate as to how money within the welfare budget can best be targeted and spent. (If anyone wants to see the totality of my speech, it is on my website – but giving a 15-minute speech in three minutes is quite a challenge!) However, that debate needs to be evidence-based. Every day, the Church of England has thousands of people working directly with recipients of the welfare budget in parishes across the country.

May I suggest, with respect and rather humbly, that there perhaps could and should be an Archbishop's commission on welfare, which can build on the excellent work already initiated in York by the Archbishop of York and which can take evidence from those in the Church of England who work in the community directly. I was very interested in the contributions made by various speakers this evening. We need to work on that so that hopefully we can be engaged in both enhancing delivery and improving policy.

*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.*

*Mr Philip Fletcher, in reply:* Focusing on those who contributed to the main motion, I suggest that we have had a good, if very short, debate. There is a lot more to be said.

The Archbishop of York has reminded us of the big vision, the Fairness Commission, the issue of justice, which was also underlined by the Bishop of Ripon and Leeds. Various speakers have rightly condemned all derogatory language in this context. Clare Herbert and Pat Callaghan referred to that, in particular around disability implications. There was a case study, which sounds horribly neutral but it was a really meaningful case study of the impact of the ‘bedroom tax’ – a point also underlined by the Bishop of Hull. Zahida Mallard made a very brave personal statement on the direct, immediate impact when you lose your job. Then finally we have Tony Baldry's very interesting contribution, which may help the debates to go yet further.

Our motion, as it stands, does not say ‘There shall be welfare payments extending *ad infinitum* as far as it will go.’ We have had various speakers telling us about the financial implications of where the nation stands. What we have said very clearly, if we pass this amended motion, is that we are most interested in the impact on the poor and the vulnerable, and we want a dialogue with Government and Opposition about this.

I have already mentioned the coming presentation on credit unions involving all three, but Tony Baldry will help us into our further debates over the coming year; and a settlement on how the Church of England can help deliver support, which does not mean conceding anything on different positions taken by politicians. We have evidence to offer; we have shown that. We have practicalities on the ground; we have shown that.

Maybe an Archbishop's commission on welfare – but that is above my pay grade! For now, it is a very clear motion addressing the nation and the Church on what can be done. I invite Synod to support it.

*Mr Gavin Oldham (Oxford):* On a point of order, Chair. If we are to send a clear message to the nation, could we have a count of the whole Synod?

*The Chairman:* Mr Oldham has anticipated my decision, which is that this is so important, and so many other members of Synod would have liked to have spoken in what was a relatively short debate, we should have a division of the whole Synod.

*The motion was put and carried in the following amended form, 331 voting in favour, 1 against, with 7 recorded abstentions:*

‘That this Synod, recognizing that in times of austerity hard choices must be made between competing priorities, and acknowledging that reform of welfare systems is essential:

- (a) affirm the need for a renewed settlement between the state, the churches and civil society in pursuit of social solidarity and the common good;
- (b) encourage Her Majesty's Government to found such reform on the principle of a bias towards the poor;
- (c) invite the MPA Council to consider how the Church of England can better contribute to this new settlement, making recommendations to the General Synod by July 2014;
- (d) call on politicians to pay close attention to the impact of welfare cuts on the most vulnerable, and call for support for those not in a position to support themselves and, in doing so, to consider whether the ring-fenced provision of universal benefits may be becoming the enemy of targeted benefits;
- (e) decry the misleading characterization of all welfare recipients as ‘scroungers’; and
- (f) commend those across the churches who are working to support those most in need.’

*The Archbishop of York* dismissed the Synod with the blessing at 10.05 p.m.



## **Fourth Day**

### **Monday 8 July 2013**

THE CHAIR *Mr Geoffrey Tattersall (Manchester)* took the Chair at 9.30 a.m.

*Revd Thomas Seville (Religious Communities)* led the Synod in prayer.

#### **Statement by the Chair of the Business Committee**

*The Archdeacon of Dorking (Ven. Julian Henderson)*: I want to advise the Synod that there may be a possibility that our business this morning will run beyond lunch. We have every confidence that our Chair will do his best, but, if needed, before lunch I may ask the Synod for its permission to vary the order of business by extending the debate on Women in the Episcopate to the first part of this afternoon. I make the point in that way because we remain committed to taking the Dioceses Commission Reorganization Scheme this afternoon but we may have to allow some of the debate on the budget, scheduled for this afternoon, to run into the evening session. We will therefore need to be flexible as we handle our business together today.

There is one other notice for members' attention, which I hope they will support. I am very pleased to report that after morning worship tomorrow Bishop Angaelos has agreed to address the Synod for 10 minutes on the current situation in Egypt and I hope members will ensure that they are present to hear and support him.

#### **Women in the Episcopate (GS 1886)**

*The Chair*: We move to Item 16, the motion –

*Mrs Andrea Williams (Chichester)*: On a point of order, Chair. Under SO 33 I beg to move:

‘That the debate be now adjourned until tomorrow.’

*The Chair*: I shall take advice.

Mrs Williams having moved the procedural motion that the debate be adjourned, under SO 33, she has not more than two minutes to give her reasons. I will then ask the Bishop of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich, the mover of the main motion, to speak for not more than two minutes. When I have heard those two speeches I will then decide, in my discretion under SO 33, whether to allow any more speeches on that procedural motion.

*Mrs Andrea Williams (Chichester)*: Will the Archbishops please consider postponing today's business until tomorrow to enable all the bishops who are members of the House of Lords to be present in the House for today's crucial debate on the redefinition of marriage, where votes will be taken to protect people being discriminated against in the workplace for their belief in marriage between one man and one woman in the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill? Vital amendments are to be tabled and voted on today for the protection of Christian liberty.

I remind Synod of the reading from Zechariah during this morning's worship:

‘Now bless the God of Israel  
who comes in love and power,  
who raises from the royal house  
deliv’rance in this hour.

Through holy prophets God has sworn  
to free us from alarm,  
to save us from the heavy hand  
of all who wish us harm.

Remembering the covenant,  
God rescues us from fear,  
that we might serve in holiness  
and peace from year to year.

And you, my child, shall go before,  
to preach, to prophesy,  
that all may know the tender love,  
the grace of God most high.’

*The Bishop of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich (Rt Revd Nigel Stock):* A number of bishops will be attending the House of Lords today and on Wednesday for the report stage of the Bill. We have therefore made sure that our voice is heard in the House of Lords. At report stage numbers do not make that much difference; what is important is that their voices are heard and their arguments made, and we have taken account of that. Relatively speaking, we receive short notice of when these debates are to take place and we have done our best to make sure that their voices are heard. However we have to do our business as well.

*The Chair:* Having heard those two speakers, I do not propose to allow any further speeches on this.

*The procedural motion was put and lost.*

*The Chair:* For this debate members will need, first, GS 1886, the paper outlining the options that we considered in particular on Saturday; second, Order Paper V, a reading of which will demonstrate the difficulties that I have in managing this debate; third, the Seventh Notice Paper, dealing with the financial implications, to which I will return in a moment; and, fourth, stamina and patience!

We have had facilitated discussions and I hope that, in a spirit of goodwill and generosity, we will begin to listen to each other rather than speak at each other. That may be a new way of Synod but I hope that it will be a very good new way; we shall have to wait to see where it takes us.

Hopefully at the conclusion of the debate a new Steering Committee will be able to put forward proposals at the November group of sessions, which will begin – I stress the word ‘begin’ – the process of what will emerge at the other end. The purpose of today’s debate is to give the Steering Committee a steer as to what they should do, and during that process there will be opportunities for the Revision Committee, in conjunction with the Steering Committee, and the Synod, to revise those proposals. I therefore must stress that this is only the beginning of the process.

I am asked to draw attention to paragraphs 13 and 14 of the financial statement contained in the Seventh Notice Paper. In doing so, it means that Mr Britton will not need to speak to this item, which obviously is helpful, because it would limit the number of speakers. I need to add that the estimated cost of staff time to prepare the draft legislation for First Consideration has been arrived at on the assumption that the amendments are not passed. Obviously there would be some cost in holding further facilitated discussions, as envisaged in the amendments proposed by Mr Cawdell and Mr Malcouronne. However, members will understand that it is not possible to cost those until a number of conversations have been held and the number of participants is known. At this stage the position is a little uncertain, but I think members will appreciate the general picture from the Seventh Notice Paper.

It will not come as any surprise that a large number of people have asked to speak, which will require some discipline on their part to make points quickly and try to move on. We are not in November 2012; we are in July 2013. Some members might wish that we were in a different place, but we are where we are and we cannot change that.

I call on the Bishop of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich to move the motion. Bishop, you have 12 minutes.

*The Bishop of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich (Rt Revd Nigel Stock):* I beg to move:

‘That this Synod:

- (a) reaffirm its commitment to admitting women to the episcopate as a matter of urgency;
- (b) instruct the Appointments Committee to appoint this month a Steering Committee to be in charge of the draft legislation required to that end;
- (c) instruct the Business Committee to arrange for the First Consideration stage for that draft legislation to be taken at the November 2013 group of sessions, so that the subsequent stages can follow the timetable set out in paragraph 141 of the annex to GS 1886; and
- (d) instruct the Steering Committee to prepare the draft legislation on the basis described in paragraphs 79–88 of the annex to GS 1886 as “option one” and invite the House of Bishops to bring to the Synod for consideration at the February 2014 group of sessions a draft Act of Synod or draft declaration to be made by the House to accompany the draft legislation.’

What a weekend! The British and Irish Lions won a series for the first time in 16 years, a Briton – a British man - won Wimbledon for the first time in 77 years, we have had constructive, facilitated conversations, the sun shone, and on Monday morning the sun went in and we seem to be back into the inevitable processes of Synod that cause us anxiety.

Echoing what the Chair said, I hope that we can bring some of that constructive element from Saturday into this morning’s debate and that all that facilitated dialogue will surround our more formal consideration today. In order to try to encourage that spirit, I can say now that later during the debate I shall accept Keith Malcouronne’s amendment, which tries to encourage a progression of that spirit of continuing dialogue to the next stage. I hope that one

of the immediate dividends from Saturday might be fewer of the set-piece contributions that we became used to hearing which go over familiar ground. I hope that we can venture into creativity.

However, we cannot avoid some choices if we are to start a new process today; and we need to try to establish where the balance of view lies in the various alternative approaches, which means that the mind of the Synod will be tested by putting amendments to the vote. We also need to remember that, as the Chair said, today is not for final decisions. The legislative process and further facilitated discussions provide a framework, within which I hope further creativity will be possible. The fact that today the Synod goes for one or other approach does not mean that it cannot develop or modify it later.

The motion before the Synod today comes from the House of Bishops and it is on behalf of the House that I speak, but 19 of the 25 pages of GS 1886 consist of the report to the House from the working group which I chaired. Therefore, before speaking on behalf of the House I want first to say something on behalf of the working group, and I would now like to say a big ‘thank you’ to all the members of that group for the time that they put in and their contributions over the early months of this year. (*Applause*)

It does not require great imagination to realize how we all felt when we met for the first time at the beginning of January, just a few weeks after the vote at the November group of sessions. Eight of us, including some with various reservations over detail, had voted for the legislation and two had voted against. The one thing we had in common was that none of us was approaching the task ahead of us with a great spring in our step. I thought that if one more person came to talk to me about poisoned chalices I was likely to hit them! Yet even at the first meeting as we talked and prayed together we developed a sense of the shared responsibility entrusted to us. For all our differences of view, we saw the task as being to enable women to become bishops as soon as possible and at the same time maintain, so far as possible, the richness and diversity of the Church that we love.

We are indebted to David Porter, who the Synod has now come to know, and his colleagues for their help with the facilitated conversations in February and April, and I am grateful to all the representatives of the major interest groups and some members of the Synod who were invited to take part. It was a significant experience, and from it the hope was born that something similar could be re-created for the General Synod. It was never realistic to expect that the facilitated conversations held with the working group and others earlier in the year would be able to come up with a solution that everyone would rally round; this Synod was always going to be the place where the decisions would be made. In the event, however, I found that Saturday rather exceeded my expectations, and I am grateful to David and his team for that and for the hope that it holds out.

It was never very likely that in the immediate aftermath of the debate in November those to whom we spoke would be likely to be most disposed to show flexibility. The outcome in November caused greater polarization, which we have to recognize. Nevertheless, if as a working group we were not able to identify a way through which everyone could endorse, we were able to reach a substantial measure of agreement on two matters. First, we were able to identify the five elements of a vision that we could all share. From these were formed the five principles in paragraph 12 of GS 1886 of the covering report from the House of Bishops.

The significance of being able to gather round these principles, if we can, means that the unresolved differences between us – and I do not want to minimize them – are about means, not ends. In the working group we were no longer arguing about whether women would become bishops; those with theological difficulties about that recognized that it is the wish of the overwhelming majority of the Church of England. Equally, the majority accepted that there needs to be space for the minority. The ground which both the majority and the minority can stand on together is carefully mapped out in the five elements of that vision.

I take the point that more than one group from the facilitated discussions said that we need to be able to own those five principles, and I look forward to hearing comments from the floor of Synod about them. My expectation is that the five principles would be included in any declaration from the House of Bishops, which would be brought to the Synod in draft and would provide the mechanism for them to be debated later.

The group was then able to produce an agreed analysis of four possible options, all of them different from the statutory code of practice approach that was at the heart of the previous legislation. We all agreed that this time everything must be settled before the Synod comes to a final approval vote. Anything, whether a code of practice or regulations, that leaves further important texts to be debated and argued later simply will not work. The group did not seek to take votes as between the four options, because the arithmetic was never going to be what mattered.

I turn now to the motion at Item 16 and address the Synod on behalf of the House of Bishops rather than the working group. Paragraphs 19–34 on pages 4–6 of GS 1886 explain why the majority of members of the House favoured option one. I think it is accurate to report that in our discussions option four – the maximal legislative approach – was not the first preference of any member of the House.

Some favoured option three, I think for the reason given in the working group's report, namely that it 'would avoid removing the statutory rights which are currently available to parishes and the corresponding duties that they involve for patrons, bishops and others'. The difficulty, however, is that the 1993 Measure enshrines a gender-based difference of treatment, and most of us in the House felt that the time for that sort of approach had passed. Moreover, the working group noted that even this legislation would not be sufficient for some since the issue in future 'would not solely be the gender of their incumbent and other clergy but the provenance of their orders'.

That left options one and two. Of those, option one had by far the greater degree of support for its clarity and simplicity. It would still involve arrangements on grounds of theological conviction, but they would be set out in either a declaration that the House of Bishops would make, or an Act of Synod if that was the preference of the General Synod. In addition, as paragraph 28 makes clear, there would be a mediation process for addressing grievances. Members will see on the Order Paper an amendment designed to make participation in a mediation process mandatory for bishops, and again it might be helpful if I signal now that I intend to invite the Synod to accept that amendment.

No doubt much of our debate this morning will be about the rival merits of the options. However, in conclusion I want to underline the importance of the first three parts of the motion lest they be passed over in silence.

The first invites the Synod to endorse the view of the bishops that this is an urgent issue, not simply because Parliament is looking attentively and impatiently at what we are doing, though it is, but because last November's decision caused some profound mystification and unhappiness around much of the Church of England. It was a serious blow to our female clergy and it means that it will be at least two years longer than we had hoped before women are able to enrich the episcopate; so, however we look at it, there is a degree of urgency.

For that reason, the second limb of the motion instructs the Appointments Committee to put the Steering Committee in place this month. The committee will need to meet in September to prepare the texts ready for November.

The third part of the motion instructs the Business Committee to arrange for First Consideration of the legislation in November so that we can complete all stages in 2015. The question whether we should bring the matter to the final vote at the end of this Synod or at the beginning of the next Synod does not need to be settled today, though, speaking for myself, I do not think we should seek to prolong this process any longer than is absolutely necessary.

I therefore believe that option one, together with a mandatory mediation process, including as it does a declaration, or possibly an Act of Synod, deserves to be taken very seriously as a means of providing the basis for securing the necessary majorities in the lifetime of this Synod.

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

*The Bishop of Lincoln (Rt Revd Christopher Lowson):* On the floor of the chapel of the Royal Foundation of St Katharine in East London are some words carved beautifully in calligraphy from St Augustine of Hippo: 'We come to God not by navigation but by love.'

Many of us were destabilized by the outcome in November and searched for people and processes to blame: six people in the House of Laity, ambiguous election addresses, a voting system that saves up a requirement for a two-thirds majority until the last moment, and so on. However, on more mature reflection the question I have been pondering is how God was present within a bitter disappointment that many people in the Church of England and the nation find bewildering and unjust. Rather than being angry and looking for someone or something to blame, we would do better to look for God's providence in the process. Of course, God always allows things to go wrong and for us to make mistakes, but the grace of God is available to us as we work together to find His will for the future. For me this means changing the language of our discourse from one of suspicion, balanced by guarantee, to one of mutual respect. I hope that we can work together to begin the journey again but in a different way.

It is a big task, because there have been years of suspicion. The debate in November, the work undertaken since by leading protagonists in facilitated discussions and our honest and painful discussions on Saturday revealed that, although we are honestly engaged in a process of truth and reconciliation, we are still at the stage of sharing the truth as we see it, and reconciliation is not possible in human terms. To use St Augustine's metaphor, the method of plotting an accurate course across the ocean which we initiate and in which we are in control is perhaps not God's way. Instead, God is inviting us to respond to his love by building new relationships characterized by mutual respect. This will of course take time to achieve, but in

the end we shall be in a better place – a place that reflects more faithfully our vocation as Church with an ordained ministry that can be celebrated by all. It will build our capacity to manage diversity with respect.

I am not naïve. I do not underestimate how difficult this will be in a Church that seeks to govern more by unanimity than fiat or even negotiated settlement. I am conscious that much suspicion surrounds this conversation – the suspicion of bishops both as a House and as individuals and the suspicion within the wider Church of this very General Synod. All of us, including bishops, need to listen to the views of those with whom we disagree. We need graciously to apologize for inappropriate language and poor decisions and we need humbly to explore the way in which God is calling us to walk; we come to God not by navigation but by love.

Although option one avoids provision through legislation, it is not fluffy or unreliable. A bishops' declaration will provide a developing and authoritative framework for protection, and if it were strengthened by the Bishop of Dover's independent monitoring system in his amendment, accompanied by continuing conversations as proposed by Keith Malcouronne, it will be as robust as anything that the Church requires. I urge members to support option one, amended as I hope by the Bishop of Dover and Keith Malcouronne, and together let us begin the path of reconciliation.

*Revd Prebendary Roderick Thomas (Exeter):* I would like to start by making it very clear that as one who was actively involved in encouraging people to withhold final approval last November I do not want – and I know that I speak for the majority of evangelicals who voted to withhold final approval – again to be in the position that we were in then. We do not want to block the clear majority of this Synod and the Church who want to see women bishops in place; I repeat that we do not wish to block the clear will of the majority to see women bishops in place.

Because of that, together with others I took part wholeheartedly in the facilitated discussions that were organized in the spring with the working group of the House of Bishops. I found those discussions quite refreshing, partly I admit because they moved away from synodical processes and partly because they opened up fresh opportunities. For my part, I freshly appreciated the sensitivities that many had about the appearance of discrimination and the theological reasoning about our shared baptism. I also felt that as a result of those facilitated discussions those who were most ardently in favour of women bishops had a deeper understanding of where some of our sensitivities lay and why certain things appeared to us to undermine what we understood the Bible to teach on male headship.

In addition, as a number of people who had refused to give final approval, we accepted that any future legislation should be simpler and more straightforward. In order to accommodate those sensitivities we also talked about a range of instruments that could be used; we thought that we could keep the legislation simple, but add to it not just Acts of Synod and bishops' declarations but canonical regulations, and we talked about taking practical steps alongside the legislative process to build trust. However, none of this is reflected in the House of Bishops' motion before us. Instead of this sensitivity we have a bald proposal for a single-clause Measure and unspecified provision contained only within either an Act of Synod or a House of Bishops' declaration; there is no scope for going more widely.

If we pass the motion as it stands, even as most helpfully amended by the Bishop of Dover and Keith Malcouronne, we will not have achieved the objective of mutual flourishing, because instead of allowing people of my integrity to flourish within the Church there will be a sense of gnawing anxiety on our part. There will be anxiety about how long the provision will last, because it will be susceptible to change by a simple majority vote rather than a two-thirds vote, about whether litigation will be started under the Equality Act, because on the face of the Measure there will be no mention of provision – not discrimination but just provision – and about whether ordinands will be able to swear an oath of canonical obedience when they are required to accept wholeheartedly the ministry of women bishops and there is nothing in the canons to accept their theological integrity.

Therefore, despite those helpful amendments, I urge that we do not go down a track that will lead to confrontation. We want to enable the Synod to vote in legislation, and that can be done only if members pass one of the helpful amendments proposed by Simon Cawdell or Paul Benfield, or one of the others, which will open up an opportunity for something to be included on the face of the Measure and within the canons.

*Revd Karen Hutchinson (Guildford)*: I begin with something of a confession. Once upon a time I was a matrimonial lawyer. One part of that role that I felt rather jarred with my principles as a Christian was when someone about to be married asked me to draw up a pre-nuptial agreement, a legally enforceable contract, which set out in advance exactly what would happen to property or finances if the marriage failed. Although it is a good idea to be clear about expectations when one enters into something as important as marriage, I worried that putting energy and resources into planning for failure rather than working on the relationship itself would not help to repair any deficits which in years to come might lead to its breakdown.

In a similar way, I am deeply uncomfortable with an over-reliance on a legally enforceable provision being spelt out as we, part of the Body of Christ, embark together on a new venture. If our energy and resources are poured into haggling over legislative formulae as they have over the past few years, it would result both in a diversion from our work as witnesses to the love of God and the potential to cause yet more damage to our relationships within that body, and only good relationships will ease that gnawing anxiety.

I want to remain part of the same Church with those who do not recognize my ministry. That is not easy and it has not been easy for many for the past 20 years, but by the grace of God it is possible to love each other even while we disagree. What unites us is greater than what divides us. Let us put our energy into building relationships that will sustain us through the transition ahead. With the additional availability of the monitoring and mediation processes that we have begun to explore, we can have confidence that those who are and will be appointed as bishops will ensure that the diverse needs of their congregations are met, without those needs and specific provision for them to be spelt out in legislation in advance. This is a chance for a fresh start, a chance to work in a different, more relational way, which ultimately will be far healthier.

I support the House of Bishops' recommendation for option one and encourage Synod to embrace its vision and vote for the motion.

*Revd Canon Wealands Bell (Lichfield)* – and making a maiden speech. I have been sent here by a strange alliance of traditionalist priests and the rest of us. In our by-election I made it clear that I was completely and passionately in favour of the ordination of women to the



episcopate and equally passionate about the retention of my Catholic brothers and sisters –of conservative evangelicals I am not competent to speak, for which members will perhaps forgive me – within the same Church.

What became clear to me on Saturday was the sad reality that there is no trust. The trust that is spoken of in paragraph 88 of the annex simply is not there, and it is impossible to imagine that it might be created by removing the assurances previously given. ‘I am going to take away the promise that I made yesterday in order that you will trust me more tomorrow’ does not seem to me to work.

We seem to have set up an opposition between trust or grace and the law, and I do not see it. It seems peculiar that, of all people, Anglicans should be concerned about the law being bad or questionable. Anglicanism is founded on Christ and the apostles but also on the law of England. From installing a minor canon to erecting a tombstone, still less, to cut to the heart of the gospel, determining where in procession the diocesan registrar shall come in relation to an assistant bishop, nothing can be done in the Church of England without appealing to the law and the documents that follow from the law.

In recent revisions of our constitution and statutes at Lichfield Cathedral we have found the Cathedrals Measure profoundly helpful. It has identified for us those items over which our own wilfulness and caprice can have no authority, and they have allowed us to give our energy to those matters that we can discuss, leaving aside those that wiser counsels have determined we will abide by. We have found the law to be good; we have found the law to liberate and enable our lives together. Of course, it will be argued that the law being asked for by some would be bad law and would enshrine injustice. I do not find that to be so, though I can see that almost no one will agree with this analysis.

It seems very clear to me that the objection to the orders of women is not about misogyny but rather an on-going grief concerning the schism of the Church – most obviously the Church of Rome – which began nearly 500 years ago, and a desire to do nothing that will be injurious to our membership of the One Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church that motivates traditional Catholic opposition to this idea. My friends in the traditionalist camp long for the day when the Pope will wake up and decide to ordain women. Nothing will give them greater joy and no one will rejoice more; it is a matter of ecumenism, a matter of being part of a whole Church. I do not agree with that view, I believe that they are wrong, but that is what motivates it rather than misogyny. I agree that it will be difficult to explain that distinction to the world, but I believe that good legislation can help us all to bear together the grief of our dividedness rather than enshrine misogyny.

Of course, much will be expected of Catholics. It seems to me that women bishops would need to be given juridical allegiance even though sacramental assurance could not be derived from them. They would have to come and be your bishops even if only at Festal Evensong, but that would be a sign of a Church growing and living together in love, and it might just be a way forward in Him in whom mercy and truth are met together.

*The Bishop of Willesden (Rt Revd Pete Broadbent):* Everything changed in November and I think that today we are all slightly scared that we might again become involved in the adversarial debate that we had then, but we have since had a good experience. Those who took part in the discussion groups in March bear witness to the fact that they were positive, as were the discussions held on Saturday, in terms of the formation of a new process for the

future, but the danger is that we are now on the floor of Synod doing what we always do, and doing it very badly.

We need to have this debate but frame something different for the way forward. I have toyed with what that might be and I have a cunning plan. I have tried it out on the House of Bishops, on some people from the various interest and campaigning groups and on folk in the bar of Vanbrugh College last night, to whom I apologize if I spoilt their drinking time. The response from most people has been that it could work, so let me try it on Synod. It does not require any change and we shall still need to have the debate this morning, which will enable us to frame the way in which we go forward.

The proposal is that we put together a bigger than usual steering group that will include people of all sorts and conditions, both those from the pressure groups and those of no groups at all, who quite often are left out of these discussions, which will be tasked with engaging in a facilitated discussion with David Porter and, based on our debate this morning and the parameters set here, proposing legislation that meets with universal approval. It is a risk strategy, because some may say ‘I cannot do this’, and there would be no case for a minority report on these issues; the group would emerge with an agreed way forward or not. It would be a different way of framing what we do and it might just work.

The second part of my proposal, which would require the consent of the Business Committee, is that we forgo the need for a Revision Committee; and provision is made in Standing Orders for the setting aside of that requirement. That was the toxic part of the process last time; all of us who were members of the Revision Committee then bear the scars of how awful it was. Revision Committees are in place for the purpose of nit-picking and unpicking what has gone on, where all can have their say but actually no one wins. Half-way through the previous Revision Committee we all said, ‘This ain’t working, it’s broke.’ Members will have read our report and will know what happened.

Therefore, my proposal, subject to approval by the Business Committee, is that no Revision Committee be appointed but that the steering group tables draft legislation that is owned by them, which will come straight to Revision Stage in Synod. In that way we, the Synod, can be assured that the people who speak for us – or maybe not – will have met and come up with something in which we acquiesce, and that would make the moral authority of what comes to Synod for revision much stronger than usual. The experience of 1992 was that when we reached the Revision Stage in full Synod most of the amendments tabled at that time did not fly, because everyone said ‘We have all had our say and we are where we are’ and those who tried to move revisions in full Synod withdrew them because they realized that they would not work.

I propose that we reframe how we do it by having a steering group comprising more than the usual number of members – perhaps a larger number initially, which could be reduced to a more manageable number when the matter returns to the Synod – to go through the process that we have all found valuable and come back with agreed draft legislation for revision in full Synod. If members think that is worth running with, I urge them to slip into their speeches: ‘I agree with Pete.’ In that way the Synod will have some consensus that this might fly, that it might just work and that by doing it differently we might avoid the train crash. (*Lengthy applause*) (*The Chair rang the bell.*)

*The Chair:* You will only encourage him – his blog is bad enough!

*Mr Tim Hind (Bath and Wells):* Thank you, Baldrick! I support you. Thank you, too, to Bishop Nigel for all his work. We congratulate him on his potential move to Lambeth, which is great news. However, I cannot thank Pete for pinching one of the best lines from my speech, which was to ask: what on earth has happened to this glorious sun of York? I mention that because in October last year I had some solar panels fitted to the roof of my house. Being a bit of a mathematician and a nerd in that way, every day since I have monitored the amount of energy that the new system has generated and on only one day has no light or heat been generated, namely 20 November! I leave Synod with that thought.

Many will have shared my intense disappointment at the result in November and will have cause for concern that in view of the current constitution of the General Synod's House of Laity we may not get much further than we did then towards the release of missional opportunity that is presented by having episcopal ministry open to all who are being called by God to exercise that role. However, I have been heartened, and occasionally dismayed, by the events of the past seven or eight months as different groups have met to enable us to have what is before us today: dismayed by the fact that I am still concerned that there are some on all sides who have yet to change their text to be inclusive and trusting; and heartened because in an episcopal Church we have had a strong episcopal lead whilst recognizing the need for an independent watchdog for any Act of Synod or formal declaration.

In my submission to the working group I said that my backstop was that the office of bishop was not to be compromised. However, what really worries me about the instruments, the style of the Measure and the Act of Synod that we have in place at the moment is that currently they are written in negative terms. What I believe is really needed is affirmative legislation, i.e. taking on board the fact that the more substantial and complex any Measure is, the more anguished and hesitant the Church of England risks appearing over a development which for most people in the Church should be a cause for affirmation and joy.

It is a must that some individuals need to be able to cope with what to all intents and purposes goes against the grain of their long-held beliefs. The way in which some have expressed themselves in the past has been to deny women the possibility of taking on the role of bishop. The Act of Synod itself embodied that discrimination in a statement that 'except as provided by the Measure and this Act, no person or body shall discriminate against candidates either for ordination or for appointment to senior office in the Church of England on the grounds of their views or positions about the ordination of women to the priesthood'.

I recognize that this is a legal construct to get us to a particular point with that set of instruments, but it demonstrates that we need a new set of instruments to work from the opposite end of the spectrum – affirmation rather than denial. What this means for me is that the fresh legislation has to be written much more towards the trust end of the debate and without unnecessary reference to the old Measure and Act of Synod as it clears the air of any prior baggage – sent to Tokyo, I believe! I know that we must avoid excessive Anglican optimism that can appear overly accepting of and almost naïve about innovation, but I believe that this is the right way forward for our Church at this time.

In conclusion, I am content with option one as a starting point and look forward to a positive, affirming set of instruments that will enable our Church to move ahead into a new era.

*Revd Canon Christopher Cook (Liverpool):* Over a week ago I returned from a sabbatical in Egypt learning, or trying to learn, Arabic. Luckily, I managed to get out of Cairo just before the beginning of the demonstrations. While I was there I travelled extensively and met a very

wide spectrum of people. For example, on one weekend I travelled to the Faiyūm, visiting five monasteries where I talked to many of the monks and my fellow pilgrims. I was therefore able to share the anxiety and fears of the Copts about the Muslim Brotherhood government and I experienced the aspirations and sense of patriotism uniting both the Copts and ordinary Muslims. They were all angry that a president who had promised to govern for all Egyptians was in fact governing for only his own party.

I relate all this to the Synod because, having only just come back, these experiences are uppermost in my mind and inevitably colour my thinking now. I think especially of the need to legislate for all and the need for unity, so we as the General Synod must also legislate fully for all and for the good of the whole Church of England.

In Saturday's facilitated conversations I sensed a feeling of unity. As we know, at times they were painful, but they also gave us a glimpse of that unity that we share based on our common love of our Church; and it is good to hear that it is likely we shall use such facilitated conversations in the future. In one of the small groups of which I was a member the consensus seemed to be that option four was the best because it would create sufficient space for all, rather than for just one group or another, and would strengthen the unity of the Church. Sadly, though, all of us in the group concluded that it probably stood no chance of getting through.

However, I then thought 'Why not option four?' As we know, it has all the provisions about priestly and episcopal ministry contained in the Measure itself and therefore gives that greater degree of legal certainty, but it seems to me that only this legal certainty will, in the words of the working group's fourth principle, 'enable those unable to accept the ministry of women priests and bishops to flourish within the life and structures of the Church'; and I think that the word 'structures' is important because it suggests a firm and certain legal framework such as only a Measure or a canon can give.

We have already heard it suggested that we should rely more on trust and grace than on law, and I agree with those who have suggested that we need both. The proposals in options one and two to repeal the Act of Synod seriously undermine that trust. In 1993 we were promised that its provisions would continue for as long as they were required. It is within the framework of legal certainty that trust can grow and flourish. That grace and trust is what we want, but it needs a legal framework.

Let us be bold and be not afraid to compromise for the good of the whole Church; let us legislate for all and for unity; but let us vote for that legal certainty that will give an honoured place to all, which finally will allow us all to leave the battlefield and return to where we belong – in the mission field.

Finally, I agree with Pete!

*The Chair:* I will call Fr Benfield. Members will appreciate that all the amendments are quite different. We will hear from all the amenders and perhaps a few other speakers too. It may seem a bit disjointed, but I think it is important to hear all the speeches as to the amendments before we start voting on anything.

*Professor Anthony Berry (Chester):* Chair, I do not wish to cast any aspersion or judgement on your chairing, but I notice that there have now been nine speeches and only one female

voice has been heard. I find that astonishing. I would be grateful if you would give some care to this as the debate progresses.

*The Chair:* Professor Berry, I am doing my best. I am not against calling anybody. I will do the best I can but members really do have to trust me a little. Some might say that is not a bad start, but there we are.

*Revd Paul Benfield (Blackburn):* On a point of order, Chair. First, I agree with Pete.

Members who were in the Chamber yesterday afternoon would have witnessed the progress of the Miscellaneous Provisions Measure and its associated canon and will know that those legal instruments deal with a vast variety of matters, many of them quite small and detailed, in connection with all areas of church life. We regulate our life by the law because as fallen human beings we know that we do not act in accordance with divine will. Why then is it proposed that in this most controversial area of church life we should abandon that approach?

The working group asks the question, is it best to have as little law as possible to prevent people relying on law rather than grace or is some law needed to fertilize the soil within which trust may grow? This distinction between law and grace is a false one, however. As the Archbishop of York has written, 'Canon law is designed to help us to fulfil our vocation to be a community which is a life-giving expression of God's grace. Law and grace are two sides of the same coin: without grace – no law; without law – no grace.'

This amendment would mean that provisions for those of us who cannot receive the ministry of women priests or bishops are contained in some form of legal instrument: measure, canon, or regulations made under canon. The legislative option is, as the working group says, the one that will best produce clarity and predictability. We will all know where we are. There will not be room for argument. We will all know what is expected of us and what we are required to do.

Without law there is no certainty. Without law it would be, to quote from the report, 'for each of the ... parties to reach their own view ... taking such account as they wished of any statements declarations or guidance that the House of Bishops or the Synod might have made nationally' and how matters 'worked out in practice would be dependent on the discretionary decisions of individual bishops, clergy, PCCs, patrons and parish representatives'. Where is the basis for trust in such discretion and such uncertainty?

If people feel unsure and uncertain, they are likely to be fearful, defensive with others and retreat into themselves. If we all know where we stand, we are more likely to be outgoing, gracious and co-operative with those with whom we disagree. Failure to put provisions into law will be interpreted as implying a resistance to making provision for those who need those provisions. There will be a fear that if the Church is not prepared to put things into law it is not serious about making proper provision for those unable to accept women priests or bishops.

We put into law such relatively unimportant things as who should administer the chalice at Holy Communion. That is governed by regulations made under canon, yet without this amendment who actually celebrates the sacraments would be left to discretion. It is proposed that rather than law there should be a House of Bishops' declaration or Act of Synod, setting out a dispute resolution procedure. Such a procedure, as the matter stands at the moment,

would be entirely voluntary; although I think it is quite likely that this mandatory procedure will be introduced. But how costly will such a dispute resolution procedure be in terms of money and in terms of the time of church members and diocesan staff?

What about the problem of future bishops or other members of Synod saying that they are not bound by it because they were not members when it was made? That has happened with the present Act of Synod, but if the provisions are in law, that risk disappears. Everyone is bound by the law until it is changed.

We have to face the fact that, however we decide to proceed with women bishops, their ministry will not be accepted by everyone. Even if there are no provisions for those who cannot receive episcopal or priestly ministry from women there will be discrimination against them. The sizeable minority who cannot accept their ministry will not suddenly change its mind. There is no evidence that our numbers will diminish.

Such discrimination will in many cases be lawful under the existing provisions of the Equality Act. Far better then that we set out clearly in law how we shall provide for the minority, rather than leaving it to chance and the prospect of undignified disputes in the secular courts over whether a particular body or person has discriminated unlawfully or not.

This amendment is not seeking to have option four, where everything is in the Measure. Some things need to be in the Measure – those things that would bind PCCs and laypeople – but other matters can be in regulations made by canon because the bishops will be bound by them. (*The Chair rang the bell*)

*The Chair:* Mr Giddings, followed by Mr Sutcliffe, who will speak to but not move his amendment.

*Dr Philip Giddings (Oxford):* What has changed since November? Chair, I hope that before we come to vote either on the amendments or on the final motion you will give us all an opportunity to read paragraph 24 on page 9, which sets out the five principles – and we should remember to turn over the page, so that we look at all five. That set of principles, taken together, is part of the fruit of the process of facilitated discussions that we have had and to which I pay tribute, as I do to the bishop who is leading our process today.

There lies the possibility that we might yet find a way of squaring the circle. To that end I hope we will give consideration to a number of amendments which could deliver it. I am particularly attracted by the Bishop of Dover's amendment because I spent most of my professional life looking at alternative dispute resolution procedures and the use of the ombudsman and others, particularly in areas of professional conflict, to deal with such matters. If he will forgive me, the Bishop of Dover's amendment is not perfect. However, it does have some key words in it and one in particular: 'mandatory'. Where is the mandate coming from?

I was intrigued that it is being described as a mediation process by some and a grievance procedure by others. They are very different in their cultures and we need to think about that. However, it does offer us a way of providing reassurance that those who have problems with all this will have a fair and proper hearing for those problems and that those who have responsibilities under this will have a framework within which they can operate with confidence. I think both are important.

I am also attracted by Keith Malcouronne's amendment. I am very glad to hear that it is intended to accept that.

What about Pete? Pete is always very fertile – I need to be careful how I put this (*laughter*) – in his approach to these matters. I think we should listen carefully to what he has said, but it has come very late in the day and we need to think about it carefully before we adopt something that we could regret.

It is a sign, however, that the processes which the Synod went through yesterday and the working group has gone through, and which the House of Bishops has gone through to some extent I understand, can show us a way round which we can gather, which we can all own honourably, therefore enabling us to serve our nation and, even more importantly, our God for the sake of the glory of Jesus Christ.

*Mr Thomas Sutcliffe (Southwark):* Twenty years ago, after I had voted for women priests, I was naïve enough not to realize how the resolution would seem to those who could not do as my vicar John Hall (now Dean of Westminster) did. John led the road-show in Southwark diocese against the Measure. After the vote, he accepted what the Church had decided even though he had strongly opposed it. However, for most of the Anglo-Catholic opposition, including my own younger brother who was a Somerset vicar and who has since he retired become a Roman Catholic, our decision caused immense distress and anxiety.

November 20<sup>th</sup> was only a temporary pause in an inevitable and, in my view, necessary and appropriate further legal change, but even that has produced similar emotions and bitterness in many people who wanted to be able to rejoice that the last hurdle to equality for ordained women had been jumped. Perhaps some of us would be happier if those who cannot accept women bishops were to be pushed further to the margin or over the brink, but I hope that most of us can now see how much richer and more capable of meeting its challenges our Church is for cherishing and valuing all its members and traditions.

Of course, making this change and also honouring our promises about inclusiveness and respect for those who cannot accept it is both difficult and deeply unsettling. I want us to take the simplest way forward that is also truly inclusive, which means basing what we do on the experience we have had during the last 20 years of accommodating a minority that does not accept women priests. With respect to women bishops that is an even larger minority, because of the growth in the conservative evangelical constituency for whom women as bishops is a radical rejection of a central belief about divine ordering.

My amendment offers us a simple solution. Women bishops cannot be a different breed from men bishops; therefore we need a system of alternative oversight that functions on a different basis from the diocesan. I propose that we make, in law, co-provincial provision – that is, Church-wide – for those needing it to petition for alternative oversight through the channel of our two Archbishops, authenticated by them jointly, and so there would be no need for a code of practice.

I also believe that the necessary editorial changes required to allow women to be bishops in our existing rules and regulations, the existing Measure for women priests, the Act of Synod, the Ordinal, et cetera, should build the new system in quite obvious ways, based on but improving on 20 years' experience.

No doubt there will be problems with how we manage oaths of canonical obedience but the reason I want this whole business lifted to an archiepiscopal level is that it is not a terrible thing to suggest that for at least a number of decades we may choose in practice not to have both Archbishops as women. It may be that once we have women bishops we will think it not too compromising that one of our two Archbishops is a man. It will give us a breathing space in which we may all learn a lot.

Of course, our Archbishops are diocesans, but as Archbishops and primates they can act together and often have. They can free up the whole process of petitions for alternative oversight and oaths of fealty by taking upon themselves these responsibilities, exercised through their Council, as a joint focus of authority and provision at the heart of our Church.

I also prefer that the laity in our parishes should not lose any more existing powers, such as Resolutions A and B. Let those powers wither on the bough in their own time. Since the Restoration and until 1970 this Church of England was run by the laity in Parliament to a very large extent. Our revolution for ordained women quite seriously risks a rapid growth in clericalism, for women's voices no longer to be encountered only in the context of the laity. I believe the future of the Church is in the hands of the laity but, increasingly, lay leadership is declining because the Church depends more and more on ordained professionalism.

I hope that what I propose may get us off a hook on which we seem to be impaled and I beg us today to exercise a self-denying ordinance in regard to votes by Houses, which were often a device for defeating the almost acceptable in the past. Incidentally, 'trust' was a word not present in the debates yesterday. Votes by Houses, for instance, stopped even discussion of a monitoring system that I was proposing back in 2008 or so.

And, yes, I am inclined to agree with Pete.

*The Chair:* Rebecca Swinson, followed by Mr Collard who will speak to but not move his amendment.

*Miss Rebecca Swinson (Archbishops' Council, appointed):* I have had an opportunity to reflect over the weekend on why I feel that I come from a slightly different place from many in the Chamber today. For me, women being ordained as priests is the norm. It is not new; it was just there. It is what I remember. Engaging with the debates around women as bishops is a bit different sometimes and approached with a little more impatience perhaps, because I have been listening to members wrangle over this for 27 years. I was not listening quite as much when I was one, let us be clear – although, as Synod has often heard, I was here then. *(Laughter)*

For me, this is a great motion because it has the word 'urgent' in it. I think it is urgent, because I would quite like to be able to go to the pub and not have to explain this. Option one is the easiest for me to explain in the pub because it does, quite clearly, what we want it to do. It offers quite a good opportunity for those of us who are not as embedded in the debate as others to get involved because it is not full of complexity and long words. Some of the things that I know a lot of people hold very dear are not embedded in my consciousness in the same way. I think it means that we do need to have something that is not as based in law. To conclude, my big hope is that my children will know a different normality from me, that they will not hear the words 'women bishops' ever again. They will see them and they will experience them and that will be normality. I am not getting any younger, so there is not



much time. Were my daughter to be here listening to this same debate in 20 years' time, we would be in a very bad place. (*Applause*)

*Mr Peter Collard (Derby):* A lot of words describe my amendment, but it is actually a very simple proposal. The principle is that we have bishops, full stop. I guess some members will be saying 'And...?' There is an 'and'. The 'and' – to put them out of their misery – is that we keep the current legislation in place. We keep the current arrangements, the Resolutions A, B and C.

One of the problems we hit last July, when one side rejected the legislation, and in November, when the other side rejected the legislation, was that the Measure and the code of practice have become a bit of a dog's breakfast over time. There was fear, uncertainty and doubt about how it would work, and they took over.

Archbishop Justin said – I hope I am not misquoting him – that there was not a lot of trust between the sides and that trust does not grow overnight. My amendment is designed to keep in place those arrangements that we have had for 20 years: we simply have bishops. For the last 20 years we have rubbed along together. Okay, it has not always been perfect, but most people out in the pews have probably not known anything about the sort of debate we are having now.

So much for the broad brush, what about some of the detail? Often the devil is in the detail, and it probably is here. As regards the 1993 Measure, which as Synod will remember gives us Resolutions A and B, I would propose that we keep it. It would be necessary to override clause 2, which denies women bishops, and it would probably be fairly sensible to disallow cathedrals from voting for Resolutions A and B, because a cathedral is the seat of the bishop.

Since wording the amendment, I think Pete Broadbent's idea of a parallel process feeding in and possibly coming up with an alternative is a good one. I thought I had better get that in!

There has been some concern about whether Resolution B – I think it is – always has to be put during an interregnum, and so I have no objection if someone wanted to change that from being 'compulsory' to being 'on demand of a member of the PCC'. I think that is the extent of the amendments needed to the 1993 Measure and other legislation to make it work here.

What about the 1993 Act of Synod? That is the one that provides for Resolution C. I do not think it has really stood the test of time. Whilst the principles of it in terms of Resolution C are good, I think there needs to be some provision for episcopal ministry built into it. I am suggesting that the House of Bishops addresses this. Apart from being very simple, it reuses a scheme that has worked for 20 years.

Are there any other issues? It seems to me that, as male bishops have operated this scheme for 20 years, it could hardly been seen as being unfair to women bishops. The legislation makes the PCCs, patrons and parish reps proof against spurious equality claims – well, so far as it can. It seems to have worked for 20 years. Whilst I am sure some people will say that it is not exactly what they want, I think a lot of us may be getting fatigued and would like to find a more pragmatic solution to the problem. I hope that members will take this amendment on board.

*The Chair:* Members will notice that Clive Mansell has two completely different amendments. If we had ordered our affairs in a slightly different way, he would have had two bites of the cherry. It seems to me only right that, since we are calling him once, he should have seven minutes to speak to both, and then he will formally move them later on.

*The Archdeacon of Tonbridge (Ven. Clive Mansell):* I would like to thank all those who have helped towards the preparation of GS 1886. I recognize how demanding that has been and I deeply appreciate all the effort that has been put behind that and in bringing forward the documentation we have before us today.

I would also like to value the collective bundle of five elements of the vision, as set out in paragraph 12 of GS 1886, and to say that between us, Synod, we can get this sorted and we can take it forward.

Let me turn, first of all, to my amendment at Item 42. I am personally concerned to find a way forward in which we can all come together, in which none feels left behind or sidelined. From the comments I have picked up when talking to people and through some of the groups we held on Saturday, very helpfully, I sense that option one, whilst satisfying to many, leaves others feeling that it falls significantly short of where they need to be and does not reflect some of the assurance offered in the total package of the five elements of the vision. Of course, some of those concerns may be met when we have had the opportunity to see a draft of what may become a House of Bishops' declaration or a draft Act of Synod. Nevertheless, I felt it would be helpful to test the mind of the Synod around the so-called option two in paragraphs 89–95 of GS 1886.

I sense that option two would get behind it more of those who are anxious about option one – and we need them on board if we are to secure the necessary majorities for Final Approval. My own sense is that the way forward is probably in the region of option two-plus, where the plus is supplementary material to be found in a House of Bishops' future declaration and/or in a draft new Act of Synod and perhaps in some other more specific material.

Option two would involve an Act of Synod. I recognize that this has unhappy connotations for some here and beyond the Synod but an Act of Synod is a device which is applied in other contexts and, in any event, any Act of Synod created for this new step in the Church's story would be just that: a new Act of Synod created by us here and now as our gift to the Church of England now and for the future. The new Measure would link its coming into force with the coming into force of the new Act of Synod, both items approved by all three Houses: bishops, clergy and laity.

The additional feature proposed in paragraph 90 of GS 1886 is that: 'the Measure could also include a special majority requirement so that the Act of Synod, as well as the Measure, could not be amended or repealed without two-thirds majorities in each House'. Provided we could get the contents of the Act of Synod right, this option could give reassurance to those who need it that here is a settlement – something that should last and not be vulnerable to some sudden lobbying initiative to overturn it in a short time. It would give more of a message to those who have struggled with the adventure of opening the episcopate to women that they truly are wanted in the Church of England for the long term – an important message which they certainly wish to hear.

I recognize that for some people this would be seen as taking an element of trust away from the way forward in option one. On the other hand, it could be viewed as a sign of good faith being offered to help to undergird the trust needed for the future. Signs of good faith are helpful gestures which we all can offer to others as gifts, and so I commend this amendment to the Synod for consideration under God as a way of helping us all to find a further way forward.

I turn now to Item 46 standing in my name. This amendment aims to address the needs of those carrying out their due responsibilities in the appointment process for a new incumbent or priest in charge of a parish. I am assuming for this amendment that the existing Resolutions A and B are not retained in a new Measure and that the new arrangements, albeit perhaps outside of the Measure itself, will enable a parish to identify its need and desire for theological reasons to have a new male incumbent or priest in charge.

However, in acting upon that need and desire of the parish, properly identified under any new arrangements, a patron, parish representatives and indeed a bishop will need to take steps in the carrying out of their duties which, according to the paragraphs 130–36 of GS 1886, may make them potentially liable to legal challenge. That seems to me to be unacceptable. It cannot be right that a person doing their proper duty for the sake of others should be vulnerable to legal challenge. Under the current arrangements they are protected from such a legal challenge. If the current resolutions go then something else needs to be done to retain the protection against legal challenge which is currently provided. This amendment is not specifying how it should be done but just that it should be done.

The focus of the amendment is quite narrow. On further investigation it may have to be broadened but at present it confines itself to the appointment of an incumbent or a priest in charge, for that, it seems to me, is where the need is greatest. I commend this amendment to the Synod for your consideration too.

*The Chair:* The Bishop of Dover's two amendments are identical. Therefore, I would hope that he could speak within five minutes.

*The Bishop of Dover (Rt Revd Trevor Willmott):* 'Beware when all praise you' is a maxim well to be heeded, especially by bishops, but I am glad that so many people seem to want to commend my amendment – and that without my even having to open my mouth!

The desire to ask 'what if' questions is deeply rooted in the human psyche. 'What ifs' give voice to that inner anxiety, fear and often unrecognized hurt. As would-be disciples of Jesus Christ we are no less prone to wanting to ask them. As much as we long and pray for a deeply mutual trust, we still want to ask: what if trust proves not to be enough? What if trust fails? But we also know, I hope, that legislation, while it can provide judgement, cannot provide the whole. I sense from our discussions, particularly on Saturday, that as a Synod we are searching for something much deeper, something beyond law itself, something relational but robust enough to answer and withstand the challenge of those many 'what if' questions.

The working party of the House of Bishops speaks of a need for a monitoring body to undergird whatever may be said or included in a declaration by the House of Bishops. My amendment seeks to make that recommendation mandatory, in other words binding on bishops whoever and wherever they/we act in regard to the provisions of Measure and canon. At this stage I am proposing a body, a procedure, which, as we have heard already this

morning – and I accept that – needs further work to be done in the hope that it could be brought before our Synod in November.

Let me offer what I believe will need to be the necessary marks of such a body, such a procedure, but first let me reiterate what I am not proposing. My amendment does not seek to fetter or limit a bishop's jurisdiction, nor does it seek a way to take us back into old, stale arguments. I am not proposing another code of practice.

And so to the marks. First, it must be palpably independent, not under the authority of the House of Bishops, but it will need this Synod to approve its membership. It shall be and must be based in mediation. We must, as a Christian body, always seek to resolve grievance. That is given to us in Scripture. Third, it must be robust. If a bishop were foolish enough to ignore the provisions of the Measure, he or she must be subject to discipline. Actions must be seen to have consequences. It must be accessible to all. It must cover grievance or concern, as much from those who look forward joyfully to the ordination of women as bishops – as I do – as from those who have continuing difficulty with such a decision. In other words, this work is not solely to meet the needs of one group; it must meet that concern expressed across the breadth of our Church.

Both the working party and the House of Bishops used the word 'monitoring'. I believe that will be important for us as Synod because such a word will enable us to be aware of issues as they arise in our ongoing life. In other words, it is not a once-for-all piece of work. However, I want to stress again that it must be mandatory. We shall all be bound. I think it will be very important, for example, that bishops in future be asked before consecration, 'Do you accept this?'

My amendment, I believe, will strengthen and develop the substantive motion, but I also believe it will provide a more robust accountability – more robust, dare I say, than any of the more detailed legislative proposals we are considering this morning.

Chair, I commend my amendment to the Synod and hopefully to the work of the Steering Committee in due course.

*The Chair:* I now call Mr Cawdell to speak to but not to move Item 44. So that Mr Malcouronne knows that I have not forgotten him, I shall deal with that discretely later.

*Revd Simon Cawdell (Hereford):* I enjoyed Saturday. I am not sure I was meant to; and at points it was certainly not easy. As someone who is an option one man, to find myself in a small group with a senior conservative evangelical and a well-known Catholic opponent led to discussions that could well be described as respectful but robust. Not infrequently we found ourselves talking past each other initially but then discovered that there were topics on which clearer understanding was achievable and which left open room for an exploration which might be possible – far more than I guessed would be the case.

We are here because in November we took ourselves to water but did not drink. We are about to travel to the waterhole again. If we fail to drink this time, we will be committing missial suicide. November stretched our credibility and the faith of many in our churches – and they expect us to deliver.

I have heard talk of dissolving Synod, especially if we cannot get option one, or doing the preliminary stages on simple majorities and waiting for final approval after the elections. This is folly. Such talk, implying that, from whichever side one is on, somehow the resulting Synod will be more compliant, treats the electorate with an arrogant contempt and risks a re-run of November, with interest. Those who presume upon voters reap the consequences. We and nobody else have been tasked with this job and we must not fail.

Feedback from Saturday suggests that people want to see this Measure achieved by 2015. To do that will take care, respect and finesse. My amendment is about emotional intelligence and not being tribal. If we begin badly, we will end badly.

My conversations on Saturday lead me to hope that simple legislation is within our grasp – option one – but if we start by creating winners and losers at this juncture we doom ourselves to failure. We do not negotiate well if we start by rolling our opponents in the dust.

The option numbers have helped frame the debate but I believe that we now need to leave them behind as we start the work, and get behind them in a way that enables the simplicity we seek to become a reality.

I turn now to the detail of my amendment. The first part seeks to call for simple and unreserved legislation – an option one-ish view. We must not and we cannot frame discriminatory legislation. My proposed clause (d) gives sentiment to that.

I further believe that the means exist to enable opponents to flourish within the framework of a declaration. To achieve this, the steering group – I agree with Pete – will need room to converse with opponents and bishops in order to keep the whole package before us. The Bishop of Dover's amendment could well fall within this provision. It must be done in a way that creates trust and is not seen to be confined. Even within our small group ideas were put that were thought impossible; it was pointed out that they could in fact be part of a declaration. The conversation was live, and it needs to remain so. Old misunderstandings need to be unpicked.

The second part of my amendment mirrors the second part of the substantive motion and I shall not dwell on it.

The third part is critical. If we do not talk, we will not gain. The style of this legislation's passage is as important as the substance. Once we lapse into confrontation – which is ever so close by – the loser is the Body of Christ as represented by this, our Church. Its intent, incidentally, is the same as Keith Malcouronne's amendment.

I truly fear that without my amendment this Synod will fail before it begins. I believe that it gives the best possible effect to Bishop Pete's way forward. House of Bishops, I urge you to listen. It is as much about style as it is about substance. Forty per cent of this Synod was elected last time round. In November we failed with legislation that we, largely, had not constructed. We now have the chance to build together and we must not fail.

Pass this amendment and we may yet walk the untrodden path to find our goal, a goal we may rejoice in as we finally and simply recognize the gifts of those women so long denied within the House of Bishops.

*The Chair:* The Synod will appreciate that we have had a number of speakers and speakers who have spoken to but not moved their amendments. I will now take us to the amendments and ask Mr Benfield formally to move his amendment.

*Revd Paul Benfield (Blackburn):* I beg to move as an amendment:

‘In paragraph (d) *leave out* all the words after “on the basis” and *insert* “that the provision made for those who cannot receive the ministry of female priests or bishops should be made by Measure or regulations made under Canon”.’

*The Bishop of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich:* I have always been grateful for the legal advice of Paul Benfield, ever since he and I were colleagues together in the parish of Shiremoor. I was the vicar and he was the assistant curate. We had a lot of trouble in the car park of a rather rough housing estate and we put a floodlight on the side of the church to light up the car park. It was only afterwards that we thought, ‘What about all this faculty business?’  
(*Laughter*) Was I glad to have a handy lawyer!

As the House said at paragraph 21 of its report, the House would sit very uncomfortably with the unequivocal commitment we wish to give to women’s ordained ministry if we were to pass this amendment, because it would be moving towards Synod enshrining in legislation a series of rights, duties and definition that would inevitably be seen as qualifying that commitment. That is our problem.

The amendment also goes very wide, certainly wide enough to allow for the possibility of legislation that involved jurisdictional changes that affected the position of the diocesan as the Ordinary. Members just need to know, I think, that is there.

It was clear in our discussion as a House that there are at least as many sensitivities about legislating under canon as under Measure. In addition, any regulations made under canon could not formally be made until after final approval of the Measure. Therefore, while they would exist in draft, the Synod could not be certain at final approval that changes would not be made. We would be slightly back into that position where we were before where, yes, we would see a code of practice but it could be changed. We could see regulations in draft but they could be changed.

However, I think this is option four with bells on and it needs to be tested. In order to do that, I will resist the amendment and see what the opinion of the House is.

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

*Mr Adrian Vincent (Guildford):* First, whatever the text of the motion looks like at the end of today, I agree with Bishop Pete – I used to be a member of staff in the House of Bishops, so I cannot just call him Pete; it has to be Bishop Pete – about a broader Steering Committee agreeing to the legislation and a shortened synodical approval process.

To return to my consideration of this amendment, at our church youth group two weeks ago Suzanne, our youth minister, said to me, ‘I hope General Synod sorts itself out so that we can get on and have women bishops.’ I said, ‘You’ll remember that it failed in November because a third of the House of Laity thought there was not enough provision for traditionalists. The

motion going to the Synod in July has less provision than last time.' Suzanne's heart sank. She could see the prospect of another failure.

It does not have to be like that, however. If those who voted Yes in November, who would ideally prefer option one, grit their teeth, hold their noses and press the Yes button when it comes to vote on Paul Benfield's amendment, they will guarantee – guarantee – that the legislation will pass at final approval. Someone like me who voted No last time will vote Yes at final approval, and even diehard traditionalists have said that they would abstain to let such legislation pass.

It is in the hands of the people in option one. If members want to guarantee that it goes through, they will have to pass something like this. Most importantly, Synod will have achieved what the Church has been demanding: legislation on women bishops that will pass; that will not be on a knife-edge when it comes to final approval.

I know there are concerns about discrimination in the Measure but, as Paul Benfield has explained, the episcopal ministry provision would be in canon, so there would be no discrimination on the face of the Measure, and therefore it is not quite as bad as it first looks.

*Revd Canon Rosie Harper (Oxford):* I am speaking to oppose any amendment except the Bishop of Dover's amendment. I would like to suggest that there is a wonderful way in which we could all come together round option one plus the Dover amendment.

What I heard coming through very clearly in Saturday's discussions was the deep desire of those who cannot accept women as bishops to remain within the heart of the Christian family they love. The simple legislation means that we remain as equals, equally valued within the main legal framework of the Established Church. Our bishops will make binding commitments to accommodate the needs of all, hopefully reciprocally, so that women are also treated fairly where the bishop does not ordain women. The Bishop of Dover's excellent and creative idea allows for external moderation if anyone slips up.

I really do understand that this asks for that famous re-imagining that we keep hearing about on the part of those wedded to the need for legislative safeguards but, alas, such legislation would inevitably splinter the Church and risk minorities becoming seen as a niche, boutique part of the Church, rather than full members. This option, option one, sells nobody short but it does require looking at the issue through a different lens.

My second point is global. One of the biggest fault lines in today's humanity is the appalling way in which women round the world are treated in the name of tradition and religion. If our own Church enacts legislation that is anything less than 100 per cent equal, we are adding to the burdens of the oppressed.

There is a battle being fought in our own country, for example, against female genital mutilation which is justified on the grounds of tradition and religion. Were we to enact legislation that legitimized any form of discrimination, I believe we would be colluding with that argument and letting down oppressed women around the world.

Option one offers fresh hope. We can remain equally part of this one Church and we can show the world at last that our God has equal regard for all his created children.

*Revd Jonathan Beswick (Oxford):* It pains me to admit this – I do not want to encourage him – but I do agree with Pete. I also agree with Fr Paul Benfield and his amendment.

Love is the fulfilment of the law but we live by the spirit of the law and not the letter. Good law, as I understand it, provides a bedrock that gives us security, freedom and confidence.

We heard earlier on today about the risk of a prenuptial agreement that is enforceable in law. I agree with the concerns expressed by the speaker. However, thinking of marriage, which is about love and the flourishing of friendship between man and woman, marriage has as its basis law. It is a legal commitment made before God and witnesses in church, the bedrock and the beginning that allows the marriage to flourish through thick and thin. It gives security, strength, reassurance. It also binds man and wife together when there are, as there will be in the years ahead, many temptations or pressures along the way for them to be put asunder.

We need more than the unamended option one which has been offered to us. I am very cautious of the amendment put forward by the Bishop of Dover. We need more than option one if we are to be bound together as brothers and sisters in Christ and in love, and not to be put asunder by the pressures and by the challenges that will surely lie ahead of us, coming from all sorts of directions. None of us, I believe and I hope, wants to live through last November again. We can do our very best to avoid that by supporting the amendment proposed by Fr Benfield. (*Applause*)

*Mrs April Alexander (Southwark):* Like others, I suspect, I have had light-bulb moments this weekend and I would like to describe two of them.

The first one was on Saturday. We had reached the afternoon sessions and we were looking at option one. I was in a group where everybody thought that option one was by far the best route for us, until one person, who is a great and long-standing friend of mine and very much a kindred spirit but who comes from what I might call an unhappy diocese from that point of view, said, ‘But how can we be sure that the bishops will do this?’ and we realized between us how much trust we would have to have in the process for option one and in the outworking. Having thought about that for a few seconds – and it did take only seconds – we realized that yes we were and yes we would. It is trust on all sides that will be required. What a boon that will be.

The second light-bulb moment occurred before that, on Friday evening. I suddenly realized in Questions that I had asked the wrong question and I thought of a different one. It was this. Why do we have all the security guards that we have round the building? What is it that we want to protect ourselves from? The supplementary question would be this. Are security guards a guarantee that whatever it is that members have in mind could never happen?

*Mr Christopher Corbet (Lichfield):* The amendment from Revd Paul Benfield requires some Measures and some regulations under canon. The amendment from the Bishop of Dover, as I heard him, applies if a bishop ignores a Measure. What are the Measures that a bishop might ignore if there are not any Measures? We need Measures. Otherwise, we do not have a grievance procedure of any sense.

*The Archdeacon of Hackney (Ven. Rachel Treweek):* I urge Synod to vote against this amendment but not because I want to vote against provision. Like many others, I want a Church in which everyone is visible, a Church in which no one is diminished, a Church in



which we grow in standing together with all our differences, fully accepting that we cannot reconcile our perspectives but we can respond to God's call to be prophetic in a world that desperately needs to learn how to live with difference, to grow in trust.

Option one offers us that. This amendment does not. This amendment takes us back to a place in which the detail of the words will put discrimination on the face of the Measure. My loud No is not against provision; it is not even against law. The title of this debate says 'New legislative proposals'. Provision which respects theological differences and allows us all to live with integrity can be delivered in option one with a robust bishops' declaration that includes the ingredients this amendment and others are seeking to convey, a bishops' declaration that bishops have to adhere to under canon, and an independent monitoring panel. Yes we will need everything on the table but this can be done if we vote against this amendment and travel with option one.

Our Old Testament readings in the daily Eucharist have been the story of Jacob and Esau, a story of broken relationship with self, with other and with God; a story of human mess, fear and fleeing from one another. A few chapters on from today we encounter Jacob and Esau about to meet. There is fear and apprehension but Jacob is met by Esau's grace and forgiveness, and Jacob responds, 'I have seen your face, which is like seeing the face of God, and you have accepted me.'

I would urge those who support this amendment, when they see me and others voting No, to dare to see it not as a personal No to them or as a vote for pushing out, but as a vote for an option which says Yes to them. Yes to an option which acknowledges the reality that there is no place of agreement on this issue but which can robustly provide for a Church in which we walk together, seeing the face of God in one another, in which all are valued and no one is diminished as we share Christ's good news with the world. I urge Synod to vote against this amendment.

*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.*

*Revd Hugh Lee (Oxford):* On a point of order, Chair. Under SO 36(c)(iv) I would request a vote by Houses.

*The Chair:* There would need to be 25 people standing for that to happen. Do I see 25 people standing? There are 25 people standing and so we will have a vote by Houses.

*The amendment was put and the Chair,* pursuant to SO 36(c)(iv), ordered a division by Houses, with the following result:

	<i>Ayes</i>	<i>Noes</i>	<i>Abstentions</i>
House of Bishops	7	34	0
House of Clergy	48	137	4
House of Laity	75	115	4

*The amendment was lost.*

*The Chair:* We move to Item 40.

*The Archdeacon of Tonbridge (Ven. Clive Mansell):* On a point of order, Chair. You quite properly operated the procedure for having a vote by Houses. Could I, through you, offer to the Synod the chance to reflect on that process, because I think we could find it extremely divisive if there is a call for a vote by Houses on each amendment. (*Applause*)

*The Chair:* Archdeacon, that is not a point of order. Although I am sure there are many in this chamber who agree, it is not strictly a point of order. Obviously we are in difficult timings, although if members want to exercise their rights under the Standing Orders they are entitled to, subject to the right numbers. I have heard what you said and I am sure everybody else has too.

*The Bishop of Burnley (Rt Revd John Goddard):* On a point of order, Chair. Because of that round of applause and because I felt a sinking feeling at the stage when we moved to vote by Houses, I wonder whether it would be possible for this Synod now to vote to take all votes before us as a whole Synod.

*The Chair:* Again, it is not strictly a point of order. The Standing Orders provide that somebody may ask for a division by Houses and the requirement is that 25 members must stand. If 25 members do stand then we are required to have a division by Houses. I am in the hands of Synod here. If people want to stand, they stand. If they choose not to stand, then they do not. Let us try and move on.

*Mr Tom Sutcliffe (Southwark):* I beg to move as an amendment:

‘In paragraph (d) *leave out* “described in paragraphs 79–88 of the annex to GS 1886 as ‘option one’” and *insert* “of co-provincial provision for alternative episcopal oversight to be administered by the two Archbishops jointly through the Archbishops’ Council along lines that continue the system of episcopal visitors currently in existence”;

and

*Leave out* “or draft declaration to be made by the House”.’

*The Bishop of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich:* I wish to resist this amendment partly because I am still not clear what it is about. I thank Mr Sutcliffe for explaining ‘co-provincial’, by which he means the whole of the Church of England, but I have no idea what the Archbishops working through the Archbishops’ Council might mean.

Take note, it is about ‘alternative episcopal oversight’ rather than the current ‘extended’. This is different territory. I think this is for further down the line and it should not delay us this morning because we need to consider the rest of the amendments and the rest of the Measure. I would urge Synod to reject this.

*The Bishop of Ely (Rt Revd Stephen Conway):* I agree with Pete too, on the grounds that what Pete is suggesting is a change in our culture.

Certainly the talk about alternative arrangements takes us right back into where we have been before, to Measures that have brought us to a standstill. I invite Synod to move forward in the spirit of the idea of extended care that Bishop Nigel has mentioned.

For 11 years as an archdeacon and bishop I have warmly worked within those provisions, in order to stay in the highest possible degree of communion, of mutual regard and mission, of sustained kindness and engagement together. Here, as a possibility in moving forward, we have an opportunity to move into greater kindness and mutual regard for the sake of Christ's kingdom, to ensure that people like me in the future are made to attend to strong provision in a declaration with teeth, and have a culture that in the end probably affects a statement of particulars for new bishops about how we are expected to behave professionally with each other.

The way in which we need to use the Archbishops most particularly into the future – I say this as Chair of the House of Bishops' Appointments and Development Group – is by ensuring that there is a sustained succession of bishops from traditionalist parts of the Church to make sure that we can inhabit together a generous future.

*The amendment was put and lost.*

*Mr Peter Collard (Derby):* I beg to move as an amendment:

'In paragraph (d) *leave out* all the words after "the basis described in" and *insert* "paragraphs 96–109 of the annex to GS 1886 as 'option three', but on the basis that (i) the only amendment made to the 1993 Measure is the removal of the ability of cathedrals to pass Resolutions A and B and (ii) the provision to be made in relation to episcopal ministry is contained in an Act of Synod based on the Episcopal Ministry Act of Synod 1993, and invite the House of Bishops to bring to the Synod for consideration at the February 2014 group of sessions a draft Act of Synod to accompany the draft legislation".'

*The Bishop of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich:* Again, this is an important amendment. It is testing the mind of Synod about option three, except that it is option three again with additions.

It is closer to retaining the 1993 Measure, the present Act of Synod, and therefore the House's difficulties that I have set out earlier would still apply. There is a great deal of difficulty in retaining legislation on gender-based difference of treatment. The 1993 Measure and the Act of Synod, rightly or wrongly, have become symbolic of arrangements that have caused a great deal of pain. Retaining it therefore may not be the best way of securing a new settlement. We are beginning to hear what the possibilities might be. I realize there is a lot of trust and work to do, but I would urge Synod to reject this amendment at this stage.

*Mr Robin Back (Norwich):* I wish to support this amendment because, in my naivety and simplicity, I am happier working on improving existing frameworks of laws than I am when considering or trying to invent new ones.

In my small rural parish in central Norfolk – about as far away from modern life as it is possible to get – change is always a struggle. In this case we have come to terms with the 1993 legislation without, as it happened, actually deciding to use it. Instead, we have

welcomed our current lady vicar and her family with open arms. She has even got me helping with Messy Church.

Option three seems to me to offer an evolutionary path and retains items that are already familiar – I am obviously speaking of the resolutions. Modifications will of course be needed, but it is much easier to sell evolution in small parishes than revolution. My apologies, your Grace, on that.

Another point is the satisfaction of parliamentary expectations. Threats of disestablishment have been heard, and various other comments in the public space. Parliamentarians find it easier to accept modifications and developments in existing legislation rather than to draft something completely new.

Finally, the ageing profile of our congregations may be resistant to sudden change but they will nevertheless come round to it and adopt it – assuming we live that long. The next generation will take what they inherit and modify it further as they see fit. We can prepare the soil for the future but we cannot predict the weather.

I urge Synod to consider this route as a workable starting point for arriving at a solution.

*Revd Canon Dr Simon Taylor (Derby):* I realize that this makes all too apparent divisions within the diocese of Derby and I trust that those relations can stand this – and, Peter, I will buy you a drink later! – but I wish to oppose my colleague's amendment, and I do so as a new member of this Synod, elected after the debacle of last November.

I wish to oppose because relying on this old legislation does not speak of what many have described as a new start, a new way of taking this proposal forward. The 1993 Act of Synod is not the basis of anything new. It carries far too much of the baggage that the Archbishop of Canterbury in his presidential address urged us to ditch, and I urge Synod to reject it.

*Revd Stephen Trott (Peterborough):* I wish to begin by saying 'I agree with Pete' and also with Steve, the Bishop of Ely. (*Laughter*)

*The Chair:* Be careful, Father!

*Revd Stephen Trott:* I welcome very much what they have said. However, it seems to me that if we reach the end of today without any of these amendments and we are left with just option one, I must abstain. I cannot countenance going through this legislative procedure again, with a fair degree of certainty of what the outcome might be.

I think that the proposal Pete has made for a Steering Committee operating in the way that he has suggested would be the best thing to happen, before we begin legislation itself. I would point us to the example set for us by the Good Friday Agreement, which has brought together people of implacably opposed views and has enabled progress to be made. I quote from the Good Friday Agreement and the way it has been achieved:

'The power of the sovereign government with jurisdiction (in Stormont) shall be exercised with rigorous impartiality on behalf of all the people in the diversity of their identities and traditions and shall be founded on the principles of full respect for, and equality of, civil, political, social and cultural rights, of freedom from discrimination

for all citizens, of parity of esteem and of just and equal treatment for the identity, ethos and aspirations of both communities.’

If we can begin the legislative process having first come up with a Good Friday Agreement of our own, in which we find a way to ensure that parity of esteem and just and equal treatment for the identity, ethos and aspirations of both communities, then we can make progress and we can have the longed-for Measure on the statute book.

Ten years ago in this chamber I said how urgent it is that we should have it, and we are still waiting. We may well be waiting a lot longer, unless we first get things right and we have a formal agreement along these lines, so that we can go forward in confidence together.

*Mr John Ward (London):* I oppose this amendment because I have in mind the naïve member of General Synod, caricatured during the drama, who wants to agree with everybody.

I believe that this amendment is naïve because I do not think option three does anything that will really help. Option three says, fine, we carry on with A and B as it stands at the moment, but it does not deal with the complex issue of the jurisdiction of the Ordinary; it does not deal with the heart of the issue that we discussed at great length and with great pain back in 2008, when the Archbishops proposed their amendment. There is still a fundamental problem with the current system, which we have to grapple with when we are talking about bishops. I cannot vote for something that questions whether or not a woman bishop is fully baptized and is therefore fully able to exercise the jurisdiction that is given to her as a bishop. Option three does not deal with this. I would therefore urge Synod members to vote against.

However, I do agree with Pete in so far as there may be some tweaks to option one that might help. I look to my brothers and sisters, and to Rod, for example, who asked if we should revisit oaths of canonical obedience. In my view, oaths are not helpful; they do not change the basic tenet that everyone must comply with the law. That kind of tweak, i.e. scrapping them (*laughter*) is a tweak! We are already bound by the law, so you do not have to give an oath of obedience to obey the law. They do not do anything. As for the ‘lawful and honest’, we all know that everyone crosses their fingers – and ‘honesty’ covers a whole range of awkwardness. They do not actually deliver anything.

If this would help some of my brothers and sisters to be able to stay within the Church because it does not *force* them to do something, then I think agreeing with Pete that we need that kind of thing to be considered is useful. However, I urge Synod to vote against this amendment.

*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 amendment was put and lost.*

*The Archdeacon of Tonbridge (Ven. Clive Mansell):* I beg to move as an amendment:

‘In paragraph (d) *leave out* “79–88 of the annex to GS 1886 described as ‘option one’” and *insert* “89–95 of the annex to GS 1886 described as ‘option two’”.’

*The Bishop of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich:* Option two was the approach that attracted the most support in the House of Bishops after option one, although it was some way behind, because for many it did appear to qualify the Church of England's wholehearted commitment to the equality of women's ministry with that of men.

I am open to building further reassurances around option one, which is why I have said that I will accept the Bishop of Dover's amendment, and that seems to be gaining traction. Options one and two are on a spectrum; I can see that. The big break is between two and three. It may be that we need something somewhere between them, but option two as described in the report would necessitate a further Act of Synod, and for many that is a bridge too far. At this stage, therefore, I am asking the Synod to reject this amendment.

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

*Miss Prudence Dailey (Oxford):* I should first say yes, I support the Bishop of Willesden's suggestion.

What I find attractive about option two is the suggestion that there might be a requirement for a special majority for the removal of the Act of Synod. At the moment what concerns me most is that, whatever arrangements are put in place in terms of provision for those opposed to women bishops, they can very easily be eroded. Whatever the goodwill of people here now, personnel change, and arrangements can disappear very easily in a generation.

Some members of Synod will be bored with hearing me say that I have a number of friends in the Anglican Church of Canada. I think it is essential to be informed by what has happened elsewhere. When they first ordained women as priests and bishops in Canada, they promised that those who were opposed to that development would retain an honoured place in the Church, and they put in place arrangements to ensure that would be the case.

Now roll forward a few decades. We have a situation where ordination candidates are being asked by their bishop whether they would be prepared to receive communion from a woman priest. That has happened as a condition for ordination. Ordinands who have doubts about women's ordination being deliberately placed with women priests in order to put pressure on their consciences – that has happened. Women bishops sometimes being especially keen to celebrate communion in parishes that have been seen as 'traditional holdouts' – in the words of the person who was speaking to me – against the ordination of women. These things have happened. A priest I know, a member of the SSC, being forced to accept a woman curate – all these things have happened.

There really is no reason to believe that it could not happen here, unless there is something in place to prevent whatever arrangements we have being eroded. That is the attraction of option two, with a special majority.

*The Bishop of Gloucester (Rt Revd Michael Perham):* I ask the Synod to resist this amendment because I believe that option one, as it has developed and is developing, is now most likely to meet the needs of us all. We need to recognize that option one has, both formally and in our conversations, moved a long way from where it was towards option two.

We are now very clear it would have a House of Bishops' declaration. We are pretty clear it would have the five principles in such a declaration, as well as provision for those unable to

accept the ordination of women to the episcopate. We know that such a draft declaration would be before us in November. We know that if we pass the Bishop of Dover's amendment there will be a mandatory monitoring process and we know that the House of Bishops Standing Committee has promised to do some work on that before November as well. It is option one and three-quarters. It is almost option two. It is option minus two.

So what is the difference between them? The difference is in paragraph 89 of GS 1886, which makes it clear that if you go for option two that, rather than a declaration of the House of Bishops, it must be an Act of Synod and, while keeping open the possibility of an Act of Synod, if we commit ourselves to something that says 'That must be there', we will immediately make this a very unattractive possibility to many of those who have found an Act of Synod a very difficult thing to live with over the years. Words like 'totemic' and 'toxic' have been used about the Act of Synod and I hope we will not commit ourselves today to the fact that that must happen.

Paragraph 90 talks about special majorities, in other words provisions to ensure that whatever is enacted is not easily un-enacted. I see no reason why such provisions cannot be built in alongside a House of Bishops' declaration. I cannot see that it needs an Act of Synod for us to decide that there should be special majorities before anything can be changed. I therefore beg the Synod to resist option two and to go for option one, which looks to me like option one and three quarters at least.

*Revd Dr Philip Plyming (Guildford):* I agree with Pete. I find the five principles very helpful and, for me, they are an incredibly encouraging part of this process. I suspect that, as part of the facilitation process on Saturday, we found a number of people with different perspectives were able to gather around them. I for one regret the fact that we are not able to vote on those five principles themselves today.

It seems to me that the question is how we will own those principles, going forward. I recognize and welcome the fact that under option one those principles will find their place in a declaration of the House of Bishops, but the question is where they could actually be owned better and with what degree of seriousness.

Given that I believe they can act as a unifying force across this Synod, I would welcome the fact that these five principles should be contained and approved by the whole Synod. I recognize that is an option under option one, but what I hear this morning is that it is not likely to take place. As a whole Synod I think that we should be saying, 'We own these principles. We think they are an important basis for building trust, going forward.' There is nothing to lose by going for that option, and option two gives us a chance to affirm these are principles that we believe can be used as a basis of trust, going forward.

I agree with Prudence that the special majorities give a flavour of permanence, which gives voice to the long-standing place that the principles wish to give to those in the minority. I was unable to support the legislation last November, even though I am in favour of women's ordination and women in the episcopate. Option two would give me the chance to support this going forward, because I believe that those five principles, widely adopted by the whole Synod, give us a basis on which to build trust.

*Revd Rosalind Rutherford (Winchester):* I want to encourage everyone here to think about who we are making this legislation for. It is not just us in this room here, who had those

conversations on Saturday; it is the Church and it is the world, the community whom we serve in our mission and our ministry.

As far as I can see, option one is the one option that makes it absolutely clear that we are wanting to serve the Church and the world in the way that they want us to. It was absolutely clear after November that they just wanted the Church to have women as bishops, with no ifs, buts or anything. I had to defend any concept of provision far more than anything else, across a range of members in the Church and the community; and I do defend it, which is why I am totally in support of a House of Bishops' declaration, an Act of Synod if necessary – but that is now a painful way of doing it – and, of course, with the sort of tweaks that will no doubt come in and the amendments that the Bishop of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich has said he will accept.

I want to go back and say, 'The Church has done a good thing. It is going forward in a way that is not based on worrying about bits of law. We will not get caught up in the law, though we will get caught up in very careful drafting of a declaration, and that is what it will do.'

There is another very significant group of people, however, who although not huge in numbers are significant in proportion, and that is our clergy. The slightly more than a third of the clergy who are women – and, although I cannot speak for them personally, men – want to work as priests and bishops in a Church where men and women are just who we are, nothing else. The women clergy in our diocese did not meet for three months after November. We have had time to reflect.

Every one of those women, whether a newly ordained deacon or someone who had retired, who had gone through being a deaconess and so on, said, 'The only way we think that we can operate our ministry without feeling diminished, demeaned, undermined, devalued, not knowing whether we are real priests or not, feel that we can preach the gospel and not feel that we are saying stuff that the Church does not believe in, is if we have a clear, legal Measure which says that women can be bishops, and the rest is done in other ways.' They said, 'Yes of course we want provision; of course we want to include everyone; but the law is a toxic way of doing it.'

We have had 20 years of the Act of Synod. I could give a much longer list than Prudence gave as to the way women have dealt with it. I beg Synod to think of those women who are trying to minister.

*Revd Canon Dr Christopher Sugden (Oxford):* I think that we need to get the nature of our debate this morning clear in our minds. We are in danger of rushing our fences. As I understand it, this morning's debate is about testing the mind and giving a steer to the future process, and Pete's suggestions are obviously having major support throughout the Synod. However, that process is open to tweaking, further negotiation, further arrangements. We have to be very careful about the words we use. Yes I understand that 'Act of Synod' has some baggage to it, but they may not be the terms we come out with from that process, although they are the terms in which certain things are currently expressed. It is what they express at the moment that this amendment is seeking to take forward as a steer, not as binding. I think that is very important. What we decide today cannot be binding; it is a steer.

As we hear the debate, there is a very important issue of power here. It is clear that the majority will want and will have women bishops in law. Therefore, it is very important that



we do not tell or say to those who find themselves in a minority position, ‘This will be good enough for you.’ That is patronizing. We should not do it. We are asking the wrong question if we ask, ‘Is this good enough for you?’ We should ask the question, ‘What is it that you really want?’

Synod should hear this morning that there are many people who are saying, ‘What we really want are the five principles’ – and Philip Plyming has properly said that Synod should have some way of expressing support for those, which I absolutely do – but it is very clear that option one, for those for whom the question ‘Is this enough for you?’, is not enough. Therefore, let us at least give the space to this Steering Committee to be able to work within a wider parameter to find a way of doing it.

I close with Lord Singh’s words to the House of Lords last month. ‘Clarity of the law benefits everyone; lack of clarity benefits only the lawyers.’ I urge Synod to support this amendment.

*Revd David Brooke (Durham):* Having just heard Chris’s speech, I would suggest that perhaps ‘Is this good enough for you?’ is still the wrong question. It is not even ‘Will you walk with me?’ but ‘Shall we walk together?’ that we should be asking each other.

I speak with some anxiety because I realize that, as each of these amendments falls, it feels as though in some sense the stakes are increasing. However, I stand to speak because I think that this one is beguiling but should still be resisted.

What came to mind when hearing what is being said is something from the Exercises of St Ignatius, which encourages us to think not only about where we stand but which way we are facing. In adopting this amendment and looking at option two in preference to option one, potentially we take not only a step apart but we turn and face away from each other. That is only a possibility, I appreciate, but it is a real possibility. I understand the need for borders and boundaries as being the places where we meet and not where we are divided, and I want to walk together with all parties – actually, all people – involved in this discussion and debate.

Before we met this morning I had a conversation with one of my traditional Catholic friends; we seek each other out when we need wisdom about these things. He said to me, ‘Who is it we must trust?’ In this process I think that all of us need to learn to trust each other. It is not only trust from those who feel that they are potentially being marginalized here; it is also trust in the other direction: trust at a very individual level, because the more cross-links we have between individuals the healthier the levels of trust will be, and it is trust in ourselves.

I found myself reflecting on the passage about the sending out of the 72 the other day – or was it 70? I cannot remember which version we had. I imagined Jesus carefully having to pick who he sent out together in pairs. That seems to me to be ridiculous. I imagine them arriving in a pair, one being received and the other not. That too is ridiculous. Shall we walk together? Let us go for option one, not option two, and give it more than a two-thirds majority today.

*Revd Janet Appleby (Newcastle):* With others, I was privileged to be part of the three-day facilitated conversations in February. It included members of all constituencies and was a valuable experience in careful listening. It contributed to the five elements of the vision as set

out in paragraph 12 on page 2, restated in paragraph 24 on page 9, and I want to support both Philip Giddings and Philip Plyming in encouraging us all to take more notice of those.

What seemed important to me in these five statements is that we all have to give ground if we are to agree to them. I will quote briefly from the preamble in paragraph 24 where it says, ‘...we are clear that there are elements within this vision which will cause discomfort to those on various sides of the argument. But they need to be read one with the other and held together in tension.’

We need somehow to keep hold of that tension, to recognize that our diversity of views will continue, reminding us of what it means to be an Anglican; that the Church of England was founded in a context of seemingly irreconcilable faith positions; and that it is our genius, as well as our trouble, that sometimes we find it difficult to hold those factions together and yet we are still here together.

In particular, Article XXXIV of the Thirty-Nine Articles, speaking of the tradition of the Church, affirms that diverse traditions may be held. The honourable tradition of dissent also came up in our discussions and has been and should remain a thread running through our history.

I would love it if Synod could overwhelmingly endorse the vision of paragraph 12, emphasize what we can agree on and enter into the debate on the options in that spirit of mutual hope and affirmation. That is why adding to option one those robust things we have been hearing about means that it can be enough.

I wish to respond to a previous speaker by saying that we need to remember also to ask women what they really want. What they said time and again was option one. In some ways we are still a minority, and that needs to be remembered. We need to start from a different place and work in a different way. I hope our debate will reflect that: that we can remember to keep space for grace, which was something else that came up in February. I would endorse the Bishop of Willesden’s suggestion of ways in which we can do that.

There is more work to be done on such things as the theology of obedience. Today, therefore, we need to affirm a broad vision and somehow to come together and say, ‘Yes, we want to move together.’ I think option one gives us the best chance of doing that, with the amendments that many have spoken about. It is the simplest and the clearest, and we all have to give ground if we take the principles that I have been talking about seriously.

*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 Bishop of Willesden (Rt Revd Pete Broadbent):* On a point of order, Chair. Under SO 36(c), I would like to ask for a count of the whole Synod on this one, not in order to be divisive but I think that it will be helpful, when we come to our more consultative ways of doing things, to gauge the support for option two. This is not a divisive division, therefore, but a number-counting division.

*The Chair:* In that case, 25 people need to stand if we are to have a count of the whole Synod. There are 25 people standing.

*Revd Hugh Lee (Oxford):* On a point of order, Chair. Under SO 36(d)(iv) I ask for a vote by Houses. My reason is that it gives us an immediate figure of what the voting is by Houses, rather than our having to wait until it is published in a couple of days' time and there being lots of ifs and buts. It is much easier if we know now where we are.

*The Chair:* I need to see whether 25 people stand. I am told that there are 25 people standing, in which case I order a division by Houses.

*The amendment was put* and the Chair, pursuant to SO 36(d)(iv), ordered a division by Houses, with the following result:

	<i>Ayes</i>	<i>Noes</i>	<i>Abstentions</i>
House of Bishops	10	28	1
House of Clergy	55	128	8
House of Laity	93	100	4

*The amendment was lost.*

*Revd Simon Cawdell (Hereford):* I beg to move as an amendment:

‘In paragraph (d) *leave out* all the words after “to prepare” and *insert* “draft legislation which enables women to be admitted to the episcopate without reservation and which also enables those unable on theological grounds to accept their ministry to flourish within the Church of England as described in paragraph 12 of GS 1886;

- (e) invite the House of Bishops to bring to the Synod for consideration at the February 2014 group of sessions a draft Act of Synod or draft declaration to be made by the House to accompany the draft legislation; and
- (f) request the Presidents to convene such facilitated groups as may assist the Steering Committee in its task throughout the process.”.’

*The Bishop of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich:* There are a number of references in this amendment that are very welcome, such as to further facilitated groups. As I have indicated that I will be accepting Keith Malcouronne’s amendment, I think that is taken up.

The proposal of a specific endorsement of the principles at paragraph 12 is something that I am sure we shall all widely support, because they underpin all four options. The suggestion that they underpin one more than another is not true; they have to underpin all four of them.

The question is whether the proposed modification of paragraph (d) of the motion is an improvement. I do not think it is because there is some uncertainty being introduced into the process. Because I am not certain what it is saying, I will ask Synod to resist it.

My uncertainty is this. It mentions producing the legislation at the beginning and you could take it that, if the wording stays the same, the legislation itself should enable a minority to

flourish. The moment you say that, you are going into elements of two, three and four; so is this option one or is it two, three or even four?

While appearing to be accommodating and not nailing everything down now, the amendment does introduce an element of doubt and I am not sure that it achieves anything that is not already in option one.

It is open to the Synod. I will resist. We can see what the mind of the Synod is.

*Mrs Christina Rees (St Albans):* On a point of order, Chair. Is it possible for Simon Cawdell's amendment to be taken in separate paragraphs, so that (d), (e) and (f) can be voted on separately?

*The Chair:* I will take some advice.

Mrs Rees, I am not minded to allow that, so we proceed with the amendment as it is and as it was drafted. The matter is now for debate.

*Revd Canon Simon Butler (Southwark):* Simon Cawdell asked me to sign this amendment on Saturday and I declined. I declined because there is a part of me that thinks there is a possibility that we may no longer be able to do both, that is, admitting women to the episcopate and enabling those who cannot accept their ministry on theological grounds to flourish in the Church of England. No one has yet said that in the debate but there is a circle that may not be able to be squared, and this process could lead us to the point where that is a painful reality.

However, I think that this amendment is the 'I agree with Pete' amendment. It allows option one and option two to remain on the table as one and three-quarters – and I agree with the Bishop of Gloucester about the one and three-quarters – but also allows the possibility that when the Steering Committee, which I hope will be formed on a wide basis, goes into its gathering, there is room for manoeuvre within the facilitated conversation that takes place. At the end of the day, people have to come back and sell a solution to one another, and to some extent that has to be painful for everybody.

This amendment therefore allows me to see the possibility that, whilst my heart is at one and three-quarters with the Bishop of Gloucester, my head may need to go to two, in order to reach the necessary outcome. I do not want to prejudice that but I want to allow the possibility for the Steering Committee to get to that point and not to come back to the Synod, only to be rejected because they have ended up at a place, i.e. option two, which the whole Synod would not accept. For me, this gives some room for manoeuvre that is healthy and hopeful.

*Revd Canon Robert Cotton (Guildford):* Like Simon, I am quite caught by the amendment. It outlines the main goal: we want legislation for women bishops and we are all in agreement with (e) and (f); but it is in the detail of the amendment to paragraph (d) where I have two concerns.

One is that it names only a certain amount of flourishing, and we want that all traditions must not only flourish but learn to flourish together. My second query about the amendment to paragraph (d) originates with the bishop's description at the start today, when he said that

what we are not doing is debating the fundamental issue. We all know that the ultimate goal is to make legislation for women to be consecrated but what we are deciding is the means and not the ends. I think that the amendment holds back from deciding the means. That is precisely our business today.

The amendment is not option five; it is saying 'Please get on with it' and refraining from deciding which of the options. Like Simon, I am fully in agreement with the Bishop of Gloucester that today it feels as if we are centring around 1.7, but what we must not do is give no clear steer. That is what I am concerned that this amendment does.

Moreover, this amendment is not the 'I agree with Pete' amendment. I can sense that many people are in agreement with *this* Pete, but Simon Cawdell's amendment is not about that. One can vote against this amendment but yet support the Bishop of Willesden. I too would like to support him, in a sort of 0.7 way. I agree that he is fascinating, attractive and enthusiastic, but, as always with bishops, one ought to have careful thought before fully adopting what they suggest!

My 0.7 agreement is that we should have the normal sort of Steering Committee but alongside, in parallel track, they may choose to come in with some sort of facilitated discussions, because that is what led to all of us participating in the facilitated discussions on Saturday. We cannot just dump it on to a committee, even an extended committee; we are all part of this. We need to decide on the means. We need to reject this amendment. It is not the 'I agree with Pete' amendment.

*Mrs Vivienne Goddard (Blackburn):* Being a born pessimist, as I sat in my group on Saturday I said, 'This is a waste of time. We will just be back on Monday with option one, which everybody knows is unacceptable to those of us who voted against in November.'

I was in the group with Simon Cawdell and we began the day poles apart. I now find myself rising to support his amendment. It is not ideal but it is better than nothing, which is what we will be left with if we keep going on like this.

Could I draw Synod's attention to the voting in the House of Laity so far? The last vote was about 50:50. The previous vote, requiring legislation, was clearly well over a third. If we carry on with option one with no amendments, even with Pete – and of course I agree with him – we will end up, yet again, revisiting what we have done up to now. We sat here and people started to do the thing that happened before – try to throw it all out by voting by Houses. That was clearly not the will of Synod and it stopped. But here we are, as we were before, saying to the House of Bishops, or whoever it is, 'Come back with option one', even though we know before we start that it is not acceptable to a third of the House of Laity.

*The Bishop of Dover (Rt Revd Trevor Willmott):* I want only to point out the law of unintended consequences. If we pass Simon's amendment, the amendment which would then allow a mandatory process to come in and work alongside such a Measure will itself then fail, precisely because of the way in which the amendment has been worded.

I merely make that comment to Synod. Much of what Simon is saying can certainly be met in voting for option one. Nothing is lost, except that if we vote for it we shall lose the possibility of that mandatory mediation monitoring group alongside it.

*Canon Zahida Mallard (Bradford):* On a point of order, Chair. I beg to move:

‘That the question be now put.’

*This motion was put and carried.*

*The amendment was put and lost.*

*The Bishop of Dover (Rt Revd Trevor Willmott):* I beg to move as an amendment:

‘In paragraph (d) after “option one” insert “with the addition of a mandatory grievance procedure for parishes in which diocesan bishops are required to participate”.’

*The Bishop of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich:* I am very happy to accept the amendment.

*The Dean of St Paul’s (Very Revd David Ison):* Can I pick up a lack of clarity in what the Bishop of Dover has said? He used the words ‘grievance’ and ‘mediation’ and I think that is an important question.

I sit on a group that is looking at whistle-blowing and establishing that, although whistle-blowing is supported in law and people are encouraged to do it, the reality is that most whistle-blowers, people who try to tell the truth, are ostracized and bullied by their colleagues and superiors, and often suffer as a result.

In my current organization I have made it very clear that we are not in favour of bullying behaviour in any way and that I would welcome people coming to me to address it. I know there are things going on in my organization but I can get no one to stick their head above the parapet and give me the evidence I need to address those things. How much more so in a situation where your bishop, if you are a cleric, is the person who has great influence over you and your future. How will you take them to a CDM and call them to account when you feel that your own future is threatened and if your colleagues ostracize you?

I would therefore ask for clarity from the Bishop of Dover, in order that we might move in two directions. One is to have a group of advocates who will take action on behalf of those on either side who feel aggrieved by this process, so that it is not an individual person taking it on themselves but the organization doing it for them. The second is to have a mandatory process of mediation.

A friend of mine was a chaplain in Dartmoor Prison and she said, ‘Most lags are much more content to serve their sentence and then go, rather than to go through the process of restorative justice, where they have to face up to the person they have hurt and the reality of their conduct.’ Having a process where we seek reconciliation and a restoration of relationships when things have gone wrong is much more the Christian way than a way that relies on law and power, which is extremely expensive. I would therefore ask the Bishop of Dover to clarify that.

*The Chair:* I do not think that the bishop gets a chance to clarify because he has already spoken. I can allow him to speak and explain, with the general consent of Synod. (*Agreed*)

Bishop, you have a second bite of the cherry.

*The Bishop of Dover:* I welcome David's comments because that is the work that now needs to be done. There are very skilled people, some inside this Synod and some outside, who would help us in those particular areas.

I entirely agree with the dean, in that a grievance should never be perceived in the sense of then bullying the person who makes it. Therefore, the process must be clear as to how such a grievance, if that is what it is, is to be heard and dealt with.

I personally believe that grievance and mediation are not necessarily held apart. One can inform and help the other. When I spoke to this amendment, I did say that it is work now to be done, in preparation for November. That is not to fudge the answer. There is work and you have heard my mind on it so far.

*Mrs Christine Corteen (Salisbury):* This is also a bit last-minute for me, I have to say, but I would urge Synod to resist this amendment.

I am fully in favour of option one unamended, but I also fully appreciate the Bishop of Dover's reason for putting this amendment forward. I assume that it has the vast agreement of the bishops, and possibly of this Synod. However, extreme caution would have to be used in putting this on the face of the Measure. The wording would have to be very carefully crafted, in order to prevent vexatious applications through the legal process, which would be hauling bishops over the coals at every opportunity.

Option one already has this grievance provision in the preamble at paragraph 28 and I am sure that the wording would be somewhere in the House of Bishops' declaration. Putting it on the face of the Measure would bring the minutiae of the law into being and would not fit with option one, which is simple and straightforward and which is to be based on trust.

I believe that putting it on the face of the Measure, whilst done with good intentions, could also lead to an abuse of the grievance procedure and foster a climate of discrimination, which would be in law. Rather, it should be a useful and helpful process, based on grace and reconciliation. I would therefore urge Synod to resist this amendment.

*The Chair* sought leave of the Synod to extend the sitting by not more than ten minutes.  
(Agreed)

*The Archbishop of York (Dr John Sentamu):* The Bishop of Dover knows that I was quite unhappy with the word 'grievance' and that relates to almost the same sort of speech that the Dean of St Paul's has made. However, I am persuaded that at this point in time we are not approving legislation; we are simply giving a steer as to where they should go.

I would be quite unhappy if we did not have the possibility that, whatever happens in the future, this should be mandatory. I would not use the word 'grievance'; I would rather talk about an independent monitoring group, mediation and reconciliation, and take out the word 'grievance'.

The group are hearing this. If it was the word ‘monitoring’ I would have no problem. If it was to do with mediation I would have no problem. If it was to do with reconciliation then, as a Christian body, we must be reconciled.

This gives us a chance when the Steering Committee has been set up – and I agree with Pete about that. It would be helpful to all of us if this part is looked at in great detail and for the Steering Committee to bring it back without the word ‘grievance’.

Those who are worried about it should still vote for it, because they would not be voting for it to become part of the Measure; it is just a steer.

*Dr Elaine Storkey (Ely):* I also want to support this amendment. It is realistic. It recognizes that, curiously enough, bishops, both male and female, will be recruited from the human race. It is not inconceivable that amongst those bishops there will be those who are not very good at listening or engaging with those with whom they dissent or hearing the subtext and pleas that go along with some of the anxieties we have constantly heard expressed, and which will continue to be expressed.

It provides a basis that is now mandatory. It says, ‘Not only should you be exhibiting the fruits of the Spirit, especially patience, faithfulness, self-control, kindness and gentleness, but, if you do not, we will make sure that you do because we will enshrine this.’ In making it mandatory, it provides a basis from which we can put in these other things that deal with issues of grievance, whistle-blowing or whatever.

I want to make a plea for this because I think it is the least that we can do for those of us who are desperate to support option one. I really feel that this is the way forward for our Church.

*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 amendment was put and carried.*

## **Variation in the Order of Business**

*The Archdeacon of Dorking (Ven. Julian Henderson):* I have two quick points, Chair. First, can we express our gratitude to you for your humour and for getting us thus far? We are very grateful. *(Applause)*

Secondly, I would ask the Synod for our publicized order of business to be varied so as to enable us to deal with the unfinished business at Item 16, to be resumed after lunch. *(Agreed)*

*(Adjournment)*

THE CHAIR *Mr Geoffrey Tattersall (Manchester)* took the Chair at 2.30 p.m.

*The Archdeacon of Tonbridge (Ven. Clive Mansell):* I beg to move as an amendment:



‘At the end of paragraph (d) *insert* “together with provision to prevent legal challenge to patrons, bishops, PCC members and parish representatives acting properly in accordance with their duties in the appointment process for an incumbent or a priest-in-charge (such issues being identified within paragraphs 130–136 of GS 1886)”.’

*The Bishop of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich:* This is an interesting proposal and I am sure that there will be a lot of sympathy in Synod for minimizing the risk of legal challenge for traditionalist parishes. It would not be in the interests of anyone if this became a legal battleground. However, there is some difficulty with advising Synod to accept an amendment to prevent legal challenge and I am not entirely clear if that would be achievable. ‘Prevent’ is a very strong word. I defer to Clive’s greater knowledge, of course, as he is a former lawyer, but it is not usually possible entirely to prevent the possibility of legal challenge; so I am not quite sure what we are being asked to do.

This would need much more careful study because there will be real sensitivities over having to approach the Government for specific new Church of England arrangements under the Equality Act. That could be really difficult. An alternative approach would be to give decisions by traditionalist parishes greater status, but that could easily take us back to something akin to statutory resolution arrangements or the 1993 Measure. For reasons already given, the House of Bishops is not attracted to retaining that Measure but that is still in the future.

I will have to leave Synod to ponder what it wants to do. If it is attracted to this, then clearly we will have to see what might be done to meet the spirit of it, but I would not want Synod to pass this in the expectation that there will be an easy answer.

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

*Mr Clive Scowen (London):* I strongly support the amendment. It is right that, as Bishop Nigel says, you can never prevent anybody challenging anything; but what you can do is put in place provisions that will minimize the risk of challenge.

At the moment, the provisions in the Equality Act appear to protect religious organizations in taking decisions on the question of appointing a male incumbent, on the basis that it meets the needs of a significant number of those to whom he would be ministering. One can immediately see that that form of words gives rise to an enormous risk of challenge. It does not really matter whether that challenge is likely to succeed or not; the fact is that it is likely to be made on a number of occasions. That very fact is likely to have an enormously chilling effect upon the ability and the willingness of patrons or parish reps, in particular those people who do not have enormous financial or organizational backup to help them defend any legal challenge.

I suggest that if we are really serious about wanting to make provision, by whatever means, to enable those with theological issues around the ministry of women priests and bishops, if we are really serious about wanting them to remain and thrive in our Church, we have to minimize the risk that those whose job it is to appoint clergy will be challenged when they take decisions in accordance with what the parish has asked for.

It is not only patrons, lay reps and PCC members; it is also bishops because bishops elect priests in charge, and so on. The bishops at least do have some resource available to them

through their diocese, in a way that individual parish reps would not. Therefore, it is vital that we do our best. I take Bishop Nigel's point that it may not be easy, but if at this stage we do not try then we certainly will not achieve it.

I think we saw yesterday on the tennis court that things that are very, very difficult can nonetheless be achieved, and I trust that it will not take us 77 years to do it! If we are really serious about keeping everybody in the Church of England, let us do our best to remove the sort of chilling risk that is currently there.

*Revd Mark Steadman (Southwark):* I urge Synod to resist Archdeacon Mansell's amendment. While I understand the very real concern and fears that prompt this amendment, which have been amplified by Clive Scowen, we also need to understand what it is asking of us. In particular, we need to understand the phrase in the amendment, 'with provision to prevent legal challenge'.

To give effect to that phrase, we will need to go to Parliament and ask them to write a different set of equality laws for the Church. I suspect that Parliament might say to us, 'But the Equality Act already deals with that situation' and as a Synod we will have to say to Parliament, 'We don't really trust that law to do what you say it does, so we need a different one.' I cannot begin to imagine how damaging that conversation with Parliament might be.

First of all, last November showed us that Parliament is unlikely to deal with such a request. Secondly, for the Church to say to the nation that we do not trust the laws that have been passed is a hugely damaging thing to say in our mission and in our witness as a national Church. I suspect that there is also a risk that such a statement and conversation might damage our relationship with the rest of the Church of England, who at the moment frankly do not trust us very much either.

I suggest that there is nothing to fear from following the law and making use of the current Equality Act. I understand that the threat of the possibility of legal action being taken is always a scary prospect. Nevertheless, legal action arises only when there is someone who does not trust that they have been treated fairly and according to the law. Such a person in this case might be a woman priest; it might be a male priest ordained by a woman bishop; it might be a conservative Catholic or evangelical.

We have to move to a place where we trust each other to follow the law, trust that it has been followed and generously applied, and not say to Parliament and the wider world that we cannot be trusted with the law as it is, so we need a different one. We have to move to a new way of working that is both trustworthy and credible in the eyes of the nation and the wider Church. Sadly, this amendment will not do that and I urge Synod to resist it.

*Mr Tim Hind (Bath and Wells):* I cannot vote for this amendment as it stands because I think that it is missing something, but if it were amended I am not sure that I would want to vote for it either.

Unless I am completely mistaken, I think there is an error in the amendment that excludes two or three words, that is, 'archdeacons and lay chairs'. They form an integral part in the appointment process. With permission, Chair, perhaps we could add the words 'archdeacons and lay chairmen' to the amendment.

*The Chair:* I am not minded to amend anything on the hoof.

*Sir Tony Baldry (Second Church Estates Commissioner, ex officio):* May I say to Synod that I would not go anywhere that involved going back to Parliament to ask it to look at the equalities legislation so far as the Church of England is concerned, and certainly I am not going to Parliament to ask for that. I have been pushing my luck quite a bit recently! Those colleagues who are really good friends of the Church of England, such as Frank Field, if they were here today would say to Synod that there are many on both sides of the House who think that the equalities legislation already goes too far in relation to the Church of England. This is a Pandora's box, therefore, which it would not be sensible to open.

We also have to recognize that there are a number in the House of Commons who are genuinely hostile to the Church of England and who would see any possibility of opening up the legislation in respect of the equalities legislation as a really good hunting ground for them. I think of the honourable member for Rhondda as an example. I do not know what they did to him at Cuddesdon, but whatever it was it was not good! (*Laughter*)

I think that I can hold the line in Parliament for another couple of years but, if we do not have this sorted by 2015, I cannot account for the law of unintended consequences at Westminster, in terms of the creative ability of colleagues on both sides of the House to get involved in this. I would go no further than to say that a number of senior Privy Counsellors on both sides of the House are already putting their mind to how they sort this if General Synod does not. In the course of these debates we have to realize that we do not take these decisions in a bubble. The world is looking at us, not least Parliament.

*Mr John Ward (London):* Synod, indulge me for speaking again but I want to address those of us who are in favour of women bishops and to try to give some reassurance as to why I will vote in favour of this amendment. The wording may not be absolutely perfect, as my friend Clive Scowen has said, but we are not legislating now; we are giving a policy steer – a very clear policy steer – and, if we cannot actually prevent it, then people will do what they can.

I do not think that Mr Baldry is correct. I do not think that we necessarily have to go to Parliament. In principle the Church of England can amend Acts of Parliament, provided it relates to Church business. There is already discrimination possible for religious groups in equalities legislation. We have to accept that that is where we are. If there were a tweak that could be made – for example, regarding those who are exercising discretion as well as those who are fulfilling duties when making appointments – which said, 'In addition to what is in any Measure, you can take into account what may be expressed in other documents, such as a declaration from the House of Bishops or an Act of Synod' (if that is where we end up), that might help. I do not want to rule out the possibility that we look at this very seriously.

We must remember that there is already an Equality Act, which provides for discrimination in relation to religious groups. It is a totemic point for those in favour, but there is a bit of rational, cold-headed, legal analysis that needs to be done, and maybe we can do it on the Measure rather than having to go back to Parliament to ask them to amend the Equality Act. I would like this to be explored and therefore I will be voting for this amendment.

*Revd Canon Simon Butler (Southwark):* On a point of order, Chair. I beg to move:

‘That the question be now put.’

*This motion was put and carried.*

*The amendment was put.*

*The Chair:* I think that we need an electronic vote.

*Revd Hugh Lee (Oxford):* On a point of order, Chair. (*Some dissent*)

*The Chair:* Mr Lee, I will not have you abused. Your point of order is...? It is not 36- whatever it was again, is it? A vote by Houses, by any chance?

*Revd Hugh Lee:* It is the same Standing Order, and a vote by Houses.

*The Chair:* We have to look for 25 people standing. I cannot see 25, but we will have to vote electronically.

*The amendment was put and lost, 200 voting for and 210 against, with 15 recorded abstentions.*

*Mr Keith Malcouronne (Guildford):* I beg to move as an amendment:

‘At the end *insert* as a new paragraph –

“(–) urge that the process of facilitated conversations continue to be used at significant points in the formulation and consideration of the draft legislation”.’

As my unusual name attaches to this amendment and it has already been referred to many times today, I would thank Synod members for their brave attempts at the pronunciation of ‘Malcouronne’. I appreciate them all.

I would secondly say that I agree with Pete. We have not conferred but I hope that my amendment may be a vehicle for carrying forward the spirit of Bishop Pete’s desire to include a wide range of voices in the next stages of the process. If I may, I will draw attention to a couple of key words in my proposed amendment.

This arose from the facilitated conversations on Saturday. I was in Group 1 and I think all of us felt that it was a very valuable process. We probably felt that it would have been good to have done it earlier; we certainly recognize that there is continuing value and in our group we wanted to work up some of the options further and have the working group reconvene, if we could prevail upon them to do that. Even if it is a Steering Committee that is now to do this work, we would endorse the continued use of facilitated conversations.

My amendment is slightly wider than would have been the case if we had taken up Simon Cawdell’s paragraph (f), which specifically referred to facilitated groups assisting the Steering Committee. My amendment talks about a process whereby ‘facilitated conversations continue to be used at significant points in the formulation and consideration of the draft legislation’. I therefore anticipate that a wider group for consultation will continue to be

called upon and these voices will be heard and can feed into the Steering Committee's work, but it may be that the Steering Committee itself will use some of those facilitated techniques to help its work, depending on how widely the membership is drawn.

The two key things I want to draw out are the words 'formulation' and 'consideration'. What is envisaged – and perhaps what Bishop Pete also had in mind – is that, as the threads are drawn from this weekend's work and as the feedback from all of the facilitated groups is reflected upon further, there may be an appropriate time for the working party or some other group like it to do further work to assist the launch of the drafting process. Going forward, in the committee's consideration of that legislation, or maybe when it is considered when it comes back to Synod, we may wish to use facilitated conversations. I am not specifying anything, however; I am merely opening the possibility and I invite Synod to endorse it.

*The Bishop of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich:* As I have already indicated, I am very happy to accept this amendment.

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

*Revd Canon Dr Christopher Sugden (Oxford):* I very much support this amendment. We have begun this way of mediated conversations but we are not through yet. So far, I believe that it has produced two objectives. It has produced the working party report and the five elements of its vision. It has been said that the bishops' report assumes these elements, and that is welcome news. It would be excellent if a way could be found that clearly expresses that we, as Synod, affirm and own all five elements.

Secondly, anecdotal evidence suggests that the experience of these conversations this weekend has unfrozen some aspects of our dilemma and produced some fruit. Indeed, the significantly diverse Oxford diocesan group of Synod representatives has urged our bishop to convene such a process among us with other relevant persons in the diocese.

Much has been said about exercising trust. Those who have introduced us to this way of working have asked us for our trust that there are further fruits and prizes to be gained from taking this way of conversation further, as we move towards draft legislation.

Let us not be fainthearted, Synod. It is a very Anglican way of doing things, to adopt a new way of working together within established procedures. It is also a means of speeding matters up and ensuring that we come to the final legislation and voting as fast as possible.

Accepting the amendment may not work but let it not be said of us that we set our hands to the plough and then looked back. Let us keep our eyes on the prize and pass this amendment.

*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:* Since there is no one standing to speak against.... You are not standing to speak against, are you? A lady who is not quite sure what she is going to say is surely worth listening to. (*Several members:* Oh!)

*Revd Canon Dr Dagmar Winter (Newcastle):* It is good to talk. Our thanks are of course due to David Porter and his team. I certainly enjoyed and benefited from last Saturday.

I am not speaking against the amendment. My concern is that we seem to be expecting too much. Everything I have heard this morning, and again just now, leads me to say this. It is not a magic tool and I am sure that David would be the first to say that.

I am worried that there is a confusion of categories here; that treating each other equally cannot be easily transferred to endorsing every view equally as the Church of England. In other words, I am a little bemused by the concept of mediation suddenly becoming a relativist framework in which we say 'each to their own', which is an interesting question for ecclesiology, I guess.

This is probably all a long way from the purpose and intention of Keith Malcouronne's amendment. If Synod does want to vote for it, we need to be aware of what the limitations are, what this can and cannot do. I would therefore have to say 'I agree with Pete – kind of.'

*The Chair:* Dr Winter, I am sorry for my misplaced humour.

*The amendment was put and carried.*

*The Chair:* Having worked through the amendments, we have the main motion amended by Items 45 and 47 and we resume the debate on the main motion.

*The Archbishop of Canterbury (The Most Revd and Rt Hon Justin Welby):* As has been widely agreed, this is not about 'whether' but about 'how', so that women are ordained on exactly the same basis as men and all parts of the Church of England may be enabled to flourish. However, history and contemporary experience show that detailed arrangements not only embed division, they are also unworkable and lead to frequent and prolonged litigation. My last 12 months' experience with parliamentary banking standards has shown this very adequately. If they do not lead to litigation, they invite attempts through clever reading to ensure a desired outcome and, if they do not lead to gaming the system, they invite a box-ticking approach that seeks to conform to the letter, not to the spirit.

I therefore strongly support an approach that is between options one and two, including the Dover amendment, with the extra work needed as suggested by the Archbishop of York. I also entirely disagree with the Broadbent scheme. You are all asleep! I just thought that I would try it, to see if anyone was listening. (*Laughter*) I also strongly support the cunning Broadbent scheme. (*Laughter and applause*) Although, as our last speaker correctly said, we must recognize that, while it is certainly the right thing to do, it will require hard work and generosity to have any effect. As was just said, there are neither magic processes any more than there are magic solutions that get us off the hook of needing a commitment to mutual flourishing.

The approach before us is a radical way forward. It provides the possibility of building trust; it gives us space for imagination; and it affirms an inclusive approach that is consistent with our previous resolutions: as I said, the commitment to ordaining women as bishops on exactly the same basis as men and the flourishing together of all parts of the Church. The approach we have in this amended resolution sets a clear principle, combined with a follow-through to the consensus-building approach that we are developing.

I hope the Synod will take the opportunity of setting a clear general direction, while leaving space for discussion and debate in various ways. I entirely agree that it is essential that the simple and clear five principles command wide support and ownership, here and across the whole Church, and have strong boundaries. They must be discussed, debated and agreed, be very robust and closely followed and monitored. Essentially, they are to be an electrified ring fence. Thus the resolution, amended as we have agreed, combined with the Broadbent cunning scheme, seems to me the best way forward.

*Mr Tim Allen (St Edmundsbury and Ipswich):* I support the motion as now amended. It is effectively an improved version of option one, proposed in the excellent report from Bishop Nigel, who will be very much missed in St Edmundsbury and Ipswich when he goes to Lambeth and who I hope will be definitively replaced before too long, because we have no suffragan.

Trust and grace, as he says, are a much more promising basis for living together in the wonderfully broad Church of England than the legalistic party-bargaining of the last few wasted years. The motion as amended responds in a most welcome way to the clear wishes of the vast majority of Church of England people.

The first paragraph of the report rightly refers to the anger, grief and disappointment felt by so many at the narrow defeat of the women bishops proposals last November. However, Chair, you may say that, notwithstanding the vast majority of support among Church of England people outside this room, seeing option one as amended through this Synod – given the Synod's votes last November and this morning on several of the amendments – will not be straightforward.

You may very reasonably be tempted to ask, when the House of Laity last November failed to muster a two-thirds majority for the previous proposals, how can the same House of Laity be expected to approve by a two-thirds majority in July 2015 the option one approach, which offers less by way of cast-iron legalistic protection for the minorities? We hope and pray that Saturday's facilitated conversations and a continuation of similar processes by which we can listen to each other may help persuade those who opposed the old, legalistic proposals of last November to trust and accept the new approach of option one.

Like many other people, I suspect that Bishop Pete's refreshing notion of a big steering group and no Revision Committee may also help. It will certainly save a very great deal of time. However, I think we ought to consider that there will be another positive and healthy influence at work, which is our own reflections on the elections to choose new Houses of Clergy and Laity in the autumn of 2015.

If women bishops are not approved at the July 2015 Synod, the shortly following elections will, I fear, be bitterly fought. Synod's electronic system of recording votes will enable voters in the dioceses clearly to identify those of us who voted against women bishops last November and in the series of votes that will take place from today onwards until July 2015. No doubt organizations like WATCH will be keen and well-organized to alert voters in each diocese to the identity of candidates who voted against.

If final approval is not given by us in July 2015, it seems extremely likely that many voters, the great majority of whom were appalled by last November's rejection of the Measure, will withhold support from those of us who voted against it and elect instead new Synod members

who pledge unreserved support for women bishops. A new Synod thus elected in the autumn of 2015 would, I fear, be very much less broad in its churchmanship than the present Synod – which would be a great pity but much more supportive of the ministry of women as bishops, which would be most welcome.

I therefore hope that this prospect will concentrate our minds, preserve the broadness of the Church of England in this Synod, and give a fair wind to option one in the months and years ahead.

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

*The Bishop of Gibraltar in Europe (Rt Revd Dr Geoffrey Rowell)*: St Paul writes, ‘I handed on to you that which I also received’ and, of course, the word for ‘handing on’ is that which becomes tradition. The faith, and the order of the Church which expresses it, is not something invented but received and handed on, even though that handing on has to be articulated and expressed in each generation.

This will be my last speech on this issue to this Synod. I have lived with this issue over many years, serving on the Rochester Commission and trying to bring to our debates an awareness of the wider ecumenical context and of our Anglican history and theology. I regret that so often we do not hear each other because we start from different ecclesiological premises, like boats that pass in the night. I hope that, in the processes of facilitated discussion, one of the places of focus should be to get those ecclesiological premises out into the open. Coming from where I do, I would like to see from WATCH a full, written statement of their ecclesiology in relation to the wider ecumenical context and to the Anglican tradition.

I welcome the five principles of vision, within which all the options we have been considering today are embedded. They are very important. They set all of us within the decision-making of the Church of England, but the Church of England does not exist in isolation; it is set in a wider context. As someone once said, whenever you see the word ‘church’ in any Synod report or anywhere else, you have to ask what it means. Is it parish church, diocese, your particular church which is a traditional denomination, or is it the universal Church? It is right to speak of a wider process of discernment in this matter.

Although I realize that in the preamble to the European Constitution God was eventually not mentioned and people said, ‘But actually preambles have no legal force’, I wonder whether some way might be found, when Synod has had an opportunity to agree, and I hope endorse, those principles of the five marks and notes of vision, that they can appear somehow on what we might describe as the face of the Measure.

The theological convictions of many of us are grounded on a Church which at the Reformation deliberately decided to retain episcopacy and the threefold order. The historic formularies, to which in the Declaration of Assent we affirm our allegiance, bear witness to Christian truth. They explicitly refer to the Ordinal of the Prayer Book, which is the only place where bishops are referred to as Fathers in God. For some of us that has a theological and not merely a cultural significance.

I believe we have to think very carefully before we enact a way forward in legislation which does not specifically protect that which we have received, which has been handed on to us, not only in our Anglican tradition. Archbishop Bramhall, that great 17<sup>th</sup>-century Anglican,



said ‘The faith is handed on by *credenda*, those things that are meet to be believed, but also by *agenda*, things that are meet to be done’, within which he would have included the Orders of the Church.

We are built on Scripture, the Fathers and the Tradition, which does not fossilize but is grounded in the renewing power of the Holy Spirit. As we seek a way forward, we need to listen not only to each other but also to those who have gone before us in the sign of faith and who were witnesses, often martyrs, to the faith we have received.

*Revd Canon Jane Charman (Salisbury)*: After this morning’s full debate, it is my lively hope that we can now unite around option one, not just by a simple majority on the floor of the House today but more and more confidently as the detail begins to be put in place by the Steering Committee. But what if we cannot? We seem to have reached the stage in the debate where we need to pay some attention to that possibility.

If we cannot, then I think that we would have to accept that we have reached the limit of our capabilities as a Synod. The events of last November proved what most of us already understood: that, duly elected though we may be, we do not fully represent the considered mind and prayerful will of the wider Church. This has now resulted in a very substantial loss of confidence in us. If, in spite of best efforts, we cannot change the record at this point and if as a result we are unable to transact the Church’s business in this urgent and important matter, then we should go. The Church would not expect less of us. The Archbishops should thank us, dissolve us, and seek some new way forward.

Personally, I am very unwilling – and I imagine most of us are – to invest in a new process without some reasonable expectation that we will be able to complete the job. That, I think, is what the conversations on Saturday and the debate today are enabling us to test. I am sure the bishops are taking the evidence on board and will analyse it carefully.

It is worth remembering that, although trust in this Synod is low, trust in the House of Bishops is higher. The House of Bishops is not infallible. It does not claim to be, but it is seen by most people as essentially benevolent and as having the best interests of the whole Church at heart.

If Synod looks unlikely to be able to grasp this, I would be happy for the House of Bishops to take the matter forward on our behalf in whatever way they see fit. This is not to call into question the good faith of any member of this Synod but it is to call into question our fitness for purpose as a working legislature. I hope this is something that the House of Bishops will consider very seriously and make a judgement on once this group of sessions has concluded.

*Revd Canon Rebecca Swyer (Chichester)*: I found the group work on Saturday to be honest and painful at times but nevertheless had a real sense of hope. For me, the five elements of the vision set out by the House of Bishops encapsulate this honest reality.

Whilst most of us in Synod will find some of those elements easier to accept than others, it seems to me that each of these elements must not only be held together, as the report states, but must also be reflected together explicitly in any legislation. Taken seriously, the five elements, held together, compel all of us to reach out and engage with one another, in order to enable us to flourish as fellow ministers of the gospel – which we are.

Although people are speaking for or against amendments and options today, I am not sure that any of the options, as they are, encapsulate the vision sufficiently. All seems to me to be work in progress. While at the moment I cannot support this motion, therefore, I do support the vision and I do keep the hope.

I would urge that facilitated conversations happen in the light of all the group feedback from Saturday, because we did not hear all of it here in Synod and, also on the table, looking at the different elements of the amendments that have been addressed today, none of which has seemed to be quite there or quite right. However, I think the vision is the key to the outcome and I do believe that it is possible.

*Canon Dr Paula Gooder (Birmingham):* The more perceptive members of Synod might have noticed that at the end of the debate on 20 November I was not what you would call ecstatically happy. I have spent the last months reflecting very deeply – I have just been on sabbatical, so I have had lots of time for reflection – on what it was that distressed me so greatly in the debate we had in November. I could now probably produce for you a 12-volume work on what it was that distressed me so greatly. Right at the top, however, one of the most significant features for me was that I felt I saw us, before my very eyes, mauling our own small part of the Body of Christ. It felt as though we were savaging each other.

Out of that reflection, along with most of Synod, I want to say that we must never do that again. We must undertake that we never do that to each other again. It seems to me that we have a chance now to grasp a new future.

I want to speak in favour of option 1.7, duly amended by the various amendments, with the Willesden cunning plan thrown in. That new package not only offers us a new start, it also offers us a new way of doing this. It offers us a new way forward.

We must be very clear that these options are just boxes into which you can put things. We do not yet have clarity about what will go into any one of the boxes, but the option one ‘box’ does provide us with the space for a different way of doing things. The problem is that, when things are laid out, we in the Church of England have that lovely discerning feeling that what we really ought to do is to choose the middle one. Somewhat cunningly, the plan gave us four, so we have dissolved into a slight sense of not being sure what to do. Nevertheless, we must not be confused by the fact that, option one being at the start, we think it is an extreme end. It seems to me that option one, as amended in the way we have just noted, has the potential to be enormously robust if we run the process correctly.

I therefore want to speak very warmly in favour of this motion and to ask Synod to give it a very warm welcome, in order to give us that new headwind, the headwind into the future, which says that we will never do that to each other again. We will work on this proposal together and we will be the Body of Christ, living the new creation as we are called to do.

*The Bishop of Rochester (Rt Revd James Langstaff):* There has been in this debate in Synod an alarming convergence around the proposition ‘I agree with Pete’. Unfortunately, that particular proposition is not in quite those words on the Order Paper for us to vote on. However, in the motion as it now stands, it is paragraph (b) of the motion which gives effect to ‘I agree with Pete’ because that is the one which asks the Appointments Committee to set up the Steering Committee. If we want to agree with Pete, therefore, we need to enable that to happen by voting for this motion, in particular that paragraph.

The motion as it stands has option one in it and, while a number of people obviously have reservations about that, we have already seen that option one itself has begun to evolve and, whether it is 1.7 or 1.75, it has shifted, not least because of some of the amendments that have been passed.

It is worth pointing out that under option one an Act of Synod is still a possibility; even a special majority could still be a possibility. Certainly we know that any declaration from the House of Bishops would be something for discussion and debate. A lot of things are on the table, therefore, even with option one.

Members of that putative Steering Committee will have heard the debate. They will have seen the votes on the amendments, not least those from my learned friend the Archdeacon of Tonbridge, and they will have heard the strong desire to have some means of affirming the five principles. To move it all forward to enable us to do that; however, we need to set up that Steering Committee and allow it to do its work. The way we have to do that is by carrying this motion as it now stands, hopefully with a serious majority.

It involves trust, of course, and trust has been spoken about a lot. It involves trusting that Steering Committee to do what we have been asking it to do through this debate. It means trusting the process as it has begun to reshape itself. That involves, for example, trusting the Business Committee to think carefully about the balance between the legislative bit and the more informal facilitated discussion bit. However, in order to get to that point, in order to do that, in order to give ourselves those spaces to engage further with the detail, we need to move it forward from today. Not to do so would send some very unhelpful messages more widely, so we need to do so. In order to do that, I would encourage Synod to vote for this motion with conviction.

*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 am told by the wizards of technology that we can now display the motion as amended. Bearing in mind that we have the text as amended, I call on the bishop to reply to the debate.

*The Bishop of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich, in reply:* Can I begin by saying thank you to everyone who has contributed and for what I hope has been a good atmosphere? There has been a graciousness and attentiveness to each other and, although things have not necessarily gone people’s way in the amendments, I think there is a serious listening and a willingness to move. We have already seen a demonstration of willingness to move, to support.

Thank you to the Bishop of Lincoln for the way he started off the debate, which was ideally how we saw what we wanted to try to achieve today and over the process of Saturday.

Whilst I can understand why Rod Thomas does not want to support things as they are, I do have to take issue that option one is not a single-clause Measure. A single-clause Measure makes no provision whatsoever; it just says ‘Women will be bishops.’ This is certainly not

saying that. I cannot emphasize enough this desire in the five principles to keep ourselves together. It may not yet be satisfying people but at least we are working towards that.

I was interested in the whole idea of pre-nuptial agreements, but I am not quite sure where it is going to get us. I think the whole matter of being as certain as we can be before we risk the vote on the final thing, and all the ways of getting there, is a very important part of that.

Trust, grace, law and all the rest of it, are not necessarily to be opposed; they are a part of it. Whatever we do, however, there will be a Measure and that is law, and eventually that Measure will also have to be approved by Parliament.

I think enough people have indicated that the Bishop of Willesden's idea has so much momentum behind it that we would be very foolish not to pay attention to it; so I am happy to say 'I agree with Pete – me mate'! But that of course is in the instruction we give in paragraph (b) and how those who make up the Steering Committee will address their task. I think that there are other ways in which track two facilitated conversations can go on. We must be inventive about it.

I can well understand Christopher Cook's idea of security. It is very moving to hear of someone who has been in the cauldron that is Egypt, even if it was just before the events that have happened; to hear of those Christians who must witness in very difficult circumstances, how they need security, how difficult it is when you do not have it and how your identity is attacked. I can well understand that, but we are trying. I still think that this is reaching out towards seeing how we can achieve that.

I enjoyed the various amendments. It did give a chance for people to begin to see where we were with attitudes towards the various options. All of that was a helpful process, therefore. I am sure that people will take note of the voting as it happened. You can read a lot into it or you can read not too much. However, people have to take note and there does seem to be a request that, 'Okay, if this isn't going to work, how are you going to convince us that you mean what you say in the principles? How are you going to convince us that things will be secure for us?'

There was a fascinating insight from Rebecca Swinson about a generation that has grown up not knowing anything different. If I were to reflect on the aftermath of 20 November, it was of having to meet a lot of the female clergy in my diocese for whom this was not an issue, because they were ordained at a time after the original vote in 1993 and they had just assumed that their ministry was accepted. The effect of 20 November was to shake them to the core about whether they were accepted in their Church. These feelings of insecurity do go both ways. It is difficult to explain to the people of the younger generation, although of course I also accept that there are people of the younger generation who take the opposite view. That is something we always have to remember.

I am grateful to the Archbishop of Canterbury. I rather wish that I had taken more notes and then I could have used his speech as my summing-up speech. However, I think that we are setting a clear principle and we are building consensus – but it is building and I do realize that there is a long way to go. I think that we have improved what we have by the amendments, so I am grateful to those who have put them.

I would agree with the Bishop of Gibraltar in Europe that discussions on ecclesiology are needed and we have been fudging it. It would be good if another facilitated conversation

could take place in which there could be some of these deep discussions, because there are very capable theologians with both types of view who could have that discussion in a constructive way.

Those who found the group work painful and honest but helpful – and I think that has been the general experience – have heartened me. If I had a real desire in chairing the working group and getting to this point, it was that we could begin to change the culture. I really do hope that has begun. I do not have any illusions about how difficult it will be from here, but if we have begun that process, if we have begun to be gentler and better at listening to each other, then I will be very content with what has happened so far.

With the vote on Clive Mansell's amendment about care for the protection of people under equalities legislation being so close, I think we must pay attention to it. Therefore, although it was lost I am sure that people are listening. It is not only the Equality Act that people can work on; there are other areas which might offer a greater sense of security for people in that. If I say that will be looked at and people will ponder very carefully, I hope that is of some help.

It has been very clear that people want to have a chance to own the five principles, or to put their interpretation and to check out if they have understood them right. Again, that will be heard and a mechanism will have to be found as to how it is done. Whether it is put into the House of Bishops' declaration and Synod is given a chance to debate them in that or done in another way, I do not know, but I think that has to be heard very seriously. As Rebecca Swyer has said, if we can unite behind those, I think we really are getting on to a road that might lead somewhere.

I certainly agree that the last thing I want to set going is a slow-motion car crash which gets us in 2015 to where we were before. I hope there are signs that we are beyond doing that and that we can build on what happened on Saturday and today.

Perhaps I can finish by reiterating my gratitude to those who struggled through this in the working group and the facilitated conversations. I am glad that the general effect in Synod was far more effective than most people feared or thought was going to be the case. I think that it proved what could be done.

I was very sorry to read predictions in the press about a further period of angry division or, yet again, convoluted things which would put the Church in a bad light. Please, let us try to build on this, put ourselves in a good light, offer a real hope about reconciliation amongst ourselves, not just for ourselves but for those beyond the Synod and in our country.

*Mr Jacob Vince (Chichester):* I have two points of order, Chair. The first one relates to SO 23(a), division of text, and whether we could vote by individual clauses. The second point of order is whether, having done that, we can vote as a whole Synod on those four items. I think it would be helpful so that we know where we are going. It is strange that we can steer a Steering Committee, but it appears that we can and I think that would be helpful, going forward.

*The Chair:* On the first point of order, that is entirely a matter for my discretion and I rule against it. It seems to me that it would not be helpful at this stage to start dividing anything, so that is my ruling.

In terms of a division by the whole Synod, we have to see if 25 members stand. Do 25 members stand for a division of the whole Synod? I am told that there are 25 members standing. We will therefore have a division of the whole Synod on Item 16, as amended by Items 45 and 47.

*The amendment was put and carried in the following amended form, 319 voting in favour and 84 against, with 22 recorded abstentions:*

‘That this Synod:

- (a) reaffirm its commitment to admitting women to the episcopate as a matter of urgency;
- (b) instruct the Appointments Committee to appoint this month a Steering Committee to be in charge of the draft legislation required to that end;
- (c) instruct the Business Committee to arrange for the First Consideration stage for that draft legislation to be taken at the November 2013 group of sessions, so that the subsequent stages can follow the timetable set out in paragraph 141 of the annex to GS 1886;
- (d) instruct the Steering Committee to prepare the draft legislation on the basis described in paragraphs 79–88 of the annex to GS 1886 as “option one” with the addition of a mandatory grievance procedure for parishes in which diocesan bishops are required to participate and invite the House of Bishops to bring to the Synod for consideration at the February 2014 group of sessions a draft Act of Synod or draft declaration to be made by the House to accompany the draft legislation; and
- (e) urge that the process of facilitated conversations continue to be used at significant points in the formulation and consideration of the draft legislation.’

*The Chair:* I think the Chair of the Business Committee may have some good news for us as to what we do next.

*The Archdeacon of Dorking (Ven. Julian Henderson):* We have done well and, before we continue with our Agenda as it is set, we will have a quarter of an hour break in order to refresh ourselves and be ready to return.

*The sitting was suspended at 3.40 p.m.*

*The sitting resumed at 4 p.m.*

THE CHAIR *Canon Ann Turner (Europe)* took the Chair at 4.00 p.m.

## **Legislative Business**

### **Draft Dioceses of Bradford, Ripon and Leeds and Wakefield Reorganization Scheme 201– (GS 1898)**

*The Chair:* Good afternoon, Synod. This draft reorganization scheme has received the consent of the diocesan synods of Bradford and Ripon and Leeds but not the Wakefield diocesan synod. It has been laid before the General Synod by the Dioceses Commission following the decision of the Archbishop of York to authorize the Commission to do so, notwithstanding that the Wakefield diocesan synod withheld its consent. The Archbishop of York's decision and his reasons for it are set out in GS Misc 1050.

*Canon Professor Michael Clarke (Worcester):* I beg to move:

‘That the draft Dioceses of Bradford, Ripon and Leeds and Wakefield Reorganization Scheme 201– be approved.’

Ten years ago, in the context of the Toyne debates, Synod asked for a Dioceses Commission ‘with teeth’. The Dioceses Pastoral Mission Measure of 2007 provided that body with a brief to ensure that diocesan structures promoted rather than got in the way of mission. Today the Commission places before Synod the outcome of its first major review and invites it to approve the consequent scheme.

Between 1836 and 1919, our forebears, with brave hearts and clear vision, established the three dioceses of Bradford, Ripon and Leeds, and Wakefield. We are now proposing that these be dissolved and in their place a single new diocese created. The three dioceses were originally designed to meet the radical social, demographic, economic and cultural changes which transformed the face of West Yorkshire as a result of industrialization and massive urban growth. Just as external change was the driver for that imaginative response, so it is another round of equally profound change which has caused us to revisit the three dioceses.

From the start we were heartened by the encouragement to be radical. We went to West Yorkshire, having consulted members of the House of Bishops and others about where the impediments to effective mission were most obvious. It was Yorkshire that quickly emerged. It did not take long for us then to discern that the whole of Yorkshire was too big to be a single entity. We concluded that the York diocese needed to be treated separately and the diocese of Sheffield is sufficiently distinct in social and economic terms for it to stand apart from the three West Yorkshire dioceses. So it was that we began our prayerful journey. Mission has been at the heart of our deliberations and is the *raison d'être* for our proposals. We have been constant in trying to discern the will of the Spirit for God's work in our generation and beyond.

Let me make it clear at this point that our exercise has not been finance-driven. Of course, our proposals have been carefully costed. The work of our financial advisers has then been rigorously scrutinized by the chairs of the three diocesan boards of finance working with their colleagues. All have agreed that, if anything, our figures are conservative and that greater savings should be possible. We simply say that this would mean more money for the new diocese and its people to devote to the mission task.

In the course of our work we talked with and listened to hundreds of people, attended dozens of meetings across the three dioceses and received a wealth of written evidence. It has been a

long process, but I make no apology for the time we have spent listening and talking. We went with a blank sheet of paper. There was no blueprint or back-pocket solution. Our job was to listen to what the people of the three dioceses had to say about what would help them in the doing of mission. From that came the proposals which are before Synod today, a solution born of the people of the West Yorkshire and its northern rural hinterland, not – I repeat not – a template for the whole Church of England, a solution truly built from the bottom up.

There are two things about that. First, the Toyne debate and then the guidance to us from the Archbishops directed us firmly away from a one-size-fits-all approach and towards local solutions for local situations. Secondly, we have been single-minded in working to the principle of defining as little as possible in the scheme itself and resisting the temptation to be prescriptive. Today, we are seeking approval for a framework for the future, a framework on which the new diocese will be able to build, and not our detailed solution. This gives the new diocese a huge opportunity. It will for the most part be able to decide how it wants to organize and work. It will be able to put into place structures, systems, processes and ways of working fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> century and the task of tomorrow. The reimagining of the Church and its ministry and mission in West Yorkshire will take place in the context of this opportunity.

I want at this point, Chair, to pay tribute to all three dioceses for their imagination, patience and perseverance. As I said, this has been a long process but they have stayed with it. Of course, I want to pay particular tribute to my fellow Commissioners and to our staff. The contribution of Colin Podmore and, more recently, Jonathan Neil-Smith as secretaries has been remarkable. We have all learned a lot in the process and we shall now make sure we build on that learning for the future.

I am conscious of the rich history and successes of the three dioceses. In no sense is the proposal for a single, new diocese to be read as a criticism of the past or even of the present, rather the opposite. However, they now face the challenges of demographic change, declining congregations, reduced numbers of clergy, weakened finances, pension costs and the like, issues faced by us all but particularly sharply in West Yorkshire. It is their, and our, contention that these will be best met by the three dioceses together, rather than separately, and that new vigour will come from new ways of doing things. In the background there are inevitably questions about the sustainability of things as they are now. The case for a more sustainable mission base is a compelling one.

Synod, your papers for this afternoon – I am sorry about their bulk but they are a necessary consequence of such an exercise – both outline the components of our proposals and report on the exhaustive process of debate and discussion. Bradford and Ripon and Leeds have voted overwhelming in their synods in support of the proposals. In Wakefield there was significant, though not majority, support. We have listened carefully, particularly to the latter diocese's concerns but believe they are misplaced and are largely about matters which the other two dioceses have resolved to their satisfaction.

Doubts have been raised about whether area bishops will ever happen. This comes from not understanding that there is provision in the Measure for the Archbishop of York to make instruments of delegation at a mediate stage and that it will then be a matter for the new dioceses to determine.



Doubts have been raised too about our lack of prescription and whether those responsible can be trusted to fill in the detail properly. We remain absolutely clear that our approach of leaving this to the new diocese itself is right.

Worries have been expressed about the funding of cathedrals, notwithstanding the successive reassurances of the Church Commissioners, as repeated here at Questions on Friday night.

The essence of our scheme is to bring together the three dioceses into one, centred on Leeds, now the country's third city and undisputed regional capital. While the see has to carry the name of a place, Leeds, we have suggested West Yorkshire and the Dales as a parallel title, which we know has widespread resonance. The three existing cathedral churches would retain their status, each with a distinctive mission and ministry in its locality. Incidentally, as strong a plea for the continuing life of the ministry of the cathedrals came from civic and other local leaders as from within the Church itself. The archdeaconry and diocesan boundaries will be revised to better reflect modern reality.

The city of Leeds, for example, will no longer be split between four different dioceses. We propose that each of the five archdeaonries will have its own area bishop. While this will be a matter for the new diocese to determine, we have prepared a scheme of delegation to show how it might work. Both clergy and laity were insistent that a close relationship between their bishop at area level and parishes was a necessary part of building strong mission.

It is this framework, we believe, that will enable the reimagining and re-envisaging of the Church for God's work, providing the springboard for new mission effort at parish, archdeaconry or area and diocesan levels. Building discipleship and growth is the starting point at parish level, supported by proper and focused resources and leadership. Community engagement will come naturally at area or archdeaconry level, with a leadership of bishop and archdeacon as crucial. At diocesan level the Church will be well placed to talk with the civil and civic worlds and to engage with wider society. Most organizations think about West Yorkshire as a whole and our ecumenical partners have been there for some time.

It is with a sense of excitement and anticipation that I urge members of Synod to support our proposals as they come before Synod this afternoon.

*The Chair:* The matter is now open for debate. I call the Bishop of Wakefield, followed by the Bishop of Bradford.

*The Bishop of Wakefield (Rt Revd Stephen Platten):* Chair, thank you for setting up, initially, such a good gladiatorial combat!

I would imagine that no one in any of the three dioceses involved will pretend that the last three years have been easy. The knowledge that the landscape may change radically is always unnerving and is bound to paralyse bold strategies for mission. Nonetheless, despite appearances to the contrary, the diocese of Wakefield has undoubtedly been stimulated by the need to respond to these proposals. We welcome the prompt to find new ways of co-operation and synergy. We can see the benefits in sharing significant functions across diocesan boundaries. We appreciate the sense in tidying up boundaries. For example, as we have already heard from the Chair of the Commission, it is common sense for all of Leeds to be in one diocese. We remain, however, by a two-thirds majority in our diocesan synod and an

even higher majority in the Bishop's Council, clear that this is not the way forward for Wakefield. Why? I will outline a few reasons in the time available to me.

First, there will still be five bishops but just one diocesan. This may well save money for the Church Commissioners, but not for the diocese – rather, the opposite.

Second, the diocesan cannot but be more remote, since he will now have three times the area. The proposal also reduces by two-thirds our representation in the national Church and potentially in the House of Lords. It significantly weakens the Northern Province.

Third, the distances for diocesan meetings and other gatherings will be greatly extended – nearly 100 miles from South Kirby in the south east of our diocese to Hawes in the north west of Bradford.

Fourth, the demography in the current diocese of Wakefield is quite different from that of the other two, with much more in common with Sheffield and the Hull area of York.

Fifth, there will be three cathedrals still – what an ecclesiology, and I wish I had more time to spend on ecclesiology – but there remains too much uncertainty about the long-term Commissioners' funding for these really significant growth points in mission.

Sixth, we remain committed to growing the Church in depth and numbers but a majority of our people are clear that this is not the way to go about it. To grow the Church we are committed in Wakefield to change and development. The radical transformation of our cathedral is iconic of this, so too is our pioneering work on academies and our new academies' trusts, along with a dynamic social responsibility network. We are keen to expand the administrative functions we are already sharing together across diocesan boundaries, though this sharing need not be limited and must not be limited to just three dioceses.

Perhaps the issue that most worries us is the model of governance adopted in the scheme before us. The move in 1970 towards synodical government was rooted in the principle of subsidiarity. Decisions should be made at the most local level possible. Indeed, the strategy of the Dioceses Commission has never been discussed in the House of Bishops in the ten years in which I have been a member. This scheme before us means that either the diocese can find itself being closed down over its own head, ignoring the majority of local decisions, or, because the current scheme is unamendable, if the other two dioceses do wish to go ahead then it means a new scheme.

Make no mistake, this sort of process will not stop here if this scheme goes through, and we are making this decision without first having had a debate across our own Church on what sort of dioceses and bishops we want. Our diocesan synod asks this General Synod for just this: that that motion is parked until this debate is concluded.

I urge members of Synod to vote No to this scheme. At the earliest opportunity let us have a full debate, allowing a proper, theologically robust strategy to be rolled out across the whole of the Church of England.

*The Bishop of Bradford (Rt Revd Nicholas Baines):* The scheme before us today requires a definite decision that will bring an end to more than three years of uncertainty in the dioceses

of Bradford, Ripon and Leeds, and Wakefield. I strongly urge the Synod to vote for it and to show both the realism and the vision that has been mostly evident up north.

When I was appointed Bishop of Bradford just over two years ago – the announcement came one week to the day after publication of the Dioceses Commission proposals – there was inevitably a degree of uncertainty, to say the least, in the diocese about the future. Several of my colleagues faced either an uncertain future or, in one case, definite redundancy.

I want to pay tribute to my colleagues in Bradford for the professionalism, vision and holding together of the big picture and detail as these two years of uncertainty have progressed. Whatever the outcome of this vote this afternoon, I want to place on record that it has been a privilege to serve with them. Personal insecurity has never impinged on the need for change for the sake of the Church of England's ability better to serve the part of the world committed to us – which goes beyond Bradford.

If this scheme goes through, I, along with the other diocesan bishops, will lose my job by dissolution of the post, so I too face further uncertainty. This is not a comfortable place to be; however, it is the right place to be.

I strongly support the scheme. It offers (a) the benefits of scale with the intimacy of locality in an episcopal area system – that, contrary to assertions in the press recently, is not being dismantled in other dioceses. It allows for area bishops – as I have worked in Southwark – to be close to the ground; (b) the ability to make structure follow vision – something the Church always calls for but rarely delivers; and (c) the freedom and opportunity for the Church of England in West Yorkshire and the Dales to address the needs of the region with coherence, informed intelligence and greater strategic wisdom.

The story of the Scriptures is one in which God invites his people to imagine a different world, a different way of being, and to defy present fears or insecurities with prophetic courage. The West Yorkshire process has taught us many things about how to and how not to manage change, but the process has fundamentally compelled us to engage in this imaginative prophetic task. We sometimes talk in the Church about change as a substitute for actually doing it. Here we have a bluff-calling opportunity to take responsibility for doing it.

As we know, structures in and of themselves will guarantee nothing. This scheme creates a framework that will then depend on the real and actual creative will of its leadership and people to establish something new – and to manage the difficult process of making it happen across the piece. Yet this is not new. Leadership is always dependent on the vision, will, pastoral commitment and strategic wisdom of those who implement change and innovation. Indeed, the collegiality set up by an area system would allow – and this is integral to mission – an episcopal team combining a diversity of gifts, leadership in episcopal areas closer to the ground, better pastoral care of clergy, more focused encouragement of and support for locally appropriate lay development, discipleship and evangelism.

It has been said that one diocese might be omitted from the scheme on the grounds that the other two 'want to merge'. This oft-repeated claim completely misses the point and misrepresents the case. First, this is not a 'merger'; it is the dissolution of three dioceses and the creation of a new diocese. Secondly, Bradford and Ripon and Leeds do not wish to merge. They wish to answer the question put by the Church and answered by the Dioceses Commission regarding a coherent ministry in and mission across West Yorkshire and the

Dales. To leave one diocese out – which is not an option on the table anyway – would fail to answer the original question. It would leave the dioceses with a further decade or more of uncertainty (because the question will not go away) and would demonstrate an inability on the part of the Church to effect change where the power to do so lies in its own hands.

During the process we have argued over specific elements of the draft and final schemes. None of us engaged in those debates has ended up with what we might see as the ideal. Not all my proposals have been agreed with. However, we must recognize that not to be agreed with is not the same as not having been listened to.

I love the diocese of Bradford, and I feel a certain poignancy in recognizing that there will also be a personal cost to the decision by the Synod this afternoon. However, I love the diocese of Bradford enough to recognize that this scheme offers more than could have been dreamed of several years ago: the freedom and responsibility to do something new and risky and visionary, taking the best of the old and setting it free in the shaping of the new. I believe that the scheme offers the possibility, if we take responsibility for it, of a bright and engaging future for both Church and our communities.

*The Archbishop of York (Dr John Sentamu):* I beg the indulgence of Synod for a few moments so that I can focus on some of the issues we are addressing in this debate. I would like to cover just three issues: first, why I see this scheme as so important for the Church of England generally and, in particular, for the Church in West Yorkshire and the Dales; second, a few thoughts about cathedrals, which have dominated much of the discussion in West Yorkshire and the Dales; and, third, some reflections and tributes to those who have brought us to this point.

Let us recall for a moment how the Chair of the Dioceses Commission started this debate. He referred to the remit we in this Synod gave the Commission, a remit to look imaginatively at our traditional and historical boundaries and to treat each of the geographical areas on its merits without imposing a standard solution. That is precisely what I believe the Commission has done here. As Professor Michael Clarke has said, the Commission began the task by looking at the dioceses of Yorkshire. In the course of their consultations it became clear that there was great synergy between the dioceses of West Yorkshire and the Yorkshire Dales, and so it was decided to leave the dioceses of Sheffield and York out of this particular scheme.

May I inform the General Synod that, right now, the Dioceses Commission is consulting with the diocese of York on its delivery of mission and it is considering whether the structures we have enable that diocese to deliver mission properly; hence there is a freeze on the appointment of the Bishop of Whitby and in due course there will be a freeze when the Bishop of Selby retires some time later this year. Until we receive the Commission's recommendations for our diocese, these will be frozen, and I think that is quite proper because they will ask us very serious questions on whether we are really delivering mission properly. That is the remit they were given.

In focusing on the dioceses of West Yorkshire and the Yorkshire Dales I believe the Commission has come up with the best solution for these three dioceses in this particular part of God's own county. The key to this is a call to a collaborative way of working, not allowing ancient boundaries to stand in the way of effective mission. Regionally, the three dioceses cohere and they would make a diocese that would deliver mission across the piece.

Synod may also be interested to know that with the new Clergy Terms of Service it became very clear to the dioceses of Sheffield, Ripon and Leeds, York, Durham and Newcastle that if we pooled our resources we would be able to appoint a first-class HR person. Singly, we could not afford to do it but together we have the best of both worlds. Collaboration and togetherness is the key to all of this. As the African saying goes, ‘They who travel fast, travel alone; they who travel far, travel in company with others.’

Clearly, what is appropriate for these three dioceses does not necessarily apply anywhere else. I encouraged the Commission to value the diversity of different areas and not to impose a standard solution, and it has not done that. This scheme, with its five areas within a single diocese, provides local solutions tailored to local needs.

Many have asked me why I have referred this scheme to the General Synod. What are the wider issues for the Church that justify a decision being made in this place rather than locally, if there had been no disagreement? Having listened to the Bishops of Bradford and Wakefield, we now see that the only and final court of appeal is Synod. Members set up the Measure that way. Members are the judges here. Like all judges, put emotion aside, look at the facts and the issues and then judge accordingly. That is why I did it.

Our beloved Church of England is all about worshipping the Almighty God and being at the cutting edge of mission and ministry; living and proclaiming the gospel in every part of England, in schools, hospitals, prisons, homes, as well as in our churches.

Our challenge in this turbulent world is to give shape to a Church fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> century, that reflects the Christian faith as we have received it – both Catholic and Reformed – a Church that is able to relate meaningfully to society and communities that are changing more rapidly and in more different ways than we have ever known.

If it is to have an impact in such a fast-moving world, our Church needs flexibility, mobility and agility. It needs a readiness to take risks, guided by the Holy Spirit, and to try new ways of reaching out to people of all ages. It does not matter sometimes if somebody is in another part of the diocese and is told, ‘By the way, you’d better go to Ripon and Leeds’, that they say, ‘But that church is so close to me, why am I not going there?’ We do not change our message, because it is our faith, but we must explore different ways of delivering that message, ways that respond to people’s lived experience, and ensure the impact of God’s message in the changing world around us.

We cannot and must not assume that the ways which served us well in the past are automatically appropriate now. It would be nothing short of a miracle if our structures, our organizations and our boundaries, many of which were developed hundreds of years ago, were anything near appropriate for today’s challenges. That would make our boundaries infallible and I do not believe anybody here believes it.

This new proposed diocese reflects a bold and imaginative way forward that breaks some of the shackles holding us to the past, provides an organizational framework that is minimal, and gives everyone within it, clergy and laity and bishops, the opportunity to develop the flexibility, mobility, and agility that is so badly needed.

What are the new ways of working and delivering mission, of being a power for good in God’s world? Discovering them is our present adventure. There is under the scheme room in

that diocese to rediscover new ways of working. This is why I believe it is so important for us to debate this proposal here. It is not just an opportunity for these three dioceses; it is an opportunity for all of us to share in and learn from a new way of reimagining our ministry and mission. Those who have been involved in parish reorganization know what I am getting at.

I have a few words on cathedrals. Much has been said about the uniqueness of the proposal's arrangements whereby the new diocese will have three cathedrals. My position is simple. A diocesan bishop has his cathedra in every church within his diocese, whether that is a cathedral, a minster, a church or a chapel. To link a diocesan bishop with one type of establishment, a cathedral, and insist that we have only one cathedral for every diocesan, is to miss the heart of our mission of today, which is to be a presence in every community and every church, however big or small.

Those who are licensed by the bishop in every church community receive the cure of souls, which they share with the bishop. Cathedrals are instruments of mission and not the kingdom of God. Wherever the bishop gathers the faithful to worship, to witness and learn more about our Lord, there is the cathedral. Having three cathedrals in one diocese will be different. It will be breaking new ground; it will challenge our traditional way of thinking; but the whole rationale for this new diocese is to develop new forms of ministry and new ways of delivering God's mission. New opportunities for cathedrals are amongst the exciting jewels of this scheme: opportunities to collaborate and share resources with each other; to develop new and relevant forms of local ministry for the varied communities to be found in the Dales, Wakefield, Leeds and Bradford.

Let us not go into the minutiae of who will fund what, for how long, or how a minster or a pro-cathedral may work. Let us, instead, explore the splendour and glory of what is possible with the wide range of marvellous people and places of worship in this new diocese. It is there that we will find the glory of God and how best we can reflect that in our work. Why not learn from the diocese of Clogher in County Fermanagh, which has two cathedrals: one in Clogher and the second in Enniskillen? Can we learn from them?

Let me end by paying tribute to the three bishops who have led their people through very difficult and challenging times. We all know the difficulties of maintaining faith and progress when faced with fundamental change such as this scheme proposes. Let us remember that, for some, this includes the dissolution of their own positions and roles. The Bishop of Bradford has said that. Within the three dioceses I have seen a sense of continuing purpose and determination that has grown rather than diminished, and this is due to the steadfast leadership of the three diocesan bishops concerned. Whatever their individual views, whatever the disagreements, whatever the outcome of this debate, we all owe these three an enormous sense of gratitude and admiration for what they have done.

I also pay tribute here to those who have challenged and disagreed with the proposals, because that takes a lot of courage. Whatever the merits of their arguments, I would like to acknowledge that bravery and determination and assure everyone that they will do their best. May I make one plea, though? It is that, whichever way this vote goes, we may have reconciliation and harmony as we build a future together.

I pray that Synod members will support this scheme and pray with me for all those within the three dioceses. We are giving them a challenge from which many may learn and grow,

a challenge that will I am sure help us dream dreams, see new visions and, by God's grace, labour in God's mission field for the salvation and well-being of all in West Yorkshire and the Dales. This is what the scheme is all about. That is why I commend it to Synod. I am also very grateful to the Church Commissioners' manager of the process, a man by the name of John Tuckett. For the Commissioners, by the way, moving this process along has cost them £100,000, so please do not look back.

*Revd Ruth Hind (Ripon and Leeds):* This is my maiden speech – so members will need to be nice to me afterwards!

I am rather disappointed that Pete Broadbent has not expressed a cunning plan regarding the Dioceses Commission, therefore I am unable to say 'I agree with Pete' in this debate, although I can say that I agree with the Dioceses Commission about their scheme. That was not always the case. I would not say that I was hostile to the scheme exactly but I just could not see the point for parishes like mine. I have four parishes between Ripon and Thirsk, in what is intended to be the northern episcopal area. I, like many of my colleagues, was fearful that this scheme was not really made with the rural in mind and that we were a tag-on minority. The proposed episcopal area seemed a huge one for one archdeacon to cover. However, following extensive discussion I now see these as problems to be resolved rather than insurmountable obstacles to the scheme.

Why do I want Synod to vote for this proposal? First, the benefits to the mission of Leeds are immense. The opportunity for that city to be one coherent unit for mission must not be missed. At our diocesan synod, many sceptics of the scheme were convinced to vote in favour by compelling arguments made by Leeds clergy, who spoke of the barriers and frustrations of the present system; so that, even if the northern archdeaconry were to find itself at a disadvantage as a result of the scheme, they should and probably would take the hit, as it were, for the whole kingdom of God. I seem to recall that there is something in our faith about bearing each other's burdens and about loving our neighbours. However, I do not think that the northern archdeaconry will be at a disadvantage, because I am becoming increasingly captivated by the vision presented of a rural archdeaconry with an area bishop who is passionate about rural ministry, where policies of practice are specific to the rural context, where rural specialists, who are in short supply, can be recruited, nurtured and trained, and where rural mission is the mission priority.

In order to achieve this, we will need to ensure that any new diocese does not forget about the rural north and that the area bishop has autonomy in setting decisions and policy. However, these are issues to be resolved later rather than now, once the scheme is in place. I would urge Synod to vote for the scheme on the basis of the immense benefits to Leeds and the possibilities that it offers for contextual best practice, not only in the northern archdeaconry but in each of the episcopal areas.

*Mrs Mary Judkins (Wakefield):* A motion Wakefield diocese passed in 2008 was that 'This Synod believes that the transformation of individual lives, congregations and communities is central to the gospel message. We therefore call on the whole diocese to engage prayerfully in the next stage of our life together, *Investing in our Faith 2008–2013*, leading the diocese to our 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary and beyond.'

The last two words 'and beyond' were my amendment as then lay Chair.

Tim Slater's background paper, *Listen to Wakefield*, was very helpful. He uses the phrase 'Wakefield-centric'. Those two words which I added and which were accepted convey what I believe this new diocese is about. 'And beyond' – opportunities and a challenge to move forward and beyond. Beyond what? Beyond time. We mentioned beyond 2013. That is where we are now. What next? Beyond place. At the original debate, speakers were worried about Mara being lost among Faisalabad, Georgia, et cetera, but that did not happen. Beyond people – children and young people, growth of congregations, fresh expressions, ageing congregations, lack of waged church members, people who desperately need a shepherd and a local bishop, an area bishop, who knows them – local true pastors of the flock, area bishops; and, beyond the diocese, our role locally, nationally and internationally.

The key question is why? It has been said it is the centrality of the gospel message, proclaiming it afresh in every generation. GS Misc 1054, *Making New Disciples*, has a prayer at the end of the report: 'Open our eyes to new opportunities, our lips to sing and speak of you, and our hearts to welcome the stranger.' I think that sums up pretty neatly why we should vote for this new diocese of West Yorkshire and the Dales. Wakefield diocese has a lot to share. Yes we could do it informally, but we do not. Our Mara link is probably the best in the Anglican Communion. Why keep it to ourselves? Our Education Department does brilliant work with our many church schools, community schools and academies, including secondary church schools. Why keep this to ourselves? We have gifted clergy and laity who are doing more and more with fewer financial resources. Why keep these gifted clergy and laity to ourselves?

We are part of Hope 2014 and are really going for this in every parish. Why can we not work together with others for more mission opportunities, together, better and stronger? Why keep it to ourselves?

At the consecration of the new Bishop of Beverley, David Hope, once of Wakefield, said the following: 'How the Church today needs urgently to shake off the disabling shackles of hierarchy and bureaucracy, so that it can be free to travel light, to embrace an altogether new asceticism – a theology of "enoughness" as Lambeth 1998 puts it, to live the gospel so that the light and life of Jesus may be the more manifest to all and for all.'

In *Mere Christianity*, C. S. Lewis says, 'Hand it over to me, the whole outfit, all of your desires, all of your wants. ... Turn them *all* over to me. ... I will then give you Myself. My will shall become your will.' Do not be swayed by lost jobs, loss in Synod, loss in the House of Lords, increased parish shares, distance to travel, pro-cathedrals, lost charities, heavier workloads, personal friends. I know these fears amongst some of our lay staff, but are we not Christians? It is a wonderful gospel opportunity to travel together. As Eleanor Roosevelt said – and here, I also agree with Pete, an optimist – 'A stumbling block to the pessimist is a stepping stone to the optimist.' I urge Synod to vote Yes.

*Mr Ian Fletcher (Bradford)*: In any reorganization of structures there is always a range of possibilities. The Dioceses Commission has considered these choices and arrived at that which is in front of us today. We now need certainty, going forward, that would derive from a Yes vote. I do not believe that any outcome that the Dioceses Commission could come up with would be agreed by everyone. Nor should it be. In Bradford, 90 voted for this arrangement and 4 against. We cannot get a vote like that when we ask what sort of coffee we want! (*Laughter*)



We have a proposition put in front of us that has been fully considered by a Dioceses Commission that was set up just for that very purpose. I look at what is presented and compare it with what we currently have, and I see lots of opportunity in what is proposed. Therefore, I have no choice but to support the suggestion of a diocese of West Yorkshire and the Dales. That does not mean that I cannot see areas of concern. I appreciate the position of some of the people in Wakefield, but I have even greater concerns about the current arrangements of the three dioceses and their sustainability in the longer term.

In general, I am one of those folk who actually prefers small. In this case I can see the effect that lack of finance is having on our mission. Dioceses exist, in my view, to assist parishes. That is the purpose of the diocese. I think a bigger diocese will do just that. The area system gives us bishops who are shepherds of people. With the area system, they will know their people in their area. Many of our parishes complain that they feel distant from the diocese. We recognize that dioceses do what they can within the resources they have, and that is what this is all about. Because I am an accountant I look at these things, but the balance sheets are on page 18 of GS Misc 1049C worry me. If the pension deficit was included, they would worry me a great deal more – hence my question about the new accounting arrangements coming over the hill. At this time we are still in a position of strength in order that we can choose how we proceed.

Looking at the maths, the three dioceses voted 200 in favour and only 98 against – a vote that would go down well in some other debates. The idea of a merger of two dioceses frankly does not work. We need the three. The Dioceses Commission has arrived at this conclusion. I agree with it. I hope that, going forward, we will have an interim arrangement that enables this reorganization period to work. I think that we need a chief executive in post as soon as possible.

The concerns of Wakefield do need to be addressed. I am sure that they will be. The on-going security of the cathedrals needs to be addressed. Some comfort has already been given and I hope that the Church Commissioners will now give cathedral support to my parish as it takes its place in the system. The scheme does not prevent any of these things from happening. The scheme gives plenty of room for manoeuvre. I urge Synod to vote for this motion.

*Canon Nigel Greenwood (Ripon and Leeds):* I speak in support of these proposals, which for many of us bring an exciting opportunity to find new ways of working. Of course, there will be challenges but I would like to offer some tangible and some evidence-based examples of how collaboration between two of the three dioceses is already enhancing and growing our mission in one particular area of Church life.

Some ten years ago a unique opportunity arose with vacancies in both Bradford and Ripon and Leeds for directors of education. In what was then seen as quite a visionary and radical move, it was decided to make a single appointment across the two dioceses, with an initial brief of setting up a joint education team to cover the two dioceses in their entirety. The underlying principle was not so much to save money but to provide improved services and support for our schools, based on rationalized but enhanced provision. It was guided by the principle that we could offer so much more by working together than either diocese could do separately in the area of education. We were, for example, able to appoint a buildings adviser to help schools with the funding and realization of both new projects and repairs.

We have one education office and a central administration, bringing economies of scale and more effective support. At the outset we set up a joint standing committee across the two dioceses and we now hold combined board meetings. We have a single umbrella trust for managing and developing academies across the two dioceses, a joint trading company for additional services, such as conference support, which some of the academies and schools can buy in. This income is fed back to enhance our provision even further. In partnership with two Methodist districts we are developing chaplaincy to colleges of further education across West Yorkshire, a sector often neglected by the churches. In all this we are driven by the philosophy that we only do separately what we cannot do better and more effectively together as one.

The good news from the proposals so far is that more recently we have been working together and meeting not only as two dioceses but also, through the Education Preparation Group, building up trust and relationships with our colleagues from Wakefield. This is an exciting prospect and project, which has brought a great deal of insight and learning from each other and the sharing of good practice.

I would respectfully suggest to Synod that this wealth of experience, which has been entirely positive, offers a model of good practice that bodes well for the new diocese as it releases the resources for enhancing our mission. Earlier today we said Yes to Willesden. I hope that now we can say Yes to West Yorkshire and the Dales.

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

*Revd Canon Maggie McLean (Wakefield)*: Although I would not want to be as dismissive as Mary has been about the concerns of my colleagues and friends in the Wakefield diocese, she did make some good points. However, it is some of those concerns that I want to raise.

As a training officer, I know how well the Yorkshire Regional Training Partnership works and the way its staff function collaboratively across the whole area. Regardless of what happens this afternoon, that collaboration will continue. Nevertheless, there is a real concern about how this training will be affected within such a large diocese that might be created. It will stretch, as my bishop has just said, from Scotch Corner to Todmorden. It is a massive area and there is a concern about the effect on training at the point of delivery.

Secondly, the creation of one diocese with a diocesan bishop could allow for economy of scale and enable strategy and mission to be discussed centrally and delivered locally. However, I agree with my bishop that two episcopal voices will be lost in a national debate and specifically here in Synod. The Synod provincial voice, to be raised again in another debate tomorrow, is often lost in this chamber and elsewhere in the Church, and I wonder if this is something that will need to be addressed if this motion this afternoon is passed.

Lastly, the creation of five local episcopal areas delivering leadership closest to where it is needed raises a concern that one episcopal area might become the exclusive preserve of a single tradition. I am also sure that when the new Bishop of Leeds is appointed she will make sure that will not happen! (*Laughter*)

For my own part, I think this is a creative response and a freeing of resources that will meet the financial and mission challenges in the North and reflect the Church structures that are needed in our Church in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

*The Bishop of Burnley (Rt Revd John Goddard):* It might seem strange to members, if they have not carefully read the report, why a Lancastrian bishop is looking at West Yorkshire. They have a gift, a treasure for us from Bradford. We are to have some of their parishes, which we welcome. They have been wooed by the Archdeacon of Blackburn and are now all content to come.

It has also been a delight to realize that, if this is passed, I will no longer have to drive through Bradford diocese in order to get to parts of the Blackburn diocese. I speak here, also, as the acting Bishop of Blackburn. From our synodical point of view we are overwhelmingly supportive of this reorganization: 104 for, 1 against. We see this as the opportunity of the Dioceses Commission beginning to gain experience in its teeth, so that when we welcome them to the north-west they will be practitioners with experience to help us forward in our diocese.

Finally, whichever lines are drawn as a boundary, they do not quite fit. For example, those in East Lancashire quite often look to Bradford for family relationships. Therefore, whether one is in Lancashire or Yorkshire, the whole of the area blends together. It is perhaps time not to think about the old boundaries or, might I say, even the old jokes about Lancashire and Yorkshire, but to move to the future and look to the development of mission, I hope with the aid of this new reorganization, which will help those of us who are not reorganized see a benefit in such.

*Mr Clive Scowen (London):* I am from Willesden. I do not know much about West Yorkshire. I do not have the tools to make an independent judgement about the proposal and neither, frankly, do most of us in this chamber. On its face, the scheme looks fairly sensible, though it is far from clear to me that it will save much money. I am not much impressed by most of the objections raised by Wakefield in its paper. However, I have come to the conclusion that I cannot support the proposal before us today for three reasons.

First, it is wrong in principle to abolish a diocese against its will. Clearly we have heard from some people from Wakefield who do not share the view of the diocesan synod, but the only measure we have of the will of the diocese is the vote of the synod and the vote does seem to have been by a fairly clear majority. The Church of England understands itself to be a Reformed Church which has retained Catholic order. As I understand it, one aspect of Catholic order is the notion that the fundamental unit of the Church is the diocese. Provinces and national Churches are federations of dioceses. As in the EU or the USA, there is pooled sovereignty which constrains the dioceses in all manner of ways, but just as neither the United States or the European Union would ever presume to abolish one of its member states or make it merge with another against its will, neither should we force an unwilling diocese into this sort of merger. It may be that, given more time and maybe more facilitated conversations, hearts and minds in Wakefield could be changed, but they plainly, if their synod is to be believed, are not there yet. It seems to me it is not the right time.

Secondly, it is wrong in practice, because the successful formation of the new diocese of West Yorkshire and the Dales – which surely it should be called rather than Leeds – requires a clear vision for the future, which is shared and embraced across the whole of the new diocese – buy-in from all its constituent parts. If Wakefield or a significant proportion of Wakefield is carried in, as it were, kicking and screaming or even mildly resistant to that new diocese, it will be a disastrous start for what ought to be an exciting and visionary new enterprise. Again, more time, more conversation, might win the majority in Wakefield to

embrace the new vision. However, they are not there yet and it seems to me it is not the right time.

Thirdly, the one point made in the Wakefield leaflet which seems to have real force is that, as so often in this Synod, we have embarked on an exercise without first asking as a Church where we want to go. What is the model of episcopate that we want in the future? Do we want more bishops or fewer? Do we want bigger dioceses with episcopal teams or smaller dioceses with just one or two bishops? If we could agree a national strategy, setting out a direction of travel to guide the work of the Dioceses Commission, it would be much easier in the future to get reviews agreed. Without such a prior national debate, the model adopted in this review, for good or ill, is likely to become the default model for future schemes without us having decided that that is actually the right direction.

My view, sadly, is that at this stage Synod should not approve this scheme because of Wakefield diocesan synod's disagreement. It makes it wrong in principle and in practice. Also, it is premature in the absence of a nationally agreed direction of travel.

*The Dean of St Paul's (Very Revd David Ison)* – and formerly from Bradford. First, I want to address Clive Scowen's comment about kicking and screaming. If members know anything about the history of diocesan reorganizations in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries they will know that there was an awful lot of kicking and screaming, and indeed some proposals which resulted in what we have in West Yorkshire were hotly contested. However, if there had been no change, no willingness to change the way we were, there would have been no diocese of Ripon, no diocese of Wakefield and no diocese of Bradford; it is simply continuing the work that has been begun in West Yorkshire.

Second, it has been said that there is precious little theology about having three cathedrals in one diocese. Although there is some theology about bishops and dioceses, actually I could find very little theology at all about cathedrals. Deans were provoked into it by this process. There is virtually no real theology in the clutch of books written about cathedrals after the 1994 Howe report – some ecclesiology but not much theology. My view, and that of my late lamented colleague Keith Jukes, is that there are real Trinitarian resonances in the nature of having three cathedrals in one diocese. This is a perichoretic theology dancing around each other in a way that would enhance the mission of the Church through our different specialisms in those different cathedrals, and it would give a real opportunity to experiment with what it would mean to have one College of Canons in three incarnations, in three cathedrals, knitting together the fabric of a new diocese.

My third point – and this is a message particularly for the Church Commissioners and the Dioceses Commission – is about the funding and security of cathedrals. The brand 'cathedral' that has been very successful and in which the Church Commissioners have invested heavily has borne fruit. For example there has been a 35 per cent increase in cathedral worshippers over the past 10 years. However there is a fear in dioceses of losing that support, particularly in areas of great poverty and deprivation, and it would be disastrous for our mission to reduce our support for poor areas while continuing to rejoice in our great mediaeval historic cathedrals in large villages elsewhere in the country. Let us support the North and the margins as part of our gospel imperative to serve the poor.

I want to suggest to the Commissioners a period of experiment, an opportunity for creativity and exploration rather than being too prescriptive or rubbing their hands at the prospect of

saving money in 2016. Let us allow cathedrals to have time to work with their dioceses on how to shape mission, have a 20-year period of looking at diocesan boundaries nationally but remain committed to the existing pattern of cathedrals that are funded during that time, not trying to change things quickly but giving space for growth and change, allowing this partnership to develop, and after 20 years – and this is where Clive Scowen’s comments seems to me to bite – look at the situation nationally not only with regard to cathedrals but also with regard to how we are doing our mission with minsters, sub-regional churches and in relation to major population centres that do not have cathedrals, such as Nottingham, recognizing the constraints of history and reality, and then formulate a national strategy for how to use, adapt or change our pattern of cathedrals and minsters. We would be able to do that on the basis of having a much better idea of what works and what does not, based on evidence and experiment. I am asking for only 21 years for cathedrals, which is a mere blip over the lifetime of a church.

I recently shared a taxi with the Bishop of Chelmsford and we had a debate about where his diocese belonged. Actually it was ours until 1846, then the diocese of Rochester took it over and the cathedral in Rochester had to serve Essex and north Hertfordshire, and it was that experience that led to the cathedral in St Albans and later in Chelmsford. We have always done this kind of thing, so let us carry on doing it.

The other fear that has been expressed is: ‘They’ll be coming for you next!’ My experience of working on this in Bradford was hugely creative and it was really exciting to have an opportunity to shape the future. Imagine a future in which, instead of thinking, ‘How on earth do we get rid of that diocesan committee?’, the thinking might be, ‘We do not need to create it in the first place.’ Brothers and sisters, if the Dioceses Commission comes for you, I urge you to grab the chance with both hands and take it to shape your own future and mission for the sake of the Church in the name of Jesus Christ.

*The Dean of Portsmouth (Very Revd David Brindley):* I want to address two areas – the first briefly, followed by a little more on cathedrals, if members can bear it.

The first is the assumption that big is beautiful. I speak as the dean of a relatively small diocese, but Portsmouth is not an isolated diocese. We share with Winchester not only joint working in education but a joint board of education. We share a finance department and IT services with Winchester and Guildford and it works well; together we do what we can. It does not save money but it provides more robust systems, which is a good thing. We do not have to create larger dioceses to bring about co-operation, and it is foolish to try to align dioceses with civil boundaries, which history shows change regularly.

Now a little about cathedrals – and I do not want to mix it with the Dean of St Paul’s contribution on the doctrine of perichoresis. It is simply not enough to state that we have three or four cathedrals in a diocese; that has not been the Church of England Anglican way. We need to do work on the theological, historical and missiological assertion lying behind this. To His Grace the Archbishop of York I would say that it is simply not enough to say that every parish church is a cathedral. It might have in it a seat on which the bishop sits but the locus of the bishop’s teaching authority is vitally important to Anglicanism. The basic unit of the Anglican Church is not the parish but the bishop in his diocese. As often shown in statistics and surveys, cathedrals are growing. That is because they are engaged at the forefront of inter-faith dialogue, their unique access points for those on the fringes of faith. Whatever we say, it will look as though we are demoting Bradford and the other cathedrals

and dioceses. One can imagine the inevitable headline, ‘Church withdraws from Muslim city.’

In a slightly more detailed way I would now like to draw Synod’s attention to the implications of Schedule 2 Part 1 attached to GS 1898. The weeds of the Cathedrals Measure 1999 may not be at the forefront of everyone’s mind, but it suggests that in order to bring about the changes necessary to the Cathedrals Measure we give the bishop of the diocese permission to create just one canonry in each cathedral. However I am not clear whether that would apply to all cathedrals and dioceses or simply to the cathedrals of the new diocese. It sounds rather like finding out which bits of the Church are growing and engaged in multi-faith encounter and then taking resources away from them.

These proposals for a new diocese contain too many untested assumptions and I therefore invite Synod to join me in voting against the motion.

*Revd Canon Joyce Jones (Wakefield):* I am a parish priest and rural dean in the diocese of Wakefield. Wakefield is a long, thin diocese from east to west and I am in the western half, which under the scheme would be served by the area bishop of Huddersfield. The initial reaction of many people in the archdeaconry, and certainly in my chapter, was favourable; they liked the idea of having a local bishop on the ground, so to speak, and did not feel particularly connected to Wakefield. However, as members know, in the diocesan synod those in favour of the scheme were in a minority. Many people were concerned about the disruption and amount of work involved, not confident in the financial benefits, and that this was something of an experiment, not part of a coherent national strategy, which was why last year the Wakefield diocesan synod passed a motion asking for a debate on the organizational structure of the Church nationally.

In the diocesan synod I spoke in favour of the scheme and I remain of the view that it would serve the area very well. A reduction in the number of diocesan bishops seems to make sense in an environment in which the number of clergy is reducing, although I have concerns about the northern voice. In my view, area bishops living among their people and with fewer national responsibilities would be better placed to take a lead in mission in their areas. This less hierarchical structure is more suited to the 21<sup>st</sup>-century Church and might well be introduced in other areas of the country too.

However, of necessity the scheme is only an outline. It is right that much work remains to be done on the ground to put flesh on the bones so that the structures created are suited to local needs. I am therefore concerned about the risks of implementing this scheme when those who will have to do the work in the diocese of Wakefield have not been convinced by the Commission’s arguments. I am also concerned that those whose livelihoods will be most affected by the scheme have not been well consulted, and I hope that can be remedied.

In spite of my conviction in favour of the scheme, having regard to the views in the diocese, I intend to abstain on the vote.

*Revd Canon John Sinclair (Newcastle):* Many of the points that I had intended to make have already been made, so mine will be a short speech.

It seems to me that locking people in a darkened room until they can agree and see the light might be an excellent way of progressing, provided they agree to enter the room together.

From what I have heard during today's debate and having read the reports, it seems to me that people are being forced into a partnership that sounds rather like a shotgun wedding, and I am hearing not wedding bells but alarm bells. Surely consent needs to be at the foundation of a partnership that will stand the test of time? We have already heard that it has taken three years to reach this point and that a lot of listening has taken place, but to proceed without the consent of one of the partners seems to me to lead us down a path that will be extended 20 years and beyond as ways of working together can be devised, and my fear is that while that happens we will be diverted from the front line of the local task of engaging in mission and evangelism throughout three important dioceses.

From my work in travelling round the diocese of Newcastle, from the city centre parishes to the deep rural Northumberland parishes, I am aware of the need for different approaches to front-line evangelism, encouraging parishes in their local context to engage with their people, and my fear relates to how that is going to happen with a much bigger area.

A word on cathedrals. I do not know what a pro-cathedral is. I would like to understand how multiple cathedrals can lead to a focus of diocesan identity. I know that working together collaboratively and in agreement, as we do with HR and training, works well, but I fear that in doing it with people who do not consent we will be diverted from the task of proclaiming the gospel.

The joint cathedral chapters in Newcastle and Durham have been trying to arrange a lunch to visit the Lindisfarne Gospels and it has taken us months just to come up with a date, so I believe that in trying to work together to do things with evangelistic mission we will set ourselves a very difficult task that will take our eye off what I see as a very important goal.

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

*Dr John Beal (Ripon and Leeds)*: In view of the time limit I shall not repeat what other speakers have said. However I want to make two points.

The first is to stress, as a resident of Leeds, the importance for that city. We have heard that currently Leeds is not in one diocese; it is not even in two or three dioceses but in four different dioceses – a complete nonsense. There is a large block to the west of Leeds, which is in Bradford, a slightly smaller block in the diocese of Wakefield, and a few fringes on the eastern border in the diocese of York, but actually some of them are only partly in Leeds and the parishes also partly in the county of West Yorkshire. To bring those parishes currently in the dioceses of Bradford and Wakefield into a single archdeaconry under a single area bishop is very important for the city of Leeds.

Secondly, having spent my career in public health, I am always insistent on looking at evidence-based policies and I would therefore like to express the hope that the Commission, or someone else, will evaluate to what extent the mission objectives have been achieved after a period of, say, three or five years. Let us learn from this big, important change, but we need to see actually whether it does what it says on the tin and improves and increases mission across the whole of West Yorkshire and the Dales.

I hope that Synod will vote in favour of the motion.

*Revd Canon Jonathan Alderton-Ford (St Edmundsbury and Ipswich)* – and a member of the Dioceses Commission.

I want to make a few remarks in response to some that have gone before. I remember that we had a national debate about dioceses when we set up all these committees in 2005 and 2007, and in fact some very clear indications were given to us. Even if we now pause in order to have such a debate, what would we actually say to each other? We would say that dioceses are like a gift. Like episcopate itself, it varies widely from denomination to denomination, from nation to nation and from size to size, and even now within the Church of England, through both history and beyond, we have different sorts of diocese, different sorts of place and different sorts of episcopate. In short, all we are doing is retaining our historic insights but re-imagining diocese for the age in which we now live, which is exactly what we have done through the ages until now; we are not losing anything and are gaining much. In fact if we know the answer already, we do not need a further debate.

In addition, this scheme is a regional solution. It is not just about Wakefield; it is about everyone there, all wanting to come together and work effectively.

I end with a little picture. Members will remember the great Sunday School outing when children were taken to the seaside. The coach doors would be opened and the children would run straight into the sea; others would take a little more time, take off their clothes and then go into the sea; and finally some would get ready to go in but would be nervous on the edge, but with a little bit of coaxing they would go in and find that they had as much fun as everyone else. Whatever else the Church or a diocese is, it is a gift to us from the Lord Jesus Christ. He wants us to enjoy it, to play with it, to have fun with it and see what we can do, and this is an opportunity the Dioceses Commission, supported by submissions from all three dioceses and beyond, is offering the national Church. I urge Synod to go for it, enjoy it, have fun with it and see what we can do.

*Mr John Freeman (Chester)*: On a point of order, Chair. Could I tempt you with a motion for closure on this item?

*The Chair*: You could after the next couple of speakers, Mr Freeman.

*Revd Paul Ayers (Bradford)*: If we were to vote against this scheme, what would we be saying? We would be saying that all the work and prayer that has gone into it had been a waste of time, that everything is fine as it is, that the way the Church of England organized itself in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries is perfectly OK. for the 21<sup>st</sup> century and that we need do nothing about it. Ironically similar arguments have been used in the past about change. For instance often people use them if they want to re-order the Victorian interiors of their church buildings. The irony, of course, is that had those arguments prevailed back then, there would be no Victorian interiors, because the Victorians were great modernizers and we need similar energy to theirs to re-create the Church for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

I want to hold out a hand to Wakefield. Many members are anxious; so are we. Many think that the scheme is not perfect. Nothing is ever perfect, but at least we have an opportunity to make it what we want it to be. It has been thought through as thoroughly as anything could be. Many are worried about what will happen in the future. There are never any guarantees about the future, but there is a phrase ‘Feel the fear and do it anyway.’ Otherwise the Church would never do anything courageous and creative. An example we vicars often use when



illustrating faith and trust in God is that of trying to teach children to swim. You stand in the pool and say ‘Jump in and I’ll catch you.’ They do not know that you will catch them until they jump. I think that we are all standing on the edge of this. We need to hold out a hand to each other, jump in and trust that God will see to our future, that he will honour our risk-taking faith and open up great new possibilities.

*The Chair:* After the next speaker I would like to hear from the Bishop of Ripon and Leeds, whose time limit at my discretion will increase to five minutes.

*Revd Canon James Allison (Wakefield):* We are asked to be unemotional about these issues but it is an emotional issue for me, as I will explain. I live 25 minutes away from my father and 25 minutes away from my son – it is a great distance to be – but two of us are vicars and one is a potential vicar. My father is a priest in the Bradford diocese, my son is an ordinand in the Leeds diocese, and I am a vicar in the Wakefield diocese.

Throughout the process I have been very positive in every possible way about the merging of the three dioceses, and today I would love to say to Synod ‘Go for it, because it is a good scheme and it will be good for the area’, but I have a huge problem in that I am also an Anglican and was brought up in the Anglican Church to consider ourselves to be both episcopal and synodical. I serve in my diocese with both my bishop and my synod saying ‘no’ and if I put my fingers in my ears and say ‘La-la-la’ I will ignore them, but I do not think we should.

It is a basic principle in all marriages – and this is a marriage – that we seek the consent of those who are to be married. Whereas I can feel very positive about this in my heart, in my head I also know that we do not have the consent of the Wakefield diocese. I therefore cannot vote either for or against this motion, and it is with an incredibly heavy heart that probably I shall abstain.

Let me finish with another illustration from my wonderful family. On Trinity Sunday my father, my son and I all got together to preach. We sat round a table – it was fabulous, like Rublev’s icon! – and a wonderful experience was had by our congregation, which was all the better for the three dioceses being present together, but wouldn’t it have been awful if one of us had been there reluctantly?

Even though I think this is a good scheme, I cannot be positive about it and I will therefore abstain.

*The Bishop of Ripon and Leeds (Rt Revd John Packer):* If other dioceses have any more ordinands whom they would like Ripon and Leeds to take, please let us know and we will proceed with that!

I believe that these proposals provide us in West and North Yorkshire with real mission opportunities and I hope that the Synod will approve them.

There is urgency about this. We have talked about the three years that we spent looking at these proposals. I first became an incumbent in Yorkshire 36 years ago, I regret to say, and ever since we have been talking about the way in which the dioceses of North, West and South Yorkshire actually fail to cohere with the natural elements of the society in which we live. This is a real chance to break through that log-jam. There are real mission needs in our

county. If we approve these proposals we will have increased the means to tackle them. We will have one diocese united in working for West Yorkshire.

I shall not repeat points that have already been made but I want to add one or two to express my concern for the future of West and North Yorkshire. All the other great northern conurbations have a diocese and a diocesan bishop at their heart – South Yorkshire and Sheffield, Merseyside and Liverpool, Greater Manchester and Manchester, Tyne and Wear and Newcastle. That does not mean that the civic and church boundaries are the same; it means that there is a central drive in those great communities. The civic boundaries will not be the same if we pass this particular piece of legislation, but we have three diocesan bishops living within 15 miles of each other and we need greater coherence in sharing the gospel, particularly in West Yorkshire.

I want to repeat the comment about the parishes of Leeds. Bishop Steven said that it would be good to bring together those parishes, but we cannot do that unless there is some way of doing it, and that is bound to affect the dioceses of Bradford and Wakefield as well as the diocese of Ripon and Leeds. Whether or not Leeds is the third city in the UK, it is one of the great cities of our country and it deserves a united mission while sharing in the benefits of the wider diocese. I have worked in Sheffield and in Liverpool. Just think of what it would be like to have those cities split between four dioceses. It really does not make sense. It has been difficult in Leeds, although we work well and often operate together.

That brings me to cathedrals. These three cathedrals are retained partly, maybe even primarily, because the local communities we serve want these symbols and centres of Christian mission. The most appropriate cathedral for Leeds is Wakefield, the historic county town of the West Riding, where much West Yorkshire activity is concentrated, including for example the centre of the police. I love Ripon Cathedral and many of us who live in Leeds love it, but it is in a different county and in a quite different culture, and much as we love Ripon Cathedral, Wakefield has more opportunities to develop its relationship with Leeds.

I do not like the pro-cathedral idea either. Those members who have looked at the small print will know that it comes into effect only if and when the future bishop of Leeds decides; I hope she never does! However it is there as an option if we need it. Meanwhile Bradford has a major ministry to its city and that wide variety of ethnic and faith groups that have made it their home, and it needs to be made very clear that in no way do these proposals reduce the role of the Church of England in Bradford. Increasingly Ripon is a sign of the kingdom for North Yorkshire and I do not think there is much chance that the new diocese will be able to forget the needs of the rural areas to the north of the diocese.

Already our ecumenical partners have moved a long way in the directions proposed by this legislation. Through our vote today they look to us to contribute to the work of the Christian Church as a whole across West Yorkshire. I pray that the Synod will allow us to get on with pursuing our pilgrimage as we share in Christ's mission in our county by approving this legislation today.

*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.*

*Professor Michael Clarke*, in reply: I start by thanking everyone for their contributions to what has been a very useful and rather rich debate. Sitting listening to it, what has pleased those of us from the Commission is that the Synod debate has mirrored our debate in a real and important sense.

References have been made to the length of the process; I referred to it in my opening statement. It has been a lengthy process but it has enabled exhaustive discussion. We have reached a position of having not everyone but a significant majority with us. Mr Scowen made the point that probably the time is not right and that there is a need for more conversation. My experience of major change projects in other domains is that there is never a perfect right time.

One of the contributors from the diocese of Ripon and Leeds made the point about the discussion on education that has been taking place with a group of people from all three dioceses looking at the opportunities for the future and becoming excited. My observation has been that when all three dioceses have sat down together to talk about this or that, they have become excited, and I can only say that during the process members of the Wakefield diocese, some of whom voted against the scheme, made it absolutely clear that, were Synod to approve the scheme today, they would work as hard as anyone else to ensure that the missional work in West Yorkshire is pushed forward.

Today's discussion has mirrored the Commission's, in the sense that we started with a blank sheet of paper, built some propositions out of our conversations with people in the three dioceses, tested, returned, redesigned and tested again. In other words, as I said at the outset, what has come to the Synod today is very much borne of the people of the three dioceses and borne through a process of robust examination and testing.

It has been good to hear in the debate references endorsing our view that this must not be seen as a template. I have no doubt that the media will say, 'This is the way the Church of England will look in *n*-years' time.' I promise Synod that the Commission's view is very different. This is not a template; it is about the missional activity of the Church in three dioceses in West Yorkshire. We recognize that the country is not uniform in cultural, economic and social terms and that solutions need to be built to match those different characteristics.

Some useful references have been made to what now has to happen, assuming the motion is passed, as we move towards the new diocese being alive on the ground. I think that Mary Judkins' two contributions about 'and beyond' and 'travelling light' would be good to give to those who will be involved in the implementation of the scheme. There is here a tremendous, very exciting opportunity to design something about the 21<sup>st</sup> century. There will be all sorts of pressure to pull us back to where we are, but travelling light, making sure that we do not construct unnecessary new obstructions to mission, should be the watchword.

There were useful contributions too with regard to thinking about the levels of community that we serve – and again I think this helps us to see the West Yorkshire context very clearly – levels of community that make a difference and mean something to people in all those three dioceses at the local parish benefice level, at the area or archdeaconry level relating to the natural larger communities, particularly the larger towns in the diocese, where a lot of the civic/community engagement inevitably and properly will take place, and at the regional level. It is politically incorrect to use the word 'regional' but the reality is that West

Yorkshire sees itself as a region, that Leeds is seen as the capital, that a great deal of the business of West Yorkshire goes on in and around Leeds and is focused on the whole of that community. The inter-relationships between the area, the region and the local parishes are supported by this set of proposals.

There were a couple of references to the rural part of the diocese. We spent a long time wrestling with the issue of the northern half of Ripon and Leeds and the northern half of Bradford. We asked ourselves whether this was the makings of a new rural diocese or properly part of the new diocese of West Yorkshire and the Dales. It was impossible to build a viable and sustainable model for a diocese in the north parts of Ripon and Leeds and Bradford. However we then began to realize that that would have been the wrong thing to do. The interaction and interdependence of the rural and urban, the mixed economy of mission that inevitably arises from that mixture, will bring something to the new diocese about which those with whom we discussed it internally increasingly said, 'Yes, this will add something of value. Do not think about trying to carve it off somewhere else.'

Dealing with one or two specific points raised by individuals, Canon Sinclair asked the question: what is a pro-cathedral? I invite him to look at the footnote in GS 1898X, which contains a short definition, but much more important than that is to remind Synod that this is only an enabling provision. We were asked to put the enabling provision in the scheme in case a future bishop of Leeds took the view that a pro-cathedral in Leeds was important. I happen to share Bishop John Packer's hope that when the time comes she will not! Dean David Brindley asked about the appointment of commissioners and canons and whether the provision was peculiar to the new diocese or more generally across the nation. It is of course peculiar to the new diocese.

What has pleased us most is that this debate has focused on mission, mission, mission. That is where we started, that was our remit, it is what we have tried to hold on to and what the scheme is built on, and it was heartening to hear those words used over and over again.

I thank members for the debate, and I echo the Archbishop of York's thanks to the three diocesan bishops for their leadership of their dioceses through a very difficult period. My worst fear about this afternoon was that some kind of delay might be argued for which prevented us moving ahead to implementation. With its inevitable planning and involvement of people preparing for change, this has gone on for long enough and it is important that we now get on and begin to implement it.

The final contribution about the importance of evaluating what happens is absolutely crucial. The Commission, and I hope the new diocese, will take an interest in that constant process of evaluation.

I hope that Synod will now do as I referred to our forebears having done in that precious period at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries and have the courage to vote for change.

*The motion was put and carried.*

*The Chair:* Having been approved by the General Synod, the Draft Dioceses of Bradford, Ripon and Leeds and Wakefield Reorganization Scheme will now be made by the Dioceses Commission and submitted for confirmation by Her Majesty in Council.

## **Resolution Establishing Transitional Vacancy in See Committee for the Diocese of Leeds (GS 1899)**

*The Archbishop of York (The Most Revd and Rt Hon Dr John Sentamu):* I beg to move:

‘That the resolution entitled “Resolution Establishing Transitional Vacancy in See Committee for the diocese of Leeds” be approved.’

I am very pleased that the Synod has approved the Draft Dioceses of Bradford, Ripon and Leeds and Wakefield Reorganization Scheme, creating the new diocese of Leeds, which will now be submitted for confirmation by Her Majesty in Council.

In the meantime, without pre-empting an Order in Council being made, a great deal of preparatory work needs to be done to ensure its smooth implementation. The new diocese will need a diocesan bishop. Ideally the gap between the new diocese coming into existence and the confirmation of the election of its first bishop should be as short as possible. That means that we need a vacancy in see committee for the new diocese to be set up and start work immediately.

The resolution before the Synod establishes a transitional vacancy in see committee to participate in the process of nominating the first bishop of Leeds. In many ways it will be like any other vacancy in see committee. It will consider the needs of the new diocese and prepare a statement for the Crown Nominations Commission, setting out the needs. It will also elect six of its members to serve on the Crown Nominations Commission for this vacancy. However because it needs to start its work now before the new diocese is up and running, some special arrangements need to be made.

Paragraph 1 of the resolution provides for all those who currently are members of the Bradford, Ripon and Leeds and Wakefield vacancy in see committee to be members of the transitional vacancy in see committee for the new diocese. That will make it a fairly large committee but it is important that we draw on the full breadth of local knowledge and experience and the range of Church traditions currently represented on the vacancy in see committees of the three existing dioceses when decisions are taken about a bishop for the new diocese. From an earlier debate, I could have said: ‘I agree with Pete’! A much larger group is needed because if only one is chosen it would not work, so a whole group is needed from which six will emerge.

The formal legal processes cannot begin until the diocesan see actually exists. The *congé d’elire*, the later missive by Her Majesty, the election by the College of Canons and confirmation of election by the Vicar General of the province will all need to take place after the day appointed for the new diocese to come into existence, but this resolution allows us to get on with the less formal aspects of the appointment process where the real work is done and decisions are taken.

If the Synod passes this resolution, the work of finding a bishop for the new diocese can begin immediately. Paragraph 11 requires the transitional vacancy in see committee to hold its first meeting as soon as reasonably practicable after the resolution is passed by the General Synod. If we can do that, there is every prospect of a new diocese of Leeds with a diocesan bishop in office next year.

*The motion was put and carried.*

*The Chair:* That concludes this item of business.

THE CHAIR *Mr Aiden Hargreaves-Smith (London)* took the Chair at 5.50 p.m.

### **Variation in the Order of Business**

*The Archdeacon of Dorking (Ven. Julian Henderson):* At this stage I ask for a variation in the order of business to enable the debate that is about to begin on the budget to continue after supper at 8.30 p.m.

*The motion was put and carried.*

### **Financial Business**

#### **The Archbishops' Council's Draft Budget and Proposals for Apportionment for 2014 (GS 1900)**

*The Chair:* I hope that we can have a general debate on this item before moving to formal votes on the following items of financial business. To that end Mr Britton has helpfully indicated that he intends to introduce all the budgetary items in a single speech at the start of the 'take note' debate and in due course move Items 18–22 formally. In an act of unashamed Yorkshire generosity, I have decided therefore, in accordance with SO 21(c), to allow Mr Britton a 15-minute speech limit.

*Mr Andrew Britton (Archbishops' Council, appointed):* I beg to move:

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

I am grateful for the opportunity to make my speech before dinner because I am anxious that some members might not come back! I have also been betting on whether I would have an opportunity to wear a jacket and tie and, as members can see, I have taken the precaution of doing so. It seems to me quite important that this debate be presented by someone wearing a jacket and tie, and I hope members understand why I say that.

As this is my last budget speech to Synod I would like to look back over the past six years and offer a few very general points on the way in which the finances of the Church of England have developed over the period.

It has of course been a very difficult time for parishes, dioceses and the National Church Institutions. As a Church we have shared the pain suffered by the national and global economy since the onset of the financial crisis and the subsequent recession. My general observation however is that the Church has come through that period better than many other organizations and rather better than we feared five years or so ago.

It is true that the investments of the Church fell sharply in value, and income particularly from cash deposits was drastically reduced. On the other hand – and this is more important – giving by Church members has been relatively well maintained despite, of course, the fall in real incomes and a continuing downward trend in many parts of the country in indicators of Church attendance. Unlike most charities, the Church has enjoyed the continuing, committed financial support of its members, and this is confirmed by the statistics for parish finance published in the past week.

There is nevertheless an urgent need to appeal to our membership, especially to the new members of growing churches, to support the many new activities being undertaken in parishes, and I would like to take this opportunity to urge all Synod members, lay, clergy and perhaps especially bishops, to preach and promote stewardship and the duty of all disciples to share their resources with the Church community.

On the expenditure side of the total Church account, the increase in the cost of ministry has been limited by the numbers of clergy retiring and the restraint on stipend increases. The dioceses however have also been obliged to cut back sharply their spending on what might be called headquarters staff.

It may be that some of these reductions were, in the language of government, 'efficiency savings', but there have been very real losses of capability as well, and this must have reduced the contribution that the Church can make to the well-being of society in a time of general hardship and need. There may also have been some false economies where posts such as those of stewardship officers or directors of ordinands have been cut.

My own main concern has been with the Archbishops' Council's expenditure. On taking over as Chair of the Finance Committee, my first concern was that our expenditure should be planned over a five-year period. A task group was set up and a strategy review brought to Synod in July 2009 (GS 1731). This indicated the path being planned for spending over the years 2010–2015. We concluded that spending should grow at a rate just below that of inflation for two years and then in line with inflation for the next three years. At the time this appeared to be quite an austere policy to adopt, but that was because the extent of the domestic downturn before that became evident. It soon became clear that in fact we need to imitate the policies being forced on dioceses and restrain the spending of the Council, just as they were restraining theirs.

The chart on the screen shows very broadly how the expenditure of the Council has been held back in the five years 2010–2014, that is anticipating the budget as proposed for 2014. On average the total apportionment will have increased by just 1 per cent per year, and this compares with an increase of close to 4 per cent per year in the Retail Prices Index over the same period. In that sense we have greatly over-achieved the austerity of the original strategy review. The chart also shows the rather striking differences in the growth rates of the five Votes within the total apportionment. These differences were planned as part of the strategy review and they remain appropriate, in my view, to the priorities of the Church today.

Vote 1 covers ministry training. This has always been seen as having especially high priority. Our hope has always been that the numbers accepted for training would increase. Comparing 2010/11 with the forecast for 2013/14, the total number in training has remained roughly constant, with some variation from year to year. The cost per student has risen broadly in line with inflation, thanks partly to changes in government support for higher education. There has also been some increase in the proportion of students choosing the more expensive pathways.

Vote 2, also referred to as national support, covers most of the activities of the Council's staff employed in Church House. On average over the period shown in this chart this actually has fallen by 1 per cent per year. Senior staff members have been diligent in seeking economies and many have been achieved without too great a loss of capacity. I am well aware however that some members of Synod have been reluctant to accept reductions in staffing in some

particular areas. The challenge now is to identify within the total of Vote 2 those areas of spending that are most important to the achievement of the Council's priorities – Church growth, transforming ministry and the service of the common good.

Votes 3 and 4 are relatively small and both have seen more substantial cuts in percentage terms over this period since 2010. It is of course a simple rule of expenditure control that you cannot treat all areas as priorities. The chart shows clearly that in the area of grants and provisions, together with contributions to mission agency pensions in aggregate, we felt that it had been possible to make some significant savings.

Vote 5, on the other hand, the Council's support for clergy retirement housing, has seen the largest percentage increase at 5 per cent per year. This is another area that we have regarded as high priority. Indeed the need for a substantial and regular increase, if the commitment to support clergy in this way is to be maintained, has been identified as a high priority area in the future.

That summarizes how the Council has managed its finances over the past few years in a period of exceptionally poor economic conditions. It will soon be time to review that strategy, bringing it into line with more recent events. It would be good to think that this can be done against a more hopeful background in financial conditions globally and in the national economy.

I turn now to the specific proposals in the budget report GS 1900. The table on the screen shows the summary of the budget, which members can also find on the first page of the report. The report describes the proposed expenditure in great detail. All the proposals have been presented to the Inter-Diocesan Finance Forum as well as to the Finance Committee and the Council itself.

The table in the report shows a proposed increase of 0.8 per cent in total expenditure, associated with an increase of 0.9 per cent in the total apportionment, and that difference is accounted for by the use of reserves. The Finance Committee has concluded that in some cases the reserves have been rather larger than was necessary. So both the budget for 2013 approved by Synod last year and the budget proposed for 2014 now show some movement out of reserves. However as the proposed movement in the 2014 budget is less than that in the 2013 budget, the proposed increase in the apportionment next year is a little larger than the increase in expenditure. I hope that is clear.

Perhaps the most striking figure in the summary table is the reduction of over 5 per cent in expenditure under Vote 2. This is partly explained by a continuing search for greater efficiency in the provision of services to the Church. There are also three special factors worth noting: the introduction of a vacancy position; the end of the depreciation for the SAP financial system; and a lower service charge for office space.

In connection with Vote 3 I thought it might be worth mentioning that actually there is an increase in expenditure on Fresh Expressions. This point was raised in an earlier debate, and if members are particularly interested in the details they will find them in paragraph 102 at page 29 of the report.

Another figure needing special explanation is the extraordinarily large increase in Vote 4. This is a relatively small vote introduced in the late 1990s, when it was agreed that the



Church Commissioners should stop paying the pension contributions of the Church mission agencies in order to increase their capacity for targeted grants. For some years these contributions have been reducing as the agencies have employed fewer members of the clergy pension scheme. This year however there has been a rather abrupt increase that we did not foresee when setting the budget in 2013. The increase for this year will be met from reserves but it would be imprudent to plan to do the same next year. That results in a large percentage increase in expenditure, especially in the apportionment, and that has been built into the figures for 2014. It is therefore a very large percentage increase on what is a relatively small number.

I hope that members of Synod will agree that an overall apportionment increase of 0.9 per cent is a good compromise between the need for frugal financial planning and the need to maintain essential activities at the national level. The tables at the end of the report show how that increase would be divided among the dioceses, using the customary formula. As in previous years we propose that no diocese should be asked for an increase of more than two percentage points above the total.

There is a slight complication in that this year we have had to show the apportionment table on two different bases, showing the position with and without the West Yorkshire reorganization. In view of the vote that has been taken this afternoon, Synod will be asked to agree that Table A be used before the scheme is brought into force and Table B afterwards.

It remains for me to thank Synod for approving the five budgets that I have proposed in my time as a member of the Council, and I hope approving this one too. I would also like to thank all the members of staff who have worked so hard to prepare those budgets. (*Applause*)

Finally, I extend my best wishes to my successor John Spence and I trust that members will treat him as kindly as they have treated me.

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

*Mr Adrian Greenwood (Southwark)*: As a member of the General Synod I would first like to place on record our appreciation for the work of Andrew Britton as the Chair of the Finance Committee for the past six years. (*Applause*) Before that Andrew was the chair of the Southwark diocesan finance committee.

I want to address my comments to Vote 2 and paragraph 76 at page 21 of the report, where the bullet points set out the tasks that the Ministry Division hope to achieve in 2014; and of course we approve a budget in order to achieve certain outcomes. The outcome that I am interested in is contained in the penultimate bullet point: 'To review the fields of lay witness, discipleship, ministry and participation in church life and make proposals for "turning the rhetoric of lay involvement into reality".' That of course is a direct quotation from GS 1815.

On Friday evening Archbishop Justin exhorted us to get rid of some baggage and recognize the revolution. Here are a few thoughts in that direction, which have a bearing on turning the rhetoric of lay involvement into reality. I suggest that two items of baggage that could go into what is known in other quarters as room 101 are parochialism and clericalism. If we can see the back of those I can see us moving forward much quicker, and I will draw on those two points as I go along.

Paragraphs 53 and 54 of the report GS 1895 *Challenges for the Quinquennium* refer to the importance of clergy support and planning for the use of scarce ministerial resources. My view is that a key element in achieving both of those very important aims for reimagining ministry is to move away decisively from the one-man-band model that we have worked with for so long and to have our clergy and their licensed lay ministers working in teams, and a good place where teams can start is in the deaneries. I therefore hope that the concept of getting our clergy and licensed lay ministers working in teams will be taken forward in relation to parish work, chaplaincies and other fresh expressions.

With regard to the other excellent report that has been referred to a number of times, GS Misc 1054, *Making New Disciples: The Growth of the Church of England*, I am very encouraged to read a number of references to the important relationship between the clergy and laity, but I am slightly troubled that we are quoting from *Towards the Conversion of England* in 1945 and from the 1988 Lambeth Conference, which referred to a dynamic missionary emphasis. Paragraphs 23, 24 and 36 of GS Misc 1054 make it clear that the key players in moving forward with evangelism are those of what I might call the ordinary laity, and it is the role of the clergy and other licensed ministers to release and empower them for the work of evangelism. I therefore hope that that will be taken forward.

In conclusion, I do not think we will start to re-imagine ministry or achieve growth until all of us, ordained and non-ordained, accept that the Church is made up of all the baptized followers of Jesus, all of whom have gifts to offer and a role to play in proclaiming the good news of the kingdom. That is a change of culture which does not cost a great deal of money, but I do not believe we will make much progress until we get a grip of it.

*The Chair:* We have no more time for speeches before the end of this sitting. I therefore now adjourn the sitting and the business will be resumed after supper.

*(Adjournment)*

*The Chair:* Welcome back. I hope that after our evening worship and dinner members are both spiritually and physically nourished. We now resume Item 17, which stood adjourned before the dinner break.

*Revd Christopher Hobbs (London):* I have four questions, not designed to be antagonistic. First, in relation to page 15, paragraph 66, what is the name of the external charity that is funding the shortfall in Vote 1 contributions, and is it open to funding more of the cost of the training pathways?

Second, on page 29, paragraph 100, the first bullet point, why is a reduction planned in the contribution to Churches Together in England?

Third, on page 29, paragraph 102, why, following the end of the time-limited Church Commissioners' support of £100,000 *per annum* to Fresh Expressions, is it considered that a grant of £40,000 *per annum* is sufficient? Rather, should this not be increased?

Finally, on page 33, paragraph 22 – and I do not know what would happen if we all decided to vote against Vote 5 – what is the reason the CHARM funds have been under-funded in this quinquennium, that is to say, why has the Pensions Board had to subsidize the CHARM funds so much in the past five years?

*Sister Anne Williams (Durham):* I have two questions. On Vote 2, the seventh bullet point under paragraph 76 on page 21 reads: 'To review the fields of lay witness, discipleship, ministry and participation in church life and make proposals for "turning the rhetoric of lay involvement into reality".' I wonder whether this is likely to include – and often I find that it does not – enabling the laity to discover their giftings. I have done a little work on this – a thing called 'Building up the Body' – but I have been amazed at how many people had thought they were absolutely useless and therefore would not put themselves forward for any kind of training for anything until they were helped to discover their giftings and then they began to use them. If any member would like more information on that, I shall be very happy to provide it.

My second question is about the item on page 22, under the heading 'Education', which reads: '*Going for Growth*: support national events building on the development of activities increasing participation of children and young people and developing a Manifesto for Youth with networks to enable policy engagement with government and DfE'.

I dare say very few members will not know what I am now about to say. I wonder whether funding could be made available to the Church of England's own uniformed youth organization, the Church Lads' and Church Girls' Brigade, which really could do with assistance in funding to enable some of its leaders to be trained. That organization does some good work, bringing into the Church lots of children, and surprisingly their parents, and it is very important that some money be made available to it. It is after all the Church of England's youth organization, but it is not terribly well promoted across the country. Therefore, if any members do not know about it, I beg them to come forward and enquire about it and see what they can do to encourage more companies to start up.

*Revd Canon Pete Spiers (Liverpool):* About a year ago we finished a re-ordering on our church and one of the features that we put in was a pair of glass doors. The idea behind it was that we could look as though we were open and people could see what was going on inside. One of the unintended consequences is that whenever one of us preaches we look straight at the glass doors and are reminded that for many people who are not aware of what is happening in church we are irrelevant.

I would like to talk about paragraph 23 on page 7 of the report, which reads: 'The 2014 budget includes provision for a new £30,000 grant for Fresh Expressions ... with effect from April 2014 – following the end of a five-year time-limited grant from the Church Commissioners.' That is £30,000 out of a budget of £1.2 million. Those who attended the fringe meeting of Fresh Expressions will have discovered that Fresh Expressions is a really important piece of work and development of movement of the Holy Spirit.

In Liverpool for example we now have 78 fresh expressions, namely about 38 per cent of our church communities. In the past few years 54 of them have started at different times, in different venues and in every conceivable context. For every one Christian involved, four new people who are de-churched or un-churched come along. They are small and lay-led. It is a growth story. The un-churched is the biggest group in our society and it is growing, i.e. people are getting farther and farther away. The growth rate of Fresh Expressions is 250 per cent.

My question therefore is whether this funding that the Archbishops' Council proposes will be adequate. Surely we should be investing heavily in Fresh Expressions, not continuing to

put all or the vast majority of our resources into traditional expressions of Church? We need to evangelize our networks as well as our neighbourhoods. I am aware that our ecumenical partners and other organizations are involved in the Fresh Expressions initiative, but equally I am aware that shortly Graham Cray will stand down and that we shall need a new director. I would not want to see the Fresh Expressions initiative held back in any way because of a lack of resources, and I therefore would like reassurance that not only in the coming year but in future years we as a Church of England will invest in this so that we can re-evangelize the nation.

*Mrs Julie Dziegiel (Oxford):* I am a parish treasurer and I would like to pick up on something that Andrew Britton mentioned earlier. The more I see of the financing of the Church of England the more I see it as a whole that has within it various income streams. We are very blessed that through the Church Commissioners and glebe we have investments that give us income, but a huge amount of that money has to come from the parishes.

I do quite a lot of stewardship. As well as being a parish treasurer I am also a deanery treasurer, so I work in churches and parishes within my deanery and I find that the most effective way of going about stewardship is to tell the congregations what we are spending the money on, not necessarily at this level but at a level that actually they can relate to – a single column budget relating to that church. When I say ‘tell the congregations’ I mean tell the congregations, not the annual meeting at which only the core is present. If it is done during a church service the preacher can back it up biblically. Tithing is a possibility; the widow’s mite is a possibility. Done with sensitivity – and there has to be sensitivity for those who cannot afford to give any more than they do – it is extremely effective and people appreciate knowing where their money is being used.

*Mr Tim Hind (Bath and Wells):* Many members will know that I believe there is an anomaly in the way we deal with these votes, and I apologize to the Bishop of Winchester in his former role for what I am about to say.

As Synod will know, we were bounced into having a mission agencies pension fund support scheme through Vote 4. I think that this has been going on for too long and I would really like this to be my last intervention on it. I have a great love for the mission agencies, as does Tim, but I believe this is the wrong way in which to support them. I think that we ought to support them by giving them a grant, and if that is what we want to do we should do it, because pension funds should be supported by the responsible employer. If we give them the money and they pay their pensions, it would result in a much better flow of money, and I wonder whether there is an opportunity in the next year or two for us to be able to amalgamate Votes 3 and 4 so that it can come under the grants and provisions part of the budget.

*Canon Peter Bruinvels (Guildford) – and a Church Commissioner.* I would like to talk about two departments and praise both of them and query whether they are receiving enough money. The first is Education, on page 21, where we see that £730,605 is being allocated. We have some great good news for the academies, which no doubt has been encouraged particularly by Nigel Genders and Jan Ainsworth. I am a trustee of the academies for Guildford. Although we are receiving funds from the Government to help us, it strikes me that not enough is being allocated for the centre.

In addition, we have outstanding school inspections, both Anglican and Methodist, where RE is at the heart of all our education. Again it strikes me that there is not enough money for doing that as well as it should be done. We would like to see more teachers who actually believe teaching RE. That is important and it would help us if additional funds could be made available for it, so I would like it to be looked at again.

Turning to page 25 and the budget for the Legal Department, I would first like to praise Stephen Slack and his team. As the acting chairman of the Legislative Committee, obviously I see the good work that is carried out by the legal team. However we have safeguarding incidents. We heard the apologies yesterday and there are a substantial number of potential claims around, along with clergy discipline claims, and the allocated amount of £1,149,948 does not seem enough. At the beginning of my intervention in this debate I identified myself as a Church Commissioner purely because I have raised it with the Church Commissioners as well. We know that we are in a litigious society and that any of these cases could cost us at least half a million. We also know that the dioceses' chancellors and legal teams will expect us to support them. I therefore ask that that budget be looked at again, for I am not convinced that it is sufficient.

Peter Forster, who with me served on the Clergy Discipline Revision Committee, said 'We will never know how much money will be needed.' Nevertheless I do not think the budget properly reflects the litigious society in which we live. I do not want any of our priests or dioceses to be disadvantaged because not enough funds are available, and I therefore urge the Archbishops' Council to look again at this part of the budget.

*Revd John Dunnett (Chelmsford):* With further reference to page 31 and Vote 4, I speak for a moment not as a proctor of Chelmsford but as the general director of CPAS. First, I want to say thank very much to the Synod and the Archbishops' Council for this support and for pensions over recent years. I have not as it were checked with colleagues from the other 10 relevant bodies listed on that page but I am sure that they too would want me to speak on their behalf.

Secondly, I want to underline the significance of that support so far as the mission agencies are concerned and offer a direct counter against the suggestion that has just been made that we should review or remove this particular support. I think there are three good reasons why we should be very cautious about doing so. First, there is something symbolic about this support being given to the mission agencies, and certainly as far as CPAS is concerned it reminds us of our times with the Church of England as a whole. For other agencies that have an international ministry it reminds them of and underlines their relationships with other parts of the Communion, and in a very powerful, deep way it enables us to feel part of the Church of England even though, as most members are aware, we have to do most of our fundraising for ourselves.

Thirdly, at a practical level, because this particular issue of pensions is covered, clergy are able to move from parish posts to mission agencies to sector posts or elsewhere with relative ease, and I put it to Synod that that is a good thing because it means that freshness and learning can be carried in different directions.

Finally, it is worth saying that as I preach in different parish churches from Sunday to Sunday I am able to comment that we have pension support from the Church of England as a whole, and if people want to match it or as it were be as generous, that is a good and effective

appeal. In other words it is a very effective multiplier, without which there would be a risk of losing not only the actual amount of money involved but also the money that could be raised against it.

I suggest that no one can have any doubt that the mission agencies are responsible employers. For example in recent times CPAS has put a lot of money into pension funds and we have a fully funded pension fund for all our lay employees, both past and present. Members will appreciate that as well as being bound to do it by the law on charities we also *want* to do it.

I again reiterate the thanks of CPAS and on behalf of my sister organizations, but I also urge considerable caution in playing with this particular support.

*Canon Elizabeth Paver (Sheffield):* I would very much like to thank the Commissioners for the increase in the grant to the Anglican Communion Office made in paragraphs 21 and 22 on page 7 under Vote 3. It will be very much appreciated. The work of the Anglican Communion relies very much on contributions from all the provinces and churches in our Anglican world, and in fact the Church of England is the highest contributor. I am very grateful for this money especially during a time of recession for our country and the rest of the world. This week we have all heard of the real needs of our Christian brothers and sisters in some parts of the world, where contributing at all is almost impossible, but they need our support and I can assure Synod that this money will be very well distributed to enable support to be provided throughout our beloved Anglican Communion, wherever the need arises.

*Revd Dr Patrick Richmond (Norwich):* I echo the thanks and congratulations to Andrew Britton and the Archbishops' Council for all their good work. For the reasons that I explained in the debate on *Challenges for the Quinquennium*, I would particularly like to thank them for the money that has been devoted to youth evangelism and for the Manifesto for Youth. After such a successful and helpful time it is understandable that Andrew Britton would concentrate on a review, but members may not be surprised that I want to hear about the forward planning, planning beyond more than five years even.

For some time we have had projections of clergy retirements – they are mentioned in the budget report – but now of course, thanks to Brian Wilson, we have projections for membership as well. I understand that plan A is to head off the decline that is built in due to ageing and dying congregations and the need to avoid a crisis of confidence that produces a self-fulfilling, disastrous scenario. However, talking particularly to slightly younger colleagues, I know that it will help us to be confident in the Church of England if it is not too complacent, if it is not presumptuous.

We need to know that we have and are encouraged to have good leadership that will make a difference for the mission of the Church, but we do not want to be told that we have achieved an end of spiritual boom or bust, and thanks to the baby boom we are looking at a steep decline in the number of clergy. I therefore would like to know what is being done to plan for the predictable results of that. Are our training colleges under threat through lack of numbers? If we are losing all these senior clergy and training new clergy, does it not mean that there may be a shortage of senior clergy even with the hoped for gain of women bishops increasing the workforce? What are the implications of this steep decline, which cannot be avoided by evangelistic success and fresh expressions in the short term?

Knowing the profile of our ageing congregations and that our most committed members are some of the oldest, it seems that we are looking at an increasing number of closing churches. The number of churches that have no children's work is frighteningly high – I have heard estimates of between 40 and 50 per cent – and it may be that we will have to close more. What money is being put into planning for this scenario? When we are trying to maintain a growing and sustainable Christian witness, a mission presence in every community, what does that look like, given the reality on the ground in some of our deep rural areas? I have heard bishops who in the past seemed quite committed to keeping our buildings open now talking about hibernation. What does that scenario look like as part of a strategy for a mission presence?

I reiterate my thanks and gratitude to Andrew Britton, the Church Commissioners and the Archbishops' Council for all their work on finances but would like to redirect them to the future, to forward planning, to show us that there is a plan B if plan A does not work, that we are not just betting the house or the farm or the church on an optimistic scenario that has no resilience.

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

*Miss Joy Gilliver (Chichester)*: I would like to make a comment and ask a question in relation to the ministry objectives set out on page 21. First, I would like to say how pleased I am that in *Reimagining Ministry* there is a focus on discipleship and lay ministry.

My question relates to what is stated in bullet point 1. I note the aim, which is not new, to extend common awards to Readers and IME 4–7. I think it is a very helpful aim in many ways, but we need to note that the funding is organized very differently, because Reader training and IME 4–7 are not covered by Vote 1 funding; that is a diocesan responsibility. Therefore, is it still the case that it will be voluntary for Reader training courses and IME 4–7 to take up the common awards? Secondly, could there be changes to funding structures? Could there be implications for how we reimagine ministry?

I am not asking for all Readers and IME 4–7 to be covered by Vote 1. I realize that that is unrealistic. However I am asking whether the fact that they are funded differently, and therefore that there are implications for the dioceses in their own budgets, is taken into consideration when we look at the process of reimaging ministry, because whilst much of it will not involve common awards, if we encourage it for Reader training for example it is important that there is an awareness of the cost to dioceses both in resourcing and paying for it.

*Canon Linda Ali (York)*: I would like to thank the Archbishops' Council for building into the budget on pages 20 and 21 some work with the black majority churches and extending vocations among minority ethnic people. I see this as forward thinking, a real outreach and a growing of the Church – three important areas for the Church of England.

However along with my colleague from CMS I would also like to add a cautious note. As a former chair of USPG I would be very concerned as to how this money will be transferred to grants and so on. The work of the mission agencies seems considerably to have fallen off the agenda of parish churches, and we need to be careful that we do not sideline mission agencies, because in these days their work is very vital. When we think about the need in our own country we should remember that it has trebled in overseas territories.

*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:* Mr Britton has up to 10 minutes to respond to the debate.

*Mr Andrew Britton, in reply:* Even in 10 minutes I cannot respond adequately to all the excellent points that have been made. I therefore will have to be a little selective and I apologize in advance to members who do not receive a full response.

Starting with Adrian Greenwood, among other things we had an appeal for a greater use of deaneries in reimagining ministry. I share with Adrian Greenwood much of the history of the diocese of Southwark, and I remember a notable review of the strategy in that diocese where the one thing on which all the parishes agreed was that they could not possibly co-operate with their deaneries. Whether that is still true I do not know, but it has to be recognized that whilst this is a worthwhile objective, in some dioceses it would be quite difficult to achieve.

Mr Hobbs asked the straightforward, factual question: ‘What is the external charity referred to on page 15?’ I am told that it was an anonymous donation, the nature of which I am not permitted to reveal.

Also from Mr Hobbs and other speakers there was a request for more information about the funding of Fresh Expressions. They have rightly identified in the budget report a fresh grant in the sum of £30,000 or £40,000 for a full year within Vote 3. Money is also concealed somewhere in Vote 2 for the use of staff time in MPA, which will also help to serve the next stage of Fresh Expressions. I do not have to hand a figure to quantify it but it will be significant. There are also gifts in kind, which consist very much of the time of senior clergy. The actual total contribution of the Church of England to this bears comparison with some of the dioceses.

In relation to what the Church Commissioners have funded in the past at the rate of £100,000, it has to be recognized that essentially that was seen as helping to launch the project. The rate at which funding is needed at subsequent stages, particularly for the central body as opposed to for Fresh Expressions, is actually becoming very much embedded now in the normal work of dioceses. I think we are still in discussion as to what in the long term the Archbishops’ Council would be able to contribute to Fresh Expressions. I want personally and on behalf of the Council to emphasize how keen we are on this new form of Church activity and indeed to say that if essentially it were to become a financial issue I am sure we would wish to give it the highest priority that we can.

There were a number of questions about Vote 1 and the expenditure on particularly lay ministry. I am a member of the Ministry Council and can take these comments back to them. They were not purely financial ones by any means.

In the context of several questions it is important to recognize the blessing that we have in the Church of England, which other denominations do not have, of the capital managed by the Church Commissioners and the use that can be made of the income and capital gains arising from that.



Referring particularly to some of the comments made by Patrick Richmond and others, for those who worry about the financial state of the Church of England, should our hopes for new growth not be realized, it is important that we have significant assets, but it is also important to recognize that those assets are currently being used for investment, not maintenance, to the extent that that is possible; and I think that is wise. The current generation is a period during which the growth of the Church of England can really be turned round and therefore it is entirely appropriate that the use of the Church Commissioners' and other funds available to dioceses should be angled particularly towards growth rather than simply being used as a back-up.

Questions were asked about CHARM (Vote 5), the scheme for housing for clergy in retirement. A consultation document has recently been issued by the Pensions Board referring to alternatives for the next phase of that programme. The Archbishops' Council stands behind the Pensions Board in this respect with the subsidy that we provide through Vote 5, which is the fastest growing part of our expenditure. Apart from that, it is supported by the Pensions Board's own resources through its charitable funds. About five years ago a deal was done during which it was agreed that the share the Council would contribute over that period would rise by 5 per cent per year, and that is how it has been and how it will be for the foreseeable future. However in due course it will be necessary to revisit that question particularly as the Pensions Board will need to refinance some of the capital that it needs in order to maintain that project. In terms of how the programme is envisaged, members may find it useful to visit the Pensions Board's stall in the Exhibition Centre, from where the relevant document can be obtained.

A question was asked about why we have Vote 4 at all. It is because there is a statutory requirement on the Church Commissioners to fund the pension contributions of the mission agencies. Some years ago this obligation was taken on by the Archbishops' Council, and therefore through us to Synod as an additional vote. The purpose of it was to save the Church Commissioners money so that they would have more money to spend essentially as distributions through the Darlow formula. We are looking back to a period when a great deal of interest was expressed in increasing the amount of mutual support that could be done through a formula that had so much angle towards the poorer dioceses, at a time when the guaranteed annuities were abolished for example and money was being angled into the Church Commissioners' funds in various other ways. The Archbishops' Council therefore took on this responsibility and it has been part of Vote 4 ever since.

I can see the logic of the suggestion that it would be more sensible if it were included as a grant in Vote 5. However it would need legislation to remove the Church Commissioners' liability, which would then mean that we did not have to support them. It might be considered but I think it is important to emphasize that it is not just a simple accounting issue that we could change at the stroke of a pen.

That is as far as I can go at the moment. There might be a little more time available but I have run out of points that I collected from the questions.

*The motion was put and carried.*

### **Vote for Training for Ministry**

*Mr Andrew Britton* I beg to move:

'That this Synod approve the Archbishops' Council expenditure for the year 2014, as shown in its budget, of £13,066,150 (net of income from sources apart from diocesan contributions) in respect of training for ministry.'

*The motion was put and carried.*

### **Vote for National Support**

*Mr Andrew Britton:* I beg to move:

'That this Synod approve the Archbishops' Council's expenditure for the year 2014, as shown in its budget, of £10,088,945 (net of income from sources apart from diocesan contributions) in respect of national support.'

*The motion was put and carried.*

### **Vote for Grants and Provisions**

*Mr Andrew Britton:* I beg to move:

'That this Synod approve the Archbishops' Council's expenditure for the year 2014, as shown in its budget, of £1,269,161 (net of income from sources apart from diocesan contributions) in respect of grants and provisions.'

*The motion was put and carried.*

### **Vote for Mission Agencies' Clergy Pension Contributions**

*Mr Andrew Britton:* I beg to move:

'That this Synod approve the Archbishops' Council's expenditure for the year 2014, as shown in its budget, of £739,500 (net of income from sources apart from diocesan contributions) in respect of mission agencies' clergy pension contributions.'

*The motion was put and carried.*

### **Vote for CHARM Scheme**

*Mr Andrew Britton:* I beg to move:

'That this Synod approve the Archbishops' Council's expenditure for the year 2014, as shown in its budget, of £3,953,896 (net of income from sources apart from diocesan contributions) in respect of the CHARM scheme.'

*This motion was put and carried.*

### **Apportionment**

*Mr Andrew Britton:* I beg to move:

'That this Synod approve the Archbishops' Council's proposals (set out in Apportionment Table A contained in GS 1900) for the apportionment amongst the dioceses of the net sum to be provided by them to enable the Council to meet the expected expenditure shown in its budget for the year 2014, save that if articles 3 and 4 of the Dioceses of Bradford, Ripon and Leeds and Wakefield Reorganization Scheme come into operation during 2014, Apportionment Table A shall be replaced by Apportionment Table B contained in GS 1900 on a pro rata basis with effect from the date on which those articles come into operation until the end of 2014.'

*The motion was put and carried.*

### **Pooling Adjustment**

*Mr Andrew Britton:* I beg to move:

'That this Synod approve the Archbishops' Council's proposals set out in Apportionment Table A contained in GS 1900 for the pooling adjustment for 2014 in respect of additional maintenance grants for ordinands.'

I would like to say a brief word about this item, the so-called pooling adjustment. This is one of the most mind-boggling bits of arithmetic. I do not ask the Synod to look at the arithmetic in any detail, still less to question me about it! However there lies behind it an important principle and this gives me an opportunity to end my presentation with a reference to that principle. The principle is about sharing. Under this proposal, although in the first instance some of the maintenance costs incurred by individual dioceses for the training of clergy will be paid by dioceses, there will then be this pooling by which the actual cost falls on all dioceses in proportion to what they would be contributing to the apportionment. In other words the same redistributed formula is used.

It seems to me quite important at this stage in the life of the Synod to emphasize the virtue of sharing such that the richer dioceses help out the poorer dioceses particularly with costs like these, which in a sense are incurred on behalf of the Church as a whole. It therefore gives me special and unusual pleasure to commend this motion to the Synod.

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

*Mr Paul Hancock (Liverpool):* I have a question. When this pooling takes place, will you use the same system as you use generally, in that limits are set according to inflation and a cap above that? Is it the same system?

*Mr Andrew Britton, in reply:* I do not think it is. The pooling adjustment consists of collecting the costs that are incurred by all dioceses during a period in the past. They are then divided among the dioceses in proportion to what they would contribute to the apportionment for the national Church. I am sure that inflation does not enter into the calculation.

*Mr Paul Hancock (Liverpool):* It is just that initially you said that it was up to 2 per cent above inflation and the –

*Mr Andrew Britton:* No. We have an understanding that for the apportionment no diocese should be asked for more than 2 percentage points above the growth rate of the total.

However that is not appropriate when we are talking about pooling, neither do we need to make a special adjustment for the Yorkshire changes, I am happy to tell Synod, because as this is retrospective it refers to the situation before the rearrangements in West Yorkshire.

*The Chair:* I think Mr Britton realized that I saw no one else standing and very kindly has already responded to the debate!

*The motion was put and carried.*

*The Archbishop of Canterbury (The Most Revd and Rt Hon Justin Welby):* It is appropriate at this point on behalf of the Archbishops' Council and the General Synod to thank Andrew most warmly for the extraordinary service that he has rendered to the Church in his six years as the chairman of the Finance Committee.

This evening we have seen two examples of his attitude that illustrate the reality of his ministry. The first was when he said, 'We invest in growth because it is a time for turning round the Church.' That is not usually what your average finance person talks about, and it is typical of his spirit and passion. The second was in the last few moments when he spoke of pooling and the need for equality and sharing between the rich and the poor, which again speaks to a deep sense of value and ethics.

The Church has been hugely privileged to have someone like Andrew overseeing its finances through six of the most complicated years financially in the general economy that we have known in over 100 years, and that he has done it with such extraordinary calm, remarkable grace and extreme success is under God something for which we should thank him most warmly. (*Mr Britton was accorded a standing ovation*)

*The Chair:* That concludes this item of business.

THE CHAIR *Canon Ann Turner (Europe)* took the Chair at 9.20 p.m.

## **Farewell**

*The Chair:* I call on the Archbishop of Canterbury to bid farewell to the Bishop of Exeter.

*The Archbishop of Canterbury (The Most Revd and Rt Hon Justin Welby):* There is a faint temptation to a deep sense of paranoia when the first major thing you have to do at Synod is say goodbye to everyone who leaves no sooner than you have arrived! I am trying not to give way to it.

I first came across Michael when he was team rector in Rugby in 1992/93 just after my ordination. It was said in the diocese of Coventry that what was not run by the vicar of Holy Trinity Coventry was run by the team rector of Rugby. He was in fact a prince bishop at that point. A few days ago a senior member of his diocese described him as 'one of the last of our prince bishops' and it is an apt description in all the best ways – a man of standing and stature, a presence, a figure in the community both in Devon and nationally; and that is not a bad epitaph.

Michael's childhood and school days were spent in Southampton. He then took a degree in history and social sciences at Birmingham followed by a PGC and a short career in education, teaching in Birmingham and London and lecturing in a college of education in Nigeria. After

ordination training at Ridley and a Cambridge degree in theology, he spent 20 years in a variety of urban and rural parishes, ending as team rector of Rugby. He was a school chaplain at Rugby School and was notably effective in all those roles. He was also an honorary canon of Coventry Cathedral, making him one of six diocesan bishops now who are entitled to a cross of nails. It's not a takeover yet! He became suffragan Bishop of Birkenhead in the diocese of Chester in 1993 and diocesan Bishop of Exeter in 2000.

Michael has been immensely effective across a whole range of national responsibilities as well as within the Church, and I will come back to the diocese in a minute. He was chairman of the Church's rural strategy group for nine years and more recently has been chairman of the Churches' Legislation Advisory Service – a Judaeo-Christian ecumenical body bringing together the interests of Christian Churches and the Jewish community in their dealings with government – and Michael's knowledge and thoughtfulness about the area of the Middle East and its troubles is more profound than most people's.

He has been a good and extremely practical chairman of CLAS, and I know that his fellow governors hold him in high regard. Members may be amused by the fact that as a demonstration of his practicality, which normally does not go with prince bishops, when discreet enquiries were made as to what might be bought for him as a leaving present his PA said that what he really wanted most of all was a decent set of screwdrivers – though they also gave him the new R.S. Thomas's *Collected Poems*.

Michael entered the House of Lords as a Lord Spiritual in 2005 and gave his maiden speech in a debate on the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Bill. He has been one of the most frequent attendees and speakers from the bishops' benches and invariably, from my relatively brief experience, is much listened and referred to with great attention during debates. He has spoken on rural issues, international and development affairs, including the Middle East, assisted suicide and educational and constitutional matters, and has also taken a number of Measures through the Lords. He has campaigned assiduously. For example he has been very critical of the cuts to the disability living allowance and has felt and expressed strongly the danger that the benefits cuts will have for children, especially those in single-parent households.

One of the things that he took on which is always quite surprising – maybe that is why he needed the screwdrivers – is that he is a member of the parliamentary Admin and Works Committee. It sounds indescribably boring or dangerous. It is true, but I am sure only a coincidence, that the Houses of Parliament now need a £4 billion overhaul. However I am sure that has nothing to do with Michael! What it means however is that he has been involved in the work of what keeps the whole parliamentary estate running – everything from security to the Committee's report recommending the use of hand-held electronic devices in the chamber, which are permitted. I find this particularly useful and I am very grateful for it, because when I find the debates in the Lords too exciting I can always send a memo to William Fittall!

More importantly, as he has quite rightly said, it is an extraordinarily good place for building relationships. Much of the work of the Lords Spiritual is almost chaplaincy. It is about getting to know people, being able to minister to them, hearing what they say and listening to them, and therefore in the chamber being able to speak more effectively and with better understanding, and I am sure that is part of where Michael's skill in the chamber has come.

He was particularly prescient in one of his questions to some unfortunate minister from the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (or whatever it is called nowadays) in 2009, when he pointed out that 70 per cent of meat products coming into this country actually are well below British animal welfare standards and are labelled as British because they are packed and processed here; and he ended his question by saying, ‘What assurance can the Minister give to members of your Lordships’ House that we can know the true quality and true source of all products consumed here?’ By my calculation that puts him three years ahead of anyone else in the scandal last year about the source of food.

Continuing in the public domain, when the occupier movement spilt over from St Paul’s to other parts of the UK, by some freak of nature Exeter Cathedral was one of the places where tented encampments sprang up. There was a threat of them coming to Durham but actually it was much too cold! This caused Michael a good deal of grief, and I rather regret that I cannot put up on the screen behind me an image that is shown on one of the websites of him looking, I think it would be fair to say, less than entirely pleased as he visited one of the encampments. [A slide was shown] Oh it is there – I hadn’t realized that we had it. The face sort of says, ‘Please come and burn it’! (*Laughter*)

On a personal note, when recently I was a very new bishop in the House of Lords Michael’s support and advice both to me as a Lord Spiritual and also in terms of the diocese, the Synod and other sources of terror was invaluable and was given with great kindness and never with the slightest condescension, and I am deeply grateful for that.

In the diocese he will be remembered for many things, or at least two or three! He will be remembered for his sense of momentum and strategic direction – the outcome of a big review back in 2000. This diocese really does have a strategy and plan; it is not just a badge and it was done properly. It is very evident that he combines both strategy and pastoral care, qualities that are much appreciated.

Shortly after he arrived there occurred one of the earlier terrible outbreaks of foot and mouth disease. Michael was new to the diocese but rapidly he got up to speed and earned enormous credibility in the diocese and county through the work that he did, and he ended up as the first chair of the Devon strategic partnership, which aimed to combine public, private, voluntary and community organizations.

Michael’s wife Esther is seated next to him in the gallery today and we welcome her very much. She is a counsellor and licensed Reader in the Church of England. Her ministry from Rugby is still remembered. She also has extensive professional and personal experience working in the area of disability and social care. They are moving to Sussex, where they have had a house for a few years, and I hope they will have more time to spend with their three children and four grandchildren.

Michael, you will leave a massive gap in the House of Bishops, among the Lords Spiritual and in your diocese, and I am sure that you will make an enormous contribution in the next stage of your ministry wherever you go. You will be a very hard act to follow, and thank you so much for such an enormously productive and valuable ministry. (*The Bishop was accorded a standing ovation*)

## Church Commissioners' Annual Report Presentation under SO 97

*The Chair:* The Business Committee has agreed that members may ask questions following the presentation.

*Mr Andreas Whittam Smith (First Church Estates Commissioner, ex officio):* I started to cut my speech in half 20 minutes ago and I have since cut it in half again, but there is still quite a lot left.

The best part of the presentation of the Church Commissioners' Annual Report for me is undoubtedly members' questions. I am generally bored by hearing my own voice, because I know what I am going to say, and I really do prefer Synod's questions because they are challenging and make me think of things that I had not thought of previously or to which I should have paid more attention. I therefore urge members to ask questions, which, with the Chair's permission, I will answer individually rather than storing them up until the end.

[*Telephone rings*] I am not sure whose telephone that is. I don't think it's mine. Anyway it has now stopped. I was sure it was the editor of the *Independent*. As I wrote something for him the other day, I thought it might be about that!

I also have an apology to make for my colleague Andrew Mackie, the Third Church Estates Commissioner. He is also General Counsel for Oxford University and they are jealously not allowing him to be with us this evening. I shall try to answer the questions that members might have directed to him but I may need to ask him to provide written replies to some.

There are three parts of our annual report to which I would like to draw Synod's attention. First, the Commissioners' fund was valued at £5.5 billion at the end of last year, and that was after spending £207 million, of which £120 million was on clergy pensions. Following that we were still £250 million higher over the year. In other words we spent £207 million and ended up £250 million better off. That is important because it has always been assumed that our absolute requirement to meet our pensions would mean that the size of our fund would decline over time, and indeed that can still happen because our pension obligations are rising fast right now. Nonetheless, last year was not a particularly good year for investment and still we managed to make that advance.

The second point to which I want to draw attention is our performance against target. Our target is inflation plus five percentage points, and that is a pretty demanding target. Members will see from page 20 that we hit that target over 20 years, over 10 years, and last year we missed it between 2008 and 2012 because of the financial crisis, but even then we grew by 3.9 per cent when inflation was running at 3.2 per cent, so we inched ahead just a little. Whenever one contemplates such good figures the risk of complacency always appears. It is an enduring risk that I think about a lot. It is very easy to be complacent, to accept that things are as they are, that the investment climate is like the weather and that nothing can be done about it whether it rains or shines. All that is not really true in the case of investment; much can be done about it. Indeed, on a pessimistic note, one of the FT's leading commentators said that the outlook for investment is as bad as it has been in a century. That took me aback. After all, a century encompasses two world wars, a number of recessions, a banking crisis, the cold war and so on. Yet, he said, it is as bad as it has been for a century.

I think there is a statistically correct way out of this problem, namely that you just have to do the work. Essentially you have to do the work in the season to create real growth, and by doing the work I mean putting work into finding fixed interest securities that you can safely and remuneratively buy, putting the work into investing assets that are weakly correlated with stock markets, of which our new investment in Timberland is a very good example. It has been profitable from very much the first days and is very profitable at the moment because the forests that we bought in the southern United States are supplying timber for housing and housing is beginning to turn up.

We can put the work into the analysis of relatively neglected securities, small companies, emerging market equities, and frontier markets, of which Africa is the main example, and we can put the work into the assets themselves. We own the Hyde Park estate, in the middle of which is Connaught Village – it is not really a village but that is what estate agents call it – which is full of small shops that we have upgraded very substantially and it is now becoming a top shopping street with lots of high fashion boutique retailers. We can put the work into the strategic land that we own all over the country, farmland that is close to growing urban centres in respect of which we can obtain permission to develop and sell to builders. In a way therefore the answer to this grim outlook is a very old-fashioned one: to put the work into making the investments, and our team does just that.

The third point that I want to emphasize relates to our distributions. Two themes are becoming more important. First of all, as members will see, we are financing and participating in quite a lot of research into Church growth. Secondly, we are trying to become more intentional in the way that our distributions are made. To give two examples, as far as research is concerned in the current triennium we are spending £300,000 on a wide variety of enquiries into why some churches are growing and some are not and what the factors are and whether we can isolate them; and we have just finished a programme of making grants to churches which by definition must come from deprived areas but very impressively are doing extremely well, and we have given them £1.8 million. I have seen some of these schemes, as I mentioned last year, and they are wonderfully inspiring.

I want to say something about a new initiative that does not fit into any of these categories, which members may have seen in recent newspapers, namely that we have joined a consortium that is bidding for over 300 branches of the Royal Bank of Scotland. This investment would be in a national network across England, Wales and Scotland – about a 5 per cent market share of the small and medium-sized enterprise market and a 2 per cent share of UK personal current accounts. Two American firms are leading the consortium and the investors are ourselves, Standard Life and the Rothschild Investment Trust.

The aim of the consortium, if its bid is successful – and I must emphasize that – is the establishment of a strong regional bank. It would trade as Williams & Glyn's. We have made it plain to our partners that our interest is twofold, that is to make good investment and make a good bank, and we have to achieve both objectives, not just one. At the moment we are involved in an enormous programme of what is called due diligence, which means examining pretty well every document that the bank has written over the past five years, and we are spending a lot of time looking at the IT systems because the Royal Bank of Scotland has notoriously poor ones. It is a big exercise, and we would not do it if the challenge was not there. The challenge is: can we participate in making a good bank as well as a good investment?



Finally, I want to give an update on our performance. Until the end of May we were 12.7 per cent ahead as far as our securities are concerned. June was a pretty bad month, so we obviously lost a little ground then; I am not sure exactly how much, though I can guess. There has been a bit of recovery since. Probably, although there are some very big problems, this will be quite a good year as activity picks up across the western world and in any case is in a reasonable state elsewhere, but let us not forget the risks. The eurozone is not a done deal – far from it – and I would still place money on it breaking up, and the Middle East is blowing up in a more worrying way than anything we have seen for a long time, so the risks are very evident. Therefore, of all the dangers I run, the one of becoming complacent is probably not too serious.

*The Chair:* I remind Synod this is a time for questions, not speeches, and I ask members to formulate their questions as clearly as possible as Mr Whittam Smith has indicated that he would like to be sure he hears the questions.

*Revd Canon Giles Goddard (Southwark):* I thank Mr Whittam Smith for his report and the good news that it contains.

I want to ask him a question about the Ethical Investment Advisory Group, which I know is not his direct responsibility but I hope he will be able to help. I am delighted that in its current review the EIAG is paying specific attention to the risk of climate change, which is very good news. Serendipitously last week the Southwark diocese, in the form of April Alexander and me and the rest of the diocese, passed a motion calling for much clearer engagement on behalf of the national investment bodies with *Sharing God's Planet* and *Church and Earth* and *Shrinking the Footprint*, the Church's recent reports on the environment. It is extremely urgent. For example there is a lot of new concern now about the levels of reserves held by oil and gas companies, which, if they are all burnt –

*The Chair:* Please may we have your question?

*Revd Canon Giles Goddard (Southwark):* My question is: will the Ethical Investment Advisory Group's review be published and will it pay specific attention to some of these recent concerns about oil and gas?

*Mr Andreas Whittam Smith:* I think so. The relationship between the Commissioners and the Ethical Investment Advisory Group is getting better and better. Recently they have launched an examination of climate change and we are working with them through that process. On Thursday morning of this week Dr Rory Sullivan, one of the experts whom they are using, will address the Assets Committee so that even before the report has begun to be written, when the preparatory work has been done there will be discussion with the Assets Committee as to what we know, what we feel and what we have to say, and I think that is a very good way of working.

*Mr Tim Hind (Bath and Wells):* Will the First Estates Church Commissioner comment on the implementation of the living wage and what impact it might have on jobs?

*Mr Andreas Whittam Smith:* We are committed to implementing the living wage. We have quite a few special difficulties on the Hyde Park estate for instance, where we employ many porters, gardeners and so on, but what they are paid is fixed by the terms of the lease with the tenants, and we cannot load that on to them. We could not charge them and get it back. We

would have to pick it up separately, and we will do that gradually. However we will not do it in one move but probably will spread it.

*Revd Dr Patrick Richmond (Norwich):* I thank the Church Commissioners for all they are doing and for publicizing the projections of Church membership. I have had senior clergy coming back to me with them, obviously surprised and avoiding complacency.

My question is about the 40 per cent of stipendiary clergy due to retire during this decade. Am I right in thinking that the pension fund can cope with this increased load in addition to what we have and that we will be short of senior clergy even if we train all these new young clergy, and does that mean that the Church Commissioners are looking forward to saving money and that will we be short of senior clergy to lead us in mission down the line even with women bishops? Some people may have heard this question previously, for which I apologize.

*Mr Andreas Whittam Smith:* The other day I saw some good news for the clergy but not such good news for the Church Commissioners, namely that clergypersons and their spouses are living three years longer than the average. There is no threat whatever to the 1998 scheme, which is the one we look after. The Clergy Pensions Scheme is a different animal from ours, but there is no threat to that at all. Of the £5.5 billion of assets that I mentioned, just slightly under £2 billion stands to be used for the 1998 scheme, so it is very well covered.

I cannot answer the question whether there will be a shortage of senior clergy. We are now going through a period during which our liabilities are under the greatest strain as a generation retires. As that generation retires so our liability rises quite sharply, and that process will go on for about another 10 years and then will begin to dip down, but perhaps the main point is that the 1998 scheme is completely and utterly safe.

*Mrs Penelope Allen (Lichfield):* My question is about investment in alcohol. In view of the references in the report to the activities of street pastors and the fact that we have sacrificed some investment income by not investing in alcohol, can I seek the Commissioners' assurance that we will not be investing in alcohol in the future?

*Mr Andreas Whittam Smith:* I cannot give an assurance, because we make our decisions after we have consulted the Ethical Investment Advisory Group. They are constantly doing fresh work and fresh work has been done on alcohol recently. In addition, Mrs Allen's question ignores the two notions of dealing with firms that may engage in activities that can be disapproved of. One is whether not to invest, the other is whether to maintain the investment but enter into dialogue with the board and see whether things can be changed, and both approaches are valid. Sometimes it is one, sometimes it is the other, but I cannot give a blanket assurance.

*Mr Paul Hancock (Liverpool):* What is the level of the Commissioners' commitment to involvement in the consortium for buying the RBS branches? Are we to take for example 15 or 50 per cent of the cost?

*Mr Andreas Whittam Smith:* I should first emphasize that it involves the branches that they are bound to sell by order of the European Union as part of the understanding of the British Government when the British Government poured over £14 billion into the Royal Bank of Scotland; it is not part of good/bad bank stuff. Both Lloyds and RBS have to make these sorts

of sale. In our terms our commitment will be substantial but not out of order. In the property business there is a notion of lot size, the size of the building that you normally buy, whether it is 10, 20 or 30 million. In the case of this investment the lot size is within our normal boundaries. We hope to be long-term holders and to find that we are in a profitable, good bank and can own the shares for a long time.

*The Archdeacon of Nottingham (Ven. Peter Hill):* I want to express huge thanks to the Commissioners for the money they have put into developing Church growth in deprived areas. My question is: can we please have some more, and when? I refer particularly to the picture in the bottom right of page 11 of the report of St Peter's Radford, now a growing, vibrant, multi-ethnic church in inner-city Nottingham, for which seven years ago we could not find a vicar, due to the Commissioners' money and the appointment of two lay missionaries.

*Mr Andreas Whittam Smith:* I hope there will be more. If I can call them investments, these investments have to prove themselves. We have to see what the results are and whether they are scalable and can be replicated by other churches. We therefore have to see whether this works. I think it probably will. If we get good signs that it is working I am sure we will want to do more. However that is part of the bigger picture which is, as I mentioned earlier, to make a higher proportion of the funds supplied by the Commissioners and the Archbishops' Council to the wider Church related to specific, intentional spending for specific objects. I think we need to do more than we do.

*Mr Paul Neville (Wakefield):* Until this afternoon I was in the diocese of Wakefield, and as I am not from either West Yorkshire or the Dales I am not quite sure where I am.

Recently, like many others, I have been doing some research into chancel repair liability, and I am delighted to say that in the case of my parish church the Church Commissioners bear almost 65 per cent of the repair liability. Can we be assured of the extent to which the Commissioners are also prepared and robust enough to support churches that now find they have a new funding source for ever for essential repairs to the fabric of their parish churches?

*Mr Andreas Whittam Smith:* As some members will know, the story of chancel repairs is a very old one. There have been numerous cases about it. We will simply do what we have to do and I cannot say more than that. In today's circumstances chancel repairs are strange things. I well understand their origin in history. They were a very sensible idea at the time but now they are not. We have quite a substantial liability, which we can afford to discharge, and we will do so.

*Miss Sally Muggeridge (Canterbury):* As today we have discussed the evangelization of the Church of England, I wonder whether we can consider keeping open some of the churches that we seem to be in the process of closing.

*Mr Andreas Whittam Smith:* That is the sort of question for my colleague, but the number of churches that are, to use a term that I think I am no longer allowed to, made redundant is quite small in relation to the total stock of churches. From memory, it is about 16 per year of a total of 13,000 churches. People sometimes think that churches are closing all the time but they are not, and 16 is a very small number. You could argue that it should be a greater number because they are not all in the right place and there are other ways of being church as we have so often discussed. I cannot really give you a firm answer at all on that. In the case

of dioceses that are thinking about what to do with the churches that they might be tempted to declare redundant, I sometimes wonder whether we should take them off their shoulders for the right transaction and deal with the realization questions ourselves rather than burden the dioceses with the task.

*The Chair:* On behalf of the Synod I would like to thank Mr Andreas Whittam Smith for his answers to members' questions. (*Applause*) That concludes this item of business.

*After the closing act of worship, the Session was adjourned at 10 p.m.*

## **Fifth Day**

### **Tuesday 9 July 2013**

THE CHAIR *Professor Michael Clarke (Worcester)* took the Chair at 9.30 a.m.

*Revd Canon Perran Gay (Truro)* led the Synod in prayer.

*The Chair:* We begin today's business with an address by Bishop Angaelos of the Coptic Church.

#### **Address by Bishop Angaelos**

*His Grace Bishop Angaelos (Council of Oriental Orthodox Churches in the UK):* Your Graces, sisters and brothers, I am very thankful for the opportunity to come and speak to you today. Having attended General Synod now for about 40 years I know that things do not change and that items are not added to the agenda, so I am very thankful to the Business Committee for having provided this slot.

Before I left I was explaining to some of my friends that I was in a bit of a quandary because this week was supposed to be an exceptional week in that Dr Morsi, had he remained president, was meant to be in England over these two days, which would have been quite alarming for us in relation to whether we should meet and therefore give credibility to a leadership that really was not leading the people, or not meet and compromise the Church, and so I prayed for a solution. I did not expect it to be quite so decisive! (*Laughter*)

Historically Egypt after the pharaohs has been Christian, and we all know that. It was a place of refuge for Our Lord himself in the family and it encompassed him and held him in its heart. It has a rich heritage of monasticism, protection and confession of faith and of martyrdom; and we are not playing a victim card here, because martyrdom is actually a power that we have had. As we know, even in physics the greatest energy is granted under the greatest pressure, so in that itself there has been witness. Most proud Copts will claim that they have a right to Isaiah 19, blessing Egypt. However my challenge is that that was written before Christianity in Egypt, so the whole nation is blessed because of the presence of Our Lord and the Holy Family there, and that is why we have seen a very different czar in Egypt.

I want to give Synod some statistics as a backdrop. In the past two years since the uprising the stock market has reached a five-year low, there is 33 per cent unemployment, affecting 3.5 million people, there have been 5,500 strikes or related protests, economic growth has been 2 per cent while actually the growth of the population has been 1.7 per cent, the debt has ballooned to 85 per cent of GDP, inflation has increased, tourism declined, there have been fuel shortages and electricity cuts, crime has increased, armed robberies rising tenfold, home invasions are up 66 per cent, and car thefts have tripled. Over the past two years there have been greater attacks on Christians and churches than in the previous 20 years, culminating in an attack on our cathedral only a few months ago.

Why do I say this? Because the media has constantly insisted on calling this a military coup and taking away the right of the people, who, yes, had marginally yet democratically elected a leader but then issued a vote of no confidence because of the state that the country was reaching, and voiced that. There have been tensions, clashes and attacks on all communities,

not just on Christians but attacks on and destruction of Sufi shrines and a horrific attack on Shiite Muslims, killed in the streets purely because they were Shiites.

We have therefore gone from being a fragmented nation under the previous regime to a completely polarized one in which one sector of the community has wanted to overtake the whole. There has been a breakdown across the board, and we must also try absolutely to point out that when we talk about sovereign states, they must be left to govern themselves rather than our trying to impose or export a certain understanding of democracy, or any other social norm that we have, telling people that this is the only way to do it.

Media rhetoric has not been helpful either. Over the past few days terms such as ‘intifada’, which is an uprising in the Palestinian context, or ‘a makeshift field hospital’ referring to a place in the middle of Cairo that was treating the injured, have been used to proclaim the constant idea that it has become a battle zone, but actually it has not.

What is the way ahead? Very simply in the words of Our Lord, a kingdom divided cannot stand but will fall. As I have said, we have had years of division under the previous regime and now we have complete polarization. Time and again I have called for pragmatic and intentional leadership to lead us to a cohesive state, to build a nation and to build national reconciliation, and to provide for all, for indeed there is a difference between democracy and majority rule. Therefore, everyone must be encompassed.

Reconciliation is what we do as Christians. In Romans we are told that we have received that reconciliation from Christ and in Corinthians we are called to a ministry of reconciliation. Now that means within us, among us and in the communities we are, so the Christians and Christ within the Christians will by God’s grace lead to that reconciliation within that society, and hopefully to peace.

The presence of Christ in Christians in Egypt and the Middle East generally is a power in itself; it is a reconciling power. The Archbishop mentioned his recent visit to Egypt and the Middle East and spoke about the witness there, whether in the presence of now the Council of Churches, the ministry of my dear brother Bishop Munir, his clergy and his church, or the papal selection process within the Coptic Church, which resulted in people comparing transition of leadership in the Church and transition of leadership in the state and seeing a huge difference. For that reason – some members are already on our mailing list – we have called for three days of prayer for Egypt here in the United Kingdom today, tomorrow and on Thursday, a reconciling prayer that breaks down all these barriers.

In 1 Peter we are told that we must be ready to give account for the hope that is in us, and we are hopeful. We are hopeful because we have seen the work of God. Who would have thought that an Islamist leadership would fall apart in a year and therefore bring the whole country together again? Let’s face it – and I hope this does not sound arrogant – when you compare what has happened to us under Diocletian and the Islamic and Arabic entry into Egypt, this is quite limited, and that is why we are hopeful that there will be a way ahead for Egypt. What is that way ahead? It is to work together, pray together and reconcile.

It warms my heart when I see Egyptian flags flying. The Egyptians are very devout, religious people, whether Christian or Muslim, and that is a wonderful thing, a power to the community. We need to get away from the model that says religion divides people; actually it brings people together. Through our own relationship as a Coptic Orthodox Church in Egypt,

through my work here in inter-religious dialogue and through our work together in bringing the Kingdom of God closer to people, we know that this is the case.

I want to close with a passage from 2 Corinthians that always gives me strength: ‘We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed, always carrying about in the body the dying of Our Lord Jesus Christ, that the life of Jesus may also be manifest in our bodies.’ We carry this burden, but it is a cross that we carry because it gives glory to God. I ask for your prayers in these days, not feeling sorry for Egypt but praying for strength, reconciliation and a new heart, because what has happened over the past days and weeks has shown people that division will never take Egypt anywhere, but a consensus, a coming together, a unity, a love, a reconciliation that is needed from the heart after years of division and divide and conquer, is the only way ahead.

I know that in this Synod there is talk of reconciliation and a grace that is working towards accepting and accommodating, and that is the spirit that we in Egypt are calling for as well. We assure you of our prayers for the Synod, for our sister Church of England, for Christianity in this country and for all we stand for together, and we pray that God will be revealed through our common witness here and around the world, that the darkness that sometimes increases is always dissipated by the light of God that shines through us. (*The Bishop was accorded a standing ovation*)

*The Chair:* Bishop, we are richly blessed by your presence among us and better informed as a result of those few minutes. Rest assured that our prayers go with you, your people and indeed your country.

Before we move to the listed business, Mrs Margaret Swinson, Chair of the Appointments Committee, will address Synod.

### **Statement by the Chair of the Appointments Committee**

*Mrs Margaret Swinson (Liverpool):* As members will be aware, last evening the Appointments Committee met in order to appoint a Steering Committee to take charge of the preparation of draft legislation to enable the ordination of women to the episcopate in accordance with the motion passed by the General Synod. Mindful of the speech by the Bishop of Willesden and Mr Keith Malcouronne’s amendment, the Committee invited Canon David Porter to join the meeting to provide specialist advice on how to give effect to the Synod’s intentions. In particular the Committee sought his advice on the appropriate size of group for such a facilitated process.

In its discussions the Committee bore in mind the time-scale to which the Steering Committee will need to work in order both to prepare legislation for first consideration at the November group of sessions and work with the House of Bishops as it drafts the accompanying documents due to be presented to the February 2014 group of sessions.

The Committee agreed to issue invitations to 15 members of Synod, representing the breadth of views on Synod, to take part in this preparatory work. The size and membership of the group will be reviewed by the Appointments Committee when the group has completed this initial stage of work and before first consideration in November. The membership list of the group will be published as soon as all the invitees have had an opportunity to respond and the membership is finally agreed.

*The Chair:* I remind Synod that the Archbishops' Council's Annual Report (GS 1913) will not be taken as a formal item of business at this group of sessions.

## **The Work of the Elections Review Group First Report by the Business Committee (GS 1901)**

*Revd Canon Sue Booy (Oxford):* I beg to move:

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

The end is in sight. It has been quite a journey, and a good one so far, to this final morning when we will consider various aspects of synodical government, principally and importantly the composition of the Synod itself. So because this is important to our life together I encourage members to stay with us and concentrate for a little longer.

The Business Committee appointed an Elections Review Group, which I was privileged to chair, and I want to express my gratitude to my fellow members of the group and to Synod staff for their support.

In this debate members are invited to take note of the first two reports by the Business Committee on the Elections Review Group. First consideration debates offer an opportunity to focus on some of the more detailed issues addressed in GS 1901, so I will now outline some of the wider issues of principle relating to the composition of Synod that we considered.

I would like to begin with the question of the weighting of representation between the provinces. The current position is that the allocation of seats in the Houses of Clergy and Laity is calculated on a 70/30 split between the provinces. That results in a slight weighting in favour of the northern province in both Houses since, as members will see from the figures on page 5, the actual percentage split between the two provinces without weighting would be 73/27.

Within the group and the Business Committee there were different views about this. Some believed that the number of seats allocated to each diocese should be directly proportionate to the number of clergy or electoral roll members regardless of province. Others expressed two related concerns, which I have heard echoed on the floor of Synod: that the northern voice might not be held effectively if York's representation fell; and that the Lower House of its Convocation might become too small properly to fulfil its functions. Following discussion in the Business Committee the majority of members did not support the removal of the weighting in relation to either House, but it agreed that Synod should be given an opportunity to decide whether that practice should continue. That is why draft Amending Canon 32 and the draft Church Representation Rules (Amendment) Resolution include provisions for its removal in both Houses.

I turn now to the second major issue considered by the group, the question of the universities constituencies. In the last round of synodical government legislation in 2004 Synod resisted a proposal to abolish them. Nevertheless our group received a number of submissions questioning their continued existence, particularly on the grounds that the number of seats is disproportionate to the size of the electorate and that the rules governing elections are difficult to operate. It seemed to us important to address the issue.



Before I continue I want to make it clear that I have been made aware by some university proctors that the report contains information that they regard as inaccurate and unhelpful and that there has been a misunderstanding about some promised consultation, which they expected would happen earlier in the process than at the stage of the Revision Committee and which did not materialize. This has left them feeling aggrieved and for that I apologize.

The evidence that the Review Group and the Business Committee shared concerned us. Most of the constituencies are very small, the majority having fewer than 20 electors and one having fewer than 10. Thus the practical problems of running the elections are considerable, not least because accurately identifying the electorates depends on the effective co-operation of universities, and this has proved difficult. Consequently, there is a continued risk of legal challenge to the election results due to the quality of data.

However our further concern is more fundamental. If the purpose of the constituencies is to guarantee the Synod access to theological expertise, the rules are not drafted to achieve that. We were also aware that there are and have been eminent lay and clerical theologians elected to the Synod by other routes. We were also of the opinion that the abolition of the constituencies need not involve university clergy being disenfranchised. Increasingly they have the bishop's licence and could therefore stand in the diocesan proctorial elections.

In the light of all those considerations, both the group and the Business Committee proposed the abolition of the constituencies. In proposing it the group was clear that the status quo is untenable and not in Synod's best interests. Recognizing that this is contentious, we have offered a proposal for the reform of the constituencies described in Annex 1 to the report. If Synod votes against abolition we would wish to see this considered by the Revision Committee alongside other submissions from interested parties.

I turn now to the remaining recommendations of the group, which I hope to deal with more briefly. The group considered the allocation of seats to the dioceses of Sodor and Man and Europe. Whilst no change is proposed in the case of the former, the group considered the diocese in Europe to be under-represented when comparing the numbers of the rolls on its chaplaincies with electoral rolls in other dioceses. We therefore recommended, and the Business Committee agreed, that in future the minimum allocation of three seats in each House should apply to the diocese of Europe. The group also considered that the number of suffragan bishops and other persons in episcopal orders working in dioceses were under-represented on Synod. Noting the reduction last quinquennium in the number of suffragans who could be elected from Canterbury, the Business Committee accepted our proposal that this be increased by one.

The third area relating to the composition of Synod, to which we devoted a considerable amount of our time, was a proposal from CMEAC that it should be possible to co-opt minority ethnic persons to membership of the Synod with a view to ensuring a minimum of 24 such members. The group did not share the premise on which this proposal was made that people from minority ethnic backgrounds were under-represented in the Synod as a whole; and members will see from the table on page 9 that clergy do not appear to be under-represented in terms of proportionality. Although this same principle implies a degree of under-representation in the House of Laity, the group did not believe that co-option was the right way forward, for the reasons that we have identified in paragraph 38.

The Business Committee endorsed the Review Group's recommendation that CMEAC, the Church of England Youth Council, internal Synod groupings and other bodies such as diocesan synods, we hoped particularly in the London conurbation, could be asked not only actively to encourage candidates from minority ethnic communities to come forward for election but also to mentor them through the election process.

In addition, our group made recommendations on a number of uncontroversial and detailed technical issues, and members can refer to the report for those. Several require changes to be made to the guidance materials issued to dioceses before the elections. These will be made by the staff in time for the next quinquennium. Others require changes to the various sets of election rules, all of which will be touched on in more detail in the debates later this morning on the instruments brought to effect the changes.

I hope that this account of the various issues addressed in the Business Committee's first report will help Synod understand some of the thinking behind the work of the Elections Review Group. I look forward to a lively debate and to trying to answer members' questions.

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

*The Bishop of Dudley (Rt Revd David Walker)* – at least for a little while longer! I want to speak because I am the vice chair of CMEAC and the Ven. Danny Kajumba, our chair, is not a member of Synod and therefore cannot address us this morning. The irony, of course, is that he is not a member of Synod because, rather than allowing the electoral process to run its course as the report urges regarding minority ethnic Anglicans, there are special rules to avoid the over-representation of one particular group. Alongside bias to the poor, we operate bias against the archdeacons. Synod may think that is a good thing!

I am grateful that the group looked carefully at the extent to which BME Anglicans are under-represented here. The analysis in the report is better than we have had in the past; it satisfies me that the level of numerical under-representation is relatively small and only in the House of Laity. I am grateful too that we are being asked to work with the Church of England Youth Council and others, but I trust that where Synod wills the act the Archbishops' Council will in turn provide the necessary resources to achieve the ends, and I would welcome any reassurance that can be given on that score.

However I want to correct a couple of ways in which I think we may be misunderstanding this issue. The first is the misconception that the need for a sufficiency of BME members on this Synod would be for the benefit of minority ethnic Anglicans – not so. We do not need BME people here, and here in good numbers, for their sakes; we need them for our sake. We want to hear the voices of black and minority ethnic Anglicans in order that all our synodical decisions are better informed and stronger. We, people like me, the white majority in this Synod, need the black and minority ethnic members of our community far more than they need us.

That brings me to my second point. When a particular voice needs to be heard loudly enough for the benefit of all of us, sometimes we need to hear it coming from a few more directions. I hate to say this as a mathematician, but is statistical equivalence enough? Does the best efficiency of the work of this Synod actually need more members from BME backgrounds than the equivalent proportion of them among the clergy and age-stratified laity of the

Church? We need to do all we can to ensure that the number of BME members is fit for purpose, not fit for mathematics.

I have no wish to do anything other than support the motion before us, but I ask that we continue to keep in our minds how we best utilize the skills and experience of BME Anglicans both for this Synod and for the glory of God.

*The Archdeacon of Rochdale (Ven. Cherry Vann):* I would like to pay tribute to the work of the Elections Review Group, but the points I want to make relate to a deep and growing concern that I and a number of others have about what appears to be a general drift of resources and influence from the north to the south. Some of the points made in the report are indicative of this and I want to highlight them for Synod.

The first is the proposal to reduce the number of allocated seats for the northern province on this Synod, both clergy and lay, by removing the present weighting. As members will have seen, the effect of this would be that the northern province would lose six clergy and seven lay representatives while the south would gain five clergy and seven lay representatives, thereby increasing the differential between the two provinces by 25. That would amount to a significant loss of presence, representation and potential influence on this national body. I was heartened to read in the introduction to the report that this is recognized by some members of the Review Group itself and by members of the Business Committee, and I want to thank them for that and add my voice to theirs and urge members of Synod to join us in rejecting the removal of the weighting.

In addition, two other points further threaten the representation of the northern province on this Synod: first, the proposal to increase the number of southern suffragans by one; and, second, as we now know, the loss of two northern diocesan bishops following yesterday's vote to reorganize the Yorkshire dioceses. The potential impact of losing both presence and voice is serious, because there are distinct and specific issues relating to the north, not least the sometimes inaccurate perceptions of the north and northerners held by many in the south, some of whom have never travelled farther north than Watford Gap! This, I believe, is one of the key factors in the difficulty that the northern dioceses have in recruiting clergy to come and work here, but the prospect of our presence in Synod being diminished is only one part of the concern.

Not very long ago the number of available stipendiary clergy was allocated to the dioceses by means of what was known as the Sheffield formula, which sought to ensure a degree of parity across the country. That is no longer the case, and some dioceses that can afford more clergy are taking a higher number than would have been allocated under the Sheffield formula. With a reducing pool of stipendiaries available to us nationally, it does not take a mathematician to realize that if this continues over the coming years the poorer dioceses of the northern province will be hit very hard indeed. As well as the financial challenges they face and the difficulties in persuading clergy to come and serve the northern churches, they will also have to compete on what some would see as a not entirely level playing field for the clergy who are available. It all adds up to what feels like a general drift little by little of resources and influence from north to south; and to return to representation, as the overall number of clergy in the northern province diminishes and the number in the southern province grows, the difference in our representation on Synod will be even more marked – a double whammy.

I urge the Synod to vote against the draft Amending Canon 32 and to comment on the draft Church Representation Rules (Amendment) Resolution in respect of its paragraph 4 so as to retain the weighting in the allocation and thereby an adequate representation of the northern province on this Synod.

*The Chair:* I call Heather Pritchard for a maiden speech. She has a little extra time if she needs it, following which the time limit will return to three minutes.

*Ms Heather Pritchard (Church of England Youth Council Representatives):* Chair, thank you for the extra time.

As a Church of England Youth Council representative I felt it important that one of us should speak about paragraph 42 of GS 1901, in which we are directly referenced. In its report the Elections Review Group has called on our Council not only to actively encourage candidates from the minority ethnic communities to come forward for election but also to mentor them through the election process, conceding that as minority ethnic congregation members tend to have a younger age profile, the Youth Council could be an invaluable source of support in that connection.

In the first instance I would like to thank the Committee for wishing to make that connection with us. As we welcome any method of further engagement between ourselves and the synodical governance of the Church of England, we recognize this positive way in which we are encouraged to actively engage in such an important issue to maintain the diversity of this Synod and look forward to the forthcoming dialogue with the Committee on minority ethnic concerns.

However at this ‘take note’ stage of the proceedings it is worth highlighting the concerns that we have felt about the assumptions in this paragraph. Initially we felt that it was unfortunate that the Elections Review Group did not come to us before producing the report. Although it positively affirms the work we can do, the nature of what it asks of us cannot be fully met and we would have liked to have a chance to mitigate disappointment down the road.

We struggle with the issue of diversity. We are a white middle-class bunch of young people and have had only two members from minority ethnic backgrounds in our 10-year history. In attempting to address this issue last year we implemented ideas such as using silhouettes in media instead of actual photographs, to be less like the stereotype. During our tenth anniversary year we will be publishing our ‘Engage’ campaign, which seeks nationally to encourage all young people on to all levels of Church leadership, from PCCs to the Archbishops’ Council. We hope that we can encourage young people from all backgrounds.

Our makeup allows for two representatives from every diocese, with every diocese implementing a different procedure for this. The background of attendees is not within our direct control as we encourage anyone interested to come along, not least as in most dioceses we struggle to make those two representatives let alone form an ethnically diverse Council. In addition, our own General Synod membership is selected from the sub-section of the 40 or so people who turn up at our annual Council meeting who are over 18. In terms of our representatives therefore whether we add to the diversity of this Synod is very much a question of pot luck.

The idea of our mentoring candidates is probably what we as a Council would find most difficult. Constitutionally if you are elected diocesan member of the General Synod you cannot be a member of the Youth Council as you have your own voice. Therefore, we do not have anyone who could mentor other young people throughout the process as no one on the Council has been through it.

The issue is wider than our membership too, made up as it is of only those aged 16–25, and therefore calls for us to support the category of young people that in most places seems to reach about 40 years old. It is simply not in our resources.

A suggestion to help all could be that, as with the two dioceses in which I have served, putting youth representatives directly on to diocesan synods and bishops' councils can both raise the profile of the Youth Council and increase the pool of potential young General Synod members. In all these issues we have our own problems to contend with and would value Synod's support and the support of CMEAC to help us as much as potentially we could help them.

In conclusion, we look forward to working alongside the Synod and CMEAC as one, to solve a diversity issue that is felt not only by Synod in its representation but by our Council as well. We need your help as much as you need ours, and a collective effort will be very much needed if we are to sort this issue. I hope I have explained our issues sufficiently well to enable members to understand both our happiness and reservations with this paragraph, and I hope that Synod will take note of both the report and my comments.

*Mr Tim Allen (St Edmundsbury and Ipswich):* It seems to me that congratulations are in order, first to the previous speaker on a most excellent maiden speech, and second to the diocese in Europe on being accorded proper representation by these proposals.

That said however I would like to tackle two separate issues. First, I question the recommendation to abolish the universities constituencies. If the information in the report is complete and accurate, about which there seems to be some doubt, the present system of electing clergy from university staff is chaotic, but to conclude from this that university representation should be abolished altogether would be to throw out the baby with the bath water. So there is a compelling case for the Revision Committee to provide for a form as outlined in Annex 1 rather than for abolition, which would impoverish the expertise of this General Synod.

The second, on more delicate ground, is the issue of allocation of seats between the Provinces of Canterbury and York. Here my question is about fairness between certain dioceses, and for clarity I will talk about lay seats only. At present a bias is applied in favour of York such that in terms of lay representation York has, as the table on page 5 shows, seven more and Canterbury seven fewer than a level playing field allocation would provide. Chair, you may agree with me that in the overall provincial context a bias of seven lay seats within a total of 193 is not very big and is a price worth paying as a friendly gesture from the south to the north to compensate for the smaller size of the northern province. However if members look more closely at the table on page 5 and focus down from the provincial to the diocesan level they will see that the bias is much more extreme in the case of a few of the smaller dioceses.

Let me take two pairs of diocese – Gloucester and my own diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich in the south and Carlisle and Blackburn in the north. I have nothing at all against

Carlisle but I wonder whether it is fair that it has four lay members from an electoral roll of almost 20,000, whereas both Gloucester and St Edmundsbury and Ipswich have only three lay members from electoral rolls of almost 23,000 each. I have nothing against Blackburn either, but I ask whether it is fair that it has six lay members, that is double the representation of Gloucester and St Edmundsbury and Ipswich, whereas its electoral roll is less than 50 per cent greater.

It may not matter much to London for example that it has only 10 lay representatives rather than the 11 to which but for the bias it would be entitled, but it matters to St Edmundsbury and Ipswich that it has only three lay representatives rather than the four that it would have but for the north-south bias. If I may borrow Cherry Vann's phrase, the voice of Suffolk has greatly diminished.

I therefore hope that a way can be found to restore fair and equitable representation between the dioceses. Clearly at present it would not be right to take seats away from the north, given the loss of seats that will be involved in the creation of the new diocese of Leeds. It may be that to do justice to the north and to be fair as between individual dioceses in the south the best solution would be slightly to increase the size of Synod, to allocate the extra seats to the north and otherwise to abandon the artificial 70/30 bias. I hope that the matter will be reviewed further by those concerned.

*Brother Thomas Quinn (Religious Communities)*: I would like to speak against the abolition of the universities constituencies. I acknowledge the electoral difficulties raised in paragraph 26 of the Business Committee's report but I know that members of the universities themselves have put forward fair and practical proposals for their own reform, which at least should be considered alongside Annex 1.

I speak against abolition first because I cannot agree with the contention in paragraph 29 of GS 1901 that 'the electorate can be trusted to vote for theologians in diocesan elections.' I am not suggesting that this never happens, but from personal and anecdotal evidence very many members are chosen on the basis of their views about a small number of ecclesiological issues, so I am not reassured that we can rely on the electorate to seek out theologians.

Of equal importance, I believe that university members bring another vital quality to this Synod. If a university is worthy of the name, it fosters an attitude of mind and of inquiry where questions are welcomed, all sides of an argument are considered and all people are eager to learn from one another. As we began to learn on Saturday, we need more not less of that attitude, and if it is not strengthened among us we could fall back into blind factionalism.

Reformation, yes – there is a sound Anglican precedent for that somewhere – but I urge the Synod to vote against the abolition of university constituencies.

*Revd Dr Rosemarie Mallett (Southwark)*: I hope I am not seen as one who speaks only on single issues. There was a slight implication that people from BME backgrounds may tend to do that.

I understand the reticence of the Elections Review Group and the Business Committee to put any hard and fast quotas on the numbers coming from any constituent group, but I feel that the response given rather skates over the top of what is the serious issue outlined by the Bishop of Dudley. There is an insistence that we look at the significance of representation.

However as the bishop knows and members will know, if you have a very low number and then you look at the statistical significance in terms of representation here, if one or two people suddenly leave for various reasons we will be under-represented; and it is the case that before the next group of sessions of Synod two of the clergy members will not be here, so the group will be under-represented. Looking round this chamber, I wonder whether members feel that sufficient voices are coming from minority ethnic backgrounds present in this place.

I do however also wonder about the decision to ask CMEAC and CYC to take up the charge to encourage and mentor potential members to stand. We have already heard from the representative of CYC why they may be challenged to undertake that. It will also be challenging for CMEAC to do so, as there is only one officer and I do not know how she will be able to work throughout all our dioceses to encourage better representation from BME backgrounds. Instead I would say that we should charge the bishops, the archdeacons and the area deans to identify potential people, to encourage them to join their deanery and diocesan synods and to provide mentoring for them. This is not a responsibility for one or two offices of the Church of England; it is our responsibility, because this is the Church that should be representative of the people who are part of it in every diocese and parish throughout this land, including BME folk in inner cities, conurbations and rural areas.

*The Bishop of Gibraltar in Europe (Rt Revd Dr Geoffrey Rowell):* I thank the working party for the report, and of course I am very gratified that the diocese in Europe now has parity of esteem and three-and-three rather than two-and-two representation. This is part of the growth of the diocese.

Those who know me will know that I am not a great one for detailed and lengthy strategies, so when I am asked what the strategy of the diocese in Europe is that I have been encouraging, I simply reply, 'Living the Trinity', and that seems to me to be a very good way to be and to be rooted.

The diocese has grown in all kinds of ways. If I think of two services of confirmation that I have done this year, the first was of Sudanese refugees when the ice was still on the ground in Finland just south of the Arctic Circle, the second baptizing and confirming seven Iranian refugees in Ankara, and I can only say that I have never encountered what I might call a thirsting for baptism from those who had fled from Iran.

Our ordinands also represent another remarkable growth area for us, from all kinds of different places: in the diocese of Wakefield, Guillermo Cavieses, an ordinand from Chile; the vicar of Heslington, Jan Nobel, an ordinand of Dutch extraction from Amsterdam; a Russian woman ordinand, Olga Fabrikantova, who will go to Ridley Hall and who discovered St Andrew's Moscow on the website; and Engin Yildirim, a Turk who is ministering to a Turkish congregation in Ankara. That reminds me that I might try to encourage him to stand as a possible clergy representative.

In the universities issue I want to support reform, but if members want to support reform I urge them to remember that there are Anglican clergy teaching in theological faculties in Bonn, in the Catholic University of Leuven, in the University of Bern and in Gothenburg.

From the religious communities, about which I have been in correspondence for some time with the Bishop of Dudley, who is concerned with the relation of religious communities and

the House of Bishops, we have a member of the *Spe Gaudentes* community in Amsterdam, working in the red light district. It is an ecumenical community but he is rather excluded from the religious communities' context. On my visit I remember being told how the work of that community was widely appreciated. I looked out the window, saw a red light flashing, erotic outlets, and said, 'Shall we go and take that and put it over the doorway of the church?'

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

*Revd Dr Judith Maltby (Oxford University)*: It will not surprise Synod that I want to speak in support of the reform of the university seats, and I do so as the person who represents the largest of these constituencies, about 50 clergy. If representing about 50 clergy is a rotten borough, then I think some other constituencies like the deans in Synod had better beware.

I want to emphasize that we university representatives feel very strongly about the lack of consultation that was involved in this process and that the report really is full of errors and misunderstandings concerning university seats, and I want to address specifically the situation relating to Oxford and Cambridge.

First, in Oxford, were all those 50 clergy to become members of the Oxford deanery, it would completely distort the deanery and its primary functions. Has the chair of the Oxford deanery been asked whether he or she would like 50 new clergypersons added to it? Have the Bishops of Oxford and Ely been asked for their views on it? I think that there is a real danger of the disenfranchisement of a rather sizeable group. Second, because Oxford and Cambridge are collegiate, not centralized, universities, that is they are structured in quite a different way, many members of our theology faculties actually are not employed by the faculty or the department but by the colleges, but they are senior members, fully research active, supervising doctoral students and so forth. There is therefore a complete misunderstanding, which would have been dealt with by consultation about what 'employment' means, certainly in the Oxbridge context.

Finally, some kind words have been used about university seats, but I want to emphasize that not only is it our contribution on the floor of Synod that is important but also the work that we bring to Synod bodies such as the Ministry Council, the Crown Nominations Commission and so on. Please reform us.

*Revd Charles Razzall (Chester)* – and the only northern member of the 12-person Business Committee. So, Cherry Vann, everything you say is quite correct.

I want to speak about the university proposal. I think that we have framed it in the wrong way. It is not necessarily abolition or doing something about Richard Burrige or anything like that; it is about doing something for our professional and university theologians. Paula Gooder is in no way diminished or neglected for her membership of the Birmingham diocese from where she is elected, and the same would be true of our university theologians in a new dispensation. That is a very serious point. Paula Gooder has been liberated. None of us here is quite his or her own ploughboy or ploughgirl theologian. We rely on our theological life together.

Some members will remember that a few years ago there was a proposal to get rid of the archdeacons and they were practically chaining themselves to this chamber and throwing themselves into the lake, saying 'All this resource will be lost to the Church.' In fact in most



dioceses archdeacons have been elected almost without exception when they have stood in the proctorial elections. The same would be true of our great university theologians. They would be rooted in the local experience of the diocese and the Church.

Yesterday we merged three dioceses. We did not do something *about* the diocese of Wakefield, Bradford and Ripon and Leeds; we did something, we hope, *for* them. The same would be true for university theologians if they came into the wider body of Synod. We need to do something for them. Richard Burrige, Dean of King's, you are welcome; all are welcome. I urge the Synod to see it not as abolition but as doing something for our university members and for the wider Synod.

*The Archbishop of York (Dr John Sentamu):* Yesterday the Synod responding to the debate on the reorganization of the West Yorkshire dioceses with a resounding 'yes'. I am reliably informed that only six voted against the scheme, so I want to thank members for delivering such a fantastic judgement.

However I want to refer to paragraph 22 on page 6 of the report, which reads, 'the Group took the view that there is a strong case for enlarging the size of the House of Bishops by one seat in order to increase the representation of the southern suffragan bishops. (In its discussions, the Group noted that, should the proposed reorganisation of the Yorkshire dioceses take place, there would be two fewer diocesan members of the House of Bishops and that it would therefore be possible to increase suffragan representation in the General Synod without increasing the overall size of the House.)' That is a perverse way of speaking by the group and I am surprised that the Business Committee agreed with them.

Similarly, in relation to paragraph 23 on the following page, where will the increase be? It will be in the south. This is absolutely perverse. The logic should have been: 'There will be fewer diocesan bishops so we shall increase the suffragans in the north, not in the south.' What kind of a world are we living in?

The Bishop of Dudley's logic about BME representation is right. The increase is not so much about the fact that black people are more represented as it is about the gifts that they bring here. Dr Rosemarie Mallett is also right that it is not the responsibility of black people to increase their membership but for all of us. Therefore, I am not in favour by the way, as I have said this before, of co-optation, because I do not know what that is doing in a retro system. However I am in favour of us all working very hard next time to ensure that black majority representation is larger than it is, and I hope that will be taken on board.

Finally, I am absolutely thrilled by the Prolocutor of the Convocation of York. Wow! She said it all.

I urge Synod to reject this nonsense.

*The Chair:* That was at least direct!

*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:* Canon Booy's has five minutes to respond to the debate.

*Revd Canon Sue Booy's*, in reply: I do like a challenge!

First, because I do not have much time, I want to say something very serious, that is that the purpose of a report such as this is to promote discussion – and I thank members for the good discussion that we have had – and lead to consultation and where necessary reform and legislation, and I think that addresses quite a few of the points that were raised. The proper place for that consultation is in the Revision Committee. One or two people have said, 'I know it was for effect. Vote this down.' I urge them not to vote down this or anything in Items 501 onwards, because they would be denying themselves and others the opportunity to consult. That perhaps relates particularly to the north, and as someone whose antecedents come from the East and North Ridings I take the Prolocutor's point to heart. She rightly noted that the Business Committee did not want to alter the balance, and I hope that Synod has heard that.

There are a couple of points about the proportionality that it might help Synod to understand. First, those proportions are allocated at provincial, not diocesan, level; and that perhaps addresses some of Tim Allen's points about weighting between dioceses. Second, the Elections Review Group recognized that the change relating to suffragans had nothing to do with the north and south weighting and the debate about north and south but actually was to redress a balance for the south, and it is very important to say that we want to hear people's views on that. Many members of the Review Group and the Business Committee will be on the Steering Committee and then the Revision Committee and we want to talk to members about these things.

I thank all those who spoke to the issues concerning black minority ethnic members of Synod. Those members have a network of advisers in dioceses. I would like to thank especially the Bishop of Dudley, Rosemarie Mallett, Heather Pritchard, and of course the Archbishop of York, who in different ways reminded us of the importance of working together to see more minorities of every kind represented in Synod, not only in the electoral process but in everything that we do together. I hope we all heard that and that each one of us will strive to do it.

In relation to the financial questions asked by the Bishop of Dudley, I am advised that Nick Hills will be working with that network of advisers on the financial provisions, so I hope members have heard that, because then they can hold us to it.

I do not want to say much about universities, about which members have heard a lot and about which I and other members of the Review Group have had quite a few conversations, and there is a following motion. We are not looking for a fight; we are looking for constructive conversations in revision so that we can make up our minds about the proper way forward on this. What we have all heard, and must hear, is that things cannot remain the same and that there is a decision to be taken about what happens next.

It is perhaps important that my colleague from Oxford understands that the Area Dean of Aston and Cuddesdon, similarly affiliated to the deanery of Oxford, was the chair of the Elections Review Group.

Finally, I would like to assure the diocese of Europe that it has always had parity of esteem and to take this opportunity to honour the leadership of Bishop Geoffrey.

*The motion was put and carried.*

*The Chair:* We now move to the following motion at Item 49. While we have Richard Burrige on the platform, on behalf of Synod I would like to congratulate him on the award to him of the Ratzinger Prize, which is a matter of particular distinction. (*Applause*)

*Revd Christopher Hobbs (London):* On a point of order, Chair. Under the terms of Standing Orders would it be possible to move to Next Business on the basis that this item will be covered by the Steering Committee following the motion that we have just carried.

*The Chair:* I shall take advice. Revd Hobbs, I am advised that you need to wait until the motion has been moved by Professor Burrige. You can make a further intervention then, if you still want to.

*Revd Professor Richard Burrige (University of London):* I beg to move as a following motion:

‘That this Synod request that the Steering Committee appointed under SO 49 to be in charge of the draft legislation arising from GS 1901 undertake full consultation with the university proctors regarding the proposals relating to the university constituencies in GS 1901, GS 1902 and GS 1904 and bring forward further proposals for consideration by the Revision Committee for the reform of those constituencies, based on accurate information.’

I am grateful to Canon Booy for her introduction of the ‘take note’ report, particularly for her recognition of the lack of consultation despite the fact that we had been promised it, and that with regard to universities the report was full of inaccuracies and based on wrong information. That enabled me and my colleagues not to try to disrupt or vote down the ‘take note’ report on the whole issue, because it was really important that all the other topics about young people, minority ethnic Anglicans, north and south, Europe and so on were properly tackled.

We are all agreed that the current situation regarding universities is not only untenable and unworkable but indefensible. However the mistakes in this report are so indefensible that if it is allowed to stand they are open to severe legal challenge for reputational risk over the status of the university clergy, the relationship of the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge to the dioceses of Oxford and Ely, the relationship for instance of King’s College London to the dioceses in which it is set, namely London, Southwark, Chelmsford and Oxford, and the relationship of the colleges of the University of London to the diocese of London. Lack of consultation caused all those mistakes, so I am most grateful for the apology.

We did not wish to seek to bring this following motion. We wished simply to be able to discuss it properly in the Revision Committee, and we had put down to amend the referrals. However one is not allowed to amend a ‘take note’ report or table an amendment that the Canons be reconsidered for revision in committee. Therefore, following legal advice the only option open to us was to bring this following motion and to try Synod’s patience and mind.

The reason for the university representatives and constituencies in the first place is complex and goes back into the past. One reason is that the rules of the old Church Assembly were modelled on the parliamentary system and the universities had constituencies in parliament, and therefore so did the Church Assembly and the General Synod. That situation of course no longer pertains. It remains true however that even now, and more so in the days when the General Synod was constituted, a large number of clergy working in university theology departments whose universities are extra-diocesan do not hold the bishop's licence.

Actually I hold a licence from the Bishop of London, which enables me on my days off or on Sundays to do anything that I am asked to do by anyone in his diocese. It has absolutely no relevance to my work as the Dean of King's, and I would continue to function as the Dean of King's if Bishop Richard were to withdraw my licence. I am grateful to the Bishops of Southwark and Chelmsford for PTOs to function in their dioceses also, and I probably ought to be talking to the Bishop of Oxford about it. But to stand in their constituencies is not part of our ministry. Oxbridge colleges are extra-diocesan; they do not come under the authority of the Bishop of Oxford or Ely as their Ordinary. If Synod goes ahead with abolition in this way it will disenfranchise something of the order of 100 clergy.

The role of the university representative is also to bring to the Synod professional, academic, university theology that is subject to very rigorous peer review and publication records. I agree completely with Revd Razzall about the wonderful work of Paula Gooder. In fact I appointed her as a visiting lecturer at King's College London, but she is not a professional theologian who has to write under the constraints of the research exercise in the way that the rest of do, which sets her free to do her wonderful work, and that means that we are very different.

Over the years we have heard a number of voices, such as those of Tony Thiselton, Barnabas Lindars and so forth. A comment was made about the debates that used to be held on Sunday afternoons and it was suggested that we were missing something by just dealing with administrative or legislative business at this time. Traditionally Barnabas Lindars used to give a wonderful theological lecture that enabled everyone to catch up on their sleep at the start of a Sunday afternoon session following a nice Sunday lunch!

I am grateful to all members of Synod who have congratulated me on the award of the Ratzinger Prize and I am glad that the Roman Catholic Church actually thinks that professional theologians are important, but it would be most bizarre for Synod to congratulate me on that at the same time as saying that it did not want us. With regard to being told that we can just simply stand in our dioceses I want to ask, 'Have members asked the Bishops of London, Southwark, Chelmsford, Oxford and Ely whether they want us?', and I hope that the Bishop of Southwark might answer that question in the debate.

We have also talked a lot about statistics. King's College London has 26,500 students and 6,000 members of staff and turns over £2 million a day. The number of our staff members therefore is about half the paid clergy of the Church of England – in fact more than all the clergy of the northern province – and our turnover is roughly half that of the Church of England. Of course, members may say 'That is just population', but the difference between the population in my pastoral care and that of the northern province is that every one of the 32,000 people under my care have my email address and can contact me, and many of them do. Nearly half the young people of our country are in universities, and we have talked about the voice of young people. Do members really want to withdraw that voice and that

availability from the Synod? For the Synod of the Church of England to withdraw from that when the country is moving more and more to a graduate situation would be further evidence of withdrawal from the public square.

We agree that the current situation is untenable and for 20 years we have campaigned for reform. Members would not know that from this report. There are suggestions that we are turkeys not wanting to vote for Christmas. For years we have been asking for Christmas and consistently have been refused it and left in a season of penitence. From 2000 to 2005 we worked closely with the Bridge Commission, asking for proposals for reform. As this report makes clear, in 2004 this Synod voted for university representation to be reformed. It was never given a chance to do that, so I was left only with the option of voting down our abolition, which left us saved but unreformed, and I do not think that is an Anglican position.

In the Synod of 2006–2010 I again put forward proposals for reform and was told that the Synod was weary of reform and that I should leave that sleeping dog to lie. When in 2011 the elections were reviewed I again sent in proposals and was promised that I and my colleagues would be consulted; we never were. That is why the report contains all these mistakes and why it would be unjust to go straight to abolition. The report suggests that if abolition does not work we should look at reform. How will Synod know whether abolition has not worked? It would just get rid of us and that would be the end of it. If something does not work the logical thing to do is to try to reform it first, and if reform does not work, abolish. This is not the place at which to go into the detail of the reforms, but we have suggested for example the importance of opening up the constituency to laypeople or to former bishops, like Stephen Sykes or Tom Wright, or even the new Master of Magdalene, who may well have theological expertise to bring to the Synod.

We have looked at the north-south divide. We are currently 66/33 north-south, but previously we recommended to the Bridge Commission that we might even come down to 50/50 parity.

We have put forward many proposals and we would like to discuss them with the Committee and hear all members' proposals, but at the end of the day I want the Synod, not some Revision Committee, to be able to make this decision. We therefore ask the Revision Committee to bring to Synod reform proposals for Synod to decide. If we are to be terminated, let it be on accurate information face to face here in the Synod rather than by summary execution by a firing squad behind the scenes.

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

*Revd Mark Ireland (Lichfield)*: Two questions make me uneasy about the universities constituencies as such. We need the input of theologians, and the issue of reform has already been conceded but there is an issue about balance as well. In my diocese it takes 506 electors to elect six proctors in Convocation. It takes only 100 possible electors to elect six university representatives. That is a clear imbalance. We addressed this issue in Synod at the time of the Bridge report, when it was argued that actually we must continue to have archdeacons, otherwise we would lose their expertise on the Synod, and that it was all right to have a situation in which the votes of two or three archdeacons elected one of their number to the Synod whereas it took 50, 60 or 70 clergy to elect one other proctor.

In the years since the Bridge report archdeacons have not become an endangered species on General Synod, and I am very pleased about that. Of course, the reason for that is that the

cream always rises to the top! I am equally sure that if we reform the representation of the universities we will still have their representation because we need theologians to help us in coming back to Scripture and theology so that we look at those issues in a deeper way.

Having just begun to read the biography of William Pitt the Younger, I was reminded that William Pitt and William Wilberforce were elected to parliament within a year of each other in 1780 and 1781. Both profoundly did a great deal for our country, but actually the way in which either of them was elected to parliament could not be defended. William Wilberforce was there because he used his father's fortune to pay two guineas a vote, and William Pitt the Younger was in a pocket borough. It is great that those people ended up in parliament but there should be a better route, and I think the better route is through the dioceses or through a reform constituency in proportion to the other dioceses.

*The Bishop of Southwark (Rt Revd Christopher Chessun):* In answer to the challenge, much as I love and respect Richard Burrige, I would not want him to have one of the Southwark seats!

Academic theology has not necessarily been the determining factor in the selection of bishops – I may have personal reasons to be thankful for that – or in elections to the Houses of Clergy or Laity. I therefore very much endorse what Brother Thomas Quinn said on this subject. We need to guard this element in our midst. The historic place of the universities in guarding the theological rigour of the Church of England is very significant. Historically our universities have played a crucial role in nourishing our corporate life and identity as the Church of England. I therefore sound that note of caution about the consequences of removing this constituency in terms of the flow and provision of theological expertise and wisdom, which inform us so significantly. We should listen well to what Judith Maltby said about process and the need for it to be better.

I am against abolition and I urge members to support Professor Burrige's following motion.

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

*Revd Canon Simon Butler (Southwark):* – and speaking in my capacity as chair of the Steering Committee.

I want to encourage Synod to see this short debate as a process of listening to members and to the universities constituencies as represented by Professor Burrige. The Steering Committee is very much in listening mode.

I want to raise an issue about process. If this motion is passed, in a sense Synod would just be asking the Revision Committee to do the work that it is already going to do anyway, because our job is to hear all the suggestions that Synod, including those of the university proctors, wants to put forward and to weigh them.

I think that behind Professor Burrige's following motion is his own unfortunate experience of being rather duffed up by the Revision Committee on the last occasion, and we do not want that to happen again. In that respect therefore, in the hope of moving the debate on, because Synod will have to hear from me again shortly when we come to the formal business, I am simply saying that members should see me as Father Christmas in order to get to the point at which we can do the necessary work to reform or abolish this, depending on the mind

of the Synod. Both in the Revision Committee and on the floor of Synod members will have an opportunity to tell us what they want us to do.

*Revd Thomas Seville (Religious Communities):* I want to support this following motion. I will not repeat many of the arguments that have been presented hitherto, because they are fairly clear. It is not clear to me however that a Revision Committee could adequately cover everything that needs to be covered. There are matters that could not be covered in Revision Committee which need to be heard here.

My main point is about the general background to going for basically one person one vote, which is the background philosophy to most of our thinking about social representation and so forth. It has a great deal to be said for it, but I think that if it is applied too rigorously it would militate against the Church and society hearing everything that God wants to say. In our community, which is modelled on the Rule of Benedict, importance is given to the youngest as much as to the rest of the community put together. The Spirit is understood to speak through the youngest, the most junior member of the community. It does not solve everything, but the way God speaks is not always through one person one vote.

I therefore think there is a particular need for attending to those people who give their lives to the study of God's work and its application. They may get it wrong and, as most members know, however much I respect him and delight in his now bearing the name Ratzinger, often I disagree with Professor Burridge. We need theologians. They cannot possibly get through the electoral system of the neighbouring dioceses. The analogy with the archdeacons does not work. Archdeacons are as public in the diocese as anyone else, and in many ways the House of Clergy will work to their favour because of their high public profile; but that does not work if you are an academic, and if it did I would wonder what the academic was doing spending so much time out of his or her proper area of operation.

I ask Synod to bear in mind the question how we hear God's voice through each other and to allow for good anomalies, well structured and well reformed.

*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.*

*Revd Professor Richard Burridge, in reply:* I am very grateful to Synod for this debate and for all the contributions that have been made to it.

With regard to Mark Ireland's comment on the balance of electors and archdeacons and going through the diocesan system, I am very grateful for Fr Thomas's explanation of why the analogy with archdeacons does not work. In addition I would point out that we are prolocutors, which comes from the Latin *proloquor* – to speak on behalf of, to prolocute. As the Bishop of Southwark made very clear – and I am very grateful for all the opportunities to work in Southwark – if I were to enter the diocesan clergy system and asked to do the task of bringing university theology, I would not be prolocuting on behalf of the Southwark clergy; and it is not just about me personally but also the Oxford clergy. That is why the analogy does not work and why we need to have that.

I am grateful to Simon Butler for his explanation that the Steering Committee is in listening mode and asking members to tell the Committee what they want to do.

I want to be clear about the difference that passing my motion would make and what would happen if it were not passed. If it were not passed we would be in exactly the same situation as in 2004, when the Synod made it very clear that it wanted Christmas for the turkeys, wanted reform and wanted university representation here but the Committee decided that it did not want that and did not bring it to Synod. Therefore, I was faced with the prospect only of saying, 'Save us and leave us unreformed', and I do not want to have to do that again.

We are therefore asking the Revision Committee to bring forth proposals for reform or abolition. They may even support the reform, but at least members will have a chance to make the decision on the floor of Synod. We want to work closely with the Committee. I urge Synod to vote for my motion in order to give us a strong mandate to be able to do that so that we can all serve the Synod and the Kingdom of God in the way that we wish.

*The motion was put and carried.*

*The Chair:* That concludes this item of business.

THE CHAIR *Mr Aiden Hargreaves-Smith (London)* took the Chair at 11.20 a.m.

## **Legislative Business**

### **Draft Amending Canon No. 32 (GS 1902)**

#### **Draft Amending Canon for First Consideration**

*The Chair:* Members may also wish to refer to the explanatory memorandum GS 1902-1905X.

Having had an opportunity to debate the general principles of the recommendations contained in the first Report of the Business Committee, I hope that Synod will address the more specific issues that arise on the individual draft Instruments and the proposals to which they give effect rather than rehearse the same arguments of principle that have already been canvassed. We are a little tight for time and I hope that members will exercise a degree of self-restraint in not repeating points already made earlier.

I should also draw members' attention to the financial statement contained in the seventh notice paper.

*Revd Canon Simon Butler (Southwark):* I beg to move:

'That the Canon entitled "Amending Canon No. 32" be considered for revision in committee.'

Synod will be glad to know that I intend to say all I want to by way of introduction in my speech on Item 501 and then move the subsequent items formally. In fact at one level there is little I need to say, because the draft legislation today simply gives effect to the recommendations in the first Report of the Business Committee of the work of the Elections Review Group, which we have just spent a good deal of time debating, and I hope therefore we can now move briskly to vote on the motions dealing with the draft Amending Canon and the draft Instruments.



It is important that at the outset members are absolutely clear about what they are invited to vote on today. This is not the moment definitely to be saying ‘yes’ or ‘no’ to one or other of the proposals. The draft Amending Canon and the draft Instruments have to go through the same lengthy revision process, so there will be plenty of time for amendments to be made in Revision Committee and then in full Synod before final approval. Of course, in the case of one of the group’s recommendations, the removal of the weighting between the provinces, the draft legislation contains a provision to that effect, not because the group or the Business Committee is persuaded that it is the right course of action but because it wishes the Synod to have an opportunity to decide the matter, and that needs to be done through the legislative process. Therefore, if members do not like particular provisions, I invite them not to vote against the motions today but to vote in favour of them and then write in, in the way set out in the agenda, arguing for deletion or amendment of the particular provisions that they do not support, and against that background I shall now briefly explain the purpose of the draft Amending Canon and the draft Instruments.

First, paragraph 1 of draft Amending Canon No. 32 makes a number of amendments relating to the arrangements for elections to the Lower Houses of the Convocations. They include the removal of the fixed maxima for the number of seats to be allocated to the two provinces and a new overall limit on the total number of proctors who can be directly or specially elected in both provinces of 195. That figure represents the current totals of directly and specially elected proctors in the two individual provinces – 136 for Canterbury and 59 for York. The overall effect of these changes will be that the number of proctors to be elected in the Convocations by all the dioceses, including Europe but excluding Sodor and Man, will be determined solely by reference to the number of electors within each diocese, subject to an overall maximum of the directly and specially elected proctors of 195.

Second, paragraph 1(6) removes the provision for electoral areas comprising universities, thus ending the universities constituencies altogether, and other provisions in that paragraph make amendments that are consequential on that. Of course, the vote that Synod has just taken invites us to do some extra work as well, which we shall do.

Paragraph 2 of the draft Amending Canon increases the number of bishops to be elected to the Upper House of the Convocation of Canterbury from four to five.

Paragraph 3 provides for the changes made by the Canon not to affect the composition of the membership of the current Convocations, so that the new arrangements will come into effect only on elections to the new Synod in 2015, any casual vacancies before then being filled in accordance with the current arrangements.

I again emphasize the importance of not voting against at this stage, because that would stop the whole process in its tracks and we would not be able to do any further work. Despite the points made by the Prolocutor and the Archbishop, I urge members not vote against at this stage but simply to proceed to enable matters to be revised in accordance with Synod’s wishes.

I can say less about the draft Convocations (Elections to Upper House) (Amendment) Resolution (GS 1903). The detailed provision for the election of suffragan bishops to the Upper Houses of Convocation is contained in the Convocations (Elections to Upper House) Rules – no doubt bedtime reading in the House of Bishops. This resolution amends them consequentially to reflect the fact that the Amending Canon No. 32 will increase the number

of bishops to be elected to the Upper House of the Convocation of Canterbury. Additionally, paragraph 2 makes fuller provision for the nominations process in elections to the Upper Houses of both Convocations, including by allowing nominations to be submitted to the presiding officer by fax, if anyone still has one, as is already the case in elections to the Lower Houses of the Convocations and the House of Laity.

The draft Clergy Representation (Amendment) Resolution (GS 1904) will in a similar way amend the detailed provision made in the Clergy Representation Rules for the elections to the Lower Houses of the Convocations of Canterbury and York to reflect the changes to be made by amending Canon No. 32 in relation to the universities constituencies. However it will also make a few other changes to the processes for proctorial elections, including by allowing an elector to ask for his or her voting paper to be sent to an address other than that recorded in the register of clerical electors, making it clear that candidates are required to indicate whether they have served previously as a member of the Convocation and requiring a presiding officer to ensure that before voting papers are issued copies of the candidates' election addresses are posted on the diocesan website together with a list of all the candidates.

That brings me finally to the draft Church Representation Rules (Amendment) Resolution (GS 1905), about which I need to say a little more. The resolution amends the provisions of the Church Representation Rules, and the three most important changes reflect, in relation to the House of Laity, the changes proposed with regard to the Lower Houses of the Convocations.

Paragraph 2 removes the fixed maxima for the number of seats in the House of Laity to be allocated to the two provinces and limits the total number of directly and specially elected members of the House of Laity to 195.

Paragraph 3 removes the current limitation to two on the number of members of the House of Laity to be elected from the diocese in Europe.

Paragraph 4 removes the requirement that the number of members to be elected to the House of Laity from the dioceses of the Provinces of Canterbury and York must be in the proportion 70:30, thus removing the current weighting in the allocation of seats in favour of the Province of York, which we can discuss in revision.

The overall effect of those changes will be that the number of members to be elected to the House of Laity by all the dioceses, other than Sodor and Man, will be determined under Rule 36(2) solely by reference to the number of names on the rolls of the parishes within dioceses, subject to an overall maximum of the directly and specially elected members of 195.

There are a number of provisions in paragraphs 5–7, which amend the Church Representation Rules in ways corresponding to the changes made to the Clergy Representation Rules that I have just described.

Finally, paragraphs 9–13 make a number of miscellaneous technical and probably non-contentious changes to some of the forms and notices contained in the appendices to the Rules, including making it explicit that only laypersons are entitled to be entered on the church electoral roll.

Members of Synod, I hope that that brief summary of the draft legislation will make clear the effect of the Instruments. I look forward to a good, hopefully brief or maybe even non-existent, debate and trust that Synod will agree to send the draft Amending Canon and the draft Instruments to a Revision Committee so that the issues that arise and have been outlined this morning through our various debates can be pursued by them.

*The Chair:* I remind members that under SO 51(b) speeches must be directed to the general purport of the Canon and Instruments rather than to points of detail.

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

*The Bishop of Willesden (Rt Revd Pete Broadbent):* I had not thought the issue about the representation of suffragan bishops was contentious until the ‘ecky-thump’ factor was brought to bear earlier in the debate.

I want to make it clear to Synod that the representation of suffragan bishops is not a question of north v south but of a lack of representation. Members of Synod will know that paragraph 21 of GS 1901 outlines why we are suggesting, and on the advice of the Elections Review Group the Business Committee has accepted, that the number of southern suffragans be increased. Actually that is quite important, because quite recently we were not exactly decimated but had our numbers reduced significantly from six to four representatives. Suffragan bishops bring a different kind of edge to Synod and I and my three southern colleagues would say that there are a couple of underlying factors why Synod needs to make sure that it does not reduce the number of suffragans or leave the number reduced at the level at which it stands. There is an on-going debate in the College of Bishops that suffragans get a pretty raw deal. A bishop is a bishop is a bishop, yet the majority of the voices heard in Synod are from diocesans. A large number of either area or suffragan bishops carry out very varied tasks for the Church of England and have quite an interesting take on life as bishops, and that voice is not always heard, although we try hard.

The second and slightly more important point made in the report is that where there are only very few of us the minority voices tend to be drowned out, and at the moment in the southern suffragan constituency certainly the views of all four of us are known to be in favour of the ordination of women and yet some suffragan bishops take the contrary view, so minority views become squeezed.

Therefore, I would like to suggest that despite the blandishments of the Archbishop of York, Synod needs to recognize that it is not a question of which constituency is increased but the fact that we are under-represented following the previous reform, and I hope that when we reach the revision stage there will be some clarity about the fact that we are talking of an increase in the number of suffragans because their voices need to be heard in this Synod and at the moment there is a minority that needs to be increased.

*Revd Paul Ayers (Bradford)* – still! I do not know whether members can tell simply from my opening my mouth that I am from ‘up north’. I tell people back at home in Pudsey that when I come here I have to modify my accent because quite a lot of people from the south cannot understand, and they are amazed because they already think I talk posh!

I love southerners. Some of my best friends are southerners – my wife indeed – but sometimes we feel that the southern Church does not always understand us very well, not just

because of our accents but because in many ways in which life in the north is very different. For example economic and social issues and inter-faith issues can be very different from those in London, and in some parts of the north the issues of mission and evangelism and some of the challenges that we face are particularly tough.

I think that the new bishop of West Yorkshire and the Dales will speak with an even more powerful voice in Synod when the new diocese is in place, but I want to encourage members to respond to Simon Butler's invitation to write in and ask them to look again at the question of representation in the north. They need not be lengthy letters; all that is needed is, 'I agree with Cherry.'

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

*Mr Tom Sutcliffe (Southwark)*: I want to say a word about the process. In recent years, especially since 20 November last, we have been very concerned about the means whereby we reach the point at which we make either a final or even an interim judgement.

We are told, 'It is fine to vote for this because actually it will go to the Revision Committee and then we can sort out all the things that we got wrong, which we should not have brought to Synod in the first place or which we realize now were not quite done properly', but the point is that if we vote against this now the Revision Committee would go back and produce a better version of this draft Amending Canon for first consideration. Otherwise why are we discussing this at all? What is the point of having this debate now? Why have I been given three minutes even, rather than just one?

I want to make it clear that if we think the group has made something of a pig's ear of it we ought to vote against this motion so that they can go back, think again about it and return with it at a later time. Such delays can be useful in enabling the production of something better, something that really does the job. I therefore urge members not to be persuaded to vote for something that they think is going in the wrong direction. It is really important not to do that. We need to start on the right foot – better foot forward.

*Revd Hugh Lee (Oxford)*: Earlier Judith Maltby wondered what the lay chair of the Oxford Deanery would think of the proposals. I speak as the husband of that lay chair but would not dare speak on behalf of her! Speaking on my own behalf, the Oxford Deanery already has some 80 clergy members. I think it is one of the largest deaneries in the country, and to add another 50 would make it extraordinary indeed. I oppose the idea of the universities being abolished and the University of Oxford becoming part of the Oxford Deanery.

I think there is something of a smokescreen in the report about the difficulty of identifying the electors in the university. I fully appreciate that under the present legislation it is extremely difficult, given the enormous amount of work done by the central secretariat, but in most elections, such as the parliamentary elections with which we are all familiar, we self-register. If you want to vote you have to register. Why should the secretariat find out who the voters are? Why should not the voters, those who are entitled to vote, register? As I understand it, that would solve their problem at a stroke.

I leave Synod with those two thoughts.

*Revd Stephen Trott (Peterborough):* I would like to draw to the Committee's attention for its consideration one area that is not included directly here. We are talking about representation, which is important in any body that claims a degree of democratic legitimacy. I have done a count and have discovered that already there are no fewer than 13 *ex officio* members of the Houses of Laity and Clergy, with one more to be added with the chair of the Dioceses Commission. None of them is elected but they have voices and votes in Synod, and I wonder whether consideration could be given to the possibility of those *ex officio* members being given a voice but perhaps not a vote so as to remedy the democratic deficit involved in being unelected members of Synod. I put that forward simply as a matter for the Committee's consideration.

*A member:* On a point of order, Chair. I beg to move:

‘That the question be now put.’

*This motion was put and carried.*

*Revd Canon Simon Butler, in reply:* Thank you to the Bishop of Willesden. I think this will be the last time it is said from the platform – I agree with Pete! His views represent those of the Elections Review Group and the Business Committee and explain why the draft legislation contains proposals for suffragans.

Thank you to Paul Ayers for raising the north/south issue. I urge members to submit in writing any points that they may wish to make about that.

Tom Sutcliffe suggested that Synod should vote against on the ground that the Elections Review Group might have made a dog's breakfast of it. We do not agree that that is the case. One specific issue about consultation was raised and dealt with in the debate on Professor Burridge's following motion, but I believe that on the whole we have done the work. The Business Committee is elected by the Synod to take responsibility for this and that has been done. The proposals have been commended to us and we now offer them to Synod. For example the Business Committee is not of a common mind about the north/south divide. Therefore in revision and through this process we want to offer Synod an opportunity to do the work on it and tell us what it would like us to do.

Hugh Lee made a good point and I urge him to write in with it, and similarly we would be delighted to hear from Fr Trott.

I urge Synod to vote for the motion at Item 501.

*The motion was put and carried.*

*The Chair:* The draft Amending Canon is now automatically committed to a Revision Committee. As stated on page 12 of the agenda, any member who wishes to submit proposals for its amendment should send in writing to the Clerk to the Synod to reach her no later than 5.30 p.m. on Friday 9 August.

**Draft Convocations (Elections to Upper House) (Amendment) Resolution (GS 1903)**

**Draft Instrument for First Consideration**

*Revd Canon Simon Butler (Southwark):* I beg to move:

‘That the resolution entitled “Convocations (Elections to Upper House) (Amendment) Resolution 201–” be considered for revision in committee.’

*The motion was put and carried.*

*The Chair:* The draft resolution is now automatically committed to a Revision Committee. 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 p.m. on 9 August.

**Draft Clergy Representation (Amendment) Resolution (GS 1904)**

**Draft Instrument for First Consideration**

*Revd Canon Simon Butler (Southwark):* I beg to move:

‘That the resolution entitled “Clergy Representation (Amendment) Resolution 201–” be considered for revision in committee.’

*This motion was put and carried.*

*The Chair:* The draft resolution is now automatically committed to a Revision Committee. 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 p.m. on 9 August.

**Draft Church Representation Rules (Amendment) Resolution (GS 1905)**

**Draft Instrument for First Consideration**

*Revd Canon Simon Butler (Southwark):* I beg to move:

‘That the resolution entitled “Church Representation Rules (Amendment) Resolution 201–” be considered for revision in committee.’

*Mr David Ashton (Wakefield):* In our diocese I voted that we move forward to a single diocese. However at that time we did not know what was planned or what was likely to happen, but I think I have identified one issue now.

On page 5 of the report GS 1901 reference is made to the northern representation of 59. At the moment we are three dioceses. The Bradford electoral roll of 11,000 has three representatives, the Leeds electoral roll of 16,000 has three, and the Wakefield electoral roll of 19,000 has four, making 10 representations in the House of Laity from the northern province. By the time this election takes place we will be one diocese, which will give us 47,000. The nearest comparison I can find on the list on page 5 is Chelmsford with an electoral roll of 46,000 and seven representatives, which means that at the next elections the northern province actually will lose three representatives from the House of Laity. We were not aware of the matters that are now beginning to emerge, and to vote for these Church

Representation Rules would mean that the information contained on page 5 of GS 1901 will be incorrect.

*Mr Clive Scowen (London):* To respond to the point that has just been made, as I understand it there will continue to be 59 seats in the northern province and they will simply be re-divided according to the respective sizes of the new dioceses. I do not know how many seats will be allocated to the new diocese of West Yorkshire and the Dales but the total number in the north will remain at 59. There will be no loss of lay seats as a result of the reorganization.

*Revd Canon Simon Butler, in reply:* I agree with Clive!

*The motion was put and carried.*

*The Chair:* The draft resolution is now automatically committed to a Revision Committee. 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 p.m. on 9 August.

That concludes this item of business.

THE CHAIR *The Bishop of Willesden (Rt Revd Pete Broadbent)* took the Chair at 11.50 a.m.

### **The Work of the Elections Review Group Electorate for the House of Laity and Online Elections Second Report by the Business Committee (GS 1906)**

*The Chair:* I am conscious that this item of business is quite a controversial issue and will no doubt result in much debate. It is slightly unsatisfactory that we have only about 40 minutes available. I therefore suggest that we begin the debate, which, unless the chair of the Business Committee has other ideas, is likely to be adjourned and resumed at a later date. The issues require quite a lot of discussion and many members have indicated that they wish to speak. We will therefore take the debate as far as we can but I imagine that it will then be adjourned and brought back by the Business Committee at a future group of sessions.

*The Archdeacon of Dorking (Ven. Julian Henderson):* I beg to move:

‘That this Synod request legislative proposals to be brought forward to:

- (a) establish an electoral college for elections by the laity to the General Synod and diocesan synods;
- (b) make provision by 2020 for elections to the General Synod to be undertaken online; and
- (c) make provision by 2015 for nominations for elections to the General Synod to be undertaken by email.’

Our final piece of formal business at this group of sessions does not immediately enthrall the heart or excite the mind of most members of Synod, but it is extremely significant and calls for a separate debate from that which we had this morning because it has a number of important consequences for the future membership of diocesan synods and this General Synod. Five years ago Michael Wills in the Ministry of Justice said of our national electoral

system, ‘Our constitutional arrangements have never been fixed nor should they be. A strength of the British constitution is that it evolves to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of our democracy.’

Based on paragraph 38 (not paragraph 33 as stated in paragraph 6 of GS 1906) of GS 1901 and paragraphs 1–27 of GS 1906, the Business Committee has come to the view that our electoral system for the House of Laity needs to evolve so that it meets today’s needs, not those of 1970 over 40 years ago, when the current system was introduced. As members will have read, the arguments are finely and carefully balanced, which led to lively debate in the Business Committee on more than one occasion. Our judgement call at the end of the day is expressed in the motion at Item 30 standing in my name. However, this debate is designed to consult with Synod and then move towards a decision on the way forward. The opportunity for and subsequent tabling of an amendment or amendments allows for a variety of possible outcomes.

We are dealing with two separate but connected issues, which require a decision if time allows. The first is the composition of the electorate for the House of Laity. There are three options on the table. The narrowest base is offered by the current system whereby members of deanery synods would elect diocesan and General Synod members. The widest base is offered by the universal suffrage option whereby all electoral roll members would elect diocesan and General Synod members. The mean between the two is the electoral college option whereby annual parochial church meetings would elect a group of people with the specific purpose of electing diocesan and General Synod members. Though the latter option requires a new body to be created, the Business Committee concluded that it was the best of the three, and therefore the motion asks for legislative proposals to be brought forward to enable it to happen.

At one level it is not controversial but at another it is a shift in the way the Church of England has become used to operating. If it were to be introduced the effects would be felt at the grass roots. It would add a new dimension to annual parochial church meetings, and most importantly would enable key local lay leaders to participate in elections for diocesan and General Synod members in a way not currently possible and without adding hugely to their already demanding workload. The majority of us concluded that it was fundamentally unsatisfactory to choose a group of people for three years for one purpose, that of serving on a deanery synod, and then to give each of them quite a different task, namely choosing diocesan and General Synod members. The net effect is to distance the General Synod and the diocesan synod from many of the key leaders in parishes who cannot make a commitment to serve for three years on the deanery synod.

The second issue is the provision for elections to be conducted online. This moves the debate wider than the House of Laity to the full Synod and elections to both the Houses of Clergy and Laity, but narrower in that it relates only to elections to the General Synod. The most important sentence on this in paragraph 20 of GS 1906 is the assurance that it is perfectly possible technically for the whole electoral process from nomination to voting to be undertaken securely online. As with a number of things in our modern age, we may not understand the detail of how that will be done and we will need to leave it to the experts to implement it for us. The real question before us this morning is not whether it is possible but whether it is desirable and helpful. With the advantages of technology and the growing accessibility of more and more people to the internet it makes sense to work towards a system that keeps pace with these developments. We could argue that it is essential both logistically



and financially to move away from the current system. Even if we retain the deanery electorate, we should move to an online system.

For such a change to work well there needs to be thorough preparation and the motion therefore proposes a staggered introduction with nominations possible by 2015 and voting by 2020. Some may argue that this is too cautious an approach, but the amount of planning required calls for a steady pace. Obviously there will need to be provision for those for whom access to the internet is not possible, but we imagine that by 2015 the majority of those standing to serve on Synod will be using email as one of their means of communication. The Business Committee believes that the current system for electing the House of Laity at both diocesan and General Synod levels, and for conducting General Synod elections, should evolve to one that is more appropriate for today and for the future.

I commend the motion to Synod.

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

*Mr Bill Seddon (St Albans):* I am very happy to support the call for a greater use of electronic means to assist the election process whether in relation to nominations, publishing election addresses or voting. I also have considerable sympathy with a proposal to amend the voting system, the low turnout for which brings into question whether the General Synod that it produces has a strong mandate from the Church. However I am less sure that the alternatives we have before us will alone solve the problem.

I would like to relate two stories from my own experience. About 30 years ago I first served on a deanery synod. At no stage beforehand did anyone tell me that membership made me one of the General Synod electorate, and I passed my three-year term in blissful ignorance. Fast forwarding to last November, following the vote on women bishops I received an email from one of our local church's lay leaders. She was precisely the type of person described in paragraph 9 of GS 1906 but had no idea about the governance of the Church of England outside the local parish.

My fear is that changing the electoral system will do little to improve the situation unless much more is done to educate and inform local church members. I suspect that even the current system would produce a far more robust result if Church House could assist with a form of words that could be used by parishes to inform members of what is expected of their deanery synod members – the provision of a short, attractive download document describing deanery synod responsibilities for potential candidates and guidance on best practice in relation to deanery synod elections. Perhaps at APCMs deanery synod candidates could provide information about themselves and how they intend to discharge the responsibilities attached to the role.

The level of interest in how the Church of England is run at diocesan and national level is limited. However it is clear that something needs to be done to ensure that a greater proportion of our members are in a position to feel that they can own the decisions that we make in their name. Perhaps a change in the electorate is needed, and it is difficult to argue against a greater degree of democracy, but alone I do not think this would be sufficient. Whether we stick to our current approach or move to an alternative, only if much greater effort is put into explaining to our members what church governance is all about will the Church get the General Synod that it needs.

*Mrs Pam Bishop (Southwell and Nottingham)* – and the diocesan lay chair of Southwell and Nottingham. The message that I want to leave at the beginning and at the end is that we diocesan lay chairs would really welcome being consulted on these particular issues. A very active conference of diocesan lay chairs meets and communicates regularly and it would have a real voice in this matter.

I want to echo what the previous speaker said. To engage and communicate with and establish a community of laypeople is very difficult. It is a real challenge, involving governance at all levels. I believe that even here in General Synod much could be done to communicate with us as a group, to network better with us and explain the structures of how things work, and I would encourage that too. I am very sympathetic to the problem. It would seem that deanery synods are not the right answer. However the solution has been to look for structure and system rather than, as alluded to by the previous speaker, to look at whatever structural system we have work. It is the process that matters and we need to pay attention to that. I am therefore not particularly sympathetic to deanery synods, although I want to elucidate some issues there, and I would not go for the electoral college route either. I think that if we are to be radical universal suffrage is probably the way to go.

However let us look at deanery synods. In some dioceses deanery synods work. If they are given responsibilities and jobs to do, their leadership and work will be taken seriously and people will want to be there, because that is where decisions are made. In my diocese decisions are made in the deanery synod and then the archdeacons and bishops work with us to elucidate the final solutions. It is a captive audience. The group meets regularly, there is an agenda, which includes GS and diocesan synod reports, and members are required not only to be there but to interact in the discussion that follows. At deanery synod level there is a potential for people to have an overview about how the Church works, so the agenda items emanating from the diocesan synod and General Synod are shared and there is an expectation that they be cascaded down to parishes. Our deanery handbook contains a requirement for that cascading model and that deanery synod representatives are part of the ladder of governance and communication through the Church. We are trying to make the process work.

Of course, the use of deaneries also offers a potential to network this very difficult group of laity. We are very disparate, very diverse, and if we are not careful we find that we do not meet easily other than in our own churches, but the deanery synod provides at least a means of networking through which we are enabled to understand who everyone is.

My conclusion therefore is that deanery synods are a system. Whatever system we use, my preference would probably be for universal suffrage in the longer term, but we have to make the systems work and effort needs to be put into thinking through the process of how they work and thinking about it from the perspective of those laity. In that regard we should not forget the role of diocesan lay chairs, and I would urge that we be consulted about the laity, their role and their representations within the Church of England.

*The Chair:* I invite Mr French to speak to but not move his amendments at Items 50–52.

*Mr Philip French (Rochester):* The problem is clear enough. As the Bridge Commission said, poor communications have led to a gulf between General Synod and the parishes. How much more true is that now? The débâcle of November demonstrated a Synod, particularly a House of Laity, out of touch with its electorate and with the nation as a whole. The solution though is more debatable. The main motion contains proposals for reform that will strengthen

the legitimacy and connectiveness of the House of Laity. I certainly support them, but they are not radical, urgent or sufficiently transparent – hence my separate but related amendments, which cover much the same ground as the Private Member’s Motion in my name.

My amendment at Item 50 concerns proper representation – universal suffrage. It seems odd to describe this system as radical, but that is the Church of England for you! Universal suffrage would be transformative and would connect each parish to the General Synod. It should help to encourage younger candidates not already steeped, or perhaps mired, in the lower tiers of synodical government. It might lead to better representation of a broad, outward-looking national Church rather than a self-absorbed sect or a Synod composed of competing factions. Any form of indirect election, whether via deanery synods or electoral colleges, loses the immediacy and accountability of universal suffrage.

Turning to my amendment at Item 51, there is a pitiful lack of urgency in the proposal to do nothing significant until 2020, or maybe 2018 for diocesan synods. What is wrong with 2015? The composition of the House of Laity then might just be important. Even from now we have two full years for planning and implementation. Given my professional background, I do not underestimate business change and technology projects, but in any other organization two years is a long time. To put off change for seven years would send a very strange message to the Church and the country.

With regard to my amendment at Item 52, we need to be more transparent, open and accountable. A good start would be to have election addresses published online in a standard format. For clarity, this goes beyond the provision in the draft amendment to the Church Representation Rules about which we have just spoken. That would just require some sort of election address somehow to be posted on a diocesan website. Those vary widely in their accessibility and usability. There should be a common though not overly-rigid format, inviting comment on key issues, encouraging new candidates to think through issues and present themselves effectively and allowing voters from across the diocese to come to a well-informed judgement. This would eliminate both those that are deliberately misleading and the hopelessly vague.

For all their faults, in the recent Police and Crime Commissioners elections there was a very good example of that being done online. This innovation is crucial to voter engagement. It is doubly important given the widespread failure of hustings. Like the previous speaker, I am a lay chair and recent correspondence throughout the network has shown that pretty well across the country our current hustings system is unsustainable. The system established could also provide a basis for reporting back in a more direct way than do the current deanery synod reports.

I shall try to anticipate three possible objections. The first is digital exclusion. Online voting does not need a high bandwidth service, but the electorate would certainly include elderly people with limited access or inclination to use online systems. We would need a so-called assisted digital service for perhaps 15 or 20 per cent. That is the detail, but I would urge members to look at the Government’s digital service website for some good thinking on how to go about these things.

The second is concerns about cost and scale. The figure 1.2 million sounds scary but the National Trust, of which many here in Synod are members, has three times that number and

somehow manages to run its annual council elections. Actually it is 40-odd elections x 25,000 or so people. It is entirely within the scope of current online Cloud-based systems. We should of course take expert advice both on the IT and the electoral mechanics.

The third is about risk of manipulation. Laypeople are not as dumb as some may want to think. I trust that the clergy would be given clear guidance not to interfere. We seem to manage the annual meeting of parishioners that appoints churchwardens and is at least as open to potential abuse.

As Winston Churchill said, democracy is the worst form of government ever invented apart from all the others that have been tried from time to time. Let us not take half measures.

*Mr Tim Hind (Bath and Wells):* It is 20 years since, in the aftermath of sorting out the legislation on women priests, Lord Bridge was commissioned to look at, among other matters, electoral issues for the General Synod – *plus ça change!* – and I really do want to know what has changed. In my opinion, what has not changed significantly is that we know what the real problem is. Some have said that the electoral system has been in place for a long time and therefore needs to be looked at. That is fine.

There are good suggestions that as a House we are unrepresentative and that the root cause is the electoral process. I agree that we are unrepresentative – we showed in November that we were out of step with the way that the diocesan synod members voted on women bishops – but as Sir Alex Ferguson would say, ‘One bad game doesn’t make a bad team.’ I therefore want to get to grips with the root cause of why Synod is perceived as unrepresentative and look for a solution to it, and my analysis shows that the root cause is not specifically the electoral system but rather its implementation. It matters not whether we use the current system, an electoral college or universal suffrage if when the time comes to exercise the vote the electors are unable or unwilling to engage with the issues and the candidates.

Primarily the task of the electors will be to ensure that they can elect people whom they genuinely feel will, as much as possible, represent their views on a wide range of issues. This will involve the electors having access to literature that transparently and honestly describes the candidates. Secondly, it will require electors to be well informed and fully up to date with all the major issues of the day so far as the Church is concerned so that they can have an informed view of what subjects the candidates ought to be addressing. They will then be capable of matching candidate issues and their own views on things that matter to them and vote accordingly. Therefore engagement, not just having a system, is crucial, and one issue that worries me about universal suffrage is the actual engagement with candidates when the college is so wide. Universal suffrage, as was said, was once described as the one way to ensure that no one had a say.

A parish-based electoral college would probably lead to a decline in the need for a deanery synod, prompting the electoral college to meet from time to time to help it better understand the issues. If looks like a deanery synod and talks like a deanery synod, it probably is a deanery synod. I am not saying that we should not explore this if it will lead to something better. However I do not think that the root cause has necessarily been thought through and therefore much more work is needed to address it. Many deaneries work well, and in my experience it is noticeable that they work well when there is proactive encouragement from the clergy to people to stand for election to the deanery synods.

I would recommend that when we come to the 2015 elections, if we still have a deanery synod as the electoral college, we should hold archdeaconry hustings meetings, at which there would be an opportunity to hear something about each of the issues and all deanery synod members from that archdeaconry would be invited to meet the candidates and question them.

It took a few years for the Bridge report (GS 1252) to be published because the report *Working as One Body* took centre stage and pushed it out of the way. On the day of its publication the deanery synod preservation society was formed and has flourished ever since. Some members will know that I am not a great lover of preservation societies, particularly the society for the prevention of alteration to buildings, but I think that perhaps this one needs to be nurtured for a little longer.

*The Archdeacon of Lewisham (Ven. Christine Hardman):* I speak in this debate not as chair of the House of Clergy but as an officer of the Synod with a duty of care for its life, the quality of its life and its effectiveness. I am pleased that we shall come back to this issue, one of the most important that we face, which we need to face with all due seriousness.

I am convinced that none of the three options being considered at the moment is quite fit for purpose. I do not think many people feel that we are content with the present system of the electorate for the House of Laity. In addition, there are issues with universal suffrage, attractive though it is, because, as most of us know, in many churches active church membership and membership of the electoral roll are by no means shared activities, and that therefore creates a difficulty. The idea of the annual parochial church meeting electing a special group of people for this purpose is also attractive. However, decisions taken at annual parochial church meetings – I do not know how many other members of Synod have attended them but I have been to a few – vary according to the knowledge of the people who attend and often consist of a small group that does not represent the entire electoral roll.

At an early stage the option concerning elected lay members of the parochial church council was rejected by the group, and I can understand why. I would urge the group to look again at that but expand it slightly. The Church of England has at its heart co-operation and collaboration between the incumbent and the parochial church council; that is who we are and how we are. I therefore ask the group to consider the possibility of including not only the elected lay members but all lay members of the PCC, which crucially would include churchwardens; and any archdeacon will confirm that churchwardens are the treasure of the Church of England.

All lay members of the PCC would include elected members, *ex officio* members, some Readers for example, and crucially churchwardens, and that would root that electorate in a body of people who have accountability and responsibility and who in their lives give Christian service and ministry to the Church of England. They deserve the right to vote. In addition usually, though not invariably, the clergy members of a parochial church council are voters in the House of Clergy elections, and that would also root our voting for the General Synod in the parochial church councils of the Church of England. If members feel that there is any merit in this suggestion, I urge them to let the group know so that perhaps it can be looked at again.

*Mrs Debrah McIsaac (Salisbury)*: I will start with what has become a famous, or infamous, line: I agree with Christine! I agree with what she said about the importance of churchwardens and I support her suggestion that the group look again at that matter.

I stand to speak in opposition to the amendment at Item 50. I think that the electoral roll would be expensive to put together. I do not know the state of other members' electoral rolls but ours comprises a pretty questionable list of people, some of whom I think died generations ago! It would raise all sorts of uncertainty, it is much too ambitious at the stage we are now at, it is an over-reaction and it would be too costly in terms of both time and money for the diocese and the local church. I would like to be famous for something very odd. I would like to be famous for reducing the administrative burden on local churches and the idea of them having to put together the forms, returns and reports that would be necessary to construct a reliable electoral roll. I know that it is supposed to be reliable but, let's admit it, it is not; it is mind boggling. I also think that it would be much too costly in terms of the reputation of the Church.

I wonder whether members know what percentage numbers showed up in their respective areas for the election of the Police and Crime Commissioner and whether they think we would have an equal turnout from our electoral rolls. It is a little like taking a position before examining the arguments. I do not think we would have an informed electorate, at least not without a great deal of preliminary work. I agree with the earlier speaker who said that other steps need to be taken. We need to take those steps, educate an electorate and then open it up fully, but in the meantime an electoral college consisting of those who can be bothered to show up at the APCM would be the right one. It would also increase the health of the local church and would provide a good reason for those on the electoral roll to bother to show up.

*Mr Adrian Greenwood (Southwark)* – and lay chair of Bermondsey Deanery, lay chair of the Southwark diocesan synod and convenor of all the diocesan lay chairs in England, the group that has already been mentioned.

I realize that it may be a little late in the day now, but of course the amendment at Item 30 refers to two distinct, separate issues. In relation to paragraph (a) concerning the establishment of an electoral college for elections by the laity, clearly there is a range of opinions which require lengthier debate. However I suspect that there is much stronger support for paragraphs (b) and (c) relating to online elections, and I therefore wonder, Chair, whether you might find your way to allowing the Synod to deal with those two items today.

I have a number of observations on the debate so far. One of the charges given to my wonderful new diocesan bishop on his consecration was to breathe new life into the deaneries of Southwark, and he has entrusted me as chair of what is called his deaneries group partially to implement that task. In that role we have discerned, though it is fairly blindingly obvious, that next year's elections will be quite crucial. To that end we have produced a leaflet, which we will distribute to all the key people in the Southwark diocese, setting out the qualities and attributes that we think are required for effective lay deanery synod representation. I commend that document to members and urge them to look at it when it becomes available on our website.

In the diocese of Southwark we also have a link with the diocese of Bergen in the Church of Norway and we note that they have effectively abolished the parish as the base of mission

and ministry and have established the deanery, and I think that pattern will gradually develop; I am aware of a number of dioceses in which it is already the case.

I learn about these matters from a wonderful conference that takes place every two years, organized by the Church House Deaneries Group. The next one is due to take place during the first weekend of October 2014 and I would encourage members to go along to it. One of the things I learnt from the first conference that I attended was that when it comes to the election of deanery synod representatives – and I remind the Synod that of course they are elected by the APCM – the first thing to do is elect the best people; it should not be a consolation prize.

I turn to the issue of universal suffrage as it is described. From my limited experience across the Church of England I am aware that the practice varies massively from one electoral roll officer to another. I am aware of one large parish church in the diocese of Southwark whose electoral roll according to the complete revision that has just passed would be reduced from 730 to 430. That would mean that 300 voters were no longer involved, so there are real issues about how qualification for membership of the electoral roll is defined, which will need to be considered if we are to go down that route.

I agree very much with Tim Hind and Pam Bishop that whatever process we come up with will not be a panacea. It is about engaging congregations and PCCs with the issues.

I also agree with Archdeacon Christine, my good friend and fellow marathon runner. I am mystified as to why PCCs were dismissed as the body for doing that, and I would urge that that be looked at again.

However if ultimately we are to make progress on this front, there is a real case for reimagining the way we do synodical government, and the diocesan lay chairs are willing to look at that and would be happy to work with others in doing so. Whoever the electorate is, we have to recognize that in the way we do our business we have certain expectations and make certain demands on who is prepared to stand to be elected. We therefore have to look at the whole thing, not just one part of it.

*The Chair:* As we have timed business at 12.30 I propose that this debate be adjourned. It will be brought back by the Business Committee in due course. We have had a canter through the issues.

I would quite like to ask the Chair of the Business Committee to respond very briefly to the debate, but I need the general consent of Synod to do that. Do I have that general consent?  
(Agreed)

*The Archdeacon of Dorking,* in reply: Given the way we started the morning with that very moving and faith-filled report on the situation in Egypt, it seems rather uncomfortable to have spent the rest of the morning conducting this rather internal and inward-looking business.

As has been made very clear, the makeup of this Synod and how it is elected has very significant consequences for our decision making when we meet together and also for our on-going mission and ministry all around the country between those times. In addition, as has become very clear from the number of people who stood to speak, there are a number of very

complex issues surrounding this matter and obviously it is important that more time is given to it.

At this stage I say simply that I agree that there is a need for greater education across the board about how the Church of England operates and about its structures and voting systems. There is also a continuing need for consultation, not least with diocesan lay chairs and churchwardens; we have heard that call. We have also heard the call for a need to try to make deanery synods work, and where they are not working well to put energy into trying to make them work well.

I suppose the biggest need is for us to return to this at a future group of sessions. If and when the Business Committee chooses to bring it back, another chair will have the opportunity to conclude this unfinished business, and I wish him or her well.

*The Chair:* Our thanks go to the Chair of the Business Committee.

This item now stands adjourned and will be brought back to the Synod by order of the Business Committee in due course.

THE CHAIR *Revd Dr Rosemarie Mallett (Southwark)* took the Chair at 12.30 p.m.

## **Farewells**

*The Chair:* I call on the Archbishop of York to bid farewell to the Bishop of Liverpool.

*The Archbishop of York (The Most Revd and Rt Hon Dr John Sentamu):* Following a curacy in Bristol, then as vicar of a parish in Croydon and four years as the Bishop of Hull, very nearly half of Bishop James Jones's ministry has been in Liverpool. Colleagues reflect that Bishop James has drawn the diocese together to focus on God's mission. People want to be there; it is a diocese that is going places. Bishop James has been energetic in fostering vocations especially to pioneer ministry. The St Mellitus North West course is the first full-time training course in the north west since the closure of St Aidan's Birkenhead 40 years ago.

Disappointingly there has been a dearth of amusing or embarrassing anecdotes about Bishop James. I even offered to pay people some money but no one would talk! But his staff team have been unanimous in their admiration for his ministry. In particular they have valued the way he has taken up his role as a bishop leading the Church's engagement with public life. Recently the Lord Lieutenant of Merseyside thanked him for 'meddling in the city'.

His style has been collaborative. The suffragan Bishop of Warrington chairs the staff meeting and Bishop James has met monthly with his area deans, with whom he says he shares his episcopate. I know that this is the theory in many dioceses, but in Liverpool it can be seen in practice and I have experienced it. He has encouraged us all to see the bigger picture, speaking in one *Thought for the Day* programme on Radio 4 of a Swahili name for God – *Mungu Mukubwa*, 'the big chief with horizon headband'.

His staff team have indeed been made to feel valued colleagues whose opinions are listened to and respected, with decisions being arrived at collaboratively. Their meetings have always been lively with good contributions from everyone, often with laughter. Disagreements yes



there may have been, but never an argument or a fit of bad temper from any member of the group.

Undoubtedly chief among his many achievements in public life as far as Liverpool is concerned was his chairmanship of the Hillsborough Independent Panel. (*Applause*) On 12 September 2012 the panel concluded that no Liverpool fans were responsible in any way for the 1989 disaster, that its main cause was a lack of police control and that crowd safety was compromised at every level as overcrowding issues had been recorded two years earlier. Not only the grieving families but also the entire city of Liverpool was completely vindicated by this conclusion. It raised the morale of the whole city. It was, and still is, a work of comfort, healing and restoration, which Liverpool will never forget.

Liverpool has a very strong history of churches working together. Bishop James has built on the progress made by Bishop David Sheppard and Archbishop Derek Warlock between Protestant and Catholic communities to embrace a wider inter-faith engagement. Non-Anglicans in Liverpool refer to Bishop James as ‘our bishop’. Archbishop Patrick Kelly asked him to give a vote of thanks after Mass on the Archbishop’s retirement.

Nineteen years ago when he was first made a bishop, Bishop James was asked by a reporter whether or not he thought Christianity was relevant. He answered that it was relevant ‘only to those who die’! But for Bishop James the gospel’s relevance has never been limited to questions of individual salvation. He is a strong contender for the environment. In schools in Liverpool there are some fantastic examples of sustainable construction – St Francis of Assisi City, a joint Roman Catholic and Anglican academy, and the new Hope Academy in St Helen’s. Bishop James has also managed to secure a ‘free’ solar heating system for Bishop’s Lodge. Just don’t ask Sarah whether it works – ‘Nothing but trouble!’ I have heard.

He also recognizes life’s complexity. He has told the story of a visit to Honduras to see the tragic effects of Hurricane Mitch. ‘How did I get there?’ he asked. ‘By plane – which shaved off yet another layer of ozone. I sailed up the Patuka River through the rainforest to see the devastating effect of illegal logging. How did I do it? In a canoe dug out of a tree!’

Bishop James has always been a strong advocate of Church schools and actively involved with them. He has overseen the opening of six joint Anglican–Roman Catholic schools. The number of Anglican secondary schools has risen from four to 11. Winning support at many levels for this was a huge challenge and his personal involvement has been key to all that has been achieved.

Nationally Bishop James has been a dedicated bishop for prisons, securing the best possible arrangements for chaplaincy and contributing to successive debates on prison reform. In the General Synod he chaired the Board of Mission and the Accountability and Transparency Group, whose report received great acclaim and unanimous support of the General Synod but, sadly, resulted in no action whatever being taken. He was appointed as chair of the Independent Panel on Forestry, which reported unanimously and secured government commitment to maintaining the public forests.

He is a master in the field of broadcasting. The award winning Radio 4 series, *The Bishop and the Prisoner*, was highly acclaimed. He is a familiar voice on *Thought for the Day*, always relevant and quick thinking. On one occasion he had to re-write his script from scratch at 7 a.m. in the studio to reflect breaking news.

He has been talking of ‘standing down’ as Bishop of Liverpool rather ‘retiring’. Bishop, you are being re-tired! He and Sarah are moving back to God’s own county, for which I am very thankful. I thank Sarah especially for all the support she has given and for the generous and creative hospitality given to everyone visiting Bishop’s Lodge.

Among his publications Bishop James once wrote a short book entitled *Why Do People Suffer?* Unfortunately on the original print run the printers omitted the question mark. Hence in bold letters across the front appeared the words, ‘Why Do People Suffer James Jones’!

By tradition there is no right of reply to Synod farewell speeches, but today I want Bishop James to speak to us from a recent *Thought for the Day* programme. He said: ‘I was watching a group of young people leading us in singing a song of Christian worship, and there in the middle in a headscarf was a Muslim girl singing her heart out. I asked the Muslim girls about singing Christian songs. There was no problem. They loved the academy and loved going to the mosque and to church and worshipping God in both; and as Muslim and Christian they were the best of friends. I came away doubting my pessimism about the future. Soil and streets in Africa, Pakistan and England have been stained with blood shed in the name of God but, as these girls showed, Kennedy was right – “enmities do not last forever”. I asked the girls their names. I did not quite catch one of them. I leaned forward. She flashed a smile. “It means”, she said, “thank you.”’

Bishop James and Sarah, thank you for all you have shown us of the way of Christ. As the numerous people I contacted to help me with this farewell speech have said, ‘Bishop James Jones is courageous, inspirational and great lover of Jesus Christ.’ Thank you. Asante! Asante, bwana. Yesu asifiwe. Kwaheri ndugu yangu! For those who do not speak the language of heaven, that means ‘Thank you! Thank you, big chief. Jesus be praised. Farewell my beloved brother.’ (*Applause*)

*The Chair:* I now call on the Archbishop of Canterbury to bid farewell to the Bishops of Hereford and Gibraltar in Europe.

*The Archbishop of Canterbury (The Most Revd and Rt Hon Justin Welby):* When you have served under one of them, this is fun!

Anthony Priddis has been Bishop of Hereford since 2004. Before that he was Bishop of Warwick from 1996, where I first met him, and he was a notably supportive, effective, challenging and inspiring suffragan bishop whom I remember with immense personal gratitude. He was the rector of Amersham from 1986, the team vicar of St John’s High Wycombe from 1980 and the college chaplain at Christ Church, Oxford from 1975. He did his curacy at St Edward’s, New Addington, having studied at Cuddesdon and New College.

Anthony is one of those many bishops with a huge range of interests. For instance he has served on the Board of the Faculty of Accident and Emergency Medicine and has been a trustee of the Family Life and Marriage Education Network and its co-chair for three years. He has been a trustee of Coventry Relate (the old marriage guidance body) and a founder member of the Chiltern Hundred Housing Association and has retained considerable skill and interest in the often arcane, always essential and invariably complex areas of housing finance. He has taken his responsibilities as a rural bishop very seriously. He was chairman of the Rural Bishops’ Panel for a number of years, alongside several other countryside-related bodies. It is notable that when he says grace before meals he always prays for those who grew

the food as well as those who prepared it. One particular responsibility he shouldered was the Church of England's Central Safeguarding Liaison Group, and the debate on Sunday brought back to us the importance of that work. He was a member and chair from 2002 to 2010. He made a very notable contribution during those years and helped to get policies into a much better shape, though we still have a long way to go, as he is the first to acknowledge. The group's work included a two-year review of over 40,000 diocesan files, which was published in 2010.

In 2011 he stepped down to focus on his role in the House of Lords, where he has been since 2009, and he has been the Church's parliamentary spokesman for Children and Families, Rural Affairs and Agriculture. He has spoken across a range of issues, obviously on rural affairs and most recently on energy issues. He made his maiden speech on child poverty. On the bishops' benches he is one of the foremost experts on nuclear power, being Secretary of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Thorium Energy. One or two people may not understand that. It is to explore and discuss the potential benefits of exploiting energy from thorium and the merits of various technologies for so doing. Thorium, as we all know, is a very viable alternative nuclear fuel to uranium – later I shall test someone at random on its signature on the Periodic Table! – which I suppose means that he is less afraid than most on the bishops' benches to take on issues considered 'radioactive'. You have to make one bad pun! His latest attempt was to sponsor an unsuccessful amendment to the Same-Sex Marriage Bill to give an opt-out for civil marriage registrars.

I am sure most members will know that Anthony's wife Kathy, who is not able to be with us today, is a notable portrait painter, potter, author and novelist. She runs classes in pastel and watercolour in the Great Hall and garden of the Bishop's Palace – a peaceful and spiritual setting. We are fortunate enough to have one of her pictures on one of our walls at home, which I see every day. As far as we are aware, Anthony is also the only bishop to have had his official portrait painted by his wife, and I am told, and indeed I have seen the picture, that she captures his smile very well. Anthony smiles often and frowns seldom; but I have been frowned at by him. It is also quite noticeable – how can put this delicately? – that it is a retrospect of Anthony. In the portrait he looks a little younger than perhaps he looks today! But that is what you might expect from a painter who knew and fell in love with her subject when he was young.

He is one of two bishops – I do not know who the other is – who are known to travel the diocese with a fly rod in the boot of their cars, in the hope of a spot of trout fishing here and there. I am carefully advised that his preferred river is the Monnow on the Welsh Borders, moreover that his favourite fly is the Dry Fly Adams Pattern – so that will be the first time that has been reproduced in the record of Synod! He is of course a keen golfer and goes out for rounds with the Hereford diocesan secretary. I have this vision of how diocesan strategy evolves in Hereford, and there is probably another pun about handicaps in there but I cannot spot it straightaway.

Finally, I do not know how many members are familiar with Hereford Cathedral, notable for its Mappa Mundi. It is also notable for its Shrine of St Thomas, a bishop of Hereford from the 13<sup>th</sup> century. The shrine survived the Reformation and has just had a new top put on it, in attractive red and gold. If you were to go round the back of it – not an obvious thing to do – you would find a series of pictures of Kilvert, Roy Strong, Traherne, the Hereford Bull, a buxom lady with apples and a portrayal of Bishop Anthony, and there he is as a fixture forever. In many ways that says quite a lot about Anthony – someone deeply fixed in his

diocese, very much at the heart of it and part of it, always there, not ostentatious or showy, leading and a good presence, a holy man.

The Priddis family moved to Bridstow in the Hereford diocese, where they have had a house for some years. Anthony, we wish you and Kathy every blessing in the next stage of your ministry, and you carry with you the warm appreciation of us all for everything you have done, for Hereford, and for the Church of England. (*Applause*)

We now move to the Bishop of Gibraltar in Europe – and no, I am not going to explain how he came by that title!

Geoffrey Rowell spent his childhood in Alton in north Hampshire and gained a scholarship to Winchester College. He was brought up in the definite but very English Anglo-Catholic tradition, to which he has remained faithful all his life. His keenness on eucharistic religion as a teenager resulted in his becoming the first altar server at Winchester College since the Reformation.

Geoffrey was a priest with one of the earliest callings I have heard, perhaps bettered only by Samuel. He has told friends and colleagues that when he was 12 he told his father that he wanted to be a bishop. His father's response is not recorded.

He also proudly relates that in his youth he managed to avoid ever having to participate in team sports. At that school in that era, that shows an achievement of politics and diplomacy, and perhaps mere skulduggery, that qualifies him perfectly for the role that he has held for many years.

Geoffrey studied at Cambridge and did his doctorate there. As an undergraduate he was a contemporary of Michael Scott-Joynt, so it is instructive to see what different places clergy can end up in ostensibly having started in the same one.

In 1968, sadly, Geoffrey moved from Cambridge to Oxford – I added 'sadly' to the sentence; it is not in my script – where he was to spend the next 25 years of his life. He was at Cuddesdon, as I have mentioned, Assistant Chaplain of New College and Assistant Curate of St Andrew's, Headington. In 1972 he became Chaplain of Keble College and in due course also Fellow and Tutor in Theology, a post that he held for over 21 years until his consecration as a bishop in 1994.

Geoffrey was the most recent of the traditional bachelor college chaplains, living in a set of rooms in the heart of the college. His ministry there is remembered with great affection and gratitude by generations of undergraduates and graduate students. Several of the present members of the House of Bishops were taught by him – Michael Perham for example – or were members of his chapel congregation – Stephen Conway and John Inge. His pupils also included the present General Secretary of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, Mgr Marcus Stock, and laypeople who went on to work for the Church, such as Colin Podmore and Caroline Boddington, whom he later married – to the Bishop of Derby!

During his Keble years Geoffrey served for 10 years on the Liturgical Commission, playing his part in the genesis of *Lent, Holy Week, Easter* and *The Promise of His Glory*, both now subsumed into *Common Worship: Times and Seasons*. In 1990 he graduated to the Doctrine Commission, of which he was a member or consultant until 2004.

Geoffrey's retirement marks the end of an era in a number of respects. We believe that he is the last diocesan bishop – I hope not the final one – to have been a fellow of an Oxford or Cambridge college or indeed to have been a full-time university teacher of theology, apart from former theological college principals and tutors. Though quite a few bishops hold research doctorates, Geoffrey is the most recent diocesan bishop with a non-honorary DD. Former members of the House with that distinction include Rowan Williams and Kenneth Stevenson, and the three of them collaborated on an anthology of Anglican spiritual writing, *Love's Redeeming Work*.

In 1994 Geoffrey returned to north Hampshire as Bishop of Basingstoke, living near Alton Abbey, which he chose so that he could attend the daily Mass at Alton as much as his diary would permit, before becoming Bishop of Gibraltar in Europe in 2001.

Geoffrey's doctorate was about hell, and he went on to write a book about funeral liturgies. When the 'lead bishop' programme was established it was therefore natural that he should be chosen as 'the bishop for Death', as he put it. He chaired the Churches' Funerals Group from 1997 until last year.

He has always been an intrepid traveller, which is convenient if you are the Bishop in Europe. Ever since he first became a college chaplain he has taken parties of students and more recently older friends on expeditions to remote and exotic places. On one celebrated occasion he and a party of undergraduates arrived very late at night in a middle-eastern city. The lodging house that they found was remarkably cheap, even given its very basic facilities. So tired were they that they all slept soundly. Only when they awoke in the morning did it gradually dawn on the undergraduates that the chaplain had put them to bed for the night in a brothel!

Geoffrey was never afraid to see significant people on his journeys. (*Laughter*) It's not how you tell them but how they write them! When visiting Rome as Chaplain of Keble he asked for and was granted an appointment with the President of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. The result was a lengthy and cordial discussion with the then Cardinal Ratzinger. This deep-seated instinct for creating and nurturing personal ecumenical contacts – and I might add from my own experience friendly contacts with many many people – has enhanced both his ministry as bishop and his role as the bishop who oversees the relations of the Church of England and the Anglican Communion with the Oriental Orthodox Churches, a role in which he will continue for the time being. He has an extensive network of friends and contacts across the spectrum.

Geoffrey's love of travel, combined with remarkable stamina, made him the ideal Bishop of Gibraltar. All those hours waiting around in airport departure lounges have enabled him to keep up a flow of book reviews, to read the Church history theses that he still examines, and to keep up the reading that so evidently informs his speaking and writing.

His love of travel and the exotic is reflected in the extensive collection of hats that now fills Bishop's Lodge at Worth. The exotic nature of his diocese is reflected in his appearance, especially on cold days, in a fur hat, reminding us that, despite its name, his diocese stretches from Vladivostok to North Africa. That he can remember where every hat came from, and in many cases from whom he acquired them, is just one of the many fruits of his remarkable memory.

In 12 years he has travelled about one-third of a million miles in the diocese of Europe – greater than a trip to the moon one way. Since technically the moon is not in any other diocese! (*Laughter*) All this was done in 400 separate trips and close to 2,000 nights away from home. If you work it out, that is roughly four and a half years, almost five years, out of 12 years in the diocese. I would love to calculate how many days in total he has spent waiting for his luggage to go round all those belts in airports. This has involved nearly all of his 280 congregations in 42 countries.

In 20 years as a bishop Geoffrey has managed not only to continue his academic work but has also developed his talent for hymn writing. One of his hymns was written for the Westminster Abbey service marking the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Authorized Version of the Bible. Another has been set as an anthem by the composer Paul Mealar. That was the beginning of a continuing collaboration, in which Geoffrey wrote the words for Paul Mealar's Jubilee anthem.

He has also been a redoubtable and articulate member of the House of Bishops and of this gathering. I am told by colleagues of his that whenever he rose at a meeting of bishops those of a mischievous cast of mind would eagerly wait to see which of his two favourite speeches he was going to deploy. Standard speech A was to remind everyone that things were different on the other side of the channel and to ask how the proposals in question – reform of pensions, new clergy discipline et cetera – were to apply there. Standard speech B was to declare the need for more theological work on the agenda item.

Geoffrey is a historian and he takes the long view. Only recently in a meeting with Foreign Office people he was asked if he could give a bit of a historical context to the diocese of Europe to help with a present-day appreciation. It is reported that he started, 'Well, it all began in the year 313 with the Edict of Constantinople.'

He is retiring to the outskirts of Chichester, of whose cathedral he was formerly a canon. The retirement homes of his predecessor Bishop John Hind, his Diocesan Michael Scott-Joynt and the Bishop of Exeter are all nearby.

Thank you, Geoffrey, for a remarkable ministry. Those of us who were in the chamber to hear you speak yesterday will feel a deep sense of regret that that was the last speech you gave here in view of the invariable theological profundity and challenge to us in almost everything you said. I am absolutely sure that we not have seen the last of you. Whatever retirement may mean for you at Fishbourne, may it be another rewarding chapter in your ministry. (*Applause*)

*The Archbishop of York prorogued the group of sessions at 1.00 p.m.*

## Index

- accountability:
  - of church leaders 100, 111
  - of Synod 6
- Act of Synod (1993) 30, 45, 145, 151–2, 154, 157, 167–8, 170, 172
- adults, vulnerable 40, 99, 100–1, 106–7, 117
- alcohol, investment in 238
- Anglican Church of Canada 170
- Anglican Communion Office, funding for 226
- annual parochial church meetings 268, 273–4
- apologetics 64–5
- Appointments Committee:
  - appointment of Chair 13
  - and women bishops legislation 243
- apportionment 219, 220–1, 230–1
  - and pooling adjustment 231–2
- Archbishop of Canterbury, Presidential Address 17–22
- archbishops, and co-provincial oversight 155–6, 166–7
- Archbishops' Council:
  - appointment of auditors 16–17
  - Audit Committee 16
  - projected budget 2014 6, 218–32
  - questions to 36–8
  - see also* Finance Committee
- Archbishops' Task Group on Making New Disciples 25, 38, 61
- archdeacons, representation in General Synod 246, 252–3, 257, 259
- area bishops 196, 197, 199, 203–5, 210, 211
- Article 7 business 83
- Association of University Theology and Religious Studies Departments (AUDTRS) 27
  
- baptism service, additional texts 46–7
- bedroom tax 137, 138, 139
- benefits, targeted 134–5, 140
- Beveridge Report (1942) 120, 122
- Big Society, and Christian action 12, 121
- Bishop at Lambeth 17–18, 151
- bishops:
  - area bishops 196, 197, 199, 203–5, 210, 211
  - and co-provincial oversight 155–6, 166–7
  - minority ethnic 47–8, 64
- Bishops' Mission Orders 34–5
- blue files 41, 42–3
- Book of Common Prayer, and ordination training 39–40
- Bradford diocese *see* West Yorkshire diocese
- Bridge Commission 257, 270, 272
- budget *see* Archbishops' Council, projected budget 2014
- Business Committee:
  - appointment of Chair 12
  - and Elections Review Group 244–7, 250, 254, 263, 268–9, 275–6
  - questions to 24–7
  - Report 5–11
  
- canon law, and women bishops legislation 162–4
- canonical obedience, oaths of 148, 156, 169
- Canons:
  - A 5 46–7
  - B 30 32, 43
  - C 7 39–40
- Capital Vision 2020 58
- Care of Churches and Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction Measure 1991 23, 71–81, 82, 85
- cathedrals:
  - investment powers 83
  - pro-cathedrals 202, 204, 211, 216
  - West Yorkshire 32–3, 197, 198, 202, 205, 208–11, 214
- Cathedrals Measure 1999 32–3, 149, 210
- CDM *see* Clergy Discipline Measure 2003
- Challenges for the Quinquennium* 9–10, 37, 54–70, 222
- chancel repair liability 239
- chaplaincy:
  - in further education 206
  - and mission 58–9
  - in prisons 277
- CHARM scheme 35–6, 222, 229, 230
- Chichester Commissaries' Reports, follow-up 41, 94–119
- child abuse *see* safeguarding

- church buildings, closure 239–40
- Church Commissioners:
  - Annual Report 235–40
  - appointment 90
  - Assets Committee 237
  - and pensions 235
  - questions to 32–5
  - and Royal Bank of Scotland investment 236, 238–9
- Church Commissioners Measure 1947 82, 84–5, 90
- Church and Earth* 237
- Church of England Funded Pension Scheme 36
- Church of England Marriage (Amendment) Measure (2012) 4
- Church of England Pensions Board *see* Pensions Board
- Church of England Youth Council:
  - and minority ethnic Anglicans 246, 248–9, 251
  - Observers 2, 24
- Church House, staff 36–7, 219
- Church House Deaneries Group 274
- Church Lads' and Church Girls' Brigade 223
- Church Representation Rules 92–3, 262, 271
- Church Representation Rules (Amendment) Resolution 2009 92–3, 244, 248
- church schools:
  - and homophobia 19
  - support for 277
- Church Urban Fund, and welfare reform 120, 129
- ChurchCare website 74
- Churches' Legislation Advisory Service 233
- Churches Together in England,
  - contributions to 222
- churchwardens:
  - election 92–3
  - and elections to General Synod 272–4, 276
  - and safeguarding training 110, 112
- Churchwardens Measure 2001 (No. 1) 92–3
- Civil Procedure Rules 78, 80
- clergy:
  - blue files 41, 42–3
  - and child abuse 95–105
  - mental health problems 41–2
  - minority ethnic 47–8, 66, 245–7
  - recruitment to northern province 247
  - retirement housing 35–6, 220, 222, 229, 230
  - senior 238
- Clergy Discipline (Amendment) Measure (2012) 4
- Clergy Discipline (Amendment) Rules 2013 23, 104
- Clergy Discipline Appeal (Amendment) Rules 2013 23
- Clergy Discipline Measure 2003 23, 44
  - and abuse 98, 99, 102, 104, 108
  - Amending Code of Practice 23
- Clergy Pensions Measure 1961 84–5
- Clergy Pensions Scheme 238
- Clergy Representation Rules 262
- Clergy Terms of Service 201
- Clerk to the Synod, appointment 12–13
- climate change 237
- CMEAC, and minority ethnic
  - representation in General Synod 245–7, 248–9, 251, 253–4
- cohesion, social 121, 123
- College of Bishops:
  - and mission 39, 68
  - and representation of women 49–50
- Commissaries' Report *see* Chichester Commissaries' Reports
- Common Awards 40, 56, 227
- common good:
  - and quinquennial goals 54–7, 60, 62, 64, 66, 67, 131
  - and welfare reform 120, 131, 136, 140
- confession, sacramental, training for 104, 117–18
- conservative evangelicals, in House of Bishops 29–30
- Convocation of York, Prolocutor 2
- Convocations (Elections to Upper House) Rules 261–2
- Coptic Church, Egypt 10, 11, 18, 152, 192, 241–3
- credit unions 132, 139
- Crown Nominations Commission 217
  - questions to 27–30



- DACs, and Faculty Rules 72–6, 78–81
- Data Protection Act 1998 42–3
- DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) procedure 101, 105, 110, 112
- deaf adults, and welfare reform 136–7
- deaneries:  
and ministry teams 222, 228  
and mission 274–5
- deanery synods, and elections to General Synod 268–70, 272–6
- debates:  
calling of speakers 8  
chairing 11
- debt, national 126–7, 129, 134–5
- Dilnot Report (2011) 126
- diocesan registrars, remuneration 32, 80
- Diocese in Europe:  
Constitution 1995 23  
growth 251  
representation in General Synod 245, 249, 251, 255, 260, 262
- Diocese in Europe Measure 5
- dioceses:  
Diocesan Advisory Committees *see* DACs  
occupational health schemes 41  
safeguarding policies 40–1, 101, 104, 110, 116–17
- Dioceses Commission:  
chair 85–6  
question to 30–1  
West Yorkshire diocese 6, 30–1, 32–3, 195–216
- Dioceses, Pastoral and Mission Measure 2007 34, 195
- disability, and welfare reforms 125–6, 136–7, 139
- discipleship, and fresh expressions 62–3
- Draft Amending Canon No. 31 84, 94
- Draft Amending Canon No. 32 244, 248, 260–5
- Draft Church of England (Miscellaneous Provisions) Measure 9, 74, 81–94, 153
- Draft Church Representation Rules (Amendment) Resolution 262, 266–7
- Draft Clergy Representation (Amendment) Resolution 262, 266
- Draft Convocations (Elections to Upper House) (Amendment) Resolution 261, 266
- Draft Dioceses of Bradford, Ripon and Leeds and Wakefield Reorganization Scheme 201–195–216
- Ecclesiastical Fees Measure 1986 23
- Ecclesiastical Judges, Legal Officers and Others (Fees) Order 2012 5
- Ecclesiastical Judges Association 78, 80, 81
- Ecclesiastical Offices (Terms of Service) Measure 44
- ecumenism:  
and church growth 55, 56–7, 60, 65  
ecumenical guests 2–3, 241–3  
ecumenical representatives 2, 10  
and food banks 120  
and welfare reform 131  
and women bishops 188
- education, funding for 224–5
- Egypt, Coptic Church 10, 11, 18, 152, 192, 241–3
- elections:  
online 267, 268–9, 271–2, 274  
universal suffrage 268, 270–3, 275
- Elections Review Group 7, 26–7, 244–60  
and Diocese in Europe 245, 249, 251, 255, 260, 262
- Electorate for the House of Laity and Online Elections 267–76  
and minority ethnic representatives 245–7, 248–9, 250–1, 253–4  
and provincial representation 244, 247–8, 249–50, 253–4, 260, 262, 263–7  
and religious communities 251–2  
and Sodor and Man 245, 260, 262  
and suffragan bishops 245, 247, 253, 254, 261–2, 263, 265  
and universities constituencies 244–5, 249, 250, 251, 252–3, 254, 255–60, 264  
and Youth Council 246, 248–9, 251  
*see also* Draft Amending Canon No. 32
- electoral roll, and election of House of Laity 268, 273–5
- employment, and poverty 121–2, 123, 128–9
- Endowments and Glebe Measure 1976 84
- Episcopal Ministry Act of Synod (1993) 30, 45, 145, 151–2, 154, 157, 167–8, 170, 172
- Equality Act 148, 154, 181–4, 193

## Index

- Ethical Investment Advisory Group:  
and climate change 237  
and investment in alcohol 238  
and Veolia 33–4
- Evangelical Group on General Synod (EGGS) 67
- Evangelical Lutheran Church in Iceland 3–4
- evangelism:  
lay 222, 223  
youth 226
- Faculty Jurisdiction (Care of Places of Worship) Rules 2000 74
- Faculty Jurisdiction (Injunctions and Restoration Orders) Rules 1992 74
- Faculty Jurisdiction Rules 2013 71–81
- Faith and Order Commission, questions to 31–2
- farewells 232–4, 276–82
- Fees Advisory Commission, question to 32
- Finance Committee, appointment of Chair 14–15
- food banks 120, 125, 128, 136
- fresh expressions 55, 59–60, 62–3  
financing 60, 65, 220, 222, 223–4, 228
- General Synod:  
appointments 7, 12–13  
and corporate worship 6  
ecumenical representatives 2, 10  
Elections Review Group 7, 26–7, 244–60  
elections to 187–8, 267–76  
Evangelical Group 67  
*ex officio* members 85, 86, 265  
guest address to 3–4, 241–3  
guests 2–3  
new members 1  
and Parliament 168, 182–4  
quinquennium goals 6, 9–10, 19–20, 24, 38  
stallholders 7, 11  
university representatives 26–7, 244–5, 249, 250, 251, 252–3, 254, 255–60, 264  
giving, parish 218–19, 224  
grooming, and safeguarding 105, 107, 118
- headship, male 29, 147, 155  
*The Heart of the Kingdom* (Children’s Society report) 121
- homophobia 19
- House of Bishops:  
and diversity of traditions 28–30  
and mission 67–70  
questions to 38–51  
Regional Representatives 47–51  
Standing Committee 38, 43, 49, 171  
Standing Orders 48  
Working Group on Human Sexuality 31  
*see also* women bishops legislation
- House of Clergy, elections to 187, 260, 268–9
- House of Laity:  
elections to 187, 262, 267–76  
minority ethnic representation 245–7  
and women bishops legislation 151, 163, 177, 187
- housing, retirement 35–6, 220, 222, 229, 230
- howtohelp.net* 60
- hustings 271, 272
- Hyde Park estate, and Church Commissioners 236, 237–8
- Iceland, Evangelical Lutheran Church 3–4
- Inter-Diocesan Finance Forum 220
- investment:  
in alcohol 238  
in derivatives 83  
income from 218, 235–7  
in job creation 127
- job creation 127, 129
- Joint Safeguarding Liaison Group 40–1
- justice, and welfare reform 123, 124–5, 139
- laity:  
lay leadership 156  
lay ministry 37–8, 57, 63, 221–2, 223, 227–8  
training 60–1
- Lambeth Conference 1988 222
- Lambeth Palace:  
Bishop at 17–18, 151  
Chief of Staff 17, 18
- Leeds diocese, transitional Vacancy in See Committee 217–18
- Legal Advisory Commission 117

- Legal Department, funding for 225  
 Legal Office 36, 88, 93  
 Legal Officers (Annual Fees) Order 2012 5  
 Legal Officers (Annual Fees) Order 2013 23  
 Legal Officers and Others (Fees) Order 2012 5  
 Legislative Business 7  
 Liturgical Commission, and additional baptism texts 46–7  
 Living Wage Commission 123  
 living wage concept 121–3, 136, 237–8
- Making New Disciples: the Growth of the Church of England* 9–10, 24–5, 38–9, 62, 67, 204, 222  
 Manifesto for Youth 226  
 marriage, Church of England teaching on 31–2, 43  
 Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill 19, 141–2, 279  
*Men and Women in Marriage* 31–2, 43  
 Methodist Church:  
   and Fresh Expressions 60  
   and safeguarding 116  
 Million for Mission Fund (Exeter) 62  
 ministry:  
   costs 218, 219, 229–30  
   lay 37–8, 57, 63, 221–2, 223, 227–8  
   self-supporting 65  
   transforming 54–5, 56–7, 64, 65  
 Miscellaneous Provisions Measures 20  
 mission:  
   and deaneries 274–5  
   national strategy 24, 38–9, 61, 66–9  
   and quinquennium goals 54–70  
   in West Yorkshire diocese 195–216  
 mission agencies:  
   parish support for 227  
   staff pensions 220, 221, 224–6, 230  
 Mission and Pastoral Measure 2011 34–5, 82–3
- oaths of canonical obedience 148, 156, 169  
 open reception 46  
 ordination training *see* training, theological  
 Overseas and Other Clergy (Ministry and Ordination) Measure 1967 83  
 Parliament, and women bishops legislation 168, 182–4
- Parochial Fees and Schedule Matters Amending Order 2012 5  
 Patronage (Benefices) Measure 1986 82, 84, 88–9  
 payday loans 133  
 PCCs:  
   annual parochial church meetings 268, 273–4  
   and appointment of incumbent 87–9, 159, 181–3  
   and elections to General Synod 273  
   and Resolutions A, B and C 156, 157, 159, 167–9  
   and safeguarding 111–13, 115  
 pensions:  
   and Church Commissioners 235, 238  
   mission agency staff 220, 221, 224–6, 230  
   state pension 36  
 Pensions Board:  
   appointment of Chair 15–16  
   questions to 35–6  
   and retirement housing 229  
*Pilgrim* course 39, 55, 65  
 Pilling Report (*Talent and Calling*) 28, 29  
 pooling adjustment 231–2  
 Porvoo Communion 4, 83  
 poverty:  
   bias to the poor 132–4, 140  
   and employment 121–2, 123, 128–9  
   and the undeserving poor 122–3, 126, 127–9  
 Presidential Address to Synod 17–22  
 priest in charge, appointment as incumbent 82, 87–9  
 pro-cathedrals 202, 204, 211, 216  
 Progress of Measures and Statutory Instruments 4–5  
 provinces, and General Synod representation 244, 247–8, 249–50, 253–4, 260, 262, 263–7
- Questions 24–53  
 quinquennium goals 6, 9–10, 19–20, 24, 38, 54–70
- Readers:  
   and mission 63  
   and safeguarding 113, 118

## Index

- training 227
- Reimagining Ministry* 227
- Remuneration and Conditions of Service Committee 36
- Resolutions A, B and C 156, 157, 159, 167–9
- Resourcing Christian Community Action 60
- Resourcing Mission Bulletin* 34
- ‘Responding Well’ policy 97, 98, 119
- retirement, housing 35–6, 220, 222, 229, 230
- Ripon and Leeds diocese *see* Leeds diocese; West Yorkshire diocese
- Rule Committee 71–2, 75, 78
  
- sacramental assurance 149
- safeguarding 7, 40–1, 94–119, 279
  - and grooming 105, 107, 118
  - national audit 40–1, 103–4, 117
  - and time limit on reporting 98, 100, 106, 108, 111, 117, 118
  - training 102–5, 110, 113–14, 118
  - and vulnerable adults 40, 99, 100–1, 106–7, 117
  - and whistleblowing 110, 118
- Scheme Amending the Diocese in Europe Constitution 1995 23
- sexuality 19, 31–2
  - and child abuse 97–103
- Shaping the Future* 40
- Sharing of Church Buildings Act 1969 90
- Sharing God’s Planet* 237
- Sheldon (Society of Martha and Mary) 42
- Shrinking the Footprint* 237
- signatures, electronic 73, 79, 81
- social media, use of 36–7, 52
- Sodor and Man diocese, representation in General Synod 245, 260, 262
- solidarity, social 120, 121, 123, 131, 140
- Standing Orders:
  - SO 14 24
  - SO 21(c) 218
  - SO 23(a) 193
  - SO 33 141
  - SO 36 18, 165, 175
  - SO 49 255
  - SO 51(b) 263
  - SO 55(c) 87
  - SO 56 87
  - SO 69 23
  - SO 113A 2
- stewardship 218–19, 224
- Stop Church Child Abuse Group 95
- suffragan bishops, representation in General Synod 245, 247, 253, 254, 261–2, 263, 265
- suffrage, universal 268, 270–3, 275
- Synodical Government Measure 1969 (No. 1) 92
  
- Talent and Calling* (Pilling Report) 28, 29
- Temple, William, *Christianity and the Social Order* 122–3
- Thirty-Nine Articles 7–8, 10
- Towards the Conversion of England* (1945) 68, 70, 222
- Towards the Re-evangelization of the North 58
- training, theological:
  - and Book of Common Prayer 39–40
  - Common Awards 40, 56, 227
  - and West Yorkshire diocese 206
  - see also* Vote 1
- Turning Up the Volume group 48, 56
  
- Unemployment and the Future of Work* 130
- universities, representation on General Synod 26–7, 244–5, 249, 250, 251, 252–3, 254, 255–60, 264
  
- Vacancy in See Committees, transitional committee for Leeds diocese 217–18
- Vacancy in See Committees Regulation 45
- Veolia, investment in 33–4
- vocations:
  - minority ethnic 64, 66, 227
  - young 56, 64
- Vote 1 219, 222, 227, 228–30
- Vote 2 219–20, 223, 228, 230
- Vote 3 220, 228, 230
- Vote 4 220–1, 224, 229, 230
- Vote 5 229, 230
- voting:
  - electronic 184
  - by Houses 156, 165–6, 175, 184
  - by whole Synod 119, 140, 175, 193–4
  
- Wakefield diocese *see* West Yorkshire

- diocese
- WATCH 188
- welfare reform 7, 19, 120–40, 233  
 and campaign of prayer 127  
 and common good 36, 120, 131  
 impact assessment 126, 127, 132–3, 135, 137, 140  
 and justice 123, 124–5, 139  
 and ‘scroungers’ 120, 121, 124, 126, 129, 140  
 and the vulnerable 120, 121, 124, 126, 132, 133–4, 136–40
- welfare state, and the Church 120, 133–4, 139
- West Yorkshire diocese 6, 30–1, 195–216  
 area bishops 196, 197, 199, 203–5, 210, 211  
 cathedrals 32–3, 197, 198, 202, 205, 208–11, 214  
 and representation in General Synod 247, 253, 266–7
- whistleblowing 110, 118, 178
- women bishops legislation:  
 bishops’ declaration 147  
 Broadbent ‘cunning plan’ 150–3, 155, 156, 157, 162, 164, 167–70, 172, 174, 176, 184, 186–7, 190–2  
 and canon law 162–4  
 and co-provincial oversight 155–6, 166–7
- code of practice 145, 155, 157, 160
- consultative group 43–4
- debate 141–94
- and facilitated discussions:  
 ongoing 144, 184–5, 188, 193, 194, 243  
 in Synod 5–6, 8–9, 11, 52–3, 142, 152, 154, 164, 184, 187, 189–90  
 and working group 147
- five principles 144–5, 152, 154, 158, 171–4, 185, 187, 188–93
- House of Bishops proposals 5, 43, 45, 143–7, 159, 189
- mediation/grievance process 145–6, 148, 154–5, 160, 164, 178–80, 186, 194
- options 1–4 44, 189–90  
 option 1 45–6, 143, 145, 147–8, 151–2, 156, 158, 160–1, 163–5, 168–74, 177–80, 187–92, 194  
 option 1-plus 176, 186, 190–1  
 option 2 152, 158–9, 170–6  
 option 2-plus 158–9  
 option 3 167–9  
 option 4 145, 152, 154, 162
- Revision Committee 142, 150, 187  
 and sacramental assurance 149
- Steering Committee 142, 143, 146, 150, 161, 162, 168–9, 173, 177, 180, 184–5, 187, 191–4, 243
- Women in the Episcopate Working Group, costs 36
- women priests 21–2, 151, 156  
 and conservative evangelicals 29  
 and open reception 46
- Working as One Body* 273
- worship, in General Synod 6
- Yorkshire Regional Training Partnership 206
- Young Anglican Observers 2, 24
- Young Vocation Champions 64
- youth evangelism 226