

**Report of Proceedings 2015**

**General Synod  
February Group of Sessions**

**Volume 46 No. 1**



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# Contents

## Full Synod: First Day (Tuesday 10 February 2015)

Introduction of New Members	1
Address by the Archbishop of the Chaldean Diocese of Erbil, Iraq	1
Progress of Measures and Statutory Instruments	4
Report by the Business Committee	5
General Synod Elections 2015: Seat Allocation	15
Presidential Address	18
Report on Immersion Experience in India	22
Legislative Business:	
Amending Canon No. 32	25
Draft Naming of Dioceses Measure	25
Draft Amending Canon No. 35	33
Questions	36
Introduction to Wednesday's Group Work and Debates	80

## Second Day (Wednesday 11 February 2015)

Discipleship	100
Resourcing the Future and Resourcing Ministerial Education	117
Simplification	139
Church Commissioners' Funds and Inter-Generational Equity	154

## Third Day (Thursday 12 February 2015)

Legislative Business:	
Draft Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure and Amending Canon No. 34	167
50 <sup>th</sup> Report of the Standing Orders Committee	181
Private Members' Motions: Canon B 38	187
Liturgical Business: Alternative Baptism Texts	202
Mission and Growth in Rural Multi-Parish Benefices	211
Farewells	233

## **Full Synod: First Day Tuesday 10 February 2015**

THE CHAIR *The Archbishop of Canterbury (Most Revd and Rt Hon Justin Welby)* took the Chair at 1.00 pm

*Mr Tim Hind (Bath and Wells)* led the Synod in an act of worship

### **Introductions**

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

The new members are: the Rt Revd Andrew Watson (Bishop of Guildford), replacing the Rt Revd Christopher Hill; the Rt Revd Jonathan Gibbs (Bishop of Huddersfield), replacing the Rt Revd John Goddard and the Ven David Picken from Southwell and Nottingham, replacing the Ven. Peter Hill.

We also welcome the new Church of England Youth Council representatives: Leah Bell, Alexandra Podd and Elliot Swattridge.

Please may we greet them all? (*Applause*)

We also welcome the new National Ecumenical Officer of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, the Revd Canon John O'Toole, as the new Roman Catholic representative. I invite him to stand so that we may welcome him. (*Applause*)

We also welcome the Rt Revd Martyn Snow (Bishop of Tewkesbury) who is attending this group of sessions because the Diocesan See of Gloucester is vacant. You are very welcome indeed. I remind members that Bishop Martyn has the right to speak but not vote and does not form part of the quorum of the House of Bishops. If you are counting, that gives some of you a little advantage and some of you not so much!

### **Address by the Archbishop of the Chaldean Diocese of Erbil, Iraq**

We now turn to a matter of both great seriousness and immense significance. Archbishop Bashar Warda, the Chaldean Archbishop, has been invited to address Synod at the suggestion of Bishop Geoffrey Rowell and with the support of the Ecumenical Bishops and Presidents. The Business Committee scheduled his speech as a follow-up to the panel session on the persecution of minorities in Iraq and Syria which took place at the November group of sessions. It is a huge privilege to hear someone who speaks from the centre of the suffering Church, from a place that we have been praying for so much. We are deeply grateful to the Archbishop for being here today, making the difficult journey from Erbil to be with us. I am sure that the Synod will be very accepting if the speech is slightly longer than scheduled given its immense importance and significance to us. I invite you to welcome with great warmth his Grace, the Archbishop.

*The Archbishop of Erbil:* Your Graces, members of the Synod, thank you very much for inviting me to the General Synod of the Church of England.

I am grateful for this opportunity to share with you our pain and hope in Iraq and in the Middle East. I must say that this talk is perhaps the most difficult one I have had to give. Many times I have spoken in front of audiences such as this, filled with kind and caring souls, but it has always been to give warnings of what might happen, and to invite investment and raise awareness about opportunities. This time it is different.

Christianity in Iraq is going through one of its worst and hardest stages of its long history that dates back to the first century. Throughout all of these long centuries, we have experienced many hardships and persecutions during which we have offered caravans of martyrs. The Christian community has enriched Mesopotamia throughout its historical stages with religion, culture and civilisation as well as a culture of co-existence despite the painful blows that they have been experiencing throughout the long centuries.

The recent decades have forced our faithful into displacement and immigration three times, leaving behind each time a history and a culture that many sought to suppress and wipe out.

My Christian people in many villages faced upheavals that followed World War II. Before that, we were victims of acts of genocide at the hands of the Ottoman Turks during the Massacre of Safar Ber Lik, what they call Seifo, in 1915 and then the Massacre of Semele in 1933 at the hands of the Iraqi army. During the Kurdish Uprising in 1961 and the Soriah Uprising in 1969, we were forcibly evicted from the numerous villages and towns and resettled in Baghdad and Mosul.

The acts of genocide, both organised and arbitrary, as well as displacement continued unabated starting from Basra, Baghdad, Mosul and Kurkuk in the aftermath of the last regime change in 2003. They were crowned by the Massacre of the Church of our Lady of Salvation in Baghdad in October 2010, during which the Christian worshippers were killed in cold blood. This was followed by acts of terrorism and displacements in June and August 2014, the year that witnessed the worst acts of genocide experienced by us in our homeland. We are now facing the extinction of Christianity as a religion and as a culture from Mesopotamia.

Brothers and sisters, during the past year more than 125,000 Christians have been forced to flee from their villages only because they choose to remain Christians and refuse the conditions Daesh imposed on them. They had to leave at night, under the cover of darkness. Many of them trod their own path of Golgotha for long hours, having left everything behind, other than their bare clothes. Arriving on foot, they sought refuge in the relatively secure region of Kurdistan, having no idea as to whether they would ever be able to return to their life-long homes. The political designation that is used to classify these brothers and sisters is “displaced”. If they decide to cross an international border, they will be classified as “refugees”.

These days the displaced among us have been hearing sad news, reports of the acts of pillage and looting of their homes and the destruction of some of them as a result of

military operations. They realise well that the military liberation of these areas is not the same as political liberation. We are waiting to know that our villages are safe and secure. We believe that the dear Lord will allow us to see that day; and on that day we will return to deserted and ruined houses, empty schools and hospitals. As for our precious churches, it is heartbreaking for us to imagine what they will look like when we return. But we can and we could rebuild it.

Today, we have families that are relying completely on the charity of others. Less than a year ago, these same families were in their own houses and were self-supporting, with sufficient or abundant regular incomes. These days, we pray in tents, having left behind ancient churches that lived the story of a flourishing Christianity, blessed with strong, willing believers and martyrs.

Too many families have lost confidence in their homeland. This should not surprise anyone. The homeland of Christians has rejected them and thrown them up. They have chosen to emigrate to the unknown, confident that they will be more secure. The road to immigration has a very long queue. Our friends and families are queued up waiting for months and years in Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan for a chance to move again, maybe for the last time, to North America, Europe, Australia or Canada. The difference in outlook between the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and refugees is that the refugees have made a final decision to get out. The IDP crisis that we are now experiencing in Kurdistan is known as a refugee crisis in the lands of our neighbours. The displaced have either not made a final decision or have decided to try to save more money before they depart.

It is an understatement for me simply to say that we are in desperate need of financial and material support so that our families may stay and survive, or depart and survive. This crisis is one of chronic urgent need.

For the Chaldean Church and our sister churches of the East, the persecution our community is enduring is doubly painful and severe. We are personally affected by need and by the reality that our vibrant church life is dissolving in front of our eyes. The massive immigration that is now occurring is leaving my church, and other churches, weaker. This is a deeply sorrowful reality. We who are part of the church hierarchy are very often tempted to encourage our parishioners to stay to keep the presence of Christ alive in this special land, but truly, I and my brother bishops and priests can do no more than to advise young mothers and fathers to take all the necessary considerations into account and to pray long and hard before taking such a momentous, and perhaps perilous decision. The Church is unable to offer and guarantee the fundamental security that its members need to thrive. It is no secret that hatred of minorities has intensified in certain quarters over the past few years. It is difficult to understand this hate. We are hated because we persist in wanting to exist as Christians. In other words, we are hated because we persist in demanding a basic human right.

All of us have a responsibility to help them through our personal prayers; I ask you to pray every day for our community, make sacrifices for them, and then help through a campaign of raising the awareness of the international community about the fragile condition of our Iraqi Christian community.

There are then two things that we as a church can do. The first is to pray and to keep praying. The second is to use all of the relationships and networks we share in our part of the Church of Christ as a pulpit to raise awareness about the true risk to our survival as a people. I cannot repeat loudly enough that our well-being as an historic community is no longer in our hands. The future will come, one way or another, and for us this means waiting to see what sort of aid (whether military or relief) arrives.

There are a number of relief projects for which we need funding; in particular we are requesting help to support renting houses for the Christian refugees who are living in public schools and to support us in creating residential rental units on church land. That is a necessary and worthy project. With your help it will allow families a more stable environment and enable them to seek suitable jobs locally and even as they make long-term plans regarding immigration. Your help with implementing this short term and long-term solution is very necessary. There are other projects which will help us as well.

We are thankful for the help that organisations have been giving to us since day one. This generosity has fuelled the hopes of many. So I ask you, after thanking you for this invitation, to keep praying for our community and please raise the awareness of all politicians. We have lost in Iraq the Jewish communities in the 1940s of the 20th century and when we lost them, we lost a lot. Please do not let another community disappear from the Iraqi community. Thank you very much.

*The Chair:* Please note that during the service of Holy Communion on Thursday, collection envelopes will be available for those of you who wish to donate to the Christian Aid Iraq Fund. We will hold a moment of silence before proceeding.

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

*The Chair:* I am required to report to the Synod as follows;

The Parochial Fees and Scheduled Matters Amending Order 2014, the Ecclesiastical Judges, Legal Officers and Others (Fees) Order 2014 and the Legal Officers (Annual Fees) Order 2014 all came into force on 1 January 2015.

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

All the remaining provisions of the Church of England (Miscellaneous Provisions) Measure 2014 which were not previously in force came into force on 1 January 2015.

The Care of Churches and Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction (Amendment) Measure, the Ecclesiastical Property Measure and the Church of England (Pensions) (Amendment) Measure have been laid before Parliament and motions that the Measures be presented to Her Majesty for the Royal Assent have been carried by both Houses. It is hoped that the Measures will receive the Royal Assent later this month.

That completes this item of business.



THE CHAIR *Professor Michael Clarke* took the Chair at 1.32 pm

## **Report by the Business Committee (GS 1974)**

*The Chair:* We now come to Item 4 on the agenda, the Report by the Business Committee, for which you will obviously need that Report which is GS 1974. I shall ask Canon Sue Booy, the Chair of the Committee, to move the motion in her name.

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

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

Good afternoon, friends. May I begin by congratulating you. You are officially the hardest working Synod in two decades! It is the sixth time we have met since July 2013 in a very concentrated group of Synod sessions, the most concentrated in 20 years, but, you know, we could do better by meeting less often.

We are all aware of the strain that frequent meetings place on you, your dioceses and our national church and so, in November 2014, I announced that this group of sessions would be shortened to three days. There have been moments when I have regretted that, but we have done our best to pack as much business and discussion as we can into these three days.

We are honoured by the presence of Archbishop Warda, invited here to speak to us, and I know you are all grateful for the testimony that you have heard and the encouragement to pray, act and give in support of our sisters and brothers in Iraq.

In this, the penultimate group of sessions in the quinquennium, we shall consider items of legislative and liturgical business that are on their way to completion, including the revision stages of both the safeguarding legislation and the alternative baptism texts. A debate on Canon Mike Parsons’ Private Member’s Motion is scheduled and on Thursday we have an important debate on Mission and Growth in Rural Multi-Parish Benefices, a subject close to my own heart, as I know it is to many of yours.

The main focus of our Agenda, however, is the opportunity for members to engage in different ways with the emerging Reform and Renewal programme “In Each Generation” that is taking shape following the task group reports. In giving thought to this part of the Agenda, the Business Committee has scheduled a number of different opportunities to take counsel together, not only in debates and presentation but in discussions in small and new larger groups.

The Business Committee is committed to the constructive use of group work in the life of Synod. We understand that this has not been consistently successful and, perhaps for that reason, not universally popular, and so we have drafted some Guidelines on Group Work, which you will find in Annex 2 of the Report. I would welcome your comments on this paper and on the format of the new type of groups at this group of sessions.

The small groups which will be meeting between 9.15 and 10.45 on Wednesday

morning will be focused on Discipleship. I invite you to go straight to your group as worship will take place there at 9.15. I want to remind you that whilst some groups will take place in this building, others will be located across the River at Lambeth Palace. Please make sure you check your destination before setting off in the morning.

GS 1977 is not part of the Reform and Renewal agenda as such. However, our shared discipleship lies at the heart of our work together and our witness. We believe and pray that the time together in small groups and the focus of the first debate tomorrow afternoon will provide a shared context for our thinking as we consider and contribute to the Reform and Renewal programme.

We have scheduled enough time between the end of the small groups and the start of the larger ones for you to move if you need to, but staff have worked hard to ensure that as far as possible members have been allocated groups on the same site.

Mindful of the purpose of these larger groups, for the time being the Business Committee has called them 'ACT' groups - an acronym for their triple intention: Accountability, Consultation and Transparency. Please take the opportunity to question the task groups and engage in a broader discussion on different elements of their work in preparation for the afternoon's debates. This is a chance to listen to one another, to ask questions and to take counsel about the future of our Church. Please be aware that Synod is not in session during these meetings. They are private and not subject to Standing Orders, and I know that you do not need Standing Orders for respectful conversation. I would like to extend thanks to members of the Panel of Chairs who have kindly agreed to be with the groups to help the discussions and time-keeping run smoothly.

Our formal business resumes on Wednesday afternoon with a series of debates on aspects of the work of the task groups.

The Business Committee does not generate business for Synod except on matters within our policy responsibility, for example, the very exciting Report on Seat Allocation (GS 1975), about which I will speak to you shortly.

The Business Committee continues to consider initiatives that will help us work together efficiently. The move to paperless worship using screens was trialled in November and continues. The Synod Chaplains have taken up a suggestion that a PDF copy of the booklet should be available for download and you should have received this at the end of last week. Paper copies of the booklet may be requested at the information desk if you need them.

You will also be aware from your papers that there are significant changes to the format of Synod Questions which we hope will improve pace and spontaneity, perhaps once we are used to them. A copy of the Questions Booklet was sent by email with the full transcript of the answers and is part of your tagged papers as usual. Everyone will have the answers to the questions, so those responding will not need to read them out, but can move straight to take supplementary questions. Oh joy!

In experimenting with a new format, we have to work within our existing Standing

Orders. Therefore, it will feel a bit clumsy this afternoon when the person answering will say, "I refer the questioner to my answer given on the Questions Paper" before they can take those supplementaries. If the new formula is well-received, we will be able to seek a change in Standing Orders to avoid this in future.

As always, your comments on our work so far and future areas to look at are always welcome. We received comments after the last group of sessions that some contributions were hard to hear. Additional amplifiers have been brought in and you can help by standing as close to the microphones as possible and by not dropping your voices at the end of sentences.

A third Synod this year, paperless worship, more complex group work and the new format for Questions mean more work for the staff, all of whom have made significant practical and inspirational contributions to the way we are working together. We salute and thank you. I want also to thank those who have led our worship and are and will be praying for us as we work together.

I beg to move that Synod do take note of this Report.

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

*Ms Susan Cooper (London):* This is really an Item that I would request for the July Synod - just a bit of forward thinking. On 9 September Her Majesty the Queen will become the longest reigning monarch in England's history and I would like to suggest that we have a motion in the July Synod requesting the precedence to send Her Majesty a greeting and congratulations on that occasion.

*Canon Timothy Allen (St Edmundsbury and Ipswich):* Chairman, I want to question the Business Committee about an important omission from our agenda for tomorrow afternoon. Just like the other three Task Group Reports which we are to debate and vote on tomorrow afternoon, the Green Report is of great importance for the future of the Church of England.

Without any approval from General Synod radical changes of practice are to be made for good or ill and a great deal of money is to be spent, £2 million in 2014-16 and nearly £1 million in 2017 and annually thereafter. Make no mistake, Chairman, this is Church money looked after for the Church by the Church Commissioners. To spend it on the Wash House Project means it cannot be spent on other priorities in the dioceses.

Like the other three Task Group Reports, the Green Report should be debated and voted on in an open and transparent way by the whole Synod in this Assembly Hall tomorrow afternoon. As the Chairman of the Business Committee has here emphasised, private discussions in self-selected act groups tomorrow morning in the Harvey Goodwin Room will be useful but they are not enough.

Why - I hope the Chair of the Business Committee will tell us when she responds, or better still the Archbishop might tell us if he intervenes in the debate - is the Green Report not to be properly debated and voted on by the whole Synod tomorrow afternoon along with the other three Task Group Reports?

Is it because the Bishops believe it is their business alone and not the business of an elected General Synod to determine how their successors as Bishops are to be chosen and trained? Is it because they fear criticism? Is it because they worry that the Green Report would not get a majority? Is it because they feel that the Green Report is not sufficiently important to justify Synod's attention? Or is it because perhaps they want to play down Lord Green's Report out of embarrassment at Lord Green's earlier roles as Chief Executive and Chairman of HSBC which was involved, on his watch, on a massive scale in facilitating tax evasion through Swiss bank accounts?

Do they want, as it were, to try hastily to close the Wash House door on HSBC's dirty linen? Maybe, but, if so, Chairman, General Synod has all the more reason to debate the matter. There is a need to ask whether the Archbishops, who as the answer to question 25 makes clear, were personally responsible, whether they were wise to appoint the ex-Chairman of HSBC to chair the Task Force. Thank you, Chairman.

*Mr Samuel Margrave (Coventry):* Thank you, Chair. The Business Committee report highlights a number of Private Member's Motions which have over 100 signatories but have still not yet been debated. They go as far back as 2012. What I would like to know is, being as this year those motions will lapse, actually it would be a waste of those signatories who took the time to ask for these things to be debated.

I understand reports may come forward in the future, but what I would like to see is maybe at the July Synod some time set aside for a kind of backbench members' day where the voices of ordinary members of Synod who have asked for these issues to be debated. As much as the Business Committee membership is very personable, it is not right that they silence members and we should be using process properly to bring issues forward.

Secondly, I was disappointed, being as we want the Church to be more relevant and to speak about issues of the day that we have not spoken about the OFSTED British values that are affecting Christian schools. We have not spoken about the magistrate who, because he expressed his view of Christian marriage, has been removed. We have not spoken about three parent babies. These are the kinds of issues that I know may not be easy for the Business Committee to bring forward but I would like us to debate issues in this place so we can send a message to the other place across the road before they make decisions, so they can hear our voice.

Finally, and yes it has already been mentioned, I concur with the views expressed, I would like to ask in relation to the Panorama programme last night and the Green Report why it did not come to Synod and, importantly, if Synod has confidence or the Business Committee has confidence in Lord Green; and, furthermore, in regard to Mr Spence, who is also a member of the Conservative Party and has a banking connection that we can ensure that we have confidence in him, his Chairmanship of his Task Group? I would like to hear the Business Committee's comment on that. Thank you, Chair.

*Mrs Margaret Condick (St Edmundsbury and Ipswich):* Thank you, Chair. I was looking forward to reading the report on 'Growing the Rural Church', especially as I am from a

village in Suffolk which has been in a benefice of five and is now in a discussion on becoming one of nine.

So, here is the report, nice green cover, picture of smiling female priests and smiling children, but when I opened it I thought, "Oh, no", as usual with the special reports it is difficult to read. Not because of colours behind the text or words over pictures; no, it is difficult because of the font and its colour. The text is pale grey on white paper, the font is Sans-Serif, no little lines to help guide the eye and very thin letters. It looks elegant but for some of us it is a nightmare to read. It may look good on computer screens and your computer whiz kids may have had fun designing it, but the pale grey is not such a problem on a bright screen.

I did read it like this, with my glasses off and six inches from my eyes. It was quite a struggle but it was worth it. I am wondering, have any of you ever stood in front of a news-stand of newspapers and examined their print, without actually reading them I mean?

All without exception use a Serif font and black ink for the main text and I am pretty sure they have done plenty of research into what is easy to read. Have a look sometime. So, please, in future use black ink and a Serif font for the main text just like you use in all the other reports. Thank you that they are still like that. Thank you.

*Revd Canon Dr Christopher Sugden (Oxford):* Chair, members of Synod, we are grateful to those who invited Archbishop Warda to address us. In response to the Archbishop's challenging address, I believe that we on behalf of the Church of England ought to be making an apology to our fellow Christians in Iraq suffering this horrendous persecution for failing to support them adequately in their hour of need.

Our nation's leaders have not so far offered any meaningful asylum to those of your people who need to leave Iraq. Our nation's leaders have not yet proposed any viable plan to provide security for those who wish to stay and maintain their Christian witness and heritage. Christian Aid, which is sponsored by and acts for 40 denominations in the UK, including the Church of England, has not so far provided any specific aid to those members of these churches and their families, despite putting out their materials on our chairs at the last Synod. I do hope and trust that they will find ways to make our gifts available to support Christians in Iraq after the Archbishop's speech.

In the Body of Christ when one member of the Body suffers all the members suffer. One of Paul's principal teachings for disciples is to do good to all people, especially those of the Household of Faith. Despite all of our ecumenical dialogues and the addresses given to this Synod by leaders of the eastern churches, our Church through its official agency has failed, in my view, to observe these requirements of fellowship in Christ.

Those persecuting Christians in the region are singling them out from all others because of their religious identity and treating them as targets precisely because they are Christians, as we have heard. Because they are Christians, unfortunately, they are also experiencing discrimination when it comes to aid and relief. Please, can the Presidents of our Synod produce an appropriate apology and the Business Committee give time for

us to debate and approve it.

I trust that our Church, through what channels it can to Government and its officially sponsored NGO, can seek to provide some meaningful help directly to persecuted Iraqi Christians even at this late stage. Thank you, Chair.

*Revd Canon Dr Hazel Whitehead (Guildford):* Given the far-reaching effects of the reports from the Task Groups, especially GS 1978 and 1979, and the important financial implications of GS 1981, it seems odd that more time is not being given to these debates and discussions. It is true that we do have the opportunity to attend a discussion group beforehand but it is difficult to see how being in a group of a hundred people will be managed to make this an effective experience.

As GS 1978 and 1979 are, according to the original motion, not to be discussed or voted on again but revised and implemented by the Archbishops' Council and the Houses of Bishops, this is an even more critical question. I would like to add my sense of confusion too about the Green Report. It seems odd to have a discussion group on it, suggesting that it is of legitimate interest to Synod, and yet not to have a debate or a discussion on the floor of Synod when this has also far-reaching consequences on much of our other business.

I am actually in favour of all these reports in various ways but it is hard to see them treated unequally. If the Business Planning Group really wants to move towards a better sense of accountability, consultation and transparency, which is what they say in paragraph 9, we need our Synod to be able to take better responsibility for these weighty matters by proper process. Thank you.

*Mr Philip French (Rochester):* Thank you, Chair, and thank you, Canon Booy for your characteristically lively introduction to this report. Sue reminded us that we are the hardest working Synod in living memory, or words to that effect. At our recent meeting, Emma Forward pointed out that Synods that meet often and that meet midweek are inimical to the involvement of younger lay people. I think there is a serious point in there. Indeed, it appears in one of the reports that is before us in a remark about perhaps moving to a quite different pattern of meetings.

I really do want to challenge the Business Committee, why do we need to meet on this occasion, from Tuesday lunchtime until late on Thursday? Could we not have managed two full days on Monday and Tuesday or Thursday and Friday rather than wrecking the entire working week? How might we have done that? Well, I dare to suggest that on this occasion perhaps we could have dispensed with the group work. I absolutely see the value of well-facilitated conversations on issues such as women bishops and, I am absolutely sure, on issues of human sexuality but do we really need it this time? By the way, I do want to welcome the Annex 2 on Guidelines for Good Group Work.

The second point (and part of it has already been made) is I do regret that we are not being given an opportunity to discuss the Green Report on the identification and development of senior leadership. I will resist the temptation to try and make a speech on that, but I would just observe that not all talent and all leadership in the Church of England is clerical or episcopal. Thank you.

*A member:* On a point of order, Madam Chairman. Will you accept a motion for closure after the next speaker?

*The Chair:* I would like to hear two or three more speakers, and then I would welcome your intervention.

*Mr John Davies (Winchester):* I have been a member of Synod for ten years and for seven years lay chair of a deanery of 26 congregations, 15 stipendiary clergy, 63 schools and 34,000 schoolchildren. I would like to say how much I am looking forward to tomorrow's agenda.

For ten years the issues of women bishops have dominated our agendas. It has been an issue fraught with acrimony and division. I would like to say it is all over but I cannot. There are still clergy in my deanery who are barely on speaking terms as the consequence of the way we handle things, so much so that my deanery could not find a single cleric prepared to lead our recent mission action planning exercise. The deanery lay officers had to take it on with surprising results.

I really hope we do better with human sexuality issues. The factions are marshalling. Stern faced people are meeting behind closed doors and, "X is miffed", they are going to write a letter. I have found this aggressive division deeply painful. I wish it would all just go away. Can you fix it for me, Business Committee?

In all four Gospels my Saviour concluded with an imperative to mission. His last prayer at the Last Supper and the account attributed to the disciple closest to him was for unity. I thought this was our priority, but I am just an uneducated layman. The House of Laity represents over 95% of the membership of our Church and is the most democratically elected.

It was the embedded common-sense of the laity which saved our Church from the quite unworkable initial women bishops' legislation presented in November 2013, but it is still treated sometimes with condescension. The trouble with top-down direction is that sometimes it fights and conflicts with bottom-up initiative.

Currently, there are some great bottom-up stories going on. 11,000 ecumenical volunteers delivering Bible stories in the "Open the Book" programme; 2,000 primary schools signed up nationally, 10% of the national total of schools; 430 Trussell Trust food banks with 30,000 volunteers, and a single independent church which has grown from 40 to 16,000 regular weekly attendance in 15 years, all examples of frontline come-on lay leadership rather than top-down direction.

Houses of Bishops and Clergy, we are going to see less and less of bishops and archdeacons in the frontline due to management pressures and financial futures. What would the uneducated layman of Acts 4:13 make of today's opportunity to proclaim afresh the great commission inspired by the high priestly prayer? I do not think they would spend much precious time tearing apart their church over gay marriages and who gets to be a bishop. Why do we not just move to a simple opinion poll of the entire General Synod electorate on these matters with perhaps three options given to them?

*Revd Preb. Simon Cawdell (Hereford):* Firstly, to thank the Business Committee for an unenviable job that they have done in drawing together an agenda containing no less than six reports with considerable significance for the future of the Church. Unlike Sam Margrave, I am actually very pleased that the two controversial PMMs on human sexuality have not been put on there. I feel that, in light of the conversations that are to be had over the next 12 to 18 months, they would be akin to facing the minefield that we have and two friendly people lobbing a couple of footballs in there and inviting us to play about and pleased we are resisting.

We must congratulate them too for their ingenuity for getting all the items into the shortened set of Synod and giving us the opportunity to engage in these significant reports in groups. It is a novel approach and it is significant that the Presidents have asked us to refrain from loading the items concerning these reports with amendments, but therein lies the problem, both of principle and the programming.

The timetabling has meant that amendments to the motions falls at 4.00 pm this afternoon which is before we have had the chance to engage with them in the groups set up for the purpose. This, combined with the fact that some of the motions are asking for consent for radical changes in sweeping items without reference back to Synod, together with the shortness of the time provided for each debate, could lead conspiracy theorists to believe that this was a mechanism for sidelining synodical scrutiny.

For the avoidance of this in future, I would suggest to the Business Committee that they engage a little more robustly with the national church institutions on our behalf to ensure that motions are framed in an appropriate way which does not allow this impression. Synod's role in the scrutiny of such reports is vital for their effective implementation and anything which is perceived as restricting that needs to be resisted and, to that extent, I am grateful to Chris Hobbs for his amendment tabled on Item 11.

Chair, in a former career I was a City investment analyst. I enjoy risk, but I know that in this frail frame beats the heart of a rogue trader crying to escape. That is why I know the need for safeguards and I hope that Canon Spence, who was presenting Item 11, will take in good part my observation that the last few years have taught us that buying products with opaque outcomes from bankers, however redeemed, is a dangerous business. The difficulty we face is that 90% of the reports are excellent but 10% could be suicidal and, if not defused, have the capacity to derail all the good things in the rest.

Lastly, an item which is not on the agenda (and I regret that) is that we were informed in November that the House of Bishops would receive a report from the Archbishops' Council on the future role of the Confessional in the life of the Church and I would have hoped that at these sessions we could have received a progress report. So, congratulations to the Business Committee for their work on our behalf, but please be more robust in future. Thank you.

*Canon Peter Bruinvels (Guildford):* Thank you, Chairman. I would have hoped we could have had a debate on the admissions policy currently in place in our schools and particularly in relation to the placement of children in schools for Church of England



ministers. We have a large number of church schools and, as you know, Chairman, the local authority admissions policy is based on the principle of local schools for local children. It also has a high regard at keeping families together.

Unfortunately, this is not the case in the sense of priorities when you are a minister of religion and you are seeking to put your children into a local Church of England school. For instance, ministers of religion are not covered by the school admissions code of practice, whereas members of the armed forces are.

Like many things in life, until you have experienced those difficulties at first hand, and I have had two letters from local clergy, the impact of trying to find a school when you come in at a wrong time; so when you have your appointment it is embargoed whilst DBS checks and routine checks are made. There is a period of time, the vicar is required to be on a governing body of a particular attached Church of England school and it is sad when her own/his own children cannot actually get into the same school where they are either a governor or a chairman of governors. This has happened in my own local town of Dorking.

The transition of regular moves for children is bad enough, but for them to not be able to get into the school of your choice causes great difficulties. The problem is that it is not at this moment possible to apply for a school place as early as you could because of the timing of your appointment as a new incumbent, the residence, how close the school is, the application with letters going in and the fact, as I said, you have an embargo.

What I am asking for is serious consideration to be given to enable those clergy with children looking for places to be given the same opportunities as, for instance, the armed forces and to not disadvantage clergy who move at the wrong time of the year.

*A member:* On a point of order, Mr Chairman. I beg to move:

‘That the question be now put.’

*This motion was put and carried on a show of hands.*

*Revd Canon Susan Booy:* Thank you and thank you members of Synod. I do enjoy a challenge. I think I am going to take the questions more or less in order. Susan Cooper, thank you for your “forward thinking”. I am not quite sure what mechanism we would need for this but we will give it our careful consideration and see what way can be found.

Tim Allen, you spoke predominantly about the report, “Developing and Nurturing Future Leaders”, and I am convinced that none of the people who spoke about this is going to be satisfied with my answer because, in a sense, I have already given it in my report to you.

Much as I might be tempted to enjoy the power which you invest in me and my colleagues on the Business Committee, I have said, and will say it again, that we like you are servants of Synod and we cannot generate business and we order the business that is asked of us by the boards and councils and we seek to do that as effectively as

possible.

I certainly cannot answer on behalf of the Houses of Bishops and I have not had an opportunity to speak with Business Committee colleagues just at this point in time, but I know that we are all grateful to all lay and ordained people who give time to the Church in preparing reports.

Mr Margrave, I do apologise if you feel that we are wasting the time that members spend signing private members' motions. I am sorry. We gave clear signals about our intent over the two particular private members' motions and I think it would have been possible for further PMMs to have been tabled given that we gave a clear signal that might have been deemed more appropriate. We are and have been seeking a way of bringing topical issues to Synod and those of you who have been here for a long time will know that we have been doing that for a long time and seeking to do so in a way that would be well-prepared and appropriate.

Mrs Condick, I am very sorry you found the MPA's report difficult to read and I am sure they and other people writing reports will have heard you.

Mr Sugden, I think if a debate such as the one that you spoke is sponsored by somebody and brought to the Business Committee for them properly to order on an agenda, then we will consider it and do our very best to do that.

To Hazel Whitehead, I am grateful for your comments about being appreciative of the whole package. I do understand that there may be problems for some people involved in the large groups, not least that you might want to go to all of them. We did feel on Business Committee that this was a realistic and sensible way to try and generate some deeper conversation amongst people.

We know the groups are large. What I would really encourage you to do, friends, is to go to the larger groups, to see how they work, to have some serious conversation with one another and then to tell us; because if it was a bad idea, I will be the first to say sorry and we will not do it again; if it feels like it has some legs for the future, we may want to try it another time. But, please, there is this rather rude expression my children use it sometimes, "Suck it and see".

Philip French, well we could probably have managed with less time but then I have had several telephone calls this week suggesting that we really ought to have managed to find a bit more.

John Davies, I am very glad we are back on the agenda that you want. The Gospel imperative to mission and unity, I believe is fundamentally at the root of all our intention of being on Synod. I have to say that Business Committee cannot be responsible for your divisions or the way you conduct them; the solution to that is in your own hands.

Preb. Cawdell, thank you for your support and for your advice. I think I will restrict myself to saying that we will continue in our efforts to be robust on your behalf and if you would like us to be more robust, it is good to have heard that.

Mr Bruinvels, thank you for your impassioned contribution on the admissions policies in schools. I do not know enough about this but I hear a serious concern and it may be certainly that you could bring a Private Member's Motion but you may find another way by conversation with appropriate bodies for doing something about that.

Thank you all very much indeed.

*The Chair:* Thank you, Canon Booy's. We now move to vote on the motion standing in her name at Item 4.

*The motion*

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

*was carried on a show of hands.*

*The Chair:* Thank you very much indeed for a useful debate.

THE CHAIR *Mr Geoffrey Tattersall (Manchester)* took the Chair at 2.17 pm

## **General Synod Elections 2015: Seat Allocation (GS 1975)**

*The Chair:* Synod, we move to Item 5, for which you will need GS 1975. I call upon the Chair of the Business Committee, Canon Sue Booy's again, to move the motion standing in her name.

*Revd Canon Susan Booy's (Oxford):* I beg to move:

'That this Synod approve the recommendations set out in paragraphs (i) and (ii) on page 4 of GS 1975.'

Friends, I do not know how many of you like housekeeping but I am pretty sure even those of you who do not love it recognise its importance. What I am inviting you to consider now is an important piece of housekeeping with regard to elections that will take place in the summer, specifically the allocation of seats in the House of Laity and the House of Clergy in each diocese.

Today we are concerned only with the allocation of seats for directly elected proctors and laity. You will find information about special constituencies and ex-officio members of Synod in the table at Appendix D, but these are not covered by the recommendations of the Business Committee's Report.

Now, I suspect that on opening this Report - indeed I have some evidence for this - most of you turned straight to the figures for your own diocese. If they were the same or greater you set aside the Report either content or very content. If the number of proctors or laity to be elected was smaller you will have looked further and asked - or wanted to ask or in some cases did ask - so how did that work! It is just human nature after all!

For this reason it is important that we should understand where the figures on which the calculations are based came from, how they were gathered and how the calculations were done. The short answer to this is that rules governing elections are to be found in Canon H2 and Rule 36 of the Church Representation Rules. A longer answer is that these are explained in GS 1975. I could therefore sit down and shut up at this point but I thought I had better deal with some frequently asked questions.

So, the base figure for the calculations in respect of both houses is the number of the electorate on a given date. Following consultation with the dioceses the date was determined for their convenience as 31 July 2014 and the numbers used for the calculation were collected from and confirmed by diocesan secretaries and are (except where indicated in the Report) figures correct at that date. We use figures for the year before election to conform with the requirement of Rule 36.2 of the Church Representation Rules that the allocation is to be fixed by resolution of the Synod “not later than the last day of February in the fifth year after the last preceding election”, in other words, by the end of this month.

There has been a change in the overall allocation of proctorial seats for 2015 as a result of work that we completed last July for a number of reasons. As a result of the reduction in the size of the Universities/TEI constituency from six to four, the allocation has increased by one in each of the provinces. As they form a special constituency, the Universities and Theological Education Institutions fall outside the scope of the Report. The increase in the allocation to the Diocese of Europe from a fixed maximum of two to a minimum of three seats has been absorbed into the allocation of proctorial and lay seats in the Province of Canterbury. In other words, the increase has not added to the overall number of seats to be distributed.

We all know that neither numbers of clergy nor the number of lay persons on electoral rolls remain static. Over the past five years we note that around three-quarters of all dioceses have experienced a decline in clergy numbers and only two dioceses have experienced an increase in numbers on electoral rolls. These changes also play into the calculations.

The allocation is made within each province on a proportional basis and this involves a number of stages.

First, any diocese which is subject to a maximum allocation is given that allocation and the number deducted from the province. Now, this is only Sodor and Man in the Province of York.

Then a calculation is made to determine which dioceses, on the basis of their figures, would not be entitled to a minimum allocation of three seats. These are then allocated their three seats and the total of that allocation is again subtracted from the total number of seats available.

The calculation is then carried out again on the continuing dioceses to determine a further provisional allocation. After that, things get a bit complicated. To determine the allocation of the final seats the famous Arithmetic Mean Divisia Method kicks in and the

final places are allocated. Can I say, if anyone asks me to explain the Arithmetic Mean Divisia Method, I might cry.

We have done it using the programme. When I say “we”, this is definitely royal. We have done it by hand - and they have - and the result is as we see it in Appendices A and B.

This method of calculation - and this is the simple bit that anyone can understand - means that a change in the actual numbers in a particular diocese does not necessarily imply that the allocation of seats to that diocese will change in the same way. It depends on what proportion the actual figure represents of the total for the province. So the actual numbers in a diocese might go down while its allocation of seats increases because the proportion of the actual numbers represented of the total for the province has increased. For example, this is the case for the London diocese in the calculations for 2015. Similarly, the actual numbers in a diocese might go down but this may not be reflected in a reduction of the number of seats allocated to that diocese because the proportion of the total for the province represented by the actual numbers in the diocese remains much the same. This scenario applies to the laity in Liverpool in the figures before you.

It is worth reminding you that it is not possible to draw direct comparisons between the provinces because of the weighting in favour of the Province of York which Synod agreed to maintain in July 2014. For example, a decline in actual numbers in a diocese in the Province of Canterbury may not have the same impact on the allocation of seats as a similar decline in actual numbers in the Province of York. I refer you to the case of the Exeter and Liverpool laity.

I have to say that none of us could have dealt with this if it were not for the expertise of Nick Hills, and to him I think I am probably eternally grateful.

I hope those of you who have found parts of this simplistic will forgive and those who still have questions will ask them. Chair, I beg to move that this Synod approve the recommendations set out in paragraphs (i) and (ii) on page 4 of GS 1975.

*The Chair.* This very straightforward and uncomplicated matter is before the Synod for debate. You may be surprised to know that no one has asked to speak but Mr O'Brien is going to volunteer. Thank you very much. Mr O'Brien, you have up to five minutes.

*Mr Gerald O'Brien (Rochester):* Mr Chairman, we are grateful to the Chair of the Business Committee, who has explained how we have got to this set of figures, but, to be quite blunt, the set of figures we have got is unsupportable, they are gerrymandered and I think it is unfortunate that Synod has very little option but to support them.

To explain what I mean, if you were in the Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich you have over 20,000 lay electors who will be awarded three seats in this Synod. The Diocese in Europe, which is, give or take one or two, half the size, 10,000 electors, will also get three members, which means if you are an elector in the Diocese of Europe your vote really counts for twice as much as an elector in the Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich. Again, for the 20,053 electors in St Edmundsbury and

Ipswich, who will have three people to represent them, if they look north they will find in Carlisle, where there are only 17,674 electors, they get four to represent them.

In terms of justice, equity, fairness, common sense, this proposal fails the test. Thank you.

*The Chair:* I see no one else standing so I call on Sue Booy to respond. She has up to five minutes.

*Revd Canon Susan Booy:* I do not think I need detain you that long. Mr O'Brien, you and I know that we have had this discussion on a number of occasions, Synod has had this discussion on a number of occasions, it has done the rounds of the Elections Review Group and Business Committee, and I am confident that at the beginning of the next quinquennium it is likely to be raised with the Elections Review Group again. I think that is the proper place to raise it. It is very much a matter of opinion, and we know one another's, so I think I will leave it there. Thank you.

*The motion*

'That this Synod approve the recommendations set out in paragraphs (i) and (ii) on page 4 of GS 1975.'

*was carried on a show of hands.*

*The Chair:* Thank you very much. That concludes this item of business.

THE CHAIR *The Ven Karen Gorham (Oxford)* took the Chair at 2.30 pm

## **Presidential Address**

*The Chair:* We come now to Item 6 on our Agenda and I call upon the Archbishop of Canterbury to give his Presidential Address.

*The Archbishop of Canterbury (Most Revd & Rt Hon Justin Welby):* Joy and delight in the love of God is at the heart of Christian witness. It was something referred to in earlier comments, the imperative for mission, but the experience of many of us - I dare say most of us - is that, instead of joy and delight, evangelism and witness bring nervousness, uncertainty and guilt.

The strategic response to this is clearly for a long-term, iterative and interactive, metric-based, evidence generated development of competencies across the widest possible range of stakeholders in order to achieve maximum acceleration of disciple input with the highest possible return on effort and capital employed.

That last paragraph is, of course, complete rubbish. To be honest, I just put it in in order to reassure you as it is well known that I am in fact a businessman who put on the wrong clothes this morning.

Back to the subject. Witness and evangelism are expressions of the overflow of the love and joy of the grace of God into our lives, and the life of His whole Church and His whole world. They are inescapably tied up with the Kingdom of God, with lives lived incarnationally full of the hospitality and generosity of Christ. They are as much part of the life of the church as worship, as the Bishop of Chelmsford, Stephen Cottrell, commented to me about a year ago, and should be about as guilt-inducing as breathing.

Evangelism and witness are not strategies, let alone strategies for church survival. A church that looks for strategies to survive has lost the plot. We need strategies so that we may be more clearly those who are able to take up our cross and follow Christ, as we heard earlier from the Archbishop, willing to die for Him so that all may live through Him.

As Paul says when speaking to the church in Corinth, the most dysfunctional of the churches he planted: “for the love of Christ urges us on...” or, in the King James version, “the love of Christ constrains”.

Yet when we look back at the Church of England, we do not see in general an overwhelming sense everywhere - I am being quite tentative here - that the love of Christ urges us on in evangelism and witness, although it clearly does in many places and throughout the church in many other areas of ministry. This is nothing new. If we go back to the Bishop of Rochester’s Report - the previous one, or any previous one - in 1944 - I know you are not that old, Bishop James - set up by Archbishop Temple, “Towards the Conversion of England”, we find there a constant theme that unless the whole Church, lay and ordained, becomes in a new sense witnesses then there can be no progress in spreading the good news of Jesus.

People have today, and in other places and other times over the last few months, rightly expressed concern and comment about task groups, and certain task groups. Listening today, it is something on which we clearly need to reflect further. Task groups are not the end; they are a means to the end. The subjects they are looking at are absolutely essential and are crucial to our future, and we owe those who work on them much thanks as well as many comments. No doubt the output of the task groups will change as time goes by. That is among the proper and right roles of a Synod: to ask questions, to push and review, to look afresh and to ensure we are thinking carefully through the implications of what is being done. And, Synod, you do not hesitate to do that, in my limited experience.

But they are means to an end. Training, issues of management, the allocation of resources: however good they are - and they must be very good - are not the final aim of the Church. We are finally called to be those who worship and adore God in Christ, overflowing with the good news that we have received, making Christ known to all so that the good news is proclaimed effectively throughout the church.

And it is good news. It is the most compelling of announcements. It comes as a gift to us, not our own creation. It is news because it tells us of what we do not already know. We have not deduced it ourselves or worked it out by our own power of reason: the good news is the power of God.

And what a power! We know through Christ that God himself is turned towards His world: He has chosen to be for us and with us. That is the message which urges us on. We are not rejected, but accepted; we are not condemned, but saved; we are not lost, but found; we are not dead, but alive - all because of the work of Jesus Christ.

In our good news we speak of the one who really does not sweep our human needs, concerns, cares, desires and problems under the carpet, but takes them up and makes them His own.

And if we allow ourselves to be gripped by this Gospel, this good news of Jesus Christ, it will overwhelm us, for it seems too good to be true. As Pope Francis said in *Evangelii Gaudium*: “the Gospel constantly invites us to rejoice”.

More than that, evangelism and witness are of the very nature of God who goes out and sows in order that the good news may, in some cases, bring out a harvest of righteousness and joy and hope, transforming the world in which we live, transforming the sorrow and brokenness of which we have heard this afternoon, and bringing hope and renewal.

For these reasons, because the good news is of the nature of God who is for us and with us, the good news of Jesus Christ is the hope of the world - the hope - and yet too often we forget that. About a year ago, I was in the Democratic Republic of the Congo with my wife. We went to an IDP camp and saw scenes of the utmost suffering and terrible deprivation, extreme even by the standard of such places. A Christian NGO, with UK government funding, linked to Tearfund, was doing extraordinary work. Towards the end of the visit a crowd had gathered, and a local bishop said: “Say something to encourage them”. I could think of nothing, and playing for time, with immense lack of faith, said in French (it was a French-speaking area): “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever”. I was drawing breath for some banal statements about actions I could take to support them, pompously and ignorantly, when, as it was translated into real French, they began to cheer. They knew Jesus Christ was the same yesterday, today and forever, and being reminded of it brought hope and light. I felt deeply, deeply ashamed of my lack of confidence in the Gospel. The Gospel is good news for all people at all times everywhere.

We share the good news with humility, even shame at times at our own failure to be those who lives or whose Church or whose history reveals the good news as it truly is. We must share the good news without manipulation, technique that is intended to get people to be other than they really are, or any other unethical or underhand method. We must bring the good news with hospitality, and without a trace of coercion, with love and grace making a defence for the hope that is within us. But we must bear witness and bring the good news of Jesus Christ.

The sharing is by action, by word, by campaign, by culture, by attitude. To defend those attacked by anti-Semitism, to share food in a food bank, to support a credit union because of the solidarity with which the Holy Spirit calls us to be with those on the edge; all this is one side of a coin, the other side of which is to proclaim, announce and declare the good news.



We share the good news together; it is the calling of the whole Church. The Bishop of Worcester, Bishop John Inge, wrote to me recently, and I will quote at length from what he wrote. He said: "Evangelism is, of course, about making new disciples, introducing people to a living and personal relationship with the Lord Jesus. However, it must be about a great deal more than this, since God's mission is much bigger than making individual disciples. It is to reconcile the whole creation to himself in Christ and, in so doing, inaugurate his Kingdom. When that mission is accomplished every knee shall bow to God's rule, whether in heaven or in earth or under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. The Church is his chosen instrument for that mission in the world, and the effective sign of the inauguration of his Kingdom here on earth, that Kingdom for whose coming we pray in the words that Jesus taught us. Through evangelism God makes disciples who then play their part in God's great plan. That part must be played together as members of the Body of Christ, not as individuals". John finished that section by saying: "As Alison Morgan has put it in the title of a book which will shortly be published: *The Plural of Disciple is Church.*"

Yet in so many places, the reality is different. To quote Pope Francis again, "No-one should ever think that this invitation is not meant for him or her". We lose confidence in the good news when it stops being good news for us. And that is such a danger when we are enmeshed in so many of the arguments and divisions with which we struggle. They may be necessary, but their danger is we lose sight of good news for us. When it has become stale news or old news or other people's news, when it has become bad news or sad news, then every day I must open myself to the love of Christ, so this love is continually making me new. That too is collective. Our guided conversations, our praying and thinking together, our discussions of task groups, must also open afresh together, all of us, to the love of Christ, so the good news is ours, not just mine.

To return to Archbishop William Temple, we find a vision that is as yet unfulfilled - his vision. It is that, for the effective and fruitful proclamation of the good news to be made in this country, every person who is a disciple of Jesus Christ plays an essential role as a witness of Jesus Christ.

There is nothing better than bearing witness to Christ so that others themselves may become his witnesses but my fear is that many of us have lost all confidence in the Gospel. We have thought that you need to be an expert or a professional to be a witness, but we do not, we simply need to be able to tell of the love that has grasped hold of us and the difference it has made in our own lives.

The Evangelism Task Group is one report we have not yet seen. I hope that, if the Business Committee thinks it is appropriate - I am being very careful and proper here - they may be able to allow it to report in July or later some time, responding to a motion that this Synod passed some time ago. The Evangelism Task Group seeks to support the Church as an effective signpost of the Gospel at every point: in cathedrals, in local churches, in chaplaincies, at universities, schools, hospitals, prisons, the armed services and so many other points, in all of which so much of the really tough work is done.

At the moment that effective signpost is not always and everywhere inescapably visible, if I may be so un-tentative.

It is essential that we give time and effort into shaping Church structures which enable and reflect witness to the compelling love of Christ. That change will not just happen, we cannot just hope for something magical to occur.

But the biggest hill to climb is that at every point in the Church we might be so urged on by the love of Christ, the good news of salvation, that we break the historic pattern which in many parts of our Church goes back centuries, and become those who, with all our faults, all our failings, all our divisions and sins and misunderstanding - because, let us be clear, if we wait until we are fit to witness, we will wait forever - we become those who, with all those drawbacks, are nevertheless humble, gentle, transparent, hospitable witnesses to Jesus Christ, so that the world may know.

That is a challenge which takes us straight back to the life of the local church or chaplaincy, to the cathedral, to every point at which there is a Christian, because at every point at which there is a Christian there is a witness. It takes us back here to be those who serve and love the witnesses, so that they are liberated to a joyful ministry of witness. All that we are doing here must be held in that context of the worship of God and the sharing of the good news. Amen.

*The Chair:* Thank you, Archbishop.

## **Report on Immersion Experience in India**

*The Chair:* We come now to Item 7 on our Agenda, a Report on an immersion experience in India. This is a presentation under SO 97. This will be a short presentation with slides by three of the regional representatives to the House of Bishops and the speakers will present for 15 minutes. On this occasion, the Business Committee has not made any provision for Synod members to be able to ask questions, but I am delighted to welcome those presenting; the Ven Annette Cooper, the Revd Preb Dr Jane Tillier and the Rt Revd Libby Lane.

*Ven Annette Cooper (Chelmsford):* Thank you, Chair. Good afternoon, Synod.

We are all, I believe, concerned about global poverty. To understand this better and to inform our leadership roles in leading change we, with four other female senior church leaders and colleagues from Christian Aid, visited Kerala in South India for an immersion experience. Immersion involves living with poor families in their homes and communities and living their lives for a while, getting stuck in if you like, seeing with our own eyes and touching with our own hands.

We were based in two small villages made up of settling tribal families, who were moving from living freely on the land to becoming more settled and building permanent concrete homes. We were well supported by a local NGO who was encouraging participatory development in these villages. Indeed, they had helped the people to establish a local water supply. We stayed in pairs with an interpreter. We slept on floors, often together. We had amazing conversations, especially with the women in the households. Kunji, my host, had never spoken of her life to anyone before. Indeed, she had never met a foreign person. She was both illiterate and innumerate and her

husband earned less than £4 a day. She had no money of her own and no voice or choice in her daily living. Her son hoped for a daily wage with casual work. Her prized family possession was her cow, and I am very pleased to report that on our final day the cow delivered safely a female calf. We were there to witness it.

Experiencing the hardships and demands of daily living showed the need for greater gender justice globally and underlined Christian Aid's understanding that 'poverty is a woman's face'.

*The Bishop of Stockport (Rt Revd Libby Lane):* In addition to living among these families and alongside our interpreters, who themselves provided valuable insights and learning opportunities, our immersion also involved engagement with women who were participating in self-generated transformation. We met three groups of remarkable women who had, together, identified the need for change, the outcomes they desired and the means to move from where they were to where they wanted to be. By accessing funding, training and resources, both human and physical, they changed their lives, their futures, their communities. The context of each project was very different, but these women exercising self-determination was transformative.

We visited a micro enterprise producing a highly nutritious food supplement for distribution in state pre-school nurseries. This was established by a group of women who were offered local authority-sponsored training in production and business management in the use and maintenance of machinery and access to loans to purchase a small industrial unit and machinery.

We visited a community action group who confronted the state's reluctance to provide running water to their neighbourhood. By co-operative matched funding they forced delivery of this essential service. We visited a group of paddy field labourers who, by accessing training and jointly accessing loans to purchase a mechanised planter, together were able to negotiate contracts with landowners and thereby have a guaranteed regular income of their own. We learnt from these women that a society that shared enterprise was not simply the most effective means to the end they desired; it was the end in itself. They realised their inherent value and purpose only in the company of each other. We glimpsed something remarkable about identity, mutuality, about being members of one body, about what it is to embody the Kingdom of God.

*Revd Preb Dr Jane Tillier:* We learnt a lot. We learnt a lot about one another. We learnt about development and we learnt to ask some slightly different questions of ourselves and perhaps of our Church; something about the difference between intention and impact perhaps. Sometimes with the very best of intentions we have unintended consequences. We were staying with border people, displaced tribal people from the border of Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu. They had been displaced by the building of a much needed reservoir and dam. Unintended consequences. We saw all sorts of examples of challenges to gender justice, questioning the place of women in that society. We spent an inspiring day with a team of women from the Church of South India who were working right across Kerala.

If I had to sum up my learning from the immersion experience in one sentence, it would be that development that is not properly participatory, and therefore properly

empowering, always runs the risk of being rather patronising, and therefore perpetuating disempowerment. You see before you an image of a woman included, with a seat, part of the journey, but actually there is something very important about the implication of allowing those who have been disempowered: in this case in this visit women: when they are allowed a place at the table, are they also allowed to change the menu, to drive, to drive for themselves? A benign paternalism, which can be espoused as much by women as by men, is disempowering in the way that some aid can be. By contrast, true participatory development such as we witnessed in our immersion experience is ennobling and empowering, transforming and liberating, all of which of course have good Gospel resonances. Transformation of the very best kind was evident not only in the women we met, through the projects that they were engaged in, but also through them in their wider communities and within us as we journeyed from the Church of England to Kerala.

*Ven Annette Cooper:* We found that in this experience each day there was much to reflect upon and much for prayer. At the end of our visit, our host families and our interpreters were invited to share their reflections on the experience too, and it was quite amazing; the best 360 I have ever been in. The families reported: "We were privileged to host you", "You wash your hands a lot" and "You bathe twice a day?" "You inspired our children and we are grateful for that." "You gave time and attention to them." "You taught them." Can you imagine singing *The Wheels on the Bus* here? "They now want to work harder and study so that they can travel and grasp opportunities." "We are amazed that you travelled to visit us as women together." "We are not sure," said the men, "that we would want our wives to travel, but we might if they were in a group like yours." It was overwhelming for our host communities that as women, "even at our age", which spanned quite a breadth, we were all still wanting to learn. That was a genuine surprise.

Our interpreters were amazing. They were all young, middle-class graduate social workers, and this is what they said: "You have all expressed thanks and gratitude and this is not a part of our culture. It is not something we do. We shall go from this experience," they said, "and begin to say thank you to people and appreciate and value them more."

I think you can tell from our reporting that we all learned much. We are still reflecting on a great deal. Each one of us has been changed because of this experience, and today, in this Synod, we would like to record our thanks, as we do in the paper that we prepared, to everyone who made it possible for this opportunity and for us to share this presentation with you today. Thank you very much.

*The Chair:* On behalf of Synod can I thank you for your challenging and informative presentation.

THE CHAIR *The Archbishop of Canterbury (Most Revd and Rt Hon Justin Welby)* took the Chair at 3.02 pm

### **Legislative Business**

#### **Amending Canon No. 32 (GS 1902D)**

*The Chair:* We come now to legislative business. We begin with the enactment of Amending Canon No. 32, which received Final Approval from the Synod at the July 2014 group of sessions. I have to report to the Synod that the Royal Assent and Licence to make, promulge and execute the Amending Canon has been given. Under SO 66, once the Instrument of Enactment has been read to the Synod, the motion appearing in the Order Paper as Item 500 must be put to the Synod and voted on without debate. I therefore call upon the Registrar to read the Instrument of Enactment.

*The Registrar read the instrument of enactment.*

*The Chair:* There is no debate. I therefore beg to move:

‘That the Canon entitled “Amending Canon No. 32” be made, promulgated and executed.’

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

*The Instrument of Enactment was signed by the Archbishops, the Prolocutor of the Convocation of Canterbury, the Senior Deputy Prolocutor for the Convocation of York, and the Chair and Vice-Chair of the House of Laity.*

THE CHAIR *Mr Aiden Hargreaves-Smith (London)* took the Chair at 3.10 pm.

### **Legislative Business:**

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

*The Chair:* We come now to Items 504 to 506, the Draft Naming of Dioceses Measure. Members will need the Draft Measure GS 1935A and the Report of the Revision Committee GS 1935Y. You will recall that the Revision Committee stage was completed at last November’s group of sessions but that there was not time to proceed to the revision stage. We therefore take the revision stage now. No notice of any amendments has been received and the motions to be moved by the Steering Committee appear on the Order Paper.

We begin with clause 1. I call upon a member of the Steering Committee to move Item 504 that clause 1 stand part of the Measure. You have up to ten minutes.

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

‘That clause 1 stand part of the Measure.’

Because of the lapse of time since we considered the Report of the Revision

Committee, it might be helpful if I reminded members what this draft Measure is about. It is a permissive Measure to allow the name of a diocese to be taken either from the see of the bishop of the diocese or from a geographical area within which the see of the bishop is situated. Nobody will be required to make use of the provision; it is simply permissive. If an existing diocese wished to change its name to a geographical area it would have to obtain the consent of the General Synod to do so. There was felt to be a need for this Measure because when the new diocese in Yorkshire was being planned, the legal advice received by the Dioceses Commission was that the new diocese could not be called after a region or area but had to be named after a town or city. So it was that the new diocese created on Easter Day last year was the Diocese of Leeds. It could not legally be called the Diocese of West Yorkshire and the Dales, although the legal scheme which created it provides that it may be known by that name.

As originally drafted at First Consideration, clause 1(2) of the draft Measure provided that if the name of the diocese was of a geographical area then the name of the see should also be of that geographical area, but in Revision Committee a new clause 1(2) was inserted, which provides that where the name of the diocese is to be taken from a geographical area, then the style and title of the bishop may be taken either from that name or from the name of the see of the bishop. In other words, flexibility has been introduced so that the name of the diocese and the style and title of the bishop need not necessarily be the same.

When the Report of the Revision Committee was debated in November last year, there was a debate lasting about half an hour before lunch on the Tuesday. Synod took note of the Revision Committee Report with a not very convincing majority. There were 105 votes in favour of taking note, 94 votes against and 10 recorded abstentions.

Chair, the Steering Committee, of which I am the Chair, is the servant of Synod. If it is the will of Synod that this draft Measure should proceed, then the Steering Committee will do all that it can to facilitate this so that it reaches Final Approval and is sent to Parliament.

If that is the will of Synod, then members should vote in favour of the motion that clause 1 do stand part of the Measure. However, if Synod does not wish this draft Measure to become law, then it would be preferable to stop it now by voting against the motion that clause 1 do stand part of the Measure and save the time and effort of the matter proceeding.

If Synod votes that clause 1 should not stand part of the Measure, then I would ask the leave of the Chair to withdraw the motion about clause 2. That would leave a Measure without any content and so it would effectively be at an end. I, therefore, move that clause 1 of the Draft Naming of Dioceses Measure do stand part of the Measure.

*The Chair.* Item 504 is now open for debate.

*Miss Prudence Dailey (Oxford):* I would like to invite the Synod to think again and reject this. My problem with this is that it breaks the connection between the name of the diocesan see, the name of the see of the bishop, and the name of the diocese and, also, the style and title of the bishop. That has ecclesiological consequences.

Our understanding in the Church of England of what a diocese is has always been that a diocese is the geographical area covered by the see of the bishop. This represents a symbolic departure from that understanding and it takes away from something traditional and historical and turns it into something rather bureaucratic.

It is a bit like Edward Heath renaming the counties. I know he redrew their boundaries as well but it was not a very popular thing to do. If a diocese wants to be known by another name, clearly it can be known by another name just as the Diocese of Leeds is known as “the Diocese of West Yorkshire and the Dales”. We do not actually have to have this in order for people to be known by that name if they think that that is pastorally appropriate but, underlying that, will be our traditional ecclesiology of what a diocese is and so I do hope that Synod will reject this at this stage. Thank you.

*Revd Canon Simon Killwick (Manchester):* I would like to speak against clause 1 as amended. I think this legislation began as a potentially sensible piece of legislation to meet the desire of those in West Yorkshire to have a diocese known as “the Diocese of West Yorkshire and the Dales”, but it became in the revision process clear that actually what that diocese wanted was to have a diocesan bishop called “the Bishop of Leeds” and then to have a diocese which was known by a different name, namely “West Yorkshire and the Dales”.

Prudence Dailey has already spoken about the need for a link between the diocesan bishop and the diocese in terms of the names. I think this legislation, as it has become amended, is actually a recipe for confusion and breaks the link between the name of the diocesan bishop and the name of the diocese.

It has also become an unnecessary piece of legislation because the Diocese of Leeds is already known as “the Diocese of West Yorkshire and the Dales”, why do we need another piece of legislation to make that possible when it is possible already? The legal scheme that created the diocese has already provided that it may be called “West Yorkshire and the Dales”, or, “also known as”.

On the principle of not getting into unnecessary legislation, I would ask members of Synod to vote against clause 1. We do not need this legislation to achieve the desired result, so let us not have it. Thank you.

*The Bishop of Chelmsford (Rt Revd Stephen Cottrell):* I too want to speak some caution into this development that is being proposed, and I think it is helpful if Synod perhaps understands why this may not be a good thing to do and understands the ecclesiology that is at stake here.

The Church is not an organisation. The Church is a way of being, a way of being with one another and a way of being with Christ. To be the Church is to be participating in the life of God; or, to put it another way, the Church is not an organisation whose task is to produce community. The Church is a community and, because we are a large and complex community, we require organisation. As a community we have a beginning or what we might you might call a source, and the beginning and source of the Church is the person, Jesus Christ.

Jesus appointed apostles and apostles planted churches. Therefore, every church has from the very beginning a source, a particularity, a particularity of person and a particularity of place from which its ministry and mission flow. This person in Anglican ecclesiology is a bishop, and the diocese is not merely a region to be organised and managed but the community in which the bishop is the source.

The development being proposed is in danger of putting things the wrong way round; for the Church, which is how it looks if we begin with the region, becomes a pyramid with the bishop at the top, whereas we understand it to be an inverted pyramid where the bishop is the source and the gathering point for the community.

We are the Diocese of Chelmsford, not because we happen to live in the old county of Essex, now Essex and five east London boroughs. After all, where would that leave our few parishes in Cambridgeshire? We are the Diocese of Chelmsford because we are the people of God who are in communion with the Bishop of Chelmsford, this particular person in this particular place. Our being is defined by our relationship and our community, not our geography.

I dare to say that the Diocese of West Yorkshire and the Dales is all very well except, of course, if you happen to live in Barnsley, still in the diocese, still in communion with the Bishop of Leeds, but now defined geographically and sociologically in a way that leaves you out, not as has always been the historic Catholic order relationally and sacramentally.

Here, I am indebted to the Bishop of Coventry and FAOC's paper on this, which could have saved a lot of time if Synod had read it a year ago. As John Suzelis (?) has observed, the total community which constitutes the Church is not made by adding together all the local communities, for each community, however small, represents the Church in her entirety.

As the final ARCIC report makes clear, the fullness of the Church is found in the local Church. The bishop is a sign and a focus, a source of this unity. Therefore, the bishop's particularity and place matter. Resisting this apparently small development may not be a ditch to die in but it might be a thread that, if tugged, unravels quite a lot more than we realise.

So, as others have already said, why not keep things as they are? We do use the informal aliases, "the Church of England in Essex and East London", "the Church of England in West Yorkshire and the Dales", but keep the diocese a communion not a regional organisation.

*Mr Clive Scowen (London):* I find myself in the unusual position of being on the other side of the argument from Prudence Dailey and Father Killwick, with whom I often make common cause, because I want to urge Synod to persevere with this Measure and in particular with this clause without which the Measure has little substance. It is a purely enabling provision which forces nothing on anyone. It gives freedom to a diocese to make decisions about its name and the title of its diocesan which it judges best to suit its context and, in particular, its mission.



There are, of course, many doctrinal issues on which the decisions of the councils of the ancient Church are of enduring relevance and importance, but I suggest that rules about the naming of dioceses is not one of them. Every diocese is different and should have the freedom to decide these things for themselves, subject to the supervisory ratification of this Synod.

I do not live in West Yorkshire and the Dales but I do understand that, historically, there is a difference of sense of place between, particularly, Bradford and Leeds. If the diocese judges that it is not helpful to be called “the Diocese of Leeds” for all purposes, then it should be free to make that judgment, I suggest, in its particular context, which may not apply elsewhere. For all I know, this may well apply to other dioceses as well.

The Bishop of Chelmsford has made a very important point about the nature of a diocese and the relation between all the members of the diocese and the diocesan bishop, but I cannot for the life of me see why calling the diocese by a different name from the name of the bishop should interfere with that. It is a reality which exists irrespective of name.

Prudence Dailey and Father Killwick say, well, you can already call it by this other name, so why do we need this? Well, that is true, but why add to the list of oddities that this Church insists on having where we do one thing and call it another? It is very odd, I suggest, to have a mandatory rule which is said to derive from a council of the ancient Church and then say, well, you can ignore that and just call yourself what you like anyway. It is far better to align the law of the Church with what is felt to be needed for missional purposes by the dioceses.

Yes, it is messy to have the name of a diocese different from the title of its diocesan, but if the diocese thinks it will help its mission why should they not be allowed to have it? You can, if you want to, insist on the orderliness of the graveyard, but I personally prefer the messiness which the new life of effective mission inevitably brings and I hope that the Synod will too. Let this be a first fruit of setting dioceses free from unnecessary central regulation.

*The Bishop of Coventry (Rt Revd Dr Christopher Cocksworth):* I think there are some fine judgments to be made here. I think the Bishop of Chelmsford put it very well that this is not something to sort of die in the ditch for and yet there may well be a thread that we could find unravelling unintentionally.

It is clear that the dilemmas faced by the Dioceses Commission over the new Diocese of West Yorkshire and the Dales were real ones and one can appreciate the complexities they found themselves in, but I have concerns that we will find ourselves on the basis of those particular complexities doing something which we might not intend to but has implications for the character of the bishop and, indeed, the nature of the Church and I think much of it has already been said and said very well.

If I could just home in on a couple of things that maybe have not been emphasised entirely. That is, the way that the diocese is traditionally the portion of the Church which is, as the Bishop of Chelmsford has said, gathered around the bishop who, as the

bishop, embodies and expresses a personal episcopate. The episcopate of the Church is embodied, it is expressed and it is lived out in that person. The bishop at the same time signifies and shares the apostolic word by which the Church is generated. In other words, therefore, the bishop is the chief pastor of the people of the one church of the diocese rather than a regional network of churches that happen to occupy a given area.

At the same time, the bishop is fundamentally a teacher of the faith of the Church, to which the faith of the Church is entrusted by the Church's intention to maintain its apostolicity and who, by a faithful teaching ministry, signifies and speaks the word of the Gospel from which the Church itself arises and that teaching ministry is signified by the see of the bishop.

My concern, I think like others, is that by divorcing the name of the diocese from the person of the bishop and from his or her seat of teaching, we run the risk of damaging the character of the bishop as pastor and teacher and, thereby, unwittingly I think, we risk damaging the life of the Church, the Church as that community, that family of which we have heard, not an administrative organisation but a community who have been brought into life by the word of the Gospel, the Gospel which the bishop is entrusted with teaching faithfully.

So I do have an unease that remains and I would like to register that we would take this move and risk something that is of significance in the life of the Church, and I am not sure that we need to do that even for practical reasons. So I personally would be quite happy, along with others, if it were to drop. Thank you.

*Dr John Beal (Leeds):* Thank you, Chair. Can I start by reminding Synod that this legislation started life as two Diocesan Synod Motions to General Synod. Both the Dioceses of Ripon and Leeds and the Diocese of Bradford passed Diocesan Synod Motions calling for General Synod to initiate this particular piece of legislation to allow a diocese to be known as a geographical area or as a major town or city.

When we were talking about the new diocese, we could have called it "the Diocese of Ripon and Leeds and Bradford and Wakefield". However, Chair, that really would have been, although sensible in one way, a bit of a mouthful. We have got dioceses with two city names but none with four city names.

Secondly, as I understand it, and I am not an expert in ecclesiology, the see of the bishop is usually where he has his seat, his cathedra, in his cathedral. Our diocese has three cathedrals, one in Ripon, one in Bradford and one in Wakefield, and yet the see of the diocese is the see of Leeds. We are in new territory and we do need to see how in this territory we have now found ourselves we make sense of the situation.

As far as we are concerned in the diocese, and certainly in the historic dioceses of Ripon and Leeds and certainly in the deanery in which I am placed, there is unanimous feeling that to have the diocese known as "West Yorkshire and the Dales" and the Bishop to continue to be "the Bishop of Leeds" is the most sensible way forward. I ask Synod to allow us the opportunity of formally making an application in due course to change the name. Names are important and we need to have the name which is right for our diocese. Thank you, Chair.

*The Bishop of Leeds (Rt Revd Nicholas Baines):* The reason I stood is because I had begun to feel I was at my own funeral or in court where they talk over you about you. I am very sympathetic with the arguments put forward by the Bishops of Coventry and Essex, but I do think that that is a perspective from inside the Church and what we actually have to deal with, and I am trying to deal with in West Yorkshire and the Dales and Barnsley, is the perception of people who are not part of the Church.

For example, we are referring to the area bishops, and I point you to what I hope will be deemed procedure in the renaming of the sees of Knaresborough and Pontefract to Ripon and Wakefield appropriately, that we refer to them as “the Bishop of Ripon in the Diocese of West Yorkshire and the Dales”. It is not inside the Church that we have a problem. It is outside.

There is also a Roman Catholic Diocese of Leeds. I am referred to in the press as “the Bishop of West Yorkshire and the Dales”, even though I have never used that term because I would quickly run out of ink. There are going to be anomalies. I think what we need to take from this, whatever the Synod decides now, is that in future we need to anticipate some of these issues and not simply react to them when we find ourselves in new territory. I would say some of these things were anticipated but there was not the scope to be able to resolve them at the time.

This is permissive, but the Synod needs to be clear. A motion, I hope, will come in July to the Synod from the extinct Diocese of Wakefield that in part asks for just this, an overview of where we are going, that we anticipate the sorts of issues that are going to come up in the future when similar reorganisations, if appropriate, are addressed. To pick up on the Bishop of Coventry’s comment, it is possible to teach the Gospel faithfully despite the nomenclature with which we work.

*The Archbishop of York (Most Revd & Rt Hon Dr John Sentamu):* To the gentleman from the Diocese of West Yorkshire and the Dales who said if this went through they will be able to rename, there are only two ways you could do it: by a fresh reorganisation of your diocese, that is the only way the name will appear; or a petition to the Queen, if this happens.

Friends, I am always worried when we send legislation to Parliament that really is not of a first order kind. You say this is permissive. Well, the permissiveness has already been granted in the Dioceses Commission’s report. It is “the Bishop of Leeds” and “the Diocese of West Yorkshire and the Dales”. Look at the website. That is what they call themselves.

The permissiveness has already been given. So to take to Parliament, the Ecclesiastical Committee will ask, “What new thing are you bringing for us to approve? Absolutely nothing”. I say to myself, please let us not let either Archbishop Justin or somebody else have to turn up in the House of Lords to defend this particular piece of legislation, then it goes to the Commons, “listen to the argument” they say. In the new diocese the two names are possible because the Bishop of Leeds is actually going to the House of Lords already as the Bishop of Leeds. He was enthroned as the Bishop of Leeds, but the diocese is known as “the Diocese of West Yorkshire and the Dales”.

The permissiveness has already happened. Why are we trying to do it again? Please Synod, I just want to say to you, do not waste Parliament's time and our own time. When it happens again next time, well, yes, we shall look in the future but please do not create a measure out of nothing. Let us get serious. Let us get onto questions and the other things we have got to pass and, for heaven's sake, please, vote that this particular part of the thing does not become back part of the Measure and then the Chair will withdraw this particular bit of what was necessary then but no longer necessary, friends. The horse has already bolted and left the stables and that horse is galloping away and its name is Nick Baines.

*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 on a show of hands.*

*The Chair:* I call on a member of the Steering Committee to respond, please.

*Member of the Steering Committee:* Thank you, Chair. I do not think it is necessary for me to detain Synod any longer. The arguments for and against this clause standing part of the Measure have been well-rehearsed and clearly put. It is for Synod to decide and the Steering Committee will deal with whatever Synod decides.

*Miss Prudence Dailey:* Point of order. May we have a vote by Houses on this Measure?

*The Chair:* A Division by Houses must be ordered if 25 members request it. Are there 25 members standing in their places? There are 25 members standing, so I order a Division by Houses.

*The motion*

'That clause 1 stand part of the Measure.'

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

	<i>IN FAVOUR</i>	<i>AGAINST</i>
<i>Bishops</i>	10	7
<i>Clergy</i>	34	66
<i>Laity</i>	65	48

*3 abstentions were recorded in the House of Bishops, 10 in the House of Clergy and 5 in the House of Laity.*

*The Chair:* We move now to Item 505 and I invite a member of the Steering Committee to move this item.

*Revd Paul Benfield (Blackburn):* Chair, in the light of that vote I would ask your permission to move a motion that clause 2 be withdrawn.

*The Chair:* That has my permission so I invite you to speak to the motion that clause 2 be withdrawn. You have up to two minutes, Fr Benfield.

*Revd Paul Benfield:* I beg to move:

‘That clause 2 be withdrawn.’

Thank you. Chair, you will see that without clause 1 this Measure is rather unusual and makes not a lot of sense. In line with what the Archbishop of York has said, I would suggest, therefore, that the correct thing is not to have clause 2 in this Measure. I therefore move that it be withdrawn.

*The motion*

‘That clause 2 be withdrawn.’

*was carried on a show of hands.*

*The Chair:* As the motion that Clause 2 be withdrawn has been carried, the motion at Item 506 “That the Long Title stand part of the Measure” will not now be moved. That brings an end to the legislative process in relation to the draft Measure which will not now proceed further. That concludes this item of business. Thank you.

THE CHAIR *The Archbishop of York (Most Revd & Rt Hon Dr John Sentamu)* took the Chair at 3.52 pm

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

*The Chair:* Members of Synod, we come to Item 501 and Item 502. Please, you will need the following: Draft Amending Canon GS 1964B and the Petition for the Royal Assent and Licence GS 1964C. As required by Standing Order 92, I declare on behalf of the Presidents, the Prolocutors of the Convocations and the Chair and Vice-Chair of the House of Laity that the requirements of Article 7 of the Constitution have been complied with in respect of this item of business. I now call upon the Bishop of Sodor and Man, the Chair of the Steering Committee, to move Item 501 “That the Canon entitled ‘Amending Canon No. 35’ be finally approved”. He may speak for not more than ten minutes.

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

‘That the Canon entitled “Amending Canon No. 35” be finally approved.’

Thank you, Archbishop. The best things come in small parcels, as the Diocese of Sodor and Man proves. The Amending Canon is a very small Canon in content but

deeply significant. This Amending Canon is a necessary preliminary step to the implementation of the Southwell and Nottingham Diocesan Synod Motion that was passed by this Synod in November 2012.

The motion called for two changes in the present Regulations covering the authorization of lay people to distribute the sacrament. The Synod agreed that the bishops should be able to delegate decisions as to who may be authorised to distribute the sacrament to the incumbent priest in charge or, during a vacancy, rural dean with the support of the PCC, or in the case of school Eucharists where it is desired to authorize a child to administer communion with the support of the head teacher.

In addition, the Synod agreed that it should be possible for authorization to be given to any regular communicant, including baptised children who have been admitted to Holy Communion under the 2006 Regulations. This is not possible under the present Regulations, which provide that only a person who has been confirmed may be authorised to distribute the sacrament.

This amending Canon therefore makes a very small change to paragraph 3 of Canon B 12 to enable the first of these objectives by removing the reference to lay persons being specially authorised by the bishop to distribute Holy Communion.

By making this amendment it is possible for new regulations to be made enabling individuals other than the bishop to authorize lay people to distribute the sacrament. Without this amendment, any new Regulations made by the Synod would have to make provision for authorization to be granted by the diocesan bishop or commissary because no-one else would have the necessary authority.

Therefore, if it is the will of the Synod that regulations should be made in due course implementing the motion agreed by the Synod in 2012, then passing this amendment is a first necessary step.

No proposals for amendment of the draft Canon were received and therefore the Revision Committee did not meet. There were also no drafting amendments. The Canon stood referred to the House of Bishops under Article 7 and the House also made no amendments.

So I invite the Synod to agree that the draft Canon should be given final approval, reminding members that unless the draft Canon is approved not all the changes called for by the Southwell and Nottingham Diocesan Synod motion can be made. The form and content of the new Regulations to be made under Canon B 12 (as amended) will be a matter for debate at another group of sessions. It is hoped that these can be brought forward for debate in July after the Canon is promulgated.

I therefore commend the Amending Canon 35 to the Synod and move that the Canon entitled "Amending Canon No. 35" be finally approved.

*The Chair:* Thank you, Bishop. The motion is now open for debate. May I remind members that this being a Final Approval debate, under SO 61(a) motions for the

Closure, the speech limits on next business are not in order, but that I retain a discretion under SO 21(c) to alter the normal speech limit of five minutes.

The matter is now open for debate. I see no-one standing. Bishop, do you want to respond on a non-debate?

*The Bishop of Sodor and Man:* Surprisingly, your Grace, no.

*The Chair:* Thank you. Under SO 36(c)(i) a division by Houses is required because, under SO 35(d)(i)(2), the motion requires a two-thirds majority in each House. This is because the Amending Canon makes provision for a matter to which a rubric in the *Book of Common Prayer* relates. Section 3 of the Church of England (Worship and Doctrine) Measure 1974 provides that no canon making such provision shall be submitted for Her Majesty's Licence and Assent unless it has been finally approved by the General Synod with a majority in each House of not less than two-thirds of those present and voting. Standing Order 35(d)(i)(2) expressly incorporates that requirement into the Standing Orders of the Synod. I therefore order a division by Houses.

*The motion:*

'That the Canon entitled "Amending Canon No. 35" be finally approved.'

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

	<i>IN FAVOUR</i>	<i>AGAINST</i>
<i>Bishops</i>	<i>25</i>	<i>0</i>
<i>Clergy</i>	<i>94</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>Laity</i>	<i>104</i>	<i>10</i>

*4 abstentions were recorded in the House of Laity.*

*The Chair:* We now come to Item 502, "That the petition for Her Majesty's Royal Assent and Licence be adopted". I therefore call upon the Bishop of Sodor and Man to move Item 502.

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

'That the petition for Her Majesty's Royal Assent and Licence (GS 1964C) be adopted.'

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

*The Chair:* The petition will accordingly be presented to Her Majesty. That concludes this item of business relating to Amending Canon No. 35. Questions begin at a quarter past. I suggest we have some nine minutes' free time. The bell will be rung to bring you back here bang on at a quarter past.

THE CHAIR *Ven Karen Gorham (Oxford)* took the Chair at 4.15 pm

## Questions

*The Chair:* Synod, we come now to Item 8, which is Questions. I refer members to the new arrangements for question time which are described in paragraphs 21-25 of the Business Committee Report. Under these new arrangements, which are being trialled by the Business Committee at this group of sessions, those answering oral questions will not be reading out their answers in full but will refer members briefly to the answer they have given on the question paper. I will then move immediately to taking any supplementary questions.

Synod members have been sent the full Questions paper with the answers included a few days prior to Synod and hard copies are available in your bundle of papers.

Normally not more than two supplementary questions may be asked in respect of each original question but I will use my discretion to allow more if I feel it is appropriate. Can I remind Synod that a supplementary question must be strictly relevant to the original question and to the answer given. I am going to be firm about repetition, deviation or any other questions that may be asked or asking for an expression of opinion.

Roving microphones are being used. As on previous occasions, the members asking supplementaries should wait until a roving microphone is brought to you before speaking. Please remember to give your name and number as usual.

We move now to our Questions, Questions 1-3 to the Chair of the Remuneration and Conditions of Service Committee.

### Remuneration and Conditions of Service Committee

1. *Revd Canon Jonathan Alderton-Ford (St Edmundsbury and Ipswich)* asked the Chair of the Remuneration and Conditions of Service Committee: Can it be confirmed

(a) whether the consideration by the Committee of transitional arrangements for clergy coming towards retirement will include the issue raised by some clergy of being able to move from full-time to part-time stipendiary deployment, without diminution of other benefits, and

(b) whether the outcome of the Committee's consideration of these matters will come before the Synod for consideration this year?

*The Bishop of Manchester (Rt Revd David Walker)* replied: RACSC has committed to reviewing the ministry of retired clergy, including the impact of pension policy. RACSC is also aware that not only clergy coming towards retirement experience a diminution of benefits and that moving from full-time to part-time stipendiary ministry can happen at any time.



The policy whereby remuneration and benefits are paid on a pro-rata basis is wholly legal and is the default position in employment practice. Legal advice would need to be sought before conferring full-time benefits in such circumstances.

The Funded Pension Scheme Revaluation at 31 December 2015, due for completion around 3rd quarter of 2016, may highlight other issues. It would be sensible to consider the question raised here in the context of other changes and avoid inefficiencies and added costs involved in obtaining legal and actuarial advice twice.

In view of these points RACSC cannot commit to bringing matters before Synod this year.

2. *Revd Stephen Trott (Peterborough)* asked the Chair of the Remuneration and Conditions of Service Committee: Anecdotal evidence suggests that since the recent significant rise in the cost of funeral fees, the number of funeral services conducted by ordained ministers has markedly decreased in parts of the country. Are reliable statistics available for the number of funeral services conducted by the clergy in each of the last five years, and is it possible to verify whether or not there is any link between the rise in the cost of such services, and the (anecdotal) evidence for a decline in the number of such services conducted by the clergy?

*The Bishop of Manchester (Rt Revd David Walker)* replied: The Church's Funerals Project is asking such questions as part of a pilot of research and resources into funeral ministry.

Initial findings suggest that fees in themselves are not a barrier to funeral ministry and that a pattern of decline is due to increased competition, availability, reputation and confusion amongst the public as to what it means to have a Church of England funeral.

Further findings highlight that where clergy intentionally work closely with funeral directors and have local booking systems such as guarantee-a-minister in place the pattern of decline can be stemmed. The statistics which have been posted on the Notice Board indicate that during the period of 'significant' rise in the funeral fee the percentage of deaths marked by a Church of England funeral has remained flat.

RACSC will closely follow the work of the Funerals Project in order to ensure that policy is solidly based on research.

*Mr Clive Scowen (London)*: Is the Bishop aware of anecdotal evidence that in many places the default is for funeral directors to suggest the use of a civil celebrant for funerals? Has there been or will there be any research as to whether there might be commercial links between some funeral directors and civil celebrants?

*The Bishop of Manchester*: Thank you. I think the main research that has been going on is of course through the Archbishops' Council projects and development team, the Funerals Project. The trial phase of that began in July 2014 in four different dioceses. That, I hope, is helping us to move, as we learnt a year ago, from anecdote to evidence, so I hope that we will have evidence to support the way that funeral ministries are going.

Certainly I am very keen to see that we have funerals in churches and funerals conducted in crematoria by Church of England clergy and other ministers.

*Revd Canon Simon Killwick (Manchester):* Bishop, has the research or will the research take into account any variations over the number of Anglican funerals depending on the relative deprivation or prosperity of particular areas because I am concerned that the impact of the new and higher level of fees may impact disproportionately on people in the more deprived areas?

*The Bishop of Manchester:* That is a very interesting point. I hope that will have been heard by those who are responsible for looking at the Funerals Project. Certainly it is important that the funeral ministry of the church is available to those who need it and not being put off by fees. Of course, as members of Synod know, there are occasions when clergy are able to waive fees if it is felt that pastorally that is the appropriate thing to do.

3. *Revd Stephen Trott (Peterborough)* asked the Chair of the Remuneration and Conditions of Service Committee: Has the Remuneration and Conditions of Service Committee made an assessment of the cost to the Church of England if funeral services were to be conducted without charging a fee, as is the case for baptisms, and whether we can afford not to abolish funeral fees if the cost of funeral services is a barrier to our ministry as a church?

*The Bishop of Manchester (Rt Revd David Walker)* replied: Latest statistics (2012) estimated that overall fee income contributed about £35 million a year to running the Church of England, of which about £15 million went towards the cost of stipends. We would need to request the PCC figure parishes submit in the annual parish return form to report separately funeral services in order to report accurately in future.

RACSC is often questioned about the practice of charging fees for occasional offices. Some believe that the fees are too high, especially those who minister in deprived areas of the country; some believe that they are too low, particularly those who work in more affluent areas. We are not aware of a strong desire amongst clergy or dioceses for funeral fees to be abolished entirely.

There is already discretion to waive fees where that is pastorally justified and fees contribute towards the cost of maintaining ministry and buildings in every community.

*Revd Preb. Sam Philpott (Exeter):* In the answer you say that £35 million was collected from fees and only £15 million was spent on stipends. Previously all fees went on stipends. What happened to the other £20 million?

*The Bishop of Manchester:* I think that is not in the remit of me as Chair of the Remuneration and Conditions of Service Committee.

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

4. *Revd Canon Giles Goddard (Southwark)* asked the Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council: What plans are in place to help the Church of England engage

constructively with preparations for the climate change talks in Paris in November 2015?

*Mr Philip Fletcher (ex officio)* replied: Church members are already praying and fasting for the climate on the 1st of each month, and making plans to join pilgrimages to Paris. We are also involved with *Faith for the Climate*, *Hope for the Future* and the *Interfaith Climate Network*.

The Bishop of London will participate in summit events at the invitation of the Archbishop of Paris. This week, he will host discussions - led by the Bishop of Salisbury, with the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, climate change experts and church representatives - including updating the Lambeth Declaration signed by faith leaders prior to the Copenhagen Summit.

Church House Publishing is planning to relaunch '*Don't Stop at the Lights - Leading your church through a Changing Climate*', updated to 2015, in the spring.

There will be a special service at St Mary le Strand prior to the Climate March on 7 March.

*Revd Canon Giles Goddard (Southwark)*: Thank you for your reply. It is good to see the Church of England setting out its story about the environment so strongly, and some of that is to do with the working group that the Synod requested we set up last year. It is good to see that. Could you also tell me what plans are in place to engage with the government which is in power after the election, please?

*Mr Philip Fletcher*: I think we will all be very conscious that time is very short between the General Election and the crucial conference in Paris on climate change. Certainly MPA would hope that there will be action by the Church of England both before the election - the hustings guidance is relevant - and following the election with the Church of England, fellow Christians, all faiths and none bringing to the attention of the new government the crucial importance to us all of climate change and the need for action in Paris in this coming December. One of the things that will be happening will be a lobby of Parliament in June.

5. *Mr Ian Fletcher (Leeds)* asked the Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council: Following the resolution passed by the Synod in November 2014 regarding the Spare Room Subsidy, what progress has been made to date in evaluating research, both social and statistical, into the effect of removing the Spare Room Subsidy?

*Mr Philip Fletcher (ex officio)* replied: As noted in the Financial Memorandum which accompanied the motion in November, MPA's existing staff capacity is insufficient to undertake new evaluative research on this topic. However, we have been keeping a watching brief on the research others are doing and, so far, we have seen nothing which contradicts or materially changes the conclusions which we outlined in our paper which accompanied the November motion. The kind of research that might change the game would be a longitudinal study showing the impact on communities, families and individuals over a significant period of time, but for obvious reasons that is not yet

feasible. MPA will go on monitoring research on this and related matters of social policy, especially as it plays into the church's pastoral agenda in local communities.

*Mr Ian Fletcher:* I think we are all aware of lives that have been blighted by the Spare Room Subsidy, better known as the bedroom tax, and as a church we are often the best-placed people to see the pain and despair which is being caused. Can you please outline how your response to this question ensures that the concerns and interests of the church at national level, especially concerning moral and ethical issues, are being discharged by the MPA in the apparent absence of a proper budget for work of this kind?

*Mr Philip Fletcher (ex officio):* Research on the Spare Room Subsidy and all its other manifestations is happening and the MPA is taking close account, for example, of reports coming from the London School of Economics in partnership with the University of York and the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, which shows that on the whole there is a terrific mismatch between those living in accommodation that at the moment has a "spare" or immediately unoccupied room and the availability of accommodation that would exactly match those households' formation. There is a real shortage of smaller accommodation into which people can move, and that is only one example of the problem.

6. *Mr Ian Fletcher (Leeds)* asked the Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council: Following the resolution passed by the Synod in November 2014 regarding the Spare Room Subsidy, what progress has been made to date in promoting with Her Majesty's Government and partners from the social and housing sectors ways of ensuring access to suitable local housing for all, especially for those who are vulnerable, without increasing levels of debt?

*Mr Philip Fletcher (ex officio)* replied: MPA is in regular and friendly contact with the National Housing Federation and Housing Justice, among other bodies with a particular interest in these issues. NHF, in particular, is engaged in important qualitative and quantitative research on many aspects of welfare reform and has been generous in sharing its work with us. A small group of bishops with a particular interest in welfare issues are in contact with senior figures at the Department of Work and Pensions. Any meetings they have will be confidential, as this allows a free exchange of views, and the bishops will, as usual, be briefed in advance by MPA.

7. *Mr Andrew Presland (Peterborough)* asked the Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council: What steps is the Council taking - or requesting dioceses or deaneries to take - to encourage active participation by parishes and fresh expressions in the Cinnamon Network's faith action audit that is taking place this month, following its launch at Lambeth Palace on 17 September, and in advance of its national findings being presented to the incoming Government after the General Election?

*Mr Philip Fletcher (ex officio)* replied: Although MPA was involved in the discussions which led to the formation of the Cinnamon Network, the Network has taken on its own life. It has focused strongly on work with the independent and Pentecostal churches and has less comprehensive engagement with some of the main denominations. As such, its reach into the Church of England is limited but its ability to capture activities in

places we do not reach is hugely valuable. Simultaneously with the Cinnamon Network's audit, MPA and the Church Urban Fund have been conducting their own nation-wide study of church social engagement, published in a report entitled *Church in Action* on 4 February.

8. *Revd Catherine Grylls (Birmingham)* asked the Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council: In the light of the growing issue of 'funeral poverty', what work is being undertaken by the Mission and Public Affairs Council, in association with the Funerals Project, to address the very real needs that are emerging?

*Mr Philip Fletcher (ex officio) replied:* MPA has not addressed funeral poverty as a specific issue. We recognise that funerals, among other "life events", can put considerable pressure on people whose material resources are already stretched to cover day to day essentials. It is one consequence of the wider questions of poverty which we are working on in various ways - for instance, there are clear links to the work of the Task Group on Responsible Savings and Credit.

We are also aware of some diocesan initiatives, such as one in Lichfield, and are looking closely to see if these can be replicated more widely.

*Revd Catherine Grylls:* We too in Birmingham have been watching what is happening in Lichfield. How will the outcome of MPA's watching be communicated to Synod and beyond, please?

*Mr Philip Fletcher:* It is not just the MPA here. There is the Funerals Project, which has been referred to by the Bishop of Manchester in earlier answers, and I am confident that we shall hear a lot more about funerals, not least a launch in June that coincides with the National Funerals Show that will be in excellent time to forewarn Synod and brief Synod ahead of the July Synod coming up. Incidentally one interesting point is that the evidence so far does not suggest that raising funeral fees has reduced the number of funerals taken by the Church of England, but we must not be at all complacent about this very important occasional office.

*Revd Andrew Dotchin (St Edmundsbury & Ipswich):* A friend of mine in the National Association of Funeral Directors is saddened that when approaching the Church of England to help with investment in their socially responsible funeral lending for the working poor, they were told, "The Church of England is not interested in this." Through the MPA, could I suggest that our organs be approached to say that it is an appropriate place to help the working poor cover the costs of funerals, which is far more than the fees we charge?

*Mr Philip Fletcher:* Indeed, the fee charged by the Church where an Anglican clergyman takes the service is only a tiny proportion normally of the overall cost of the funeral. I am happy to take the point away, but would want to stress the key importance of close working between the funeral directors and the clergy. It is a matter of both taking account of the other's needs if we are to serve those grieving families who are looking for a Church of England funeral.

9. *Mrs Mary Judkins (Leeds)* asked the Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council:

The Trussell Trust asks for a £1,500 voluntary donation for any support they offer in setting up a 'food bank'. What is the Church of England doing to support churches which want and need to set one up but cannot afford this initial outlay, and where that money could buy essential food?

*Mr Philip Fletcher (ex officio)* replied: Whilst many churches have set up food banks through the Trussell Trust, others are independent initiatives, tailored to local contexts. The one-off fee of £1,500, and the subsequent annual charge of £360, gives access to the Trussell Trust brand, webhosting and other advantages which, for many churches, represents excellent value. A full list of what the fee buys can be found at: <http://www.trusselltrust.org/start-a-foodbank>.

Independent food banks have to find other ways of accessing similar services, and the cost is likely to be comparable. It may be that finding start-up costs, either through the Trussell Trust or independently, helps to test the commitment of the churches concerned and acts as a safeguard against food banks being set up too optimistically and with too little support and investment to be sustainable. The fee buys essential support structures and shows that the volunteers are able to reach a base line of commitment.

*Mrs Mary Judkins:* Given that this answer does not address the question, my supplementary asks: what, other than promoting the Trussell Trust, is the Church of England doing to support churches which need to set up a food bank but feel the £1,500 and annual £360 would be better spent on actual food and that the brand, web hosting and other advantages offered by the Trussell Trust may be inappropriate for their independent initiatives tailored to local contexts, as you have said, and where local canvassing has shown that word of mouth is adequate advertising?

*Mr Philip Fletcher:* It is not good news but it is appropriate news that over 80% of Church of England churches are involved in supporting food banks because those food banks are entirely necessary. The answer I gave makes it clear that there is a real purpose behind the Trussell Trust £1,500 and annual subs, there is real value to be gained, but very many churches, as Mrs Judkins has postulated, are in their own local situation and choose not to seek the Trussell Trust. What is necessary of course is that they really think through what they will need in order to provide this crucial service locally. It does not need, I suggest, any form of direct financial subsidy.

*Mr Samuel Margrave (Coventry):* Thank you, Chair. Sorry for jumping the gun, but I was so incensed by the answer that is given to this question. Notably, there seems to be a question here of the commitment of churches concerned, so if a parish is poor, does that show that they do not have commitment? No. So the question I would like to put is: has consideration been given to how the church can help poor parishes who do not have the £1,500 but want to set up a food bank and how it might be possible for the church to dip its hands in its pocket and actually help the poor communities, help the poor?

*Mr Philip Fletcher:* I should like to know which pocket Mr Margrave has in mind, but it is not my job to ask questions. Because the pockets here are the pockets of "we"

members of the Church of England in the last resort, the question is what are we going to do as members to support this crucial service, which clearly is crucial at the moment, in supporting those least able, through all sorts of events, many entirely beyond their control, to hold body and soul together. It does not need a subsidy. It does need careful thought at parish level, maybe at deanery level, maybe at diocese level. It does not need a national subsidy, which in the end still comes from the same pockets.

10. *Mrs Mary Judkins (Leeds)* asked the Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council: After the presentation and short question time on religious persecution at the last group of sessions, what action has the Church of England taken to ensure that persecuted Christians are aware of the love and concern of the Church of England and its members? For example, has consideration been given to ensuring that their plight is given due prominence on every diocesan website, not just some?

*Mr Philip Fletcher (ex officio)* replied: The panel discussion at the last group of sessions on violence against religious minorities in the Middle East was widely reported by the religious press here and abroad. The Archbishop of Erbil's presentation at this group of sessions will be reported equally widely.

The Bishop of Coventry continues to play an active role on the All-Party Parliamentary Group on International Religious Freedom. This work is publicised through the APPG's website.

Last month the Bishops of Coventry, Derby and Southwark met with Baroness Anelay, the Minister responsible at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office for human rights and religious freedom. MPA staff provide regular updates on this and other related work via social media.

It is the responsibility of each diocese to determine the content of its website and to decide how much prominence to give to this particular issue.

*Mrs Mary Judkins:* While the initiatives described in the answer are to be welcomed, I would be interested to know how the Church of England nationally, not at individual dioceses' discretion, intends actively, as in the address by Archbishop Warda, to encourage its members to support the humanitarian provision of immediate sanctuary and/or care, as at St Luke's Holbeck Church, while the question of asylum or return is being decided?

*Mr Philip Fletcher:* As the answer makes clear, a number of our bishops lead on the welfare issues and have important consultations (which are, rightly, confidential) with government ministers on the issues. That still leaves the public face of the Church of England calling the nation to account on whether we are reacting sufficiently and appropriately to the needs that were made so clear to us by the Archbishop in his address today, and we shall have a chance, as voters - those of us who use our votes and have votes - to make our positions clear and to ask appropriate questions of candidates in our constituencies prior to the General Election. I suggest we use those chances.

11. *Mr Gerald O'Brien (Rochester)* asked the Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs

Council: Noting that the male/female ratio in CofE congregations is falling and the average age of congregations is increasing, in view of research findings by Monte Sahlin and David Roozen that the more men there were in a congregation the more likely it was that the congregation would attract young adults, what assistance is offered to parishes to prioritise the evangelisation of men?

*Mr Philip Fletcher (ex officio)* replied: Research findings in this complex field are usually tentative - for good reason. Members may have seen recent reports of research by Professor David Voas. Although the headlines highlighted the greater disposition towards religion of women compared to men, the report stressed how little is known about the reasons behind some of these statistics. It is a question that is very much on our minds at MPA because God calls women and men equally to follow Christ, and both must be reached if we are to address the priority of growing the church, numerically and spiritually. Some Fresh Expressions seem to be especially good at reaching men and I would be happy to share the information with the questioner. But I will not pretend that we are sufficiently confident of either the facts or the results of practical evangelism initiatives amongst men to offer advice to parishes yet.

*Mr Gerald O'Brien:* Thank you for the answer that is printed out. It says that you are not sufficiently confident of the results of practical evangelism initiatives amongst men. Given that there are, in fact, numerous examples of adult men giving their allegiance to Jesus Christ, will the Chair of MPA take counsel with the leaders of churches with a successful track record in this field, churches that would include, but not be limited to, St Helen's Bishopsgate, Holy Trinity Brompton and All Souls Langham Place?

*Mr Philip Fletcher:* I think that Mission and Public Affairs is engaged constantly in a dialogue at diocesan and still more at parish level with those who are making things work. We want to learn what works and we certainly want to disseminate it appropriately. What I think we want to avoid is any impression that there is just one answer. Mr O'Brien in his question does not imply such, but we need to make sure that every parish in their own appropriate circumstances is taking seriously the job of evangelisation both of women and of men.

*Revd Canon Pete Spiers (Liverpool):* I wonder whether you could ask the Intentional Evangelism Task Group to make sure that there is a special section on the evangelism of men in their future reports?

*Mr Philip Fletcher:* I am sure that those involved will have very much heard Pete Spiers' question and that the issues will be thoroughly thought through within that task group.

12. *Mr Paul Hancock (Liverpool)* asked the Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council: In the light of the 2002 General Synod resolution on abortion and the Mission and Public Affairs briefing paper of 2005, does the Council have any comments to offer on the guidance issued by the Department of Health in May 2014 entitled "Guidance in Relation to Requirements of the Abortion Act, 1967", with particular reference to the availability of impartial counselling?

*Mr Philip Fletcher (ex officio)* replied: The Mission and Public Affairs Council made a submission to the Department of Health's 'Consultation on Procedures for the Approval



of Independent Sector Places for Termination of Pregnancy' (January 2014). While welcoming the Department's commitment that '*Women must be given impartial evidence based information*', the Council advised: '*There are problems ensuring that providers who are paid for performing abortions will present women with 'impartial evidence based information', including alternatives to abortion.*' We argued that all providers who are remunerated for performing abortions ought to offer women access to health professionals/counsellors who are employed neither by the provider nor by its associated or parent companies. Panels of locally accessible professionals could be maintained in each CCG area. Current guidance that 'NHS providers should be accountable for the services they recommend' does not adequately address the problem of independent sector providers.

### **Business Committee**

13. *Revd Dr Patrick Richmond (Norwich)* asked the Chair of the Business Committee: The General Synod often calls on other bodies to act - as it did, for example, in November 2013 in its resolution on intentional evangelism. When asked about reviewing the effectiveness of such calls in November 2014, the Chair of the Business Committee did not mention any intention on the part of the Committee to review the effectiveness of such calls. Will the Committee therefore consider the possibility of conducting such a review, with a view to the Synod being better equipped to evaluate its own effectiveness?

*Revd Canon Susan Booy*s (Oxford) replied: The Business Committee's main role, as set out in SO 115(a), is to oversee the agenda for Synod and related business. The Committee does not have a remit to review the effectiveness of calls made by General Synod for activity in the wider Church. However, the Business Committee is always open to scheduling where possible business relating to the Quinquennial Goals, of which this is one. Should the Evangelism Task Group wish to bring an update on its work to the Synod at a future date, the Business Committee would be happy to consider it for a forthcoming group of sessions either in July or in the next quinquennium.

*Revd Dr Patrick Richmond*: Thank you for the answer and I am delighted that the task group will be given space to come back and report but I think, as Archbishop Justin was tentatively suggesting, we really need, as well as a task group, a cultural change, and therefore I wonder whether the Chair knows of anyone who can advise us whether Synod's motions have any effect, whether this has been discussed at diocesan synods, whether it was passed down to PCCs and deaneries so that you can know what to prioritise and we can know whether we are wasting our time and how we can up our game?

*Revd Canon Susan Booy*s: I do not know. I can find out. I can tell you that some of these issues have been discussed at the Oxford Diocesan Synod, which I can tell you about.

14. *Mr John Ward (London)* asked the Chair of the Business Committee: What analysis has the Business Committee done as to whether the current listening process will make a material difference to whether or not PMMs raising questions relating to human sexuality should usefully be postponed until the next quinquennium?

*Revd Canon Susan Booy (Oxford)* replied: I refer Mr Ward to the comments made in paragraph 12 of GS 1974, the Report from the Business Committee, in which the Committee reiterates its decision ‘not to schedule the PMMs by Mrs Andrea Minichiello Williams and Mr John Ward because the process of Shared Conversations has now been launched in the regions.’ It is not for the Business Committee to analyse the outcomes of these shared conversations. However, under SO 115(a)(x) the Committee is entitled ‘to advise the Synod on the determination of priorities in regard to proposals affecting the allocation of Synod’s time’. Given the quantity of other urgent business which has needed to be brought to this and recent Synods and the fact that a separate process is now underway, the Business Committee has determined that other matters should be given priority in the allocation of Synod time.

*Mr John Ward:* Contrary to the answer given on the Questions paper, in an extraordinary, if I may say so, reply to the Business Committee debate, you said that the existing PMMs were not suitable. Is this the real reason for the Business Committee being afraid of allowing General Synod to model a godly shared conversation on marriage and civil partnership and would you explain what would be suitable?

*Revd Canon Susan Booy:* I think we are praying that there will be a godly shared conversation in those conversations that are rolling out through the dioceses.

### **Crown Nominations Commission**

15. *Revd Dr Jo Spreadbury (St Albans)* asked the Chair of the Crown Nominations Commission: The House of Bishops Pastoral Guidance on Same Sex Marriage (15 February 2014) states:

*“(25) The Church of England will continue to place a high value on theological exploration and debate that is conducted with integrity. That is why Church of England clergy are able to argue for a change in its teaching on marriage and human sexuality, while at the same time being required to fashion their lives consistently with that teaching.”*

Given the high value the Church places on “theological exploration and debate that is conducted with integrity”, is the Chair of the Crown Nominations Commission able to assure Synod that its policy and practice is, and will continue to be, that clergy who “fashion their lives consistently with [the Church’s] teaching” will not be barred from preferment on the grounds that they have argued for “a change in [the Church’s] teaching on marriage and human sexuality”?

*The Archbishop of Canterbury (Most Revd and Rt Hon Justin Welby)* replied: Yes. When candidates are being considered for a particular see their teaching on a range of issues is, however, among the many considerations that may properly be taken into account when considering their relative merits for that appointment.

*Revd Dr Jo Spreadbury:* I just wanted to clarify what current policy and practice is, and what it might continue to be? Having directed the CNC not to vote for one of the candidates in the Exeter and the Edmundsbury appointment processes because of the effect on the Anglican Communion, will your Grace continue to use what amounts to an

unconstitutional veto in future appointments?

*The Archbishop of Canterbury:* I really cannot comment on what goes on in CNCs. We are bound by a promise of confidentiality, which is strictly held, in most cases. It is also the case that the Crown Appointments Secretary and the Archbishops' Appointments Secretary keep a close eye and follow up on anything that looks like a breach of normal practice.

### **Church Commissioners**

16. *Mr Samuel Margrave (Coventry)* asked the Church Commissioners: Can the Commissioners provide the Synod with the following figures relating to bishops' costs:

- the average cost of diocesan bishops' housing;
- the average cost of suffragan bishops' housing;
- the average annual cost for the ongoing maintenance of bishops' houses;
- the number of bishops living in houses with more than 6 bedrooms; and
- the number of bishops with chauffeurs, and the cost of providing them?

*Mr Andreas Whittam Smith* replied as First Church Estates Commissioner: According to our December 2013 valuation of diocesan bishops' houses (excluding Lambeth Palace) the average value was £2.26m.

The average cost of maintenance in 2013 was £61,079 per house.

Twenty six see houses have more than six bedrooms (excluding areas outside the bishops' demise which are let or occupied by staff).

Eleven bishops have drivers (four of these also act as gardener) at a total cost of £207,400p.a.

Suffragan bishops' housing is a matter for dioceses.

*Mr Samuel Margrave:* I will try and phrase two questions in one. First of all, a clarification, when I asked for the average cost of diocesan bishops' housing, I understand I should have said the "annual" average cost rather than the value of the property, and I would be interested if that were able to be given.

Second of all, I wonder whether any consideration had been given, taking into account the cost of clergy housing, which is under £10,000 a year, and the availability of conference facilities and office space in dioceses, to whether the expensive, lavish, opulent cost of bishops' housing is good value for money?

*Mr Andreas Whittam Smith:* First of all, my observation is that nowhere in the Church, and this includes bishops, is there any excessive spending. People do the best they can, I think, and I am very used to areas of life where there is an enormous amount of excessive spending, so the Church is a pretty economical place.

Secondly, the bishops' houses are as they are and we have to deal with them as they are, unless you want us to remove them in short order to other places, which I do not think would be a right and proper thing to do.

Thirdly, there is a bargain here which I still feel we have to observe although it is more than 100 years old, which is that when the Church Commissioners acquired the estates of the bishops, the deal was that we would provide their stipends and look after their housing and their costs, and I think we have to stick to that deal.

*Revd Preb. Stephen Lynas (Bath and Wells):* In the light of the little local difficulty in Wells last year, would the First Church Estates Commissioner be able to tell us what action the Board of the Commissioners are taking to ensure that the Bishops and Cathedrals Committee reviews their accountability, their consultation and their transparency in their dealings with the dioceses?

*Mr Andreas Whittam Smith:* I am not the Chair of that Committee, as you know, but I will pass on the implied observations of your question.

17. *Revd Canon Giles Goddard (Southwark)* asked the Church Commissioners: In their deliberations on inter-generational equity that led up to GS1981, what advice did the Church Commissioners receive from the EIAG on climate change which is the most serious inter-generational issue, as the very existence of future generations is threatened by the amount of carbon dioxide that the our current generation continues to put into the atmosphere, including by companies in which the Church Commissioners' funds are invested?

*Mr Andreas Whittam Smith* replied as First Church Estates Commissioner: GS 1981 is, of course, specifically about financial distributions policy but I admire Canon Goddard's ingenuity. He is right to say climate change is a serious matter of intergenerational justice and that is why we take very seriously the advice of the Ethical Investment Advisory Group on this and other matters.

A new climate change policy is being developed and I, like the EIAG, am determined that it will be published as soon as possible after it has been approved. I expect this will be in the next couple of months.

*Revd Hugh Lee (Oxford):* The question was what advice did you receive? I am interested to hear the specifics of that advice.

*Mr Andreas Whittam Smith:* First of all, you have to understand that we have a new appointment, a full-time staff member concerned with ethical investment, who sits in on every decision we make, all the time, so it is very hard to say we have got this piece of advice or that piece of advice. Secondly, we are in constant touch with EIAG. We do not really move without knowing what they think. I find it very hard to say that this or that piece of advice was decisive. We have advice all the time.

### **Ethical Investment Advisory Group**

18. *Revd Catherine Grylls (Birmingham)* asked the Ethical Investment Advisory Group: What progress has been made on the consultation with the National Investment Bodies on the EIAG review of investment policy in fossil fuels and when is the report likely to be published?

*The Bishop of Manchester (Rt Revd David Walker)* replied on behalf of the Chair: Since Synod last debated the issue of climate change the EIAG has been working intensively on the development of a comprehensive climate change policy that also addresses the issue of National Investing Bodies holdings in fossil fuel companies.

Development of a climate change policy has required extensive dialogue and consultation with the NIBs given the breadth of the implications of such policy. The policy is close to conclusion and it is expected that it will be published ahead of the next Synod.

### **Archbishops' Council**

19. *Mr Andrew Presland (Peterborough)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishop's Council: How many grants were eventually awarded from the Churches and Community Fund under theme 3 of the guidelines used for the 2012 to 2014 period ('to replicate models of successful community engagement across the wider church'), following the consultations with potential applicants that were reported - in an answer to a previous question - as being in place as at February 2014; and when will the themes and guidelines for any money available for 2015 and future years be announced, and information posted on to the Church and Community Fund website?

*Canon John Spence (ex officio)* replied on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: Two grants (each amounting to £60,000) were awarded by the Church and Community Fund (CCF) under theme 3 of the guidelines between 2012 and 2014. The CCF Committee are currently reviewing the funding themes in the light of emerging evaluation evidence and the prevailing needs of the church. Whilst this review is on-going the themes and guidelines in place for 2012-14 have been rolled over for 2015. The new themes and guidelines, once agreed, will be posted on the CCF's website in the second half of 2015.

20. *Revd Canon Dr Hazel Whitehead* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: Might the Archbishops' Council consider forming a new, small task group (smaller than the Archbishops' Council) whose role would be one of promoting cohesion and consistency of implementation, to ensure that the outcomes of the work of the four task groups and the Lord Green report are not mutually contradictory and all lead in the same direction?

*The Archbishop of York* replied as Joint President of the Archbishops' Council: The chairs of the task groups had regular contact with each other and there was also cross membership between a number of the groups. In addition the Archbishop of Canterbury held a joint meeting with the chairs last July in York. The importance of achieving coherence and consistency is well understood. The Archbishops' Council will be considering the overall governance arrangements for the emerging programme of Reform and Renewal at its meeting next month.

21. *Mrs Joanna Monckton (Lichfield)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops Council: What was the income of the Church of England from all sources in 2013, and what proportion of this came from the 'Parish Share'?

*Canon John Spence (ex officio)* replied on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: Each year we produce an aggregation of the published accounts of the dioceses, cathedrals and the national church Institutions and the parish finance data published by our Research and Statistics department. 2012 is the most recent year for which full data is available when the total income of these independent bodies was £1,357 million. In 2012 parish share paid to dioceses was £318 million: equivalent to 23% of "total church" income.

According to diocesan accounts parish share paid in 2013 was £321 million. We expect this to have been a very similar proportion of "total church" income.

*Revd Canon Simon Butler (Southwark)*: Given the increasing popularity of what might be called "generosity-based" schemes in dioceses to fund parish share, is there an intention for the Council to monitor the relative success of such schemes over and against such schemes as cost of ministry-based approaches to collection of parish share?

*Canon John Spence*: I think it is a very fair question that we should be monitoring and understanding effectiveness so that we can spread best practice.

*Mr John Freeman (Chester)*: I refer to the second paragraph of your answer. Is the Archbishops' Council aware that in some dioceses the figure is actually well above 50% in a lot of cases? I speak as a treasurer and as someone who examines a number of other churches' accounts and one who once trawled through all the accounts of all the parishes in the Diocese of Chester.

*Canon John Spence*: Your supplementary gives me the chance to pay tribute to the work being done by people in Church House. These numbers could only be compiled by understanding the numbers in every diocese and so, yes, we are aware that there is a considerable range.

22. *Revd Dr Patrick Richmond (Norwich)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: Last year, the *Anecdote to Evidence* report suggested that amalgamating parishes was associated with decline, but the later report *Stronger as One* disagreed, reporting a complex relationship between standardised growth and church structures. David Goodhew and Bob Jackson, involved in *Anecdote to Evidence*, have questioned *Stronger as One*, saying that the effect of amalgamations shows up statistically only once one compares churches of similar size. *Released for Mission* is ambivalent but says its research started before the idea of 'focal ministry' had risen to prominence and calls for more research. Is more research planned on structures, amalgamations and leadership patterns or do other research questions now have a higher priority?

*Mr Philip Fletcher (ex officio)* replied on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: Research continues into the impact of benefice structures on growth. The *Stronger as One* report built on the initial work carried out as part of the Church Growth Research programme. Further statistical analysis, commissioned by the NCIs, is currently being carried out which includes testing a range of additional factors, including the relationship between church size and growth. This is a complex area of research

and the evidence base is continuing to be developed iteratively and robustly. A note will be published within the next few months drawing together all of the evidence that is available to date. Building on the *Released for Mission* report, the NCIs will also undertake further work over time to evaluate the effectiveness of the different leadership patterns that dioceses are beginning to explore

*Revd Dr Patrick Richmond:* Thank you for the informative answer. NCI reports are now starting to use words like “urgency” and “ruthless prioritisation”. What is the most urgent and highest priority research question that is being addressed at the moment?

*Mr Philip Fletcher:* In the field of church growth, I think it is extremely difficult to pick out any single strand. There are a number of issues. The two reports, *Anecdote to Evidence* and *Stronger as One*, have helped to pull out issues around there being no straightforward, simple answers. There is no one structure that is right for everybody, and we have got the further report which we will debate tomorrow *Released for Mission* which will take us a step further on in looking at the rural church. So there is not just one; what is essential is that all of us should see it as our job to be growing.

*Revd Tony Redman (St Edmundsbury and Ipswich):* Will the future research, particularly in light of *Released for Mission*, take into account the role of self-supporting ministers, ministers with PTO and the lay ministry?

*Mr Philip Fletcher:* Yes.

23. *Mrs Mary Durlacher (Chelmsford)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops’ Council: In last November’s Final Approval debate on the draft Ecclesiastical Property Measure the Chair of the Steering Committee referred to the fact that the Archbishops’ Council had yet to set a timetable for consulting on a draft of the Order setting the threshold below which consent would not be needed for a transaction from the diocesan authority. When will the Council put the necessary consultation in place so that the draft Order may be brought forward for approval by the Synod?

*Ven Christine Hardman* replied on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops’ Council: The Council will consult the Inter-Diocesan Finance Forum at its meeting on 23 February, with a view to considering a draft Order later this spring. The intention is that an Order will be brought to the Synod for approval at the July 2015 group of sessions, so that it can be considered by this Synod before the end of the quinquennium.

*Mrs Mary Durlacher:* Thank you for the answer. Could you explain, please, why some things seem to take place very quickly, like task groups, while things decided by General Synod can take so long to progress? I am thinking in particular of the seven months that have passed since Synod passed a motion asking for work to be done on the investiture of clergy during services and yet there is not even a steering committee appointed yet.

*Ven Christine Hardman:* No, I cannot answer on every specific item of business in General Synod and different timetables, but I can say that the consultation on this with the Inter-Diocesan Finance Board is happening very shortly after the end of this Synod in February, and the results of that will be looked at and we are hoping to bring it back

to July so it will be completed in this quinquennium.

24. *Mr Gavin Oldham (Oxford)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: Is the Archbishops' Council satisfied that the Church of England Twitter page shows just over 8,000 tweets and 46,000 followers to date (compared, for example, with 14,000 tweets and 102,000 followers for the Green Party) and, if not, what steps are planned to raise the profile and reach of the Church's social media activities?

*Miss Rebecca Swinson* replied on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: Over the past two years, the Communications Office has significantly enhanced the Church's social media footprint. In terms of Twitter, the number of people following the @cofe account has increased more than 100% over that time.

The Church of England's Twitter stream has the largest number of followers of any religious denomination in the country. It has fewer than the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, however.

In terms of wider social media engagement, in addition to the Twitter account the Communications Office operates a YouTube channel, Facebook page, Pinterest account and Flickr account.

In addition the office produces:

- a daily media digest online seven days a week
- a weekly podcast available both on iTunes and SoundCloud
- a Tumblr blog highlighting the work of the Church
- a monthly online *InReview*

*Mr Gavin Oldham:* Informally, it is a supplementary to question 11. Bearing in mind the non-geographical spheres which most young people inhabit, not just social media but also work and sport, has the Archbishops' Council considered the barrier to evangelism to young people presented by a church which is exclusively geographically organised and geographically episcopally led?

*Miss Rebecca Swinson:* That is quite a broad question and, as I was not the answerer for Question 11, I do not know how much detail I can give. In terms of all the task groups and things, we certainly do give consideration to all of that. My personal experience has always been that geographical issues have always been there when you are younger, and certainly that is one of the areas where the social media output that we have can have a greater impact.

25. *Revd Canon Jane Charman (Salisbury)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: Given that around 80% of the membership of the task groups is male, including all the Chairs:

- Was the Appointments Committee consulted about their membership?
- Were the usual good practice guidelines applied in making appointments to them?
- can the Council explain why the process has resulted in such a poor gender balance?
- What steps will the Council take to avoid such an outcome in the future?



*The Archbishop of Canterbury (Most Revd and Rt Hon Justin Welby)* replied as joint President of the Archbishops' Council: I agree that an 80/20 gender balance in most contexts is not good enough. In the case of the task groups it did not help that, despite progress in recent years, women remain under-represented not only among archdeacons, other senior clergy and of course bishops but also among others who have important contributions to make to exercises of this kind - such as diocesan chairs of finance and diocesan secretaries. The responsibility for these appointments rested with the Archbishops, not the Appointments Committee. So, it is for us to do better in future and for many others to help us by getting more women into the roles from which these sorts of groups tend to be drawn.

*Revd Canon Jane Charman:* For clarification, the guidelines I am referring to are in GS Misc 963 and covered by SO 116. Since they so helpfully pilot us through all those issues such as diversity, balance and mix of skills and experience, which so often catch the best of us unawares, will the Archbishop now direct that in future they should always be used by everyone in making appointments to groups which serve the national church?

*The Archbishop of Canterbury:* I think I will need to take advice on that question. I am not even sure that I am allowed to direct such a thing and I would need to know that. I do feel, looking at the mix on the task groups, that I agree with the stress of the question and I apologise for the failure.

*Mrs Anne Foreman (Exeter):* Since we are beginning to explore and experience new ways of being Synod, could some creative thinking go into finding women of wisdom and experience within the church but not necessarily in the particular roles that are mentioned in the answer? They do exist.

*The Archbishop of Canterbury:* We do not have to look far. I agree with you entirely and the answer is "Yes".

26. *Revd Hugh Lee (Oxford)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: What consideration was given to incorporating the experience and insights of Self-supporting Ministers (SSMs), including ministers in secular employment, in the selection of the members of, and in the deliberations of, the three task groups and the other two reports that the Synod will be debating on Wednesday afternoon 11/2/15, and who is responsible for integrating the insights and experience of SSMs into the future life of the church?

*The Archbishop of Canterbury (Most Revd & Rt Hon Justin Welby)* replied as Joint President of the Archbishops' Council: The report on discipleship was prepared by the Bishop of Sheffield, who is the lead bishop for all ministry issues, including the distinctive contribution of self-supporting ministers and those in secular employment. It would not have been possible to include all constituencies and sectors in the groups without making them too large, though there were two SSMs on the resourcing ministerial education group and the group on discerning and nurturing senior leaders was led by a distinguished self-supporting clergyman. The other groups all sought to engage with dioceses on their mission and ministry needs as a whole, not solely with

reference to stipendiary or indeed ordained ministry. The research undertaken for the RME group also explored the training experiences of SSMs.

*Revd Hugh Lee:* In view of the reports in the media in the last 48 hours, what consideration is being given to reviewing the membership of the Archbishops' Review Group which will be overseeing the delivery of the proposals in the report on discerning and nurturing church leaders to which you have just referred?

*The Chair:* I am not sure whether this is relevant to your question on self-supporting ministry.

*Revd Hugh Lee:* It is relevant to the answer. The answer mentions a distinguished clergy person.

*The Chair:* I rule that out of order, I think, Mr Lee.

*Revd Tony Redman (St Edmundsbury and Ipswich):* In the light of the apparent lack of representation of self-supporting ministry within the processes and the democratic process of our Synod, would the Presidents consider addressing this in the future so that ordinary SMMs could be more involved?

*The Archbishop of Canterbury:* I think we have to be careful about accepting the premise of the question, but certainly the role of SSMs is absolutely essential and we need to keep constantly under review that they are properly involved.

27. *Mrs Joanna Monckton (Lichfield)* asked: How many clergy served the Church of England in stipendiary parish ministry in 2013 and how many clergy were in paid employment in non-parochial posts?

*The Bishop of Sheffield (Rt Revd Steven Croft)* replied: Clergy statistics for 2013 are not yet available due to issues in extracting information from the new clergy database ('Resource Link').

In 2012 there were 7,195 full-time parochial stipendiary clergy and 245 full-time non-parochial stipendiary. In addition there were 429 part-time stipendiary clergy - it is not possible easily to identify whether they are in parochial or non-parochial roles.

*Mrs Joanna Monckton:* Thank you for the figures. I am slightly surprised. We have got 245 full-time non-parochial stipendiary clergy, which seems a large number and we do know about the 429 part-time stipendiary clergy. Why not? Please, in future would it be possible to identify all those stipendiary clergy who are in non-parochial roles?

*The Bishop of Sheffield:* Thank you. There have been changes to the databases which are used across Crockford's and across Church House and accessed by dioceses which ought to make answering that question more straightforward in the future.

*Revd Preb Simon Cawdell (Hereford):* For the avoidance of doubt, do the figures here for non-parochial clergy include deans and archdeacons?

*The Bishop of Sheffield:* I am almost certain that they do, Simon, thank you, yes. If that is not the case, I would look for somebody to correct me and let you know.

## House of Bishops

28. *Revd Charles Read (Norwich)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Given that bishops are often called upon to make public statements or to chair church working parties which produce reports, what training in the use of the Bible and in hermeneutics is available to bishops to promote the appropriate use of scripture in such statements and reports?

*The Bishop of Sheffield (Rt Revd Steven Croft)* replied: In common with all the clergy bishops are encouraged to continue reading and studies which sustain and develop their initial ministerial education of which a crucial part is in the use of the Bible and hermeneutics. Diocesan Continuing Ministerial Development programmes are open to bishops and indeed they are positively encouraged to learn alongside others. Specifically for the episcopate, the College of Bishops provides a context for corporate study on current issues, including reflection on scripture and its application to them. This is often led by those academically well qualified in theological expertise. On particular matters which call for statements, bishops have access through their network of contacts to theological advice and expert comment, including on the use of scripture in addressing issues. NCI staff, particularly in Mission and Public Affairs, and the Secretary for Ecumenical Relations and Theology are available to bishops and regularly assist in this way.

*Revd Charles Read:* It is very encouraging to hear of all the CMD opportunities available to bishops, not least alongside other licensed ministers. Has all this CMD resulted in there being any agreed methodologies amongst the House of Bishops regarding the use of the Bible in such reports so that the use of the Bible in such reports may relate to the argument of the report itself and not appear to be tangential to it?

*The Bishop of Sheffield:* Thank you, Charles. What an interesting supplementary question. No, I am not aware of any particular guidelines, but there is a process of continual moderation of such reports and methodologies by the fact that they are always discussed within the House of Bishops Standing Committee and such questions are raised. There is staff input to the report which ensures consistency and also the House of Bishops will reflect on them together which helps develop a collegial, common approach to hermeneutical questions. .

29. *Revd Hugh Lee (Oxford)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: What unambiguous assurances are required from candidates for ordination as bishop, priest or deacon, including assenting to the Five Principles in the House of Bishops' Declaration on Women in the Episcopate and renouncing membership of the Freemasons, and when were these introduced?

*The Bishop of Sheffield (Rt Revd Steven Croft)* replied: The House of Bishops agreed at its December 2014 meeting that prior to being sponsored for selection, candidates for ordination should be asked whether they assent to the Five Guiding Principles. Assent is a condition of proceeding to a Bishops' Advisory Panel or BAP. A note to confirm that

the candidate has so assented is recorded in the sponsoring papers sent by the bishop to Ministry Division. This procedure was introduced for candidates sponsored from January 2015. There is no specific similar procedure covering membership of the Freemasons. However, the range of a candidate's commitments is recorded in the sponsoring papers and BAP Advisers are diligent in exploring these and under the criteria for selection considering their consonance with Christian obedience.

*Revd Hugh Lee:* My question asks about ordination of bishops as well as priests and deacons and my question also asks about all the assurances that are required from candidates to bishops, priests and deacons, not just the two that were mentioned.

*The Bishop of Sheffield:* Thank you. The first question in terms of bishops; there are, of course, different processes for selection of bishops but it is clear from the way these processes operate that both at the point at which somebody completes their papers they will be wise to offer their views on, particularly, the new Five Guiding Principles' statement and on other matters, and then in the process of appointment questions will be raised normally on any areas which are likely to be contentious. The only other area, Hugh, where there are separate questions for candidates for ordination are on a commitment to live within the House of Bishops guidelines on human sexuality.

*Revd Christopher Hobbs (London):* Members of Synod will need GS Misc 1102. Why has the House not reported its decision about the Five Guiding Principles in the summary of its business, GS Misc 102, and then further given us an incomplete answer to Mr Lee's incomplete question, given that the House has also required that ordinands affirm their acceptance of the Five Guiding Principles at the end of their training as well as the beginning and in view of the fact that the guidance the Ministry Division has issued says that this does not apply to the questioning in relation to issues in human sexuality, which will normally only be asked by the DDO, why does the Houses of Bishops' report ---

*The Chair:* I think there are a number of questions here, would you just like to pick one out, please?

*Revd Christopher Hobbs:* It is not in the summary of what was decided. We only hear about it because someone has asked a question about it and, unusually, not only are you now requiring ordinands to ---

*The Chair:* Is this a question or a matter of opinion?

*Revd Christopher Hobbs:* Why has the House of Bishops decided to introduce this without informing the Synod and the Church?

*The Bishop of Sheffield:* Thank you very much for the question which is helpful and really important. I do not have an answer to the question of why it is not in the record of business and it should have been, and so apologies for that. In terms of why this question is asked at two points, approaching ordination and then immediately prior to ordination, that is because the Five Guiding Principles have been introduced quite recently and, therefore, some candidates in training have not been offered an opportunity to affirm their assent to it prior to their ordination. Therefore, it seemed

important on introduction that there was that two-fold conversation. It is also conceivably the case that people's views will alter and change during their training as well.

30. *Mrs Jennifer Humphreys (Bath and Wells)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: What proposals are there for disseminating the lessons learned and insights gained from the Shared Conversations Initiative across the Church of England?

*The Bishop of Sheffield (Rt Revd Steven Croft)* replied: By their very nature, the regional Shared Conversations are decentralised and each one will be shaped by the local context in which it occurs. For this reason, dioceses will have considerable freedom to follow up on the conversations in their region in whatever way is most appropriate for them. The lessons learned and the insights gained from the Shared Conversations will be different in each region, and thus the dissemination of these will also be different. It is hoped, and will be very much encouraged, that participants in the regional conversations will bring their learning and insights to their wider communities.

In terms of a reflection on the process as a whole, the precise nature of the follow-up is still to be worked out. Throughout the Shared Conversations, a Regional Advisory Group with a representative from each region will be meeting to share experiences of the process, as will a Steering Group and Reference Group. These meetings will shape the way the learning from the Shared Conversations as a whole is disseminated. Additionally, it is hoped that the lead facilitators who will be attending all of the conversations will also offer a reflection after the final regional conversation in March 2016.

*Mrs Jennifer Humphreys:* Thank you very much for your answer. I would just like to ask that dioceses will have considerable freedom to follow up but I hope they will be encouraged in the precise nature of the follow-up to engage with all people that will be interested in hearing, not just those that have been involved throughout the process. Thank you.

*The Bishop of Sheffield:* Thank you. There will be, as part of each regional conversation, some space to give thought and reflection as to how those who have come will then subsequently engage with their wider diocese.

*Mr John Ward (London):* When you have worked out how lessons will be learnt, will you tell the Business Committee because they are relying on you to deliver something while not allowing parallel discussions in General Synod?

*The Bishop of Sheffield:* John, we will certainly continue to reflect on that as we go forward with a view to July 2016 Synod, thank you.

31. *Revd Christopher Hobbs (London)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Can the House confirm whether or not the report of the meeting between the LGBTI Coalition and David Porter concerning the Shared Conversations about sexuality which was posted on the Changing Attitude website on 23 January is accurate? If it is accurate, how is it compatible with what was said about the purpose of the Shared Conversations in GS Misc 1083?

*The Bishop of Sheffield (Rt Revd Steven Croft)* replied: Private conversations have been offered and held with individuals and groups from a range of views and constituencies within the Church to enable the process to move forward addressing the concerns that each have expressed. I am assured that what has been said at all of these private meetings is in keeping with the purposes of the conversations as set out in GS Misc 1083.

*Revd Christopher Hobbs:* In the light of that Changing Attitude Report, which no doubt should not have been given, can you confirm whether there are plans to hold a General Synod debate about the Church of England's current teaching and practice in relation to human sexuality once the shared conversations have been completed?

*The Bishop of Sheffield:* We are certainly working towards bringing the results and outcomes of the shared conversations to Synod in July 2016, but the exact shape of that conversation, the balance of group work, how and when questions come to debate, has not been determined, as far as I am aware, and we hope will be reflected on as the regional conversations proceed.

*Revd Canon Simon Butler (Southwark):* Given the concerns expressed by Changing Attitude and other members of the LGBTI coalition that the shared conversations will not be a safe space for lesbian and gay clergy, particularly, to disclose their sexuality, what steps are the House taking to ensure that those concerns are addressed?

*The Bishop of Sheffield:* Thank you. Those concerns have been reflected through the design process and a number of steps have been taken to ensure that those conversations are as safe as possible. There has been considerable reflection on what part bishops should play within the conversations within their regions. In the event, the House of Bishops was not able to agree a consistent line to take and it seemed appropriate that different practices be followed within the different regional conversations. The appointment of facilitators and external facilitators is partly to ensure safe space for disclosure, as is the particular design of the group work which goes on within each conversation. I am satisfied that as much has been done as can be done to safeguard those conversations in that way but, in the end, and I think this will be explicitly said in the conversations, people must, of course, take responsibility for the degree of their own self-disclosure and set their own boundaries.

32. *Mr Tom Sutcliffe (Southwark)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: If, as GS 1977 reminds us, discipleship is authentic learning from Jesus, will the House take positive and perhaps ecumenical steps to proclaim that love of our Muslim neighbours requires us not to insult their faith, and will it not just challenge the dubious reality and misleading implication of PR affirmations like "Je suis Charlie", but also enable this Synod and others in our Church to hear thoughtful Muslim teachers explain what they think our God now wants and how they feel as our neighbours?

*The Bishop of Leeds (Rt Revd Nicholas Baines)* replied: Whilst instant and orchestrated adoption of slogans raises many questions, they may nonetheless have their place as outward signs of the almost universal detestation of murder and violence committed in the name of any ideology. That the Paris killings and other atrocities have

been committed in the name of religious faith fuels a suspicion of religion in general which harms Christians, Muslims and many others. So, it is not a bad thing to show solidarity so long as slogans don't displace the deep reflection and sensitive conversation which necessarily follow on after the shock has begun to recede. The tensions between protecting people's sensibilities and freedom of speech are too familiar to expand on here. However, I fully share the questioner's understanding of discipleship and commend to Synod the work of the Christian-Muslim-Forum among other initiatives. There is much careful work taking place - more than can be outlined here.

*Mr Tom Sutcliffe:* In the name of religion much bad has been done and is still being done, but will not the House in future be a bit braver and declare that a lack of constraint in insulting and offending, while it may be meant to demonstrate the robustness of press freedom, need not be frequently repeated since, as Rowan Williams implied on *Newsnight* last night, it is not a very Christian way of fulfilling our Lord's summation of the law, that thou shall love thy neighbour as thyself; and will the House encourage us all to show solidarity with the seriousness in which our Muslim neighbours hold their tradition of not visually representing created humanity rather than half endorsing the secular assumption that such an idea is risible, which is surely what our Muslim neighbours generally make of the chant, "Je Suis Charlie"?

*The Bishop of Leeds:* Good speech and I think we would agree, but I am not sure it is for the House to make statements like that. There is a lot of very good work going on around the country led by bishops and others where we engage with our Muslim neighbours. I might cite the Christian-Muslim-Forum; Near Neighbours, which is very effective at local level; Scriptural Reasoning; the Feast, working with young people. There is some very good practice around and some of this is best done at local level rather than through the House.

33. *Mr Gerald O'Brien (Rochester)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: In view of the steadily diminishing percentage of confirmation candidates, members of electoral rolls and clergy that are male, has the House of Bishops considered what steps might be taken to ensure the adequate provision of male role models for young men in the Church?

*The Bishop of Bristol (Rt Revd Michael Hill)* replied: Although, intuitively, the Church may lack good female, rather than male, role models, the question is a good one. Prof David Voas' recent study shows women as more sympathetic to religion than men, but notes that the reasons remain obscure. The fact that we still have a majority of male clergy doesn't address the role model question: Historically, clergy were sometimes referred to as the "third sex" and the profession doesn't really reflect secular standards of masculinity. Jesus is, of course, the ultimate male role model - but popular culture does not see him as especially macho. There are tensions between cultural understandings of masculinity and the model of Jesus, which should not necessarily be resolved in the world's favour. The House has not given this topic specific consideration and I think we should challenge the way secular culture presents masculinity before changing our practices to collude with such worldly stereotypes.

*Mr Gerald O'Brien:* May I thank the Bishop for his very full reply. It seems to me having

read it all very carefully that the answer to my question is no. Given that the young men that we hope to see converted to Christ are currently immersed in the secular culture that surrounds us and them, will the Bishop ask the House to consider what might be done in present circumstances before the gender ratios becoming even more skewed?

*The Bishop of Bristol:* That is a very direct question which is asking a question of me. I am happy to ask the question of the House of Bishops. I think what I would want to say is that although specifically we have not spoken about evangelism and mission specifically amongst men, I think what we have done is consistently addressed questions of how we go about our mission and how we go about evangelization in this post-Christian and secular culture which you refer to.

*Dr Philip Giddings (Oxford):* Would the Bishop recommend to his colleagues that they should consider how young men who are Christians and attend our churches can be encouraged to take their proper place in the leadership structures of the Church?

*The Bishop of Bristol:* I am flattered by the amount of influence you think I have on the House of Bishops. I think the answer to that is that my understanding would be that if you looked further down or further up in the Church, whichever way you prefer to look, to what is going on locally in churches and what is going on in dioceses, I think you will see a definite engagement with the subject of how do we encourage both men and women into appropriate leadership roles that are in line with their gifting?

34. *Revd Canon Richard Hibbert (St Albans)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: What steps are being taken to pilot and review the Quality Assurance process this year, as mentioned by the Bishop of Durham in his reply to Question 24 at the November 2014 group of sessions, and what involvement and/or role does the National Safeguarding Panel and the National Safeguarding Adviser have in that Quality Assurance process piloting and review?

*The Bishop of Durham (Rt Revd Paul Butler)* replied: A draft Safeguarding Quality Assurance process was put out for consultation to dioceses in August 2014 and was also discussed with the National Safeguarding Panel. The consultation closed in October 2014. Following comments received, a final recommendation for a QA process was submitted at the end of 2014 to the House of Bishops and the Archbishops' Council who agreed that it should be piloted in 2015 and launched in 2016. The plan is for a series of four QA pilots to take place in 2015. These pilots will be reviewed towards the end of the year and the results reported to the Archbishops' Council, the House of Bishops and the National Safeguarding Panel. The new National Safeguarding Adviser will be fully involved in overseeing the QA process piloting and review and the launch as well as reporting on its progress to the House, the Council and the National Safeguarding Panel.

35. *Revd Canon Richard Hibbert (St Albans)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Following the National Safeguarding Panel meeting on 9 December 2014 at which the Cahill Report (Archbishop of York's "inquiry into the Church of England's response to child abuse allegations made against Robert Waddington") was reviewed, what steps are being taken to implement the recommendations of the report?



*The Bishop of Durham (Rt Revd Paul Butler)* replied: Many of the Cahill recommendations have been anticipated and are being addressed as part of the Church's national safeguarding work programme. Recommendations 1 and 2 are being supported by the increased production of national safeguarding policy and practice guidance to assist dioceses in following the existing House of Bishops policies. This approach will be reinforced by the roll-out of a safeguarding training programme, the forthcoming safeguarding legislation which is going through Synod and the introduction of the Safeguarding Quality Assurance process. Recommendations 4, 5 and 6 are being addressed in the current draft practice guidance on Responding to Serious Safeguarding Situations. Further work will be necessary to look at the other recommendations. The National Safeguarding Panel has already discussed the Cahill Report and the incoming National Safeguarding Adviser will be preparing a further interim report to the Panel when it next meets on 18th March.

*Revd Canon Richard Hibbert:* In respect of the National Safeguarding Panel's meeting on 18 March and the Cahill Report being given further consideration, what other items and reports are being proposed for the agenda of that meeting and will the agenda include a consideration of the effects of the costs, demands, training and future resourcing of bishops, archdeacons and diocesan staff due to, as stated in the answer, the increased production of the National Safeguarding Policy and Practice Guidance?

*The Bishop of Durham:* The National Safeguarding Panel is an advisory panel to us made up of experts from outside in the safeguarding world. It is not for them to look into the matters of costs.

*Mrs April Alexander (Southwark):* The overwhelming conclusion of the Cahill Report is that legislation and guidance are not enough. An archbishop was found to have been more concerned with the person for whom he had pastoral responsibility than with a complainant and a bishop found himself too conscious about his oath of obedience to question what the archbishop was doing. What steps are being taken to ensure that the necessary change will be affected by training and by other means to achieve such a very deep level of cultural upheaval?

*The Bishop of Durham:* The cultural change needs to go through the entire Church not just the bishops, but there is now a programme of training of bishops and their senior staff which is underway and which is going to be rolled out over the next year at that level. We have a new training package which is being piloted which is for people at parish level and clergy and so we have underway a whole new training regime coming in.

36. *Mr Tom Sutcliffe (Southwark)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Considering that the presumption of innocence is a cornerstone of British justice, will the House of Bishops very carefully consider giving advice to bishops on the exercise of their power to suspend following a complaint under the Clergy Discipline Measure and, even more importantly, on how they use their discretion to encourage or invite clergy under investigation following an allegation of misconduct to 'step back' from ministry voluntarily - bearing in mind that the Church has no equivalent to a bail hearing in criminal proceedings to air issues and that the Church may be seen as dangerously close to applying a presumption of guilt?

*The Bishop of Durham (Rt Revd Paul Butler)* replied: The idea that suspension under the CDM or a voluntarily agreement to ‘step back’ from ministry involves any finding or admission of guilt is mistaken. As explained in the guidance given by the Clergy Discipline Commission in the Code of Practice under the Measure, the fact that a bishop suspends a cleric following a complaint does not mean that the bishop has formed any view that the complaint is, or is likely to be, true. Nor will the cleric be prejudiced in the investigation of the complaint as a result of being suspended. The position is the same where a cleric voluntarily agrees to ‘step back’ from ministry. But either form of action should only be taken where it is considered to be necessary, after careful consideration of the balance between the interests of the cleric, the parish, the complainant and the wider Church.

*Mr Tom Sutcliffe:* While I understand that bishops can do nothing to dilute the sense of ‘no smoke without fire’, surely the first principle to apply must be whether there is any danger to the complainant or to any other person that is likely to come from the accused. Will the House please in future ensure that no complaint that is not taken to the police and pursued by the police is ever followed by suspension or stepping back? Will the House also promote the principle that where there is no risk of repetition or further offence, the process of inquiry be carried on discreetly in the background and, furthermore, be required to take into account and involve the parishioners and associates of the accused who may well be considerably better informed and experienced about the nature and past practice of the accused than either the accuser or the Clergy Discipline investigator?

*The Bishop of Durham:* The work of risk assessment, which is one of the things that is undergone, does require a great deal of careful work by an independent person. I would be very wary of going down some of Mr Sutcliffe’s suggested route about parishioners and so on because that would certainly fan more smoke.

37. *Mrs April Alexander (Southwark)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Since the November 2014 group of sessions there will have been 400,000 more HIV and AIDS-related deaths, mostly in the seventy eight countries where homosexuality is a criminal offence and where, “the penalty for disclosure... is to be thrown out of the family home and work” (Norman Fowler: AIDS: Don’t Die of Prejudice 2014). What steps has the House taken in that time, including “behind the scenes” interventions, to effect a reduction in prejudice in such countries where it has a presence?

*The Archbishop of Canterbury (Most Revd & Rt Hon Justin Welby)* replied: There has been no direct intervention during this time in the name of the House of Bishops. However, an example of effective intervention from the mission agency Us. (formerly USPG) is its continuing work on a Stigma Index in association with the Zimbabwe National Network of People Living with HIV (ZNNP). Dispelling some of the myths and misconceptions around the spread of HIV/AIDS, which leads to some of the stigma and discrimination, is a core activity of Mothers’ Union in the majority of countries in which they work.

*Mrs April Alexander:* Thank you, Archbishop. The work in Zimbabwe would seem to be particularly encouraging. However, Lord Fowler is more concerned with the Anglican

Church in both Uganda and Nigeria which appears to support the oppressive legislation in those countries and a Church of England which gives the impression of being sympathetic. Perception is all in this case. In view of the number of deaths in question, could you tell us when action on the part of the Church of England will cease to be indirect and become direct?

*The Archbishop of Canterbury:* It is important to remember that just because something is not happening in the public domain it does not mean it is not happening at all. There has been some direct action in terms of statements that can be found on the website for the Archbishop of York in terms of letters by myself and by the Archbishop of York respectively to the President of Nigeria and the President of Uganda - about a year ago I guess, somewhere around then. I do not need to remind Synod of the sensitivities around the many issues of social and personal ethics when they are addressed from one culture to another. We may want to make a point but if we make it without displaying a certain amount of modesty and discretion, especially as the former colonial power, we will probably not be listened to and so damage relationships as to make matters worse. Any conversations that might or might not be going on around this subject will certainly not be broadcast to all and sundry, and do I hope Synod understands what I mean.

*Revd Canon Dr Christopher Sugden (Oxford):* While every effort must be made to differentiate HIV/AIDS from homosexual activity, was the Archbishop of Canterbury made aware during the his recent visits to Primates in other parts of the world that the situation is not helped by the effort of states like the United States of America and bodies like the European Union that appear to be tying aid for healthcare and education to the promotion of same sex legislation in African nations, and was he made aware if there was any truth in the allegations that the United States' Presidential Office directed African heads of state on this last year at a meeting in Washington?

*The Archbishop of Canterbury:* As this covers 37 visits - and I am not sure that the Synod would have time for me to go through all of them - there were a range of opinions raised. The answer to the first of his two supplementaries was, in fact, yes by some and no by others; and, to the second one, it may have been but not that I can remember.

38. *Revd Stephen Coles (London)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Given the care exercised over the participation in the laying on of hands during the episcopal consecration in York Minster on 2 February, has the House of Bishops considered what measures might need to be put in place to ensure that participation in all future consecrations can maintain a comparable quality of care?

*The Archbishop of York (Most Revd & Rt Hon Dr John Sentamu)* replied: The arrangements at any consecration service are for the relevant archbishop to determine. The Archbishop of Canterbury and I are united on the importance of continuing to exercise care in these matters, not least to ensure that we honour the commitments given by the House of Bishops in the declaration which it agreed last May and in the Five Guiding Principles which the Synod had already endorsed.

*Revd Stephen Coles:* I hope my younger brother will allow me a senior moment, but my theology about all this has become confused by recent events, so I want to ask him

further if he can clarify how what happened in York Minster last week differs from what the early Church described as “Donatism” and if the Faith and Order Commission could be asked to provide a paper for members of Synod and the whole Church explaining how that consecration relates to traditional Catholic teaching? I am ready in the spirit of gracious restraint for him to give a written answer should he prefer to do so at this short notice.

*The Archbishop of York:* You are ready, yes. I can, of course, refer you to my website where I give very detailed reasons why that was done. It is in relationship to the Five Guiding Principles and the question of consecrations at the discretion of the Metropolitan of the Province, and Canon C 2(1) allows that Metropolitan to delegate to at least three people, so what I did actually is well within Canon Law and the early Church would recognise it as well.

39. *Mrs Anne Foreman (Exeter)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Given that the last review of the Crown Nominations Commission, led by Baroness Perry, was in 2001 (*Working with the Spirit*, GS 1405) and that it is nearly 5 years since the introduction of interviews, what plans are being considered for an external review of the Crown Nominations Commission to ensure that, going forward, it continues to be compliant with legislative frameworks and best practice as they change and develop?

*The Archbishop of York (Most Revd & Rt Hon Dr John Sentamu)* replied: The last external scrutiny in relation to the Crown Nominations Commission was conducted in 2010 by Baroness Fritchie, the former Commissioner for Public Appointments. Because her report concerned the circumstances of a particular CNC it could not be published, but she made some general recommendations which were considered by the central members of the Commission. The latter regularly review how the Commission operates and we have the benefit of input from the Prime Minister’s Appointments Secretary as well as our own to ensure that we keep abreast of changes in law and good practice. The House of Bishops has no current plans for a further review of the Commission.

*Mrs Anne Foreman:* Thank you very much, your Grace. Given that you refer to central members of the CNC regularly reviewing how it operates, please can you advise the Synod how many of the general recommendations made by Baroness Fritchie were implemented after being considered and, also, what opportunities are there for diocesan reps on the CNC to contribute to any review process?

*The Archbishop of York:* Well, if the matter were simply down to us I suspect we might want to make some modification to the present arrangement, but it is not. The CNC operates in accordance with the Standing Order agreed by the Synod and I suspect there would be a wide range of not wholly consistent views over what changes actually ought to be made, so everything is operated within a particular Standing Order agreed by the General Synod. Whatever recommendations you may have made, we still want to work with the Spirit in the sense that every CNC begins in prayer, continues in prayer and, on the last two days when they are actually looking at interviewing people, they begin with the Eucharist and there is constant prayer and a discernment of vocation both for the diocese involved, the Church of England and the particular person who is being interviewed. We are still working with the Holy Spirit but, friends, we are guided by the Standing Order of this Synod and we cannot actually operate outside it.

*Revd Canon Dr Hazel Whitehead (Guildford):* If there are members of the CNC who are not in favour of women becoming bishops by conviction, could the Archbishop assure Synod that their views could not unduly influence the decision whether or not to appoint a woman should she be the best candidate?

*The Archbishop of York:* I can assure you there are members who are not on theological conviction in favour of women becoming bishops and, in my experience, actually, we try and follow the Standing Orders. Any private or whatever views you have got, you have got to actually follow the particular agreed role specification, personal specification, and the discussion and conversation in many ways really go around that. I hope and pray to God that the Holy Spirit still does speak through those people. Where the problem may be, and I have got to be very honest here, it may not actually be the central members but the diocese itself, is how are we going to create trust and confidence. My prayer is that the Holy Spirit actually does guide. They may make decisions that are not right. If they make them, well, they have got Christ in the future to answer to.

40. *Mrs Anneliese Barrell (Exeter)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: What is “the Wash House” (to which reference is made in Appendix 4 of the ‘Green’ Report), and to whom is it responsible?

*The Bishop of Ely (Rt Revd Stephen Conway)* replied: The Wash House takes its name from the old laundry building at Lambeth Palace where the staff supporting senior appointments and senior leadership development are based. The staff are led by the Archbishops’ Secretary for Appointments and funded by the Church Commissioners as part of their support for the ministry of the Archbishops. The Appointments Secretary is line managed by the Bishop at Lambeth. She provides direct support for both Archbishops in relation to the work of the Crown Nominations Commission under Synod Standing Order 122 and for the House of Bishops Development and Appointments Group chaired by me.

*Revd Hugh Lee (Oxford):* Who has been appointed to the Wash House in the last 12 months and what are their responsibilities and experience for the job?

*The Bishop of Ely:* We have recently appointed Lisa Adams to direct and fulfil our plans for the Leadership Development Programme both for bishops, deans and for the learning community for those who are being nominated by bishops at the moment.

*Dr Philip Giddings (Oxford):* In view of the interest of the whole Church in the development of our senior leadership, would the Bishop agree to make a periodic report to this Synod on the work of the Appointments Group and the Wash House operation so that we can all engage in reflection on how it is going?

*The Bishop of Ely:* I would be very happy to go back to the House of Bishops Standing Committee, to which DAG is responsible, to ask that question and come back to you.

41. *Mrs Anneliese Barrell (Exeter)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: How many staff are there in the Wash House and how is its operation funded?

*The Bishop of Ely (Rt Revd Stephen Conway)* replied: There are six permanent staff working in the Archbishops' Secretary for Appointments (Wash House) department. An additional staff member is currently managing the Senior Leadership Development Project. The department is funded by the Church Commissioners as part of their support for the Archbishops' ministry.

42. *Revd Canon Dr Christopher Sugden (Oxford)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Can the Chair of the House of Bishops assure the Synod that there will be a proper and continuous provision for the oversight by and accountability to the House of Bishops and the General Synod of the proposed process for selection, training and oversight of the leaders of our Church?

*The Bishop of Ely (Rt Revd Stephen Conway)* replied: No changes are proposed in the processes for selecting people for individual posts. These continue to operate in accordance with arrangements endorsed by the Synod. Nor are there proposals for changing the oversight arrangements for senior appointments processes. The identification of those with particular potential who might benefit from development for future posts of wider responsibility will be a matter for diocesan bishops, in consultation with colleagues, in accordance with arrangements agreed by the House of Bishops. These will be reviewed and refined in the light of experience in the first year.

*Revd Canon Dr Christopher Sugden:* Thank you, Bishop. In your reporting (which you have already given in an earlier answer) and in the processes, how will you take into account the views of clergy and laity in the appointment process that is now in view?

*The Bishop of Ely:* As currently when it comes to the appointments of bishops, certainly the appointment of suffragan bishops not subject to the CNC rules, then I think that my colleagues would be calling together advisory groups made up of clergy and lay people to ensure that the views of the diocese, both lay and ordained, are taken seriously into account in making any appointment.

43. *Mr Adrian Greenwood (Southwark)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: To what extent, if any, did the 'Talent Management for Future Leaders and Leadership Development for Bishops and Deans' Task Group make use of the research carried out at Roehampton University and the London School of Economics by the Revd Dr Malcolm Torry and published in two books, *Managing God's Business*, published by Ashgate in 2005 and the second volume *Managing Religion: The Management of Christian Religious and Faith-Based Organisations* by Palgrave Macmillan in 2014?

*The Bishop of Ely (Rt Revd Stephen Conway)* replied: Dr Torry's work provides an important lens through which to view the organisational life of the Church. As indicated in the Synod paper, the report focussed internal reviews in relation to leadership and management challenges. This is a timely reminder of an important piece of work which needs to be reviewed as we move into the design phase.

*Mr Adrian Greenwood:* Thank you, Bishop, for your answer. In his books, Dr Torry studies the distinctive characteristics of religious and faith based organisations and then, on the basis of his findings, asks which particular aspects of management theory

from different organisational sectors are relevant to the Church and faith based organisations and which are not. Might the design phase that you are about to enter be asking similar questions and employing similar logic?

*The Bishop of Ely:* The answer is yes.

*Revd Canon Simon Killwick (Manchester):* Bishop, did the task group make use of the Faith and Order Commission report on Senior Church Leadership and will that report which was commissioned by the Synod be brought to the Synod for debate?

*The Bishop of Ely:* That is two questions, I think, Father. The answer to the first one is that there has been very close conversation between DAG and members of FAOC, and indeed our report alludes, even before the publication of the FAOC Report to faithful improvisation. That was one of the core themes within the FAOC Report on senior leadership. We have been having subsequent meetings about how we can work further together both on the theology and the practice of what we propose.

As for there being a debate here in Synod of the FAOC Report, that is beyond my ken.

44. *Mr Samuel Margrave (Coventry)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: According to GS 1610, prepared by the Cathedrals and Church Buildings Division, the average church spends £6,000 per year in maintenance costs and cites the average cost of installing disabled access in a church as being £49,000. Can the Synod be informed how many churches could be maintained or have disabled access installed for the 'additional cost of £2.083 million between 2014 and the end of 2016' referred to in Lord Green's report on Talent Management as being required to give effect to the new approach it advocates?

*The Bishop of Ely (Rt Revd Stephen Conway)* replied: The funds made available by the Church Commissioners are not distributed to dioceses for the maintenance of buildings or the installation of disabled access so strictly speaking the answer is none. The decision of the Spending Plans Task Group to commit additional funding for nurturing and developing senior leaders did, however, have an opportunity cost in that the money could not then be spent in other ways. The Group agreed with Lord Green's group and with the Archbishops that the Church had significantly underinvested in this area up to now and that increased expenditure was not only justified but necessary.

45. *Revd Canon Dr Hazel Whitehead (Guildford)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Will the House give further thought to the composition of the Archbishops' Review Group (which, according to GS 1982, will oversee the implementation of the talent and leadership development programmes proposed in the 'Green Report') so as to ensure that there is sufficient and independent scrutiny, a healthy gender balance and proper representation from those involved in dioceses in ministerial formation, training and development?

*The Bishop of Ely (Rt Revd Stephen Conway)* replied: The Development and Appointments Group, a sub-committee of the House of Bishops, is responsible for the implementation of the recommendations of the report and its membership is currently being widened. The Archbishops' Review Group has been set up to ensure

independent scrutiny, hence representatives from the Archbishops' Council, the Church Commissioners and from the professional learning and development world, as well as bishops who are responsible for ministerial formation within their own dioceses. The Group has its first meeting later in February.

### **Secretary General**

46. *Mrs Anne Martin (Guildford)* asked the Secretary General: Could the Secretary General please supply General Synod members with a list of all the task groups in existence (including those presenting reports in this Synod, those not presenting reports and the Spending Plans Task Group), along with their current membership?

*Mr William Fittall (Secretary General)* replied: The reports of five task groups have been circulated to the Synod in connection with the February group of sessions, namely, Resourcing the Future (GS 1978), Resourcing Ministerial Education (GS 1979), Simplification (GS 1980), Discerning and Nurturing Senior Leaders (attached to GS 1982) and Optimising the Role of the NCIs (GS Misc 1094). The membership of the groups is included in each report.

It is difficult to produce a comprehensive list of other task groups because there is no standard definition of the term and groups can be established to undertake focused work in a wide variety of circumstances by any number of national bodies. I have, however, placed on the notice board the membership of the Archbishops' Task Group on Evangelism, the Task Group on responsible Savings and Credit, the Spending Plans Task Group, the Turning up the Volume Group, the Church Buildings Review Group, the Environment Working Group and the Deployment Task Group.

### **Archbishops' Task Group on Evangelism**

The Archbishop of Canterbury (Chair)  
 The Bishop of Liverpool  
 The Bishop of Lancaster  
 Mrs Amy Orr-Ewing  
 The Revd Andy Croft  
 The Revd Annie Kirke  
 Mrs Beth Keith  
 The Revd Liz Adekunle  
 The Revd Canon Dr Jules Gomes  
 Canon Mark Russell  
 The Revd Canon Michael Beasley  
 The Bishop of Burnley  
 The Revd Rico Tice  
 The Revd Al Gordon  
 The Revd Malcolm Macnaughton

### **Task Group on Responsible Savings and Credit**

Sir Hector Sants (Chair)  
 Christine Allison (Centre for the Study of Financial Innovation)  
 Jeremy Anderson (Global Head of Financial Services, KPMG)  
 Anthony Browne (Chief Executive, British Bankers Association)



The Bishop of Hereford  
Gillian Guy (CEO, Citizens Advice)  
Sheila Nicoll (Head public policy, Schroders)  
Mark Lyonette (Chief Executive, ABCUL)  
Kenny MacLeod (Chief Executive Officer, Scotwest Credit Union)  
The Bishop of Stepney  
Caroline Rookes (CEO, Money Advice Service)

**Spending Plans Task Group**

The Bishop of London (Chair)  
The Bishop of Sheffield  
The Dean of York  
Andreas Whittam Smith  
John Spence  
Christine Hardman  
Hywel Rees-Jones  
Mike Eastwood

**Turning up the Volume Group**

The Bishop of Rochester (Chair)  
The Bishop of Shrewsbury  
Caroline Boddington  
Brad Cook  
Vasantha Gnanadoss  
Elizabeth Henry  
The Revd Canon Arun John  
The Ven Danny Kajumba  
The Revd Canon Dr Rosemarie Mallett  
The Revd Dr Rosalyn Murphy  
The Revd Arani Sen  
The Ven Cherry Vann

**Church Buildings Review Group**

The Bishop of Worcester (Chair)  
Sir Tony Baldry (Second Estates Commissioner and Church Buildings Council Chair designate)  
James Halsall (DAC Secretary for the Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich)  
The Ven Christine Hardman (Archbishops' Council member)  
Andrew Mackie (Third Estates Commissioner and Chair of Pastoral and Closed Churches Committees)  
Jennie Page CBE (Vice Chair of the Cathedrals Fabric Commission)  
Ian Watmore (Church Commissioner)

**Environment Working Group**

The Bishop of Salisbury (Chair)  
The Bishop of Dudley  
The Bishop of Kingston  
Philip Fletcher  
Victoria Johnson

Dave Bookless  
 Robyn Pender  
 Martyn Goss  
 Giles Goddard

### **Deployment Task Group**

The Bishop of Blackburn (Chair)  
 The Ven Rachel Treweek, Archdeacon of Hackney  
 Mrs Julie Jones, Diocesan Secretary of Lichfield  
 Phil Potter, Archbishops' Missioner  
 The Ven Ian Jagger, Archdeacon of Durham

*Mrs Anne Martin (Guildford):* Thank you for the reply and the action taken. Can I also ask, will the terms of reference for each task group be made available to General Synod members? Thank you.

*Mr William Fittall:* We can certainly seek to do so. I think that the point to draw out is that even at national level the Church of England is quite a complex institution. Some people may have a fantasy that there is a sort of central air traffic control that ensures that all these bodies are set up in an orderly fashion with terms of reference and a single process for appointing members. The reality is that a lot of commissions, councils, boards and so on do set up groups to undertake particular tasks. I can certainly try and assemble those for you but it does not all sit neatly on a database.

*Miss Vasantha Gnanadoss (Southwark):* Given that black and Asian people are very poorly represented in the membership of the task groups, will he encourage the people responsible for making appointments to do better in future?

*Mr William Fittall:* I think in an earlier question there was a reference to guidance that the Appointments Committee has produced on making appointments, and that does very much make the point that has just been expressed in relation to diversity. That guidance does apply to all appointments, not just those for which the Appointments Committee itself is responsible. That is a long way of saying yes.

47. *Revd Charles Read (Norwich)* asked the Secretary General: What steps were taken to avoid the recently announced redundancies in the Ministry Division, as required under employment law?

*Mr William Fittall (Secretary General)* replied: Employment law does not require the avoidance of redundancies when they are a necessary consequence of restructurings which are justified on business grounds. It does, however, impose certain procedural requirements in the interest of fairness. The policies and procedures of the national church institutions are entirely consistent with these and have been followed in the case of the Ministry Division restructuring, which involved four of the staff of the Division being placed at risk of redundancy.

*Revd Charles Read (Norwich):* Thank you. Can you clarify, please, two things in your reply. One, that in this particular case no steps were taken to avoid redundancies?

Secondly, can you clarify how the restructuring you referred to relates to things we may discuss tomorrow in the RME Report?

*Mr William Fittall:* We have an employment protection policy which we apply across the National Church Institutions where jobs are put at risk as a result of restructurings, so it is not true to say that no steps were taken. What is the case, and it was true in this restructuring as in some others, is that we do appoint people to posts on the basis of particular skills and qualifications, so we do have a more specialist and professional staff than was the case if you go back a decade or two. It does mean that where restructurings happen it is not always possible, in fact it often is not possible, to redeploy people within Church House or other National Church Institution staff, but we always do make those efforts.

On the second question, no assumption was made in the restructurings about any particular outcome in relation to the Resourcing Ministerial Education proposals. The conclusion reached by the Director of the Ministry Division, with my agreement and with the agreement of the Chair of the Ministry Council, was that the structure of the Ministry Division in relation to the business which it is already seeking to advance was not right and therefore needed changing. This is not unique, we have done a number of other restructurings over the last few years. It is in the nature of dynamic organisations and institutions that from time to time you have to look at your staff structure and ask whether you have got the right mix of skills and posts.

48. *Canon Christine McMullen (Derby) asked the Secretary General:* Every email I receive from Church House Westminster carries a warning on my computer saying "Be careful this sender has failed our fraud detection checks". Am I alone in this, and is there any truth in the warning?

*Mr William Fittall (Secretary General)* replied: I cannot recall ever having failed a fraud detection test - or indeed passed one - and, so far as I am aware, neither has any of my Church House colleagues.

This is not a message that we attach to our emails and it is the first we had heard of its existence, though researches reveal that it is a known Outlook problem when messages are sent through a third party internet service provider. While it is salutary to treat all material issued from Church House with due caution, the solution is probably to add the Church of England domain to the recipient's safe senders list.

*Dr Elaine Storkey (Ely):* If we take the Secretary General's advice and have enough trust in the Church of England to put it on our safe senders list, can he assure us, those of us particularly who have strong theological needs for coherence, that we will never receive anything from the Church of England that sends us into a panic attack?

*Mr William Fittall:* I am very reluctant to give assurances that I may not be able to keep.

## **Board of Education**

49. *Mrs Mary Durlacher (Chelmsford)* asked the Chair of the Board of Education: What steps is the Board taking in relation to Government and Ofsted to ensure that the rights,

freedoms and values of Christian schools are not prejudiced by reference to the perceived need to promote “British values”?

*The Bishop of Ely (Rt Revd Stephen Conway)* replied: The Church of England’s Education Office has had significant engagement on this issue with the Secretary of State for Education and her officials as well as Her Majesty’s Chief Inspector of Schools and Ofsted officials. They have each given assurances that the need to promote fundamental British values is not seen as being in conflict with the rights, freedoms and values of schools designated with a Christian character and that inspectors will not be expecting Church of England schools to be doing anything that contradicts the legal framework on which they are based.

Newly revised Department for Education guidance on promoting fundamental British values as part of Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development in schools makes it clear that, whilst schools must encourage respect, it is not necessary for schools or individuals to ‘promote’ teachings, beliefs or opinions that conflict with their own, but nor is it acceptable for schools to promote discrimination against people or groups on the basis of their belief, opinion or background.

The implementation of the regulations by Ofsted inspectors and others will remain under the scrutiny of diocesan education teams and the Education Office itself. Any concerns arising from this would be taken up at a senior level.

*Mrs Mary Durlacher:* Given the Archbishop’s address earlier, which referred to signs of an increasing loss of apparent confidence in the Gospel and the public proclamation of Christianity, and given the link with Christian values, my supplementary is this: what steps can be taken, or are being taken, to sharpen the broadcasting of Christian values as the gold standard of a compassionate society which is concerned with justice and freedom so that, to quote Boris, they do not come across as “Magic FM and the Cotswolds”?

*The Bishop of Ely:* I think that it is all of our responsibility, and especially of course Christians involved in the media, bishops in the House of Lords and all of us, to think about how we express our Christian values as boldly and as clearly as we can, and of course that we celebrate these in our church schools as we are protected and supported in doing.

*Revd Canon Simon Butler (Southwark):* Given the longstanding claims of Her Majesty’s Government under various political masters that the Church is a centre of moral influence in our society, and remains so, what consultation did HM Government make with the Church before discussing and suggesting what “British values” might involve?

*The Bishop of Ely:* There were no discussions with me but I have had subsequent discussions with the Secretary of State about seeking assurance from her and her colleagues that in their adumbration of these values they in no way seek to see us in our promotion of Christian values as anything other than a support of community cohesion and the moral value of our society.

50. *Revd John Cook (Oxford)* asked the Chair of the Board of Education: In the light of the suggestion made by Ofsted to several Christian schools that they should allow non-Christian worship to take place in the course of their assemblies, what steps is the Board taking to ensure that the rights and freedoms of Christian schools, and the legal framework within which they operate, are respected?

*The Bishop of Ely (Rt Revd Stephen Conway)* replied: I refer to my answer to question 49.

Ofsted has given the assurance that inspectors will continue to be trained to understand the legal framework within which schools with a religious character operate and that the workshop in such schools must be carried out in accordance with their trust deeds.

*Mr Paul Boyd-Lee (Salisbury)*: Whereas it is heartening to read of the significant engagement which the Department has had with the government Department of Education, nevertheless it seems that some schools have concluded an expectation to have some forms of non-Christian worship. Therefore, is it possible that the Chair can disclose the substance of the representations to Ofsted on this particular matter, perhaps through the Church of England website which would be more accessible and perhaps more easily understood to our many people who are involved with church schools rather than the guidelines which have been issued by the government Education Departments?

*The Bishop of Ely*: Thank you. I think I could go back to my colleagues in the Division to see how best we might respond to that question. It is clear, of course, that certainly aided schools are expected to provide Anglican worship as a matter of course and I think that we would be very happy to pursue that and speak to you further.

51. *Mrs Victoria Russell (Oxford)* asked the Chair of the Board of Education: What representations does the Board plan to make to the Department for Education with a view to ensuring that children by primary school age at Christian schools are not asked questions by Ofsted inspectors which are of an inappropriate kind?

*The Bishop of Ely* replied: I refer to my answers to questions 49 and 50.

Ofsted has given assurance to the Education Select Committee that media reports about inappropriate questioning are not accurate and have also assured us that inspectors will continue to be trained to carry out inspections using appropriate language.

*Mrs Victoria Russell*: What advice and help would the Board give to school leaders and parents in the case of any future inappropriate questioning of school age children?

*The Bishop of Ely*: We have received assurances from Ofsted with regard to the training of inspectors that they know when questions are clearly inappropriate either in terms of the question itself or in terms of the language used. We will continue to monitor this very closely and, if necessary, go to the highest authorities in Ofsted to make representations if there is any evidence of inappropriate questioning.

52. *Revd Eva McIntyre (Worcester)* asked the Chair of the Board of Education: By what means is the resource *Valuing All God's Children* being actively promoted in our Church of England schools across the dioceses?

*The Bishop of Ely (Rt Revd Stephen Conway)* replied: Following the widespread positive publicity on publication of the *Valuing All God's Children* Report in May 2014, dioceses sent schools a PDF copy of the report and it has been widely distributed by email and other electronic means. In addition to this, over 600 hard copies of the report have been printed and distributed from the Church of England's Education Office.

Diocesan Boards of Education have engaged with the contents of the report, some have provided specific training and workshops for head teachers, and we know that there has been widespread positive use of the report.

The general issues of wellbeing and prevention of all forms of bullying are monitored through the statutory inspection of Anglican schools and is now considered by inspectors in the light of this report. We are planning further training for inspectors on the areas covered by this report to ensure its continued impact.

*Revd Eva McIntyre:* Given my recent experience whilst speaking at a DBE Headteacher and Senco Conference that, in spite of circulation and promotion, not a single delegate had read the resource, what new and creative methods are being developed to promote this resource and its aims?

*The Bishop of Ely:* As I have said, the document has been sent round and certainly we will be further monitoring with DBEs how the penetration of the document is pursued and can report back on the monitoring of that.

**[Questions 53-63 were not reached and were answered in writing]**

53. *Revd Canon Dr Christopher Sugden (Oxford)* asked the Chair of the Board of Education: The Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Education recently emphasised the important work which Standing Advisory Councils for Religious Education (SACREs) and Agreed Syllabus Conferences (ASCs) do 'through their development of appropriate and demanding RE Syllabuses'. Will the Board do all it can to inform and resource Bishops and Diocesan Boards of Education in the task of devising such syllabuses and ensure that Locally Agreed RE Syllabuses will be guided principally by an interest in religious faith and underpinned by a well-grounded Christian Theology?

*The Bishop of Ely (Rt Revd Stephen Conway)* replied: Through the work of the RE Development Group, the Board provides support and professional development for diocesan RE advisers, all of whom work closely with or are represented on local SACREs. The locally agreed syllabuses are informed by their expertise and understanding of the local context.

The publication of our review into the teaching of RE has been followed by a clear action plan to develop the quality of RE in schools. The introduction of the Christianity

Project, which is currently being trialled and piloted across a number of dioceses and community schools, will ensure that theological literacy is properly developed and the quality of the teaching of Christianity improved. This will have a positive impact as dioceses continue to support and influence the work of Agreed Syllabus Conferences.

### **Council for Christian Unity**

54. *Revd Tony Redman (St Edmundsbury and Ipswich)* asked the Chair of the Council for Christian Unity: In the light of the call for the simplification of our processes, could the Council explain the strategic approach to fostering fellowship and in particular the relative roles of the CCU, the Archbishop of Canterbury's Romanian Orthodox Consultative Council, the Anglican and Eastern Churches Association, and the Anglican-Oriental Orthodox Commission?

*The Bishop of Peterborough (Rt Revd Donald Allister)* replied: An overview of current activities and priorities for the Church of England's ecumenical relations is given in the annual report for 2014 prepared jointly by Lambeth Palace and the Council for Christian Unity. The introduction has been sent to Synod members as GS Misc 1101. The full report is available at:

<https://www.churchofengland.org/media/2148632/national%20ecumenical%20relations%20report%202014.pdf>

It includes substantial sections on both the Eastern Orthodox Churches and the Oriental Orthodox Churches. This answer is intended to supplement the detailed material that is set out there and which provides essential background.

Fellowship with the Orthodox Churches is fostered through supporting a variety of activities that together serve to sustain and deepen a much valued pattern of relationships. Vital strands in this pattern would include:

1. The Archbishop of Canterbury
2. Lead bishops for the Church of England
3. International dialogue commissions
4. National organisations and groups.

Their related roles are set out briefly below. The role of the CCU is noted with regard to all four of these and pertains to function (c) in its constitution (2010): 'To foster ecumenical work in the Church nationally and in the dioceses.'

55. *Revd Paul Hutchinson (York)* asked the Chair of the Council for Christian Unity: In relation to the resolutions passed at the November 2014 Group of Sessions of the Synod on the Anglican-Methodist Covenant, what progress has been made in appointments to the Joint Covenant Advocacy Group, and in the work of the Council for Christian Unity and the Faith and Order Commission? In the absence of any mention in the current Business Committee report (GS 1974), when may the Synod and the Methodist Conference expect to be able to receive the first of the annual reports referred to in recommendation 3 of GS 1971?

*The Bishop of Peterborough (Rt Revd Donald Allister)* replied: The Appointments Committee will be considering nominations for the three Anglican members of the Joint

Covenant Advocacy Group at its meeting on 11 March, including the nomination of a Diocesan Bishop by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York to be the Anglican Co-Chair. The Methodist Council will make its appointments at a meeting on 1 April and an announcement of the full membership of the Group will be made thereafter.

The Faith and Order Commission and the Faith and Order Committee of the Methodist Church will hold a joint meeting in March to scope Recommendation 1 of GS 1971, with members of the two bodies already working together to prepare for that.

There will be a brief report to the General Synod (in the form of a GS Misc) and the Methodist Conference in July 2015 and a fuller report in July 2016.

### **Ministry Council**

56. Mr Adrian Greenwood (Southwark) asked the Chair of the Ministry Council: In para 46(a) of GS 1977 *Developing Discipleship*, reference is made to a 'group of theologians, bishops and theological educators to work together to resource new theological conversations on discipleship and ministry.'

- (a) Please supply the names and relevant qualifications and experience of the members of the Group;
- (b) please can the Brief to the Group be published;
- (c) What is the time-scale for the Group to report back; and please can the Group be asked to add 'evangelism' and 'mission' to their remit as urgent priorities for the expression of 'discipleship and ministry' for the Church of England in the 21st century?

*The Bishop of Sheffield (Rt Revd Steven Croft)* replied: I have arranged for the names and current roles of the members of the group, and its brief, to be placed on the notice board. This work is conceived as a reflective theological conversation between bishops, academic theologians and theological educators in preparation for a similar three-way conversation during the meeting of the College of Bishops in September 2015. Please be assured that evangelism and mission will be at the centre of our deliberations. This is in line with the title of the Common Awards themselves: Theology, Ministry and Mission.

### **Ministry Division**

#### **Common awards: taking forward the theological conversation**

- 1 Following the creation of the common awards, the question remains as to how the theological conversation around the awards should be taken forward. The partners in this conversation are:
  - Ministry Council and other bishops;
  - theological educators in dioceses
  - the common awards team of Durham University led by Professor Mike Higton and academic theologians more broadly.



- 2 In the past, individual providers of theological education have answered the church validation questions which included questions about God’s mission and the Church’s ministry. While the possibility of theological preface to the awards has been talked about, over the last two years the church has created a pragmatic settlement with regard to the common awards, driven by the need to have them in place for September 2014. However the task of theological reflection on the task of theological education and formation for ministry remains. This is the case both for the church as a whole and for the individual theological education institutions (TEIs).
  
- 3 The discussion at High Leigh with principals of TEIs in March 2014 indicated that a ‘theological preface’ to the awards is no longer the priority as such but that there is real energy for theological engagement with each other on emerging themes in mission and ministry, theological education as preparation for ministry in the light of emerging themes in the church’s life and in theological education.
  
- 4 The aims are:
  - to hold each other to account
  - to enrich our understanding of each other by getting below the common (or distinctive) language used
  - to reflect together on contemporary issues in the church’s life (‘lay ministry’, new forms of church, the relationship between the church and the world, mission and evangelism)
  - to ensure this theological reflection is happening here as it is one of the few places where it can take place
  - to prepare for a larger scale discussion of these topics between the College of Bishops, academic theologians and theological educators.

<b>Membership</b>	
<b>Bishops</b>	
Steven Croft	Bishop of Sheffield
Stephen Conway	Bishop of Ely,
Martin Warner	Bishop of Chichester
Jonathan Clark	Bishop of Croydon
<b>Theologians</b>	
Mike Higton	Professor, Durham
Frances Clemson,	Lecturer, Durham
Jeremy Morris	Trinity Hall, Cambridge
Julie Gittoes	Guildford Cathedral
<b>Theological Educators</b>	
John Applegate	All Saints
Peter Allan	Mirfield
Robin Ward	St Stephen’s House
Emma Ineson	Trinity College

57. *Mr Gavin Oldham (Oxford)* asked the Chair of the Ministry Council: Does ‘working with children and young people’ now comprise a mandatory part of ordination training?

*The Bishop of Sheffield (Rt Revd Steven Croft)* replied: Ordination training is a broad-based preparation for ministry and therefore includes working with children and young people. This might take the form of placement or in-context working with children's or young people's groups, schools and children's work in church. The Ministry Division has further ensured that there are good opportunities for study in this area in the Common Awards. Indeed it is collaborating with the Institute for Children, Youth and Mission to develop specialist modules in this area. These will be available to ordinands as well as to those preparing to be children and youth ministers. It is projected that these additional modules will be available from September 2015.

58. *Revd Canon Roger Driver (Liverpool)* asked the Chair of the Ministry Council: How many current ordinands in training (within the Common Awards Programme of study) have a registered disability? Under the Common Awards Programme what support and help are Durham University contracted or obligated to provide to ordinands with disability?

*The Bishop of Sheffield (Rt Revd Steven Croft)* replied: The Ministry Division does not keep a record of the number of ordinands studying for the Common Awards who are disabled. However, as the Division provides advice on the support of disabled students to theological education institutions (TEIs) through the National Disability Adviser, it is aware of several current ordinands who are disabled. Under the Common Awards contract Durham University is required to make available to TEI staff advice on any issues faced by students with disability. It has been agreed that the University's Disability Support service will supply this where needed. The cost of assessments and of additional support is underwritten by Vote 1 where the student cannot access funding through Disabled Student Allowances or other grants.

59. *Revd Canon Roger Driver (Liverpool)* asked the chair of the Ministry Council: Of the number of ordinands who have a registered disability, how many have been formally assessed or screened by a qualified assessor at the outset of their course, to enable reasonable adjustments and focused support to be recommended? Whose responsibility is it to decide whether the reasonable adjustments and focused support are provided?

*The Bishop of Sheffield (Rt Revd Steven Croft)* replied: I refer to my reply to the preceding question. In the current academic year 13 ordinands have had a formal assessment of their educational needs paid for from Vote 1. In the academic year 2013-14 the figure was 5. It is the responsibility of the theological education institution to make reasonable adjustments and provide focused support which enables the ordinand to participate fully in the educational programme. This is done in consultation with the ordinand and drawing on the expertise of the Church of England's National Disability Adviser and the advice of the Durham University's Disability Support service.

60. *Revd Christopher Hobbs (London)* asked the Chair of the Ministry Council: When will the full Theological Education Institution-specific research data, which underpins the proposals in the *Resourcing Ministerial Education* Report, be published for wider scrutiny?

*The Bishop of Sheffield (Rt Revd Steven Croft)* replied: The national church institutions are keen in general to make their data accessible to the research community and enable peer review. The annual Faith in Research conference is just one forum where this takes place. It is not however proposed to publish the research data in Theological Education Institution-specific form. The Task Group commissioned the research in order to study comparisons between pathways and forms of training rather than between individual TEIs. Where a TEI has asked for this data in specific form, an institutional level report has been provided for TEI staff.

61. *Revd Jonathan Frai (Chichester)* asked the Chair of the Ministry Council: In the report *Resourcing Ministerial Education in the Church of England* (GS 1979), the Task Group says it hopes to see “a cohort of candidates for ministry who are younger, more diverse and with a wide range of gifts to serve God’s mission” (paragraph 8). What steps have been taken (or will be taken) to identify those training institutions which already excel in attracting such candidates and draw appropriate lessons for the wider church?

*The Bishop of Sheffield (Rt Revd Steven Croft)* replied: The Ministry Council is aware through the information which it holds about candidates and theological education institutions or TEIs of the size and age profile of each student body. Several TEIs have a concentration of younger candidates and these are not exclusively either residential or context-based. Candidates of the kind which the Task Group hopes to see appear to come from a range of traditions and are attracted to a variety of training pathways. If the increase of 50% in ordinand numbers sought by the Task group is to be achieved, TEIs of all kinds will need to excel and respond to the expectations which good quality candidates will bring. However, the growth which the Task Group advocates will come not only from the excellent work of TEIs but also in partnership with dioceses and parishes where the primary work of encouraging vocations is carried forward.

62. *Revd Jonathan Frai (Chichester)* asked the Chair of the Ministry Council: In the report, *Resourcing Ministerial Education in the Church of England* (GS 1979), the Task Group refers to findings which show “no distinction between college and course pathways” regarding ministerial effectiveness (paragraph 31). The research for this is posted on the ministry development website (paragraph 26). Under this website’s ‘Research & Consultation’ section, the *Resourcing Ministerial Education* section has several reports, contributions and theses. Which of these many works (specifying sections within them, please) most clearly support this conclusion of college-course parity?

Resourcing Ministerial Education, Part I: Main Findings:

[http://www.ministrydevelopment.org.uk/UserFiles/File/RME/loE\\_Part\\_I\\_Main\\_Findings.pdf](http://www.ministrydevelopment.org.uk/UserFiles/File/RME/loE_Part_I_Main_Findings.pdf) (p.18 section 4.4 and p.39 section 10 NB this is a summary report)

Linking Theological Educational Pathways to the EMS13 Dataset:

[http://www.ministrydevelopment.org.uk/UserFiles/File/Experiences\\_of\\_ministry\\_reports/pathways.pdf](http://www.ministrydevelopment.org.uk/UserFiles/File/Experiences_of_ministry_reports/pathways.pdf) (p. 3 section 2 of a 12 page report)

A closer look at Self-supporting and Stipendiary Ministers in the Experience of Ministry Survey 2013 Dataset:

[http://www.ministrydevelopment.org.uk/UserFiles/File/Experiences\\_of\\_ministry\\_reports/SM\\_SSM.pdf](http://www.ministrydevelopment.org.uk/UserFiles/File/Experiences_of_ministry_reports/SM_SSM.pdf) (p. 8 section 3.3 of a 9 page report)

*The Bishop of Sheffield (Rt Revd Steven Croft)* replied: There is indeed a great deal of research, which is why the report does not actually assert a crude 'college-course parity'. Rather it notes: "The full range of pathways can therefore be used with confidence, recognising that each pathway has its own excellence and offers distinctive benefits." This is a subtle and important distinction reflected in the detailed analysis in the reports. References for the relevant reports and sections which provide summaries of some of this analysis and warrant reading in their full context have been placed on the notice board for members of Synod to consult.

63. *Revd Preb Stephen Lynas (Bath and Wells)* asked the Chair of the Ministry Council: Given the recent decision of one college (St John's Nottingham) to cease all residential training, and the uncertainties surrounding all colleges and courses, what consultation:

- (a) took place with colleges and courses when preparing the report *Resourcing Ministerial Education in the Church of England* (GS 1979); and

will now take place to enable colleges and courses to plan for the transition to the desired 50% increase in ordinand numbers in five years' time?

*The Bishop of Sheffield (Rt Revd Steven Croft)* replied: The RME report envisages a rising number of ordinands and other candidates for ministry and increasing investment in all forms of training in the Church of England. This indicates a positive and healthy rather than an uncertain future for theological education institutions (TEIs). During October 2014 a series of three consultations were held with TEI and diocesan staff around the first phase of the research.

*The Chair:* That concludes our question time. I would like to thank Synod for your cooperation for this - I have called it - question time of trial. I am sure the Business Committee will appreciate your feedback on how it has felt for you. This ends this item of business.

THE CHAIR *The Bishop of Manchester (Rt Revd David Walker)* took the Chair at 5.40 pm

## **Introduction to Wednesday's Group Work and Debates**

*The Chair:* Synod, welcome to our next item, this is Item 9, the introduction to the Group Work and Debates taking place tomorrow. I suggest that you refer to GS 1976 through to 1982. This is a presentation under SO 97, but it is a bit of teamwork, it is not just a presentation by one person. What we are going to do is have short presentations of six minutes each from the people who have been responsible for the various reports that we have got before us. That will take us probably about 40 minutes or so in total. At the end of that we will have time for questions and answers and I will probably take the questions in groups of three, but I will remind you about that a little nearer the time.

As we begin Item 9, can I invite Canon John Spence to set the scene.

*Canon John Spence (ex officio):* Ladies and gentlemen, it seems to me it is quite difficult when you receive a set of reports as you have done with your Synod papers this time. There is so much to consider, so much detail, it can be hard to keep an eye on the bigger picture. It can feel as if some people have sat in some opaque process, however carefully they have been selected for their experience of different parts of the Church from which they come. It can feel remote. It can feel as if one is dealing with closed minds and settled papers.

Let me just make four points before I explain how each of the task groups fit together, and I apologise in advance, Bishop, if I just digress slightly over the six minutes.

Firstly, what this is not about is the creation of some central strategy for the Church of England. What it is about is how we best respond to support the dioceses, over 40 dioceses and other parts of the Church, in developing and delivering their plans and strategies for those 40-odd dioceses and all the parishes that ultimately they cover.

Secondly, what this is not about is a group of people sitting in the centre thinking in a corporate way about what they think they should do. As I will explain to you in a few minutes, the genesis of these different task forces is actually quite separate.

Thirdly, what this is not about is closed minds. Why would it ever be that 50-odd people who have been involved in these different task groups would have a collective wisdom that can match that of this Synod or of the dioceses and church communities from which you come? It is true that some decisions have already been made by the relevant part of the Church, the relevant institution, but even those will need careful engagement with you and others in terms of their implementation. But, for the most part, the reports that are before you today are still at the stage where the detailed proposals have to be developed.

What this is about is the start of a really genuine engagement, and I will set out how we see that progressing over the coming months. This will only ever work if all the stuff in this is owned collectively by the church.

What we had to start from was the programme of research that has been undertaken over several years and which culminated a year ago in the publication of the *From Anecdote to Evidence* report and the analyses that have been undertaken by colleagues within Church House around population, demographic and church trends.

We started from looking at what had been happening to church attendance and membership over the last 30 years and we could see that while the population of the country was increasing year by year, the average decline in church membership and attendance was over 1% per annum, which compounded takes you down by over 50%.

We looked at the age profile of church members and attendees and we saw that in every single part of the population, every age group up to 55, we were under-represented, and that way back in 2007, and one cannot believe it has improved since, 68% of all attendees and members were age 55 or more.

This led members of staff to project forwards. This is purely an arithmetic projection, it is not a prediction, it is not a statement of what we can achieve. If you look at that arithmetic projection you identify that over the period between 2007-2057 church attendance membership will fall from 1.2 million on a regular basis to something like 200,000 or 300,000 if current trends continue.

If you can stop the loss of membership through other than death, you still see a reduction by more than half. Even if you start on to a compound growth rate of 3% per annum we can expect membership to keep falling until around 2041 before an upward trend is resumed.

I do not like using words like “burning platforms”, but let us just remember what that age profile told us. We know that we have large numbers of parishes now with very small electoral rolls and with nobody on them below the age of 70. We know from what at least two diocesan bishops have said that in less than ten years we could see a threat to the presence of Church in communities across rural England, and some urban areas as well, and we could see the Church of England eliminated from its key, absolutely essential role in promoting the risen Christ in those places.

So building on that we took the first step, which was to create the Resourcing the Future Task Group, and to ask our officers to carry on the engagement they had already been undertaking with individual dioceses and to go on a programme of visits to every diocese to get views back from those places. That programme was undertaken across the first half of 2014.

What did the dioceses tell us? Unanimously they told us that they aspired to grow the Church, and that in turn led to a very significant debate about what does good growth look like, and I am deeply indebted to Adrian Newman, the Bishop of Stepney, who really was focusing us on what good growth is. Bad growth would be that which is confined to bushy suburbs. Good growth is that which sees us present, vibrant, with a depth of membership. Not just numbers but depth, quality of membership in the most deprived communities of this country.

The dioceses told us that they expected to need the numbers of clergy to be maintained at around current levels. I will come back to that. They told us that they expected to need more lay leaders than has been the case in the past, and that is something which needs continuous work still to understand what that really means and looks like.

But they told us it was not just about numbers, they said it was about getting the right people in the right jobs, about the competencies, about the experience, about the ability to keep people performing really well in whatever role it is that they are undertaking, which again raises questions which have been referred into the RME place. They equally told us in numerous cases that they actually found it quite difficult to understand how they could bridge the gap between their aspiration and ambition and that which they could actually achieve. How could they really turn what they wanted to do into something that would actually happen? So this programme of task groups, this collection of task groups was created.

If we look at the map, one, Discipleship had already been taken. This was before my time emerging from the third quinquennial goal about re-imagining ministry. It had caused papers to be written which were debated within the House of Bishops and Archbishops' Council and that led to the Discipleship workstream which we will discuss tomorrow.

That on Leadership and Development came about in a quite different way. The House of Bishops, thinking about what sort of budgets they would require to ensure the appropriate training and development of the bishops of today and tomorrow, came to a meeting in Church House and that then led to a further discussion about what did we need to do to supplement - not to supplant - the churchmanship and theology that we might expect all bishops to have with other skills that might be needed to sit alongside it. That piece of work was then taken forward under the aegis of the archbishops.

The Resourcing the Future one I have explained, it came on the back of all that research. We did all these visits round the individual dioceses. They gave us very clear answers but posed many questions. That has fuelled the work on the Resourcing Ministerial Education piece and effectiveness. I actually realise I must apologise to Philip, I have missed a slide in that, but it is one that Steven Croft is using anyway so I will let him explain it. That in turn also, on the back of what the dioceses told us, led to the Simplification Task Group which Pete Broadbent is leading because the dioceses were telling us about all the things that are getting in the way of that growth pattern that they want to achieve.

Finally, a further piece of work has been initiated by me with the help of Archbishops' Council around NCI optimisation. What does that mean? It is saying that if we are going to be doing all these things, if we wish to maintain the principle of subsidiarity while maximising the effectiveness of every organ of the Church across this country, then one needs to make sure that at the centre we have the right engine room to support it. It is saying that we cannot go on simply cutting Vote 2 year by year, as has been the case over the last decade, and demand efficiency rather than effectiveness.

If I go back to what Gavin Oldham asked earlier about the geographic organisation of the Church, there are some things that it may be can best be done by some national initiative, and I think particularly around possibly things like digital church, and so we have created another workstream - not a task group but a workstream - under the governance of the Archbishops' Council, on the subject of optimising the National Church Institutions and particularly the work done from this building.

So, ladies and gentlemen, you will see that this series of task groups have different start points. Some flow one from the other, others have been quite independent, but what I suggest they do is to represent a co-ordinated response to the research that was available to us and the messages we had received from our diocesan visits. It is in that spirit that I ask you to consider them.

I have said already that this will be the start of an ongoing engagement programme. We will use meetings like the Inter-Diocesan Finance Forum, which is meeting in ten days' time, as a place where we can really sit down with diocesan secretaries and DBF chairs to think through the practical implementation of all this work.

We will have another programme of meetings with senior leadership teams from every diocese. A letter has already been sent to every diocese, asking each of them to consider what diocesan bodies or open forums of members might be most appropriate for these discussions/explanations to take place, and we will seek to meet the demands that the dioceses place upon us. We will have another meeting with the Theological Education Institutions, whom I fear have concerns which are misplaced because, when you listen to what the Bishop of Sheffield has to say, you will understand just how much we hope they are going to be available to do, and we will reach out to other stakeholders.

Finally, out of all this comes one other workstream, which is on that draft: application to the Church Commissioners for the potential for a significant but one-off piece of funding. I have talked already about just how urgent the work is. When I come to explain the Resourcing the Future plans and our formulae and when you listen to what Steven Croft has to say, it will become clear that if we are to have an impact in the short and medium-term as the product of all this work, and I believe that impact is essential, we will not be able to do it from within the pockets that are currently available to us. We will consider very hard what exactly it would be appropriate for us to ask of the Church Commissioners and we will seek your endorsement in principle to such a request being made, with the absolute commitment that you will be kept in the loop around the exact nature of that request.

So Bishop, I am pleased to present before you the background to the task groups and to invite you to ask for explanations of each individual group.

*The Chair:* Thank you. We are coming on to those explanations. Bishop of Sheffield?

*The Bishop of Sheffield (Rt Revd Steven Croft):* The vision for the Resourcing Ministerial Education Task Group's report is set by that very extensive research undertaken for Resourcing the Future, not simply filling in a questionnaire but a two-hour consultation which is then written up and textured very well. That research establishes beyond doubt that dioceses are looking to grow in numbers and in spiritual depth as well as in service to their communities, and looking for different and imaginative ways to take that forward. It is clear that dioceses believe, almost uniformly, that maintaining the number of stipendiary clergy and increasing the number of SSMS and lay ministers is absolutely vital to that growth. The graph you can see is on page 4 of GS 1978 Resourcing the Future. You will see from that graph that dioceses aspire to have a similar number of stipendiary clergy as we had in 2012, ten years later, just over 8,100. But the reality is that, according to our best projection, we will have only 6,350, and this is a gap of up to 1,700 between aspiration and reality.

The reason will be familiar to most of us: That retirements are outstripping the numbers of people being ordained because of the age profile of the present clergy. It is already the case from the same research that the church struggles to find sufficient ministers to lead churches in some of the most deprived communities in the country, so the deficit that is represented by the graph will present an increasing challenge to the Church of England's aspiration to maintain a significant presence in every community and to grow in every place.



The same research was clear about the qualities needed in stipendiary clergy and SSMs and lay ministers. We need all such ministers to be missional, collaborative and flexible as we go forward into a changing future. This research has shaped the central recommendation of Resourcing Ministerial Education. We believe this is the right moment for the Church of England prayerfully and proactively to seek new vocations for all kinds of ministry.

We have set a challenge and a target to grow vocations by 50% per annum every year from 2020 onwards. Even that is not enough to bridge that gap, but it is enough to make a radical difference to the future of the Church of England in many communities across the land and begin to turn things round. So we believe that it is right to invest in more vocations work. We believe that training a larger number of candidates through the next ten years will require greater investment in that training. If we are to invest more, we also need to ensure we are investing in the best quality of initial training and continuing training for our clergy and lay ministers.

The detail of our recommendations and the 12 proposals in the paper are still to be tested in consultation and debate and we envisage they will evolve further before becoming concrete proposals. I would stress that we envisage a continuing mixed economy of initial training - college and course and context-based training - into the future. One of the most significant and far-reaching resolutions this Synod can make in the months to come will be to own this vision of seeking to grow the number of candidates for ministry, to support this work in dioceses and to release the funds to make this increase in candidates possible.

Tomorrow afternoon I will invite you to welcome and support this vision in the formal debate on this Report.

*The Chair:* Canon Spence will now briefly introduce Resourcing the Future.

*Canon John Spence:* I have explained where the genesis of the idea of the Resourcing the Future Task Group came from. We had three main areas that we looked at. We had two formulae, one the Sheffield Formula, as it was known, which was aimed at ensuring a fair allocation of priests across dioceses, and it became very clear at an early stage that that was no longer effective. It raised many questions and in fact had been discarded in large parts of the church. The Darlow Formula, by which funds were being made available from the Church Commissioners, so they are national funds, they do not belong to the Church Commissioners, but which are the dividend, if you like, from the good work undertaken by the Church Commissioners over and above the funding of pensions, those funds were being distributed by a formula that was opaque, which had no accountability attached to it, where funds typically disappeared into a pot and where there was no link with deprivation of communities.

We studied numerous options for how that could be changed. We concluded that the best way forward in terms of any allocation is to try to move away from such formulae and to create a system where those funds and the funds currently distributed under the Mission Development Funding should be distributed firstly according to the levels of deprivation in each diocese and, secondly, for proactive investment and growth.

Intentionality should be the basis on which those funds come through.

Further, we recognise that we want to create a spirit of mutual accountability. I am absolutely determined that that should not mean accountability to Church House and one of the things we wish to debate with you and IDFF and other places is how we can create an effective accountability operation which does not involve you reporting here.

Then we had to address this question around creating strategic capacity. That debate has again been opened. Several dioceses have already approached us following a letter that has been sent, and, again, the ongoing piece of work we have here is what can we do with those funds, or other mechanisms, which will best enable the individual dioceses to close that reality gap, either through the provision of resource or expertise, whether they require funding to bring their own expertise in. However they want to do it, we are going to look at giving them the means for that to happen. Let us just be clear again: we believe it needs to happen sooner rather than later. We can go into the details of the formulaic piece at the group meeting tomorrow for those of you who have signed up to the Resourcing the Future and Church Commissioners' piece and will explain more tomorrow afternoon.

*The Chair:* Thank you, Canon Spence. Bishop of Ely?

*The Bishop of Ely (Rt Revd Stephen Conway):* The report on Leadership Development has attracted considerable attention, even from within my family. "Now dear about this Report ..." Well, I do wish some of the communications about this had been better and then some of the misconceptions around the Report might not have taken root. It was written by a group of bishops with learning professionals and the input of other clergy, written to access funding for a step change in a support and challenge of present and future leaders among our clergy to engage with the opportunities of our generation in context. Our project is only one part of a whole-system review of our development and support, both of lay and ordained strategic leaders for our church.

It is really good that the paper on Discipleship which we are going to be studying tomorrow has been framed in much the same time-frame as our report. I am not a special Christian by virtue of being a Bishop. Only Jesus Christ is our prophet, priest and king. Nonetheless, Paul in Ephesians does not hold back from saying that people are called to particular functions and offices. All disciples are called to witness and to serve. All priests are called to be faithful pastors and teachers. The Church does, however, call people into roles, not differentiated by value to God but by scope and impact. Bishops are set apart and given authority to lead and guide and teach, and we are developing a programme to help all of us serve the mission of the church and the common good. We are called to be both faithful and agile as we proclaim the faith afresh in this generation. To serve this purpose, we also wish to nurture and support other clergy who have already shown capacity to exercise leadership and influence for good beyond their immediate sphere. To that end, diocesan bishops, with their staff teams, have identified people who will benefit from being in a learning community, in which over a sustained period people may, from very diverse backgrounds, be further formed together, both to grow in their existing roles and to be supported in their readiness to be both more adventurous and more effective in what they are called to undertake next.

I regret that I did not have more intentional support in the years before I was called to be a bishop. It is essential that we do not abdicate our responsibility as a Church to those whom we call into positions of influence and authority. We are determined to use this pattern to serve a more diverse grouping of people in a wide variety of ministries, including those of bishops. We are committed to developing the ministries of women and men and many more people from minority ethnic communities within our Church. A crucial test will be how we live out all five of our Guiding Principles in our nurture of future leaders. I am very proud that we have turned away from an opaque and wasteful preferment list in favour of a more accountable and inclusive system with sustained support for people.

For the first time, there is funding for the learning and development of deans of cathedrals. We have used the shorthand of a 'mini MBA' not because we are sending them or anybody to Fontainebleau, but because we have an entirely customised course for them in Cambridge which will help them in their roles as strategic leaders of complex teams. They are operating in settings where they are both at the leading edge of mission and running a heritage business, the purpose of which is to turn visitors into pilgrims. They face the same pressures as the leaders of small and medium-sized enterprises. The courses that we are developing are rooted in the theology and spirituality of the Church and in our dealings with potential business school partners, we have had no truck with those who wanted to tell us what our vision and values should be. In every encounter I have made clear that the vision and values are at the heart of who we are in Christ, and that none needs bid to work with us who does not see that our approach to leadership always starts with the model of a Saviour who is both crucified and risen.

It is providential that our report came into the public domain at much the same time as the FAOC study on Senior Church Leadership. You will find reference in our report to that faithful improvisation which is at the heart of that study. We believe that our plan coheres with the whole Reform and Renewal vision, which is seeking to be purposeful and generous in its support of growth and resilience. This is a reality within our senior clergy, our priests, theologians, evangelists and heirs of the Apostles. Alongside the apostolic call, bishops, like deans, are also responsible for extensive budgets, investment portfolios, for business and for process. Church leaders, like all disciples, are called into the character of Christ, and so is his body, the Church, as both community and organisation, and we believe that being spiritual and strategic go together as we seek for the church's flourishing into the future.

*The Chair:* Thank you, Bishop. I now invite the Bishop of Willesden on Simplification. I hope it will be short and simple, Pete, because we do need to get through the rest of these presentations in about the next ten minutes or so.

*The Bishop of Willesden (Rt Revd Peter Broadbent):* Short and simple! I sense the energy level in the Synod has gone down. It ought to be up because these task groups are the most fundamental and exciting thing that has come for a long time in terms of what we are doing. I am deep committed to the evangelisation again of England. The only reason we are doing all of this is in order to achieve that. So let's get some excitement into the Synod about what we are actually doing here. It is all of a piece.

We did not go into a bunch of smoke-filled rooms as task groups and come out with energy and excitement because we thought it was going to shock the Synod, but rather because we thought it might change the face of the Church of England. I am responsible for simplification, which in itself is a conversation-stopper at every party I go to. Everyone laughs their head off; this man is simplifying the Church of England!

GS 1980 tells you some of the things that we have come up with. You will recall that, of course, the report already referred to, *Towards the Conversion of England* came up with a lot of things about how the Church of England should engage with society and transform things at the end of the Second World War. The Church of England responded by engaging on a long-slog programme of canon law reform. I am not prepared to do that, but I am prepared to chair a group that looks at how we simplify our structures. You will see that what we have set out in here is a menu for the things we can tackle. It could be another five-year programme. I am up for that because I think we could drive a swathe through some of the things that are wrong about our legislation.

When we legislate, do you remember that little scene in *Father Ted* when Father Ted and Dougal were told, "Go and protest against that very iniquitous film that is being shown in the local cinema" and Dougal and Father Ted roll up outside the cinema and they hold up placards. One says "Careful now!" and the other one says "Enough of this sort of thing!" Most of our legislation tends to be framed because we sit here thinking, "Careful now; be careful of this kind of thing which might damage us." What the simplification agenda says is that we can change that. We can look at legislation and see what is necessary in order to safeguard and properly give a legal framework for what we intend to do because we are a church with order and legal order. I am a proud member of the Ecclesiastical Law Society. However, it is also the case that we put things in because we worry about "what if" or what might happen in the worst circumstances or let's legislate for absolutely everything on the face of the Measure, and that has stood us in awful stead.

If you read the report, and I am sorry it is thick and there is more to come, you will find that we try to get through that and say let's change the way in which we do this legislation; let's facilitate; let's look at the criteria. Good legislation; enabling mission, simply put together, and without all the complications we have foisted on ourselves over the years. If you want to come and discuss more about the detail in due course, please do. This is the fruits of our consultation with the dioceses. I want to go to parishes for the next quinquennium and ask them where it actually hurts when the rubber hits the road. I am excited by simplification. I hope you are too.

*The Chair.* Thank you, Bishop. We heard in introduction that there are financial implications of some of what is proposed and the First Church Estates Commissioner will explain some of those.

*Mr Andreas Whittam Smith (First Church Estates Commissioner):* Thank you very much indeed. I am afraid we are going to have to talk about money now. I will try and be swift. I share your desire to leave plenty of time for questions, so I hope I can set a good example.

First of all, I will say something very briefly about the financial position of the Church

itself. As you probably know from an answer to a question earlier on, a written answer I think, the Church costs about £1.4 billion a year to run, to cover everything, heating, lighting, vicarages, stipends, the hierarchies, everything you can think of, repairs. To put that figure into perspective, it is about a quarter of the turnover of Waitrose, which gives you a sort of idea of the size of it. It is one of those numbers which is at the same time large and at the same time small. The most remarkable thing I think, which is not made enough of, is that almost half of that £1.4 billion is supplied by giving; by people in the pews giving. The figures are very remarkable. Our members are extraordinarily generous. They give twice as much to their church as other people give to charities. It is a remarkable fact. Some of the other sources of income for the Church are, of course, fund-raising events, which again church members do, and fees. The last bit is the investments held in hand of the parishes, the dioceses but most of all in the hands of the Church Commissioners.

The Church Commissioners have two roles, an active role and a background role, if you like. The active role is contributing to those running costs. In 2013, we laid out £208 million, of which pensions, for a scheme which has been closed since 1998, took £120 million. It is an enormous sum, which hardly anybody notices is being paid for and is near its maximum right now. £40 million only goes to parish ministry and mission, mainly to poorer dioceses, and the rest are our statutory duties to cover the cost of bishops and cathedral ministry and so on. The second role of the Church Commissioners is to provide emergency funding if needed, and in my time, which is perhaps 12 years now, it has never been necessary.

But before we come on to the subject matter of this week, I can think of a second reason why we might have to provide emergency funding one day and that is if there is a decline in giving, not because our members are becoming less generous, but from all we know about the numbers because there are just fewer of them, we must keep in the back of our heads that there could be a decline in giving, and that would be serious.

So now I come to the question before us, which is paying for the work of the task forces, which is obviously beyond the scope of the dioceses. We know what the crisis is which confronts us: it is an existential crisis. There is a dreadful 'doomsday' machine at work which means that our membership inexorably falls as young people fail to replace our members who are coming to the end of their lives.

In turning to the Church Commissioners, which is the correct thing to do, and I was immediately encouraging to John Spence when he first told me about the plans. It is the correct thing to turn to us, but it does pose difficult issues for us. That is why I have insisted that we debate this tomorrow afternoon because of these issues, and I do want the support of Synod and the understanding of Synod because we are going to break the famous intergenerational rule. An intergenerational rule which we observed rigidly for 20 years, which was not observed in the 1980s and we see what happened. The intergenerational rule means that we only distribute such funds as are consistent with maintaining the value of the endowment in real terms through time. In other words, the notion is that our successors as members of this Church will have the same amount in spending terms of Commissioners' money to help them as we do. That is the rule. But if it is a crisis, then I am afraid that is a rule which has to be broken or we have to consider breaking it. We can only finance the spending on the task groups'

recommendations by borrowing from the future, by taking funds reserved for future members and using them now, and that will reduce our grant-making capacity in perpetuity, forever. There is no way out of that. That is why for me as First Church Estates Commissioners it is an enormously, big, difficult thing to do. I think we have to do it, but it is not just one of those things where you say "Okay".

There are two conditions which I will want to discuss in much greater detail tomorrow. We should only do this if the Church faces a genuine crisis. I think it does, but I shall want to know that Synod as a whole thinks that and, secondly, if safeguards are in place, to make sure that funds are well-spent. I have given a lot of thought to what these safeguards should be. How we can go as far as possible to make sure the funds are well spent, because I do not believe there will be a second chance, and on that I shall very much want to have the advice and suggestions from Synod members as to how to do this well. That is what we must discuss tomorrow and I look forward to the debate. Thank you.

*The Chair:* The Bishop of Sheffield is going to talk briefly about the Discipleship paper and then a little about tomorrow's small group work.

*The Bishop of Sheffield:* What does it mean for us as a Church to be a community of missionary disciples? That is what we are hoping to reflect on tomorrow morning in the small groups and to carry that conversation forward into the debate tomorrow afternoon. The final paper you have, the first one to be discussed tomorrow, the paper on Developing Discipleship aims to begin a sustained conversation across our Church about discipleship. It is not meant to be a final word about anything. How could such a short paper accomplish that in any case? Unlike the other papers before you Developing Discipleship is not the work of a task group. I was asked to write it as part of an open and ongoing dialogue in the House of Bishops and the College of Bishops and the Archbishops' Council and with other individual groups along the way.

As I said in the blog post which introduces the paper, it has been quite a challenging paper to develop. I have torn it up and started it again on several different occasions. It has been by turns too critical and not critical enough. It has been too theological and not theological enough, often in the same meeting actually. It has felt at times like a very large and prolonged *viva voce* examination and I wonder what I have done quite to deserve it. I must need great improvement in patience.

The starting point for the paper is that as a Church we have not done enough careful work on our theological understanding of the laity, of the whole Church and therefore on discipleship, and the consequences of that are spelt out on page 7. I have become deeply convinced that our re-imagination of ministry, one of our goals for this quinquennium, has to begin with a re-imagination of what it means to be the Church and what it means to follow Christ and be disciples together. I have been surprised - and I would prepare you for this tomorrow - at each stage of the process by the depth of passion, positive and negative, stirred up by the ideas in this paper and its different versions and the debate that has flowed from it. The subject touches on my own passions and beliefs quite deeply as well and I will expand on those tomorrow in the debate. It is just excellent, although it was not part of any long-term plan, that the debate and discussion has arrived here at the same time as that task group papers,

providing a context for them.

I particularly encourage you, as you prepare for discussion tomorrow, to reflect on your own story, your own understanding of discipleship, and I particularly commend to you the Ten Marks of a diocese committed to making disciples. When we last did the research, only a third of dioceses had a strategy or a policy for how to enable this in their own dioceses, so this is a timely piece of work. These marks have been developed not by me but by a team of senior officers across the divisions in the Archbishops' Council, in dialogue with those who lead this work already in dioceses, and I want to pay particular tribute to Joanna Cox for her pioneering work in this area and for her work on this paper particularly.

Some have commented that there is too little that refers to parishes, but these marks could easily be adapted to any parish or benefice. My assumption is that we should be developing discipleship wherever we find the Church: In parishes, in 'Fresh Expressions', in cathedrals, in every diocese and through the national Church as appropriate. In our discussion tomorrow and debate I hope we will move beyond the paper to share our experiences, our hope and our common vision for developing a community of missionary disciples across this Church of England and across this land. Thank you.

*The Chair:* Thank you, Bishop. That brings us to the end of the presentations. The time is now for questions and answers. We have had no requests to speak in this section, so I hope that means there is going to be spontaneity and people are going to be responding to the things that you have heard. This is Q&A, so we are not looking for speeches (in fact, we are not allowing speeches) but questions, and I will take them in groups of three and then invite the panel of presenters to decide who is going to respond to them.

*Canon Timothy Allen (St Edmundsbury and Ipswich):* Earlier in the day when we debated the Business Committee Report I asked the Chair of the Business Committee to explain why the Green Report on Discerning and Nurturing Senior Leaders was, unlike the other task group reports, not to be debated in General Synod here tomorrow afternoon.

In reply, you will remember that the Chair of the Business Committee said, with admirable frankness, that the Business Committee could schedule only the business proposed to it by the responsible body and said that she could not speak for the House of Bishops. Would someone on the Panel please now speak for the House of Bishops and explain why the Green Report is not to be debated and voted on here tomorrow afternoon?

*Mr Gavin Oldham (Oxford):* Thank you to John Spence for referring to my question about the need for a focus on non-geographical attention for attracting younger people to the Church but it is slightly at variance with the question on page 13 of GS 1978, "Is there a risk that the proposals about accountability will lead to a more 'centralist' approach?", which essentially says that the whole of this is going to be interpreted within a geographical context.

I just want to make sure that there is no pre-condition on here which stops us moving down the road of having diocesan equivalent bishops with a non-geographical responsibility who can really take the authority of leading on issues which really are of concern to the country as a whole and particular groups who do not relate to our geographical structure. I do want to make sure there is no pre-condition which is making all this subject to the current diocesan structure.

*Mrs Julie Dziegiel (Oxford):* I was very pleased to hear about the consultation process with the dioceses, but what I would like to know further is if there was a sense during that consultation process with the dioceses that a lot of the issues raised were being raised from parishes? The coalface is the parish level, how much of what the dioceses said was informed by what they knew of what was happening at parish level?

*The Chair:* Thank you. I will invite the panel to respond to those three questions.

*The Bishop of Ely:* Thank you. As I said at the beginning of my presentation, there is very clear interest in all that the report that we have produced contains.

I think it is important though to say that bringing a report to be discussed both now and tomorrow morning is a change already because, until this, the preferment list and all the development of bishops and other clergy, has been entirely the responsibility of bishops under the overall care of the archbishops and so I think that the money that is being proposed is not money from the General Synod.

Of course, people have a right to be interested and engaged and I do not know what will happen into the future around these issues, but that is why this is not a thing to be voting on in Synod since this is the particular responsibility of the bishops with the archbishops.

*Canon John Spence:* If I can deal with the other two questions. I can give Gavin Oldham the reassurance that he seeks that there is absolutely no pre-conditionality here. The reference to accountability is very much that, relating to those funds which come into dioceses from the distributions that we are talking about and it is not in any way to stop, if that is to seem to be the best way, the creation of pan-Church organisational elements, if you like, if you think that that is the best way in order to proceed on particular topics. Gavin, I really do not think that you need to worry on that score.

In terms of the last question, which is around understanding what is going on at parishes, I can tell you that in my own task group I had people who were all parish members. If somebody is a DBF chair, they come from a parish if somebody is operating in that. In terms of the visits that we made to dioceses, typically we sat down not just with the diocesan bishop and maybe area bishops but with archdeacons as well in order to pick up that piece.

Certainly, I would hope that when individual dioceses decide on what consultation, what engagement events they would like, we have referred to open meetings, we absolutely want the engagement of the people who are in those communities day by day because that is where the Church is most important.



*The Chair:* Thank you.

*Miss Vasantha Gnanadoss (Southwark):* Poorer churches do very important pastoral work in the community; will this be given proper acknowledgment when discussing finances? I ask this because, when the question was raised about establishing food banks, the reply gave the impression that it is up to the churches to establish their own sources of funding. Thank you.

*Revd Charles Razzall (Chester):* How strong a bias is a bias to the poor under *Resourcing the Future*, total bias to the poor or just a strong bias to the poor?

*Mr Adrian Greenwood (Southwark):* Could I just say that I am personally very excited about this package of reform and renewal and I am looking forward very much to engaging with it. We have heard how the different task groups have come together and it is, therefore, in my mind not surprising that they are not yet totally joined up. In relation to Discipleship, in particular, and what part evangelism plays within discipleship, I am aware that we have debated or received and debated two previous reports. One was GS 1917, Challenges for the Quinquennium: Intentional Evangelism. The other one was GS Misc 1054, Making New Disciples: The Growth of the Church of England. Can I just check that both of those excellent reports are part of the package that we will be taking forward together?

Secondly, in paragraph 8 of GS 1979, which is Resourcing Ministerial Education, a number of characteristics for flourishing ministry are listed but, given the foundational importance of discipleship, it is surprising to me at least that being able to nurture discipleship is not on that list.

*The Chair:* Thank you. I am going to turn to the panel to respond to those. After that, we do not seem to have any questions on Simplification, perhaps the Bishop of Willesden explained it so simply and clearly there are not any, but areas that we have not had questions on. We have nothing else yet on the Church Commissioners' funding either. If you have got questions on those issues we would like to hear from you.

*Canon John Spence:* It would be jolly good if we get questions on Simplification. It would be a bit hard on Pete Broadbent if he is very excited and then is totally ignored. We would not want that at all.

Thinking about the poorer communities, and I almost wished I could have intervened when that question about food banks was asked, the formulae that we are going to adopt in terms of the distribution of funds previously under Darlow and Mission Development Funding will be 50% of those will be linked to the deprivation of the communities served by the diocese. It will be up to the diocese then as to how they are applied under a mutual accountability mechanism which I hope will not involve this place.

That 50% will have intentionality about it. What we want to get away from is any sense of subsidy. Under Darlow you may not know that if a diocese improved its overall financial position it got less and that, actually, did not seem to do very well in rewarding

growth, it rather penalised it. That 50% will be for use in the more deprived communities, recognising that mission in those communities is both harder often and that the amount of lay support typically, but not always, is less, simply because there are less structured community organisations.

The other 50% being distributed under the new mechanism will be for church growth. That may be in deprived communities. It will be the subject of some form of bidding process yet to be agreed, all the detail to be worked out in engagement with you. It will have that piece that that church growth in a particular diocese may be wanted again in a deprived area. Potentially, in one diocese they may seek to apply all their funds into such communities but 50% is ring-fenced for that reason.

Could I just say, by the way, that if people have more detailed questions, they have the groups in the morning, but Pete Broadbent, Steven Croft and I will be retiring to Room 3 at the end of this session for at least half an hour for people who want to ask questions on a more private basis.

*The Bishop of Sheffield:* I will just address Adrian's question briefly and also thank Adrian for his consistent raising of some of these issues of discipleship and the role of the laity over the years. Yes, the report, Developing Discipleship, does assume and want to carry forward the earlier report on the Growth of the Church of England, the quinquennial report and the Intentional Evangelism report. However, the accent, I hope, in the discussion and debate tomorrow will not be so much on the making of disciples (that is evangelism, which is being carried forward through the Evangelism Task Group), but to resource the Church's thinking on being a community of disciples and how we enable each other in our on-going Christian life and witness, not so much the giving of witness at the beginning.

RME does talk about clergy being missional and dioceses wanting that and I guess the spelling out of that, or it not being spelled out in the way that you articulated, is part of the shorthand that is being used in reports but it is certainly meant to be included. Thank you.

*The Chair:* Thank you. We will take another batch of questions.

*Miss Sally Muggeridge (Canterbury):* You mentioned the laity twice and I think you have got to remember that there is an enormous amount of talent within the laity itself. I am a management development director, an HR director, all sorts of things, and I think you need to really embrace the fact that there is a resource there that is willing and able. I was a bit concerned that it did not really come up. I am a Reader as well. We have got I do not know how many Readers in the country, but there is a resource there which I would suggest is often under-utilised. Thank you.

*Dr Philip Giddings (Oxford):* How do you teach old dogs new tricks? I am enormously excited by the programme of reform and renewal that is in front of us, but I reflect that many of the things that are in front of us are not actually new. They have been here before. Let us take, for example, the role of the laity which has just been touched on. *All are Called* is referred to. What happened to it? Why is the answer to that, "Nothing"? How are we going to ensure that we, as a Church, the whole Church, take

on board this programme?

It needs a spiritual revolution. It needs a work of the Holy Spirit. I would like to hear from the Chairs of these task groups how we are going to mobilise this Church to seek that work of the Spirit so that all these wonderful ideas which are good ones can be taken forward and the rest not? There is a profound spiritual challenge here and at the moment I do not see much in the papers (and perhaps that is understandable) about that. In particular, I want to know how we really are going to mobilise the enormous gifts of the laity of this Church to bring about the growth and evangelism and discipleship which God wants.

*Revd Preb Charles Marnham (London):* I am impressed with the leadership development of the distinguished groups that are being involved in the possible further training. I would like to know that there will be a process of instruction and education, because my experience is that many in management and business do not understand the true nature of the Church, in particular that it is a voluntary organisation.

I meet this personally where I serve in Central London and, again and again, I have to remind people they also do not know, for example, the extent of the finance that we raise every year. If I am not wearing a clerical collar they ask me what I do. I say I represent a large international organisation, it has branches throughout the world and it is still growing. They normally say, "Which bank is that?"

*The Chair:* Thank you. I am going to invite the panel again to respond. I am conscious that all bar one of the questions to the floor so far have come from the Southern Province. I know that those of us from the North are probably still trying to work out what this "Waitrose" is that is this key competitor, but maybe we could encourage a few more contributions, please, after the Panel have responded.

*The Bishop of Sheffield:* Thank you, Chair. I believe there is a branch of Waitrose in the City of Sheffield and I have been once. I have only been once. Sally, thank you very much for your words on the importance of the laity. In fact, an earlier version of the paper that is now Developing Discipleship did focus much more on the role of the laity and tried to describe different ministries. Because we did not have a secure, I felt, theological understanding of discipleship and the Church, constructing a theology of the laity felt rather like building on sand. I hope that we will be able to move on from here to describe that much better in our language and discourse and develop resources to enable us to do that.

*The Bishop of Willesden:* Let me pick up on Philip's question because it is about rolling this whole programme together and this is not in isolation from our three goals. You will recall that Archbishop Justin has been pushing us very hard to undergird all we do with the life of prayer and spirituality.

Yes, it is not explicit in the papers that we are saying very much about prayer, but the context of what we are doing is that this is about the renewal of the Church of England for mission and you cannot do that without prayer. It is a ridiculous thing to say. I would say also that there needs to be something intentional about the way in which we place ourselves in relation to the elections to General Synod in 2015 because, if we get

people elected who are committed to working with a programme of reform, we can achieve this stuff; but if we get an election that is fought only on subsidiary issues that are not as important, we will not see the holistic approach that we need to make these things happen.

I would also say to Philip that part of the reason why the laity thing has never really taken route (and he and I have been around as long as each other on this and report after report has gone through Synod about the ministry of the laity) is that we have not actually put money into it.

I think one of the things that is important about the debate we are going to have about releasing money from the commissioners and about making sure that training is not just about the clergy but about the laity as well is that we actually resource these things, I am sorry I am digressing into your area, Steven. If you put your money where your mouth is then things change.

*The Chair:* Can we have some contributions from the North?

*The Bishop of Leeds (Rt Revd Nicholas Baines):* Can we be reassured that in all that is being planned, and as all of this is pulled together, we will be a Church that relates to Aldi and Morrisons not just Waitrose and to Lidl and to the whole variety of cultures that are around? I remember a bishop once described himself as a Radio 4 bishop in a Radio 2 diocese. I know what is meant by that, but we need to be Radio 2 in a Radio 2 context and FM commercial in an FM commercial context. I am mixing my metaphors but you get my point.

*Revd Amanda Fairclough (Liverpool):* I am a Church Commissioner and we have heard a lot of very scary numbers in Church Commissioners' meetings lately in terms of how much money may be required. I am not sure if I am more scared that they are too big or even too small, but what I would like to know is when can we expect some detailed costed proposals coming from the task groups to suggest exactly how much money is going to be needed, please?

*Revd Paul Benfield (Blackburn):* The Waitrose of the North is, of course, Booths, and Booths is successful because of the good relations it has with its suppliers, the farmers and so on. What plans do the task groups have to establish good relations with the dioceses by coming out and doing roadshows and things like that, otherwise this will just be seen as some sort of central planning by "them in London" who do not know what goes on in the North?

*The Chair:* Thank you. I will invite the panel to respond, hopefully fairly briefly because I would like to get at least one more set of questions in, but there will be no further supermarket analogies permitted after this next round of responses.

*Canon John Spence:* I myself was quite impressed by the episcopal knowledge of different grocers, actually. Absolutely, we have got to be relevant to every community. Adrian Newman, as I have said already, has held our feet to the fire very clearly to make sure that we really focus here on being most effective in the areas where the need is greatest, not always the physically poorest but often that is the case.

In terms of when can the Church Commissioners expect to get a detailed request, I believe it is right that we get the request properly formed rather than try to do it fast, but I think certainly that on Resourcing the Future will be ready first; that on Resourcing Ministerial Education is going to take longer because the numbers are very considerable.

If I can just go back to what Andreas said, if we cost £1.4 billion a year to run, if you are going to do something that is really meaningful, if you are going to try and find a way to fund 70% more priests in ordination than you have today and you do not want the diocese to say that they cannot afford it, you are talking about significant sums of money.

In terms of the engagement, I thought we had already made it clear, a letter has gone out to every diocese, you please tell us what sort of events you want that will maximise and optimise the engagement with your people. We will do our best to respond.

*The Bishop of Ely:* Could I just respond to Charles Marnham's question about people in business not always understanding about the nature of the Church and how careful we need to be, just to say that another important phrase in the FAOC report which we have taken on board very much is the whole thing about critical appropriation.

We are not about just reading across other people's mantras but making sure that all that we do in terms of design to celebrate the fact that theologians are in the room in all that we are seeking to undertake and that prayer and reflection are woven through all that we plan to do, but we are only re-routed in people who are working with us for the advance of the Kingdom of God.

*The Chair:* Thank you.

*Revd Canon Pete Spiers (Liverpool):* I just wonder whether any consideration has been given either to simplifying the requirement for communion to be celebrated at least once every Sunday in a parish church or that perhaps other people, maybe lay Readers, could celebrate communion?

*Mr Elliot Swatridge (Church of England Youth Council):* In relation to the Resourcing Ministerial Education part of the agenda, I wanted to add that a great barrier for a lot of young people in entering the ministry is the length of the process and the complexity of the process and the large amount of uncertainty contained in it. I was wondering if there was any possibility that the process itself could be changed or altered in order to make it much more accessible, because for many young people it is impossible and for many people it takes five years anyway and so by that age you would not be young anymore! Thank you.

*The Chair:* The Anglican definition of "young" I think is at least up to 40.

*Mrs Christine Corteen (Salisbury):* My question is more procedural. We are breaking up into these four large groups tomorrow. There will be a lot of points made there that we are not necessarily going to hear on the floor of the debating chamber in the

afternoon, particularly, of course, the Senior Leadership Task Group because that is not going to be debated. I am just wondering how are we going to draw what could be very important points that the whole of Synod need to hear and how are the important points, or any of the points that are made, that we are being encouraged to contribute to these reports, how are we going to know how that has been taken forward by the task groups? Thank you.

*The Chair:* Thank you. Would the task groups like to respond?

*The Bishop of Willesden:* Pete Spiers raises an important issue about how much you can bite off in order to be able to do something that is digestible. If you read the Simplification report you will see there is a lot of stuff which will take a lot of synodical time and we will have to take a judgment call, both towards the end of this quinquennium and to the next one, as to how you allocate time.

We have suggested that the Terms of Service Measure is a fairly easy one to deal with because it is a one stage process, but much of this is legislation that takes more than one. In relation to that, we will have to take a view also about whether you bite off some of the fairly hairy questions that will be raised if you got into Canon Law reform.

The view we have taken at the moment is that Canon Law is not something we want to get into because there are theological, doctrinal and liturgical issues which are fundamental to the way we govern our Church. There may be some peripheral things we bring forward in relation to very small aspects of Canon Law, but large questions like the one he is raising may not be within our remit.

As to the question of lay presidency, I think we did lay that to rest. I know there are many folk in the Synod who take contrary views on that. We had a very substantial report a few years ago which set out the mind of the House of Bishops on the matter and I would urge those who still want to argue for it to give it a rest because really we did look at it in great detail and it was not ever going to find favour with the majority of Synod.

*The Bishop of Sheffield:* Briefly, Elliot, thank you very much for your question. Yes, there is a recommendation that we look at accelerating the process for candidates in the right way so that it might be completed within a year, the vocational exploration. That is taking it back to the way things were more commonly and we had far younger candidates and, I agree with you, it is vital. It is about culture change rather than change in regulation.

*Canon John Spence:* Dealing with the final point, and it was a very important procedural point, in terms of tomorrow, there are members of the Archbishops' Council going to be involved in each of the four groups. We are meeting at lunch-time so that we can have a cross-fertilisation of the key points to come out and we will aim to pick some feedback from those up in our various contributions tomorrow afternoon. Going forward, I have an abhorrence of being asked to sit in task groups or focus groups where you all feed in things round a table and you never hear anything of what has been done with that output. We are going to be connected. We are going to keep in touch with you and so we will have a mechanism.

We did this successfully before. I pay tribute to Philip James and his team in Church House who in their previous round of diocesan visits were expert at feeding back what the diocesan parishes were saying, which is what fertilised this whole thing in the first place. We shall continue to collect carefully, to distil and feedback.

*The Chair:* I think we have got time for one more question.

*Revd Janet Appleby (Newcastle):* It is a question about the Resourcing Ministerial Education. I am delighted at the idea of having more ordinands, but I would like this task group also to address the problem of retention because I personally know too many clergy who have not gone as far as retirement, they have left because of burn-out, overwork through lack of support. I would like the group to address the issue of retaining clergy in the posts as well, please. Thank you.

*The Bishop of Sheffield:* Thank you, Janet, that is a point well made. We have been considering that and one of the things we hope to do, as you will see from the proposals, is significantly increase the resources going into and the quality of Continuing Ministerial Development, which is one of the things that will greatly assist I think in retention and building strong communities of practice and of mutual support among all clergy and also lay ministers.

*The Chair:* Thank you. That brings us to the end of this item. Can I thank the panel but also thank all of you members of Synod. We have got through a record number of questions in quite a short period of time, so thank you for keeping those questions short and for keeping them apposite and snappy. I think it has been a really good session.

As Canon Spence mentioned earlier, he, the Bishop of Sheffield and the Bishop of Willesden have got nothing better to do once we have concluded our worship than to stay behind in Room 3 and answer any further questions for half an hour or so at least that you may have.

I will just say a little bit about tomorrow morning. We go straight into the small groups. The opening worship will take place in your groups. You should have received notification of which group you are in via email but the information desk is around in the morning to assist you if you have got any queries about that. We are hoping, or intending, to have the Order Papers for the afternoon session available at the start of the large groups tomorrow morning.

Can I invite you to stay in the chamber though now. Evening worship will conclude our proceedings today in a few minutes' time.

*The Revd Christine Hardman (Southwark)* led the Synod in an act of worship.

## **FULL SYNOD: SECOND DAY WEDNESDAY 11 FEBRUARY 2015**

THE CHAIR *Canon Ann Turner (Europe)* took the Chair at 2.30 pm.

### **Discipleship (GS 1977)**

*The Chair:* Good afternoon, Synod. I am pleased you are all in good humour. Let us hope you are at the end of this hour! We come now to Item 10 on our Agenda, the debate on Discipleship. Members will need GS 1977, and I draw your attention to the Financial Memorandum on the Eighth Notice Paper. You will see from Order Paper II that there are five amendments to this motion shown as Items 72-82. You may find it useful to know that after the first few speeches I shall be reducing the speech limit to three minutes in order to give as many people as possible a chance to speak in this debate and also to enable us to make good progress through the whole afternoon's business.

I therefore call on the Bishop of Sheffield to move the motion at Item 10 standing in his name. You have ten minutes.

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

'That this Synod, mindful that the Church of Jesus Christ is called to be a community of missionary disciples:

- (a) commend the Ten Marks for Developing Discipleship for further study and reflection with a view to the development in each diocese of an action plan for implementation at diocesan, deanery and parochial level; and
- (b) invite the House of Bishops:
  - (i) to prepare a new Revised Catechism with a view to its approval by the General Synod under Canon B 2; and
  - (ii) to identify and commission other resources to help the whole Church to live out our common discipleship.'

Thank you, Chair. Good afternoon, Synod. It is a real pleasure and privilege to be able to introduce this debate and speak to this motion, not least because so many of you here are qualified to speak to it as disciples of Jesus Christ, whether you live out your vocation as a lay person or someone called to ordination.

I was about 15 or 16, I think, when I discovered what it meant to become a disciple of Christ some 30 years ago now, a bit more. My childhood faith had flickered and dimmed as a teenager. I was held within the local parish I was part of in Halifax as part of a small youth group, and as part of that group I was invited to attend a diocesan youth event held at Barrowby near Harrogate.



As part of that weekend, in the final Eucharist I came to understand what it means to become a disciple of Jesus Christ. I was embraced by the grace of God and in return I offered my life, as much as I understood that, back to God in response. The two texts which express that offering were the Prayer of Oblation, which we say at the end of the Eucharist, based on Romans 12 and Patrick Appleford's great hymn, "Lord Jesus Christ I would come to you, live my life for you, Son of God".

My previous perception I think, looking back on it now at some years' distance, was that the Christian faith was like a bolt-on or a leisure interest, a part-time activity. I came to understand in those precious moments that to be a disciple is about responding to the overflowing grace and love of God by offering the whole of my life, for the whole of my life, and so that my life might be whole.

Many of you here will have had similar experiences, and some of them were shared in our small group this morning, of that transition from nominal Christian faith to whole life discipleship, often accompanied by profound experiences of grace and of the Holy Spirit's work and of profound joy.

I was able to preach my first sermon when I was 17 on the theme of discipleship and the first sermon after I was ordained nine years later on the theme of discipleship. It is not difficult, if you are preaching on a Gospel, as you know, the texts tend to come up.

One of my early books as a vicar in Halifax was called *Making New Disciples*. It is now long out of print, and that is probably a very good thing, but it was born from the experience of working with adults who were coming to faith and growing in faith.

One of the most precious threads in my own ministry is being involved now with others in two sets of materials which help the Church teach the whole faith to those who are learning the way. The first, *Emmaus: The Way of Faith*, which began its life over 20 years ago with Stephen, Bishop of Chelmsford in the Diocese of Wakefield, and now *Pilgrim*, which is just coming to completion today.

So I do not come late or accidentally to this theme. I believe passionately that as the Church of England we are called to make disciples and sustain discipleship in Christian life and witness. This language is deep in the scriptures and tradition, both the common tradition of the Church and the Anglican tradition. As a Church we are called to be, and to become, "a community of missionary disciples", in Pope Francis' beautiful phrase. It is this identity which needs more and more deeply to shape our common life in the coming generation.

In our worship, in our preaching, our teaching and our pastoral ministry, the Church calls people deeper into the joy and love of Christ and into the rhythms of discipleship to be with Jesus together and to be sent out. That rhythm is the very heartbeat of every local church. We come together to be with Christ, gathered around word and sacrament. We are sent out in God's mission to the world to live out that discipleship in faith and hope and love and according to our different vocations.

It is this simple, beautiful, profound concept threaded through our tradition and history which needs to be better understood, more fully explored and more deeply lived in the life of the Church of England in the coming years.

How are we doing that? There are many good things, of course, but the signs are that lay development and enabling discipleship is not yet a sufficiently visible priority for dioceses, though we do not know the situation for parishes.

In December 2013, when research was done to undergird this eventual report, fewer than half of the dioceses of the Church of England had a strategy or vision that included lay development, lay ministry or discipleship. These are serious matters. As I said yesterday evening, our thinking needs to be better resourced into the future.

The paper and the motion before you suggest two ways forward for this work to continue and another is already ongoing in a three-part conversation. The first is to commend the Ten Marks of a diocese committed to developing disciples, which I am glad to do and I hope you will do. Already dioceses have begun to explore them and develop them further and use them as a tool for reflection.

The second is to ask the House of Bishops to commission a Revised Catechism and to identify and commission other resources. The Catechism down all the years of the Church has been one key way of resourcing our common teaching of the faith to new and established Christians. Its revision, I hope and pray, will be a means of setting discipleship more at the centre of our common life.

Will this renewed emphasis on discipleship make a difference? Philip Giddings asked the question yesterday, why did not similar documents and debates in the 1980s have a wider impact. Professors Linda Woodhead and Elaine Graham have asked similar questions, very helpfully in my view.

My answer would be that this will make a difference because the Church of England is slowly emerging from Christendom to be a new kind of Church in a different kind of society. That emergence is happening gradually over generations. We have not been this way before. Over the last 50 years we have been gradually and steadily learning to set the mission of God at the heart of our common life. Seeking to become a mission-shaped Church leads inexorably to a richer sense of what it means to be the whole people of God and to the notion of discipleship. Our mission is shaping our ecclesiology. I therefore believe that the whole Church of England and this Synod is more ready to take seriously these ideas than it was in the last generation and to set them at the heart of our common life.

We are not suggesting to one another new or radical ideas; we are articulating something in a new way with fresh emphasis which is already somewhere near the heart of what the Church believes. It is as though a small stream, which has been flowing underground for some time, has become a large river now and is breaking the surface to the blessing of the Church in the present and the future.

Synod, I am delighted to move the motion standing in my name.

*The Chair:* Synod, this item is now open for debate but it may help you if you have an outline of the pattern, seeing we have five amendments. I intend to call three speakers, who will each have a speech limit of five minutes. After that I shall take the amendments in turn as on your Order Paper and will ask the movers of the amendments to speak to and move their amendments as they go along, and for them the speech limit will be three minutes. So after the first three speakers I shall be reducing the speech limit to three minutes in order to hear as many people as possible in what is a very oversubscribed debate, if I can put it that way. We have a large number of people wishing to speak. This item is now open for debate.

*Canon Pamela Bishop (Southwell and Nottingham):* I just want to reiterate right at the beginning the start that Bishop Steven made in his opening presentation that for many of us Christian discipleship has been literally a lifelong journey surrounded by family, friends, church, church activities fostering that sense of discipleship, so immersed in this idea of discipleship long before we really knew the Word, or really understood it, and certainly had not had any teaching.

But those huge social and cultural changes that have been referred to also mean that this cannot be the same situation for people coming and growing up today. Something like 60% of those over 60 have had substantial contact with a church, and therefore with church activities, whereas less than 20% of those in their 20s have had a similar church experience. So there are new generations living not only in a very difficult secular world but having had very different experiences. They have not had that disciple immersion of being just alongside those who try to model what it is to be Christlike. That, I think, makes a significant difference because we can preach, pray, write, read, study courses, but that is rather different from getting the feel of what it is to be a disciple. I think more of the same, therefore, of the things we have done in the past may not be an answer and we probably all know that, but we do need to try to look for some other solutions because of that very different situation.

The report I read with interest and wish to support the proposals entirely, but despite the good words, lots of good words and very wholesome intent, I think I was looking for something as well which was perhaps a little more tangible, practical. We were encouraged to do that a bit in our groups this morning.

I just wanted to share with you three ideas which for me seem very significant and would start that discussion about what can we actually do as well as support the proposals we have.

I want to first of all mention the Partnership for Missional Church initiative, which is being explored and developed in my own diocese at the moment. It is not the time here to tell the whole story about the Partnership for Missional Church journey, which probably many of you have heard of, but it is about creating a deep cultural, organisational change in congregations. It is not a quick-fix solution to anything. It is about learning and adopting and practising new skills, "holy habits" as they are called within the jargon of the initiative. That is leading to greater confidence in faith for those within the Church and then improved practical skills of reaching out to local communities and working alongside them on their agenda, working with them. That just sounds to me like a very good example of discipleship.

The second example I just wanted to share is perhaps the other way round and it is promoting the values and the practice of the inclusive Church. I think too often we, as Church, focus on what we see as our role to inform society and inform the world. Clearly very important, we take a stand on many strong issues, but maybe sometimes we just need to look and see what is out there, what is going on, and how can we, from our very special perspective, reflect that world.

Many people in our communities see the Church as out of touch as we retreat into ourselves to try to work things out. We have made big strides but I think we know that there is a good way to yet go, and I think this would be a rich area for the discipleship agenda if we could embrace the inclusive Church priorities.

I will not be the last person this afternoon to talk about the role of laity. Informing the clear references in the report, I also want to raise awareness of those many lay people who are not paid, who do not have a title, but who week by week go out from the pews to be disciples in their daily work, in their voluntary work. I think we do not do enough to acknowledge that, to coordinate it, to celebrate it, to pray for it. We heard a good example in group this morning where that happens. I think that is a very significant thing that would cost no money and very little effort and would be something about affirming our own congregations, our own disciples and taking that out into the community.

*Ven Rachel Treweek (London):* Thank you for this paper, it is really good to be focusing on discipleship. I do have a few concerns about the Ten Marks. I think the overall intention is really good but I think this list has got a little bit of an identity crisis and I do not think it quite knows exactly what it is trying to do or who it is primarily aimed at.

I think some of my struggle comes from those rather nebulous words “the diocese”. For example, the first mark refers to a “lifelong journey of discipleship and growth” and says “Christian maturity within a diocese is supported and modelled by all”. “By all”? I love the aspiration but I am assuming that every diocese is going to fall at the first mark. Anyway, how do we measure this or observe it? I think this needs sharpening regarding the who, the what and the how. I think it needs to have a tone of encouraging diocesan culture change, not promoting a top-down imposition.

On a slightly different note, following on from the previous speaker, I think there is something very important missing from the marks which links to that point on page 8 about the church “seeing itself and becoming a community of missionary disciples”. One of the key marks of a worshipping community committed to developing disciples is one which has really grappled with how worship gathers people in from the days they have just lived and then sends people out again to live and work to God’s praise and glory.

In the Diocese of London, I am currently taking a lead on something we have called Ambassadors for Christ, which is aiming to commission people as an intentional disciple of Christ among the people and places of their week. We are working closely with the London Institute of Contemporary Christianity, churches of all sizes and traditions, to change the culture at grass roots level and not simply from plans made by diocesan

staff. This is not about workplace ministry; this is about thoughts and light, whether that is at home, in paid employment, at the school gates or being a good neighbour.

So often being Church is seen primarily as being gathered worship plus all the outreach, whether that is food banks, toddler groups, Inquirers Groups, and that is all to be celebrated, but this is often the only context in which we understand lay ministry. Gathered worship so often fails to affirm and nurture people for being followers of Christ in their daily lives, yet that is where the majority of lay ministry is being lived. Lots of people do not have the capacity to be involved in activity at church.

I was recently at a church where during the service there was an inspiring focus on some great youth work and then the volunteer youth leaders were prayed for, yet in conversation later when I asked people it transpired that most people had no idea about how those youth leaders spent their week, which is where they were doing most of their lay ministry.

Last week, I was involved in a training session in the diocese with a group of lay people from across the diocese and when they went round the room and introduced themselves, they all gave their name and the church where they worshipped. I asked them why none of them had introduced themselves by saying something about their weekday context. I think it says something about how we understand ourselves as Church, as a community of disciples. I think we need to be seriously refocusing this lens if we want to truly capture a new vision of discipleship. Thank you.

*The Chair:* We will now hear Bishop Joe Aldred and after that I shall be moving to the amendments.

*Bishop Dr Joe Aldred (Ecumenical Representatives):* May I say what a joy it is, if at times a becalmed joy, to attend these group of sessions and, with other ecumenical colleagues, to pray for and to admire your exemplary sardonic processes. The joy of attending Synod exists within, for me, a greater joy, if such a thing were possible, of participating in the lives of several ecclesial communities other than the Pentecostal one in which I have been raised and to which I still belong. This exposure to other than my own Church has stretched and enriched my own discipleship formation. It has taught me that however much I cherish and am supported at home, home is part of a wider community and world that a gracious God has made.

Synod, I want to make two observations briefly with reference to GS 1977 on Developing Disciples. It seems important to me that in Christian discipleship we seek first to root people deeper into the person of Christ. All Churches can, and many do, even without malintention make disciples in their own denominational image. From my context, we can tend to make Pentecostals and Evangelicals; you may be in danger of making Anglicans. All of us though could aim higher at making Christians, followers who are more like Jesus than they are like us, who are attached to the life source of the vine, not just the branch.

My second comment is to point to the reservoir of Christian fellowship and ecclesial communities who are our brothers and sisters in Christ. We are enriched by the talents and gifts of those who are the 'different other' and we are diminished by our non-

engagement with that 'other'. They often have the gifts and talents that we lack and are sometimes flourishing where we are not. I know that many of them look forward to working in partnership with you. I would therefore welcome a more evidenced ecumenical intention in this paper. In particular, intention towards the black and Pentecostal churches who are committed to the same mission of discipling people in the way of Christ.

My prayer, therefore, and my hope, recognising the complex nature of partnership even as I say so, is to see greater collaboration with sisters and brothers in Christ as often as it is better to do so than to go it alone. Where this already exists, I applaud it with vigour.

*The Chair:* Synod, we now move to the amendment, number 78, in the name of the Revd Mark Ireland, and I would ask the Revd Ireland to speak to and move the amendment in his name.

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

*Revd Mark Ireland (Lichfield):* I am hugely excited by this excellent paper on discipleship and the whole raft of papers that we are debating this afternoon. Together they amount to a mission action plan for the Church of England, a clear strategy to deliver the vision set out in the three quinquennial goals. I am sure that this strategy will be supported here in Synod because it is exactly what we asked for in a debate on making new disciples in July 2011, when the motion overwhelmingly passed referred to "the urgent missionary task facing the Church of England to reverse decades of numerical decline and make new disciples in every community in our land".

The purpose of what I hope is a very friendly amendment, Item 78, is to begin the motion with a vision of God rather than seeming to be a response to the state of the Church and the problems that were outlined last night, because discipleship is not about what we can do to save the Church, it is our response of love to what God has done to save the world. If we can root our discussion of discipleship in the glory and the grace of God shown in the face of Jesus Christ crucified and risen, then it should save discipleship from becoming an "ought", something that is worthy but dull, but rather help it to be an overflow, an overflow of the glory and the grace of God.

It is exciting that this report begins with Matthew 28:19 "Therefore go and make disciples", but actually we need to begin our thinking with verses 16 and 17 of that chapter because it was when they saw the risen Christ they worshipped him but some doubted, and Jesus came and said "All authority has been given to me". It is the vision of Jesus crucified and risen which flows out in all that we do so that we are, as Archbishop Justin put it yesterday, constrained by Jesus' love.

My second amendment is one that also flows from this passage, which is about being a community of missionary disciples that includes making disciples of others, and I owe so much to those when I was young who formed me in the Christian faith, mostly lay women.

However, I just want to give notice that as Chris Sugden's amendment highlights the priority of making new disciples, if that amendment is accepted I will not move Item 81 to save time. Thank you.

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

*The Bishop of Sheffield (Rt Revd Steven Croft):* Thank you, Chair. I am delighted to accept Mark's amendment which I think significantly adds to and improves the motion and enriches it in the ways that he has outlined. Thank you.

*The Chair:* Is there any debate, Synod, on Item 78? Then I put Item 78 to the vote.

*This amendment was put and carried on a show of hands.*

*The Chair:* We move now to Item 79 and I ask Canon Chris Sugden to move the amendment standing in his name.

*Revd Canon Dr Christopher Sugden (Oxford):* Chair, members of Synod, the Report on Discipleship deserves at least a Beta+, but to be really an Alpha course of action on the pilgrim way, Synod needs to link it closely with our motion on intentional evangelism of November 2013. We need to signal to those taking this work forward to keep before them our calling as disciples to witness to Jesus and the Resurrection. There have been occasions in the past when the Synod motion and nothing but the Synod motion was the task description for the next stage of any particular work. We need to be clear and joined-up in our thinking. The Ten Marks of Discipleship set out so far are a good start, but need to take into account some other dimensions. The Discipleship Report needs more focus on our calling to make disciples of all nations. It seems to lack a global focus. Who else can tell people of all nations and races that God loves them so much he wants them to be with him for ever in a new heaven and a new earth? Who else can truthfully tell people that their guilt and sin whatever it may be is forgiven completely? Who else can tell people that the meek will inherit the earth, that Jesus came to bring the good news of the Kingdom to those who are really physically and socially marginalised, poor and desperate? The Report as it stands lacks a proper biblical bias to the poor. Who else can tell people, with good reason, that in Christ the dead will be raised to life everlasting? Such news is the basis of the call to be a disciple.

Our motion on intentional evangelism in 2013 commended the Seven Disciplines of Evangelisation and urged every Church to share experiences and initiatives and try one new way of seeking to make new disciples of Jesus.

So we were thinking about discipleship already in our motion on intentional evangelism. Without passing on the good news, there can be no new disciples. To be a disciple is to be called to share the good news of the Kingdom of God which embraces and transforms all of life. We are called to discern the question with any group or context we find ourselves in. If the Kingdom of God came tomorrow morning in this group, what would change first? It is a way to understand Jesus' encounters with different groups in the Gospels. Not all are called to be evangelists, but all are called to share and witness to the good news that others may be called to discipleship also. My amendment is to

make this clear and keep it before those who will take this work on discipleship forward. Please support the amendment standing in my name, which I now move.

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

*The Bishop of Sheffield (Rt Revd Steven Croft):* Again, I am content to accept this amendment. I had assumed that the links were explicit and implicit in the motion, but recognise that this particular wording would strengthen that connection. Therefore I accept the amendment.

*Brigadier Ian Dobbie (Rochester):* I would like to support this amendment and encourage Synod to do so also. By using the expression “making a new disciple” I would understand that to be exactly the same as “making a new Christian”. This raises the question what precisely is a Christian? I think it is interesting that the New Testament never actually defines that, but I have always been grateful for Archbishop William Temple’s definition, that is “somebody who has met God in Christ, who is trusting him as Saviour and obeying him as Lord.” I am glad that the paper refers to the importance, the necessity, for each one of us to repent and believe to become true disciples. But it also mentions baptism as being the initiation into the Christian faith, and I find myself hoping that this is not a subtle way of supporting regenerate baptism. I very much wish that this paper referred to the necessity of the new birth, to which the Lord Jesus himself and three of the New Testament writers refer: “Except a man be born again, he cannot enter the Kingdom of Heaven.” It is mandatory for authentic Christian experience. We must be born of God to be a new disciple. Just as we need a physical birth for physical life, so we are told we need a spiritual birth for spiritual life. Indeed, I suggest that in our Churches there is much spiritual frustration due to the fact that so many over the years have sought to grow spiritually before they have actually been born. Until we are born again, we are actually described as “being dead in trespasses and sins”. I think there is a need to emphasise the need for intentional evangelism. I wish there were a stronger emphasis in this paper for making new Christians, for making in, Canon Sugden’s amendment, new disciples, and so I am confident that this Synod will support his amendment.

*A member:* On a point of order, Chairman. I beg to move:

‘That the question be now put.’

*This motion was put and carried on a show of hands.*

*The Chair:* I therefore put Item 79 to the vote.

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

*The Chair:* We move therefore to Item 80, the amendment in the name of the Revd Canon Dr Simon Taylor. I ask him to speak to and move his amendment.

*Revd Canon Dr Simon Taylor (Derby):* With your permission, I will move both amendments standing in my name.



Synod, let me begin by saying I too am excited by the package that is before us today and that the whole thing founded upon discipleship, upon our following of Jesus, is one of the most exciting things. Founding our work for the next period of our Church's history on the costly grace of being formed by the Spirit into the likeness of Christ, to the glory of the Father, is indeed exciting. This is a programme that should engage the whole people of God in all their beauty and their diversity.

There are warnings in the paper before us today. GS 1977 notes, and it was one of the questions for group work this morning that "the biggest obstacle in lay development is the clericalised culture of Church and ministry" and warns that without a breadth of vision for discipleship, we will restrict our understanding of service to the Church, create a lop-sided view of ministry and impoverish the ministry and mission of the whole Church.

Given the exciting nature of the programme, and the breadth of its application, it was a little disappointing to come to the motion before us when it gives one action to dioceses and two to bishops. These actions are important and valuable, but discipleship is bigger.

My first amendment seeks to involve the whole Church, lay and ordained, in committing ourselves to learning, praying, worshipping and proclaiming together, and it asks all the disciples of the Church of England to take responsibility for our own lives in Christ and to communicate what would be the greatest support to that discipleship.

My second amendment seeks to broaden the conversation further and to involve the people that we seek to serve and work with in the service of the common good of this nation. There are people of goodwill who long to partner with us. We need to listen to them. It is not, as one colleague has already suggested to me, to turn following Jesus into doing what the world tells us. I hope the wording of the amendment is clear, that it is a contribution to our discernment of what discipleship could be, where the Lord is calling us, as we seek to serve the common good. But if it is the common good that we serve, then we have to listen to those with whom we will work and whom we seek to serve. It is really important that we hear as many voices as we can as we seek to reform and renew the Church. Yesterday we had two apologies for the lack of diversity in task groups. This matters because the lack of diversity means we have a lack of ideas, a lack of godly insight, a lack of the fullness of what God is saying to us at this point in our life together. We are impoverished by a limited range of voices.

After Synod's move yesterday, I hesitate to invoke a piece of leadership theory, but I think there is a very relevant piece of thinking. The challenges that face us are not business as usual, they are not tame problems, but rather, to use the jargon, they are "wicked" problems, and to address a wicked problem well is to encourage experimentation and listen to everyone as a means of addressing problems that involve everyone, and the solutions could be found anywhere.

If leadership theory is not something that should be discussed on the floor of Synod today, let me also offer you something from the Rule of Benedict, who teaches that "all should be called for counsel because the Lord often revealeth to the younger what is best".

Synod, we face wicked problems, we need a range of voices. I beg to move the amendment standing in my name.

*The Chair.* Thank you very much. I ask the Bishop of Sheffield to reply.

*The Bishop of Sheffield (Rt Revd Steven Croft):* I have to confess to being more ambivalent about this amendment. It is not that I disagree with the sentiments expressed in it or with anything that you have said, and I think the process going forward ought to be very much a listening process in the way that you have described. I have a caution, however, about including the wording in the motion as it stands in terms of what it adds, in particular I guess, your paragraph (i) “to commit themselves to learn, pray, worship and proclaim the Gospel together”, as I think that is what we do Sunday by Sunday as a matter of course. The second one I am more in sympathy with being part of the motion, but it would be good to hear Synod debate that for a few minutes.

*The Chair.* Item 80 is now open for debate.

*Revd Canon Simon Butler (Southwark):* I was not expecting to stand up but find myself on my feet. I tend to find portmanteau motions that get bigger and bigger are ones I want to resist, but I want to support Simon’s amendment this afternoon because of the way it highlights the things that we need to do together. Synod, this morning we talked in our groups about the danger of clericalism, and many in the House of Laity across the country will have strong thoughts about the risks of clericalism to the ministry of the whole people of God. I just want to highlight what clericalism does to the cleric. It separates the cleric from the rest of the people of God. It claims that we are somehow more important, more significant, more powerful.

At my own parish church, we have embarked on a series of discipleship conversations, and we do that intentionally. It is not just evangelism that happens intentionally; it is discipleship that does as well. This means that members of our ministry team have intentional or significant one-to-one conversations with anyone in the congregation who wants one, and so far that has been about two-thirds, about their discipleship. What that does for me, as the one having the conversation, is it opens up the possibility that I can be transformed by that conversation as well. So when I sit on my computer, as I do from time to time, and see someone from the conservative side of the Church say that certain people like me are not really good disciples, I go out and do a discipleship conversation, and I realise that I am. And when some people from another side of the Church worry about how many hands on a bishop need to be laid and of what sort, and I get down by that, I go out and do a discipleship conversation, and I remind myself that this is what really matters.

I think Simon’s amendment allows us as clergy to take that role as disciples more seriously. I am concerned that when I do these conversations, I find people in their 80s who have not had a single conversation about their faith for 60 years, and it seems to me that, unless we as clergy take the lead and are seen to be doing this ourselves and seen to be disciples ourselves, alongside our brothers and sisters in Christ, we will fail the wider Church, so I support Simon’s amendment.

*Mrs Angela Scott (Rochester):* I welcome this amendment and point (ii) to suggest what the Church of England and its leadership could do. According to the seventh of the Ten Marks of Developing Discipleship, the gifts of leadership are to be recognised and developed amongst all the baptized, ordained and lay. The issue raised in question 5 of the reflection and discussion groups held earlier “the biggest obstacle to lay development is the clericalised culture of the Church and ministry” needs to be addressed, and I offer a suggestion.

Currently, the Ministry Division supports and encourages the training and development of clergy, licensed Readers and Church Army evangelists and the Education Division does the same for other adult lay ministries. Until recently, I was the internal quality nominee for our diocesan lay training scheme. I am therefore aware of the rigorous nature required of all lay training. Each diocese is embracing the development and training of lay leaders in different ways, but increasing numbers are preparing laity for licensed lay ministry, as is my diocese, as they recognise the ministries are not fully expressed in just Reader ministry. For this reason, I urge Synod to consider simplifying canon law by expressing Reader ministry as licensed lay ministry. This would enable the Ministry Division to embrace the ministry of all adult lay leaders and so freeing the Education Division to concentrate on schools, children’s and youth ministry alone. I know it involves cost and reshaping of divisions, but it would help to address the problem of the clericalised nature of the Church, and the wider expression of lay ministry would be transferable between dioceses, whilst those lay leaders called to preach could take specific training and become LLMs with permission to preach. Many local churches are working in leadership teams and this would be better expressed in one central division. Both clergy and lay leaders are called by God to shared leadership, passing their combined expertise on locally so the whole Church benefits. These lay leaders, who are not volunteers (this is a lifelong calling) need to be trained, overseen and developed by one division and not two, and then the problem of clericalisation could be addressed more effectively. So I urge you to vote in favour of this motion.

*A member:* On a point of order, Chair, I beg to move:

‘That the question be now put.’

*This motion was put and carried.*

*The Chair:* Closure on Item 80 has my permission but does it have that of Synod?

*This motion was carried on a show of hands.*

*Mr Adrian Greenwood (Southwark):* Point of order. I cannot refer to any specific paragraph of Standing Orders but there is something about splitting motions and I wonder if I could speak to that?

*The Chair:* One moment while I take advice. I wonder if you might explain why you want amendment 80 split, please?

*Mr Adrian Greenwood:* The reason for raising it is the new (b)(ii) talks about the “Church of England and its leadership”, and I think that concept of the Church of England is a bit diffuse. Therefore, I think there is a lack of clarity about who we are asking to do what in (b)(ii) which might be overcome by allowing us to vote on (i) and (ii) separately.

*The Chair:* Having re-read Item 80, I think it is very difficult to divide and therefore that does not have my permission. We therefore move to a vote on Item 80.

*Revd Canon Jonathan Alderton-Ford (St Edmundsbury and Ipswich):* Point of order. Unless I heard him wrong, I thought Dr Simon Taylor said, “I rise to move both my motions.” In that case, if he did do that, he is actually asking us to vote on 80 and 82. Could you clarify that we are only voting on 80 and not 82 as well?

*The Chair:* I would be pleased to clarify that we are in fact voting only on 80. I think you heard correctly, but when we get to 82 I shall ask for this motion to be moved again formally. So we are now voting only on Item 80 as it stands.

*This amendment was lost on a show of hands.*

*The Chair:* We move therefore to Item 81 on your Agenda, an amendment in the name of Revd Mark Ireland.

*Revd Mark Ireland (Lichfield):* Madam Chair, I do not wish to move that amendment.

*The Chair:* You are withdrawing the amendment? Thank you very much. That means we move to Item 82. I would ask the Revd Canon Dr Simon Taylor to formally move the amendment standing in his name at 82.

*Revd Canon Dr Simon Taylor (Derby):* I move the amendment.

*The Chair:* I ask the Bishop to comment.

*The Bishop of Sheffield (Rt Revd Steven Croft):* Again, Simon’s points are well made about listening, and I think in the future work on the Ten Marks we need to strengthen that element, but I could not support this amendment without further preparatory work on exactly what it would mean to arrange that wide consultation and how we would conduct it at this stage, so I think the sentiments are entirely right, but I could not support the amendment now.

*The Chair:* This item is open for debate. We are speaking only on the amendment.

*Revd Jonathan Frai (Chichester):* I do welcome this debate and the Report and the Ten Marks. I think, however, that this amendment will make something explicit which is best held implicitly. We do want to be listening people. We do want to learn from everyone, but actually if we hold something very precious, the pearl of great price, which is the Gospel, I just wonder if it gives the wrong signal to state it in this way at this time. It seems to say we do not quite have the confidence in what we hold dear. I do not think that is arrogance. I just think that is the nature of the Gospel. After all, the

Gospel is the cross of Christ which we hold out. It is our way of exalting God as holy and loving. It humbles the sinner, killing pride and slaying false gods. It is our evangel; it is our cause of discipleship; it promotes holiness; it brings assurance; it urges wholeheartedness; it is hope in despair. When others trip over it, it is an offence which we trust is only because of what we say. I think this pearl of great price needs to be held as something which does not need to be tweaked by saying "but we can all learn from others". That is implicit in the nature of being Christlike. I suspect we should reject this amendment.

*The Chair:* After the next speaker I would welcome a motion for closure.

*Revd John Dunnett (Chelmsford):* I am not entirely clear whether it is more helpful to talk about a "template" for discipleship or an "agenda" for discipleship or a "pattern" for discipleship or a "model" for discipleship or a "role" for discipleship, but I am convinced that there is, at the end of the day, only one authoritative voice that defines and describes for us what discipleship is all about, and that is Scripture. Scripture of course defines for us the message that disciples live under and carry, which is the message of what God has done uniquely in Christ. It is Scripture that defines for us how it is that we are to live as disciples, which is to love God with all our hearts and to love our neighbours as ourselves.

So although I appreciate and warm to the suggestion that we should be discussing and listening in a sense as part of everyday discipleship, I want to suggest that the intention here has been unhelpfully expressed, and may I respectfully suggest that this amendment is a red herring and invite you to join me in voting against it.

*A member:* On a point of order, Mr Chairman. I beg to move:

'That the question be now put.'

*The Chair:* That has my permission; does it have that of Synod?

*This motion was carried on a show of hands.*

*The Chair:* I therefore put Item 82 to the vote.

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

*The Chair:* Therefore we resume the debate on Item 10 as amended by Item 78 and 79. I call the Bishop of Guildford for a maiden speech and Caroline Herbert for a maiden speech. The speech limit is still three minutes.

*The Bishop of Guildford (Rt Revd Andrew Watson):* It is good to be back. Madam Chair, as a child we had a battered old wardrobe on which the heights of my siblings and I were recorded with a red marker pen. Every time a birthday came round we would solemnly stand in front of the wardrobe. My mother would place a book on our heads to get the level right and would then put a small mark on the wardrobe besides which she would write "A aged 4" or "F aged 11". Most years those marks were reasonably close together as we had grown maybe one inch, a couple at most, but

there was an odd bumper year where we had had a real growth spurt. The practice helped to record those bumpy years as accurately as the exceptional rings on a tree trunk. That wardrobe came to have a certain mythic quality about it, even though its back remained annoyingly solid whenever my sister and I sought access to Narnia!

GS 1977 is a good introduction to an extremely important subject, arguably the most important subject for the future health of the Church. My one concern though is this, that there is no mention of growth spurts in this Report; times when people are jolted into a far deeper level of Christian discipleship than they have ever had before. To use the language more often associated with evangelism than discipleship, the Ten Marks seem focused around processed discipleship rather than crisis discipleship, whereas, in my experience, and that of many others, there is both crisis and process: the years when I have grown a steady one inch and the years when I have grown an extraordinary nine. Crisis discipleship is often connected with joining mission teams, with embracing challenges that go far beyond our comfort zones, with Christian conferences and retreats and pilgrimages, with revelation, God reaching out to us in remarkable ways.

I myself am the grandchild of CMS missionaries and my grandfather's growth spurt took place as he walked along the sands of Tynemouth on November 10, 1918 and received a vision that was so powerful that it catapulted him from work as a pharmacist in Newcastle-on-Tyne to 18 years as a doctor in South West China and 15 years heading up the Mildmay Mission Hospital in East London. Crisis discipleship can also be connected with events quite outside of our control, hard events perhaps which knock people sideways and confront them with a stark choice, either to go deeper in their faith or else to give it all up.

I am reluctant to add to the Ten Marks of discipleship and I do recognise that the wind blows where it wills and that life-changing experiences on the sands of Tynemouth are beyond the control of General Synod. But could I suggest that alongside the revised Catechism, work is done on the theme of crisis discipleship and how parishes and dioceses might seek to provide opportunities, mission trips, pilgrimages, internships in challenging parishes, parish missions so as to stretch people's faith beyond the norm.

Could I also suggest that fresh work is done on the twin themes of practising the presence of God and the power of Christian testimony, both of which help to develop the sense of expectancy that the living God is at work. There is still far too much deism in the Church of England. My time is up, so I will finish. Thank you very much.

*The Chair:* I call on Caroline Herbert and, after Caroline Herbert, I would welcome a motion for closure to test the mind of Synod on this item.

*Mrs Caroline Herbert (Norwich):* Thank you for calling me to speak, Madam Chair, and I am really pleased that I can give my maiden speech in this debate on discipleship. It is an issue that is very close to my heart because I believe it is very important for all of us to be living out our faith actively in the world, not least because this will be a powerful witness and part of our evangelism in bringing other people to know Jesus and, as we have heard already, to trust in him as Saviour and Lord.

I want to welcome this report and the Ten Marks of discipleship. In my own parish church I have been involved in helping to deliver discipleship courses and there is definitely an appetite for further learning and for certainly among the congregation there to go deeper.

I just wanted to raise perhaps a concern about item b(ii) of the motion, the part about commissioning other resources, and just to urge the House of Bishops to make sure that we fully examine all the resources that are already available. I know in our group this morning on discipleship there were a number of courses and programmes which people had experience of; they knew they worked. I just want to say do not rush into commissioning more things, but perhaps there could be opportunities for dioceses and parishes to share what works and then to also perhaps share where they have maybe adapted ready-made material.

The other concern I wanted to raise has already been mentioned by someone about the reference to discipleship of all baptized.

Having been involved in leading Alpha courses and so on, I think many of those involved would not recognise necessarily an infant baptism as the beginning of their discipleship journey. If they have been away from the Church for many years, it does not have the same meaning for them that it does for those of us who perhaps have grown up and been disciples through childhood and youth ministry.

Indeed, after one Alpha course someone was coming forward for baptism and the conversation went, "No, I have not been baptized before. I was christened as a baby though". So I think we need to be careful as we go out beyond the Church walls to think about making new disciples that we are clear about what we mean and I think just allow people to acknowledge their own milestones, whether that is confirmation, renewal of vows or whatever it might be. But I would definitely support the motion, thank you.

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

'That the question be now put.'

*The Chair:* Mr Freeman, that has my consent but does it have that of Synod?

*This motion was carried on a show of hands.*

*The Chair:* I call on the Bishop of Sheffield to reply to the debate. You have five minutes.

*The Bishop of Sheffield (Rt Revd Steven Croft):* Thank you, Chair, and thank you, Synod, for your contribution to this on-going debate both in the groups this morning - I look forward to hearing the outcome of those - and in the debates this afternoon. We have heard some very helpful encouragements, particularly an accent to encourage people to live out their faith in the world and to enable that more fully in a number of contributions, and really helpful encouragement for ecumenical engagement in the way we take this forward.

There have been a number of calls, not least in the amendments, for the development of the Ten Marks further to introduce that accent on listening and so on which we will endeavour to do and take them forward in dialogue with dioceses. There has been a desire to link our thinking on discipleship, quite rightly, with our thinking on evangelism, which I welcome, and an emphasis on exploring and being open to those moments of crisis as well as process, which again I do welcome very warmly.

I just end what I say by quoting paragraph 10 of the report, “Yet discipleship is an invitation to the strongest hope, the deepest joy, the greatest fulfilment, the most authentic pattern of living, the highest adventure known to humanity”. Such is the call to discipleship and following Jesus Christ, I do with all my heart move the motion standing in my name.

*The Chair:* Synod, I now put Item 10, as amended by 78 and 79 and displayed on the screen, to the vote.

*The motion (as amended by Items 78 and 79):*

‘That this Synod, inspired by the glory and grace of God shown in the face of Jesus Christ and mindful that the Church of Jesus Christ is called to be a community of missionary disciples and in view of its resolution of November 2013 which highlighted the priority of evangelism and making new disciples:

- (a) commend the Ten Marks for Developing Discipleship for further study and reflection with a view to the development in each diocese of an action plan for implementation at diocesan, deanery and parochial level; and
- (b) invite the House of Bishops:
  - (i) to prepare a new Revised Catechism with a view to its approval by the General Synod under Canon B 2; and
  - (ii) to identify and commission other resources to help the whole Church to live out our common discipleship.’

*was carried on a show of hands.*



THE CHAIR *The Bishop of Manchester (Rt Revd David Walker)* took the Chair at 3.41 pm

## **Resourcing the Future (GS 1978) and Resourcing Ministerial Education (GS 1979)**

*The Chair.* Synod, welcome to Item 11 on our agenda today, for which you will need papers GS 1978 and 1979. I should also draw your attention to the final commitment on this Item. You can find that in the Financial Memorandum, the Eighth Notice Paper, at paragraphs 8 to 9.

We do not have anyone particularly wanting to speak from the platform on that financial aspect of it. If I can just say a little bit about the shape of the debate this afternoon. We have got a lot of people requesting to speak and we have also got quite a number of amendments to go through. We have marshalled the amendments in what seemed the most logical order. The amendments and the main motion together give us a chance to say how ready we think this piece of work is for decision or what bits of it we feel require further work and what reference they might require back after that. That is the general tenor of the debate.

What I am intending to do is, after a few opening speeches, I will get the various proposers of the amendments to speak to but not move their amendments. I think that way, if all four of them get a chance to do that, we will get a sense of what each amendment is about. We will then probably take two or three more speeches from the floor of a general nature and then we will start working out way through the various opportunities the different amendments are giving us as to how we want to shape this motion for its final decision later this afternoon.

Timing is fairly tight because we do have other business to do and we have got quite a lot on. Because of that, once we have had the opening remarks from the front here, I am going to go straight to just four minutes for the speeches. That will include those who are proposing amendments, and so if you have got your five minute speech you have got a little bit of time to try and cut 20 per cent out before you are called to speak. We are going to try and get as many speakers in as possible but we do have a lot of people who have asked to do that.

Because the two reports are coming together as one, what I am going to do is I am going to ask Canon Spence to speak just for six minutes rather than the usual ten, but then call the Bishop of Sheffield for another six minutes. If I am to do that though I need your permission, so that when we get to the end of the debate I think I do need to call on the Bishop of Sheffield to respond to the whole debate.

That would require, members of Synod, your permission because it would mean him speaking effectively twice although he is not the formal proposer of the main motion. I hope you have understood that? Can I have a show of hands, are we in favour of the Bishop of Sheffield?

*This motion was put and carried on a show of hands.*

*The Chair:* That has your consent and, thank you, we will be making use of that when it comes to the end of the debate. Without further ado then, I am going to call on Canon Spence to open this debate for us. Canon Spence, you have up to six minutes.

*Canon John Spence (ex officio):* I beg to move:

‘That this Synod,

welcoming the objective set out in paragraph 4 of GS 1978 of investment focused on dioceses’ strategic plans for growth, and with a strong bias to the poor; and

the vision set out in paragraph 8 of GS 1979,

invite the Archbishops’ Council and the House of Bishops to reach early decisions on the specific recommendations in the two reports once the current consultation period with dioceses, theological training institutions and others is concluded.’

Mr Chairman, I am grateful for your agreement that we can both address this debate at the start. I promise not to abuse your generosity. Let me just remind you of two issues that came out from yesterday. Firstly, the question of urgency as evidenced by the historic trends of attendance and membership, the age profile that we see today, and the projections of attendance and membership going forward.

Secondly, let us never forget what Peter Broadbent said, “Every urgent issue gives us an opportunity and we are in the side now of having a response to that opportunity, which is truly exciting”. Please, never let the excitement be smothered by the duvet of urgency. You are being asked to take both these reports today because they cover a common theme, that of resourcing.

Getting resourcing decisions right does not guarantee success, but getting them wrong severely compromises the chances of success. We have been working to three common objectives. Firstly, the successful achievement of good growth rather than the orderly management of decline; secondly, the maximisation of choice, flexibility and intentionality at diocesan level by a reduction in national regulation and prescription; but, thirdly, the safeguarding of those issues for which there can be no negotiation such as our focus on the poor and the excellence of theological education.

As far as Resourcing the Future is concerned, you are asked today only to endorse our governing objective and that is how it must be. That governing objective is to move away from the use of ineffectual and mechanical formulary for subsidy to a focus on investment which enables the achievement of dioceses to achieve their growth aspirations and strategic plans while focussing on the poor. That is as it must be, Mr Chairman, because we cannot go further now without your endorsement of that objective.

The next steps, thinking truly about the transition plans and how you move from the

current methodology to new ones; working out exactly how mutual accountability will work in ways that does not create a dependency on this place; thinking through the ways in which we can from here best support the diocese in that strategic capacity. That will all be about dialogue and engagement and a reminder about what I said yesterday about using every existing device we can for that engagement while inviting all parts of the Church to tell us how best we engage with them.

This afternoon I ask Synod to do all that you can to enable us to proceed with urgency, but we all know that the most successful urgent paths are achieved, greatest success is achieved in urgent circumstances, when there is careful planning and deliberation. We need to develop a common understanding, a common voice and a common will because that will enable success when we come to implementation.

If we ever get to the point of needing to go to the Church Commissioners for additional financial support they will expect no less. Can I advise you, therefore, that both the Bishop of Sheffield and I have agreed that we will be accepting the amendment in the name of Christopher Hobbs that all future decisions come and receive due scrutiny on route to implementation. On that basis, Mr Chairman, I beg to move the motion in my name.

*The Chair:* Thank you. We will hear then from the Bishop of Sheffield. He has up to six minutes. After which, the time limit will be reduced to four minutes, and Mr Tim Hind.

*The Bishop of Sheffield (Rt Revd Steven Croft):* Thank you, Chair. Let me share with you one of the problems that keeps me awake at night. On Sunday morning I was in Thurcroft which is a former mining community just outside Rotherham. Thurcroft and the neighbouring parish of Maltby have just become vacant. These are substantial communities. The combined population is over 20,000 people. Both parishes are among the most economically and socially deprived in the country. The pit in Maltby, one of the last in the country, closed only last year. The parishes have just become vacant. The congregations are small in number. There are about 20 people there. Great people in Thurcroft on Sunday. I was the youngest member of the congregation, apart from a couple who came to have their banns called, though there would have been more in Maltby. They have been well-served recently in terms of ministry by an ordained husband and wife team, two stipendiaries working together, and I believe the Bishop of Manchester is a former of Vicar of Maltby.

*The Chair:* And chaplain of the coalmine!

*The Bishop of Sheffield:* Thank you. So they were building on excellent foundations. Thanks to good stewardship locally and in the diocese and thanks to the continued grant to the diocese from the Church Commissioners, we hope to appoint a new team rector and probably a team vicar with pioneering gifts. The precise details are still being worked out.

I think the posts will be hard to fill, though not impossible, judging by recent experience. Many other dioceses would say something similar and you can probably think of your own Maltby and Thurcrofts, as we go round the room, because of the available supply of clergy.

Once we have made the appointments, God willing, I want the people we appoint to have the best possible support in terms of CMD, coaching, learning networks, everything that can be provided. That will mean investing in CMD locally. I want them to be able to appoint part-time staff, Readers to assist in the considerable funeral ministry, a development worker to take up the administrative load and part-time children and youth workers to broaden and deepen the ministry.

As a diocese we received a grant last year from the New Development Funding and the Commissioners to create a fund from reserve to help us employ development workers to take up the administrative load and we have made funding available for children and youth workers. That is the kind of difference that funding can make.

I am hopeful we will continue to see growth in those parishes, though it is likely to be slow and steady for a while to come and the changes proposed in RTF and RME will make that investment possible. But the question that keeps me awake at night at the moment is this. In ten years' time, once the person we appoint this year has moved on to their next post, where will the next Rector of Maltby come from, if there are 25 per cent fewer clergy to deploy?

It is communities like Maltby and Thurcroft which need priests, which will not find them on our present planning and trajectory. A person sitting in the Synod, a lay person called to ordained ministry, will take two years to explore their vocation, on average two or three years to complete initial training and then serve a three or four year curacy. The total process will be seven or eight years from first speaking to the DDO to incumbency.

So the need is urgent to bring change into the situation and well past urgent to begin to grow new vocations prayerfully and proactively, to invest in more and better training and to invest in CMD. Broadly speaking, dioceses and parishes do know what kind of clergy we are looking for. We know that they can be trained well in different ways. There is always more theological reflection that can be done, but the need at the moment is to connect more clearly the needs of dioceses with the training that is offered and so that the one is influenced by the other.

There is a need to develop, as we have said, lay ministry in many and different ways. Synod, we need vision and leadership and urgent action prayerfully and proactively to increase our base for ministry and mission, lay and ordained, and to invest in growth locally and into the future. So, Synod, I would urge you passionately to seize the moment and vote in support of this motion today. Thank you.

*Mr Tim Hind (Bath and Wells):* Thank you, Chairman. I want to welcome these reports wholeheartedly as a great first step in the right direction but I also want to put down an early marker on the place of laity in the process and outcomes.

Yesterday, we had several voices showing disquiet over the membership of the Task Groups in relation to the ethnic, gender and other mixed factors, for example SSMS. I restrained myself from adding to that list yesterday regarding the number of lay members on the RME Task Group.

The three lay members are all good people I am sure, but there were only three of them. Once every five years we form a new Synod and this is done by joining the Convocations of York and Canterbury together and then bolting on the House of Laity afterwards.

I have mentioned in previous discussions that it is very sad that the RME proposals seem overbearing to do with ordained ministry. Although there is text which recognises that this is a problem, in the end proposal 12 is tacked on the end and is phrased in terms that makes it look bolted on. Can I please urge us all to ensure that despite it being last named that it is urgently prioritised?

*Revd Amanda Fairclough (Liverpool):* I am about to climb on my SSM soapbox and I apologise in advance for that. I broadly support the concept of an increase in ordained ministry. I believe strongly in a sacramental and self-sacrificial priesthood, but I do hope that we are able to focus more on the growth coming through fostering self-supporting ministers. It is not just a retirement job either. We should be trying really hard to get younger self-supporting ministers.

I am 47 next week and I am, believe it or not, a young self-supporting minister. We should be trying to get people who will be ordained in their 30s and 40s who are still quite close to their academic and professional training, so we do not necessarily need to put them through the wringer of taking yet another degree. They will also be working in a changing environment out in the secular world and so we can use some of the skills that they have and translate them.

In order to encourage people into self-supporting ministry, especially younger people, we need to recognise those gifts that they already bring. I am sure that there are a number of extremely talented people in the House of Laity here who should be wearing one of these uncomfortable collars and perhaps would if the training process was less fixed and more flexible and, also, if deployment was more sensible.

I would emphasise the need for contextual training, practical based training as opposed to academic, and an affirmation of the skills that the people can bring to self-supporting ministry, translating their skills from their everyday occupations. I also think we need to think very carefully about how we deploy SSMs imaginatively.

We have a number of people, again nearly all in retirement or semi-retirement, in house for duty posts. What about, instead of expecting people to work three days in church whilst they are occupying a church house, we actually let them live in that house in the parish, commute a reasonable distance for their 9.00 to 5.00 or, in most cases, let us be honest, considerably more than that hours in secular employment, devoting the same kind of time on a Sunday and in the evenings that you would expect a committed lay person to do?

In that way, we make sure that we can get people who are really valuable, who have a calling, who have something to bring as ordained ministers and yet still work 9.00 to 5.00 or longer in secular employment. Let us be more imaginative and less prescriptive about how we put people through the wringer and more expectant of what they can do

at the other end. Thank you.

*Revd Tony Redman (St Edmundsbury and Ipswich):* Thank you for calling me. I am the less good-looking member of the SSM on Synod. I believe there are three of us altogether and I think I am the second oldest or the second youngest. Oh, yes. I am really grateful for this report on Resourcing Ministerial Education and I am very much in favour of paragraph 8.

However, I want to share some of my disappointments with the Task Group's report at several different levels. Firstly, about the process. I sense the disappointment amongst some of the training institutions and certainly the DDOs that they have not been consulted more fully over the report before it has come to Synod. The group again have to work jolly hard and urgently to restore credibility if this is going to get anywhere. My sense is that those who have not been consulted, far from being against the initiative, want to add their own creative insights into how the process of formation can be made fit for purpose.

Secondly, I have to admit my disappointment, as the previous speaker has, on the focus on stipendiary ministry within this report. It may not be obvious, it may not have been intentional, but that is the way a number of people have read it. The report fails to mention either SSMs or locally resourced ministers or pioneer ministries. Indeed, self-supporting ministry is only mentioned in clause 12 of the Resourcing the Future, GS 1978, suggesting to me that this distinctive ministry might be seen only as a way of delivering ministry at less cost. On the other hand, as we will hopefully hear tomorrow in the Rural Ministry debate, such ministries and such diversity is a key to the future of rural ministry as probably also to urban ministry.

Thirdly, and finally, Chairman, I am concerned about the silence about contextual learning. Yes, I was brought up through a course and part of my joy in the theological formation was to study theology within the course of my normal employment. Recent research at Kings College, I believe, showed that only four out of 1,400 ordinands had a contextual learning experience during their course and all of those were pioneer ministers.

Another example is I am aware of hardly any learning which takes place in colleges and courses on the theology of church buildings and in post-ordination training the opportunities are at least patchy or at most patchy. Then we release clergy into context where buildings often speak evocatively of hope in the wider community and yet fail to give them either the theological insights or leadership skills to see how they can use these buildings creatively. I know buildings can be burdens but they are also mission opportunities; what supermarket chain would not give all it could to have a branch in every community? All of this at a time when the secular world is valuing more highly the sense of place, environment and setting. So our buildings are often a way in which the Church of England does theology, especially in rural areas.

Sadly, this report only gives me a little hope that the culture in which we work will change but change it must. Hopefully better research, especially into the diversity of ministerial leadership and formation in the light of contextual learning may go some way to address these concerns. Thank you.

*The Chair:* Philip Plyming, after which would Fr Thomas Seville speak to but not move his amendment.

*Revd Dr Philip Plyming (Guildford):* I want to say I welcome these reports, I welcome both of them, and I want to set out three reasons and three things that I particularly welcome.

First of all, I welcome their honesty about the current situation. It seemed to me over the last six years that at times this Synod has been in something of denial about the challenges facing us, perhaps because we do not think we can do anything about those challenges and therefore we would rather avoid them. I like the way that in fact we are honest in both reports about, as John Spence described it, the existential crisis facing the church and the reality of clergy numbers being tracked forward. The fact that we are honest about the present means that we can change the future. That is what I welcome first of all.

Secondly, I welcome the vision for the future; a vision that seems to me is unashamedly focused on the mission that God has called us to and that we have affirmed in our previous debate on discipleship. That mission includes a necessary and non-negotiable bias to the poor but also a capacity to nurture growth where it is possible. It is a vision that includes an increase in the number of younger ordinands, and I take all the points made about the importance of lay leadership. As somebody who is coordinating a deanery Growing Leaders course I completely affirm that. However, unless we have more leaders of churches, more parish priests, as Bishop Steven says, we will not be able to maintain our presence in every community. I welcome that vision of an increase in ordinands at 50% from 2017 and going forward.

Thirdly, I welcome what I see as a necessary rebalancing between the national and the local. I have heard some comments made that this seems something of a power grab from the national church. I do not recognise that in these recommendations. Instead, I recognise increasing emphasis on encouraging dioceses and parishes to invest in opportunities for growth. I see that in the way in which training is going to be encouraged not from a one-size-fits-all approach but rather about encouraging individual local-based training needs. That speaks to me as a training incumbent who has trained a number of curates and yet I have to say that what seems to me a compliance-based portfolio-ridden assessment process actually detracts from mission-focused training. I welcome, therefore, guidelines rather than regulations, personal learning plans and emphasis on leadership development, an air of deregulation that breathes through this motion. I realise there is more work to be done, more consultation to be taken, I therefore welcome the fact that the Hobbs amendment is to be welcomed by the proposer of the motion. I want to say I welcome and support the direction of travel and for the last six years I have hoped and prayed for this and am thrilled it is here.

*The Chair:* Fr Thomas Seville to speak to but not move his amendment followed by Canon Jane Charman ditto. In each case it is still the four minute speech limit.

*Revd Thomas Seville (Religious Communities):* I want to speak to what I think is a very specific lack which I hope we will be able to redress because I think if we do not do it we risk undermining the very good things which seem to promise from the report on Resourcing Ministerial Education. It relates to the business of theology. Theology, the very word makes some people turn off. I wish to argue that without a serious theological undergirding of what we are doing we are going to make serious mistakes.

It touches two areas. The first area, and you may hear that this is not part of the remit of the RME but I think it should have been, is the lack of a cogent theological analysis of where the Church of England is found. Basically, why theologically are so many people not coming to church? It is probably arguably common to many of the mainstream denominations: Roman Catholic, Methodists, wherever. It is absolutely imperative.

Whenever theology is not done, the myths of the age creep into the Church. One of those big myths is the myth - we all carry it to an extent - of the self-sufficient autonomous self. Paragraph 8 affects our ordinands. Because I think that theological analysis has not been done adequately yet you have it in the very structure and approach to pathways. I have to disagree with the previous speaker, with great regret. I think the emphasis on individual pathways, suitable needs and all that kind of thing, risks actually importing the role, the supremacy at one level, of the individual subject into the training and structure of the Church. The very shape traditionally the life of the Body of Christ has taken, and that goes for any churchmanship, is in huge contrast to that. It is reflected in the approach to training pathways in this report. That theological work needs to be done.

It may be argued that this is to kick the motion into the long grass - my friend Simon Butler has challenged me with that already and he may challenge me with this later in the debate - but I do not think so at all because one of the things is that you have among the TEIs, among those people who the Church of England employs to train lay and ordained ministries, people who are gagging to do this work. They have been left out of the consultation process so far. It is imperative that they are actually engaged, and you might have had a few less of the complaints about the lack of lay and gendered participation in the research body had that consultation already happened. That is basically my urging why we should actually do this theological work sooner rather than later and make sure we do not make big mistakes.

It is going back to the sources of life which sustain the Body of Christ. That has far more relevance to the training of ministers, the fostering of vocations, than any amount of planning, any amount of pathways which we can envelop. Unless we do that, we cannot go forward as a Church I think. That theological work remains to be done, and so I ask you to support my amendment.

*The Chair:* Canon Jane Charman to speak to but not move her amendment, followed by Mr Samuel Margrave ditto.

*Revd Canon Jane Charman (Salisbury):* My amendment differs from Fr Thomas Seville's in that it leaves the main motion untouched with regard to GS 1978 but amends it with regard to GS 1979, Resourcing Ministerial Education, creating an opportunity for further work to be done specifically on that report before bringing more



detailed proposals back to Synod in July. This allows for some wider clarification of the proposals without losing the sense of forward momentum which John Spence has underlined.

My amendment is not intended to suggest that I think Synod ought to send the first report forward for implementation at this stage, my amendment is agnostic on that, but if Synod thinks that report also is in need of further work then I point you to Christopher Hobbs' amendment. However, for those with a particular concern for the second report it looks to me as though my amendment provides Synod with a greater opportunity to keep a hand on the tiller.

The RME Report is full of possibility, and I am excited by many of the proposals in it, but it also contains a number of hostages to fortune. The impact on poorer dioceses, the future of residential training and the implications for women's vocations are just three examples which spring to mind, and a number of other points of inquiry and concern have also been raised.

I am sorry I could not join the larger group discussing the report this morning, I am sure you will have touched on these things, but that is the constraint of doing a major part of our business in groups and not on the floor of Synod. I know other people are in the same boat.

My amendment allows space for the Task Group to do three things. First to complete the research. At paragraph 26 we read that the Group commissioned a major research programme, of which initial results are available and further dissemination planned. Having looked at what is available so far it would certainly be helpful to see the complete outturns from the research and have an opportunity to digest and evaluate.

Secondly, to complete the consultation with dioceses, TElS and others. There is good consultation with stakeholders in the preparation of the report, but the proposals as they now stand have only just emerged and discussion is only beginning. In particular, we should include in the consultation Durham University, now our main partner in the delivery of ministerial formation, and as far as I am aware they have not been part of that discussion so far.

Thirdly, pleas for more detail regarding funding, not only how much of it there is but how the funding will flow between the various proposals, how it will be accessed, within what timeframe and according to what criteria.

Any or all of the above could alter the picture significantly and Synod may well feel that without some more information on these points it cannot easily exercise its responsibility to scrutinise this report. I agree with that and hope that you will support my amendment, but I am not moving it.

*The Chair:* Thank you. Mr Margrave followed by the Revd Christopher Hobbs, again to speak to but not move their amendments.

*Mr Samuel Margrave (Coventry):* Thank you, Chair. Can I just say it is very odd that really what I am asking you to do is to vote down the previous two speakers. Now, I

come from a diocese of reconciliation, so I do not know whether it is possible in some way to encompass some of the observations made by the last two speakers or by my amendment in going forward because obviously if the first amendment succeeds, et cetera, then obviously that will leave us in a position where my amendment cannot go forward. I do not know what can be done because there are lots of valid points.

Synod, I welcome the work undertaken by the Task Group and I feel it offers a strong foundation to build upon. The question I have is does the current proposal pass what I call the 'Ronseal' test. In stating an objective to have a strong bias to the poor, does the current plan deliver the intended outcome? Does it do what it says on the tin? Often the poor have been let down and we have to make a long-term investment to show poorer communities the Gospel and to share the good news. After all, that is part of our call, to proclaim the good news to the poor.

My concern is that while the report speaks of a bias to the poor, it fails to ensure there are the resources needed for this ministry. Further on in Luke's Gospel we are told, "Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. Won't you first sit down and estimate the cost to see if you have enough money to complete it, for if you lay the foundation and are not able to finish it everyone who sees it will ridicule you saying, 'the person began to build and wasn't able to finish'."

I want us as a Church to be able to finish the job entrusted to us by our Lord. This is why I have proposed three areas within this amendment. I have concerns regarding whether we are, as maybe an unintended consequence, taking money from the poor and putting it into mission in better-off areas by doing away with the Darlow Formula. When it comes to poor parishes, we must also recognise the real need for strong and often time consuming leadership and pastoral care. This can only come from sufficient numbers of full-time stipendiary ministers. All I ask for is further consideration by the House of Bishops and Archbishops' Council to consider further how best to ensure there is a genuine strong bias to the poor and that this plan does what it says on the tin.

I welcome other views on my amendment and I commend them to you. I hope if we do get to my amendment, I know there are people who really do want to speak on this, Chair, so I look forward to hearing those speakers and others. Thank you.

*The Chair:* The Revd Christopher Hobbs, after which I will explain where we are up to.

*Revd Christopher Hobbs (London):* The thing about clergy training now is the money for it comes to the Archbishops' Council from the apportionment from the dioceses. This money does not come from the Task Group or Ministry Division who are making these plans and it does not really come from the bishops, it actually comes from the parishes, from the laity who give it and the clergy who ask their church communities for it.

Unless my amendment is passed, the laity, who receive the clergy trained for them and the clergy who are trained and seek to foster vocations, are not to have a proper say over the changing of the system. We are a synodical church where the clergy and lay representatives add their voice, their "yes" or "no" to the bishops and Boards. I do not

think the Task Group, that we have only just become aware of, that we had no say in appointing or guiding, should take over from synodical government.

I move this amendment because I do not want to turn up in July and find that Vote 1 is now for something quite different. This is important, do not rush it. It may be that our system of training for ministerial education has to change even more quite significantly so that we get more church planters and evangelists and apologists, for example, and I would welcome Church Commissioners' funding for that.

It may be that we need fewer residential colleges, and sadly one has already gone, but we need more consultation with the Theological Education Institutions, more robust research, more time for Synod to operate and for the representatives of the clergy and laity to give their approval. In my view, if Synod is not going to be given the final say on these changes then we ought to vote against the whole motion because the process is not right.

*The Chair:* Thank you. Before I take the next speeches, just to say where we are. We will continue debating the main motion and the speech limit will remain at four minutes. Attention has been drawn to the way in which the amendments are ordered. One of the reasons for getting all four to speak to their amendments is so that, Synod, we can have a conversation now that maybe ranges across the whole pitch because when we do get to voting on the amendments, as has been referred to, if we vote in favour of a particular amendment that might mean certain other amendments we do not get a chance to debate afterwards.

What I would like to do is take two or three speeches. I think we have a maiden speech from Dr Francis-Dehqani, we will take that, after which I think we will have Charles Razzall.

*Revd Dr Guli Francis-Dehqani (Peterborough):* Thank you, Chair, for calling me. I work as an IME Phase 2 Officer, or Curate Training Officer as we call it, in the Diocese of Peterborough. I am grateful for this paper on Resourcing Ministerial Education. There is a lot in it and a lot of questions that it raises for me and things that I could say, but I want to restrict my comments just to two points if I may.

The first refers to the shortening of the length of curacies and in a sense associated with that is the possible fast-tracking of ordination training for those who seem like suitable candidates along the lines of the Teach First system.

I want to say that I think we should be very cautious about doing either of these things. Being incumbents or equivalent requires, it seems to me, not just the assimilation of knowledge, be it academic or any other kind of knowledge, and not just the ability to have certain skills in leadership. It also additionally needs time for formation to take place and for wisdom to take root, and these are things that cannot be rushed. It is no coincidence, I believe, that one of the virtues we require in the Christian life is patience. Specifically with regard to curacies and younger candidates particularly, we should rather be thinking about lengthening training through the possibility of second curacies again and assistant posts. I fear that if we rush things too much, albeit with good

intentions, we might well be storing up potential problems for ourselves in the future by expecting too much even from able candidates too soon.

My second and final point is connected with point 29, which raises the question of training incumbents. Point 29 in the Report says that “the curate/training incumbent relationship is seen as critical for formation and more so than the design of the formal diocesan programme for curates”. I want to agree with this point.

I am aware that although many of us agree with it, in practice we are not quite at the right point yet. I am aware that I spend a high proportion of my time implementing our curate training programme, building relationships with the curates, doing their reviews and their assessment and so on. We would be aided, I believe, further by a lot more thinking around the training and support of training incumbents. They do hold the key in the end to successful curacies. I am aware of the training of training incumbent documents and I did attend the consultation day, but I suspect that we still need much more by way of careful and structured thinking around this with some clearer guidelines on how we might proceed. Thank you.

*Revd Charles Razzall (Chester):* Thank you, Chair. The late, great Dr John Hughes, that social theologian so cruelly taken from us last year but now heaven’s gain, used to have a phrase over a pint in the pub, “Beware the careless adjective”. In the motion that we have before us, 11, we have that word “strong” bias to the poor: strong. No such thing as a weak bias to the poor. Why do we need that adjective “strong”?

How things have changed since the godchild of the William Temple tradition, the Faith in the City movement, was rubbished by the Thatcher Government. Now we have everyone seemingly agreed on a strong bias to the poor. But does that quite say it all? Is it not wrong to see our poorest communities as those to whom things are done or even helped? Does this motion mean that the poor and poorer communities will be at the heart of the life of the church and will perhaps even take over the life of the church? That is, as a previous speaker said a few minutes ago, a long-term strategy. It is not something just for three years, perhaps, as someone said in a plenary earlier, for seven years or more.

Secondly, in any talk of money there are always winners and losers. There are dioceses which in the medium to long-term will be gainers, they will be winners, but there will be other dioceses which are losers, and we need to plan for that, understand that and know that.

Thirdly and finally, are we all truly redistributory people now, wealth away from the wealthy to the poor and the poor at the centre of the church? Thank you.

*The Chair:* Thank you. I am going to call then on Fr Thomas Seville to formally move the amendment in his name after Mr Follett has spoken.

*Mr Samuel Follett (St Albans):* Thank you for calling me, Chair. As a 24 year-old ordinand I just wanted to bring a few quick reflections on the RME Report, firstly from the perspective of a young person who has recently gone through the selection process and also a view from the ground in theological colleges.

Firstly, with regards to recruiting candidates, I think streamlining the vocations process is a fantastic idea. The long process definitely puts off some younger candidates; I am sure it puts off other candidates as well. I would, however, like to say that I had a delightful time going through the process. I never particularly felt like being young was an issue, and I think that has been a real improvement in the Church in recent years.

I would offer caution though. This streamlining, combined with our desire to recruit substantially more candidates, which I also commend, does bring with it a danger that we lower, for want of a better word, quality. We need to find ways that are quicker and simpler but that are just as rigorous, both for the sake of the Church and for the sake of the candidate.

Secondly, referring to paragraph 28 of the report, if the training institution itself is a significant predictor of the effectiveness of training then I would really like to know which colleges are doing best and why. What can we learn from the stronger institutions and are there things that we can do to strengthen those that are struggling?

Finally, my main point refers to paragraph 27. My experience on the ground is that our residential training models are, just as it says in the report, “lacking adequate preparation for the practice of ministry and in need of better integration of practice and theory”. I chose residential training because I am an activist. My sponsoring vicar said, “Sam, the only way we are actually going to get you to sit down and read a book is if we lock you in college for three years”. I am loving being at my college. I am thoroughly appreciating the chance to undertake significant theological education and I think it is an incredibly important and valuable part of training. However, we also need to remember that we are training for ministry and not sacrifice other important things.

The fact that we undertake an academic qualification means that the vast majority of our time is filled with study, leaving very little time for reflection or for applying our learning into the context in which we are serving. I know first-hand that at my college the introduction of Common Awards at the beginning of this year has also substantially increased our volume of assessed work, which means an already potentially unbalanced emphasis on the theological theory side of training has been pushed further towards theory and now, because we are struggling with the workload, we are having to drop even more practice and have even less time for reflection.

I also think that it is fitting that we are exploring this area on the same day as the Discipleship paper. One of the greatest possibilities that residential training offers is closer care by our tutors to our discipleship and growth individually. They have us around to invest in us a lot and I would like to have more time to benefit from this. If we are ever to lead others in growth in discipleship we need to be being effectively disciplined ourselves to be able to grow others and to have a good ministry modelled to us.

It is with this in mind that I really like the intention behind delaying ordinations until September. This could enable more space for formation. However, I am concerned that our theological training and our personal formation and practice should be separated out in that way. Also, from a financial perspective I know my college has to raise several thousand pounds per ordinand and only just stays afloat by letting out the

site for language schools over the summer, so where would this additional training take place?

To enable us to use our limited resources wisely we need to ascertain with hard evidence what the core elements of successful ministerial training really are across the different pathways and to ensure that our energy and resources are channelled towards that.

I thank you very much for this report and look forward to following the next steps. Thank you.

*The Chair:* Fr Thomas Seville, will you please formally move the amendment that stands in your name?

*Revd Thomas Seville (Religious Communities):* May I make a point of order before I do so?

*The Chair:* You may indeed.

*Revd Thomas Seville:* It refers to the order of the amendments. It seems to me, and I may have misunderstood the way they are set out, as if some are in competition with others which actually touch different areas. It seems the only way you have of voting for Sam's amendment - 85 - is if you vote down my amendment or Jane Charman's amendment, now they are touching different areas. I would just like some clarification on that.

*The Chair:* Thank you. We did look at the amendments in some detail and took advice about them. There is a way in which they are presented. Those that affect the text first are taken in that order. We put yours first simply because it is the most radical of the solutions that are offered to us today. The other two strike the text at the same place and we have had to take a punt as to which way round it felt more logical to deal with them. The final one, of course, does not depend on the others falling or being sustained. It is the way we have to do the debate; we have to structure it one way or another. That is why I called yourself and your colleagues who proposed amendments to all speak earlier on so Synod could have a view as to all of them before we come to vote but, you are right, we do have to vote yours and if we vote in favour of yours we then move straight on to 86 at that stage.

*Revd Thomas Seville:* Is there any way that could be changed?

*The Chair:* No. Will you now please move your amendment?

*Revd Thomas Seville:* I have to say, because my heart lies very much with Sam's motion, and I think it is the more generally important because I think my points will have been heard, that I have to withdraw my amendment. However, I do wish to register a protest about the way these amendments have been ordered. I hope members will support Sam's amendment.

*The Chair:* Thank you. My understanding then, because the amendment was never

formally moved, is that it does not have to be withdrawn. We just move straight on.

*Mr Peter Haddock (Southwark):* Point of order. I apologise for delaying matters, Mr Chairman, but I still did not understand from the explanation why Mr Margrave's amendment cannot be taken first.

*The Chair:* They both strike the text at the same point and we took the view that probably the Charman amendment is a little more radical than the other one and that is the decision that we have made.

*Mr Peter Haddock:* I understand it is the decision but I do not think ---

*The Chair:* You have made your point of order. Can we now move on, please? Can I ask Canon Charman to formally move the amendment that stands in her name?

*Revd Canon Jane Charman:* I also share the perplexity but I move the amendment standing in my name.

*The Chair:* Can I now call upon the panel to respond please and indicate how they want to respond to that.

*The Bishop of Sheffield (Rt Revd Steven Croft):* I would urge Synod to resist this amendment on two grounds. The first is that we cannot do this level of consultation by the July Synod. We are about to begin an extensive process of consultation. It is a really important part of the process. We do not estimate it can be concluded by the July Synod and therefore we cannot support the amendment.

However, my second argument is that we are doing more or less what Jane has requested anyway, in that we have been waiting until this Synod and the debate this afternoon to proceed with the consultation, but we are about to embark on a detailed process of consultation with dioceses and with TElS. Conversations have already begun and begun some time ago with the University of Durham. That will include both inviting written responses to the 12 proposals, further work on the financial detail that is required, and we very much accept is required, and on the lay proposals, which we have also accepted is much required.

The effect of the amendment proposed by Christopher Hobbs, which we very much hope Synod will agree, is that the substance of Jane's motion will be taken forward in that the proposals will come back to Synod for further debate and approval in due course, most probably early in 2016, we think.

*The Chair:* We now are debating Item 84, the amendment in the name of Jane Charman. It is on the screens for you. We will have a speech limit of three minutes.

*Dr Elaine Storkey (Ely):* I really want to support this amendment. I think we are rushing far too fast for a set of proposals where we are not sure that we even know properly what we are doing. I would have supported the previous amendment because I think we desperately need more theology and more research on this. What the Report presents to us as research is largely qualitative data gleaned from people's stories and

opinions, where they are trying to make sense of their own context, self-interpreting it and so on. I understand all of that, but that is not research. It is also reading articles and books and number-crunching. There are lots of assumptions there, all of which need to be tested properly by proper theological and sociological research.

Clergy can have a stab at understanding their context and the Task Force can have a good idea what is going on, but we need some proper concrete data. What do we need? What kind of things do the research areas need to uncover? First of all, we need to understand properly the context we are in theologically and sociologically, not just making guesses in the fragmented areas that we are in. We need to look, for example at social media - Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, LinkedIn and over 200 other social media networks - where most people get their understanding of faith from today. How are we going to train ministers in order to speak into that context? What research is needed to shape and frame that? We need to look at the whole democratisation of knowledge, the way in which everybody is now an expert on anything, and what does that do about authority, what does it say about the authority that we believe is there in God, in the Scriptures, in the Revelation and in the centrality of Jesus Christ. We are putting one set of concepts and understanding about authority into a context and a culture which does not even begin to relate to this. Then there is the whole area of demographic change. There is the area of transition and fragmentation, fragmentation of work, fragmentation of communities, individualisation of choice, individualisation of morals, meanings, beliefs and so on. How are we going to train ministers for all of this? We really need to do some thinking. Okay, let us move ahead with our numbers and let us get more people involved, younger ministers and so on, but, for goodness' sake, let us know what we are doing. What are we training them for?

Then there is the whole ubiquity of consumer culture: I shop therefore I am; Tesco *ergo sum*; I am what I buy; I am the style I choose; I am what I accumulate. The whole centrality of choice where unlimited choice is a human right. I think we just need more careful and more proper detailed research into all of these areas. The dioceses cannot do it. The institutions cannot do it. We need to actually put our money where our mouth is and we need to make a real, strong commitment to this. Otherwise have we really any idea what we are doing in terms of our culture today. Let us go for it but let us not minimise the amount of careful, scholarly work we have to do, otherwise we are just pleading in the dark.

*Dr Philip Giddings (Oxford):* I agree with many of the points that have been made, but I think we actually need to look at the text of the amendments. The one which gives most space for the deepest consideration of all the important issues that have been raised in this debate so far is Item 86. The difficulty with the amendment that we are on at the moment is that July this year is much too early a date to do the things which need to be done, particularly after the last speech. I would urge Synod to accept the gift that we were given at the beginning of this debate, which was an undertaking to accept Item 86, which will give most space for all these important questions to be addressed before we move to implementation.

*Revd John Cook (Oxford):* I hear the same encouragement to be fast but I want to support Jane Charman and also Philip Giddings because there are in proposals 6 and 7, about residential training, some massive knock-on effects. First, the transfer of



decisions about training pathways for dioceses is likely to disincentivise residential training for point, but there are not enough ordinands being recommended for residential training to maintain the TEIs which offer it, depending on the level at which the standard grant is set. More than that, secondly, that risk is compounded by the requirement that dioceses meet the maintenance costs of their sponsored candidates, which will inevitably incentivise local schemes and, as a consequence, it is most likely that many providers of residential training will cease to be viable. I do not think we have really grappled with that one yet. I know there will be pressure on money, but residential colleges in the universities have a vital function, because the church's links, say, with Oxford and Cambridge mean that extra effort is given to the Bible and theology. I want to support Jane Charman.

*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 on a show of hands.*

*Mrs Christina Rees (St Albans):* Point of order, sort of. I would really like to be clear what we are going to be doing right now because what I have heard, if I have heard correctly, is that the Bishop of Sheffield has said that he is already starting on a process of consultation and that it would clash with Jane Charman's amendment. We have had an incredibly powerful and important speech from Elaine Storkey --

*The Chair:* I think we are ending up with a speech rather than a point of order.

*Mrs Christina Rees:* What I want to understand is, is proper research part of the consultation that the Bishop of Sheffield has already started?

*The Chair:* You need to decide that on the basis of the debate that has taken place thus far.

*Mrs Christina Rees:* Could it not be clarified?

*The Chair:* We cannot have further speeches at this stage on this matter. That brings us to closure on Item 84. I therefore put Item 84 to the vote. You can see what this will do to the text up on the screens.

*The amendment was lost on a show of hands*

*The Chair:* That brings us to Item 85

*Revd Paul Hutchinson (York):* Point of order. I believe that SO 22(b) provides that "a motion or amendment that is not moved by the proposer may be moved by any other member." Assuming I have read that correctly, I would like to move Fr Thomas Seville's motion.

*The Chair:* I am afraid it is too late to do that, but nice try!

*Revd Paul Hutchinson:* On what basis, please?

*The Chair:* We have moved on to the next item. We cannot go back to a previous item. Thank you. I do now call on Samuel Margrave to move formally the amendment that stands in this name.

*Mr Samuel Margrave (Coventry):* I so do move, Chair.

*The Chair:* I am now going to call on the panel to respond to the amendment. We are now on Item 85.

*Canon John Spence (ex officio):* Mr Chairman, ladies and gentlemen, I have a great deal of sympathy with what Sam said. We actually want to be very clear that we are going to achieve success in this bias towards the poor not, to take Charles' point, so that the poor take over but the poor are at the very heart of all that we do. Indeed, it is the whole reason why we are moving away from the Darlow Formula because the Darlow Formula provides no linkage whatsoever with levels of deprivation. I am puzzled, to be honest. What we are proposing here is that a minimum of 50% of the funds currently distributed under Darlow will be ring-fenced for use in deprived communities in the ways determined by dioceses in consultation with their peers. I have never been able to say that before. Nobody in this room has been able to say that before. So do we need further work to prove this? I do not think so. It is very clear to me that we are introducing a new level of support for deprived communities, that it is consistent with 1840 (and Philip James is very happy to talk to that later) and that through this there will be the ability to think about how we best resource those deprived communities, but Sam is absolutely right, there can be challenges in getting people to go now. The Sheffield Formula has not been working and this offers an improved solution.

Ladies and gentlemen, in our group meeting this morning we were privileged to hear from a representative from a Liverpool parish which is already very deprived and which faces greater levels of deprivation as final salary pensions disappear and there is an increased focus on the minimum wage, who had previously been denied the ability to seek funding under the Church Urban Fund because of old ways of allocation. I was very proud to be able to give the assurance that under these proposals you will indeed have that support ring-fenced to that sort of parish. I ask you to resist the amendment.

*The Chair* imposed a speech limit of three minutes

*Revd Canon Simon Killwick (Manchester):* I would like to speak in favour of Mr Margrave's amendment. I am very much in favour of the overall positive vision in the Report that is in front of us, but I do want to query whether it does deliver the strong bias to the poor that is mentioned in the motion itself. I accept entirely that the Darlow Formula is inefficient at targeting resources on poorer areas and does need to be replaced by a more effective formula. I also accept that a new formula could result in an increase in resources for poorer areas from around 33% to 50%, but I question whether this is really a strong bias to the poor, as the motion claims that it is. On the face of it, 50% is arguably not a bias at all, let alone a "strong" bias. Given that the Commissioners are under a legal obligation to make additional provision for the cure of

souls in parishes in most need of assistance, I would have expected something substantially more than 50% in order to indicate a strong bias.

I realise that the other 50% earmarked for initiatives for growth will be allocated with a bias to the poor, but this will be subject to a bidding process with an uncertain outcome. I would like to argue for a greater sense of entitlement for the poor in the way that the Commissioners' funds are allocated. Therefore, I believe that more than 50% should be allocated for poorer areas through a new formula as a matter of entitlement. It is demeaning to the poor to have to come cap in hand to bid for funds. Therefore, I would ask you to vote for Mr Margrave's amendment to ask the Archbishops' Council and the House of Bishops to recalibrate the detail of the proposals so as to deliver a genuine strong bias to the poor.

*Revd Canon Graeme Buttery (Durham):* Boys and girls, I live on a mushroom farm. I have lived and ministered on mushroom farms for over 20 years and we all know how they grow mushrooms. That is right: they keep them in the dark and they shovel you-know-what on them! It is a slightly extreme way of saying that a lot of my parishioners in various parishes have felt that is how successive governments, charitable institutions, ideas, policies, reviews and the like have treated them. Things are done to them, occasionally for them, rarely with them and, increasingly rarely, by them. Anything which does not identify the poor as equal players in whatever we do and however we do it is not doing the right job. Sam's amendment is not perfect, but it gives us a chance to put that into what we want to do. Money which does not go along with a proper process and a proper vision and a proper means of getting there and proper partners to do it will be money badly spent and resources squandered. We not only have to see the poor as people who need our help and desperately need the Gospel to come into their lives, but we desperately need them to teach us their lessons of how you live and thrive on what the world considers inadequate. You want to see how poor communities can thrive and have wonderful lives. Go to the DofE website and look at my school on the SATS results, Brougham Primary, and see what a deprived school in a deprived area can do and come in the top 150 primaries in the country for achievement, with no extra money whatsoever, but a change of attitude and outlook which says that we learned from you, you learned from us. If we do not do that, then all this new radical thinking, all these new reports, all this new way of being and doing will, quite frankly, be wasted.

*A member:* On a point of order, Chair. I beg to move:

'That the question be now put.'

*The Chair:* That has my approval; does it have the approval of Synod?

*This motion was carried on a show of hands.*

*The Chair:* That brings us then to vote on Item 85, the amendment in Mr Margrave's name.

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

*The Chair:* That brings us to Item 86, Mr Hobbs' amendment. Can I ask him to formally move that amendment?

*Revd Christopher Hobbs (London):* I move the amendment in my name.

*The Chair:* I am going to invite the panel to respond, I hope fairly briefly, as they have already indicated their view on this item.

*Canon John Spence (ex officio):* Ladies and gentlemen, I have already indicated we will accept this amendment. I just wanted to correct one piece of factual accuracy from what Christopher said earlier. There is absolutely no question that Synod will be confronted with a new methodology for Vote 1 in July. We are a long way from that. The whole reason we have been seeking your mandate this afternoon is to get involved in the detailed work with the dioceses, the TEIs and all other relevant parts of the church so we can develop the proposals. You will not be ambushed with such a proposal in July.

*A member:* On a point of order, Chair. I beg to move:

'That the question be now put.'

*The Chair:* That has my approval; does it have the approval of Synod?

*This motion was put and carried on a show of hands.*

*The Chair:* That brings us then to a vote on Item 86, Mr Hobbs' amendment.

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

*The Chair:* That brings us back then to the substantive motion that lies before us today. We have not got very much time left, but I think I will hear from Canon Philip Blinkhorn.

*Canon Phillip Blinkhorn (Manchester):* In 2014, Manchester received £2,652,586 in the way of ministry support for poorer parishes and £294,980 in mission development funding. That money supported 60 stipendiary priests, about 25% of the current strength. You may have guessed by now that I am the Chairman of the Board of Finance, and I have to say I do not think the example in the paper is Manchester, but I may be wrong. What I can say is very definitely is we have got skin in the game.

When I say that I support the motion and the changes in the way the funds will be distributed, you might think I am a turkey voting for Christmas, but as a lifelong City and Salford fan I am quite used to contemplating turkeys! It is quite clear to me that the mechanical process needs to change. I have a particular dislike for the all-conquering use of the word "intentionality", but if it means that we are going to make sure that money is spent after suitable planning and discussion, that it is spent in pursuit of stated and measurable goals and that the recipients expect to be accountable to the wider church for their stewardship of those funds, then I am all in favour of it. I am also in favour of the kind of discussions between the centre and the dioceses that I have had personal experience of in the last couple of years about strategic funding. Our friends

from Church House have been challenging, and at times have certainly made me feel a little uncomfortable, but the external view has sharpened our own thinking and I trust is leading to better planning and work in the task groups that we have set up. Honest friends are a blessing for all of us.

That said, there are aspects of the funding report that I am not entirely happy about and some of the language surrounding ineffective subsidy and failing the poorest. Philip James said this morning that it was not meant to be patronising and I just say as a son of Salford, I am not paranoid, but I am very, very aware of being patronised.

I do want to make one final plea for something like the Sheffield Formula. It is a great way for dioceses like us being able to plan out three and five years. It is not perfect but in the zero sum game that is the clergy resource available to all of us, it is important that there is a measure of fairness and that we do not have a situation where one diocese that can afford it thrives whilst others are really looking for places. I urge you to support the motion, but I do want to hear more from the bishops about what is going to replace Sheffield.

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

‘That the question be now put.’

*The Chair:* I will be grateful for that in a moment or two, but Synod gave me permission earlier on to call the Bishop of Sheffield a second time as part of the ending of the debate, so I am going to call the Bishop of Sheffield to speak for up to three minutes after which, Mr Freeman, I would be very grateful if you could help me out.

*The Bishop of Sheffield (Rt Revd Steven Croft):* Thank you for all the contributions, particularly on Resourcing Ministerial Education. They have been very helpful and they will be taken forward. I want to comment on three things very briefly. The first is the question of the theological work to be done, the amendment that was not put and the passionate speech from Elaine about that. There is more theological work being done and there is more theological work to be done. That is going forward in parallel with the research. The Developing Discipleship paper refers to a three-cornered Synodical conversation between Bishops, theological educators and theologians, and that will, I hope, be very fruitful. There is a specific statement on theological method at page 10 of the RME report, which I would commend to you. We are working not with a theological method which attempts to articulate precisely an ideal and then derives consequences from it, but with an iterative theological method which keeps in dialogue theological reflection and practical experience, and we believe that is the appropriate way to do it and also, if we were to attempt to reach a consensus on some of these questions, it would elude us, I think.

In terms of the very eloquent list of researches needed articulated by Elaine Storkey, again that is a massive agenda. There is work being done, as I am sure Elaine is aware, in all of those areas by researchers, by universities, by theologians. We will do our best to connect with it, but we could not possibly work through that entire list and then reach conclusions.

Financial details and some of the concerns about residential training; there is again more work to be done to explore funding pathways. The point was raised in the seminar this morning about the risk to exporting dioceses and whether their training would end up costing them more which would suppress the flow of candidates from those dioceses. We need to find a way to get the funding right so that does not happen.

I do not believe the risks to residential training institutions are as great as has been articulated by someone in this debate and also by some of those colleges. We are not abolishing maintenance payments to married students. We are abolishing the pooling of those, which affects that calculation at the margins, not in the centre, but we will bring more detail on that.

Finally, the comments about detailed consultation and engagement, I would repeat, we are now, hopefully, following this Synod debate, going to embark on a thorough process of consultation that will include refining the proposals. They will, I am sure, be different in some ways when they come back. We will seek to learn from all that is said to us and look forward to taking that forward in the future. I urge you to support the motion.

*The Chair:* I call on Canon Spence to respond. He has up to three minutes.

*Canon John Spence (ex officio):* Ladies and gentlemen, I will try and keep this brief. I would just like to start by saying sorry. I am sorry that there are those in this room who feel that this has been a hidden process so far and that you have been excluded from the debate. I am not sure we could have moved at the pace that we have done in any other way, but I hope you understand the commitment now, as echoed by our acceptance of Christopher Hobbs's amendment, that we will be working with you very closely as we go forward.

What we sought today was a mandate, a very clear voice from this chamber which says to the Church: We understand the urgency of the issue. We recognise the scale of the opportunity and we are saying to you now, go and develop the detail of what you have said to us today - and, yes, I hear it - and keep us informed and allow us to scrutinise. I will say absolutely, because that is the only way I will be able to go to address the Church Commissioners on your behalf if and when the moment comes.

I will say to those who were both in this morning's session in my group, and I know in other groups, and have said again this afternoon that I recognise that the least developed part of the RME proposals is in respect of the development, training and encouragement of lay leadership. We really need to get into that. I give notice now to those of you who are at the Lay Chairs' Conference in two weeks' time and to those of you who are at the IDFF on 23 February that you need to think about those issues before I come and talk with you there.

I will listen because I am just a 'lay boy' and I understand that we need to define what lay leadership really means and how we go about truly training and developing it and ensuring that we do not have a spirit of clericalism, because we will need, both the stipendiary priests and the non-stipendiary and the self-supporting priests and the lay people, if we are going to achieve the goal to which you have committed us today to bring this Church back, to resume the pattern of growth and, as I will say over and over

again, to restore the risen Christ into the centre of this country, its culture and its people. I ask you to support.

*The Chair:* Thank you. That brings the Synod to a vote on Item 11.

*The motion (as amended by Item 86):*

‘That this Synod,

welcoming the objective set out in paragraph 4 of GS 1978 of investment focused on dioceses’ strategic plans for growth, and with a strong bias to the poor; and

the vision set out in paragraph 8 of GS 1979,

invite the Archbishops’ Council and the House of Bishops to reach early decisions on the specific recommendations in the two reports once the current consultation period with dioceses, theological training institutions and others is concluded and bring those decisions back to Synod for more detailed scrutiny before implementation.’

*was carried on a show of hands.*

*The Chair:* That completes Item 11. Thank you very much for your perseverance through a debate that was a little complex in places.

THE CHAIR *Mr Geoffrey Tattersall (Manchester)* took the Chair at 5.05 pm.

## **Simplification**

*The Chair:* As they say up North, “Now then”. We move seamlessly, with people running away at every corner, to Item 12. Item 12, as you know, is the debate on Simplification. I am going to call, first of all, the Bishop of Willesden who may speak for up to ten minutes and then we will see how the debate unfolds. So the Bishop of Willesden for no more than ten minutes.

*The Bishop of Willesden (Rt Revd Peter Broadbent):* I beg to move:

‘That this Synod, welcoming the proposals in GS 1980 and noting the support that the Archbishops’ Council, the Church Commissioners and the House of Bishops have given them, invite the Archbishops’ Council and the Business Committee, in the light of any comments from dioceses and others, to bring the necessary amending legislation to the Synod for more detailed scrutiny.’

I appear to have simplified the chamber. I think that is quite an interesting point to pause. Really, following on from what John Spence was saying in relation to the last debate, when you have quite radical and quite far-reaching proposals to bring to Synod how far do you pre-cook them before they come to Synod and see the light of day?

At one level, the process we have been through over the past few months has been a bit behind closed doors. At another level, it has been dealing with what one might call “the blooming obvious” because we need our Church to reform and we need to bring a new light to how we do evangelism and mission in our Church and simplification, as I say pointed out to yesterday, is a part of that.

I think it would be worthwhile for the Business Committee (and I am not going to teach them to suck eggs) to reflect on the process we have been through so far. I want to particularly think again about how what we did this morning was, from the simplification discussion that we had, very helpful. The hearing that we had was a very good airing of some of the basic issues that this report seeks to address. I am not, therefore, in my speech now going to go into the detail of all the different aspects of the report because, actually, those who wanted to engage with them came to Lambeth, sat around and we had a very good interchange.

The difficulty, of course, someone else has pointed out is that those hearings were all taking place simultaneously and you cannot be everywhere unless you are able to bilocate. Something about process does seem to me to need to be addressed and I hope we will get back to that as we take these ideas forward.

In terms of what simplification is seeking to do, please note it is not called ‘deregulation’. I am rather glad about that because if you have watched successive governments come to power and promise to deregulate and cut all the red tape in Whitehall and then go away with their tails between their legs because very little has actually changed, I was rather worried that this report might find the same kind of fate. Of course, it could still do so, but I think there is a fair wind behind this and people want to take notice of the ways in which we are inhibiting mission.

Please remember it is all about mission. If I can do one political speech, it is about mission, mission, mission. Politicians always repeat things three times, I am not quite sure why, but the fact is that that is the only reason that I would be standing up here in front of you volunteering to take this forward. I do not want to consign myself to five more years of this unless we think it is going to facilitate the growth and mission of the Church of England.

Therefore, what are we putting before you? For those who were in the session this morning, forgive me, a bit of background. We went to the dioceses. The dioceses said, “There are real problems about mission”. That actually came out from the report the Church Commissioners had which suggested that mission was not working and the Commissioners went round the dioceses and said, “There are big blockages to mission and growth which we need you to tackle”. We then said, “Okay, well, if that is the case let us find out what the dioceses have to say”.

We talked to bishops, archdeacons and diocesan staff and the fruits of that are in Appendix 2 of the report in that sideways tabulated form. We have shown our working in terms of what we have listened to and what we have taken up and what we have not and we have really clustered our proposals around those things which showed up most from the dioceses.



I give you an undertaking, if you give us the remit to go forward, the next stage is we will talk to those who are not in power, to the parishes, to the people where it bites, because it is not just about a management exercise in order to make mission easier for the bishops to carry out. It is also about those at grassroots level saying, "How can we achieve our mission better?" I am hoping that we will get an overwhelming endorsement from Synod for this and then go out and say, "Okay, what else is on your agendas?"

The reality is we cannot do everything. What we have listed for you are those that got the particular votes from the dioceses as being the biggest blockages and problems that currently exist and they are listed on pages 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 of the report.

If you cannot be bothered to read the whole working (and not everyone is quite so excited by legislation as I am) you may find that just reading those headlines will help you in terms of understanding what is being proposed. We are not at this stage saying that we have an order in which these should come back, nor, indeed, have we got any remit to propose a legislative programme based on this.

The one proposal we would be bringing to you is that set out on page 3. That is the amendments to the Clergy (Terms of Service) Measure and Regulations, because they are able to be reformed in one go at Synod because they are regulations not measure and not anything else.

There is such overwhelming support for making it simpler for us to make short-term appointments with proper protection for clergy, to extend clergy who are in their first curacy for another year if they have not yet found a job, and to allow us to be more flexible in the ways in which we appoint and streamline clergy terms of service without making any difference to people's security of common tenure.

Therefore, we think we can bring those back to you we hope in the next group of sessions before this Synod is dissolved. For the rest, there will be a conversation with the Business Committee and the Archbishops' Council to say, "What do you want us to bring? How can we bring it?", and we will be suggesting that these different amendments to the Mission and Pastoral Measure, to the revisions on church buildings, particularly to bishops' mission orders which we think are a really good tool for mission, to compensation procedures and other things can come back later on.

You will see there are some ill-formed ideas as yet because this is a work in progress where we say to you, "If you really want us to go along a road of more reform, do you want us to tackle the Patronage (Benefices) Measure, the teams and groups' measure? If you do, do you realise how much synodical time that will entail? You might just say, "Now, hang on, it is not worth it".

That is a considered discussion and conversation to take place between us about what we think should be the priority areas. We want to hit those areas which are preventing you from evangelizing, from church growth, from church planting, from pastoral reorganisation, from deploying clergy more sensibly and we believe that the things we have identified here will begin to address that.

What does the motion say? It says it has had already scrutiny by the Church Commissioners, the Archbishops' Council and the House of Bishops. I even got cheered at the House of Bishops. It was quite amazing. They do not usually raise themselves from torpor that much. In light of the conversations which we have had and the remit we have got, I would love you now as a Synod to say, "Yes, let us go ahead, let us have more comments from dioceses, let us have comments from parishes and let us bring back legislation". That does mean committing ourselves, within the next five years, to making some of these changes. They are hard work. They are not necessarily the most exciting things but, keep in mind, it is about mission, mission, mission. I beg to move.

*The Chair:* This matter is now open for debate. You will see that Item 87 is an amendment to be moved in due course by Father Benfield and I will call him later on.

*Revd Canon Jonathan Alderton-Ford (St Edmundsbury and Ipswich):* Thank you for calling me. I rise to talk about church planting. Apparently, all the various reports, surveys and reflections and all the different types of church growth from all the denominations and all the different traditions within the denominations show that church planting is one of the most effective ways of reaching out to society, building community and welcoming people back into the Kingdom of God and you get growth at both ends. New people come to the mother church and new people step up to replace the quality leaders who have left, as well as seeing growth in the new plants.

As in nature, plants that are planted out too soon can easily become diseased and stunted and die for many reasons. If they lack committed, focussed and sacrificial leadership or a clear vision and good resources, it kills them. But what kills them most is either too many expectations too soon with too little support or too much interference which keeps them dependent and prevents growth to maturity and ultimate independence. Worst of all is not to try because, "All this is my parish not God's".

Simplification of church planting could really help us to fulfil the commitment to be a church in every community which, if we are honest, is actually a vague hope or even a pipe dream in many areas of our country rather than a living reality despite the parochial system. These new plants do not need to be clerically led or even have a paid leader, lay or ordained. They can be anywhere from a factory to a living room.

My first church started in a tent and my second church was planted in a pub and I can tell you some interesting stories about prayer meetings where taps went off and soaked people's dresses, but that is for another time. Of course, there needs to be supervision and support, but if we had less bureaucracy and more pastoring - and can I say that again, less bureaucracy and more pastoring - how much better it would be.

Would it not be great if we could give time at each Synod to tell how many churches we had planted since the last time we met and how they were doing? Yes, of course, we need a new sort of leader which does not mean better training from our colleges and courses but perhaps a different sort of training and it should be given to lay people and SSMs as well. Later on, we are going to look at rural ministry and if we really are going to succeed there we are going to need the sort of clergy person or ordained person or non-ordained person who can select, train and put people in and sustain them.

Sadly, there are very few of those produced by our colleges and courses. As a training incumbent, I have had five curates and youth workers over the years. They have all been very good, but some of them seemed to be better at writing essays than doing anything else and they have come out of the process deskilled, whereas many of the things they need they can learn but they have only got three years to learn it with me and there are other things to do.

Here, the Bible helps us. Moses, the leader of a pilgrim people, carefully selected Joshua to be the leader for the time of war and battles. He was selected, nurtured and given different training from the priestly clan and given carefully selected tasks so he could take his church into the new role in a changed environment. To put it another way, he began green but he came out gold. We face a new world with new challenges and we honour the old systems which have served us well and they still have a contribution to make, but we have to adapt and we have to make things easy and as simple as possible for our generation so that we can succeed as well if not better than they have.

The other thing I need to say is we have not got that much time. If we grow by 3% year on year for the next ten years we will actually have less people than we have now. We have already lost two generations of young people. We cannot afford to lose another. Thank you very much.

*Canon Peter Bruinvels (Guildford):* I want to speak to paragraphs 38 to 53 specifically to do with the Pastoral Measure and I speak on this having been a member of the Pastoral Committee for the past 22 years and seen a number of reforms in that time.

I do welcome the light touch that is coming in and being recommended today, but I also want to pay tribute to the staff of the Pastoral Committee and the expertise that they give and I do not want that to be lost. It does say at one part here that they are using them unofficially in some of the dioceses. I would like to put it forward that they should use them officially when they can because not all the dioceses can afford to bring in specific Pastoral Committee experts from their own area and so I would like it to be discretionary not mandatory.

I used to be a member of the Government's deregulation unit, so I understand why we are doing it and I think I got some things right there and I hope you will agree, Chairman, in a minute I have got some things right here today. I also think it is useful sometimes to have the arm's length approach so that if you are having a public hearing or anything like that, at the end of the day you can blame the Commissioners.

We are used to being blamed, rather than have internecine warfare between representors and the diocesan officials. It is also quite good to lance the boil by going out into the local community to actually have hearings in public. As somebody who has led a number of those, chaired them over the years, I have found it to be extremely beneficial and I have to say on a number of occasions completely a different view from the view we had before we left Church House; and I am not a Church House hack, I assure you.

The Pastoral Committee is all about pastoral issues and it is quite interesting, even when the representors fail to convince us, they start talking to each other. So there is a major pastoral purpose in what we do. I think as far as the consultation is concerned, and I am looking at 50, you still need to know where to look to see how and what scheme is being put forward. It is not satisfactory to just say, "It will be an electronic information, the newspapers are no longer circulating in the locality". We have got to be confident that people know what we are planning to do. When I say "we" I should not say "we", the local diocese concerned.

It is this light touch that I have mentioned. Another thing I welcome is the fact that the Pastoral Committee can now be proactive. It is deeply frustrating when we have to turn down a number of applications when we actually can see an alternative and we are not in a position at the moment to offer that. I welcome that very much and I hope that will be underlined in what we are doing.

The other point is those visits I mentioned a few minutes ago. When we go out into the community we actually unite the community. Sometimes we have masses of people, not just the PCC. We had a very big one down the road with Chichester actually and we had over 500 people and I believe there could be one in Guildford, which I cannot obviously attend, which may have over a hundred attending. This is letting the lancing of the boil, letting people have that opportunity. I do not want that to be lost.

Another issue is the deanery plan which is recommended in 48. I think it is a good idea. At the moment when we have schemes before us we only look at the one specifically with us and we do not necessarily look at the deanery and it is deeply frustrating when we ask what is your relation in the next deanery and there is no requirement to talk to the next deanery. Indeed, sometimes the rural deans do not even really know each other because it might be in another diocese. If we can have some fluidity there and have the possibility to go across the 'Berlin Wall', I think that would work very well and so I would urge that to be done.

Please, can we see the code of practice and what it is going to look like because that is going to be important to us as well.

An issue on 43 is regarding who the bishop decides should be consulted, the bishop is to act fairly but who decides who the bishop should consult? I hope it is the archdeacon but also the local community. I do warn one caveat. There have been a number of appeal threats. Only one has actually ended up with the Privy Council and that was in my old constituency in Leicester and it was the Gaulby case and that was 21 years ago. The risk now is that there may be more if we are too light of touch.

The caveat is we have to take care, we need to move forward with confidence, we have got to be assured that all the right people have been consulted but also to ensure that the bishop is on side. The bishops love us when we say, "yes". They do not when we say, "no". I do support it but I have that caution.

*Revd Stephen Trott (Peterborough):* Mr Chairman, what have the Normans ever done for us? Well, they gave us tax inspectors. Yes, but apart from the tax inspectors what have they done for us? Well, they gave us canon law. Yes, but apart from canon law

and tax inspectors what have they given us? Well, they have given us the parish system? Well, apart from the parish system, canon law and tax inspectors? Well, they gave us incumbents.

Well, the system we have really is a system that the Normans have done for us and it is a system which has worked well most of the last thousand years, but it is a system that needs radical attention. It has become monolithic. It is firmly skewed towards a pastoral model and, when it was well-resourced, as it was in the 19th century when there was a great explosion in church building and the clergy were required for the first time to live in their own parishes, it was capable of both pastoral care and mission.

The parish system of today is failing to evangelise because it is struggling simply to maintain itself. It has lost so much of its resources, particularly resident clergy. Without the personnel, it is hard to see how its mission can be accomplished. I would like to ask you to compare the Norman system with the Anglo-Saxon system which preceded it. The Church in England really was a missionary Church from 597 to 1066.

There were very few restraints on church planting and the primary evangelists of the day were the leading churchmen, bishops such as St Aidan who continued to inspire many vocations to ministry, including my own. This was able to happen precisely because the Church was not hide-bound by a burden of a thousand years of acquiring property, status, territory, jurisdictions, rights and pertinences, codes, canons and measures.

We have been around too long to create complexity and the luxury of time and resources to refine, weave, embroider, tweak and gild the many interwoven lilies of our tradition. Bishop Simon Burrows of Buckingham, a former missionary, used to counsel the Church to travel light. If we are going to resolve our current situation we need to be radical, to travel light. We need a St Aidan Anglo-Saxon model side by side with the pastoral ministry which we provide through the parish system.

A body needs two lungs and the Church as a body needs a pastoral lung and a missionary lung. Simplification is good as far as it goes. I think we need something like a standing law commission to deal with it and to chop it away as far as we can, to have a "bonfire of the quangos" to use a phrase that was popular some years ago.

The only simple remedy, the only one that is really going to work, is real simplification and what I propose is this: that we set a target. We set a target of a thousand new ministers ordained each year for the parish system and we set a target of a thousand new ministers each year for the evangelisation of England, travelling as light and as unhindered as St Aidan and the evangelists for the missionary church which preceded the Normans.

That is all we need, Chairman. That is the simple remedy, the effective remedy, the one which will turn things around and change our situation and give us a new perspective on the Church as it has been and as it can be again. A thousand a year for the parishes and a thousand a year for evangelism.

*The Chair:* Tim Allen, after which I am going to call Father Benfield to speak to and

move his amendment.

*Canon Timothy Allen (St Edmundsbury and Ipswich):* Mr Chairman, forget about the written report, see the film. Thanks to the miracles of modern technology we have all been presented with, in effect, two separate versions of Bishop Pete's Simplification Report.

Last to appear was the formal written report of the Simplification Task Group, GS 1980. It is a worthy, if dull, document proposing 19 sets of mostly minor reforms to simplify existing legislation so as to free up the Church of England for mission and growth. An outsider might expect that much of the legislation to be cut away would be cobwebbed ancient laws, but the rather depressing fact is that Bishop Pete's axe is largely aimed, for the time being, at legislation confidently passed in this chamber very recently indeed, for example, parts of the Clergy Terms of Service Measure 2009 and of the Mission and Pastoral Measure 2011.

In contrast, the proposal from the cathedral deans (hardly a radical body) to abolish the confirmation of election ceremony for bishops by amending the Appointment of Bishops Act 1533 was turned down by the Task Group as too innovative. As I said at the beginning, see the film which is much more interesting and convincing. In his film, Bishop Pete, in his excited mode, makes a strong case for simplification. As he says, we are not fleet of foot enough to be able to do mission. Then he says, a sea change is needed whereby the Church needs to restructure itself in order to evangelise the country.

Bishop Pete's present simplification proposals are just one part of that sea change which also includes the other reports before Synod today and we should not forget the Task Group report on Discerning and Nurturing Senior Leaders which we have not yet been allowed to debate and welcome in Synod. May I add, Chairman, however, that I now have some grounds for hope that this most necessary and welcome report might be brought to Synod at York this summer.

Bishop Pete's present proposals are only the beginning of a continuing process of simplification which will no doubt occupy him and the new Synod to be elected this summer. In particular, I trust that Bishop Pete will follow through on his recognition, which comes right at the end of the film, and I quote, "That the rural church operates differently from the urban church and again differently from the suburban church, and the rural church needs to be able to be free, not to be constrained by lots of rules and regulations about PCCs and churchwardens they can't recruit, but to have a flexible way of doing things which might not be appropriate somewhere else." These are very important and hopeful words for the church in rural areas, for there is, as is clear from the excellent report which we will be considering tomorrow on Mission and Growth in Rural and Multi-Parish Benefices, an especial urgency for simplification for the rural church. There is a lot that should be done to cut down on the cumbersome organisational bureaucracy of multi-parish benefices.

Simplification of other aspects of the Church's life, so long as this is approached in an analytical and joined-up way, will also help mission and growth. So may I urge Bishop Pete and the members of the new Synod to be elected for 2015-20, of whom I shall

happily not be one, to persevere with simplification but please approach simplification in a way which discriminates between what needs radical change, what needs turning around and what needs steady improvement. There is not dire crisis in every aspect of the church's life, please do not throw out the good with the bad. Thank you, Chair.

*Revd Paul Benfield (Blackburn):* Chair, this amendment seeks to remove the recommendation to reduce the level of compensation payable to clergy whose office is abolished. Many of the proposals from the Group are sensible and are indeed proposals for simplification, but those concerning the compensation of clergy for loss of office are of a different nature. I find it impossible to reconcile them with the statement in the Executive Summary that: "It is not our purpose to remove important checks and balances nor undermine rights and duties".

An incumbent, whether an old style freeholder or serving on common tenure, could lose his office under pastoral reorganisation. If so, at the moment he or she would be entitled to compensation for any loss suffered by him or her. That is to say, loss of housing, loss of future stipend and loss of pensions contributions together with any incidental costs of moving.

The proposal from the Simplification Group is that the right to that compensation - yes, the right to that compensation given in law - should be swept away and replaced by a month's stipend for every year of ecclesiastical service since ordination plus six months' accommodation. So a priest with a young family is ordained and serves his title for four years. The bishop then persuades him to go to an undesirable area as incumbent. He agrees and moves in. But after six years hard slog it is clear to everybody that this parish is not viable, so the office is abolished and the priest will be turfed out with ten months' stipend and six months' housing accommodation.

The argument is that this follows best secular practice, but can the Church, Christ's body, find nothing better than secular practice on which to base its treatment of those who have answered a calling. Yes, it can. It is already there in another piece of church legislation. Compensation payable under the Vacation of Benefices Measure 1977 to someone who is removed from his or her benefice after pastoral break down is on a less generous level than under the Pastoral Measure but on a more generous basis than that proposed by the Simplification Group. In particular, there are special provisions for a priest who is over 50 years of age when removed. This is not even referred to in the report.

How a priest aged 63 whose office is abolished is supposed to survive is not even considered by the Simplification Group. He has given his life to the Church and we are now prepared to throw him out on the scrapheap with a maximum of 21 months' stipend and housing for six months. It leaves the impression that the Church has no care or responsibility for a priest in such a position.

Now it may be that the existing level of compensation is too generous, but before we change it we need to have a proper look at all the elements of the remuneration package together: stipend, housing, pension, retirement housing and severance payments. This has not been done. This is a major policy change and should not be done on the back of other reforms which are genuinely simplification matters.

The danger with approving this motion unamended is that the new Synod in November will be told that these proposals were approved by this Synod and that the legislative proposals then brought forward are simply being brought forward to bring into effect what has already been decided.

If the proposal to reduce compensation is approved at this stage it will send out an alarming signal to parish clergy up and down the land that their ministry is not valued by the Church. They will fear that when the managers decide that their job is over they will be cast asunder with very little provision for their future. Clergy morale is already low. Do not make it lower by approving this proposal about compensation.

I urge you to support my amendment and remove the proposals concerning compensation for loss of office. I now move that amendment.

*The Bishop of Willesden:* Unsurprisingly I am going to ask you to resist this amendment. It is premature. There will have to be a debate on the level of compensation payable but this is not the time. I think Fr Benfield has actually misrepresented the process that we are putting in place by putting this report before you.

What we are saying is here is a set of proposals, including some draft legislation, which will need to go through the full synodical process. Nothing about the discussions that need to take place through Measure, through Regulation or anything else is actually trammelled here. There is a sense in which I just want to say to him, "Leave it and we will deal with it later on", but I need to address the substantive issues that he has raised simply because he has raised them.

Let us be clear where this compensation is actually payable. It is part of the Mission and Pastoral Measure and it is only for those who are displaced by pastoral reorganisation and who do not get another place to be, and that is very important. To represent this as chucking a priest out on the streets without any by your leave is an entirely false understanding of what goes on.

I also need to say that this is drafted in such a way that it really does not bear any scrutiny. The fact is that this provision is hardly ever used because it is so expensive. Basically, what this gives a priest is a meal ticket until they are 70 and, therefore, anybody who is displaced is entitled to have full payment, which can run into six figure sums, because they no longer have the particular post they are in. So some priests can sit there and basically say, "You can't get rid of me or else you pay the full compensation".

Now I would say that is pretty scandalous in terms of what goes on and it is not really something for us to be concerned about in relation to those clergy who are obstinate. It is something for us to be concerned about for good priests who might be displaced by pastoral reorganisation and we need to find a proper compensation package if they cannot find an alternative place to be. That is an important thing. Actually, if they are good enough they will find another place because have we not noticed that we are slightly short of clergy at the moment.



I want to suggest that we can have this debate, find out what the proper level of compensation is. We have given you a parallel with best secular practice which does include rights to housing and pensions. It is not ignoring those things; it is taking into account the fact that someone who depends for their livelihood on house and pension being protected will be protected under this. It may be that Synod will decide that is not enough and a more generous package could be put together, but the current package simply is not sustainable in a world where everybody else has to face the possibility that they may lose their job and go elsewhere. All it is saying is let us look at this.

So please resist the amendment, please keep it on the stocks, and I give a firm and solid undertaking to Fr Benfield that we are not going to come back to Synod and say, "All the stuff in here is a done deal". The new Synod will have to engage with these questions, possibly *de novo* because for many of them they will be new issues which they have not addressed before. We will clearly need to help them with that. At this stage let us not make any deletions because many dioceses said, "We are actually finding it difficult to make reorganisation schemes because this particular financial provision deters and prevents us from doing so".

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

*The Bishop of Leeds (Rt Revd Nicholas Baines)*: This debate is about simply allowing this to go forward so we can come back to do all the detail at another time. I do not think this is the time to be going into enormous detail; it has got to come back. None of this is going to go through just because of what we say today. I just wonder, given the time and not knowing how to move a motion of closure, whether we might move on the debate from the amendment to the full motion and then move on to the next business.

*The Chair*: I have called Mrs Mclsaac. I will hear her and then I am receptive to another repeated point of order.

*Mrs Debrah Mclsaac (Salisbury)*: I will be very brief. I do hope that we do not move to next business, you resist this amendment. It seems to me that we have to exercise some self-discipline or, if we attempt to deal with simplification, bringing many amendments on an untimely basis we will find ourselves in a terrible muddle and over-complicating instead of simplifying. We can deal with this at the next stage and I think that is the right place to deal with it. Thank you.

*A member*: On a point of order, Chair. I beg to move:

'That the question be now put.'

*The Chair*: That has my consent. Does that have the consent of Synod?

*This motion was put and carried on a show of hands.*

*The Chair*: We move to vote on Item 87.

*This amendment was lost on a show of hands.*

*The Chair:* We go back to debating Item 12.

*Mr Robin Lunn (Worcester):* Firstly I want to say how enthusiastic I am about these proposals and am clear what the direction of our Church should be over the next five to ten years. If anyone has any doubts about the plans they should look at the Business Committee Report on General Synod representation when we saw how the figures on the church electoral rolls had declined from 2010 with the exception of London and Southwell and Nottingham. That was enough to frighten the greatest optimist. While there were some mitigating factors, the greatest pressure was there for all to see.

Reading the detailed Simplification report I am reminded, for all of those of a certain age, of the Meatloaf classic rock number "Two out of three ain't bad". In this case it is 19 out 20 ain't bad. Only one point was something which I actively objected to. I am sure many of us will be more enthusiastic about some points rather than others, but we need to approach this with a positive spirit and not let the odd niggle detract us from how vital this is for the future of the Church. I hope that the Church and the groups go further and find further simplifications as the Bishop of Willesden talked about earlier.

Let us look more closely at some of the simplifications raised. One which brought a large cheer in my living room was Recommendation 7 on deanery plans. Having just - hopefully - come to the end of a deanery reorganisation, which has taken about seven years, this has to be simplified and speeded up, particularly where broad agreement is in place.

Anyway, getting away from specifics to come back onto the bigger picture, I heartily endorse moving away from a 'safety-first, let's cover every eventuality and then some' approach. Of course, what we do has to be legally robust obviously but let us not tie ourselves down with minutiae. Let us ask the question with all of these recommendation proposals, will this Church be poorer and less efficient if our mission is without them. If not, then remove them.

My one observation or one reservation is the proposal to change the 1976 Endowments and Glebe Measures. I think we should consult, but am I going to vote against these proposals because of this? Of course not, and I would urge nobody else to do so either. Look at the wider picture.

What I particularly like about these proposals that we are debating is the strands that lead to a central goal to grow our church and not go the way that the First Church Estates Commissioner warned would be our fate in 2011 if we did not address it. Let us support this report with enthusiasm and look forward to the day when these simplifications are joyfully and prayerfully enacted. Thank you.

*The Chair:* I would like to hear one more speaker.

*Revd Canon David Banting:* Bishops' Mission Orders and Patronage. Yes, Bishops' Mission Orders are indeed a good tool for mission. We were privileged to be one of the first three Bishops' Mission Orders in our diocese and it has helped us to get secure and grow; 56 people to start with are now 135. As we heard earlier, those 56 who left our

church of St Peter's have now been made up, at least numerically. It is a good tool for mission but it is a very clumsy and complex piece of legislation. I never thought I would say it, but how grateful I am to area bishops, a former archdeacon who has now become the area bishop involved who understood how complex it was and helped us get it through. BMOs, simplify them, yes, please.

At the same time, could they be made more attractive and accessible to the many church plants which have gone ahead, arguably a bit prematurely but have gone ahead, without official Anglican authorisation or oversight, of which there are many more than we may realise.

The heart of what I want to say is about patronage. I am privileged to be for just about 20 years a patronage trustee of the third largest independent patronage body after the Crown and Oxbridge colleges. I am talking about the Church Pastoral Aid Society, CPAS. Patronage, and the principle of patronage, is invisible or forgotten in this simplification document. They are almost nowhere referred to as having been consulted and yet they are critically involved in appointments, teams, pastoral reorganisation and some of the major legislation. I draw your attention to paragraphs 10-12.

Patrons, and the principle of patrons, are important. They know and understand the history and tradition of the parish and help provide an oversight of a continuity of the parish's tradition to ministry. Patronage is also clear, whatever people may say or their ignorance.

The appointment process is the three-legged stool in which the patrons have the privilege and responsibility to seek and nominate appropriate candidates against the job description, the person specification. The parish reps in the terms of the legislation have the right of veto, but that means they are involved in the interview and the chance to appoint or not to appoint. The bishop, of course, has the responsibility to license and institute. It is a three-legged stool. It is very clear and very effective, certainly at its best. It is important, it is clear and it is helpful, partly because it is independent patronage. It is therefore an important check and balance. Having had a lot of people from an independent church which imploded recently, they are deeply grateful for the sorts of checks and balances that the Church of England structures often provide.

In paragraph 4 of the key summaries, it is an important check and balance that I want to be remembered in this process of simplification. Patrons bring a lot of wisdom and experience.

Finally, in (v) at the beginning, is patronage considered one of those worthy and weighty pieces of bureaucracy that is now past its sell-by date? I want to say at its best no, it is not, and especially if the Patronage (Benefices) Measure is to be revisited and revised they will play a very important part, if they are consulted as they should be, because it is one of those checks and balances against an undue centralisation.

Simplification, yes, please, for Bishops' Mission Orders but please do not forget to consult patrons in the process. Thank you.

*Revd Christopher Hobbs (London):* We made an agreement with the people who have lifetime freehold. By all means make them do safeguarding training and if they will not remove them, induce them in other ways, annoy them with the BMO, but I do not think we should go back on our word by some easier method of displacement.

*A member:* On a point of order, Chair. I beg to move:

‘That the question be now put.’

*The Chair:* That has my consent. Does it have the consent of Synod?

*This motion was carried on a show of hands.*

*The Chair:* We move to the reply from the Bishop of Willesden. You have up to five minutes.

*The Bishop of Willesden (Rt Revd Peter Broadbent):* Thank you, Chair. Can I pay tribute to the staff who have helped us in this. We have moved fairly fast to get you a report with lots of detail and content in it and some drafting that has been done, so thank you to those who have supported from the lawyers, from human resources, from Church Commissioners, pastoral and other places, because they have really helped us get before you something that you can understand if you want to read the details. I am grateful to them. Thank you to all of you who have given us a very positive reception, I think, which is great.

Jonathan Alderton-Ford wanted to know about church planting. I think that in Recommendation 14 you have before you a proposal for BMOs that are much simpler and give a much fuller sense of what it means to be an ecclesial unit which may or may not look like a parish but has all the rights of the parish if it wants to. I am glad of his support for that and similarly from David Banting on that matter.

Peter Bruinvels talked from long experience of the Pastoral Committee. Flexibility is what it is about. Paragraph 49 of the report talks about the fact that if we need help from the Commissioners’ staff then it can be solicited but it does not have to. In fact, much of the work we did on the Pastoral Measure proposals and the simplification came out of the experience of the staff of the pastoral department who advised us on that.

Mr Trott wants us to go back to the Anglo-Saxons. I did not realise that Aidan was his DDO 1,400 years ago. It is a very good idea to think about the fact that we are talking about a church here that is a mission model and a pastoral model, there was an “and” about it. I loved his idea about a thousand evangelists. I think dioceses should be setting targets about how we grow. In the Diocese of London we are committed to planting 100 new churches before 2020 and we are on the way. Challenge your diocese to say, “What are you going to do about new ways of encountering mission in your diocese and putting new stuff out there?” It will be different in different contexts.

Mr Allen reminded us that there is a huge difference between the rural and the urban and the suburban. You should watch what you are watching on the internet, videos of me are definitely dodgy, but thank you for looking at it. I give you an undertaking again

that the Rural Affairs Group, who are discussing a lot of things about rural mission and whose report we will be discussing tomorrow, will have major input into where they see simplification required in rural churches.

Robin Lunn said “two out of three ain’t bad”. I am very glad of that. I think he is absolutely right, the philosophy we are using is to move away from legislation that says, “Let’s cover every eventuality”. He is also absolutely right to suggest that some of the stuff that we have put into Measures recently really has been much too intricate, much too defensive, much too covering every base and not actually enabling legislation, how can we make sure that legislation enables and does not fetter.

David Banting, I can give you an assurance that there is nothing in our proposals that says anything different about how patronage currently exists. Where patrons have the right to be consulted, we are not proposing to change that. There is clearly a question about how the Benefice Measure works but that is much more about a Measure that is badly drafted and not fit for the 1980s, not about the rights of patrons which we want to sustain.

Synod, I hope you will give a fair wind to this and say, “Let’s get on with it”. Let us bring the proposals on Regulation 29 to the next Synod and then move into a programme of change which can pick up the concerns of parishes. Let us make our church a place where evangelism and mission and church growth can thrive, where our parishes can flourish, and where the recommendations of the other reports we have been discussing can be put into place without hindrance. I am very glad of your support for this motion on simplification.

*The Chair:* We vote on Item 12.

*The motion*

‘That this Synod, welcoming the proposals in GS 1980 and noting the support that the Archbishops’ Council, the Church Commissioners and the House of Bishops have given them, invite the Archbishops’ Council and the Business Committee, in the light of any comments from dioceses and others, to bring the necessary amending legislation to the Synod for more detailed scrutiny.’

*was carried on a show of hands.*

*The Chair:* That concludes this item of business.

THE CHAIR *The Bishop of Birmingham (Rt Revd David Urquhart)* took the Chair at 6.00 pm

## **Church Commissioners' Funds and Inter-Generational Equity (GS 1981)**

*The Chair:* Synod, our last item is Item 13 on Order Paper II. We are running a little bit later than schedule and we worship at 7.00, so I am going to ask the First Church Estates Commissioner to introduce this item. He has up to ten minutes. Speeches will be limited to four minutes and there is a financial note on the Eighth Notice Paper at page 5 under Item 13 connected with this motion.

*Mr Andreas Whittam Smith (ex officio):* I beg to move:

‘That this Synod,

welcoming GS 1981; and

noting that the funds of the Church Commissioners are a permanent endowment, held in perpetuity to support the Church of England as it seeks to proclaim the faith afresh in each generation,

support the Commissioners, in consultation with the House of Bishops and the Archbishops' Council, giving consideration to the basis on which they might, for a limited period, release additional funds in order to support changes that will equip the Church of England more effectively for sustainable mission and ministry over the coming generations.’

I have come to think of the Task Group's proposals as part of a process, not just a one-off thing because the Church's first response to the relentless decline in membership goes back at least ten years now. It is the development of Fresh Expressions and church planting and so on, all of which have had very, very considerable success, and they have gone well because of the dispersed nature of the church aids innovation, which is always best done in small units.

So now come the Task Group proposals, which you have listened to in detail all afternoon, but I think can be summarised as strengthening the church's capacity and skills, removing blockages and increasing the focus on mission. In other words, the plans will better equip the main players - the bishops, the deans, the clergy, lay leaders, the diocesan teams and pretty well everybody - for their role in carrying out strategies which are drawn up locally by parishes and dioceses. I think this adds up to a powerful combination. We are strengthening the main players and we have a favourable setting for innovation. I think that makes a very convincing and logical step in the process in which we are engaged, and that is why, when I first learned of the Task Group proposals, I thought instinctively if we can, the Commissioners must help in this. Obviously the dioceses cannot finance these plans and nor, of course, can the Church Commissioners out of their normal distributions, so it is a double negative. The dioceses cannot do it and we cannot do it out of our normal distributions. That is the

crux of our debate this afternoon.

The only way we could do it, as you know, is by borrowing from the future to finance the present. I just want for the sake of clarity to explain the inter-generational equity point, although I think most of you, and perhaps all of you virtually, are very familiar with it. We are advised by our actuaries every three years, updated once a year, as to how much we can safely distribute after meeting our pension liabilities and so on, so as to preserve the real value of the fund through time, so that future generations of church goers will have the same real value, if you like, in spending terms, of the endowment behind them as we have. That is the principle and we have stuck to it extremely rigidly for 20/25 years.

What sort of sum of money are we talking about? It is not yet clear, but I do not see that it can be less than £10 million a year for ten years, which is £100 million. I suspect it will be a bit more than that, in fact. However, spending £100 million before its due time would permanently reduce the Church Commissioners' normal distributions. If we take that figure of £100 million, just because it is a nice round number, then the cost in perpetuity is about £1.5 million per annum forever. That £1.5 million per annum should be compared with what we distribute for ministry in the poorer dioceses and for mission, and that sum of money is £46 million. So it is £1.5 million off £46 million. You may think that is not very much. In a sense, perhaps it is not, but do not forget that every penny that we distribute to the church is desperately needed and is fully spent. There is no margin here at all of any kind, so on the basis of my nominal figures, ticking off £1.5 million per annum out of £46 million is not nothing. In fact, I think the final cost might be more than that.

All the same, if the church does face an existential crisis, which I think it does, and I think perhaps we all now think it does (I believe the numbers in the forecasts), future generations would expect us to do something about this. It is a very daunting thing to borrow from the future, but we do have to ask ourselves what would the future say to us if we did not do something about this now. Because I think that we are not going to get a second chance, as a matter of fact, and if we were to spend these funds badly, and nothing happened, the trends stayed just exactly the same, it would take quite a long time before we could see that this was the result. As we were waiting for the good results and they were not appearing, there would be a certain amount of pleading by optimistic souls saying, "Just give it time, the time lags are very long", and we might easily end up in ten years' time, if we spent the money badly, with nothing done, and then it would be more difficult to turn the church around and the willingness to use the Commissioners' funds in the same way again would be pretty small. So I do think this is a last chance moment.

How can we deal with this last chance moment? That is the question which I have been thinking a lot about, because it turns on making sure the funds are well spent. I have only devoted a sentence or two to the long-term trends because we have discussed that a lot, and I do not think anything I can say will add to your feeling about those trends, and to what extent you think they are real or exaggerated or just about right, but what I do want to say quite a lot to you is what we can do to make sure that the funds are well spent.

The first thing we can do is actually what we are doing now which is this afternoon's debate, because for me the first consideration is that the whole church is fully committed to what is proposed. That to me is absolutely crucial. If the church is not enthusiastically committed to what is proposed, then it is just not going to work. All the other things we might do will be as nothing as compared with a lack of belief in what we are doing. That is why I have insisted over some months that I should be able to come to you this afternoon. As a matter of fact, the Church Commissioners have all the legal powers they need to make these decisions on their own, but I do not think that is right in these circumstances. I think we should go much further than the legal requirements. So that is why I have wanted to put down this motion, and I am very glad to have the chance to debate it with you. I must say I do not see it as advisory at all. I am not saying, "Tell me what you think and I will go back and think about it." No, it is real. Indeed, I hope somebody will propose that we have a vote by Houses because I want to see that it is real in the House of Bishops, real in the House of Clergy and real in the House of Laity. I want to see that the church is fully and completely committed to it. If that is not the case, then I think the Commissioners would just want to wait until the church was of a common mind. I think that would be the consequence.

There are various other measures I want to mention and I hope, Chair, you will allow me a little latitude to make these important points. First of all, we are not going to stand down our actuaries. They have to keep on telling us how much this costs in perpetuity. We need to know that sum all the time. We need to find a way of expressing a limit as to how much we are prepared to make available. I think I have already described a limit. It should be some small percentage of that £46 million per annum which I mentioned to you.

I think also that the programmes must be time-limited. They cannot be open-ended. They cannot go on forever. The ministry proposals will create new ordinands and, in due course, new priests, new posts and so on, and eventually the dioceses will have to take over the funding of that. We cannot go on forever funding it, not because we do not feel like it but because if we do, something else will stop, something which you need; something else will stop. If the programme is working well, the church will be able to afford more. That will be one of the rewards.

Thirdly, I beg the task forces to ask for enough to get the job done properly. I think there is a tendency in the circumstances in which we find ourselves not to ask for enough, strangely, because you feel money is so tight and "We won't get it if we ask for that amount". That is wrong. One of my tests will be: have you asked for enough to get the job done?

That leads into being able to test how success will be judged. If proposals are put forward and we cannot judge success, then I do not know whether we should be doing them. If we cannot judge success, they are not ringing a bell for me. You may say that you cannot always judge success. Can we judge the success of the new proposals for the training of diocesan bishops? I think so, yes as a matter of fact. You could start off with self-evaluation. That would be an interesting first way of testing success.

Furthermore, task group plans must be based upon evidence of what works. This is often neglected. People put up proposals and they work on their instincts and their



knowledge and so on, and they toss in propositions and assertions and assumptions which actually have not been tested for a long time. Evidence must be produced and if something cannot be evidenced, I think it should be taken out of the plan and the plan should be redone. We have got to be as careful as that. Of course, we need what you would imagine we would need: a full account of the costs, of the cashflow, which is the staging, a full list of the risks. People have got to sit down and absolutely imagine the worst, brain storm and brain storm until you have got a list of the worst that can happen and then say what would you do about it.

Those are the sorts of ways in which we can make sure that the funds are well spent. Nothing, of course, is foolproof or perfect. I imagine it will make me and the Church Commissioners and those who assist us very unpopular, but I think that will be for a good cause, as a matter of fact.

I end with a plea. It would be valuable if church members with relevant expertise in what I have just been describing could help us. I would like personally to hear from members of Synod or people whom Synod know from their local churches who have the sort of experience which would be helpful in making the sort of judgments I have just mentioned. I would really like to hear from you.

Meanwhile, I beg you to pass this motion with an overwhelming majority because if not there will be a pause.

*The Chair:* It is open for debate. I just remind you that it is up to four minutes. If you can keep it beneath that, that will help to get more speakers in.

*Revd Canon Giles Goddard (Southwark):* I was talking to a developer recently who told me that he was in negotiation with a diocese not far from here which had some closed churches, and this developer told me - and I do not know whether this is true or not - he was being offered the churches for nothing if he could take them down and rebuild them at the heart of the new residential communities that he was going to build, so that he would have a heritage building at the centre of his community and we would have a viable church, which I thought was absolutely brilliant.

I went to the talk this morning and I came away with three things which I think we owe to future generations, in addition to what Mr Whittam Smith has said. The first thing that we owe to future generations is that we make the church genuinely inclusive and, if we do not do that, there is no point in doing any of the rest of these things.

The second is that we do not destroy their climate by burning fossil fuels, so we should divest from fossil fuels. You would expect me to say, that would you not!

The third, and most importantly for today, is I think we need to acknowledge the thing which is not really being said, that what is really being proposed, I hope, is a genuine and radical refocusing of our work. We are as a church spread too thinly now, especially in rural areas. I have huge respect for my colleagues in rural ministry. I would not want to do what they have to do. I do not think that we can flourish unless we recognise that we do have to make some hard decisions. We owe that to the future as well, not to leave them saddled with an unviable structure about where and how we are

working. One of the reasons for the situation that we are in is the sheer cost of the heritage that we have to maintain. I am not talking about pulling out of poor areas, rather away from the places where the community has changed so much that it cannot support a church, however beautiful it may be. There are serious implications for that. Can we continue to have a presence in every community, if indeed we do have a presence in every community (and I would dispute that)? That is a question that we need to ask because as part of this whole conversation I think we owe it to the future.

*Revd Canon Simon Killwick (Manchester):* I came to this Synod feeling that I would want to support a modest subvention from Church Commissioners' funds to support all the work that we have heard about today. Then yesterday evening in Questions and Answers it became apparent that what we were talking about was actually a pretty substantial sum from the Commissioners rather than a modest intervention. This is where I started to get worried. I feel rather as though we are being asked to sign a blank cheque, although I am grateful to Mr Whittam Smith for giving some kind of outline of what sort of figures might be involved. It still does feel a bit like being asked to sign a blank cheque. I would feel happier about it if there was some process whereby something actually came back to the Synod with some actual figures so that we could make an informed decision about it.

In the earlier debate about resourcing the future and resourcing ministerial education there was a helpful amendment from Christopher Hobbs put in at the end, which was accepted, that there would be reports back to the Synod in due course. I think we would all be helped if there were reports back to the Synod in due course, with some more precise figures and so on.

What we do need to be very clear about is, is there crisis or is there not? On the one hand, a 1% decline per annum in itself is not a crisis, although it certainly is a problem. On the other hand, the finding that the proportion of our congregation aged 70 and over is high is indicative of a crisis.

There are one or two questions though I would just like to put against that. First of all, it is only very recently that we have been asked in annual returns to give figures of the age profile of congregations, so this is relatively new information that is coming. Secondly, there is evidence that a number of people are coming to active church membership when they retire from full-time employment. That is another factor that ought to be weighed up. Thirdly, for a long time now, the Church of England seems to have had a policy of encouraging older ordinands or older vocations, in other words by saying to young people with a sense of vocation, "Go away and do something else and then come back to us." This has had the knock-on effective that there have not been the positive role models of young people in the ordained ministry in sufficient numbers to attract young people into the churches, so I think there are other factors that do also need to be weighed up as well.

Nonetheless, I think in assessing the motion that is in front of us, we all need to ask ourselves whether we are convinced that there is a crisis. If the answer is yes, then I think we would be very likely to support the motion that is in front of us. If we are not sure that there is a crisis, then we might want to ask for some further work to be done. Remember what Mr Whittam Smith said, that there will be no second chance of doing

this, so if we go ahead and we get it wrong, we have really blown it. I just want us to be absolutely sure about what we are doing before we actually take the plunge and do it.

*Mr Tim Hind (Bath and Wells):* I would like to thank Andreas for what he has presented to us today and particularly think about a couple of things. First of all, I would agree that there is a crisis. 1% is a deceptively slow decline but taken over many decades it mounts up to quite a lot. The second thing is that whatever we do, we must do it properly. I think we have been sleepwalking as a church into decline and that we have so often come up with really good ideas for doing things to change that, only to find that when it gets onto the floor of the Synod at the Second Reading we think perhaps we will not do quite as much as we thought we would and it ends up by being ineffective.

The third thing is I think the whole of this afternoon has been about mission and growth. The one thing that Andreas has not presented to us as a counter to the £1.5 million he suggested we might lose in perpetuity is the amount that we might gain in perpetuity through that growth. I was just thinking £1.5 million at £3 a week is 10,000 new believers donating in the plate every year. If 10,000 is our objective I would hope that that is a low objective. I would hope we are going to go for greater growth than that and maybe that £1.5 million loss will turn into a much greater gain.

*Mr Robin Back (Norwich):* May I start by saying, "And now for something completely different!" I would like to draw Synod's attention to a fairly innovative approach, at least we think it is, to renewal in the Norwich diocese. In 2012, we established a trading subsidiary called WiSpire Ltd to install, create, generate, whatever word you like to use, a rural wi-fi network in Norfolk. Noel Coward once described it as "very flat". He was quite right. We are blessed with some 640 medieval and later churches. Many of these are within sight of each other and together form an interlaced network of community hubs within their villages. For a techno geek like me this is an ideal host structure for a linked network, not using telephone wires like BT or cables like Virgin Media, or satellite like Sky, all of which are very expensive, but wi-fi. Incidentally we call wi-fi installations hubs as well, so we are in tune, we think. We use the topography to our advantage, Norfolk being flat, and WiSpire has installed some 40 linked hubs in churches across the centre of the diocese radiating out from Norwich north, south, east and west.

Why are we bothering? In the local media and at a national level, through regional MPs, rural businesses and residents in Norfolk have long-complained at the absence or very poor quality of broadband at village level, and it really is depressing. BT have promised much but the final mile to most of rural Norfolk is absolutely beyond economic sense for anybody. This leaves, by our estimate, up to 40,000 potential customers for an alternative solution, although not all of these will be easy reach. Secondly, and uniquely, we have real estate. We have the church towers, we the church. Thirdly, we can do it. It is not technically that difficult - complex but not difficult. It is not just broadband, we offer telephony, Voice over IP (VoIP for the cognoscenti) and, as of last Friday, we have our first WiSpire-ed delivered CCTV system, which is actually on my church as it happens to protect the remaining 15 tonnes of lead the thieves did not take in September. "Brilliant idea!" I hear you say, "We must have more." You are not alone in thinking this. As recently as January, Lord Lloyd Webber made public his conversations with Minister of State for Culture and the Digital Economy, Ed Vaizey, on the former's views on – and, I might add, offered to help with – installation of wi-fi in

churches. The assumption was at that point that a wi-fi hub in an individual church was the concept, but we have stretched that by servicing the community through the church as a hub, as I said earlier, thus my small church for example services some 25 customers from the community and rural surroundings. Incidentally, this is more than 50% of households in my community. However, it is not quite so straightforward as it sounds. We have undergone pain in achieving DAC approvals, satisfying architects, streamlining the faculty process to ensure uniformity and then wiring up the churches. We could not find outside investors because we are very short of the necessary resource to continue expanding the work. We would like to do another 50 churches; it is going to cost half a million quid.

So, where do we find this money? It is coming from a number of sources. We are very wary of outside investors because they have their own agendas. We may not rule them out but we will nevertheless be very wary.

I hope we will vote wholeheartedly in favour of the motion before us, but, above all, I would urge Synod to recognise that our church's future is our responsibility and it is God's guidance of our efforts that will enable us to grow. Thank you for your attention.

*Ven Christine Hardman (Southwark):* I agree with everything that Andreas Whittam Smith has said. I do think we are facing a time of crisis. I wish it were otherwise because what it does mean is that we here, now, face the very uncomfortable responsibility of having to make some very, very difficult decisions. This question of how we use our resources is one of the most difficult decisions of all because we are not talking just about how we use our resources; we are talking about how we use the resources of those generations who will come after us. I agree with Father Killwick that we have a feeling we are going to blow it, and that anxiety is there in all of us, I think, or at least most of us. Actually, left to our own devices, I think that is quite a likely outcome. No matter how much money we throw at it, and we do need to throw money at it and we do need to bring in talent from the world around us, if we forget why we are doing what we are doing, we will probably blow it."

This Synod, I am thrilled to bits to say, has had William Temple abounding in it. I am a huge fan of William Temple. William Temple said this, "When I pray coincidences happen. When I don't, they don't". We have a hint here for our money, for our enthusiastic commitment, for our use of every single gift that God has given us in a wide outreach to people, but let us pray our socks off in all of this and that would give us the very best chance that God's wonderful coincidences will flourish and abound.

*Mr Peter Collard (Derby):* Thank you, Chair, for inviting me to speak. I am a member of the baby boomer generation, as I guess there are probably quite a few here who are, and financially we seem to have raped and pillaged our way through life. We have drained the North Sea of oil, we have sold off all the public utilities and we are now about to leave our children a massive debt.

Depending on which side of the political spectrum you come from, you say it is either due to tax cuts or excessive benefits and so I am not really going to go there. I think as a default position we must resist the temptation to strip away the Church's money, but are there any exceptions?

I have been very pleased to hear the controls that are going to be put on the additional funding and I think that, provided we have a fully costed investment, then it is possible that the growth that we bring about will actually pay for the cost of that investment over time. As we bring new people into the Church and they contribute to the Church funds, then we will actually see a return on that investment.

I think there is possibly one other exception that we might want to consider somehow and that is that we provide finance to those under 40. Now this is not people my age creating projects for the under 40s. This is people under 40 in the Church proposing projects for people of their age because I think we do need to encourage that generation now to take over from ourselves, as we are doing in our parish.

We have actually said they are now grown-ups and must take over. We are getting too old. I think I am going to vote for this and I would like to encourage that we can put together some sort of financial controls that will make sure that we get a return on this investment. Thank you, Synod, for listening.

*Revd Amanda Fairclough (Liverpool):* I have several soapboxes. I am an SSM, a Church Commissioner and a chartered accountant. I only know one joke about accountants, "How many accountants does it take to change a light bulb?" Of course, the answer is, "What number are you looking for?" Whenever one of my clients asks me a question, I always respond with, "Why are you asking that question?"

We need to be careful today that we recognise what question we are being asked and answer it appropriately and that, in the time to come, we ask the right questions so that we get appropriate answers to those. Today, we are being asked to support the principle of breaking inter-generational equity. I support it fully. I have no problem with it at all but, in practice, we are going to have to go a little bit beyond those principles and get into details.

I have been pushing to get more details about how much money is likely to be needed to be spent and in what way and what sorts of measures of success we will have. There are not any details yet, it does not stop me agreeing the principle. But when it comes to the time that the Church Commissioners are actually asked for money, do not first expect us to say, "This is how much you can have", because we generate a feedback loop if we do that, that will be the money that is spent. Instead, let us have the work that goes on from these Task Forces, come back and tell us, "We want to achieve A, B, C. We need X million pounds to do it and we will show it has worked by giving you results that say Y or better". When we have got that, we will know that we are asking the right questions and answering in the right way. Thank you.

*Mr Brian Wilson (Southwark):* Chair and members of Synod, I support the motion. I will put in a request that part of the Church Commissioners' allocations under the proposed new arrangements should be allocated to new towns. The Government and the Labour Party are both advocating the building of large numbers of homes in either greenfield or brownfield sites or both.

The Government expects that at least three new towns will be built by 2020 with at least

15,000 homes in each. One of these is already underway in Ebbsfleet. The Labour Party is advocating the building of 200,000 homes a year until 2020. Many of these new populations or new towns will be in areas where there is no local church. New churches will need to be formed, church buildings built and churches planted into them. It is not only new towns.

In my own Diocese of Southwark, in one very small area high-rise blocks for 35,000 people are being built in the area from Battersea to Vauxhall over the next five years. At the current level of churches in the diocese, that equates to five new parishes being required in that small area alone. Of course I am not anticipating continued decline in church numbers which we both hope and pray will not happen.

London Diocese, we have just heard, is hoping to plant a hundred new churches by 2020. I hope that south of the river we can have a similar aspiration, but I fear that the finances will be short and we will need additional funding for that. Will new money be specifically allocated for new towns, please? Thank you.

*The Archbishop of York (Most Revd & Rt Hon Dr John Sentamu):* Bishop David, members of Synod, it is now more than 24 hours since we started our collective engagement with the Emerging Reform and Renewal Programme. In a few minutes we shall be voting on the last of the four motions that we have been debating since 2.30 this afternoon. There has been no doubt about the scale and urgency of the challenges that we face.

These will not be resolved by money alone. The resources that we most need to refresh and renew are the spiritual resources that a generous God has given us in Jesus Christ. In Jesus Christ we have all we need for carrying out his mission and gospel of redemption. He has also given us material resources and we need to use those fruitfully for the work of the Kingdom. All things come from Him and of His own we give Him, and for the disciples of Jesus Christ money is an instrument of mission.

These are exceptional times and that is why I believe it is right for us to make an exceptional request of this kind to the Church Commissioners. It will be for them to determine how to respond and what conditions to attach. I have sufficient confidence in the First Church Estates Commissioner that I do not believe that he and the Board of Governors (of which I am a member) will allow bishops and dioceses to use any special distributions unwisely.

There is still much more to be done to develop the exact nature and scale of the request. The detailed work in relation to all the proposals we have been considering over the past 24 hours begins actually today. It will be done in full agreement with dioceses and the Church as a whole. Members of the Archbishops' Council and their staff team look forward to responding to requests from dioceses for meetings and discussions over the coming months.

There will be, as already agreed, further discussion in the Synod as the various elements of the programme develop. The Simplification proposals will now be the subject of consultation and will need to come back to Synod in the form of draft legislation. With the Resourcing Ministerial Education and Resourcing the Future

Reports there will be detailed engagement with the diocesan synod teams, theological training institutions and others. Then, when the Archbishops' Council and House of Bishops have taken further decisions, they will come back here for scrutiny as agreed in the motion that we passed this afternoon with Christopher Hobbs's helpful amendment.

The focus of the initiative in relation to discerning and nurturing prayerful and missional senior leaders is at present on bishops and deans. Quite rightly, members of the Synod have also asked about the discerning and nurturing of prayerful and missional lay leaders, including senior leaders. The Archbishop of Canterbury and I agree that this needs to be addressed and for Synod to be engaged.

As the Development and Appointments Group carries forward the work for bishops and deans and the Ministry Council works up further proposals in relation to lay ministry and leadership, we shall ensure that there is further reporting back to Synod and the opportunity for further engagement. The programme on which we are embarked is ambitious and requires resources.

We should only ask the Church Commissioners for exceptional support if we have gained an exceptional consensus in the Synod. That is why I strongly endorse the motion moved by the First Estates Commissioner and hope that Synod members will give it enthusiastic and overwhelming support. So, for all that has been, thanks; for all that shall be, yes. Let us together go forward in the strength of the Holy Spirit who has been given to us in abundance and in the power make Christ visible together. We are amidst the people, Hallelujah is our song and so let us not fear or be afraid for Christ is risen.

*Revd Hugh Lee (Oxford):* On a point of order, Chair, I beg to move:

'That the debate be now adjourned and resumed at the July group of sessions.'

*The Chair:* I have heard the point but I will consider what you have said. This is the procedure under Standing Orders. Mr Lee has moved the procedural motion that the debate be now adjourned and resumed in July. Under SO 33, Mr Lee has not more than two minutes to give his reasons. I will then ask the First Church Estates Commissioner, as mover of the main motion, to speak for not more than two minutes. When I have heard these two speakers, I will then decide in my direction under SO 33 whether to allow any more speakers on the procedural motion. Mr Lee.

*Revd Hugh Lee:* Mr Andreas Whittam Smith has rightly explained the seriousness of the decision he is asking us to take. It is a one-off opportunity, he said. He has talked about £100 million that we should at least need to spend. I think all these are very wise proposals, but we have got a number of people here wanting to speak. We have not had the opportunity to consult with our dioceses.

It is such a big decision that I do not think that we need to make it now. We can do all the other things and we can work out how much money we want and we can come back in July when we have thought it through and make that decision much better informed than making it now on: Well, this is roughly what it is and we are told the Church Commissioners were told have the authority to do it but Mr Andreas Whittam Smith says

he wants our authority. If he really wants our authority he needs to have our informed authority and that informed authority means that we need to consider it further and we need to have the opportunity to talk with our deaneries and parishes and say: This is it, let us go for it, rather than we have just had less than an hour's debate on this and we have let them do it.

*The Chair:* Andreas Whittam Smith, up to two minutes.

*Mr Andreas Whittam Smith (ex officio):* I am afraid I cannot accept the decision that we should adjourn the decision. We are asking a very simple question, not a complicated one. It has been in the air for a long time. There have been meetings this morning. There has been plenty of time to consider it.

I did not need to come here and ask for your support, and the key thing is I am asking for your support. But the decision rests, and this refers to something somebody said earlier, with the Board of Governors. They are the trustees of the Commissioners' funds and I will support nothing that takes away from their trustee duties.

I hope very much indeed that there will be nil support for this idea of postponement. It is what usually happens when you come up to something difficult, people turn round six times, go up to take the jump and think, "Oh, no let us wait, let us try tomorrow". That is no good. We are in a serious situation. Let us make a decision and stop fooling around.

*The Chair:* I do not propose to allow any more speakers on this motion, so I now put to Synod the motion that the debate be now adjourned and resumed in July.

*The motion*

'That the debate be now adjourned and resumed at the July group of sessions.'

*was lost on a show of hands.*

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

'That the question be now put.'

*The Chair:* Mr Freeman, thank you very much. I would be glad to hear that after we have heard the next speaker, who I have already called, who is Revd Dr Patrick Richmond.

*Revd Dr Patrick Richmond (Norwich):* Thank you for calling me, Chair. Crisis, what crisis? That was the headline of the Church Times five years ago when we gathered in York. I can assure you that there is a lot of evidence that there is a crisis. I can respond directly to Simon Killwick that those issues that he raises of older people joining congregations are addressed. David Voas, who has been doing the research for the Church of England, points out that the decline already includes the effects of retired and older people joining our congregations.



I wish that there had been clearer leadership from people saying that there was a crisis and then my wish was fulfilled when the First Church Estates Commissioners said that there was. The evidence is incontrovertible. Indeed, Linda Woodhead writing in the Church Times as a sociologist suggests that the Church cannot face up to the big questions. We have seen some evidence that might support that. She is asking us whether we are still not asking hard enough questions and so I would ask for leadership as these conversations take place after this vote is passed, I very much hope; leadership that will explain to people just what the harsh realities are.

I encourage further attention to the geographical reality. Not only is it the case that our congregations are aging, they are aging at a rate which varies across the country. You may not be surprised to hear that the youngest average age is around London and the South-East. Indeed, it would seem from figures I got from Peter Bralio (?) that 25% of them were in Inner London in 2012 and young people in their twenties are concentrated. Probably about 50% of them are in university towns meeting in university churches like the one which blessed me with encouragement and a wife.

I went to St Aldate's for church celebrants, St Ed's for church militants, and St Andrews for church trendy and I was deeply blessed. But we need to be realistic about where these ordinands are going to go and so I would encourage leadership on producing projections and realistic scenarios so that the Church Commissioners' money is not spent without doing the projections, those projections which I am so glad are now in the public place and are being supported from the front.

We need to be thinking about doing detailed modelling, testing our assumptions and challenging expectations that were unrealistic such as the diocesan expectations that they were going to have enough ordinands. These proposals are partly, I understand, to get more money to get ordinands to make up the gap between the expectations that were not well-evidenced. We need leadership, leadership that generates realistic expectations and adjusts them in the light of the evidence and the data.

It was five years ago that Synod at the beginning of the quinquennium was told that we had not met the targets we had for recruitment. We need to be ruthless and realistic. We need to factor in the urgent work on the buildings. We need to recognise that, as Giles Goddard has raised, there are really serious questions about what it means to have a presence in every community and there are really serious questions about how we can sustain that. We need to be well administered. It is a gift of the Holy Spirit. We need to give the Holy Spirit a chance for a revival.

*The Chair:* Patrick, that is a very good way to end, thank you very much.

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

'That the question be now put.'

*The Chair:* Thank you very much. That has my consent. Of course, the Synod's consent is much more important than mine. Is that your wish?

*This motion was carried on a show of hands.*

*The Chair:* Andreas, would you like to respond, please?

*Mr Andreas Whittam Smith (ex officio):* Thank you very much indeed for a lot of very interesting contributions. I am particularly grateful to the Archbishop of York making sure we understood the spiritual side of what we are seeking to do, without which we certainly cannot succeed.

Patrick Richmond spoke so well about the projections and modelling and so on (I am starting at the end of the list of speakers) that he has more or less earned himself a place beside us when we come to judge some of the plans that come before us. There were lots of important points. Giles Goddard reminded us (and this is something I think about a lot) which is if it is a crisis it is also hard choices. That is the point. Hard decisions, and many of the hard decisions, funnily enough, are wrapped up in buildings. One cannot avoid that. That is where some of the hardest decisions are and they are most sensitive but we have to go forward.

I was pleased that Tim Hind and Peter Collard made the point I did not dare quite make myself, that growth will pay for investment. You are absolutely right about that. If it works properly, that £100 million will come back. Brian Wilson reminded us of new towns. The Commissioners have done quite a bit of special funding to help dioceses which have big extensions of new housing and new settlements, mainly to finance the provision of new churches.

Whether we get involved in the commercial side of new towns, I rather doubt because we have got a lot of strategic land which we will do rather better with than there. I think those are the main points I want to pick up. I pray that you will provide my motion with a sweeping majority because I think it will be the best possible start to what we are trying to do.

*The Chair:* Point of order?

*Revd Preb. Simon Cawdell (Hereford):* As the First Church Estates Commissioner earlier suggested it would be better if this was done as a vote by Houses under SO 36(c)(iv).

*The Chair:* Thank you very much. Are there 25 people standing? Yes, so we will have a Division by Houses on Item 13 already moved.

*The motion*

'That this Synod,

welcoming GS 1981; and

noting that the funds of the Church Commissioners are a permanent endowment, held in perpetuity to support the Church of England as it seeks to proclaim the faith afresh in each generation,

support the Commissioners, in consultation with the House of Bishops and the Archbishops' Council, giving consideration to the basis on which they might, for a limited period, release additional funds in order to support changes that will equip the Church of England more effectively for sustainable mission and ministry over the coming generations.'

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

	IN FAVOUR	AGAINST
<i>Bishops</i>	28	1
<i>Clergy</i>	112	6
<i>Laity</i>	128	7

*6 abstentions were recorded in the House of Clergy and 3 in the House of Laity.*

*The Chair:* The evening concludes with worship in a moment led by the Revd Dr Rosemarie Mallett.

*The Revd Dr Rosemarie Mallett (Southwark) led the Synod in an act of worship.*

*The Archbishop of York dismissed the Synod with the blessing at 7.15 p.m.*

## **FULL SYNOD: THIRD DAY THURSDAY 12 NOVEMBER 2015**

THE CHAIR *The Revd Canon Dr Rosemarie Mallett (Southwark)* took the Chair at 10.30 am

*The Chair:* Good morning, Synod. Before we move to next business I have two announcements to make. The Archbishop of Canterbury has sent his apologies. He is in the House of Lords for the Second Reading of the Lords Spiritual (Women) Bill. He will return as soon as he is able to.

The second announcement is that people have been asking us where to put their Christian Aid envelopes. There is a box on the information desk to receive them.

### **Legislative Business:**

#### **Draft Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure (GS 1952A) and Draft Amending Canon No. 34 (GS 1953A)**

*The Chair:* We now come to Item 503, the report by the Revision Committee on the draft Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure and draft Amending Canon 34. Members will need the report GS 1952-3Y; the draft Measure GS 1952A; and the draft Amending Canon GS 1953A. I would also draw members' attention to the financial comment on the eighth Notice Paper.

I call Mr Geoffrey Tattersall QC, Chair of the Revision Committee, to move Item 503, that the Synod do take note of this report. Mr Tattersall may speak for up to ten minutes.

*Mr Geoffrey Tattersall (Manchester):* I beg to move:

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

The draft Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure and the draft Amending Canon 34 received first consideration last July and the Revision Committee met on three occasions in November and December 2014. It received submissions from eleven members of Synod and at its first meeting before it began to consider such submissions it welcomed and heard oral submissions from members of the Minister & Clergy Sexual Abuse Survivors Group, MACSAS, and it subsequently received written submissions from the group.

Members of Synod will appreciate that time does not permit me to deal with all the detailed matters considered by the Revision Committee and that I can only deal with some of the major issues. At the very beginning of our report we set out at paragraph 6 the representations which were made to us by MACSAS and at paragraphs 7 to 17 we set out the Revision Committee’s reflections on such submissions. In particular, I refer to four matters.

Firstly, Synod will no doubt note that the Revision Committee believed that the most appropriate way of achieving consistency in the exercise by bishops of discretionary powers was for detailed guidance to be provided by the House of Bishops, and for bishops and others to be required on the face of the measure to have regard to such guidance. This is provided for by clause 5(1) of the draft Measure. We were advised, and noted, that the decision of the House of Lords in the case of *R v Merseycare NHS Trust ex parte Munjaz* only allowed a decision-maker to depart from such guidance where there was cogent reason for so doing, a condition which was not easily satisfied. Moreover, clergy who failed to have due regard to such guidance would themselves be liable to disciplinary proceedings for misconduct.

Secondly, although MACSAS had contended that the standard of proof should be the balance of probabilities, we noted this was already provided for by section 18(3)(a) of the Clergy Discipline Measure and that the code of practice issued by the Clergy Discipline Commission had already clarified that, notwithstanding an acquittal in respect of criminal charges, where the standard of proof was beyond reasonable doubt, complaints could still be proceeded with alleging the same matters where there were adjudged to be good prospects of successfully proving the misconduct alleged.

Thirdly, we agreed with MACSAS that, in relation to risk assessments, paragraph 4 of the draft Amending Canon was too limited in addressing whether a cleric will harm a child or vulnerable adult and that the test should be whether a cleric may harm a child, but we did not agree that paragraph 4 should prescribe the criteria that a bishop must consider when deciding whether to direct a risk assessment. We had reached that latter view because we believe that if a bishop’s discretion could only be made by reference to certain specified criteria, this might unduly restrict a bishop’s ability to direct

that a risk assessment could take place which did not, in the opinion of the Revision Committee, seem desirable and indeed might frustrate what MACSAS intended.

Fourthly, although MACSAS criticised the proposed rights for a cleric to seek a review by the President of Tribunals or a bishop's direction that there should be a risk assessment, we were advised by the legal office that such a direction engaged a cleric's right in respect of rights for private and family life under Article 8 of the European Convention and that interference with such a right was only permissible if necessary. We thus concluded that the provision of such a review would uphold the balance between the interests of children and vulnerable adults, the diocese, the wider church and the cleric's own Article 8 rights. It would also effectively remove the risk of challenge by judicial review to a bishop's direction that there should be a risk assessment.

The main provisions of the measure may be summarised thus.

Firstly, suspension of a priest. Section 36(1) of the Clergy Discipline Measure already provides for the suspension of a priest or deacon where disciplinary proceedings are commenced or he or she is arrested on suspicion of committing a criminal offence, is convicted of certain criminal offences or included on a barred list. That clause 1(1) of the draft Measure adds a power to suspend where a bishop is satisfied on information provided by the police or local authority that a priest or deacon presents a significant risk of harm as defined by clause 1(2) but before suspending the bishop is required to consult at the very least the diocesan safeguarding officer. Such suspension continues for three months but may be renewed.

Churchwardens. The current clause 2 of the draft Measure, which was originally clause 1, provides for the disqualification and suspension of churchwardens. Members of Synod should note that (a) although the initial draft provided for a waiver of disqualification for the reasons identified in paragraph 17 of our report, we were persuaded that such a waiver required further clarity. Hence clause 2(2) provides that before giving any waiver the bishop must at the very least consult the diocesan safeguarding officer and must give reasons for any such waiver and that any such waiver will be of unlimited duration and have effect in every diocese.

(b) As to suspension, the Revision Committee agreed that a bishop should not only have power to suspend a churchwarden in the circumstances set out in what was clause 1(3) of the Measure, now clause 2(5), ie if arrested on suspicion of committing a schedule 1 offence, but also if the bishop was satisfied that the churchwarden presented a significant risk of harm, although in such a case there are like provisions for the suspension of clergy, including a requirement for prior consultation with a diocesan safeguarding adviser and a right of appeal by a churchwarden against his or her suspension to a President of Tribunals who may confirm or revoke the suspension. There is of course already a right of appeal in respect of priests.

PCCs. The Revision Committee agreed that the disqualification and suspension of provisions for PCC members should mirror those in relation to churchwardens. In addition, the Committee accepted a proposal that bishops should also be able to suspend PCC secretaries and treasurers who are not PCC members.

The making for rules for appeals against suspensions is now provided for in clause 4. The issuing of guidance by the House of Bishops is provided for in clause 5 and I have already dealt with that.

“Child” and “vulnerable adults” are defined in clause 6 and it should be noted that clause 6(1) has been clarified so that significant impairment may be either temporary or indefinite.

Finally, I turn to the question of the limitation period for instituting disciplinary proceedings. The rationale for the one-year limitation period, which can be extended with the permission of the President of Tribunals, is that justice needs to be administered relatively speedily because otherwise the quality of evidence may deteriorate as time passes. The Committee received proposals for substantial amendments in respect of the limitation period from three members of Synod.

The Revision Committee rejected an initial proposal put forward by Mr Benfield, which he subsequently withdrew, that the limitation period should be removed in relation to all sexual misconduct complaints, but it accepted his modified submission that such a limitation period should be removed in sexual misconduct cases involving children and vulnerable adults with a procedure for allowing a respondent to make submissions on the issue of vulnerability. Although he had proposed that such submissions should be made to the bishop, the Committee preferred, and thus adopted, a procedure for allowing the respondent to make submissions on the issue of vulnerability to the President of Tribunals. This, too, will shield bishops from the risk of judicial review proceedings.

There are some other provisions in the Measure: allowing the suspension of clergy pending applications to bring proceedings out of time; delegation of functions; powers to remit a complaint; and the re-appointment of legally qualified persons to provincial panels.

In paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 of our report we deal with the provisions in relation to the draft Amending Canon. The most significant changes made in Committee are two-fold: firstly, to give Synod the opportunity to debate the regulations made by the House of Bishops in relation to risk assessments of clergy; and, secondly, to apply to licensed Readers and lay workers provisions as to the suspension of disqualification which mirror those for churchwardens and PCC members.

Members of Synod, I beg to move the report standing in my name.

*The Chair:* The motion is now open for debate. I remind members that under Standing Order 54(c) it is not in order to debate any matter which is the subject of an amendment on the Order Paper.

*Canon Dr Jamie Harrison (Durham):* Thank you, Madam Chairman. Safeguarding is everyone’s business, so it is our business, it is my business, it is your business. Here we have quite a complex piece of legislation and I was on the Revision Committee, which was extremely ably chaired by Geoffrey Tattersall who introduced our documents

this morning. Safeguarding is something that other parts of the nation, and the world, are also conscious of. As many of you know, I visit practices for the Care Quality Commission and I have to ask questions about safety in practices. “Do the drains work? How does your fridge turn on and off? Do you measure its temperature? What about chaperoning? Do you take care to follow guidelines, and tell me about safeguarding. If you thought someone was at risk or a worry to what was going on - if someone was being bullied, a child was injured - what would you do?” That would apply to everyone from the cleaner and the receptionist down to the lowest doctor because safeguarding is everyone’s business. We ask about systems of monitoring and assessment, of discussions and sharing of information and understanding, and everyone is involved.

For my sins I also chair the PCC in my parish church and I make sure now that safeguarding is on every agenda as a standing item. We discuss how the dioceses’ guidelines might affect us. We refer to them on our website. We think about our own accountability as a corporate body, as a PCC, and we make sure that we listen to one another and check people have their DBS clearances because safeguarding is everyone’s business. That is why this legislation is both timely and very necessary.

It was particularly good to meet members of the MACSAS survivor group and some of you are in the gallery this morning. It is good to see you. What they brought to us was something of a reality check about where we were and where we had been and where we needed to be, and that was moving and difficult and certainly very important and welcomed.

In that group they remind us that not just clergy but laity matter in this matter. That is why this legislation talks of churchwardens, Readers - I am a Reader - licensed lay workers, PCC members and that interesting small group of people who are employed by PCCs as treasurers and secretaries but do not actually become part of the PCC; they do exist. This legislation must address their needs and concerns and ours.

So I do welcome this quite complex legislation. I believe the Revision Committee did a very good job. It was well met by members of Synod who came to ask questions and make comments. I cannot comment on the amendments, the Chair tells us, but I do hope we take them well seriously and I do very much recommend and support and ask us to receive these documents with significance and, if not with joy, at least with a need to say this indeed is all our business.

*Mr Clive Scowen (London):* I just want to raise a concern about the drafting of several identical provisions in clauses 2 and 3 of the draft Measure and paragraphs 4 and 5 of the draft Amending Canon. Now these provisions concern the suspension respectively of churchwardens, PCC members, Synod members, Readers and lay workers. It is clear that a suspension can be made for up to three months and that such a suspension can be renewed at least once. It is also, I understand, intended that the power to renew a suspension should be capable of being exercised repeatedly until the matter is concluded. That would seem to be necessary and very good sense.

My concern is whether the language of, for example, section 6A(7) of the Churchwardens Measure which to be inserted by clause 2(5) of the draft Measure

actually achieves that. It is essential that the matter should be free of doubt since otherwise an attempt to renew a suspension could well attract legal challenge. Because the intention is clear I have not put down amendments which at this stage I believe should be to do with matters of substance rather than drafting, but it is important that the legislation as finally approved should achieve what is intended beyond any doubt. I believe that could be achieved in the example I have drawn attention to by inserting the words “and this subsection” after the words “subsection (6)”. I want to urge the Steering Committee to consider inserting such words at final drafting stage. Thank you, Chairman.

*Revd Hugh Lee (Oxford)*: I made a long written submission to the Revision Committee and then I was privileged to be able to be present for two whole days of their hearings. My concern, as I guess it is the concern of all of us here, is that the Church - a church, the Church, any place of worship, any church gathering - should be a safe place, a place where one is safe from sexual harassment, safe from bullying, safe from spiritual abuse and that, equally, anybody in a dog collar should be a safe person to talk to. Sadly, we know that has not been the case and sadly we know that when people have pointed that out it has got worse, not better. So I was very concerned that we should try to have legislation that did an awful lot better than we have been, and that is happening.

If you read carefully the Revision Report, you will see that I think all of my proposals were actually rejected. They were not rejected, I hope, because of the sentiment in them but because of the complexity of arranging legislation to cover every eventuality. Legislation is sometimes described as “a blunt instrument”. I hope it is not blunt in the safeguarding sphere, but I think you understand what I mean, that you cannot actually cover everything in legislation and the way in which this is recognised in this particular bit of legislation or measure is by having guidance issued by the House of Bishops. The wonderful thing about the way in which we got through the women bishops legislation is that, instead of talking about codes of practice that would be published or passed later, we actually had the House of Bishops declaration in front of us when we were doing it. I hope that in future this sort of legislation will have the guidance produced by the House of Bishops in front of us as well so that we can see what we are talking about at the same time as looking at the legislation. It seems to me so important that we should be aware of that guidance. Yes, we are going to have an opportunity for some of that to be debated later, but it would be better if it was now. So it is this legislation plus the guidance that counts, and I hope that in that guidance an awful lot of these extra bits that are worrying us could be included.

Finally, I want briefly to refer to a point that was made in the opening speech about the fact that criminal law requires the decision to be beyond all reasonable doubt whereas the Clergy Discipline Measure talks about the balance of probabilities, and that is absolutely right. Clergy discipline should be about the balance of probabilities but, as was intimated, this does pose a problem because it means that criminal proceedings can be finished and then we still have Clergy Discipline Measure investigations, and it becomes worrying when that delay goes on a long time. Justice delayed is justice denied and so I hope that there will be something in the House of Bishops’ guidance about going as speedily with all reasonable dispatch, or whatever is the right phrase, as speedily as possible, dealing with those cases where criminal proceedings have been



stopped, dropped, and yet Clergy Discipline Measure investigations are going on because, as I said, justice delayed is justice denied to both parties. Thank you.

*Mr Martin Sewell (Rochester):* I recently retired as a child protection lawyer and I can imagine when most of you are reading this stuff your hearts are sinking and you are thinking, "This is immensely complex and how am I going to talk to my PCC about it?" It is very easy for people to shy away from this, but what I would like us to do, please, is to remember that what is being debated here, and it is very well done, is the complicated stuff after you know that things have gone wrong.

I was very pleased to hear our colleague over here started by mentioning that safeguarding includes such simple things as food hygiene and I would like to remind you that child protection is actually a very simple thing. It is getting the simple things right, analysing what went wrong and processing it and how it happened and how we can prevent it happening again. That is the complex bit. But if I ask you to go into a kitchen of your church, you probably would not cut the chicken and then butter the bread with the same knife; you would wash your hands. There are a lot of very simple things that you would do, and that is what is going to keep most people safe most of the time. You do not have to know how to do a heart transplant to save a lot of lives.

What I really want to emphasise is that we have training that we promote to get people to see the stuff at the very lowest level and do the basic things right. Nobody is above suspicion. If there is a charismatic person that you cannot possibly do without, keep an eye on them. You need to make sure that if somebody begins to start to talk about a problem, you have to know how to process it clearly and record what is said accurately, make no promises of confidentiality with the very young. You have to respond by listening and taking what is said seriously, however outrageous it may sound or whatever. This is very basic stuff but it is that that will keep people safe within our churches. The complicated material: absolutely necessary. Do not be frightened of that. Do the simple things right and that will deal with so much of the risk that we have to be very alert to in our churches. Do not be anxious. Just do it.

*Revd Preb Patricia Hawkins (Lichfield):* I just have a very short and very specific point which relates to paragraph 3, which is about Parochial Church Council members, and I am hoping that my point is due to my ignorance of how changes in some legislation affects others so I am hoping that the response will be "Yes, that's already been noted". Just to point out that under Church Representation Rules nominations for PCC members can be taken from the floor at the annual parochial church meeting and, as this stands, that might create a problem.

*The Chair:* I see no-one else standing and so could I call upon Mr Tattersall to respond to the debate.

*Mr Geoffrey Tattersall:* Could I say that I am enormously grateful for all those who contributed to the debate.

To Dr Harrison, who is a member of the Revision Committee, these are enormously important and profound issues which we are dealing with, albeit in the context of really quite complicated legislation, and we never have to lose sight of the fact that safeguarding is everybody's business, not just the lawyers' business, and I agree

entirely with him that safeguarding has always got to remain, and be always on our agenda.

As to Mr Scowen and his drafting point, Mr Scowen recognises that the intention is that suspensions can be renewed and we are advised that the wording, which is in the Measure, does achieve that but, to make absolutely sure, we will look at this again before the final drafting stage and make sure that either what is there is good enough or we will bring forward some drafting amendments to achieve what is necessary but we think what is there does the trick already.

To Mr Lee, yes, it is true that when Mr Lee came most of the things which he proposed as detail we did not accept, but that is not to treasure the contribution he made because without people coming to Revision Committees and engaging the Committee, it is very difficult for the Committee to spark off and to really consider all points, and he helped us do that. I agree with him that we have to make sure that any church is a safe place. I agree with him too in terms of his reference to criminal proceedings that it is important that there should be as little delay as possible.

To Mr Sewell, it is good to be brought down to earth, and it is good to be brought down to earth by reminding people that although this legislation does do things right, safeguarding is everybody's business and so it should be.

To Mrs Hawkins, there is not a problem about PCC members and I give her that assurance. Thank you very much.

*The Chair:* I now put Item 503 to the vote.

*The motion*

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

*was carried on a show of hands.*

*The Chair:* We now come to the Revision Stage for the draft Measure. Notice has been given of one amendment, which is set out in the Order Paper, together with the motions to be moved on behalf of the Steering Committee. Where no notice has been given of any amendment to particular clauses and no member has indicated a wish to speak against them, I give my permission under SO 55(c) for clauses to be taken en bloc.

As this is the Revision Stage we will need to use the 40 member procedure under SO 56. Where any amendment is moved by someone other than the Steering Committee and it is not simply consequential on an amendment that has already been passed, the mover has not 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 the amendment, the amendment will lapse unless 40 members stand in their places to indicate that they wish the debate to continue. If there are 40 members standing we will continue with any further debate on the amendment and take a vote on it.

*The Chair:* We start with clauses 1-6. No amendment has been given in respect of clauses 1-6 and no member has indicated a wish to speak against any of those clauses. I therefore call upon a member of the Steering Committee to move Item 507, "That clauses 1-6 stand part of the Measure".

*The Bishop of Durham (Rt Revd Paul Butler):* Thank you, Chair. I beg to move:

'That clauses 1-6 stand part of the Measure.'

*The Chair:* This item is now open for debate. I see no one standing and therefore I put Item 507 to the vote.

*This motion was carried on a show of hands.*

*The Chair:* We now come to clause 7. There is an amendment in the name of the Revd Mark Steadman at Item 508. I invite Mr Steadman to move his amendment. He may speak for not more than five minutes.

*Revd Mark Steadman (Southwark):* Madam Chair, I apologise for a rather technical and somewhat impenetrable amendment. This amendment is designed to close a potential hole in the draft Measure and enable the powers conferred to work in a more effective manner. I am grateful to Caroline Mockford, the Registrar of the Diocese of York, for drawing attention to this problem and for the work of the Legal Office in assisting with the drafting of the amendment to cure it.

The text before us is dry and arid, but law is fundamentally about people and their situations, so let me give you an example to illustrate what this amendment seeks to do.

Imagine that Bishop Dave receives a complaint from Janet. Janet is in her early 30s and is accusing her vicar, John, of sexual harassment towards her during confirmation preparation some three years ago. The matter does not meet the thresholds for referral to the police. The CDM means that Janet's complaint would not be able to proceed as it is over a year since the alleged misconduct occurred so it is out of time. It can only proceed if Janet were to be considered a vulnerable adult under clause 6(2) of the draft Measure or if permission is given for Janet's complaint to be made out of time. The registrar would advise Bishop Dave of all of these things in his or her preliminary scrutiny report.

Bishop Dave would then refer the matter to the President of Tribunals for a decision on whether Janet was a vulnerable adult at the time of the misconduct. As the preliminary scrutiny report has been received, Bishop Dave also has the option to suspend John. That is an existing power under the CDM as it currently stands. Let us assume that Bishop Dave takes that step and John is suspended.

The President considers the question of Janet's vulnerability and he can decide to do one of three things. If the President decided that Janet was vulnerable then her complaint would proceed as normal because it would not be time barred. John's suspension would also continue. If the President decided that Janet was not vulnerable then her complaint would be considered as out of time and Bishop Dave would dismiss

the complaint, the matter would be concluded and John's suspension would also end. Finally, the President could decide that Janet was not vulnerable but decide that nevertheless there are good reasons why the complaint was not made during the time limit. The President can then give permission under the draft Measure for Janet to make a complaint out of time.

As the Measure is currently drafted, Janet would then have to make a fresh complaint. She would have to go through the potentially upsetting situation of filling out all of the paperwork again and the process would start afresh. John's suspension would also end and there would be a gap whilst he waited for the new complaint to be made. Bishop Dave cannot continue John's suspension during that gap. John is left in something of a limbo between complaints and not knowing when to expect something further. That does not seem very good either for Janet or John and nor does it seem particularly good process, and that is where this amendment comes in.

What the amendment will achieve is that it will mean that Janet will not have to make a fresh complaint. That is because the amendment will result in retrospective effect being given to the President's permission. In effect, it will permit Janet's existing complaint to continue, notwithstanding that it was initially made without the President's permission. In such cases it also means that Bishop Dave will be able to continue John's suspension because Janet's complaint continues.

In short, this rather complicated amendment will ensure that this Measure works more effectively and in a more streamlined way. It will remove a potential extra hoop for Janet to have to jump through and speed up the processes to which John is subject. That has to be in everyone's interests and in the interests of dealing with difficult matters in a straightforward fashion. I hope, therefore, that this amendment, which is intended to be friendly, will be well received by the Steering Committee.

Madam Chair, I move the amendment standing in my name.

*The Chair:* I call upon a member of the Steering Committee to respond.

*The Bishop of Durham (Rt Revd Paul Butler):* The Steering Committee too is grateful to Caroline Mockford and the legal team and to Mark Steadman and we welcome this amendment.

*The Chair:* The amendment is now open for debate. I see no one standing and so I put Item 508 to the vote that this amendment be made.

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

*The Chair:* I now call upon a member of the Steering Committee to move Item 509.

*The Bishop of Durham (Rt Revd Paul Butler):* I beg to move:

'That clause 7 as amended stand part of the Measure.'

*The Chair:* This item is now open for debate. Once again I see no-one standing and so I put Item 509 to the vote.

*This motion was carried on a show of hands.*

*The Chair:* We now come to clauses 8-12. No notice of amendment has been given in respect of those clauses and no member has indicated the wish to speak against any of them. I therefore once again call upon a member of the Steering Committee to move Item 510, "That clauses 8-12 stand part of the Measure".

*Bishop of Durham (Rt Revd Paul Butler):* I beg to move:

'That clauses 8-12 stand part of the Measure.'

*The Chair:* Once again this item is now open to debate. I see no-one standing and so I put Item 510 to the vote.

*This motion was carried on a show of hands.*

*The Chair:* I invite a member of the Steering Committee to move Item 511.

*The Bishop of Durham (Rt Revd Paul Butler):* I beg to move:

'That the Long Title stand part of the Measure.'

*The Chair:* This item is open for debate. I see no one standing and so I put Item 511 to the vote.

*This motion was carried on a show of hands.*

*The Chair:* That completes the Revision Stage for the draft Measure which is now committed to the Steering Committee in respect of its final drafting. We now come to the Revision Stage for the draft Amending Canon. Once again I refer members to the Order Paper for the amendments and other motions which will be before Synod. As before, where no notice has been given of any amendments to particular paragraphs of the Amending Canon and no member has indicated a wish to speak against them, I give my permission under SO 55(c) for them to be taken en bloc.

*The Chair:* We start with paragraphs 1-3. No notice of amendment has been given in respect of those paragraphs and no member has indicated a wish to speak against any of them. I therefore call upon the Steering Committee to move 512, "That paragraphs 1-3 stand part of the Amending Canon".

*The Bishop of Durham (Rt Revd Paul Butler):* This Amending Canon is an important part of the whole package. I beg to move:

'That paragraphs 1-3 stand part of the Amending Canon.'

*The Chair:* This item is now open for debate. I see no-one standing and so I put Item 512 to the vote.

*This motion was carried on a show of hands.*

*The Chair:* We now come to paragraph 4. There is an amendment in the name of Mr Adrian Vincent at Item 513, so I invite Mr Vincent to move his amendment. He may speak for not more than five minutes.

*Mr Adrian Vincent (Guildford):* Madam Chair, my speech explains both of my amendments, 513 and 515, because they are on the same subject but we will obviously take them separately when the time comes. I wish to thank the staff of the Legal Office who have helped me with the wording of the amendments.

The safeguarding package includes the draft Amending Canon which will introduce a new power to bishops to suspend Readers and licensed lay workers. This new power is not limited to safeguarding matters. Under the new Canon E 6.3 and E 8.5, the bishop will have the power to suspend a Reader or licensed lay worker “for any cause which appears to him to be good and reasonable”.

Last year I suggested to the Revision Committee that they introduce amendments to require the bishop to consult their registrar prior to suspending and prior to revoking the licence. The Committee did not accept my proposal and so the amendments that I am putting to Synod today are more modest. They will require the bishop to consult the registrar only before revoking the licence and I have dropped my suggestion for consultation prior to suspension.

I make three points in support of my amendments. Firstly, unlike clergy who have the careful procedures of the Clergy Discipline Measure, which give protection against a rash or wrong decision to revoke their licence, by contrast Readers and licensed lay workers have no such procedures, they may have their licence revoked for any cause which the bishop personally considers to be reasonable.

My proposal is a simple requirement for the bishop to consult their registrar prior to dismissing. This will give a minimum level of reassurance to lay ministers without introducing bureaucratic procedures. Some have said that a bishop would always consult their registrar in these cases and so it does not need to be written down as a rule, but unfortunately the Cahill report, whilst not a directly comparable case, is an example where a bishop - in this case an archbishop - did not consider it necessary to consult his registrar and in the absence of advice the wrong decision was taken.

Thirdly, some have said that the right of Readers under Canon E 6.3 to appeal to the archbishop after their dismissal is sufficient protection against a wrong decision, but by the time it gets to an appeal stage the damage has been done to the Reader's reputation and their sense of lay vocation. It is surely preferable to insert a check to prevent a wrong decision being made in the first place than to leave it to the appeals stage to correct it.

I invite the Synod to support this amendment which I now move.

*The Chair:* I call upon a member of the Steering Committee to respond.

*The Bishop of Durham (Rt Revd Paul Butler):* As Adrian Vincent explained, he attended and we looked at his previous proposals at revision and we decided against them. On further reflection on this more limited proposal, whilst in one sense we wish we did not have to put down “must consult the registrar of the diocese”, we have concluded on the basis of some of the evidence given to us that this is both a wise protection actually not only for the Readers and licensed lay workers but also for the bishops so that they would not be subject to judicial review. We therefore welcome both amendments.

*The Chair:* This item is now open for debate.

*The Archbishop of York (Most Revd and Rt Hon Dr John Sentamu):* I want to follow the Bishop of Durham. I think any bishop in these matters would be quite unwise not to consult their registrar. In the Cahill report the systemic failure was not that the archbishop did not consult a registrar but a safeguarding officer. So please let us be very careful when we are reporting other reports to be very accurate in what it actually says.

Incidentally, the persons themselves were not the ones that were condemned in that particular report but it was the system. There was a systemic failure really of where people were being asked to do safeguarding without training, without expert knowledge. Please, again, I just want to correct it is not that the archbishop should have consulted the registrar, the registrar had no locus in the matter, it was a safeguarding officer that he did not consult in the first instance. Subsequent, of course, if you read the report very carefully, he did consult but by that stage matters were as complicated as ever. Please, if you are going to quote from those reports, please read them carefully and report them back accurately.

*The Bishop of Manchester (Rt Revd David Walker):* Just a very small point. I am dealing with one safeguarding case at the moment where my registrar is actually conflicted out because she has given advice to somebody else at an earlier stage. I just need some reassurances from the panel that in the case where the person who is the registrar is conflicted by some previous engagement that I can get legal advice from the registrar from another diocese, for example.

*Mr Paul Hancock (Liverpool):* I wanted to speak in favour of this amendment because we have been talking about the need for more lay ministry within the church and I do feel that our Readers and our licensed workers are vulnerable on this one.

I would not have been happy, as the Steering Committee were not happy, if it had talked about suspension. I am very happy with the wording as it stands now that the consultation “must” take place before the licence is revoked.

I would like you, in view of what has been said over the past couple of days about lay ministry, to protect our lay ministers to some degree. I do not want the suspension taken away, I want them suspended if there is suspicion of any problem whatsoever, but I do not want their licence taken away until the case is proven. I am glad that the

Steering Committee has accepted this and I trust that Synod will vote in favour of both of these amendments but particularly obviously 513. Thank you very much.

*Ven Christine Hardman (Southwark):* For this purpose interim Warden of Readers in St Albans Diocese. I will be supporting this amendment but I just want very briefly to identify in this context the problem is much wider than what happens in a safeguarding context. We do need, as a Synod, to look to establishing greater clarity, proper codes of conduct for Readers. Clergy now have a great deal of clarity and the professional guidelines are coming out in July. For Readers there is not such clarity for either Readers themselves or the bishop. I would just like to put a marker down that urgent work needs to be done on this.

*The Bishop of Sodor and Man (Rt Revd Robert Paterson):* Better to remain silent and be thought a fool than open your mouth and remove all doubt, but just to assure the Synod that the work is being done by the Central Readers' Council. A group is already working on how to nuance Reader discipline or licensed lay minister discipline. They are not being ignored.

*The Chair:* I see no-one else standing and so I put the amendment at Item 513 to the vote.

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

*The Chair:* I now invite a member of the Steering Committee to move Item 514, "That paragraph 4 [as amended] stand part of the Amending Canon".

*The Bishop of Durham (Rt Revd Paul Butler):* With permission, Madam Chair, may I say we will look at the point raised by the Bishop of Manchester and in drafting we will look at that. With that note, I beg to move:

'That paragraph 4 as amended stand part of the Amending Canon.'

*The Chair:* I see no-one standing and so I now put Item 514 to the vote.

*This motion was carried on a show of hands.*

*The Chair:* We now come to paragraph 5. Mr Vincent has already spoken to this but now I ask him to move his amendment formally.

*Mr Adrian Vincent (Guildford):* My apologies to the Synod and to the Archbishop of York if I have misquoted the Cahill Report by way of illustration. I do so move Item 515.

*The Chair:* I invite a member of the Steering Committee to move Item 515.

*The Bishop of Durham (Rt Revd Paul Butler):* We accept this amendment.

*The Chair:* This item is open for debate. I see no-one standing and so I put Item 515 to the vote.



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

*The Chair:* I now invite a member of the Steering Committee to move Item 516.

*The Bishop of Durham (Rt Revd Paul Butler):* I beg to move:

‘That paragraph 5 as amended stand part of the Amending Canon.’

*The Chair:* This item is open to debate. I see no-one standing and so I put Item 516 to the vote.

*This motion was carried on a show of hands.*

*The Chair:* I now invite a member of the Steering Committee to move Item 517.

*The Bishop of Durham (Rt Revd Paul Butler):* I beg to move:

‘That paragraph 6 stand part of the Amending Canon.’

*The Chair:* This item is open for debate. Once again I see no-one standing and so I put Item 517 to the vote.

*This motion was carried on a show of hands.*

*The Chair:* That completes the Revision Stage for draft Amending Canon No. 34. The Canon now stands committed to the Steering Committee in respect of its final drafting.

THE CHAIR *The Bishop of Birmingham (Rt Revd David Urquhart)* took the Chair at 11.30 am.

## **50<sup>th</sup> Report of the Standing Orders Committee (GS 1984)**

*The Chair:* The next item is the 50<sup>th</sup> Report of the Standing Orders Committee and you may need GS 1984 and also, if you have still got it, the first Notice Paper. I invite Mr Geoffrey Tattersall to move Item 14.

*Mr Geoffrey Tattersall (Manchester):* I beg to move:

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

Chair, notwithstanding the apparent complexity and length of the proposed amendments to the Standing Orders set out in the first Notice Paper and explained in the 50<sup>th</sup> Report of the Standing Orders Committee in this take note debate, I will deal with matters fairly shortly.

We start from the premise that we are but servants of the Synod and that the role of the Standing Committee is set out in SO 117(c) namely to keep under review the procedures and Standing Orders of the Synod, to submit to the Synod such proposals

for amendment as it thinks fit and to report to Synod on all such proposals.

You will see from paragraph 3 of our Report that the text of our Standing Orders has not been the subject of any systematic review for many years and that our aim has been to produce a revised consolidated text in time for the inauguration of the new Synod in November 2015: a text expressed in as simple and straightforward way as possible and using gender non-specific language. In this Report we put forward some pre-consolidation amendments with a view to a consolidated text being put before the Synod for its approval in July 2015.

The great majority of the proposed amendments are of a technical or drafting nature which require little explanation, but there are three areas which merit some explanation.

First of all, the length of notice for amendments for legislative business. We deal with this at paragraphs 7 to 12 of our Report. Item 19 amends SO 10(c) [namely the default deadline for notice of amendments to legislative business, recomittal motions to liturgical business and amendments to proposed changes in the Standing Orders] so that the default deadline is 5.30 pm on the day which falls three clear days before the first day appointed for such business to be considered. Currently it is one clear day.

The Business Committee had drawn our attention to difficulties faced by the Legal Office staff in relation to amendments to the draft synodical government legislation, even after (this is last July) the Business Committee, pursuant to SO 11, had brought forward by 24 hours the deadline for giving notice of amendments. Having considered the matter, the Standing Orders Committee concluded that the deadline should be brought forward by 48 hours. The reasons for so doing are set out in paragraph 10 of our Report.

In particular we believed that it was crucial that we should allow the legal staff sufficient time to negotiate with the movers of amendments as to the appropriate form of the amendment, to marshal them in an order paper and to produce the Chair's brief in good time before the debate. The latter did not happen last July. Moreover we do not think that such an amendment would be prejudicial to members of Synod in that by the time the default deadline expires members will have had the draft legislation for at least 13 days, that is since the second circulation, and usually for 20 days since the first circulation. This proposal has been endorsed by the Business Committee.

Secondly, bodies answerable to the Synod, SO 119 makes provision for "Bodies answerable to the Synod through the Archbishops' Council" and the identity of such bodies is determined from time to time by the Business Committee, pursuant to SO 119(f). SO 105(a)(v) provides that the bodies which may be asked questions in Synod include "any body answerable to the Synod through the Archbishops' Council".

The Legal Office have advised the Standing Orders Committee that there are arguments that a number of aspects of SO 119 may be of a kind that the Synod does not have the legal authority to make because its powers to make Standing Orders, contained in Article 11(1) of the Constitution, relates to meetings, business and procedure of the Synod itself. It is therefore questionable whether Standing Orders can make provision which purports to impose obligations on the Archbishops' Council in the

way that SO 119 does (see paragraph 41 of our Report) albeit that sections 3 and 4 of the National Institutions Measure do impose certain (but fairly limited) obligations on the Archbishops' Council (see paragraphs 43 to 44 of our Report).

However, whilst the legal basis of SO 119 might be problematic, the Standing Orders Committee accepts that the arrangements it contains represented part of the constitutional context in which the Archbishops' Council was created. The Standing Orders Committee therefore proposes a way of removing the legally objectionable features of the present position, whilst achieving the same effect in a different way - which is set out in paragraph 47 of our Report. Items 70 and 65 give effect to our proposals, and there are consequential amendments.

What is proposed has been considered and agreed by the Archbishops' Council which, if Synod agrees to amend SO 119 in the way proposed, will itself enter into the commitments referred to in paragraph 47(c) of our Report. The Business Committee has also been consulted and agrees with what is proposed.

Finally, the procedure for reply to questions for oral answer. In the past it has been concluded because SO 129(b) provides that "no person other than a member of the Synod shall address the Synod" that if the Chair of a body to whom a question is put is not a member of the Synod that person cannot answer it and another person who is a member of the body concerned and a member of the Synod should answer it. However there are other provisions of the Standing Orders which suggest to the contrary (See paragraph 51 of our Report).

Having considered the matter, the Standing Orders Committee has concluded that, as a matter of principle, questions ought to be answered by the Chair of the body to whom the question is asked, whether or not the Chair is a member of the Synod. That view has been endorsed by the Business Committee.

Item 66 thus provides that the Chair can give an oral answer whether or not he/she is a member of Synod but Item 76 provides that the Chair may direct that the question be answered by another member of the body.

Synod may also wish to note that paragraphs 58 to 62 of our Report, which considers the different but allied question of the delegation of responsibility for answering questions pursuant to SO 108(c). Ultimately, having consulted the Business Committee, the majority of the Standing Orders Committee concluded that it was preferable not to propose any amendments to the Standing Orders.

Finally may I emphasise to Synod that the Standing Orders Committee stands ready to receive and consider comments from members if they have proposals to improve the procedures of the Synod. Chair, I beg to move that the Synod do take note of this Report.

*The Chair:* Thank you very much. It is open for debate.

*Revd Canon Pete Spiers (Liverpool):* I would have liked the Standing Orders Committee to be a bit more proactive in their Report today and not simply respond to

the concerns of others. I welcome the extended time proposed for amendments for legislative business, but wonder if it could be extended to all the business that we do here at Synod. It might mean that the proposers of amendments and the movers of motions might be able to get together and discuss them. Especially where an amendment is accepted by the mover, the resulting debate could reflect that and so the proposer of an amendment could still make their speech and we could get to a vote on it quickly and then move on to consider the debate on the main motion.

Where an amendment is not accepted a discussion could take place and perhaps assurances given that the point being made by the amendment has been listened to and heard. That is something that movers of main motions often say, and then we vote them down. A meeting beforehand might have also dealt with the near farce that we had yesterday when we were debating Thomas Seville, Jane Charman and Sam Margrave's amendments, and there was confusion reigning. I wonder whether a meeting beforehand might have ironed that out.

As with legislative business, I wonder whether the 40-member rule could be invoked with all our business. At the moment just two or more signatures are required to support the proposer of an amendment. I suspect that most of the time it is just two signatures and rarely more. I think there is a real frustration in Synod that often we spend more time debating the amendments than the main motion. The suspicion is that the proposers of amendments are just trying to guarantee themselves a speech. Let us discourage amendments, let us talk together beforehand and let us have better debates and people who are prepared to speak on the main motion less frustrated about not being called to speak because of all the time the amendments have taken up.

*Mr John Freeman (Chester):* I would like to support Pete Spiers and his thoughts and also to give you all a little tip. When I had my Living Wage motion - which you all supported very well and thank you very much again - I had a fringe meeting the day before, and that was a very good opportunity for people who had some reservations about my ideas to come and nobble me, to get their reservations sorted out, so as well as getting these people together, because as Pete says, if we had the good old TUC practice of compositing amendments, we might have saved ourselves a bit of trouble yesterday, so think of that, Mr Tattersall, Sir, but I think, think about using a fringe meeting beforehand because you can then flush out and reassure people who have some doubts.

*Dr Philip Giddings (Oxford):* I am sure that the Standing Orders Committee can and will address these sorts of questions, but before we forget our history and rush headlong into making changes too precipitatively, consider what the impact of a 40-member rule would have been on the very helpful amendment which Mark Steadman brought today. Sometimes these points occur very late in the process and they are very important, so we just need to be a bit cautious about ramping up the obstacles to amendments. We need a qualitative bar perhaps rather than a quantitative one.

*Mr Thomas Sutcliffe (Southwark):* I just would like to speak a word against what Peter Spiers has said because, again, as you would expect me to say, minorities, and small minorities, are sometimes the means whereby something very important is heard. I seem to remember that there was revision of the Standing Orders regarding the

numbers needed to move an amendment or a motion, and I actually managed to reduce that number from the original ten that were proposed to two, which is where we are now. I am not going to be on the Synod next year and I am sure the Synod will do very well without me, however, I think you should be cautious about suddenly deciding that majorities, and large majorities, are needed and are always right. Surely, the experience of the Church is precisely the opposite; that sometimes the truth resides in one just mind rather than in what everybody thinks.

*The Archbishop of York (Most Revd and Rt Hon Dr John Sentamu):* Certainly I do not think you want to evoke the 40-member rule to apply to everything but, on the other hand, I am not the only one who is frustrated, I hope, when people have been to Revision Committee and seven of the amendments were rejected, then they bring back five of the same thing. You say to yourself, "They rehearse it and every time we vote them down." There are people here who are very good at putting in a lot of amendments knowing they are going to fall anyway. Maybe we should plead with those members, please have some self-denial, only bring the best and do not rehearse arguments which are rejected and on the floor of the Synod are going to be rejected anyway. Certainly, with Tom Sutcliffe, I think you are right, majorities must not always be seen as the guardians of truth. Where there is clarity, Mark Steadman, with my Registrar, worked out the thing properly, and that was actually helpful. I am one of those who says to the Standing Orders Committee, please be a bit more brave and may we in Synod please reject sometimes debates that have been rehearsed again and again and again and you get a raft of seven amendments taking away the debate from the main motion and people do not have a chance to actually express what they really want to be heard. How do you create this balance? Maybe not by member numbers, who is going to do what, but a self-denying ordinance by those who love rules, who love standing orders; boring us to death!

*Mr Hugh Lee (Oxford):* I want to bring us back to what Mr Freeman said a couple of minutes ago about having fringe meetings in order to explain what your motion is about and to allay fears and so on, and I thoroughly agree with that. It is not always possible to arrange a fringe meeting, but a lot of the business of Synod, as elsewhere, is done in the corridors and the tea room and in talking and so on, but that cannot be done if we do not have time. I want to refer us back to GS Misc 1094. One of the task force reports that we were not given the opportunity to debate yesterday 'Optimising the Role of the NCIs' where it is proposed and agreed that we shall debate it, and it is very important that we do, that the number of days for Synod to meet will be very significantly reduced. If that happens, we will not have the time for these fringe meetings, for these talks in the corridors and the café and so on to sort out what we are doing. It is not just the legislative time in this chamber. It is in the other bits of time when we are present together, especially when we are present together in York when it is residential, that we get the opportunity to think through some of the ideas and improve the proposals and legislation before us. So I hope we shall get an opportunity to debate the whole of GS Misc 1094 at some stage, and particularly that we will not be happy with the idea of reducing the number of days that Synod meets.

*The Chair:* I see no-one else standing so, Mr Tattersall, would you please respond to the take note debate.

*Mr Geoffrey Tattersall:* Mr Sutcliffe, I seem to remember about five years ago standing in York, on many occasions, trying to persuade the Synod that we should have more supporters for amendments. I seem to remember that you had a whole series of amendments, I think there were nine in total, starting off with one and then two and when we got to two, the Synod agreed with two. We have travelled this ground before, but I think probably, as it is Synod, we are going to have to travel this ground again. Pete Spiers is right to say that we do need to consider whether or not there needs to be a little bit more support for amendments, because maybe yesterday's experience was not the best. And how do we best do Synod? We have to look at these things again. It may be that we need to think about whether we should increase, not to ten maybe but to another number, which means that supporters of amendments are a little bit more numerate. I am not sure about 40 members, but I think we need to just look at it again, and we can do that and we will do that with great willingness.

As to Mr Freeman and Mr Lee, I do not think we want to regulate fringe meetings, but obviously I do understand the point you are making, that if things can be sorted out at fringe meetings and areas can be clarified and amendments which perhaps were contemplated can be withdrawn, that obviously improves the business of Synod and that is a good thing. I am not sure there is anything more I need to say, but I am grateful for your contributions.

*The Chair:* So the motion before us is "That the Synod do take note of this Report" at Item 14.

*This motion*

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

*was carried on a show of hands.*

*The Chair:* We now go on to Items 19 to 77 set out in the first Notice Paper. I would ask Mr Tattersall to move the motion in his name.

*Mr Geoffrey Tattersall:* With your leave, Chairman, can I do them all together because I propose Items 19 to 77 in the first Notice Paper.

*The Chair:* So these are all before us. Is there any debate? I see no-one standing to speak and therefore I put this to you that the amendment be made with effect from 13 February 2015.

*This motion was put and carried on a show of hands.*

*The Chair:* Just before we close this item, can I, on your behalf, thank the Chair and the Standing Orders Committee for all its work on our behalf.

THE CHAIR *Mr Aiden Hargreaves-Smith (London)* took the Chair at 11.50 am.

**Private Member's Motion:  
Canon B 38 (GS 1972A AND GS 1972B)**

*The Chair.* We come now to Item 15. This is a Private Member's Motion concerning Canon B 38 and the law relating to funerals of those who have taken their own life. Members will need the paper prepared by Canon Parsons, GS 1972A, and the note from the Secretary General, GS 1972B.

In a moment I shall call on Canon Parsons to introduce the debate, but given the sensitive and difficult nature of aspects of this motion, I would like to invite the Synod to pause for a moment of prayer first.

*The Chair led the Synod in prayer.*

I now invite Canon Parsons to move the motion standing in his name. He may speak for up to ten minutes.

*Revd Canon Michael Parsons (Gloucester):* Thank you, Chair, for that sensitive prayer and introduction.

Like many people, I became involved in a topic like this through conducting the funeral of a close friend and then her memorial service and, because I was at that point Principal of one of our regional theological courses, writing a theological reflection on it, which was then published as a Grove booklet. I could do the advert for you if you like.

This motion is about only one thing: is it right that a Christian funeral can be offered within the Church of England for anybody, no matter what the means of their death? For at present it is not: a person who takes their own life while of sound mind may not have a licensed Church of England minister conduct their funeral in any shape or form. This is disregarded by most clergy, who are mainly completely unaware of the canonical prohibition.

We take the funerals of murderers, rapists, child abusers and gangsters. God himself is their judge and we are happy to commit them to the mercy of God. But not, it would seem, suicides.

I said it is about this one thing. What it is not about in any shape or form is assisted suicide, despite the efforts of one Sunday paper to declare "Church to legalise suicide" as a headline to an account of this motion or even the *Church of England Newspaper* who coupled this motion with assisted suicide in adjacent paragraphs. It is entirely about what happens after death and not before it.

Most clergy, myself included, were surprised to learn that many services they have taken have been in contravention of Canon B 38, particularly as we have prayers in the Pastoral Services book designed for this purpose. Let us see why we have got here. Let me read you this extract:

“It is a melancholy consideration, that there is no country in Europe, or perhaps in the habitable world, where the horrid crime of self-murder is so common as it is in England! But how can this vile abuse of the law be prevented, and this execrable crime effectually discouraged? By a very easy method. We read in ancient history that, at a certain period, many of the women of Sparta murdered themselves. This fury increasing, a law was made that the body of every woman that killed herself should be exposed naked in the streets. The fury ceased at once. Only let a law be made and rigorously executed, that the body of every self-murderer, Lord or peasant, shall be hanged in chains and the English fury will cease at once.”

That is from John Wesley's *Works*, and was clearly ineffectual.

There is a history of the burial of suicides being outside the churchyard without the services of clergy at night and even at crossroads as a warning to others. Up until 1882 the burial of suicides was restricted to between 9.00 pm and midnight, and without rite.

This has led to the view in many quarters that the church is hostile to suicide. I was accused as a priest in a Health Service seminar on suicide of being part of the problem, not the solution. This is believed by some, despite the fact there is plenty of evidence in the literature and other places, that sensitive Christian ministry, which is offered universally throughout the church, is much appreciated. An ability to handle guilt and anger, to provide space for lament, is often so much more than secular funeral officiants are able to offer. All the evidence suggests that clergy respond sensitively and with insight - in happy ignorance by and large of Canon B 38, although I was told in my own parish of an elderly parishioner of mine who 60 years ago was refused a church service for her husband who had killed himself and she has never been near the church since.

The Canon says at paragraph 2: “It shall be the duty of every minister to bury according to the rites of the Church of England, the corpse or ashes of any person deceased within his cure ... except the person deceased have died unbaptized, or being of sound mind have laid violent hands on himself, or have been declared excommunicate. In which case he shall use at the burial such service as may be prescribed or approved by the Ordinary, provided that if a form of service available for the burial of suicides is approved by the General Synod under Canon B 2, that one shall be used.”

It is very interesting. We have a Canon that actually provides for two means for subverting it, neither of which is available. General Synod has not approved any service for the burial of suicides and a service directed by the diocesan bishop, apparently, I am told by my previous diocesan Michael Perham, who, as some of you know, was something of a liturgical junkie, that he was unaware of any such service having been approved in any diocese.

The unsound mind exception is unhelpful. Various people have said to me, “Well, of course, it is not a problem because I assume the poor person could not have been of sound mind or they would not have taken their own life.” It is unhelpful in at least two ways. The coroner's verdict frequently comes quite some time after the funeral and clergy are not qualified to judge on the mental state of a person they have probably never met, but also medical professionals who work in this field of suicide research are



very hesitant about whether such verdicts can be justified. Contemporary research would challenge assumptions that suicides are often the acts of mentally disturbed people. To say they must be of unsound mind is rather too close to the old Soviet reason for putting religious believers into psychiatric hospitals because “they have to be mad to believe that nonsense”.

There were good pastoral reasons for it coming into English law because in English common law a suicide was a felon who had committed *felo de se*, and his property was forfeit to the Crown, which left widows and children destitute. By the end of the 17th century coroners, recognising this, were moving almost universally to deliver verdicts of *non compos mentis* - “of unsound mind” - so the property was not forfeit and the grieving family not rendered destitute, thereby demonstrating that even in the 17th century lawyers can have tender hearts. Suicide ceased to be a crime in 1961. The forfeit of property to the Crown disappeared, I believe, in the 19th century so the “of sound mind” clause is an archaic remnant that needs to go.

Is killing yourself wrong? Aquinas says it is. It contravenes the natural order, it is destructive to the community and life is a gift from God and only God can remove it. That has been challenged by John Donne, former Dean of St Paul’s some years ago, in his book *Biathanatos*. It has also been challenged by the philosopher David Hume, who deconstructs Aquinas’s reasons very comprehensively: in particular if something is a gift, it is up to the receiver as to what they do with it.

Aquinas’s arguments have not gone unchallenged but it would be unfair to suggest that actually contemporary opinion rejects them. I have taught in this area as well. I would say that probably about 70% of philosophical, theological and ethical opinion both from those of Christian believers and those of other faiths and of no faith at all would wish to argue for more inhibition over suicide but the other 30% would say, “Actually you can’t make that case”. Their particular pastoral difficulty, which I can see, is you do not want to be seen to be encouraging suicide, so it is quite complicated to make that argument sensitively in the public arena.

Some people say, “Well, if we alter this Canon, aren’t we going to encourage suicides?” No. No, we are not. The evidence in pastoral care of those who feel suicidal is that actually asking somebody very sensitively in the right context “Have you actually thought of ending your life?” is a massive relief, as if it were the elephant in the room that has been named, and at that point it then becomes possible to talk about it, to receive help and counselling, and is a positive step away from taking your own life. The same I believe is true if we pass this motion. It would be seen as a hugely positive pastoral step by the Church.

I did a radio interview early this morning and I heard the tail end of some other interviewers that the programme had had. Comments such as “It’s terribly important that the Church takes this caring, symbolic act” and “Would I want to be part of a church that rejects vulnerable people?” “Who asks, also, if the deceased is baptized?” “You cannot be excommunicated these days.” “Why burial of the dead when most funerals are cremations?”

I would suggest that Canon B 38 is in desperate need of revision and that it is long past its sell by date but also its revision would be a very significant indicator of the pastoral care exhibited by many clergy. Please support the motion.

*The Chair:* Item 15 is now open for debate.

*Revd Paul Hutchinson (York):* I welcome Canon Parsons' motion. Which of us in ministry has not at some point in time encountered the judgment of secular authorities on some aspect of the Church's arcane rules or its pastoral practice and which of us at some point has not encountered someone who has received deep pastoral grief as a result of something done two or three generations before us, over which we have had no control at all? I think it is right and proper that we see to the amendment of Canon B 38, but it seems to me that what you have presented is not perhaps quite the full truth that those thousands of us in ministry, clergy and Readers who have conducted funerals of those who have taken their own lives needed to hear. Is there a legal bar to us conducting such funerals now? The answer, the Secretary General very kindly explained to us, is no. Is there a legal duty to conduct under the usual circumstances? The answer is yes. Is there a legal right that we can use in order to conduct those services? I believe the answer to that is yes, there is, because neither *Common Worship* nor the *Alternative Service Book* before it nor *Series 3* expressed anywhere on their face any restriction whatsoever as to what kind of death those services could be used in respect of. Had the Church Assembly approved *Series 2*, that would have been very much the same and it would have carried alongside it its very comprehensive marginal notes about the intent of being usable in the cases of suicide. Perhaps there is a slight question mark over *Series 1* because, although the current printing of *Series 1* contains no restrictive rubric, I am not entirely clear as to whether or not the restriction that was in the *1928 Prayer Book* has carried over, just somehow unprinted, and some clarification on that would be useful.

Where does Canon B 38 fit into that? It muddies the waters but not as much as I think Canon Parsons would like to suggest. It allows, in the case of those who have taken their own lives, for a service approved under Canon B 2 for the funerals of suicides. I would submit that our current funeral rites under *Common Worship* and its predecessors by being open to all are indeed those rites that are available for suicides, so that part of the proviso of Canon B 38 is indeed fulfilled by our current funeral rites. They do provide us in the cases of those who have taken their own lives with the rites referred to in the proviso of Canon B 38.

The position of the unbaptized is slightly less clear and although it is not in the motion, I would urge that it be given consideration because in that proviso the provision of B 2 only applies to those who take their own lives and not to the unbaptized. The only provision in that proviso that applies to the unbaptized is the one about rites specified by the Ordinary, so it is a different position. If, as most of us do, we take funerals without enquiring as to the status of the person and their baptism, then perhaps we need that one sorting out.

Yes, please, let us revise Canon B 38 but let us not give the impression that we are not already in a position to do these things. It is good that we get rid of legislation that confuses us, it is good that we get rid of legislation that causes secular people to

misrepresent who we are and what we say, and it is good that we get rid of legislation that restricts our ability to respond pastorally to those in need. Let us do it but let us be honest about the fact that we can do these things already.

*Revd Jonathan Frai (Chichester)*: Thank you for calling me, Chairman. I think it is good that we have this subject, though it brings such sadness, distress and grief to so many, and which of us have really been far from any such scenarios? When we read of Dignitas in the paper or issues concerning mental health, we know that this subject is near.

My first ever funeral visit was to a situation involving a suicide and I now live on the south coast, ten miles from Beachy Head where the Beachy Head chaplaincy team do a wonderful, wonderful task in trying to change people's minds as they go intentionally to take their own lives. Only last year I had someone who visited church and came to a morning service, and I chatted to him for half an hour afterwards. His intention was to say his farewell to God on his way to Beachy Head. I do not know to this day if I had any effect in restraining him.

I want to speak just to try and speak up for those who are not here because they are our forebears, they are the people who put this into the rules of the Church of England. I just want to try and explore with you a little, and think "what did they think they were doing?" Obviously they started at the Sixth Commandment, "Thou shalt not kill", and the sense that it is not our job to take a life. In scripture there are a variety of suicides, reminding us that everyone is an individual. Samson in effect died in battle, taking many lives of his enemies. King Saul died, as 1 Samuel 31 says, for fear of abuse by his enemies as he lost in battle. His armour-bearer then took his own life in panic and fear. In the New Testament, Judas was filled with grief and remorse but stopped short of repentance to hope. Perhaps the character most associated with taking his life in sound mind is Ahithophel. In 2 Samuel 17 the renegade who swapped allegiance from David to Absalom who took over David's throne and who, when his own advice was rejected, we read, went home, put his own room in order and hung himself.

Commandment six and a variety of people, but then a view of law, law as educative, law as a deterrent, so actually what they were doing was saying to people, to the unbaptized, "Why don't you get baptized?" to the excommunicate, "Why don't you repent of your moral scandal?" to the potential suicide, "Please don't do this". Law as educative. Law as a deterrent. We might say, "We love you too much not to try and use this to make you think twice before going through it". Therefore I think, Synod, what we have is two views of the rule before us. Either on the one hand we could say our attention is on the grieving family, we do not want to make their lot any worse, and perhaps on the wider effect of mission and the reputation of the Church; or we could say we want the law to remain in place because of its deterrent value and because of its educating role on the Church. I think a pastoral case can be made for keeping this and for rejecting it. Whilst I am certainly not against amendment of what we have in the Canon, I am actually going to vote against this because of the way it is presented. Like the previous speaker, I do disagree with the mover of the motion that the Canon forbids us to officiate. I think it is simply what service we use. I would have thought the remedy for non-use is right use rather than new use. If the remedy is we have not been furnished by the Liturgical Committee with the appropriate balance of laments and

penitence as well as hope fitting a service, I would have thought that would be helpful to explore and whether that meets the need. Whatever funeral we conduct, there is an element of tailoring it towards the need. I suspect that this is well intended but the wrong solution to the problem that has been identified. Thank you.

*Mr Elliot Swatridge (Church of England Youth Council Representative):* This is my maiden speech. Dear Chairman, I stand in resolute support of the Revd Canon Michael Parsons in his motion to remove the limitations and prohibitions of Canon B 38.

Over 500 young people, aged 15 to 24, take their own lives every year. That works out at more than one per day. To put this in context, over the course of this three-day Synod session probably another three or four young people will have ended their own lives.

Young people today are in crisis. According to a survey published in 2014, almost half, 45%, say they experience self-loathing, while 17% believe they are worth nothing at all and 19% have such intensity of pain that they choose to self-harm. For some, these feelings of inadequacy become so overwhelming they lead to tragedy. A staggering 26% of young people report feeling suicidal at some point. That means that over one in four young people that you meet has probably considered killing themselves. In fact suicide is so prevalent that it is the leading cause of death in males under 35. These are harrowing statistics. Each of these 500 yearly suicides was a real, live young human being with hopes, gifts, dreams and loved ones.

We who call ourselves the people of the God of all comfort cannot, and must not, overlook this. Jesus declares in Matthew 25 that “Just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me”. I recognise that very few, if any, ministers take the Canon in question at face value or act any differently as a result of its presence. However, in the eyes of society as long as this item is unresolved, it remains yet another conspicuous ink splash on the already tarnished books of the Church’s reputation. Sensationalist language and unscrupulous journalism often portray the picture that a significant proportion of Anglican ministers would refuse a Christian funeral to those who have died by suicide. This, of course, is a gross misrepresentation, but its inaccuracy does not prevent it from portraying Christians as legalistic, cold and even cruel to families in deep grief. This is why I believe the change to Canon B 38 is so essential right now. We would do well to follow the example of our brothers and sisters in the Roman Catholic Church who in 1983 produced its Canon 11 84, getting rid of similar prescriptions that excluded victims of suicide from full burial mass rites.

Why stop at this, however? I believe that we ought to also rethink our theology of suicide. Christians often inherit the curious idea that suicide is somehow a uniquely unpardonable sin beyond others. Yet there are a number of suicides described in the Bible, including King Saul, Abimelech, Sampson and Judas Iscariot. However, not a single one comes with an explicit condemnation of the suicide. Neither does it contain any theological comment stating the purported unforgivable nature of their action. Others might point out that suicide by nature gives no opportunity for repentance in this life. Yet by the same token, we would all be condemned. Who of us will be able to say at the point of our death that we are completely sinless? We will all end our lives still

with aspects that fall short of God's purpose. If it were up to us to make ourselves perfect for death, then our salvation would be utterly and hopelessly impossible. In fact, in order for our salvation to even be possible, since no person can really know they have formally confessed and repented of every single imperfection in their lives, it follows that God must bestow mercy even at the point of death. Why then do we not bestow the same grace upon those who have taken their own lives? We are no different.

Thankfully, the mercy of God is far greater than the limits we so often place upon it. I believe therefore that there is still hope of salvation for those who have taken their own lives, no matter what the circumstance. Teaching to the contrary has caused unspeakable pain to many and I suggest that we seriously reconsider it. In this way we have the power to give despairing families a hope of peace and even reunion with their loved ones, something the world cannot give. Therefore, by supporting the amendment right now and reconsidering our theology, we can let the light of God's message shine onto each and every young person in crisis a message that they are precious, valued and loved, more than they could even imagine. Thank you.

*The Chair:* I thank Mr Swatridge for his maiden speech.

*Rt Revd Robert Atwell (Exeter):* This is my maiden speech. There will be few of us in the chamber this morning who have not known families who have been devastated by the loss of a relative, a colleague, a friend through suicide and whenever this takes place it is always a tragedy. It seems to me that Canon B 38 does not express the attitude of the Church of England in these circumstances and it is open to misunderstanding, and that is quite clear to us all in the way that there has been adverse media coverage in this respect.

Having recently written about the changing face of funeral ministry in our country, I am conscious that the authorized liturgical resources that are available to clergy and Readers in conducting such funerals are inadequate and poor. Speaking as the incoming Chair of the Liturgical Commission, if it is in the mind of the Synod and the House of Bishops that we should supplement the existing provision, then we will be glad to do so.

The second point that I want to make is a pastoral one, that is to say that I think particularly those of us who have been involved in taking funerals are aware that increasingly today there is amongst some quarters a certain apprehension when people approach the Church or consult Readers when there is a funeral, and particularly in cases when there is a suicide and people are particularly apprehensive that there may be any sense of judgmentalism or rejection. I think we all know what a privilege it is to be alongside a family in such circumstances and so therefore I think, particularly those of us privileged to be conducting such funerals, we need to have our pastoral antennae really alert, really sensitive and we are giving out messages not simply with the words we are speaking but our very body language, so I would really gladly support this proposal so that, as a Synod, we can send a good, clear message to the public.

*Revd Professor Paul Fiddes (Ecumenical Representative):* In my own heritage of non-conformist churches the form of service to be used for funeral and burial has been

largely in the hands of the local church and minister. They have been unfettered by Acts of Parliament or Church Canon, so there has been no need to make the invidious inquiry as to whether a suicide was of sound or unsound mind. How matters were conducted might, however, have been affected by theologies held in the past. I mean that among Calvinistic Reform Churches some might have regarded the suicide as rejecting God's gift of life, so casting doubt on whether he or she was among the elect. Among free will Arminian Churches suicide might have been thought to have cut someone off from salvation by the failure to make a faith response to God before death. But others were guided by a different theology, that of a generous and accepting God. I mean the belief that God is too humble to be offended by rejection of God's gifts. I mean that God's mercy and pursuing love reaches further than we can fathom in this life and the next, enticing a human response we cannot imagine. I mean that a compassionate God understands that in the conflict of life some people may make such a decision without losing their faith. Many non-conformists as well as Anglican churches have always held this kind of vision of God. Guided by a theology of an accepting God, we should surely be generous, and even excessive, in our acceptance and welcome of people in pastoral need. Enquiring whether the deceased was of sound or unsound mind does not, I suggest, give a message of acceptance.

I myself experienced a wonderful acceptance by my local parish church when my 19 year old son took his own life. As someone living in the parish, the vicar immediately responded to my personal tragedy by gladly allowing my son to be buried in his churchyard. I did not need the office of an Anglican priest since under Ecumenical Canon B 43 the incumbent gave permission for my own Baptist minister to lead the burial service. As it happened, my son was finally determined to be of unsound mind, but this only means unsound according to our norms of what is sound at any particular time, so my own circumstances would not have been altered by the proposed change of Canon Law.

The point I want to make is that I experienced an acceptance without limits and in other people's cases such an acceptance might well require a change in Church law. Whenever I worshipped in that church or indeed preached in it by invitation I felt myself to be part of the great communion of saints, worshipping with the living and the dead, all accepted by a merciful God. Mike Parsons' motion offers the hope that many others will be able to experience this too.

*The Archbishop of York (Most Revd and Rt Hon Dr John Sentamu):* Again as the Reverend Hutchinson from York said, and I agree with him, it is not correct, as Canon Parsons suggested, that the clergy of the Church of England cannot conduct a funeral for a person who has committed suicide. It is not correct; they can do it. All that Canon B 38 says is that the form of service needs to be approved by the bishop. That is all it does. It does not say no liturgy can be conducted. It may be a good idea actually to remove that particular requirement, that a bishop should approve the liturgy and to allow the normal funeral service to be used in such cases, but the Synod actually should be clear that Christian funeral services are provided by the Church of England for those who commit suicide. That is the position in the law at the moment. All you are trying to remove is whether the requirement in that B 38, a form of service, should be approved by the bishop.

I think Synod needs to pay attention to what the Secretary General's paper says in paragraphs 19, 20, 21 and 23. That is the nub of the question as legislators, we want to address. He says if the Canon were to be changed, as proposed by Canon Parsons, a number of questions would need to be addressed. This would include a minister would be under a duty to use one of those two services in the case of such a person or should have a discretion as to whether to do so (or at least to opt out on grounds of conscience), in which case the minister could use another standard form of service; whether the position in relation to those who are unbaptized should be similarly changed or whether different questions arise in such cases. Then he says if the Synod were to ask for legislation to be introduced to amend Canon B 38, the question would arise as to whether it could be achieved simply by means of a Canon under section 1(1)(b) of the Church of England (Worship and Doctrine) Measure 1974 or whether it would be necessary for the Synod to pass a Measure which specifically authorized the making of an Amending Canon with the desired effect.

Then he goes on to say, and these are the areas that, as a Synod, we have to take into account, further work would need to be done on whether the provision made by the Canon under the 1974 Measure could have the effect of changing the law as set out in the rubric in the Book of Common Prayer - you have still got to address that question in the Book of Common Prayer - or whether legislation takes the form under the 1974 Measure, it would require a majority of two-thirds of those present and voting in each House at Final Approval Stage. Were a Measure to be needed, a special majority would not be necessary for the Amending Canon made under it unless the Measure required, so those are the issues we have got to tease out, not whether currently people who commit suicide cannot actually be commended to God by a clergy person or have a funeral when, in terms of the Church of England, we are doing this.

Now if the motion is passed, that will provide, I think, an opportunity for the Faith and Order Commission and the House of Bishops to consider the position in the round, including those who die unbaptized as well as those who take their own lives while of unsound mind. It would then be open to the House of Bishops to sponsor an Amending Canon in the light of the theological work. That is the matter as I see it and therefore I want to say if you want work to be done and you want it to go forward, FAOC to do its job, the House of Bishops to move its own Amending Canon in light of the way our statutes actually are made, then I think if you want that work to be done you have to approve the motion, but please approve it not because we cannot at the moment - at the moment - as you know carry out a Christian funeral or a burial or a commendation for those who commit suicide and whoever thinks that is the case, that is not what actually happens.

So what you are voting on is not that we may now do it, no, we may do it in a way that probably does not have these difficulties or even cause misunderstanding. That is all you are doing and then the areas in the law we ourselves have got to address as legislators. So, friends, whatever the press have said out there, I am afraid the Church of England has already extended its boundaries because of the love of Jesus Christ.

*Mrs Angela Scott (Rochester):* I have been in the unfortunate position of being the first person to find someone who had committed suicide not once but twice. On each occasion the pastoral issues that occurred were such that we needed to support the

family and friends. I just welcome this because I had not realised that in fact it was still officially not permitted for a minister to take a burial service or a service of this sort.

I was glad for the clarification of the Archbishop and I would just like to say that I would support this motion. Thank you.

*Miss Prudence Dailey (Oxford):* I want to begin by saying that no one, whatever that person has done, can be beyond the mercy and love of God, and that certainly is not a judgment that either the Synod or clergy taking funerals can be expected to make on God's behalf. Nor indeed can anyone truly judge the state of mind of another person. But I think we can safely assume that there is at least a possibility that anyone who was suffering so much that he took his own life at least might quite likely have been of unsound mind.

It is nevertheless the teaching of the Church which we have inherited that suicide is wrong and I am worried about the message that we would send out if we were to accept this amendment. I am extremely grateful to the proposer of the amendment for making it crystal clear that this has nothing to do with assisted suicide. Nevertheless, the concern remains because at present, as we have heard, it is quite clear that those who die by their own hand while of unsound mind can receive a Christian burial.

On the proposals that are currently being discussed in relation to assisted suicide, there is generally included a requirement that in order to avail himself of assisted suicide a person has to be of "sound mind" and so therefore this could be perceived to be paving the way for an acceptance of assisted suicide and a declaration by the Church that that somehow was not wrong even though that is not our intention.

I am definitely not saying that I believe that suicides under any circumstances which I can envisage should be denied a Christian burial but, as we have already heard, this is not happening, suicides are not being denied a Christian burial. We have just heard of a tragic example of this happening 60 years ago but I do not think anybody has produced a more recent example.

I do think that to accept this proposal now to amend Canon Law would send out a message that we do not want to send out at this time when assisted suicide is under discussion, and so I would urge Synod to think very carefully before accepting this motion. Thank you.

*The Bishop of Sodor and Man (Rt Revd Robert Paterson):* I would like to support the motion and speak in part as Vice-Chair of the Liturgical Commission. The fundamental reason is that laws that cannot or morally should not be enforced should either be repealed or not enacted in the first place. There are complicated reasons surrounding the various provisions that are related to this particular Canon but we need to leave those things to the lawyers. Where there's a will there's a way.

Any parish priest with a heart and a brain learns very quickly that there are no slick answers to the enigma of suicide. Every suicide I encountered and every bereaved family I had the privilege to serve in nearly three decades as a parish priest opened up new questions and questions that still in my mind are not answered.



The more we try to use dogma and slick answers to explore this, the more we become mired in a moral swamp. If we really believe that Samson did not commit suicide but died in battle, what on earth do we make of suicide bombers? Clergy, Readers, must take time, sensitivity, pastoral expertise and instinct, and above everything else mature Christian common sense in the way in which they lead people through this enigma. Canon Law needs amendment and we should not be hesitating at this.

The Liturgical Commission should be asked by the House of Bishops, and ultimately this Synod, to take another look, and ministers need support. I hope that this Synod will support this motion overwhelmingly.

*Revd Neil Patterson (Hereford):* I want to begin by making a connection to what we were doing yesterday. We spent a great deal of time discussing the structures and finances of our Church, and doing so aspiring to maintain what it seemed we are all happy to believe in, the ministry of our Church to our whole nation in every place and, I think, to all people.

If you look at the beginning of the second clause of Canon B 38, this is one of the places that is found expressed in our Canons: "It shall be the duty of every minister to bury, according to the rites of the Church of England, the corpse or ashes of any person deceased". "Duty...every minister...any person". It is one of the fundamental places in my mind where we set forth our calling to minister to the whole nation. All sorts of people we bury. Good heavens, I certainly still bury them, I have country churchyards to bury them in. I have not asked if they are baptized. They have included one suicide. About their faith sometimes very little can be said, the course of their life, their sins, no, we receive them and we commit them to God as best as we can according to our limited ability.

I am very glad that a great deal has been said more eloquently than I, particularly by Elliot Swatridge and Mrs Scott, about suicide and our need to minister to it compassionately. But I want to pick up some of what Mike finished by saying about the other constraints provided in the Canon. It is very much we shall minister to all except for a series of complicated exceptions, and we do sometimes seem to fall into that trap in our ministry.

We have talked about infant baptism, the need to revisit that, or baptism at any age in fact, but particularly the sense in which whether or not you happen to be baptized as a child by your parents' decision should determine the ministry you receive after your death from the church.

Also clause 3 of B 38, it is rather grudging, is it not? Cremation is lawful in connection with Christian burial. It is a relief really to know that three-quarters of the funerals taken in England today are not disapproved of by the church, but it is not covered by the same duty to take those services upon a minister of all those who wish to be cremated.

My suggestion is we have a chance, maybe it does need to involve FAOC and the work of the House of Bishops together, to renew our commitment to minister to all. There are some other helpful connections. I hesitate to mention that questionable organisation,

the Ecclesiastical Law Society, in this place but its spring conference is covering issues of funerals, burials, memorials, and there is a great deal of wisdom there that can be drawn on. It will be graced by Dr Sandra Miller. Some of you will be familiar with her work striving to educate the clergy better in the flexibility and imagination we need to deploy in our funeral ministry if we are to carry on reaching a changing society.

We have the chance to renew, in revising this Canon, our ministry to the whole country, to all people of commitment, however frail, but who live in the world for which Christ died. Amen.

*Mr Tom Sutcliffe (Southwark):* I do not want to delay us for very long but 84 years ago my grandfather was a patient at Osborne House on the Isle of Wight and he was suffering from a depressive breakdown in 1931. My mother was 18 - it was 12 years before I was born - my aunt was 14. All I want to say is he threw himself under a train on the Isle of Wight, which must have been quite difficult even in those days, there are not very many, and he killed himself. He had two older brothers who were priests of the Church of England, so maybe that was one of the reasons why I can go and visit his grave in a church on the outskirts of Osborne House.

It is not a new thing that Anglican priests have used discretion, it is not a new thing at all, but it is incredibly important. My grandmother preserved all my grandfather's last letters. He was the youngest of 14. Two of them were doctors, two were priests, two were lawyers, I mean, God knows, you would have thought that some of them would have woken up to what he really needed but they did not. He was supposed to be getting into the Cassel Hospital in Ham and it never worked. His letters indicate how useless, how much he felt he had failed. The response of somebody with a depressive breakdown committing suicide is all to do with their judgment of themselves. It is something that in a sense requires compassion more than almost anything else.

I believe that if there is any doubt, as there seems to be in some places, about how the Church regards this kind of ending of a life, we really do need to take advantage of having the possibility of revision at this point even though we may have all sorts of questions to ask about people going to Switzerland. Please support this motion.

*Revd Dr Rosalyn Murphy (ex officio):* Thank you, Chair, for calling on me. I do not usually spend time making speeches here at Synod, I tend to sit and want to listen. I wanted to speak on this issue today primarily because I serve in a parish in central Blackpool which is one of the nation's top ten most deprived areas in the country. We know that along with deprivation also comes mental health issues, but not just mental health, aspects of desperation and also aspects of depression. So it is not unusual for me to find myself counselling those who have attempted suicide or who have family members left behind when they have been successful in taking their own lives.

Those participating in the current Funerals pilot project are told that funerals hold significance for those who are left behind and also they provide great opportunities to meet the needs of pastoral care to families and friends from a Christian perspective. That is what we are concerned about doing, actually offering out the grace and mercy and love of God.

I suspect that the intention here with this motion is to do just that, to remove any obstacles, whether they are perceived or otherwise, that might actually impede the offer of pastoral care to survivors as well as family friends.

Recently two of our Readers actually attended special training for emergency suicide counselling. That is how dire the need is in Blackpool. But Christian funerals and burials give enormous hope to families and friends. They offer an affirmation also of the generous and gracious love of Jesus Christ that is reflected in our pastoral care and in our welcoming attitude and also our support.

I would plead with Synod, please put forward support for this motion so that we can move forward to remove anything that might impede in offering that type of care. Thank you.

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

*Revd Canon Susan Booy (Oxford):* Most or many of us will have shared difficult conversations with contemporary people about these difficulties. I know that this might sound odd but I want to bring a bit of unusual 19<sup>th</sup> century evidence and its current application and concern to Synod.

I want to begin by reading you something: “Reader, if thou hast the heart famed for tenderness and pity contemplate this spot in which are deposited the remains of a young lady whose artless beauty, innocence of mind and gentle manners once obtained her the love and esteem of all who knew her, but when nerves were too delicately spun to bear the rude shakes and jostlings which we meet with in this transitory world nature gave way, she sunk and died a martyr to excessive sensibility. Mrs Sarah Fletcher, wife of Captain Fletcher. Departed this life June 1799 in the twenty-ninth year of her age.”

It may sound odd to be quoting a tombstone but this is within the confines of my church. It is regularly visited. It often has flowers on it. The story goes that the people of the village petitioned the Oxford Assizes for Sarah’s burial within the church walls.

I bring it to you as evidence because of the number of visitors and the care they give this tomb to suggest that this is still a live matter of both justice and pastoral care. The very fact that we have sat here for almost an hour and debated this issue means that we must now send a clear message to all those who care for Sarah Fletcher’s tomb and for all those who care about relatives who have died in this way that the Church of England wish to be just and pastoral in this matter.

*Revd Thomas Seville (Religious Communities):* I had not put my name down to speak on this debate partly because of personal experience of close relatives who have killed themselves. One was a devout Christian, a daily communicant, but whose mind was ravaged by what we now call bipolar. Many of the suicide attempts were actually when he was as high as a kite. It is not simply a matter of depression. He was horrified when he was rescued, sadly not at the seventh attempt, at the idea of his committing suicide because he knew it was wrong.

I am just a little worried that in our proper compassionate response to this issue, and it is not an issue which will ever have closure, and I thank the Bishop of Sodor and Man for his comments on that, that we confuse the destructive reality of suicide. It is not a good. If you want to use the language of sin, I think that is quite proper but one has to be very careful about using sin in this kind of context. It is a gap, it is a horror, and it lasts. You can probably hear it in my voice. Commonly said, it used to be that it was a long-term solution to a short-term problem, that kind of little quip, but as I think many people who have responded to suicides know it is actually a short-term solution with a long-term problem, it is not just something which is over after the funeral, and that I think we do need to bear in mind.

I am still not quite sure whether I am going to vote for this motion. I think I probably will in the end but I am worried that in proclaiming the boundless mercy of God, which touches the darkest of dark places, we run a risk of qualifying what a horror suicide is, and it is a horror. Thank you.

*The Chair:* I can see one person standing and I think we can just squeeze him in, so if you would like to speak and after that, Mr Freeman, I would be delighted to hear from you.

*Revd Michael Booker (Ely):* Chair, thank you for calling me at the last moment. I would like to say that in my comfortable villages we have also had a number of suicides over the last few years, we think six, definition is not always easy. In at least one case very definitely chosen by someone of sound mind.

I want to speak in favour of this motion precisely because all of those suicides were of people in the first half of life, mostly young men, exactly the demographic we see so seldom in our churches. The church was packed and in some cases the churchyards have been packed as well.

I want to speak in favour as well not because they have been easy, they have been extremely difficult. We have not always been in the business of condoning. Often I or a colleague has had to be a voice pointing out that we are in a situation which should not have been. Sometimes friends have paid tribute in a way which has implied that here was the cheerful bloke who had had an unfortunate accident and I have had to name the reality. At other times there is the danger of collusion of saying the course chosen was understandable and perhaps to be commended, and I have had to express my theological reservations in the face of grieving relatives, not at a distance as a funeral is taken somewhere else by somebody else. If we do not take these funerals somebody else will and different things will be said.

If we have reservations about supporting this motion I would ask you to support it and then to take on the challenge of thinking how we as a Church express those reservations with love in pastoral conversation, not to step aside. Thank you.

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

‘That the question be now put.’

*The Chair:* I think, Mr Freeman, you may be the only person standing, but I am always grateful to you. I see no one standing now so I call on Canon Parsons to respond to the debate. He has up to five minutes.

*Revd Canon Michael Parsons:* Thank you everybody who has contributed to this debate from so many perspectives. Some have said, “Actually, no you are permitted to do a funeral perfectly well”. I think my reply to that is the legal waters are murky enough and give the impression of negativity, something needs to change there.

Particularly responding to Thomas Seville’s reply, to quote from the new Roman Catholic Catechism, which I did not have time to deal with: “We should not despair of the eternal salvation of persons who have taken their own lives. By ways known to him alone God can provide for salutary repentance. The Church prays for persons who have taken their own lives”. In 1983, the Vatican repealed Canon Law provision barring the burial of suicides in churchyards or church funerals.

Thank you, Elliot Swatridge, for a very, very helpful speech and for pointing out that it is young men who are the most vulnerable: young men who appear to be cheerful, young men who appear to be successful often. A colleague told me when he was working on the ministry team at Soul Survivor a few years back that they happened to say one evening that should anybody present have ever thought about ending their own life, if they would like some counselling afterwards there were one or two people who could help them. Over 100 young people turned up, they were working well into the small hours of the morning on that. This is not a problem that is going to go away.

Thank you to the various Liturgical Commission people. Yes, we do need extra material, that would be most helpful.

I am afraid having a law that indicates that we have some hesitation over the taking of a funeral service does not have a deterrent effect on the morality of the action beforehand. It is quite clear that actually what that Canon ought to be dealing with, it seems to me, is what do we do after the death. For instance, we take a funeral of somebody who is a murderer but that does not mean we approve of murder.

So many other people have spoken in so many other areas, basically supporting, one or two hesitations being raised. Thank you for the sensitive contributions and I think painful for those who were speaking from the experience of funerals of people who were close to them.

Let us be a Church that demonstrates very clearly that God accepts without limits and let us vote for hope. Thank you.

*The Chair:* I am willing to order a division of the whole Synod.

*The motion*

'That this Synod call on the Business Committee to introduce legislation to amend Canon B 38 so as to allow those who have taken their own life, whatever the circumstances, to be buried in accordance with the rites of the Church of England.'

was carried following a division of the whole Synod. The voting was as follows:

IN FAVOUR	262
AGAINST	5

6 abstentions were recorded.

*The Chair:* That concludes this item of business. Thank you for a thoughtful and sensible debate. It remains only for me to wish you *bon appétit*.

THE CHAIR *Mr Geoffrey Tattersall (Manchester)* took the Chair at 2.30 pm.

### **Liturgical Business: Alternative Baptism Texts (GS 1958A and GS 1958Y)**

*The Chair:* You will see that with an ever-diminishing voice we are on the home straight I think. For this item, members will need the Report of the Revision Committee, GS 1958Y, and the revised text of *Christian Initiation: Additional Texts in Accessible Language*, GS 1958A. I call upon the Bishop of Truro, Chair of the Revision Committee, to move Item 600. The Bishop may speak for up to ten minutes.

*The Bishop of Truro (Rt Revd Timothy Thornton):* I beg to move:

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

The texts introduced to Synod in July 2014 were drafted because of concerns that the *Common Worship* Initiation texts in their present authorized form are not accessible to those who are unused to attending church. They were intended as a practical and pastoral resource for those clergy who frequently conduct baptisms for "un-churched" families, often at services separate from the main Sunday morning act of worship. In these circumstances, the existing provision can seem complex and inaccessible.

The texts submitted for First Consideration had the benefit of being trialled in a number of parishes, something that had not happened to the original *Common Worship* provision for baptism. Thank you very much indeed to all those who were involved in those trials and for the very helpful feedback which we received.

The texts were generally welcomed by the Synod and many expressed a sense of relief that there was now alternative provision which would allow candidates to express their faith clearly and simply and take forward the mission of the Church. Nevertheless, there were a number of areas of concern raised both in the Synod debates and in the submissions to the Revision Committee.

At this stage, if I may, I would like to say thank you to a number of people and I would like to begin on your behalf, I hope that is all right with you, by saying a very particular thank you to Tim Hone who, as you know, has now moved on to a place in the far north but to whom we were very grateful on the Revision Committee, and I am sure Synod would also want to say a big thank to Tim for the work that he did caring for the Liturgical Commission in various ways, so thank you to Tim for that.

Can I also thank all those who served on the Revision Committee and those who advised and serviced the Committee, as well as all of those of you who made submissions either on paper or in person. Throughout the process, real concern was shown to give attention to different points of view. I hope people who came to the Committee or who sent in paperwork will feel that we really did try to pay attention to all that was being said to us. We tried to listen very carefully. The Revision Committee welcomed suggestions which helped to bring the texts into sharper focus, but of course were more resistant to those who wanted more complex language or to define the underlying theology simply along party lines.

Here I have to make a comment that I am very surprised indeed to find that members of Synod have been a bit lax, a bit lazy, I have to say. The eagle-eyed amongst you will have noticed - in fact nobody did notice - an inadvertent anomaly on page 1 of GS 1958Y. If you have it with you, you may want to look at it very carefully; I will say this only once. The heading should, of course, refer to "Additional Texts for Christian Initiation" - you see, you have noticed now, have you not? - as it does on the cover page and not to "Additional Eucharistic Prayers". Much more significantly, and you all have read the Report for which I give you great thanks, paragraph 34 of the Report should state that: "unhelpful to refer to a personification of evil in the form of the devil, in these alternatives texts", and not what it does say which may lead people to the opposite understanding.

The revision process needed to agree workable solutions where a number of options had been suggested. In most areas, there was a high degree of unanimity about the texts now before you that have been brought back to Synod. However, there were some areas of the rite where no single solution would or could resolve all the concerns of those involved in the process. Nevertheless, there was clear majority support for the version of the texts now submitted to Synod.

I would like now to look briefly at each group of the texts that come under those headings. Firstly the use of the words of Jesus from St Mark's Gospel 10.14: "Let the children come to me. Do not stop them." These are used at the Presentation of the Candidates. This was warmly welcomed by those who had used the trialled texts. This text has been included to express the church's welcome to children, not as a justification for infant baptism.

The Revision Committee also accepted a suggestion that the texts could be revised to more adequately express the love of God in the words: "Christ loves them and welcomes them into his Church." The rest of the Presentation has been made simpler and more direct and the questions have been reordered so that there is a more obvious progression through the journey of faith.

Secondly, in drafting the Decision, the aim was to express doctrinal matters in words which those participating could understand and to which they could respond with confidence. The section is introduced with a vivid reference to sin in terms of a separation from God. The references to the Good Shepherd and Prodigal Son were warmly welcomed by some who spoke in the Synod debate. After much discussion the Revision Committee accepted the suggestion that the question to the candidates could be made more doctrinally specific if the answers were simplified. Next, although only one line of the text for the Signing with the Cross differs from the suggestions originally presented to Synod, this text was rigorously discussed throughout the revision process. As you will all know, the biblical framework for this section is Ephesians 6.10-17. The texts are intended to refer to a strong position of standing with Christ against the power of evil. This is seen as a posture of confident resistance rather than an aggressive act and it deliberately stops short of the use of the word "fight". Those who work with young people gave consistent advice that references to the devil are likely to be misunderstood in today's culture. A clear majority of the Revision Committee agreed that it is helpful to refer to a personification of evil in the form of the devil and there was clear support for the text presented for authorization.

A number of revisions to the text of the First Prayer over the Water were agreed by the Revision Committee in order to express the ideas presented in the prayer as clearly as possible. The proposed text makes a clear reference to the choice between death and life offered to God's people by Moses in Deuteronomy 30.19 as well as incorporation of Christians, through baptism, in the death and resurrection of Christ.

There was considerable discussion about the Second Prayer over the Water. The proposed text echoes the biblical narrative more fully than the version proposed in GS 1958. However, it is important to remember that this is a liturgical text with resonances for baptism in general. It is not just a re-telling of the account of the baptism of Jesus by John. Other concerns about the Blessing of the Water were considered and a slight redrafting of the end of the prayer helps to present the underlying elements more clearly.

The suggested framework for the Commission has been amended to include specific references to discipleship, a suggestion from the submission process that we were happy to adopt.

I hope you can see from these comments how we have tried to respond and tried to work together as much as we could to achieve consensus. I hope therefore you can see that the revision that we present before you has had a clear majority of agreement, a lot of support from the trials around the country, and I now hope that we will get the support of Synod so that we can move forward.

*The Chair:* The matter is now open for debate. Can I remind members that it will not be in order to debate aspects of the liturgical business which are not addressed in the Revision Committee's Report, and because there are recommittal motions it will not be in order to debate any matter which is the subject of a recommittal motion.

*Revd Canon William Croft (Peterborough):* I have quite a specific point and it concerns



the first Prayer over the Water and the sixth line there which currently reads “who has rescued us from the deep waters of death”. I do not think this rings quite true. Christ goes through the waters of death for us, and that seems to be the more biblical idea. The people of Israel passed through the waters and in the rite obviously the person being baptized is dipped into the water. So the phrase “who has rescued us from the deep waters of death” does seem to me to ring a little oddly. It is as though water ought to be avoided, but obviously we are not doing that in baptism.

I would like to see that phrase looked at again, taking note perhaps of the following points, that Christ has passed through the deep waters of death, and that is a phrase used in the *Common Worship* rites, for example in the reception of a coffin before a funeral. The doctrinal point is that in baptism our old sinful humanity is drowned with Christ in the waters of baptism and that we die with Christ to be raised with him. So I would urge that this phrase as it is currently there in the first Prayer over the Water is looked at again.

*Revd Dr Joanna Spreadbury (St Albans):* Question: “Why do you want to be baptized?” Answer: “I have just got to. I want to be a follower of God and grow more like Jesus.” No, I am not suggesting yet more alternative wording that might delay this new provision further. The question and answer I have just quoted was part of a real conversation I had last week with Thomas, aged 6. Thomas is one of a pair of twins and after an all-age service in January at my church on the Feast of the Baptism of Christ, Thomas said to his mother that he wanted to be baptized. He said it with absolute conviction but in his own words: “I have just got to. I want to be a follower of God and grow more like Jesus.” I welcome the proposed Additional Text in Accessible Language.

Like Thomas, many young families and young people may not have a fully articulated theological rationale for why they are drawn to the Church, drawn to baptism, drawn to God. We need these extra resources and options to welcome them appropriately in a variety of contexts and settings, but they are not an end in themselves. We need skilled and sensitive clergy and ministers to use these resources and options well when families and those on the fringes come to enquire about christening and request baptism. I think we should note from the excellent work of the Christenings Project now coming to fruition, that it is “christening” rather than “baptism” which is the term most commonly used when this request is made. The language of these additional texts is direct and yet deep. The register and tone is fresh and yet still has a proper formality and resonance.

I have talked with Thomas and his family about a possible baptism date around Easter, sadly not in time to be able to use these proposed additional texts fully, but I will be paying attention to the helpful recommendations in the guidance notes, suggestions like those about how to word the Commission and adapt it to different occasions, candidates and groups. With 50 to 60 baptisms a year in my parish we have a wide variety of situations and contexts embodied. These options and opportunities need to be made available across the Church and made available soon. This is an opportunity that I should say as Chair of Praxis, the Praxis regions are eager and ready to take up, offering training days and regional events to encourage clergy and make all involved in baptism welcome across our churches. I would urge Synod to resist the delay that the two amendments are likely to entail. As the inspirational work of the Christenings

Project is rolled out across the dioceses, the timing of this is so opportune so that we make the most of every opportunity to welcome the newest members of God's family, to make new disciples and to grow God's church. To paraphrase Thomas' reply: "We have just got to. We want to make followers of God and help them grow more like Jesus."

*Revd Canon Dr Christopher Sugden (Oxford):* Chair, as a member of the Revision Committee, I want to commend warmly these texts as they stand to Synod and, for the avoidance of doubt, because I put it in after the debate we had on this in an earlier Synod, about the reference to the devil, to emphasise the Bishop of Truro's words, the issue is the accessibility of language and also understanding by those for whom these texts are intended. Nothing has changed in the doctrine of the Church of England. Nothing has changed in our *Common Worship* services of baptism. Nothing has changed. If we are going to help people understand, that is the role of catechesis, in which we point to the biblical references to the devil and his reality, but I think we can accept these texts as they stand as good enough and entirely designed properly for those for whom they are intended. May they be well used and may they contribute to our mission in this country. I would strongly support these texts as they stand.

*Revd Charlotte Gale (Coventry):* Having been excited by the prospect of these new texts at our discussions in July, I thought I would play fast and loose with Canon Law and try them out. On the whole I have found them really excellent. However, I do have just one point. The Bishop of Truro acknowledged that these texts are designed in part for those of us who, for a number of reasons, regularly conduct baptisms separate from usual Sunday worship. It seems strange then that at the Presentation of the Candidates, the whole congregation is asked to support the children being baptized and to help them to live and grow within God's family. This felt very odd to me in a context when most of the congregation had little or no familiarity with church. A simple change to "may address the whole congregation" would make all the difference.

*The Chair:* I see no-one else standing so I call upon the Bishop of Truro to reply.

*The Bishop of Truro (Rt Revd Tim Thornton):* Thank you very much to those people who have made comments. To Charlotte Gale, thank you for your comment. The title of the service is "Public Baptism" and therefore I think it is not possible for us not to assume there will be some members of the public there.

Canon Sugden, thank you for your comments. You used the phrase in what you said "for the avoidance of doubt". I think that is the definition of what we are doing here in General Synod. We are here to avoid any doubt whatsoever!

Jo Spreadbury, thank you very much indeed. Your comments helped me to remind Synod that of course the words are only one part of what we are doing in liturgy, and the guidance notes therefore are very important. We are very grateful to what Praxis have done and will go on doing in helping us think about the whole business of how we approach the activity and the way in which we use ourselves and all the various items that we might use as part of baptism as well as the language itself. Language of course, again as we know here, both unites us and divides us.

Finally, to Bill Croft, thank you very much indeed for your comments. I am advised that you might be right, which is a very worrying thing to know, is it not, but I am also advised that the House of Bishops has reserved powers in this case given the nature of it, so we would be happy to look at that, if that is okay with you, at that stage.

Other than that, thank you for your comments and I do hope that Synod will give these a very warm welcome as they are.

*The Chair:* We move to vote on Item 600.

*The motion*

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

*was carried on a show of hands.*

*The Chair:* We then turn to Item 601 which is a motion for recommital by the Revd Charles Read and I call him now to speak.

*Revd Charles Read (Norwich):* My proposal, which as you see refers to page 2 and lines 10 to 12, is to do with that rather controversial use of Mark 10.14 to which the Bishop of Truro has alluded. I hope that my suggestion, which is meant to be friendly and helpful, could be dealt with without taking up too much time by the Revision Committee. It is this: that we provide there another scriptural text which could be used as an alternative to Mark 10.14, or indeed alongside it, although perhaps without cluttering up the options there. The text I have in mind is one that will be very familiar to us by now from our work on discipleship which is the Great Commission in Matthew 28.19 and following.

My reasons for this are two-fold. One is, and I have to be honest about this, a negative reason, that I do think the use of Mark 10.14 in this context is not helpful. I know I am on a loser trying to argue that because the field-testing results are against me and, although I am geeky and nit-picky liturgist, even I know that you cannot argue against the general public.

Nevertheless, while I take the Bishop of Truro’s point that Mark 10.14 is not used here as a justification or mandate for infant baptism, I do think it is a use of the text that we have moved away from in liturgical revision in the last 50 years and it is odd to come back to it. I do have a negative reason but negativity is never enough and I have to leave that behind.

My positive reason is that I think given the option of using some or all of Matthew 28.19-20 (“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit”), I think this would give us a further missional opportunity and a missional depth to the text without cluttering up the language. We could even use that not just in the section at the top of page 2 to do with infant baptism; we could put it in further down the page for candidates able to answer for themselves.

My recommital proposal is that an alternative be given there from the Great

Commission. A minister might use either the Mark 10.14 text or the Matthew 28 text or indeed might use both.

I wonder if I could just indulge in a little bit of liturgical history. If you all sit perfectly still while I do this, no harm will come to you! There was a very good report that came to the Synod some years ago called 'On the Way'. Like many General Synod reports, it contained much that was very good, and it has since been forgotten. 'On the Way' was drafted by the late and, in my view, much lamented Michael Vasey, who was my predecessor on the staff at Cranmer Hall. Michael's vision was to try to tie together liturgical revisions. We were beginning then to produce what became eventually the *Common Worship* baptism text, tying together liturgical revision and evangelism and nurture courses like Alpha and Emmaus and a concern for nurturing discipleship and a concern for lifelong learning. The 'On the Way' Report has some very interesting things to say about tying all those disparate bits of church life together. I am rather sad that we have lost sight of it, but I think one very small thing that we might do to get that vision of tying all those things back together is to have a reference to the Great Commission in here at the point at which I am suggesting. As I say, I regard this as a friendly suggestion to the Revision Committee. I welcome warmly these texts in their present form. I rather hope we can just tweak it a little in order to have some missional and discipleship-affirming liturgy. That is essentially my positive reason for hoping that you will go with me in this recomittal motion.

*The Chair:* I call upon a member of the Steering Committee to speak for not more than five minutes in reply.

*The Bishop of Sodor and Man (Rt Revd Robert Paterson):* The proposal is that we should make this change and that it is not controversial. It is only controversial from one point of view. The Great Commission is one of the mandates for evangelism, catechesis (education) and baptism. It is a mandate for the whole church. Were one to use that text at this point in part of a service, which is designed for those who are on the fringe or probably beyond the fringe of the church, what one is doing is using the text in a way in which it becomes semi-intelligible. The argument that has been used has been expressed by Colin Buchanan. He wrote this to the Steering Committee: "This text was used by Cranmer [that is, the text we have in there, the text in the words of Jesus] as a kind of apologia for infant baptism and has been generally agreed over the last 50 years to be inappropriate as an apologia. This has been allied with the conclusion that an apologia for infant baptism cannot be written into the service with any integrity or conviction anyway and that the main characteristics of the baptismal rite must be equally applicable to all ages." I could not have put that better. The words of Jesus about welcoming children are inappropriate as an apologia for infant baptism because that is not what they are there for. We are not looking for a text at the beginning of this rite to provide scriptural justification for infant baptism in the face of those who very rarely, if ever, frequent the church and for whom the authority of Scripture is probably not one of their priorities.

The world has changed in the last five centuries, even in the last 15 years. Do I really have to explain that it is obvious why the text that we have put in the revised material is there? At the baptism of the children of people who have lost most of the language of church, these words of Jesus say clearly, "You are welcome". They do not provide a

mandate for anything, apart from a welcome. The text is a verse of the *Prayer Book* baptismal Gospel, but the way in which it is used is radically different from the way in which it was used in the 16th century. Before the synodical process, the Liturgical Commission in fact considered inserting a different possible alternative sentence, which it derived from Acts 2.39: "God's promise is to you and your children". If you were going to provide an alternative text, I think that one would be much better than the mandate for the mission of the church. But it was rejected, rightly I believe, though we are fully aware of the arguments that you have heard, because the text you have before you says it clearly and says it better and says "Welcome". I ask Synod to reject this motion.

*The Chair:* Unless 40 or more members stand in their places to indicate that they wish the debate to continue or a vote to be taken, the recommittal motion will lapse. Are there 40 or more members standing? I think, Mr Read, even I can count to one! So there are not 40 members standing and therefore I declare that the motion has lapsed and we move to Item 602 in the name of the Reverend Jonathan Frais and I call him to speak to his motion, 602, recommittal motion, and he has up to five minutes.

*Revd Jonathan Frais (Chichester):* So the target to beat is one! Chairman, thank you for calling me. Noah must be one of the most unloved people in the Church of England and it is Noah I want to talk about. He was not loved by the *Alternative Service Book*, nor *Common Worship* nor now by the authors of the text before us. Why is it that we do not particularly like him? Was it because of his career as a shipbuilder? He only got one on the go. Was it because of his great age? At the time of the Flood he was 600 years old. Is it his complicity in creating fossil fuels? The global flood compressing creatures by massive pressure, giving the appearance of great age, and people say they were millions of years on the go.

I love Noah and that is why I bring you his prayer. Liturgical aficionados will recognise of course it is just a modern translation of the prayer book, what we now call "Prayer over the Water". It is wonderful, this treasure of the Church of England. God saved Noah and his family in the ark, then, as you go down, so he received the child into the ark of the church, the child travels through the storms of this world until it comes to the land of everlasting life. A wonderful way of how to do liturgy.

It is not just that I enjoy the heritage of the Church of England, it is that I love to look also for connections and echoes of the Bible story in the world and where are they, what are the songs that are sung in nursery and play group, what are the decorations on the child's bedroom wall, what is in their books, what toys do they play with? The answer is they all know of Noah, the ark and the animals. What a golden opportunity to connect that yet again we have missed, but it is actually the starting point every time. It is there in the prayer book.

What should we do with this recommittal motion? The first thing to do is to recognise you can always pop it in as an *extempore* prayer anyway. Secondly, you can use it as a cracking children's talk. You can actually extend it into the homily for the baptism service or if you want - the target is one to beat - you could even vote for recommittal. Members of Synod, whatever floats your boat!

*The Chair:* With prizes for ingenuity, I call a member of the Steering Committee to respond.

*The Bishop of Sodor and Man (Rt Revd Robert Paterson):* I have a lot of sympathy with Noah. As a shipbuilder, what would I do living on the Isle of Man 60 miles off the English coast if I did not like shipbuilders, and he was very old and I am very old too. Compliments will be wonderfully received.

Jonathan Frais submitted a proposal that one of the prayers should be written adopting the imagery of the Noah story. That having been sympathetically, I may say, rejected, he has asked, as you have heard, for reconsideration, offering a third alternative prayer. The matter we have before us is additional to the liturgical provision both of the *Book of Common Prayer* and of *Common Worship*. With the seasonal prayers that were authorized along with *Common Worship*, it has been accepted at least to this point and certainly by the Steering Committee that two additional prayers are sufficient, one using a dominant Old Testament image and the other a dominant New.

The Committee was aware that the pictures of Noah's ark and the rainbow are very familiar to children and families, no question, and the music about Noah and so on, but their significance early in the story of salvation is very little known, and understood hardly at all. The ark, its animals and the rainbow are almost exclusively associated in the popular mind with ecological issues today. The consequence for us is that this well-known image would now require more rather than less exegesis, liturgical exegesis, today and this detailed exegesis simply cannot be encapsulated in a concise and accessible prayer. If you were to look at the *Book of Common Prayer*, you would see the magnificent Noah prayer, and it is a magnificent prayer, but it occupies some 15 or 20 lines of unlined-out text. It is a beautiful Cranmerian exegesis, but the prayer we have now, which is really not a translation of it - it hops about a bit - the prayer offered begins with Noah in Genesis, chapters 6 to 9, and then it jumps to Moses in Exodus, Chapter 14, it then moves on to the Gospels, then it returns to Genesis, makes a reference to the Spirit, introduces the new concept of the storms of life and leads us in the end not to Mount Ararat but to the shores of Lake Galilee. It is a valiant attempt - thank you for trying it, Jonathan - but it is one that we have all tried and we believe it cannot be done in today's context with conciseness and accessibility.

I am going to add this, although I was tempted not to. I have been reminded that Noah was the favoured image of the fourth century Donatists, who held the erroneous view that the effectiveness of the sacraments depended on the moral calibre of their ministers. The Noah story appealed to them because it made a clear distinction between those who were inside the boat and those who were drowning. Lest anyone should accuse the Church of England of setting Noah adrift, we have not. He remains there very firmly in the Prayer Book rite, a rite written not far off five centuries ago when people were a great deal more articulate about the Biblical story. I ask Synod to reject this motion.

*The Chair:* We have got the same procedure as before: unless 40 or more members stand in their places to indicate they wish the debate to continue or a vote to be taken, the recommittal motion will lapse. Are there 40 or more members standing? The answer is no so the motion lapses. That concludes Item 602.

The liturgical business entitled Christian initiation additional texts in accessible language now stands committed to the House of Bishops under Standing Order 77(f) and that concludes this item of business.

THE CHAIR *The Revd Canon Rosemarie Mallett (Southwark)* took the Chair at 3.08 pm

### **Mission and Growth in Rural Multi-parish Benefices: Report from the Mission and Public Affairs Council (GS 1985)**

*The Chair:* Good afternoon, Synod. We now come to Item 16, the report by the Mission and Public Affairs Council on Mission and Growth in Rural Multi-parish Benefices. You will need to have sight of GS 1985. I just want to warn Synod that there is a time health warning on this item as we must finish promptly by 4.45 pm. There are a number of people who have put in to speak and so, while we will start with the usual time limit of five minutes of speakers once the floor is open for debate, I may have to exercise the right to shorten the speech limit so as to allow as many to be heard as possible. I now call upon the Bishop of Knaresborough to move Item 16 and to speak for no more than ten minutes.

*The Bishop of Knaresborough (Rt Revd James Bell):* I beg to move:

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

Chairman, members of Synod, born and bred in a rural community, formed in discipleship at the start in a rural church, now having the privilege of seeking to encourage mission in the churches of the Yorkshire Dales, I give thanks for this opportunity to present the potential and the challenges faced by the rural church in our times.

The lively debate on the Common Good in the York Group of Sessions enabled reference to the significant contribution of the rural church, embedded as it is at the heart of so many places. It contributes to social capital and the vibrancy of our rural communities. The rural church, though, should not just be another social organisation but one that is able to proclaim the Gospel afresh in this generation. There is ample evidence this is happening in villages and towns right across the countryside. Just a few of the stories of impressive activities and initiatives are being shown in the pictures as I speak. There is also plenty of evidence that the rural church is able to grow, not least through its closeness to the community, the parish, it seeks to serve. *From Anecdote to Evidence* acknowledges that a greater proportion of the population relates to the Church often by attendance in the countryside, and drew our attention to the need to understand the barriers to fulfilling that potential as well as what contributes to effective growth. We know from the analysis in *Released for Mission* that the same proportions of urban churches as rural churches grow.

Rural is different and not just because it has a smaller population and longer distances to travel than urban areas, but because community and place still have a prominent role, particularly in the nature of the Church and so providing a potentially fertile ground

for sharing the Christian message. Rural covers of course a vast array of different contexts and communities. In places, the church is the last remaining open public building, creating good opportunities for mission and service through extended use by community groups and adaptation to provide other services such as a shop or post office. However, not every church building can be used in this way and maintenance is usually expensive and time consuming, so we urgently need to develop a new strategy to manage our buildings, as well as a strategy for filling them.

Stories can be told of growth and they regularly are in *Country Way*, published by the Arthur Rank Centre, through both the inherited church and through Fresh Expressions, Messy Church, schools and creative outreach initiatives. Stories can also be told of the impediments to growth, for example structures, governance and administration which our recommendations seek to address in significant ways.

I offer you some stories from my own area of North Yorkshire, the Dales area of the diocese of West Yorkshire and the Dales. A priest with responsibility for six communities within four parishes of Kirklington, Burneston, Wath and Pickhill asked her people what they wanted in terms of church. They said a service in each parish church at the same time every Sunday. Wait for it; she explained that since there was only one of her, this could not be Holy Communion. They said that was fine, so there is a service in each church each Sunday. The result is that weekly attendance has risen. It is not rocket science. The people know where the service is and when it is. I mean the people of the parish and not just the members of the church.

That provision for the parish rather than for the sake of church members or the benefice or indeed the priest can only happen because of two gifted Readers. There is still pressure on the resources and if this sort of aspiration, the service in each parish church at the same time each Sunday, were to be realised in just half of our rural churches, we need to recognise and release the gifts of lay people for leading worship and many other things in church and community.

At Thornton in Lonsdale the retired priest invited the PCC to exercise the ministry of visiting. The members agreed to visit every household in person twice a year. The congregation has increased. Again, the key was sharing responsibility, equipping the people not least by distributing authority, supporting and continuing to enable their ministry.

At Masham, just north of Ripon, the vicar has two benefices, one with two and the other with three parish churches and a chapel of ease. I will leave you to work out how many churchwardens, treasurers, PCC secretaries and PCCs that requires. There is concern about how when the self-supporting minister retires the excellent relationships that have developed with the three schools can be maintained. That of course moves us into the territory covered by the excellent *Working Together* report from the Board of Education. In other words, we need to learn how to do things together, enable and equip the ministry of lay people, share resources and ideas, but it also raises the issues of expectations, obligations, organisation and resources.

So many exciting developments in that neck of the woods, so much imagination, so many signs of growth, but how can we expect one priest to give the sort of leadership



across so many different churches and communities that will enable the body to grow? The multi-church unit has been the understandable response to the reduction in numbers of stipendiary clergy and the continued commitment to every parish. The multi-church group is a very different form of ministry to a single church, but we have allowed its development without corresponding attention to different collaborative styles of leadership, the skills required to prioritise, the discernment and development of the vocations and ministries of others and the expertise required to re-imagine pastoral care, communication, outreach and evangelism.

At Grewelthorpe - wonderful names we have in North Yorkshire - in the Fountains benefice, a multi-parish benefice with seven parish churches and two other licensed buildings, nine in total, I had the joy of celebrating the coming together of the parish church and the Methodist church. One village, one community, one church. There are examples like that of ecumenical partnership bearing fruit for witness for the Common Good. The chapel became a community resource and for the sharing of the good news of Jesus Christ. It felt like a movement of the Spirit, I can tell you.

There is room for so much more and significant encouragement to press on with the practicalities of the Covenant and other ecumenical partnerships would be timely. Our recommendations seek to address the issues that hinder the rural church in achieving its very real potential, realised in many places, despite the barriers. They are not directed at specific people or committees as the changes that are needed would have to be enacted by us all, from here at General Synod and the national church institutions to every church in every parish in every multi-church group. Dioceses will need to take every recommendation seriously in their strategy for mission and development and approach to training for clergy and lay people.

The foundation is of course a culture of discipleship in which all are enabled to participate in fulfilling the corporate calling of the Church. We warmly welcome the discipleship report and will work with this and others to produce resources shaped to the rural context. The research report *Released for Mission* is a starting point - it is a starting point - not only for significant change but also for further research, sharing of good practice, enabling and equipping of lay and ordained, which will be done in partnership with other denominations and the Arthur Rank Centre. We should not seek to do alone what can be more fruitfully done together. You should know, however, that this is a patient process of change. It is not a simple quick fix, but a programme of honest assessment and development that in some ways will feel radical and in other ways continue what is best in rural mission and ministry. The Rural Affairs Group is committed to seeing these recommendations through and so we will work with the Simplification Task Group, welcoming the opportunity for input extended earlier on by Pete Broadbent, and a very welcome offer that was. We will also work with the ministry division and dioceses to achieve the implementation of these recommendations seeking to release further the potential of the rural church as a place of growth in the Church of England. I look forward to your stories and suggestions, and I beg to move.

*Mrs Debra Walker (Liverpool)*: Liverpool is not a diocese that everyone automatically associates with green fields and rural communities. However, we do not wash our hands of this issue; quite the reverse.

In Liverpool we celebrate the joys of living in and amongst rural communities. My own parish of Lydiate and Downholland forms one part of a united benefice with the neighbouring village of Halsall. Each of the villages within the benefice has particular challenges. Haskayne village is within the parish, approximately two miles from the church. The village has no bus service, making it extremely difficult for those without a car to attend. The church itself is not situated in the centre of the community but is surrounded by fields with no more than ten to twelve houses within easy walking distance. Parishioners wishing to attend services need transportation and it requires a particular effort to attend. Additionally, for those who drive to church there is insufficient car parking, resulting in many of the congregation parking on muddy grass verges along a narrow lane, busy with farm traffic. The uniformed organisations meet regularly in premises remote from the church, furthering the disconnect between the church and parishioners. It is also of note that throughout the united benefice there are no churches other than the two Church of England churches and one Roman Catholic church. Local ecumenical initiatives are therefore limited.

Opportunities for mission require innovative thinking. The vicar has regular contact with children and parents at the church schools. He is a regular visitor at school and this has fostered personal relationships with parents who are then more open to the idea of attending church. Other opportunities may be to use the three church schools, each situated within the heart of its own village. Perhaps these could be used as worship centres, not always ideal but an opportunity awaiting further exploration. There are the inevitable questions around how well those who expect a traditional church ministry will adapt or even if they will try this new approach and of course how easy will it be to harness the support of a settled congregation.

We should also be aware that responsibility for mission does not lie solely at the local level. Much of the farmland in the united benefice is owned by Church Commissioners and several families' livelihoods depend upon the Commissioners. The interaction between tenants and landowners in this environment can have a profound effect on mission throughout the whole community.

Liverpool diocese welcomes this report and most definitely owns the challenge of growing the church in rural multi-parish benefices. Thank you.

*Revd Canon James Allison (Leeds):* I am also a Rural Officer in Wakefield and Huddersfield Episcopal areas, which is my kind of hobby really. I have been a priest for 25 years and 18 of those years I have been a vicar of growing churches for which I praise God and the people I have worked with. Eighteen of those growing years have also been in rural churches, multi-church benefices. Being a vicar in more than one church has made my life not more difficult but definitely more complicated. I actually managed for five years when I first started with two churches to do two midnight communions at Christmas. I am still not quite sure how it happened, but there was a speeding car involved and I tried not to look at the speedo as we were doing it. Despite all this, I do not think any of my time has been less fruitful. What I have battled with more than anything else, and I battle with now as a new Rural Officer, is the perception that this story cannot possibly be true. The narrative for multi-church benefices in rural areas is obviously they are in decline. Now this would not be such a bad thing if it was people who were in these churches who were saying this. The problem is that the story

has become so pervasive and so pernicious that people in rural areas start to believe it themselves. I will never forget standing in a church surrounded by small children that I kept tripping over with one of the members telling me, "The big problem is that we have no children here", and I kept saying, "What's that then?"

On a more serious level, and this is from evidence to anecdote, I was talking in one of the big country town churches and somebody there was saying they tried to get some of their SSMS to go out and do work in the surrounding country parishes which were a bit short of ministry, and the reply was: "No, we're not going to go" and also the reply was "Aren't they all dead anyway?" which is shocking and they should be ashamed of themselves.

I think we need a new story. I think we need the story that this Report begins to tell. It is my story but I also know it is the story of many others in rural multi-parish benefices. Growth is possible. Rural communities can be transformed. People can be drawn to faith in Jesus.

Now we do need to loosen things up a bit. Some of the rules make it difficult for us but you have heard the creative ways in which we find to work within them and, shall we say, beyond them.

I hope some of you here are fans with me of *Father Brown*. The body count now for the current series is about 25. I deliberately do not watch *Midsomer Murders* because I think it is in the thousands now in that poor village. My worry is that the story we see in the media of the rural community as a place where there is death is also now being told about the churches in rural areas too and it will not do. Multi-parish benefices can grow, and more importantly do grow, but need some help and need some confidence to see that growth that is happening and to dream that it might happen there too.

I commend this Report to you. Start telling a new story. I am so excited that God by his spirit is on the move in rural areas, so let us tell that story, shall we. Thank you.

*The Bishop of Dover (Rt Revd Trevor Willmott)*: Like Liverpool, Canterbury may not be a diocese that many people immediately assume to be rural but in fact we are 85% a rural diocese and it is out of that experience I want to speak.

Bishop James has rightly, I think, drawn attention to the Report 'Moving from Anecdote to Evidence'. One of the downsides of that Report in our experience is that national rhetoric has now taken hold that rural churches are not viable business units, but rather like some political parties we can seem to be veering towards forgetting the predominant constitution that makes us what we are. We are not called to be a viable business unit, we are called to be a community; a community of people that gather not for themselves but in service. I welcome immensely that comment just made about a new story.

The paucity of personnel and costs of service delivery are not solely a church problem. In my own county, for example, we are currently in need of 400 GPs by 2020 if we are to fulfil the health requirements of the County of Kent. One of the things we need to do

perhaps is to encourage people to move away from some areas where they find life comfortable and come and join us where life is hugely enjoyable but challenging.

I want to say there needs to be a much greater commitment towards partnership with the wider community. I welcome the Report but I despair of two things. First of all, we are merely asked to say we “take note”. So often in this chamber “taking note” means “It’s a good idea, let’s say yes and put it away”. Secondly, the picture on the front of the Report. It merely shows us being church in church, but in the rural community church is church when it is truly in partnership with its wider community.

One simple example from my own diocese: over the past two years we have set aside what we have called ‘seedcorn’ money to enable many multiple parish communities to work with their partners. What has happened is the discovery that the wider community says, “We never knew your story. We never knew you were here, and thank God you are”. That seedcorn money is bearing huge fruits already in leveraging new monies to develop the buildings we have in the service of the community. I would like to suggest that working in partnership with others, if we are to have five priorities, ought to be one of those five because that is where our future lies.

Two more points and then I will stop. We discussed much yesterday about simplification, and I welcome all of that, but again anecdotal evidence points out that multi-parish benefices do not seem to work, and I would be the first to say they do not work if all we do is put parishes together and say to a priest, “Run a bit faster”.

Before we begin pastoral reorganisation we have to gain the will and the consent of the communities to change their internal governance, not in the future but now. Again, we can give good examples in Canterbury where that is happening, where people are saying, “Yes, we want to be church, we can’t continue as we are, let’s change it now”.

Thirdly, the comment about ministry. I think it would do us no harm to rediscover the parson in our community. Not necessarily ordained, but that person who is absolutely the one around whom people say, “Here we find the Gospel being lived. Here we find authority and leadership”. Identifying that person, with Bishop James again, we can find in every community in a multi-parish benefice worship being offered Sunday by Sunday by Sunday.

I would also want to say that perhaps it challenges some of our training processes, again much discussion yesterday, so we do not put somebody through a hugely long process at the end of which we say, “You are what we thought you were at the beginning, we have just stopped you doing it for x number of years”. In other words, be the focal person, be the parson in our community. I welcome the Report but let us go further than just noting it and get on with some actions.

*Ven Karen Gorham (Oxford):* Chair, I was delighted to read this Report and its recommendations as it gives us a realistic picture of the rural church today. As Archdeacon of Buckingham, supporting church life in such diverse communities as High Wycombe, Slough and Milton Keynes - yes, those we have heard of - and ministry in Mursley, Lavendon and Hardwick - more lesser known - I am becoming more and more aware of the disparities with the urban and suburban church largely resourced, gathered

and populated for mission and growth and the rural multi-church, often multi-parish benefice struggling with so many pressures to deal with, its mission severely constrained.

Let me illustrate. The Vicar of Bernwode Benefice attends seven PCCs, has seven open churchyards and seven APCMs. She has fortunately, at the moment, 14 great churchwardens. The only perk being invited to seven Harvest Suppers. The Vicar of Biddlesden, one of five of her churches, spends most of her time writing to the owner of the local manor house to ensure he leaves the gates open so the parishioners can attend Sunday Worship in the grounds. The Vicar of Hillesden, one of four churches, is responsible for an historical listed building in need of £1 million worth of expenditure with an average congregation of ten. The congregation of Twyford, one of eight churches, face their church being cut off from the rest of the community by HS2. It is not unusual for a lone churchwarden to triple up as treasurer and chief fundraiser and in appointments herding numerous parish reps and patrons can get in the way of the care of candidates. All demonstrating that in many places there is very little capacity to develop mission and ministry because of pressure, paper and process.

Yet our rural clergy and lay leaders can be found chatting quite naturally about faith in the pub, shop and community gathering. They are looked upon as holy men and women for spiritual counsel and to bring meaning to community life. Our rural multi-parish benefices demonstrate extraordinary lay commitment. In Buckland, the church is also the local village cinema. In Kimble it is going to become the extension of the village school. In many of our multi-parish benefices, the numbers of outsiders who gather week by week for weddings and baptisms and experience the Christian church often for the first time can be 50 times that of the regular Sunday attendance. Church funerals are still popular with whole villages often turning out to hear the Gospel. All these opportunities are not always experienced in our urban settings.

Yet we could still do more. The Vicar of Waddesdon, for example, wants to reinvigorate her dwindling church and literally turn part of the listed building into a bakery. The congregation of Olney, a small market town, wants to share its resources with surrounding villages. The churchwardens in other places want to be trained in leading worship. None of these are impossible but all are hampered by the pressures and challenges outlined in our Report. We have laity waiting to be freed to do mission, we have called and committed clergy not content to merely collect butterflies like their predecessors, so we need to do all we can to free deeply committed people to be the people God wants them to be, to harness the energy in what are often vibrant communities and make possible what is currently impossible as much as is possible.

In Bucks we are doing what we can to address some of the issues and are currently looking to appoint a full-time area dean for rural mission and development. I am grateful for this important Report as it links the rural church with much of what we have been talking about this week in terms of simplification, discipleship and resourcing. I urge Synod to take note of this report ensuring that the future of the rural church and multi-church group not only survives but thrives. Thank you.

*Ven Christine Hardman (Southwark):* It was in the village parish where I began my ministry that I encountered the custom of Beating the Bounds on Rogation Sunday. Our

walk leader was a rigorist in terms of boundary accuracy and, as I lost a boot in the mud and fought through the brambles, a fellow walker said, "Doesn't the Church of England have its parish boundaries in some inconvenient places". Well, sometimes yes it does. Boundaries that once made sense in terms of a governance unit can, as times change, become a hindrance to the effective cure of souls within a community.

In the newly formed Salisbury Parish and Benefice of Salisbury Plain, this Rogation Sunday last in 2014 saw something very new and very special. The new parish and benefice was formed from four former parishes of Chitterne, Orcheston, Shrewton and Tilshead into one parish, one benefice. On Rogation Sunday, walkers from each of the four churches set off on different routes. They walked from their church to the point on Salisbury Plain where the boundaries of their four former parishes touched. They walked to a point of meeting in a plantation nearby where there was car parking for those who could only come by car. Prayers were said. Lunch was prepared. Bacon butties were eaten. Nearly 90 people aged from six months to over 80 celebrated their Christian life together in their new parish and benefice. It was good and they are going to do it again this year.

Our daughter married a farmer, whose family have farmed in Shrewton and Orcheston for three generations. With the arrival of grandchildren, one of whom is disabled, we have spent a considerable amount of time in the village of Shrewton. I watched with sadness as Shrewton Church endured a vacancy that lasted for two and a half years. The church members, retired priests, SSMS, did a fantastically valiant job in keeping things going but that is what it was, struggling to keep things going with a slow but remorseless decline. To my joy, the last 15 months have seen the most wonderful - and it is fantastic - turnaround in all four churches in the new Salisbury Plain Parish and Benefice. There have been two factors that have brought this about.

The first, well done Salisbury Diocese, in making the right appointment. The first rector of the parish and benefice, Eleanor Rance, has the vocation, the joy and the gifts to minister in a rural village context. Interestingly, she has never done rural ministry. She was Southwark and then an RAF chaplain for ten years, but in the RAF she knew the importance of community. An RAF base is a community, you do not just minister to those who come to church. She instinctively knows about the importance of the embeddedness, getting in there in those four village communities. She knows how to help people find the courage to work with change and she has got the imagination to say, "What do we need here? What are we not doing that people are not coming?" So new services have been started, 30 minute family services, all ages across the communities are being cared for. Dementia Friends, oversubscribed, meeting in the churches. A wonderful appointment.

But I talked to her - she could not have said that about herself - and I said, "What is it do you think has contributed to this story?" and she said, "It's the structure". The four villages were in a group of four parishes in a 12 parish team; they now are one parish in a single united benefice. They have eight churchwardens who support and help each other, one PCC. Individuality and identity of each place sustained and encouraged by Eleanor, but she does not have to do four PCCs with all the stuff that involves. It is absolutely wonderful and I hope that when parishes come together, as they will need to do, they will not automatically use the default of a multi-parish benefice but the Rural

Affairs Group will help people to look at examples like this to see in some instances there will be a good alternative which will give a wonderful structure in which everyone is freed to work for the mission of God and to renew and grow God's church.

*The Archbishop of Canterbury (Most Revd and Rt Hon Justin Welby):* We have heard in this Report and in the comments that have been made much about the immense importance of community.

Having spent seven years in what, according to the definition in the excellent Report, is a rural parish - I did not think it was but now I know better, it was 8,000 - one of the key things one recognises is that community and the centrality of the church to that community and the symbolism of the centrality of the church continues in rural areas very, very extensively. If you have community it works because of relationship. It cannot work on the basis of formal structures; it has to work in the way that people have been describing so far. Therefore, Bishop James mentions the two gifted Readers. That is all about relationship in the community. It is emphatically something that cannot be clericalised. If it is to work at all it must work because it is community reaching community, melding into community and drawing people in.

Thus, my great concern in reading this Report is very similar to that which Bishop Trevor, who for obvious reasons I know reasonably well, put forward. No, we have not conspired on this. I do agree with him very strongly. First of all, we cannot go forward on the assumption that we can simply do more with less, and it is going to be a lot less. We have to face the facts that we have seen over the last couple of days and know that part of the cost of that is more and more stretching, particularly in rural areas. If we take the same approach that we have always taken it will be a disaster and the clergy who are put in those areas will be worn out to little effect. There has to be a radical rethink.

I also agree with Bishop Trevor about my disappointment that this is simply a "take note", it does not have the urgency that this needs. This is a really huge opportunity for the Church. If we get this right churches will grow and develop and serve their communities and be a blessing and benefit to them very quickly and very effectively indeed. He spoke of the need to relook at issues of training and the role of the parson in the old sense. That comes back to relationship. I want to echo that very strongly and agree with him very strongly indeed.

It is also clear that we have to continue to work very hard on the issue of buildings. Buildings can be a great blessing or a great difficulty. With support from the right people you can turn the difficulty into a blessing. I started with one that had poor lighting, no sound system, and if there was heating it was purely decorative. It was what we called placebo heaters because they were high up and red, so they looked warm but did nothing. We had them in Liverpool Cathedral as well but that is irrelevant. Central help in dealing with that, is what can transform something that feels like a huge burden to something that becomes an enormous benefit to the community, which has happened since I left that church.

I do hope that we will recognise the urgency of the situation, the need for a fresh look at how we train parsons in rural areas, the need for a deep aversion to clericalism and the drawing in of communities that make communities, and a really radical look and urgent

look at buildings, which I know that the Bishop of Worcester is already deeply committed to doing.

*Mrs Anne Martin (Guildford):* I welcome this Report and I am proud as a member of the Rural Affairs Group for the clear assessment it gives of the rural church and the five priorities it identifies for growth. In particular, I would like to draw your attention to the fifth priority on page 3, the “facilitation of creative ecumenical partnerships”. I have been excited over the reports of the task groups that we have debated but I have been saddened by the lack of mention of ecumenicalism and on the concentration on the growing and resourcing of the Church of England because I want to be part of the growth of the Christian church with other Christians and not just concerned with the future of the Church of England.

In a significant number of rural areas, working ecumenically is not only a desirable aim but a necessity and fruitful for church growth. This is somewhat close to my heart. I grew up in the Church of England, my husband grew up in the Church of Scotland. When we first went to church together as students we went to Wesley Methodist in Cambridge and it was a Roman Catholic preaching. And that is where I come from.

I am very lucky to live in a very beautiful village on the Surrey/West Sussex border on the edge of Guildford Diocese which has a strong sense of community. This is enhanced by the cooperation between the three churches: Anglican, Roman Catholic and Baptist. This includes a pastoral scheme organised with somebody in every road from one of the churches, a jointly run coffee café for mothers and children, a meeting place for the elderly, joint services, a biannual welcoming lunch for new people to the village. It is known the churches work together and we can achieve so much more together, and that is essential in much more rural areas than I live in, for example the extraordinary work that is going on in the Carlisle Diocese.

I hope when ‘Resourcing the Future’ is considered, thought will be given to how joint funding can work and that ecumenical ministry is supported.

On the subject of finance, recognition all must be given to the fact that resourcing and maintaining rural ministry is more expensive than maintaining ministry in towns and cities. I hope that this Report will give encouragement to supporting rural mission and ministry. Thank you.

*Dr Christopher Angus (Carlisle):* Cumbria certainly has its share of rural parishes. As a representative of Carlisle Diocese, I would like to thank the Mission and Public Affairs Council for producing this well researched and well thought out Report. Our recent work in this area allows me to readily endorse in particular the nine recommendations that it makes.

We are in the process of implementing a diocesan vision and strategy firmly aimed at numerical and spiritual growth with God for all and growing disciples as central themes. What started as an Anglican strategy has developed and evolved to become an ecumenical strategy in partnership with the Methodist and United Reform churches in Cumbria.



One particular strand of the overall strategy has been a ministry strategy looking at how we should organise ourselves across the county in order to increase levels of ministry and outreach, sustaining and growing our existing churches and congregations whilst establishing other forms of church and reaching out to all who live and work and visit Cumbria, and of course in the face of falling numbers of stipendiary clergy in the coming few years.

The pattern that we are adopting is to establish mission communities, groupings of Anglican parishes and Methodist and URC churches and congregations. Mission communities can take different forms but each will have a mission community leader, normally an ordained minister from one of the partner denominations, and each church or congregation will have a designated and dedicated church leader. I think that is the parson that the Bishop of Dover really referred to.

The community will have a team of stipendiary and self-supporting ordained ministers and lay ministers, and we are looking for a significant increase in the numbers of both self-supporting ordained ministers and lay ministers because we need them if we are to support more forms of church and increase mission and outreach.

There is obviously somewhat more to the strategy than I have been able to outline but time is brief. Just over a year ago in October 2013 the ministry strategy as we had then formulated it was presented to diocesan synod and it has to be said was not enthusiastically received. What was clear was that the strategy was not yet ready for the people and the people were not yet ready for the strategy.

Instead of endorsing the strategy, synod agreed that we should spend the year exploring the strategy on the ground, taking feedback, responding to issues and refining the strategy. Deaneries in partnership with the local Methodist and URC churches were encouraged to start exploring how they might form mission communities in their areas. A small advisory group was formed to engage with the strategy, liaise with the deaneries and people on the ground, seek feedback on the process and issues that were arising and to advise on the way forward.

A year later, having done that work, we were in a very different position. We had learnt an enormous amount, we had a crisper and clearer strategy that took into account the feedback and suggestions that we had received over that year and which removed some of the misunderstandings that had grown up. We had a clear view of the issues that had come up and where necessary had determined how to resolve them, or many of them. We also had a much clearer idea of the things that we felt were necessary to achieve a real prospect of success.

Synod, having listened to our feedback and read the strategy, now enthusiastically endorse the revised strategy with only four dissenting voices and one abstention.

One key problem that we have had to tackle is the impression that the strategy is essentially top-down, it is about telling the parishes what they should do and how they should do it. But a crucial aspect of the strategy is that its outworking has to be determined locally by the people on the ground. It is for them to determine the nature

and shape of their communities and the form of missions and outreach they will engage in under the care of their mission community leader.

There is also a key problem in terms of the ask of the clergy: a changing role in terms of spending more time on the things for which they were individually best equipped and less on running the churches, a greater focus on those outside the church and less on those inside, a more collegiate way of working, a willingness to relinquish some of their day-to-day control in the parishes and move to much more enabling forms of leadership.

In developing and reviewing our strategy we have been considerably helped by the excellent report *From Anecdote to Evidence*. This provides yet more immensely helpful input as we move forward into the real implementation phase.

If I had the time I would happily talk about our experience in much more detail and how it resonates with this Report but I have to be mindful of the red light. Let me conclude that it is experience of that year which allows me to say that I think that every member of our advisory group would heartily agree with every one of the recommendations in this Report and the five priorities set out in the preface.

It would be tempting to pick out one or two as being particularly important to emphasise, for example, the need for much greater lay leadership, but our experience suggests that all are important. We thoroughly commend this Report.

*Revd Canon Dr Dagmar Winter (Newcastle):* As a member of the Rural Affairs Group I want to pay tribute to the work that has gone into producing the green-coloured Report that is before you. Thanks not least to our National Rural Officer, Canon Dr Jill Hopkinson.

It is fortuitous that we should be receiving this Report and having this debate in the same session in which we have looked at the various task group reports for there is clear convergence. I am, well we are, hugely grateful for the offer of the Bishop of Willesden on behalf of the Simplification Task Group to receive and work with suggestions on what would make life easier and free up rural churches. We have heard of the rules and regulations that might make sense where there is one priest, one church, one building, and they suddenly become unwieldy and a real hindrance to life and mission in the multi-church, multi-parish benefice context, church representation and meeting rules not making common sense any more. Some Canons are already frequently flouted, e.g. where church communities from different parishes work well together there may not well be a Communion service in every parish every Sunday yet the worship life is thriving, as in the example from North Yorkshire which the Bishop of Knaresborough gave.

In my own rural parishes in Northumberland, we submit quite odd statistics for Christmas and Easter, with alternately one of the churches recording no worshippers at all at these most important feast days, because of us all coming together in one of our each reasonably large-sized churches at a main morning time, with a united benefice choir and so on, is a much-loved huge occasion, and it draws everyone to the one church, whatever parish they are from. I will not bore you with the details of how long it took and what an epic act it was when we merged two parishes.

One of the reasons why rural churches offer such huge mission opportunities, and the Archbishop of Canterbury has mentioned it already, is the nature of personal relationships in small communities. The boundaries between church community and village community are very porous and there is a great sense of ownership of the village church even by those who would not normally dream of coming on a Sunday morning. I suppose one of the big advantages is simply also when I think back to my suburban ministry days, people actually know where the church is located. Building further on these personal relationships, caring occasional offices which reach deeply into the village when it becomes apparent that you really care - you, the parish priest, the lay minister, the church wardens, the PCC, the local ministry group - because you are involved or get stuck in, in the village activities that benefit the whole community, building on personal relationships. It is easy to start new traditions, such as important village occasions being graced by a service in church; the Sunday service after the Saturday fête taking place in the big tent on the village green, suitably informal; Holy Week craft activity which introduces the Easter story; getting local joiners and electricians involved in creating an Easter trail in church, a kind of Stations of the Cross for Holy Week, attracting people to visit quietly on their own as well as school groups; or using the village hall for free, for play and pray. So the church, the Christian faith, is woven into the fabric of community life.

But there is another task group, the Discipleship Task Group, and it is here, too, that there is further convergence with the work of the Rural Affairs Group. One of the things that was for me the constant challenge as a rural incumbent was to get the balance right between inclusivity and distinctiveness in the life of our church. We must be open and inclusive in our village community, of course, otherwise no mission is possible, but it will not do at all to try and divide the community. Generous inclusive openness is only worthwhile if we are also clear and confident that there is something very distinctive that we bring to the table, and it is here that the discipleship theme is hugely important; an understanding of discipleship that needs to be developed in a rural context where lives are lived very differently and relationships are experienced differently than in a suburban context, so the Rural Affairs Group looks forward to working with the Discipleship Task Force as well.

Please support this Report for the rural church of our country. Vote yes and release us even further into mission.

*Revd Canon Tony Walker (Southwell and Nottingham):* I welcome very warmly this Report and this debate and I want to see all these recommendations carried out urgently. It is really encouraging to have some joined-up thinking about multi-parish benefices and mission.

I am team rector of one of the largest multi-parish benefices in the country, with 27 parishes across some 80 square miles. Last week I gained a new colleague. She was licensed in a freezing cold church with what the Archbishop of Canterbury described as “placebo heating”. After 20 months of advertising and looking unsuccessfully for a half-time clergy person to take charge of five rural parishes, we have appointed a half-time stipendiary lay woman to do the job instead. Does that mean a lay person is second best? No, it means that this particular lay person, Angela, a Reader, is responding

more imaginatively and more faithfully than clergy to the call of discipleship and mission in a tough area.

But it raises interesting questions about her continuing ministerial development. She is effectively going to be seen as the incumbent of those parishes, but she has not done curate training, let alone first incumbency training. We are having to devise a bespoke training scheme from scratch. Angela's appointment also raises an interesting question about how sacramental provision should be offered and provided by the clergy members of the team and the local retired clergy. It is early days yet, but almost certainly Angela's presence in our team will bring about greater collaboration amongst the clergy than would have been the case if a clergy person had been appointed to that post. It will be interesting to see if the result will be that there are more or fewer services of Holy Communion and whether fewer Communions will result in more mission and more people coming to the churches. It also raises again the question of administrative support. I welcome in particular recommendation 5 on page 31 in *Released for Mission*. The plea is that the provision of paid administrative support should be seen as an enabling resource which releases time and energy amongst clergy and lay people and should therefore be a legitimate call on mission funding.

Our diocese is, rightly, very committed to the development of Fresh Expressions of Church, but a frequent refrain from our clergy in rural multi-parish benefices is that if they did not have to spend so much time on routine and emergency administration, they themselves would be able to take the initiative and develop contextually relevant Fresh Expressions of Church. It would be wonderful if one result of this Report and this debate is that dioceses with rural multi-parish benefices would undertake to fund the employment and training of one or more administrators to take on the faculty and funding applications and all the other administrative burdens of rural buildings and see that as a genuine contribution to mission in rural areas. It is true that administration costs money, and diocesan money is not always understood in rural areas.

So a final plea, the Bishop of Knarborough referred to the need to develop resources for discipleship relevant to rural communities, and one of the areas where I think that is lacking at the moment is discussion of the financial and stewardship side of discipleship. I would love to see better resources for helping rural communities to grasp the joy of sacrificial giving and also to feel that the diocese is on their side, not the one that is taking their financial resources. Some element of discipleship to do with that would be a real help in enabling a partnership between the dioceses and the rural multi-parish benefices to enable the church to grow in all those areas.

*Mrs Anne Foreman (Exeter):* As someone who served as lay chair of a deanery synod, I welcome any attention focusing on rural ministry, so I would like to thank the Bishop of Knarborough for urging us to discuss the research and the recommendations contained in GS (Misc) 1092.

Members of Synod will know that we have had reports on rural issues before. Remember *Mission-shaped and Rural* and of course the Arthur Rank Centre produces helpful material such as the report on *Resourcing and Training for the Rural Church*. They produced that in 2011 and it mapped out the experience of contemporary practitioners and churchgoers, but, frankly, such reports have not had the impact as

doubtless their authors would have wished. Will *Released for Mission* have more of an impact? I think that it will and I think that it will because of its connection to the work of the task groups and the support given to the motions yesterday.

Before I say a little about that, I want to make one or two comments about the Report itself. First of all, though it paints a picture that I recognise of challenge and optimism, of faithfulness and innovation in rural church groups, in our diocese, we, like Carlisle, speak of “mission communities”, and Southwell and Nottingham might like to know we recommend that they all have at least 20 hours’ admin for each mission community. When first reading the report and the nine recommendations, it left me feeling a little bit like Oliver and saying, “Please, Sir, I wanted more”, because although the Report professes to paint a comprehensive picture of rural ministry, and paragraph 29 does acknowledge that rural England is a very diverse place, the Report does not touch on the shades of difference that exist. In the Exeter Diocese, for example, rural ministry in North Devon is completely different from that in Mid Devon; that of the farming community is different from that of communities that rely on tourism; villages and hamlets where incomers outnumber the local families face different issues again. The foreword to the Report acknowledges that rural society is changing fast and so I hope that more work will be done to identify the variety of rural contexts that exist in order to respond effectively to them.

The other aspect of the Report, it touches but does not expand on, is the fact that in rural areas disadvantage is dispersed and difficult to identify. Though the statistics might show that in a rural area you are less likely to be unemployed, you are less likely to have a low income, be without qualifications or skills, be anxious or die prematurely, the reality can be of asset rich (you picture that idyllic cottage or the Devon longhouse) but very cash poor in the households in our communities. You will not find, for example, many Gift Aid boxes ticked on the envelopes in the collection plates of many a rural church, since a good number of parishioners do not earn enough to pay tax.

As for anxiety levels or premature death, then I suggest the Farming Community Network might tell a very different story. They re-branded their name from Farm Crisis Network last year in order to encourage people to be in touch before things reached crisis level. Suicide rates among farmers are among the highest in any occupational group.

Turning to the recommendations, the Bishop of Knaresborough describes the picture painted as giving grounds for optimism and hope. Growth, the Report says, is being realised, but more needs to be done, and the recommendations are practical, achievable and provide a short agenda. The agenda they offer may well be short and practical, but achievable? Until yesterday I was not sure about that. However, the significance, and they were so significant, of the motions supported yesterday and the commitment to action and the changes implicit in them gives me hope that this Report and its recommendations will result in mission and growth.

May I give some examples. From the discipleship one, in rural communities such as Exeter, service to neighbour is the heartbeat of the community, and it results in the growth of people belonging, but attention does I think need to be paid to empowering lay people in particular to contribute towards transforming that belonging into believing,

in order that those “belonging” activities do move and are more than just an alternative leisure activity that is part of being part of the rural community.

From the resourcing, yes please, equip people for collaborative ministry. This really is a no-brainer. Rural commissioned communities will not grow with clergy or laity unable or unwilling to embrace the concept, and simplification and the others. Please support this.

*The Bishop of Bath and Wells (Rt Revd Peter Hancock):* In Bath and Wells, we are very fortunate to have a diocesan Rural Life Adviser, and please note the title; he is a Rural Life Adviser, rather than a rural church adviser. He is an extraordinary resource to the parishes and the deaneries. Earlier in the week he sent me an email encouraging me to vote in favour of this motion. But I do not need any encouragement; this Report before us is excellent, it is attractive and it is informative. It describes in both qualitative and quantitative terms the challenges and the opportunities, the difficulties and the delights of rural ministry. Many of the contributions this afternoon have picked up all four of those. Nor do I feel the need to encourage Synod to take note of this Report. I am confident that Synod will give it overwhelming support this afternoon.

But I will encourage Synod and I will take back to the Diocese of Bath and Wells the encouragement to do more than take note, and I follow the example of the Bishop of Dover and our Archbishop in saying that. There are nine recommendations at the end. They are thoughtful, they are positive and they are practical. I am very grateful for the words with which the Bishop of Knaresborough ended his foreword. It is on page 4. He ended with this paragraph: “With Synod support, the Rural Affairs Group of General Synod, the National Rural Officer and Mission and Public Affairs will take the recommendations forward and seek to implement them effectively so that the rural church can thrive.”

Synod, this afternoon we are being asked not just to take note of this Report; we are being asked to take it forward. Because it has a particular focus that is on rural multi-church ministry in the 21st century, it has a somewhat inward-looking focus, and I would like to balance that by speaking also about the aim of stimulating mission, evangelism and growth. I come back to that by talking about our diocesan Rural Life Adviser.

Perhaps I can give just two illustrations of the work that he does. One is that he gathers together children from church schools and other schools, from village schools and town schools and he gives them a farm experience. He has a ‘sheep day’ in which they see lambing taking place and he has a ‘cow day’ in which they realise that the milk that they drink comes from a living animal. As a farmer, he is well-placed to help our young people understand the importance of rural life and how it sustains the life of us all.

But as the last speaker spoke about the effects on rural life and about the increasing concern about suicides in the midst of many in our farming community, the other thing that Rob does is he goes, often unannounced, to the farm gate and as a farmer he knocks on the door of the farmhouse to see how the farmers of Somerset are doing. This time last year when we met for Synod we were aware that much of the farmland and farms of Somerset were under water and the impact of those floods still carries a great scar on those who are involved in rural life. He visits them to encourage them

and to listen to them and to help them be assured that they know of our prayers and our support.

There is much more happening in rural life than is able to be outlined in this Report. There is indeed much more that could happen, but my encouragement to Synod is not just to take note of this Report but also to make sure that we take it forward.

*Revd Ruth Hind (Leeds):* As a rural incumbent and somebody who is blessed with the title of 'Deanery Lay Enabler' for Wensley Deanery, I welcome the Report, which is already stimulating considerable discussion and is having a really positive effect on the morale of the rural church already, simply because we are talking about it here today. I have some hopes, a caveat and a recommendation to offer.

My hope is that recommendation number 9 regarding research will give us some clarity regarding some of the pressing questions of multi-parish benefices and, in particular, help us to discern the optimum balance between the need for the unity of the benefice and the mission of the individual parishes. Frequently, I find that the natural inclination to centralise and create unity and uniformity in churches through joint services and liturgical conformity, for example, is at odds with the needs of the local mission. A joint or ecumenical Christingle may appear to be a good idea, but holding one in each church in the benefice results in considerably greater attendance, and potential for outreach, yet, obviously, there is much to be gained from working together. The Report's commitment to rethinking the traditional model in a way that is authentic to the place and people to whom the church is reaching out is welcome. Please may it take seriously the reluctance of people to travel and put to death the idea that if people will travel to Tesco's then they will travel to church. I hope that the qualitative research recommended will enable us to reflect on the context as it is and not the context that we wish we had.

Now for the caveat. I am pleased that the valuable and creative contribution of lay ministry is recognised in the Report. In my own parishes, I have found myself continually grateful for the work of lay people, whose contribution to the mission of the church frequently surpasses mine. However, it is important that this recommendation is not misread as a suggestion that the role of the laity is to fill vicar-shaped gaps as clergy are given the cure of more and more souls in more and more parishes. With or without lay support, very large multi-parish benefices are proving unmanageable and vacancies impossible to fill. Further increasing the size of benefices must be resisted and a reduction in the size of some benefices considered, if at all possible. Care must be taken to ensure that the laity remain as salt and light in the world and do not become inward-looking and concerned primarily with the delivery of church. That will be the call of some but the ministry of the laity in the workplace or in serving the community through involvement in organisations other than church must be equally valued and resourced. Whilst the effective deployment of lay ministry enables more ministry to happen, it must never be imagined that having lay ministers will free up more clergy time. Done properly, the recruiting, training, supporting and enabling of lay ministry is time-intensive. It is not a recipe for bigger benefices.

Finally, a recommendation. The Report highlights the expectation of a visible and visiting clergy in the countryside and the feeling that sometimes only the vicar will do.

Either the Church of England at large needs to challenge this expectation at a national level, because if it is challenged at a local level it is understood as the vicar justifying their own laziness, or somehow we need to be able to deliver on the visiting and visible vicar. The present mismatch between expectation and ability to deliver puts the incumbent with multi churches on the back foot from the off.

There is also an urgent need to educate the general public, not congregations who have by and large got the message, but the nation, about lay ministry. Bishops and Archbishops need to be saying loudly and repeatedly in public that lay ministry is not second-class and is as representative of the church as the vicar.

I urge you to endorse the Report and look forward to the outworking of the recommendations.

*Mr Jack Shelley (Exeter):* I have just recently retired after nine years as a deanery lay chair, and we have 38 parishes cared for by four and one-third stipendiaries, two of whom at the moment have retired. We have been advertising one of the posts and we are now on to the third advertisement, and still have no applications. We are about to lose another member of our stipendiaries who is going to be made up to archdeacon. The thing we have been doing though over these years is a lot of lay training because we have had many people needing to take lay-led services in our deanery. We have had the Exploring Christianity course, which we borrowed from the Bath and Wells Diocese (it is their first year Readers' training course) and we have got over 40 people through that course. We have done two courses of Wings for Worship. We have done pastoral care courses. We have had Briggs and Palethorpe teach us about how we do bereavement visiting. We have done a great deal of training of lay people and of course this time that falls to pieces. What I want to talk about particularly is paragraph 43, eucharistic deprivation, because we are doing lay-led services. There are people like myself who have the bishop's license to do Communion by Extension, but a large part of our services have to be Services of the Word, because even though we have got quite a lot of retired clergy who have permission to officiate, we cannot get round all those services and make them all eucharistic, which a lot of the parishes require.

What I would like the Rural Affairs Group to look at is how do we allow more people to produce Communion by Extension? Do we have to be Readers to do that? Because these people who are taking Services of the Word at the moment are very able people, they have been trained and the service itself is a beautiful service.

The other trouble I have is that in a lot of places we are working ecumenically. One of the churches I take Communion by Extension for has a very thriving Messy Church and coffee mornings during the week, done with the local Free Church. The organist who comes and plays for those services comes from the Free Church, and I pass him the bread and wine as the person who is doing Communion by Extension. That little hamlet has an Anglican service once a fortnight and it also has a Free Church service. We have the oddity of the fact that I can bring a Communion from my main church and distribute it. Why can we not have the local people possibly doing lay presidency? In another place, I ended up where I was with a Methodist minister in the audience. I said to him, "Why am I coming to take a service in your part of the deanery when you are here to take the service?" He said, "I can't just take the service; I can also do lay



presidency.” I said, “Oh yes?” and he took a crumpled piece of paper out of his wallet and showed me and there he had the licence which is renewed yearly to do lay presidency. At another place there is a very active Messy Church. This time it is with the Congregational Church. So we have ecumenical working; we have this oddity of a split in the Communion table. I am afraid I go back now to my time in the Free Church where I used to break bread for that congregation, now I do Communion by Extension. Sometimes, because I have also been doing the training on the Exploring Christianity course, we always have something eucharistic at the last of the ten sessions. There are some quite nice Celtic services of agape, are there not - which of course I would not like to tell the Bishop I was doing - so could we therefore ask the Rural Affairs Group to look further at this problem. Thank you very much indeed.

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

‘That the question be now put.’

*The Chair:* Thank you for that. I would like to hear one more speaker after that and then I will be looking for your assistance.

*Canon Timothy Allen (St Edmundsbury and Ipswich):* Madam Chairman, the rural Church has been all too often rather overlooked and undervalued by General Synod. This synodical neglect is in spite of the remarkable fact, which is made clear on page 5 of ‘Release for Mission’, that 40% of the Church of England’s average weekly attendance is in small rural communities, so it is exceptionally welcome that this excellent rural report is put to Synod at the same time as we face up to the wider daunting task of reform and renewal right across the Church which dominated our agenda yesterday. Clearly there is a rough reforming ride ahead for the whole Church. It seems to me that unless special, sympathetic and generous attention is paid to rural multi-parish benefices there is a danger that they will weaken and die, with the Church of England effectively abandoning the thinly populated countryside and consolidating in the towns. The consequence of past neglect and of the shortage of stipendiary clergy and of money has been the unstrategic growth of ever larger multi-parish benefices in the countryside. In all too many cases the overstretched and overstressed stipendiary priest, who was trained for the traditional suburban role of one priest running one parish, finds him or herself rushing between congregations on a Sunday morning without the opportunity to connect deeply with any of them. If we carry on like this, as the Archbishop of Canterbury hinted a few minutes ago, continued decline even to the point of extinction in some places is all too likely, so it is essential, as part of the wider reform and renewal of the Church, to commit here at the national centre of the Church in the rural dioceses and in small rural parishes to a set of strategic changes to enable the multi-parish benefices to achieve effective mission and growth. Noting this report and then forgetting it will not do. Action is vital.

Let me, Madam Chairman, outline briefly, if I may, from my own experience of a 17-parish benefice what I believe are the most important of these strategic changes under three headings: clergy, laity and simplification.

First is the clergy. Their training, selection and support for the demanding role of leading and inspiring teams of lay people, retired clergy and lay Readers where they are

available, the skills needed are not at present sufficiently taught as part of clergy training. Leading large multi-parish benefices to mission and growth requires the very best of the clergy. This rural work is just as important and as challenging as work in the gritty inner city or in the more comfortable suburbs.

Second is the laity. To draw again on personal experience, in my part of Suffolk lay ministry is already extensively deployed. Lay people, who we rather quaintly call “lay elders”, lead services of the Word so that parishioners can continue to worship with their neighbours in their own communities more frequently than the overburdened clergy could enable. Also lay people chair our PCCs so as to relieve the burden on the parish priest who is able to attend but in a less demanding role, but above all in the village communities many Christian people informally fulfil countless unsung informal ministries on the basis that looking after others in need is what good neighbours do. All this is very good but to step up growth and mission needs high quality training, guidance, support and leadership if they are to take greater responsibility.

The third essential is simplification, which I do not think I need dwell on because the excellent Bishop Peter, our bishop for simplification, has clearly got the message. We need reform so we do not run out of volunteers who are so fed up with the daunting task put to them that it is not possible to find the churchwardens, treasurers and PCC members needed. Madam Chairman, three action points on clergy, laity and simplification. If we can get these right, mission and growth are indeed achievable in rural multi-parish benefices, not least in Suffolk. Thank you.

*Mrs Mary Durlacher (Chelmsford):* Tim is always a hard act to follow and so many good points have been made. In the interests of simplification I will not repeat them but to emphasise that the role of relationship in a village church, in a rural church, is a huge advantage, but it does not come without its difficulties because, even though they may not come to the church, a village sees the church as their church, great family links and often great resistance to change, so there is a training element which needs to encompass that.

Strategies for growth. The very best strategy for growth which we have found true for us and is cost effective, which I think the Church Commissioner will be encouraged by, is the vertical relationship, the relationship with Christ. That is what is transformative. We have talked about confidence in the Gospel; part of the training must be to equip our ministers with the right appointments to have that confidence in the Gospel which is not cowed by resistance and we have to recognise that the Gospel can be an offence, is an offence.

I think of our church, a typical rural Grade 1 church, if we got to 12 on a Sunday, we were having a good day. We were as near to dead in the water as a church can be, but we got praying. There came a point when we had to get a new incumbent and we prayed, and God in his amazing mercy sent us someone with the confidence in the Gospel and he looked at us and he saw that we had had only part of the full Gospel, not the whole Gospel. We had had the good news but we had not had the background of the bad news and without the bad news the good news is not that good, so he set about redressing the balance. That was not popular. Of the 12, I think 10 left and it was painful and it took perseverance, courage and confidence but we are now about 150,

we are about 75 children, we are sending church and it is transformative. If you are looking for growth, if you are looking for disciples, confidence in the Gospel, that is our USP.

Secondly, I think we need a reality check as to what are the impediments to growth and that is cultural. It surrounds our society's view on what to do with Sundays and Sundays are no longer such a great day for people to come to church. There are factors of family - I call them "F factors" - we have got family, people go and see family; they have got friends; there is food, Sunday lunch to cook, so service times do not always work; there is finance, people do not come to church because they think they will be asked to prop up the roof or the tower, and there is fear of how strange a place it is. There is often a ritual which they do not understand. People are too friendly; not friendly enough so they do not often come. The days of expecting people to come to church are, I think, over. We have to first go to the people, go to him outside the camp with the good news of Christ, and recognise that coming to church is often quite far down the line of discipleship and giving is very far down the line of discipleship too. Wonderful initiatives; let us try them but let us get the priority right. Thank you, Chairman.

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

'That the question be now put.'

*The Chair:* That certainly has my permission. I therefore put the motion for closure on Item 16 to Synod.

*This motion was carried on a show of hands.*

*The Chair:* That has clearly been carried so I now call upon the Bishop to respond to the debate.

*The Bishop of Knaresborough (Rt Revd James Bell):* What a wonderful and amazing array of fruit. I am just going to pick some of them. First of all relationships, relationships, relationships, and not least, as Mary has just reminded us, relationship with Jesus Christ, allowing a Christ shape of the Church, confidence therefore in the Gospel and the primary work of prayer. Thank you so much, Mary.

Telling a new story where growth is possible, partnership with the wider community, working with communities, something we have not been very good at perhaps in the introduction of pastoral reorganisation. We need to learn how to work with communities in order to change governance and the way we work. Exploring the model of the parson, the local focal person. Pressure, paper and process, there was a lot of about that, was there not, about administration and organisation, and the suggestion that maybe dioceses should think about budgeting for administering support in order that the clerical resource can be released.

Connecting with the context. As well as recognising the variety of context, the really important opportunity of connecting with the nature of the context that we inhabit and

therefore becoming real for people. An urgent look at buildings, I will come back to that perhaps.

Ecumenical partnerships, yes, we have many stories about that. Management of change. Participation. I just think this is one of the wonderful opportunities of rural ministry, that you can enable participation by the community in imaginative ways and therefore grow the life of the Church and give God the opportunity to grow faith in individuals. Lay leadership. Stewardship side of discipleship, thank for you that. I guess I am beginning to look particularly around that whole area of connection to the task group. I give thanks we have had this debate on this occasion alongside the task group because there are so many connections to be made.

Above all and before all I welcome the Archbishop of Canterbury's, Bishop Trevor's and Bishop Peter's calls for action and urgent action. The Rural Affairs Group is committed to taking forward the recommendations as quickly as possible. Even though this is a take note debate, it gives Synod the opportunity to discuss the issue, gives us a clear mandate to press on with the implementations across more fronts than one motion perhaps could have encompassed. As I have said, for me one of the most exciting things is the potential of convergence with all the work of the task groups and I welcome again Bishop Pete's invitation to send the requirements of the rural church to the simplification group but also, as has also been pointed out, that convergence with the resourcing of ministerial education, as Canon Spence noted, one of the underworked proposals of lay leadership and there is clearly a determination that we should work on that. Of course we look forward to working with the Bishop of Worcester and his work on church buildings.

I cannot resist noting that he has said that the Church, if it thinks of closing buildings, is in danger of being countercultural just at the time when the rest of the world is discovering the significance of place. Just a little marker down there. I hope that this will therefore enable us not to try to do more with less but establish new ways of working that will ensure that the relational has the prominence it needs, that deep integration with the community being developed in order to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Let me say in conclusion a huge thank-you to Jill Hopkinson, both for the particular work of this research that has produced this report but also for her outstanding work as a National Rural Officer. I give thanks to God for the excitement, the energy, that there has been in this room for this debate and I ask, as Bishop Peter said, for overwhelming support to take action. Thank you.

*The motion*

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

*was carried on a show of hands.*

*The Chair:* That is overwhelmingly carried and that completes this item of business. THE CHAIR *Canon Ann Turner* took the Chair at 4.44 pm.

## Farewells

*The Chair:* Synod, we now come to Item 17, Farewells, and I first call on Mr William Fittall.

*Mr William Fittall (Secretary General):* Before we come to the main farewell I am sure the Synod will want the chance to express its gratitude and affection to one of our long-serving members of staff who is leaving at the end of March.

It was in July 1999 that Judith Egar first appeared on the platform bewigged as one of the registrars. The records indicate that her arrival caused something of a stir because up to that point registrar duties had been performed only by the legal adviser, Brian Hanson, and his deputy, that great synodical favourite, Ingrid Slaughter. I have not got long. A clarificatory oral statement from my esteemed predecessor was deemed necessary. He said, and I quote from the record of proceedings for 12 July 1999: "Several members of Synod, mainly male, have asked me who is the new member of staff of the legal department. One member ..." - it was Mr Lovegrove - "...went so far as to say that he was enquiring whether she was the only person on the platform who did not look as if she was held together by Polyfilla"!

Now concerning Polyfilla, I am pleased to report that the Archbishop of York and I had sat at the same table as Brian Hanson at dinner the other evening and he appeared in rude good health and, as to Ingrid, she is now the proud possessor of two new knees and if she is not yet quite skipping like a calf, Lebanon and Sirion like a young unicorn, nevertheless she is on very good form.

By the time Judith made that first sensational appearance at the Synod she had in fact already been at Millbank since 1985 as a solicitor doing property work in the Commissioners legal department. Her move to Church House blazed a trail for the subsequent creation of the integrated legal office.

You also, as a Synod, owe more to her than you can possibly realise because until July 1999 Synod sessions operated on the basis of the agenda and notice papers, of which there were 24 of that Group of Sessions, but with no order paper for each morning and afternoon sitting, so in debates with amendments spread across several notice papers Synod members had their work cut out. Here from Tuesday 16 November 1999 is the first ever order paper made possible by the extra capacity that Judith's arrival created. Where would we be without them now?

For that alone, Judith deserves to be recognised but over the last 16 years she has blazed a trail in other ways, doing all the heavy lifting on the Common Tenure legislation and being our expert on data protection and safeguarding. She was for many years part of the staff chaplaincy team and since 2005 has combined her work here with being a priest in the Chichester diocese, moving to a part-time role with us to release more time for pastoral work in 2010.

She has been a great colleague, present help in time of trouble as all those who have worked closely with her as Chairs of Sessions or members of Revisions Committees can testify. Judith has all the qualities you want of a lawyer: calmness, good sense,

clarity and a commitment to problem-solving. In an immensely gentle and civilised way, she has been a trail blazer too.

We wish you well, Judith, as you write your MA dissertation on God and 19<sup>th</sup> century painting and as you spend more time in the parish. Thank you for 30 years' service to the Church nationally and for having been part of the Synod team for nearly 16 years. We are greatly in your debt and shall miss you enormously.

*The Chair.* Now, Synod, I call on the Archbishop of Canterbury to give a farewell to the Bishop of Leicester.

*The Archbishop of Canterbury (Most Revd & Rt Hon Justin Welby):* With some bishops it is quite easy to be humorous; with others there is just a sense of sadness that they will be going, and for me Tim comes with a great sense of sadness that he will be going. He is someone who is going to leave huge gaps and, as we go forward with other people, numerous people, having to pick up the things that he is leaving behind, we will be reminded again and again of his distinguished contribution to our common life.

Tim has always had a ministry which has engaged with faith in the public square. It has been one of the most consistent aspects of his life. Right from the beginning of his curacy in East Ham to his rectorship in Canvey Island, and on to diocesan roles in the Diocese of Chelmsford and then as Archdeacon of West Ham, he understood at an early stage in his ministry the crucial gift that the Church could bring to the urban life of our country in the London part of the Diocese of Chelmsford and his expertise was quickly recognised.

Just to prove that he could bring his ability to think deeply about society which he ministered into all situations he then moved from there to one of the less urban dioceses, if I can put it as mildly as that, St Edmundsbury and Ipswich, as Bishop of Dunwich, which I think is under the sea, is not it? Yes, absolutely.

It was from there in 1999 that he went on to his long and distinguished episcopate in the Diocese of Leicester. I know that Tim is a bishop about whom it is easy to sound as though as you are speaking in clichés. We speak of bishops being much loved and respected; they all are, invariably obviously, but in Tim's case in Leicester that is a very inadequate way to describe the affection with which he is held and I know that personally from visits I have made there and what has been said about him.

He will be retiring from a diocese that is one of those which has grown in recent years, both in depth and numbers. He remarked to someone recently that he is not sure quite why this happened. He might not be sure but one person who worked with him through these years is in no doubt. It is due to his presence leading a consistent mission strategy, now ten years old and going through its second five-year revision, and consistent and bold episcopal leadership. Tim is a person who does not accept second best in himself and he leads not accepting second best, and the quality of mission and ministry training and the commitment to a thought-through approach to Fresh Expressions and new mission initiatives have borne a fruit which is there for all to see.

His colleagues can also testify to a leadership that can be challenging because of a commitment to both quality and detail. What that meant was that time and time again the diocese experienced superb highlights in its life. Included in this was the visit of Her Majesty the Queen, the Duke of Edinburgh and the Duchess of Cambridge at the very start of Her Majesty's Jubilee Year. It says something that that Jubilee Year started in one of the country's most diverse cities with worship at the cathedral.

Others remember a diocesan eightieth celebration when thousands came to Abbey Park for a festival and Eucharist with the Archbishop of Canterbury, the previous one, or the sequence of stimulating lay congresses and diocesan lay conferences.

Others speak of the vision that gave people the courage to embark on huge projects. The development of St Martin's House as a new diocesan centre for mission and diocesan administration next to the cathedral, a £7 million project successfully completed. Then again there is the refurbished Launde Abbey retreat, holiday and luxury centre - those two other adjectives were not in my text but I am speaking from experience - which is a gift for the whole Church to use, a £2.5 million project. There is the development of the nationally recognised St Philip's Centre for study and engagement in a multi-faith society, Samworth Church of England Academy and most recently the refurbishment of the cathedral grounds and the cathedral itself. What people really appreciate about them all is Tim's innate confidence that they were possible and his commitment to making them happen. None of it was easy but what this was about was the Church's contribution to the whole life of society founded on a deep faith in what Christ brings into every aspect of human life.

From that base of faith Tim was able to take very seriously his role as bishop in one of the most diverse cities in the country. He is held in the highest regard by the other faith communities of Leicester - we always say that about bishops in multi-faith communities but in this case it is true; I am not saying where it was not - for whom he is almost always referred to, as "our bishop". After the terrible events of 9/11 he convened a faith leaders' forum around himself to work for the good of the whole community and for the good of the whole country and with an ability to respond to local, national and even international crises. Because he had formed that, when the events of 7/7 happened he with the Chief Constable, the leader of the City Council and other civic leaders was able to convene the faith leaders that very evening so that a public commitment to one another and to the well-being of city, county and country and the support of the local Muslim population could be declared.

But of course what was also hugely appreciated in the county was that Tim and Wendi were a team who led in Christian hospitality and in Christian witness. Their home and garden was always a place of welcome to all and Wendi's contribution was invariably hugely appreciated. Wendi made formidable contributions to the life of the county in her own right which came with her own recognition at the university.

A committed, able, dedicated diocesan bishop? Well, he must have done almost nothing else; not. Somehow in all of this, Tim managed to be the Chair of the Children's Society for six years, which included the publication of the Good Childhood Report; Chair of the Trustees at Common Purpose UK; Chair of the Council of Westcott House.

He has been a member in his time of the Archbishops' Council amongst other distinguished wider contributions to the Church.

Then six years ago, just in case he did not have enough to do, he was asked by my predecessor to take on the role of Convenor of Bishops in the House of Lords. Within a year of that appointment, a Coalition Government had come into being and an entirely different political landscape had to be contended with.

Tim led the first of the parliamentary debates on the 'Big Society' concept putting down a marker to Government that the Church took the idea seriously. In fact, I think you more or less said that we had invented it. You did say that? Yes, I thought so. I echoed you several times.

Tim has been a wonderful bridge between the Lords Spiritual and the wider church and of course, vitally, with the leadership of the main parties in the House of Lords, by whom he is held in enormous affection. And that is not in my script either, but it is true.

He has been one of our most vital connectors between the Church and the political world. During this period he steered us safely through some intense and fairly controversial waters, the challenges of Lords' reform, the Equal Marriage Act, differences with Government on welfare and most recently our internal troubles over legislation to enable women to become bishops. Those are just a few.

He served on the Joint Bill Committee that scrutinised the Government's plans over Lords' reform, which took up a huge amount of time and where his contribution was distinguished and effective. He constantly made a convincing case for the contribution the bishops made, something that was echoed in the House of Lords this morning as we considered the Lords Spiritual (Women) Bill.

He engaged widely with the details of potential reform. He has never shrunk in speeches, writing and debate from presenting a formidable apologetic for the place of Christian faith in the public square and a clear declaration of Christian faith in witness.

In some of these controversial matters, Tim would meet ministers and officials behind closed doors, putting the case frankly and passionately but carefully and respectfully. To do this meant that he has had encounters where tact and diplomacy have been a huge requirement, although inevitably in politics not always successful!

Tim has convened the meetings of the Lords Spiritual fitted into the margins of other meetings of the House or College of Bishops. If you think sometimes that the Church does not readily embrace change, changing some of the conventions of the Houses of Parliament are even more challenging. Yet under his convenorship the radical step was taken of allowing the Prayers for the Day to include a Collect for the Season! Next we are going to have Graham Kendrick! I must not go off script. I get into such trouble.

He has helped enormously in the Lords Spiritual (Women) Bill, being on course, we pray, for being passed, at least it seemed so this morning, which will be the first change to the Act of 1878, which has been unamended between then and now.



Many of you will have seen in the press that one of the final big moments in Leicester will be an event where a former Monarch of this country is buried in Leicester Cathedral. My apologies, your Grace! Tim does recall that the late John Holroyd, the PM's Appointments Secretary did say to him when he was appointed to Leicester that he would need to work at the Cathedral as access to it was not the easiest. Richard III found the same: it took him 530 years! Like many a parish church, the Cathedral needed directions to find it and work out constantly what its identity and contribution could do. "Of course," said John Holroyd, "the easiest thing you could do is find yourself a good relic." Well, I am not commenting on good or otherwise because I will get into trouble with someone, but even Tim could not have foreseen that the body of Richard III would be found under a car park, actually my text says "in a car park", but I am assured that it was "under"! The careful and fair way in which he has withstood all the controversy to bring the body of Richard III to a dignified burial is again testimony both to his extraordinary skill and patience in dealing with difficult negotiations and finding within them that which can be a blessing for everyone.

However, I am acutely aware that at this moment when we so very much want to thank Tim and Wendi and celebrate with them and wish them well for the future, we do so at a moment when there has been a tremendous sadness in their life, with the death of their beloved daughter Rachel a few weeks ago. Rachel had been diagnosed with cancer over these last two years and not all that long ago was finally faced with a prognosis that nothing further could be done. She provided a remarkable witness in this time, not least in her faith and in her courage and in being unafraid to appear in public to raise money in the fight against cancer. It is no surprise to know that as a daughter with such parents she was passionate in her work for some of the least privileged people in our world. She was a popular and much loved colleague at Christian Aid and the accomplishments of her all-too-short life were so movingly spoken of at her funeral. In the midst of great grief, Tim and Wendi were able to organise an extraordinary funeral for Rachel in Leicester Cathedral. The Cathedral was packed and those who were there testified to the fact that, despite their sadness, they could not help but be uplifted by the faithfulness to Christ that they witnessed and the sense of profound thankfulness for Rachel.

With that in mind, when we wish and pray for every blessing in the future for Tim and Wendi, perhaps we do so with more heartfelt fervour than we do normally. Tim might be retiring from full-time episcopal ministry but it will be very surprising if his energies do not find an outlet in continued service in some way or another. Whatever that may be, Tim, Wendi, know that you go from here with our very deep gratitude and a deep sense of sadness. We will miss you.

*The Chair:* Synod, that completes the business for this group of sessions and therefore I call upon the Archbishop of Canterbury to prorogue us.

*The Archbishop of Canterbury (Most Revd and Rt Hon Justin Welby)* prorogued the Synod at 5.10 pm.

## INDEX

- ACT groups 5–6
- administration, in rural benefices 224, 225, 231
- Agreed Syllabus Conferences (ASCs) 74–5
- AIDS, and prejudice against homosexuality 7
- All are Called* report 95
- All-Party Parliamentary Group on international religious freedom 43
- Alpha course 208
- Alternative Service Book*:
  - baptism service 209
  - funeral services 190
- Ambassadors for Christ (London) 104–5
- Amending Canon No.32 4
- amendments:
  - and 40-member rule 184–6
  - length of notice 182, 184
- Anglican-Methodist Covenant, Joint Covenant Advocacy Group 75–6
- anti-Semitism 20
- Appointment of Bishops Act (1533) 145
- Appointments Committee 52–3, 70, 76
- Archbishops' Council:
  - and bodies answerable to General Synod 182–3
  - questions to 49–55
  - Quinquennium Goals 45, 90, 106
- Archbishops' Review Group 54, 67–8
- Archbishops' Secretary for Appointments 47, 65–6
- Archbishops' Spending Plans Task Group 67
- Archbishops' Task Group on Evangelism 21, 44, 45, 68
- area bishops 31
- Arthur Rank Centre 212, 213, 224–5
  
- Baghdad, persecution of Christians 2
- baptism:
  - alternative texts 5, 202–211
  - and discipleship 108, 111, 115, 204
  - of infants 197, 203, 207, 208
  - and mission 207–8
- baptism service:
  - Blessing of the Water 204
  - Commission 205
  - Decision 204
  - First Prayer over the Water 204, 205, 209
  - Presentation of the Candidates 203–4, 206
  - Second Prayer over the Water 204
  - Signing with the Cross 204
- Bedroom Tax *see* Spare Room Subsidy
- benefices, multi-parish 5, 8–9, 146, 153, 211–32
- bias to the poor 93, 107, 118, 123, 126, 128, 134–5, 139
- bishops:
  - appointment 7–8, 10, 55–6, 65–6
  - area bishops 31
  - confirmation of election 146
  - as focus of unity 28–30
  - in House of Lords 31, 72, 236
  - housing costs 47–8
  - non-diocesan 92
  - and safeguarding 168–70, 178–9
  - training in hermeneutics 55
  - see also* suffragan bishops; women in the episcopate
- Bishops' Advisory Panels 55–6
- Bishops' Mission Orders 141, 151, 152
- Board of Education, questions to 72–5
- Book of Common Prayer:
  - baptism service 209, 210
  - funeral services 195
- 'British values', and church schools 8, 72–3
- bullying, homophobic 74
- burial of suicides 188, 190, 194, 196, 199
- Business Committee:
  - and allocation of Synod seats 15–18
  - questions to 45–6
  - report 5–15, 46
  - and simplification 139–40
  
- Cahill Report 60–61, 178–9, 180
- Canon B 2 100, 116, 188, 190
- Canon B 12 34
- Canon B 38 187–202
- Canon B 43 194
- Canon C 2.1 64
- Canon E 6.3 178
- Canon E 8.5 178
- Canon H 2 16
- canon law, reform 98, 111

Care of Churches and Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction (Amendment) Measure 4

Catechism, revision 100, 102, 114, 116

Cathedrals and Church Buildings Division 67

Central Readers Council, and safeguarding 180

Chaldean Church 1–4

Changing Attitude Report 58

chaplains to General Synod 6

chauffeurs, of bishops 47

child abuse *see* safeguarding

children, training for working with 78

Christendom, end 102

Christenings Project 205, 206

Christian Aid:

- in India 22–3
- Iraq Fund 4, 9

*Christian Initiation* 202

Christian-Muslim Forum 59

The Christianity Project 75

church:

- digital 83
- inclusive 104, 157, 223

*Church in Action* report 41

church attendance:

- and age profile 82, 118, 158, 165
- decline in 81–2, 118, 158–9, 162, 164–5
- rural 229

church buildings:

- and mission 122, 141, 165–6
- rural 212, 219–20, 232

Church Buildings Review Group 69

Church Commissioners:

- Bishoprics and Cathedrals Committee 48
- Board of Governors 162, 164
- and inter-generational equity 154–67
- investment 48, 89–90
- and pensions 89
- questions to 47–8
- and Resourcing the Future 84, 85–6, 97, 119, 120, 134
- and Resourcing Ministerial Education 127
- and rural churches 214

Church of England, annual costs 89, 97

Church of England (Ecclesiastical Property) Measure 4, 51–2

Church of England (Miscellaneous Provisions) Measure 2014 4

Church of England (Pensions) (Amendment) Measure 4

Church of England (Worship and Doctrine) Measure 1974 35, 195

church growth:

- and funding 93–4, 154–67
- research 50–51, 82
- rural 211–32

Church House, staff 50

church plants 142, 151, 152, 154, 162

Church Representation Rules:

- and nominations to PCC 173
- and seat allocation 16

Church Representation Rules (Amendment) Resolution 2014 4

church schools:

- admissions policy 12–13, 15
- and ‘British values’ 8, 72–3
- and distribution of Holy Communion 34
- and homophobic bullying 74
- in rural parishes 214, 226
- worship 73

Church Urban Fund 41, 134

churches, as wi-fi hubs 159–60

Churches and Community Fund 49

churchwardens, and safeguarding 169, 171

Churchwardens Measure 2001 171–2

Cinnamon Network, faith action audit 40–41

civil partnerships 46

clergy:

- compensation for loss of office 147–9
- house-for-duty posts 121
- housing 47
- leadership development 65, 67, 68, 83, 86–7, 95, 163
- lesbian and gay 58
- numbers 82, 84–5, 119, 120, 123, 126, 132, 213, 221, 229
- parochial/non-parochial 54–5
- part-time stipendiary 36–7, 54
- with permission to officiate 51
- retention 99
- retired 36, 84, 121
- rural 211–32
- in secular employment 53
- self-supporting 51, 53–4, 84–5, 121–2, 221
- training incumbents 128, 143
- vesture 51

Clergy Discipline Commission 62, 168  
 Clergy Discipline Measure 61–2, 168–9,  
 172–3, 175, 178  
 Clergy (Terms of Service) Measure and  
 Regulations 141, 146  
 clericalism 110–111, 138, 220  
 climate change:  
     and investment 48–9  
     Paris talks (2015) 39  
 College of Bishops 55  
 colleges, theological 79–80, 85, 127, 129,  
 132–3, 138  
 Common Awards 76–8, 129  
 Common Good 109, 211, 213  
 common tenure 141  
*Common Worship*:  
     baptism services 202, 206, 208, 209, 210  
     funeral services 190, 205  
 Communications Office 52  
 community:  
     mission 221–2, 225  
     in rural parishes 211–23, 231  
 Confessional, role 12  
 consecration services 63–4  
 Continuing Ministerial Education 55, 85, 99,  
 120, 224  
 Council for Christianity Unity:  
     and Orthodox Churches 75  
     questions to 75–6  
 courses, theological 79–80, 85  
 credit unions 20  
 Crown Nominations Commission 66  
     questions to 46–7  
     review 64–5  
 curacies:  
     length 127–8  
     and training incumbents 128  
  
 Darlow Formula 85, 93–4, 126, 134  
 deaneries:  
     and mission communities 221  
     and simplification 144, 150  
     and women in the episcopate 11  
 deans, development 87  
 Deployment task group 70  
*Developing Discipleship* 76, 90–91, 94, 95,  
 100–116, 223  
 Development and Appointments Group  
 (DAG) 65, 67–8, 163  
  
 digital church 83  
 diocesan boards of education 74  
 diocesan boards of finance, chairs 84  
 diocesan registrars, and safeguarding 178–9  
 diocesan safeguarding officers 169, 179  
 diocesan secretaries 84  
 Diocesan Synod Motions:  
     distribution of Holy Communion 33–5  
     naming of dioceses 30, 31  
 Diocese in Europe, representation on  
     General Synod 16, 17  
 Diocese of West Yorkshire and the Dales  
 26–32  
 dioceses:  
     allocation of seats in General Synod 15–18  
     and ecclesiastical property 4, 51–2  
     naming 25–33  
     senior leadership teams 84  
     and Shared Conversations Initiative 57  
     and simplification 139–41  
     Ten Marks of discipleship 91, 100, 102,  
     104, 107, 111–14, 116  
 Dioceses Commission, and naming of  
     dioceses 26, 29, 31  
 disability, and ordination training 78  
 discipleship 83, 86, 90–91, 94, 95, 100–116  
     and baptism 108, 111, 115, 204  
     crisis 114, 116  
     and ecumenism 105–6, 115  
     and evangelism 93, 94, 100–102, 104, 109,  
     114, 116  
     and ordination training 129  
     and rural churches 213, 224, 225–6, 231  
     Ten Marks 91, 100, 102, 104, 107, 111–  
     14, 116  
 diversity:  
     and discipleship 109  
     and leadership 87  
     and task group membership 70, 109, 120  
 Draft Amending Canon No. 32 25  
 Draft Amending Canon No. 34 167–8, 170,  
 171–2, 177–81  
 Draft Amending Canon No. 35 33–5  
 Draft Diocesan Naming of Dioceses  
     Measure 25–33  
 Draft Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline  
     Measure 167–77  
  
 Eastern Orthodox Churches 75

Ecclesiastical Committee of Parliament 31–2  
 Ecclesiastical Judges, Legal Officers and Others (Fees) Order 2014 4  
 Ecclesiastical Offices (Terms of Service) Measure 98  
 ecclesiology, and mission 102  
 ecumenism:  
   and developing discipleship 105–6, 115  
   and Eastern Churches 75  
   and Muslims 58–9  
   in rural areas 213, 214, 220–21, 228–9, 232  
   *see also* Anglican-Methodist Covenant  
 Elections Review Group 18  
 electoral rolls:  
   and age profiles 82  
   decline in numbers 150  
*Emmaus: The Way of Faith* 101, 208  
 Endowments and Glebe Measure 1976 150  
 Environment Working Group 69–70  
 equity, inter-generational 48, 154–67  
 Ethical Investment Advisory Group:  
   and Church Commissioners 48  
   question to 48–9  
 evangelism 18–22, 88  
   and discipleship 93, 94, 100–102, 104, 109, 114, 116  
   intentional 44, 45, 93–4, 107–8  
   and men 44, 60  
   and simplification 144–6, 153  
   to young people 52  
 Evangelism Task Group 21, 44, 45, 94  
 Exploring Christianity course 228–9  
  
 Faith in the City movement 128  
 Faith and Order Commission 64  
   and Anglican-Methodist Covenant 75–6  
   and funerals of suicides 195, 198  
   and senior leadership 67, 68, 97  
 Faith in Research conferences 79  
 farewells 233–7  
 food banks 11, 20, 42–3, 93  
 fossil fuels, investment in 48–9, 157  
 freedom:  
   of religion 43  
   of speech 59  
 Freemasons, renouncing membership 55–6  
 Fresh Expressions 154, 212  
   and evangelisation of men 43–4  
   and rural benefices 224  
*From Anecdote to Evidence* report 50–51, 81, 211, 215, 222  
 Funded Pension Scheme Revaluation 37  
 funerals:  
   fees 37–8, 41  
   of suicides 187–202  
   of the unbaptized 189, 190, 195, 197  
 Funerals Project 37–8, 41, 198–9  
  
 gender:  
   and language 182  
   and poverty 22–4  
   and task group membership 52–3, 67, 124  
 General Synod:  
   bodies answerable to 182–3  
   chaplains 6  
   Constitution 33, 182  
   ecumenical representatives 1  
   fringe meetings 184–5, 186  
   group work 5, 10, 12, 14, 80–99  
   guests 1–4  
   new members 1  
   number of meetings 5  
   seat allocation 6, 15–18  
   special constituencies 16  
   worship 6, 99  
 genocide 2  
 Green Report 7–8, 10, 49, 67, 91  
 Guiding Principles 55–7, 63–4, 87  
  
 hermeneutics, and bishops 55  
 HIV/AIDS, and prejudice 62–3  
 Holy Communion:  
   distribution 33–5  
   by Extension 228–9  
   lay presidency 97, 98, 228–9  
   weekly celebration 97  
 homosexuality, and prejudice 62–3, 74  
 House of Bishops:  
   Declaration 55, 63  
   and Leadership Development task group 83  
   questions to 55–68  
   and safeguarding 168, 170, 172  
   and same-sex marriage 46  
   and simplification 142  
   Standing Committee 55, 67

women in 55  
House of Clergy, seat allocation 15–18  
House of Laity 11  
    seat allocation 15–18  
House of Lords, bishops in 31, 72, 236  
housing:  
    affordable 40  
    of bishops 47–8

immersion experience, in India 22–4  
“In Each Generation” 5  
India, report on immersion experience 22–4  
Initial Ministerial Education 85  
Institute for Children, Youth and Mission 78  
Intentional Evangelism Task Group 21, 44, 45  
Inter-Diocesan Finance Forum 51, 84, 86  
investment:  
    by Church Commissioners 48, 89–90  
    and climate change 48–9  
    ethical 48  
Iraq:  
    Christians in 1–4, 5, 9–10  
    Jews in 4

Jews, in Iraq 4  
justice:  
    gender 22–4  
    inter-generational 48, 154–67

Kurdistan, and displaced Christians 2–3

laity:  
    and celebration of Holy Communion 97, 98  
    development 102, 109, 111  
    and discipleship 102, 104–5, 109, 111  
    and distribution of Holy Communion 33–5  
    as incumbents 223–4  
    leadership 82, 84–5, 94–6, 111, 123, 138–9, 163, 212, 221–2, 232  
    and mission 11, 85, 95, 221  
    and task group membership 120–21, 124  
    and timing of Synods 10  
    training 142–3, 228, 230  
    *see also* ministry, lay; Readers

language:  
    accessible 204, 205–7, 210, 211  
    non-gender specific 182

lay workers, and safeguarding 170, 171, 178–80  
Leadership Development Group 65–7, 68, 83, 86–7  
Legal Office 169, 175, 178, 182  
Legal Officers (Annual Fees) Orders 2014 4  
legislation, simplification 88, 139–53  
LGBTI Coalition 57–8  
Liturgical Commission:  
    and alternative baptism texts 202–211  
    and funeral of suicides 193, 197, 201  
London Institute of Contemporary Christianity 104  
Lords Spiritual (Women) Bill 236–7

*Managing God’s Business* 66  
*Managing Religion* 66  
marriage:  
    Christian 46  
    same-sex 46, 236  
masculinity 59–60  
men:  
    evangelisation 43–4, 60  
    role models for young men 59–60  
Messy Church 228–9  
Minister and Clergy Sexual Abuse Survivors Group 168–9, 171  
ministry:  
    collaborative 85, 213, 224, 226  
    focal 50  
    lay 51, 82, 84–5, 102, 104–5, 111, 120–21, 212, 217, 221, 226–8, 230  
    pioneer 122  
    re-imagining 90  
    rural 122, 143, 146, 153, 157, 211–32  
    young candidates 97, 123, 132, 158  
Ministry Council, questions to 76–80  
Ministry Division, restructuring 70–71  
minorities, religious, persecution 1–4, 5, 9–10, 43  
mission 18–22  
    and baptism 207–8  
    and church buildings 122, 141, 166  
    and discipleship 93, 94, 100–102, 104, 109, 114  
    and ecclesiology 102  
    and laity 11, 85, 227  
    mission communities 221–2, 225  
    in rural multi-parish benefices 5, 8–9, 146,

153, 211–32  
 and simplification 140–42, 145–7, 153, 162  
 Mission Development Funding 86, 93, 136  
 Mission and Pastoral Measure 141, 143, 146, 147, 148, 151  
 Mission and Public Affairs Council, questions to 38–45  
*Mission-shaped and Rural* 224  
 Muslims, as neighbours 58–9

National Church Institutions 68, 70–71  
   optimisation of roles 83, 185  
 National Disability Adviser 78  
 National Institutions Measure 1998 183  
 National Investing Bodies, and climate change 48–9  
 National Safeguarding Adviser 60–61  
 National Safeguarding Panel 60–61  
 Near Neighbours 59  
 New Development Funding 120  
 new towns 161–2, 166

oath of obedience 61  
 occasional offices:  
   fees 37–8, 42  
   in rural parishes 223  
 OFSTED, and ‘British values’ 8, 72–4  
*On the Way* 208  
 “Open the Book” programme 11  
 ordination training *see* training, theological  
 Oriental Orthodox Churches 75

Paris, climate change talks 39  
 parish share 49–50  
   generosity-based schemes 50  
 parish system 145  
 parishes:  
   amalgamations 50–51  
   boundaries 218  
   and discipleship 92–3  
   and mission 145  
   multi-parish benefices 5, 8–9, 146, 211–32  
 Parliament:  
   Ecclesiastical Committee 31–2  
   and ecclesiastical Measures 4  
 Parochial Fees and Scheduled Matters Amending Order 2014 4  
 Partnership for Missional Church 103

Pastoral Committee 143–4, 152  
 patronage 151–2, 153  
 Patronage (Benefices) Measure (1986) 141, 151, 153  
 PCCs:  
   and property transactions 4, 51–2  
   and safeguarding 169, 171, 173, 174  
 pensions:  
   and Church Commissioners 89  
   Funded Pension Scheme Revaluation 37  
 Perry report (*Working with the Spirit*) 64  
 persecution 1–4, 5, 9–10, 43  
*Pilgrim* 101  
 poverty:  
   and funeral costs 41  
   and gender 22–4  
 Praxis 205–6  
 President of Tribunals 169–70, 175–6  
 Presidential Address 18–22  
 Prime Minister’s Appointments Secretary 64, 237  
 Private Members’ Motions 5, 8, 14–15  
   on funerals of suicides 187–202  
   on human sexuality 12, 45–6  
 Progress of Measures and Statutory Instruments 4

Quality Assurance process (safeguarding) 60–61  
 Questions 6–7, 36–80  
   for oral answer 183  
 Quinquennium Goals 45, 90, 106

Readers:  
   and celebration of Holy Communion 97, 98  
   and funeral ministry 120, 193, 199  
   as incumbents 224  
   and safeguarding 170, 171, 178–80  
 Reform and Renewal 5–6, 49, 87, 93–5, 162  
*Released for Mission* 50–51, 211, 213, 224–5, 229  
 religion, freedom of 43  
 religious education (RE):  
   and Christianity Project 75  
   syllabuses 74–5  
 Remuneration and Conditions of Service Committee, questions to 36–8  
 Resourcing the Future Task Group 68, 82,

83, 84, 85–6, 93, 97, 117–39, 162–3, 220  
*Resourcing Ministerial Education* report 79–  
80, 93, 94, 117–39, 162–3, 232  
Resourcing Ministerial Education Task  
Group 54, 68, 71, 79, 83, 84–5, 97, 99  
*Resourcing and Training for the Rural  
Church* 224–5  
Responsible Savings and Credit task group  
41, 68–9  
Rural Affairs Group 153, 213, 219, 220,  
222, 223, 226, 228–9, 232  
Rural Life Advisors 226–7

safeguarding 5, 60–61  
and risk assessment 168–9, 170  
training 61, 173  
*see also* Draft Safeguarding and Clergy  
Discipline Measure  
Scriptural Reasoning 59  
seat allocation, General Synod 6, 15–18  
Secretary General, questions to 68–71  
Senior Church Leadership Task Group 67,  
68, 91, 98, 146  
Senior Leadership Development Programme  
66–7, 83, 86–7, 95, 163  
sexuality, human 11, 12, 45–6  
and House of Bishops’ Guidelines 56  
and shared conversations 57–8  
Shared Conversations Initiative 57  
Sheffield Formula 85, 134, 137  
simplification 139–53  
and Business Committee 139–40  
and church plants 142, 151, 152, 154, 162  
and compensation for loss of office 147–9  
and deaneries 144, 150  
and dioceses 139–41  
and mission 140–42, 145–7, 153, 162  
and rural parishes 213, 222, 230, 232  
Simplification Task Group 68, 83, 87–8, 93,  
98, 139, 146  
social media, and Church of England 52,  
132  
solidarity, with Muslims 59  
Soul Survivor 201  
Spare Room Subsidy 39–40  
Spending Plans Task Group 67, 68, 69  
Standing Advisory Councils for Religious  
Education (SACREs) 74  
Standing Orders 6  
and Questions 6–7  
SO 10(c) 182  
SO 11 182  
SO 21(c) 35  
SO 22(b) 133  
SO 33 163  
SO 35(d)(i)(2) 35  
SO 36(c) 35, 166  
SO 54(c) 170  
SO 55(c) 174, 177  
SO 56 174  
SO 61(a) 34–5  
SO 66 25  
SO 77(f) 211  
SO 92 33  
SO 97 22, 80  
SO 105(a)(v) 182  
SO 108(c) 183  
SO 115 (a) 45, 46  
SO 116 53  
SO 117(c) 181–2  
SO 119 182–3  
SO 122 65  
SO 129(b) 183  
Standing Orders Committee, 50th Report  
181–6  
*Stronger as One* report 50–51  
subsidiarity 83  
suffragan bishops:  
appointment 66  
housing 47  
suicide:  
among farmers 225, 226  
assisted 187, 196  
and CofE funerals 187–202  
theology of 192–3, 194  
and unsound mind 188–9, 194, 195, 196  
and young people 192–3, 200, 201  
Syria, religious minorities 1

task groups 79–81  
membership 6–71  
and self-supporting ministers 53–4  
Theological Education Institutions 84  
*see also* colleges, theological; courses,  
theological  
theology:  
and discipleship 90, 95  
and ordination training 124, 131–3, 137



and suicide 192–3, 194  
*Towards the Conversion of England* 88  
 training, theological:  
   Common Awards 76–8, 129  
   contextual 74, 78–9, 85, 86, 121–2  
   and disabled students 78  
   fast-tracking 127, 129  
   funding 126–7, 129–30  
   Initial Ministerial Education 85  
   and representation on Synod 16  
   residential *see* colleges, theological  
   for rural ministry 230  
   and theology 124, 131–3, 137  
   and working with children and young  
   people 78  
   and young ordinands 79, 123, 128–9  
   *see also* Resourcing Ministerial Education  
   Task Group  
 Trussell Trust, food banks 11, 42–3  
 Turning Up the Volume task group 69  
 Twitter, and Church of England 52

universities, representation on Synod 16  
 Us. (USPG) 61

Vacation of Benefices Measure 1977 147  
*Valuing All God's Children* 74  
 violence, against Iraqi Christians 1–4, 5, 9–  
 10  
 vocations:  
   increased 85, 120  
   of young people 97, 98

Vote 1 78, 127, 136  
 Vote 2 83  
 voting:  
   by Houses 32, 35, 156, 166–7  
   by whole Synod 201–2

Wash House Project 7–8, 65–6  
 West Yorkshire and the Dales, Diocese 26–  
 32  
 wi-fi hubs 159–60  
 witness, as vital 18–22, 86  
 women, and poverty 22–4  
 women in the episcopate:  
   and deaneries 11  
   five guiding principles 55–7, 63–4, 87  
   House of Bishops' Declaration 55, 63  
   opponents 65  
*Working with the Spirit* (Perry report) 64  
*Working Together* report 212

young people:  
   evangelism to 52, 60  
   role models for young men 59–60  
   and suicide 192–3, 200, 201  
   and timing of Synods 10  
   training to work with 78  
   vocations 97, 98, 123, 128–9, 132, 158  
 Youth Council, representatives 1

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