

Report of Proceedings 2015

**General Synod
November Group of Sessions**

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Contents

Full Synod: First Day (Tuesday 24 November)

| | |
|--|----|
| Westminster Abbey Service and Opening Ceremony | 1 |
| The Queen's Speech | 3 |
| Introductions and Welcomes | 6 |
| Presidential Address | 6 |
| Report by the Business Committee | 11 |
| Introduction to Synod Worship | 21 |
| Reform and Renewal: Presentation | 23 |
| Questions | 43 |

Second Day (Wednesday 25 November)

| | |
|---|-----|
| Loyal Address | 72 |
| Global Warming: Presentation | 72 |
| The Migrant Crisis | 76 |
| Legislative Business: Ecclesiastical Judges, Legal Officers and Others (Fees) Order 2015 | 95 |
| Public Perceptions of Jesus: Presentation | 102 |
| Report of the Church Buildings Review Group | 113 |
| Farewells | 135 |
| Prorogation | 141 |

Full Synod: First Day Tuesday 24 November 2015

Westminster Abbey Service

The Houses of Bishops, Clergy and Laity and the Representative of other Churches proceeded into the Collegiate Church of St Peter in Westminster (Westminster Abbey) for a service of Holy Communion at 10.30 am. His Grace the Lord Archbishop of Canterbury (the Most Revd and Rt Hon Justin Welby) was the Celebrant, the Bishop of Stockport (the Rt Revd Libby Lane) the Gospeller, and the Secretary General (Mr William Fittall) read from the Old Testament. Father Raniero Cantalamessa, Preacher to the Papal Household, preached the Sermon.

Opening Ceremony

Her Majesty The Queen, escorted by the Joint Presidents, entered the Assembly Hall and took her seat on the platform.

The Archbishop of Canterbury (Most Revd and Rt Hon Justin Welby): Your Majesty, we welcome you and His Royal Highness to the inauguration of the Tenth General Synod of the Church of England.

It was my predecessor but four, Archbishop Michael Ramsey, who had the honour to welcome you both to the inaugural meeting of the newly created Synod in 1970. In his remarks he noted that it was thought to be the first occasion on which the Sovereign had attended an ecclesiastical synod in this country, even though a variety of convocations, assemblies and synods had existed since the early medieval period.

It is a matter of great pride and rejoicing to us that, since then, Your Majesty has been present in the Abbey for each of the Synod services and in this Assembly Hall for each of the opening ceremonies. It is an especial privilege to be able to welcome Your Majesty here today just two months after the present reign became the longest in our nation's history.

Over the centuries there have been many twists and turns in the relationship between Church and State and in the role played by the Supreme Governor. My predecessor but two, Archbishop Robert Runcie, reminded your Majesty in 1985 of the example of Queen Anne, who was a devoted Churchwoman, yet had such a deep dislike of synods that she was very reluctant to allow the Convocation of Canterbury to meet in 1710.

Her Minister, Robert Harley, saved the day by offering her this advice: "Let them meet," he said, "for they like to come up to town. But they shall be on their good behaviour. If they prove extravagant they hurt none but themselves, for we shall pack them off back to their parishes." Wise words, which the Archbishop of York and I will keep in mind as the lifetime of this Synod unfolds.

It may also be that there will be moments in meetings of the Crown Nominations Commission when we shall regret the passing of those simpler days when the Supreme Governor felt at liberty to decide senior Church appointments without too

much heed for advice or process. In 1805 George III's offer of the See of Canterbury to Charles Manners Sutton, without consultation even with his Prime Minister, provoked an indignant protest from William Pitt the Younger and, according to one source, an angry exchange such as had rarely passed between a sovereign and his minister. Even such a royal favourite as Benjamin Disraeli found in 1868 that Queen Victoria disputed three of his first five nominations for bishoprics and on each occasion got her way.

Since the reign of Queen Victoria things have been rather different - possibly duller. On the appointment of the new Archbishop of York, Your Majesty's great-grandfather memorably confined himself to offering two pieces of advice to Cosmo Gordon Lang, one that he should keep the parties in the Church together; the other that he should prevent the clergy wearing moustaches.

When the Church Assembly was established in 1920 the question arose of how Your Majesty's grandfather would be able to mark the occasion. The meeting was at the end of June and unfortunately His Majesty had a prior engagement, but he sent a message which Archbishop Davidson read out as the members of the Assembly stood to attention. The text is on page 1 of the report of the proceedings of the Church Assembly. What the report does not reveal is that the message was sent from Newmarket.

On a more serious note - I think that is quite a serious note, but that is what my notes say - it is 75 years ago this year that Your Majesty's parents came to open this building just as our nation was facing its greatest hour of trial. Within three months Church House was damaged by bombs. But it survived and was subsequently able to provide shelter for both Houses of Parliament at various points during the Second World War as well as hosting some of the preparatory meetings for the United Nations.

This new Synod today gathers in the same building at another moment of great uncertainty and conflict in our world. We shall, in the midst of all our other business, want to take time to pray earnestly for the leaders of the nations as they grapple with problems so intractable that solutions are likely to be neither simple nor quick.

As we seek to take counsel together here to discern the mind of Christ for the Church of England and for those whom we serve in this land we shall draw strength from knowing that Your Majesty's prayers will be with us. For our part, it will remain our earnest concern to pray that Almighty God will continue to replenish Your Majesty with the Grace of the Holy Spirit enduing her plenteously with all Heavenly gifts.

I now call the Joint Registrar of the Provinces of Canterbury and York and the Secretary General to make their Returns, after which I hope that Your Majesty will be pleased to address us.

The Registrar: My Lord Archbishops, in accordance with Her Majesty's writs for summoning the Convocations of Canterbury and York dated the 10th day of June in the sixty-fourth year of Her Majesty's reign, I hereby declare that the bishops suffragan and others in episcopal orders and the deans, archdeacons and clergy here assembled have been duly elected, chosen and appointed and are now

summoned, together with the diocesan bishops, in obedience to Your Graces' directions so as to constitute the Upper and Lower Houses of the Convocations.

The Secretary General: My Lord Archbishops, the representatives of the laity here assembled have been duly elected and appointed in accordance with the Synodical Government Measure 1969, and are now called together in obedience to Your Graces' directions so as to constitute the House of Laity.

The Queen's Speech

Your Graces, the Convocations of Canterbury and York, duly called together in obedience to Our Royal Writs, are on this day joined together, in accordance with the Synodical Government Measure 1969, and the House of Laity is added to them in accordance with that Measure so as to constitute the tenth General Synod of the Church of England.

Thank you, Archbishop, for your welcome and for setting today's proceedings in a wider historical context. In the 45 years since the meeting of the first Synod much has changed. The last Synod will be particularly remembered for the way in which after prolonged reflection and conversation, even in the midst of deep disagreements, it was able to approve the legislation to enable women to be consecrated as bishops. This new Synod too will have to grapple with the difficult issues confronting our Church and our world. On some of these there will be many different views and I am sure that members of the Synod will pray earnestly that the gathering in January of the Primates of the Anglican Communion will be a time when together they may know what is God's will.

St Paul reminds us that all Christians, as ambassadors for Christ, are entrusted with the ministry of reconciliation. Spreading God's word and the endless but rewarding task of peace-making and conflict resolution are important parts of that ministry. So too is the Church of England's particular vocation to work in partnership with those of other faiths and none to serve the common good in this land.

To this end I was pleased that one of the first events that Prince Philip and I attended in 2012 to mark my Diamond Jubilee was a gathering of leaders of all faiths at Lambeth Palace.

The presence among us today of the Preacher to the Papal Household would not have been possible but for the notable advances since 1970 in co-operation across the great Christian traditions. There are many other examples: the Covenant between the Church of England and the Methodist Church; the recent visit of the Ecumenical Patriarch; the participation in this Synod of observers from so many Christian traditions; the newly created ecumenical community of St Anselm at Lambeth. Each of these serves as a reminder both of the progress already made and of the journey that still lies ahead in the pursuit of Christian unity.

Your Graces, each new Synod inherits from its predecessor the same, weighty responsibilities. Collectively you must continue to draw deeply on your faith, judgment and life experiences as well as that precious Anglican tradition of unity in fellowship to discern the future path of the Church of England.

At the beginning of this new Synod as you put your hand into the hand of God, my prayer is that, as we sang in that joyous hymn this morning, His glorious light may shine ever on our sight, and clothe us round, the while our path illuming.

The Archbishop of York (Most Revd & Rt Hon Dr John Sentamu): Your Majesty, on behalf of all the members of Synod and of our guests today, let me express our gratitude for your presence with us today and for the moving address that we have just heard.

The Archbishop of Canterbury began by quoting words that his predecessor but four, Michael Ramsey, spoke in 1970. He will forgive me if I quote the remarks of my predecessor but four, Donald Coggan, made on the same occasion. He said this: "We do not suffer from the delusion that a reorganisation of Church governance such as that which we begin today will itself bring in the Kingdom of God. The Spirit of God is not tied to any method of organisation. Nevertheless, the Kingdom is not hastened by procedures that are cumbrous and outdated."

I was first elected to this Synod 30 years ago and remain an unashamed supporter of the synodical system. The coming together of bishops, clergy and laity in a single body to take counsel for the good of the whole Church of England is right in principle and sound in practice. "Synod" simply meaning, "Pilgrims together on the Way." And more on the Way of Christ.

Those who designed our arrangements showed much wisdom. In many other churches the membership is chosen afresh each time the particular assembly, conference or convention comes together, usually only once a year or in some cases only once in three years. Here, a Synod is constituted for five years. We meet normally twice a year. There is time for us to grow together as a body of Christians, sharing worship and fellowship with each other and bearing each other's burdens as we engage in the common task. And most importantly sharing the joy of the Gospel of Christ.

Why is it then that, to quote the words of Archbishop Habgood, "As a body the General Synod ... has not been universally loved"? In 1990, when he uttered those words, some of the energy which had led to major reforms in the 1970s, such as the Worship and Doctrine Measure and changes to church appointments' processes, had dissipated. In addition, the Synod had spent much time on the subject of women and the priesthood without reaching a conclusion.

Yet I suspect that some of the frustration, then as now, arose because people had invested exaggerated hopes in the synodical and forgotten those wise words of Archbishop Coggan: "Reorganisation of governance will never of itself bring in the Kingdom of God." Good governance is necessary. But it can never be sufficient. Obedience to the Lord and being transfigured by the Holy Spirit daily are crucial.

What we do together here over the next five years, passing measures and canons, voting on motions, deciding on the use of all our resources, will be of great importance. The decisions we take will affect ministry and mission in every community. We have the ability to chart a course that will enable the Church of England to be more single-minded and about pursuing spiritual and numerical growth. Re-connecting the Church of England with England.

Yet synods and other Christian assemblies can never be the primary places where the hungry are fed, the bereaved are comforted and the good news proclaimed to those looking for meaning and purpose. These are tasks which, in Archbishop Coggan's words, will bring in the Kingdom of God. Our responsibility as a Synod is to support and encourage that work in the parishes and dioceses of the Church of England, ensuring that "procedures that are cumbrous and outdated" are swept away.

Next Monday, 30 November, marks the tenth anniversary of my enthronement in York Minster. I began my inaugural sermon by quoting Michael Ramsey, my predecessor but five, who in 1962 at a big university mission said, "I should love to think of a black Archbishop of York holding a mission here telling a future generation of the scandal and the glory of the Church." Then I said, "Well, here I am." I can think of no better way of marking it than being in the same place to consecrate the Bishop of Newcastle as she takes up her ministry as the first woman to be a diocesan bishop in the Northern Province. She will join a group of bishops who have over the past year committed themselves afresh to the task of evangelism.

Instead of just coming together for business meetings we decided to meet together on Holy Island, Lindisfarne, in May 2014 simply to pray together and to wait on God.

As a result, 22 northern bishops, with their mission teams, gathered in the diocese of Sheffield in September 2015 to lead a four day mission. It was an extraordinary time as we joined together parishes in proclaiming the good news of Christ. More such events are being planned. In addition, from 1 December until 22 May I shall be spending the majority of my time leading deanery missions in the diocese of York. As Dr Emil Brunner once wrote: "The Church exists for mission, just as a fire exists by burning. Where there is no mission there is no Church; and where there is neither Church nor mission, there is no faith."

Your Majesty, your presence with us and your words today are a great encouragement to us as we seek to be faithful to the mission committed to our charge. To Almighty God, we shall continue to pray and sing: "Thy choicest gifts in store, on her be pleased to pour, long may she reign!"

Long live the Queen.

Her Majesty The Queen, accompanied by the Presidents, then withdrew.

(Adjournment)

THE CHAIR *The Archbishop of Canterbury (Most Revd and Rt Hon Justin Welby)* took the Chair at 2.45 pm

The Revd Michael Gisbourne (Chaplain to the Synod) led the Synod in an act of worship

Introductions and Welcomes

The Chair: It is my pleasure to welcome all the newly elected members of the Synod. As it would take a long time to read out all their names, I wonder if they would just stand.

I would also like to welcome a new diocesan bishop returning to Synod in a new capacity. Would the Rt Revd Christine Hardman, Bishop of Newcastle, please stand.

May I also welcome an appointed member of the Archbishops' Council, Mr Matthew Frost, formerly chief executive of Tearfund, who is also here for the first time. Please would he stand?

There are three bishops attending during a vacancy in See: the Rt Revd Colin Fletcher, Bishop of Dorchester, for Oxford; the Rt Revd John Holbrook, Bishop of Brixworth, for Leicester; and the Rt Revd Clive Gregory, Bishop of Wolverhampton, for Lichfield. Please could you stand?

We also welcome the Revd Philip Cooper, who is attending Synod for the first time as the new Ecumenical Representative of the Moravian Church. Please would he stand?

I shall not on this occasion be reporting on the progress of Measures and Statutory Instruments, which is set out in the Fifth Notice Paper, but I draw members' attention to the fact that the Ecclesiastical Committee of Parliament has recently considered the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure and the Diocesan Stipends Funds (Amendment) Measure and found both expedient. Accordingly, they will now be put before both Houses of Parliament for approval.

That concludes this item of business.

THE CHAIR *The Revd Canon Dr Rosemarie Mallett (Southwark)* took the Chair at 2.57 pm

Presidential Address

The Chair: Good afternoon, Synod. We now come to Item 2 on the Agenda. I call upon His Grace, the Archbishop of Canterbury, to give his Presidential Address to Synod.

The Archbishop of Canterbury (Most Revd and Rt Hon Justin Welby): Good afternoon. I learnt the rules yesterday. A few months ago, those renovating the Great Hall, part of the library at Lambeth Palace, found this (*indicating*): it is a plumb line. We are into visual aids this time. I wonder if William would just stand for the whole address! It is beautifully shaped, and goodness knows how old. It was found

behind a wall. For all we know, it could be several hundred years old. It is unbelievably heavy, so, if you will excuse me, I am going to put it down somewhere where it is more or less visible.

A plumb line's chief purpose is not to draw attention to what it says about itself, but to what it enables. A plumb line is used to test verticality and depth. It is, of course, the prophet Amos who has the vision of the Lord holding a plumb line against the people of God.

As we start this Synod, I offer this image of a plumb line being held against what we have and will build, what we stand for and how we conduct ourselves. Amos uses it to warn the people that God is serious about both justice and judgment.

With the formal inauguration of Synod, we stand at the brink of another five year period of the work that General Synod carries out. To those of you who are returning, welcome back. To those who are new, we have given you, I hope, a very warm welcome. To all of you, thank you for being prepared to serve the Church in this way. For many of you it is, I do realise, a huge commitment of time, and quite often of precious holiday time, that you sacrifice in the service of the Church. We genuinely thank you from the bottom of our hearts. It is a sacrifice, and we know that.

If you are anything like me, you come to this experience of a new Synod, whether you are new or returning, with a certain amount of apprehension. How do we best take responsibility for the household of God, which is the Church of England?

For me, this is the first time that I have seen a new Synod, but I know that Synod has some tried and tested ways of building. Having learnt to like some of the ways of the old Synod, the last Synod, I feel like those in my parish church did when we suggested getting rid of the pews and putting in chairs. The pews may have been beautiful or ugly, comfortable or uncomfortable. There was even a suspicion, which I have to say I may have helped create, that they had been designed by an osteopath who was short of business. Whatever one's opinion, they were the pews we knew.

What is this new Synod to be like? So much of the atmosphere and environment in which we sit and work seems to guide us in a particular way. We have the wigs, the formality, the points of order, all of which derive from the fact that in the General Synod we are, from time to time, required to discuss and make the law of the land. Since Parliament has delegated certain responsibilities, albeit with the check of the Ecclesiastical Commission and the requirement for measures to be laid before both Houses of Parliament, we are required to do things properly, carefully and legally, and that is of course exactly as it should be.

However, not everything we do is like that. Many of our debates may lead to legislation, but in their earlier stages they are, above all, attempts to understand and respond to the call of God, to proclaim the gospel afresh in each generation. There is nothing new about that challenge, but a Synod might seem a strange way to seek to meet it.

However, we remember Acts 15. Following the work of Peter in drawing Cornelius and the Samaritans into the Church and the first missionary journey of St Paul, there was significant dissension in Jerusalem amongst the leadership of the Church. All

involved came together and reflected and listened. They were a council, or in some ways a synod. Speaking to the recent Synod of Bishops, Pope Francis said: “The world in which we live and that we are called to love and serve, even with its contradictions, demands from the Church the strengthening of synergies in all areas of her mission”. He went on: “It is precisely on this way of synodality where we find the pathway that God expects from the Church of the third millennium.”

Before we are legislators, we are Christians. We are Christians with different views and attitudes, but we are Christians. The plumb line that is held to us as followers of Jesus Christ is Jesus Christ himself. That means we are called to work together with all those in this country and around the world - all those - who are fellow members of the Church, baptized in the name of the Holy Trinity. Loving one another and working together is not a choice we are free to make or not to make; it is an obligation we are given. Within that huge, diverse and extraordinary body that is the Church of God in time and space, the Church of England is one part and assembles in synods of various forms, including here in the General Synod, to walk together.

As we stand at the brink of the next quinquennium, mindful of God’s plumb line held up to our common life, and its outworking here, what might be revealed concerning our hopes and fears? What might be the best, and what might be the worst, in terms of how and what we might build together in these five years?

If I might begin with the worst. One of my fears is that we approach this Synod as a place of suspicion and conflict. To use Pope Francis’ phrase, we cannot come together in what he called a “hermeneutic of conspiracy”. Many of you will remember the performance of Kenneth Williams in *Carry on Cleo*, in which, as he faces his murderers, he cries out, “Infamy! Infamy”.

Synod in unison: “They’ve all got it in for me!”

You are awake! That is not a fresh expression of synodal spirit, but it is for many the default response to almost anything that happens.

Another example comes from the Congress of Vienna in 1815 when the Austro-Hungarian Chancellor Metternich heard that the head of the French delegation, the notoriously wily diplomat Talleyrand, had died, and he is said to have remarked, “Now what does he mean by that?”

The Westminster model, in which we are to some extent caught, sets up a mood of equivalence and exchange, in which all Synod decisions become a zero-sum game in which one side must win and another side must lose. But that is not the logic of the Body of Christ. If any lose, we all lose. If any win, we all win.

My first hope is the counter to my first fear, the extreme opposite. To steal an expression from the French philosopher Ricoeur, we live rather in a place of abundance and grace, the attributes of God, whose generosity is far more abundant than we can imagine, and whose grace takes us from the deepest sin into his living presence.

That was the first reaction of the Council at Jerusalem. In Acts 15:3 it says that Paul and Barnabas reported the conversion of the Gentiles and brought great joy to all believers. The extraordinary surprise of the conversion to the Gentiles is something

that the lapse of 2,000 years teaches us to take for granted. For the Jewish believers, it was no less than a complete Copernican revolution - the whole world had changed - yet it brought great joy to all the believers.

However, some of the believers wanted to set particular conditions for the reception of the Gentiles, especially that they adhere to the law of Moses, but the joy which came first was the joy of seeing the abundance and grace of God, which is not constrained by the limitations of our imaginations. In many ways, the Council of Jerusalem turned the experience of the grace of God into practical decision, and perhaps that is our biggest challenge as a Synod.

If the way we work is only on the Westminster model, we will neither be overwhelmed with joy by the grace of God nor capable of finding a way forward that ensures that all those who receive His grace - all those - are enabled to flourish in His love. The achievement of the council was that, having rejoiced, they acted decisively to respond to the work of the Spirit.

In the last Synod we worked together until we arrived at the Five Principles, which set out clearly both a decision but also an aspiration for the generous expression of the grace of God. Agreeing the Five Principles was a moment of genuine synodality. The vision of what this Synod could be was strengthened in that moment. It was a moment of responding to the Spirit, recognising that, wherever the Spirit was at work, we must encourage life to flourish.

We must not be ashamed of the fact that we are a church that has its arguments in public, loudly. It is healthy and good. The plumb line does not judge disagreement but it does hold me and each of us to account for how we disagree. This is one of the public fora in which different views are made apparent. In an age of instant communications and strong party spirit, combined with the radical autonomy of individual rights, the subtleties and nuances of argument and of responsibility for the whole body of Christ are not well reported. Yet for all that people assert the lack of relevance of the Church of England in the life of the nation, there seems to remain an interest in the things we do and say. Let me quote Pope Francis a third time. At one point in his speech in the middle of Synod he said this: "What the Lord wants is in a certain way already contained in the word 'synod': walking together" - the Archbishop of York referred to this earlier - "lay people, pastors, the Bishop of Rome, a concept which is easy to put into words but not so easy to put into practice". That sets out my second hope. We must build together, lay people, clergy, the House of Bishops. Building together requires us to listen, to discern the mind of Christ. Pope Francis went on: "A synodal church is a listening church, aware that listening is more than hearing". It means listening to each other when both have something to learn.

This Synod offers enormous challenges to the future of the Church of England but much more than that to our role within the global church and indeed to our full participation in its life, to which we are called under God. Each day at Morning Prayer at Lambeth with the community of St Anselm we pray a prayer for the unity of the Church, praying, among other things, that we may experience the suffering caused by division and see our sin; that we may experience the suffering caused by division and see our sin. A plumb line is that which points to our error that we may not deny our sin but see it. It is from that place that we learn to hope beyond all hope that our imagination may be stretched to conceive afresh God's grace outpoured abundantly.

A few weeks ago the Archbishop of Constantinople and New Rome, the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I, paid an official visit. We spent much time in discussion and built a strong relationship. It is based on links that go back to Archbishop Tillotson in the late 17th century. Yet that relationship is only as good as our next steps together. The same is true for us in this Synod. We are called to unity not for efficiency or bureaucratic tidiness but by the prayer and command of Christ. The plumb line held against us is the very prayer of Christ. Therefore, during the course of this Synod I hope and pray that you will agree - and it cannot be enforced on you, this will be a choice of the Synod - that we will regularly find different ways of discussing together in order to listen to one another and not merely to hear one another. We have been doing that in the structured conversations around the issues of human sexuality. We will need to go on doing that, not only on that issue but on others.

My second great fear is that we are too consumed by the inner workings of the Church of England, that we become a church curved in on itself. The events of the last two weeks in Paris have broken our hearts. In great sorrow we have seen the impact of religiously motivated violence at its very worst. We will not likely ever be forgiven if this Synod turns inwards at this time of crisis, thinking only of ourselves and our own preoccupations, and that if we neglect the fact that all around us is a great struggle described recently by Lord Alderdice, who was so instrumental in the Northern Ireland peace process, as the Third World War.

Let me be clear. It is not a war against Islam. Religious extremism is global and faces us with a generational and ideological or theological struggle. It is a war against extremism and the fundamentalism that prefers to defy God Himself rather than to live in holiness with those whom we are called to love, and let us remember we are called to love God, one another, our neighbour and our enemy. We will not likely be forgiven if we are self-indulgent in our arguments, party-spirited in our approach. As I just said, the conflict around us is global, affecting people of all faiths and none, including vast numbers of Christians all around the world. Extremism is now a feature of every major faith tradition, including our own. The conflict is generational. It will see us out and requires the long steady focused haul and determination that alone can lead to overcoming, and it is theological and ideological. There will be aspects that may involve the use of armed force in a quasi-policing form. We will differ over when that is right and when it is wrong.

Yet at the heart of this conflict for the first time in centuries in western Europe is theology, so those who are people of faith, us, have a challenge and a task. The challenge is to be like Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace. The task is to overwhelm extremism not by other extremes but with hope and love. Victory will mean the end of religiously motivated violence in the way that the great Christian wars that began with the Reformation and ended at the Peace of Westphalia in 1648 defeated Christian-generated large-scale religious warfare in western Europe. This present conflict must be won for faith of any kind to have any reputation in the public mind.

Let me repeat again: an inward turning, self-indulgent frame of mind that says, "We'll do what we do and never mind the consequences", such a mind will not be forgiven. On the other hand, if we are a synod that engages with the world around, that puts our own issues in a broader context, that demonstrates that deeply held differences on hugely important questions can be held in love through the grace of God, then we can acquire the right to speak prophetically and the courage to act courageously and

compassionately in a world of war.

Whether we like it or not, I believe Jesus Christ holds His plumb line up to each of us as individuals, to His Church and to this Synod. He does so that we might build wisely, responsibly, skilfully and in a way that to the interested outsider points to the glory of God. Let us therefore approach this quinquennium with an attitude of openness to the Holy Spirit building together as a synodal church. Let us learn to honour one another and to love one another as those who bear the name of Christ and who seek to serve Him. Let us demonstrate the self-sacrificial love of the Cross in our debates, in our care and concern not only for the Church but for the whole nation and indeed for the whole world. In five years' time we can look at ourselves as people who have built together, who have listened and heard and, although not agreed, have done our best to be faithful to Jesus Christ.

We know that the Council of Jerusalem, despite the wisdom of James' words, was not the end of the matter. In later years we see Paul still struggling with the fallout of those who disagreed. Human beings, being sinners, will never be tidy in the way they disagree or in the nature of their relationships. We will be an untidy synod because we are a human synod. Untidiness in relationships is normal, not fearful. It expresses the richness of who we are. The last Synod changed its way of working and achieved much. If we are consumed with desire for each other's flourishing, if we can celebrate rather than resent the work of the Spirit in each other's lives which expresses not so much who we are but, above all, whose we are, if we are willing to discover new ways of listening and loving, then this next quinquennium, meeting at its beginning in the shadow of Paris, will achieve even more. Amen.

The Chair: Thank you, your Grace, and that concludes this item of business.

THE CHAIR *The Ven Karen Gorham (Oxford) took the Chair at 3.21 pm*

Report by the Business Committee

The Chair: We come now to Item 3 on our agenda, the Report by the Business Committee. This is our first item of debate in this session of Synod. This is the usual opportunity for members to make brief points about the adequacy or otherwise of the Agenda and about other matters addressed in the report by the Business Committee. You will need the Report of the Business Committee GS 2006 and I call upon the Revd Canon Sue Booy, Chair of the Business Committee, to speak to this item.

Revd Canon Sue Booy (Oxford): I beg to move:

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

Madam Chair, thank you. Members, new and old, here we are, well and truly inaugurated into the tenth quinquennium of the Synod and it is my pleasure to move the Report of the Business Committee. I have had the great pleasure of meeting new members already and it has been good to reconnect with old friends as well. As I have just indicated in the formal way that we expect, my name is Sue Booy. I am a returning Proctor for the Oxford diocese, continuing as Chair of the Business Committee with a term of office that ends in 2017. Synod can take a bit of getting used to and I would encourage new members to just

keep on asking questions. There are staff on the help desk to help you and we hope you will find the Synod Survival Guide and the Staff Synod Guide helpful as well. You will find them in the members' resources section on the website and in the new Synod app, which I hope you have discovered.

This is a short group of sessions and we have aimed to schedule business that represents a good introduction to our work together. We will meet for a more substantial period of time in February on weekdays and across a weekend in York in July. Renewal and Reform will be a major theme of the five years. GS Misc 1124 offers a progress report and there will be an opportunity to ask questions about this update when it is presented later this afternoon. Tomorrow we will debate a report from the Church Buildings Review. This presents an opportunity for you to engage with just one part of the Renewal and Reform agenda, one which is familiar to most of us from our own parishes. We have also scheduled outward looking business tomorrow in a debate on the migrant crisis. Returning members will be aware of our continuing concern and struggle to address topical issues in Synod. We hope that by scheduling this business on the Agenda but then using a Notice Paper to provide a more timely text of our motion will enable a lively and well informed debate on a matter of serious concern. In these difficult times I am sure that our prayers and concern, expressed on our behalf by their Graces and our bishops, following recent events in Paris and elsewhere across the world will never be far from our prayers, those personal prayers and those expressed in Synod.

Since 2010 the Business Committee has been working with members, the Presidents and the Archbishops' Council to change the way that Synod works together around four key themes: prayer and worship, working together for good, communication, and our role as a legislative and deliberative body. In particular, we have focused our group work to provide background exploration of the themes of debate and to bridge different viewpoints. Our use of web technology has been developed with continuous live streaming and the Twitter feed to help a wide audience engage with what we do as it happens.

Amongst innovations this Synod is the distribution of papers. You have received, and are accessing, your papers electronically unless you opted to receive what can be an increasingly weighty library of paper by post. This represents a significant improvement in our environmental impact as well as a financial saving to your dioceses. I am particularly grateful for the hard work that the staff have put in to bring forward plans for the Synod app much more quickly than we had dared hope. If you have not discovered it, it is available on android and Apple devices, and I know that many of you have appreciated it already. As with any innovation, although it will make your lives easier, I am quite sure that there will be room for improvement and we look forward to your feedback, both about the app and other aspects of Synod.

Shortly Michael Gisbourne, the new Chaplain, will introduce himself in a more formal way. He is the first Chaplain to be appointed to this role by the Presidents from outside the membership of Synod. This means that he can devote time and attention to supporting and developing our prayer and worship together.

One of the responsibilities of the Business Committee and the Synod staff is your security and that of our guests and members of the public. We take this seriously and take regular advice. Please help us by being vigilant and by working with the security staff whose job is to help us stay safe. If you are visiting the public gallery,

you have been asked to leave larger bags and coats in the cloakroom, and a security arch has been installed for visitors on the stairs. Guidance about security for us all as well as policies on fringe meetings and displays and the conduct of Synod members can be found in members' resources on the website and in the app.

Before I finish I would like to pay tribute to William Fittall whose retirement as Secretary-General we shall mark together. One of William's many roles is to help inform and guide the Business Committee and its Chair, and we will miss him. Another is to lead and guide the Synod staff, who are exceptional in their support to each one of the members here.

Finally, I would like to reiterate something I said in July. As members of this tenth Synod, we have a particular calling to live out St Paul's aspiration expressed in Ephesians 4, that we should bear with one another in love and maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. As Chair, it is my intention and my prayer that the Business Committee should serve you in this and I look forward to working alongside a newly elected committee. Madam Chair, I beg to move.

The Chair: I am aware we have limited time for this debate. I will be welcoming a motion of closure at 3.55.

The Chair imposed a speech limit of three minutes.

Ven Peter Spiers (Liverpool): Thank you very much for calling me. I submitted my 'request to speak' form via the app, so I am delighted that it has worked and succeeded but you might not be by the time I finish, however. I would like to congratulate James Stott for all the work that he has put into it. It is great to see the Twitter feed all on one page, to be able to access documents, to submit questions and 'request to speak' forms. This shows tremendous entrepreneurial spirit and we need more of it in our Synod proceedings.

A slight worry I have is whether someone masquerading as me could submit a 'request to speak' form and wanted to make a different point or an opposite point to the one that I would want to make, or, even, having used their allowance of two questions, submit a question in my name. So perhaps we need to check up on that. Successful apps exist to solve a problem that you did not even know existed and propose a solution to the problem. They also exist to entertain you when you are bored. They enable us to be interactive and to feel that we are more involved.

I would like to suggest some improvements to the app that might see more engagement, not just from us but from people outside of Synod. For example, what about a check-in facility for the House of Bishops so that we could all see at a glance whether there was a quorum in the House of Bishops? What about notifications that we can customise so that we need never miss a speech from an Archbishop again and, conversely, warn us that it is time for a cup of tea during the speeches of others? We could also have the fringe meeting venues in the app. We would have our Synod numbers on the app and that we could click on them the number of times people get called to speak.

We could have a game of maiden speakers so we could work out who has been called and who has not for that. What about 'request to speak' forms in the middle of debates that people could interact with, or we could call speakers ourselves? What

about adjusting the speech limits up and down ourselves? That would be fun. In the Houses of Parliament they have a 'work for you' email alert. Well, we could have, 'they pray for you' email alerts, so that the people who voted us here will be able to find out the points that we make, the questions that we ask and we could review and rate speakers and debates all via the app. I do hope the Business Committee will look to development of the app and that you will all give your feedback to them. Thank you.

Revd Preb Simon Cawdell (Hereford): Chair, it is a pleasure to return and I am sure I am not the only member getting used to my new number. I presume that my change from 130 to 127 is a result of the translation of the diocese of Bradford to the diocese of West Yorkshire and the Dales, or Leeds if we must, Bishop Steven, rather than an ecclesiastical version of *Kind Hearts and Coronets* in which the 126 people between me and his Grace need to be very afraid. Test your synodical tea for hemlock.

I warmly welcome the Business Committee Report which has given a really helpful space and balance both to the on-going themes and new business. I wish to commend a particularly helpful innovation which is the delay in sending out the actual motion on migration until the last minute in order that the Synod may be able to function in the most relevant way possible. Taking a theme of the Presidential Address, to prevent us from becoming inward looking, I hope that this is a principle that will be carried forward into future sessions.

There is a balance to be found in creating space for relevant comment and the daily cost of Synod revealed yesterday at £100,000, but to have an hour or two hour spot held back until the beginning of each Synod with contingency business ready to slot into it could be a very effective way of speaking to the nation and Church as we meet, balancing the needs and the possibilities of this.

Events of last week demonstrated the need for that very, very clearly. The dreadful advent of terrorism both in Europe and beyond is something on which we can very usefully speak, especially as our government works out its response in our name; or, more trivially, the extraordinarily chilling decision of the Cinema Advertising Agency to ban a screening of a simple film advocating prayer to proceed before the on-going *Star Wars* film coming out before Christmas. Chair, members of Synod, I think the extraordinary public response on that to date has demonstrated that 'the force' is with us.

Speaker: And also with you.

Revd Preb Simon Cawdell (Hereford): Thank you, Sir. By the grace of God in the form of Christ incarnate for us in our salvation. Pete Spiers has commented on one of the new bits of technology. I will leave that. But I note the other new bit of technology in the new voting machines offering on their keyboard so much more than a simple 'yes or 'no' - I wonder what happens if I press Z - but also demonstrating by their flashing lights clearly that they are keeping track on our pulse, and it is very good to see that all of you on the platform there have your pulses absolutely in tune with one another.

I thank you too for the forecast of forward business and hope that there may be space for a re-examination of Church Representation Rules such as narrowly fell in

the last quinquennium. Much work was done that was good and it would be good to see it returning to be put into clear position now. Thank you.

Mrs Anne Foreman (Exeter): Thank you, Chair. Mine is a very short and small point. It is about Annex 2, the Forecast of Future Business, and in 2017 we have the statement that there will be the report, possibly, on the task group on lay leadership. I think we have heard so often that lay leadership is vital and important. I think if you want us to have confidence in that, we need to think a bit earlier than 2017. I know they are going to report in September 2016 but what worried me is the beyond. Please do not cast lay leadership into the beyond. Bring them forward a bit sooner than that. Thank you.

Mrs Anne Martin (Guildford): Thank you for calling me. I have two requests of the Business Committee. The first is the reference on page 8 of the Report, Forecast of Future Business, July 2016, Shared Conversations. I wonder if the Chair of the Business Committee can elaborate a little bit more about that? And, then, I refer Synod to page 6 paragraph 36, which is a very useful clear statement particularly on what we have already heard today.

It is very important that new members and those of us who are returning remember how different, how much the facilitated conversations in the last Synod changed the nature of Synod. It has already been mentioned that at the end of the quinquennium goodwill and a willingness to listen and co-operation established a very positive working atmosphere. It felt we were working together and this positive, and dare I say Christian, atmosphere was in somewhat contrast to what sometimes prevailed earlier in that Synod.

Those of us in July will never forget the sight of Christina Rees and David Houlding walking across the Synod to hug each other; and, those of us who were here yesterday enjoyed a performance from both of them working together. I think we all hope that the atmosphere will continue. The Business Committee has obviously considered that, but I would ask: What effect will it have on future business in the life of this Synod? Thank you.

Revd Canon Catherine Grylls (Birmingham): As someone who joined Synod five years ago I would like to express thanks to the outgoing Business Committee for all the work that they have done and, as Anne has just said, particularly on helping us listen and learn from one another. The guidelines for group work, which they also developed, were particularly welcome and I do hope that group work will feature significantly in future groups of sessions.

With reference to this Agenda, I simply want to amplify the note in paragraph 12 of the Business Committee Report. The Birmingham Diocesan Motion that is listed on page 7 of the Agenda may well be withdrawn when the Diocesan Synod meets on Saturday. It simply has not met since the July sessions. The substance of that Motion was debated during the two debates on climate change and investment in July.

The international summit in Paris, COP 21, that it refers to starts at the end of this week, so the time for prayer and encouragement to government to ensure binding agreements is short. Whilst we are meeting here, the pilgrimage to Paris which left this city about ten days ago continues and I hope that our prayers here are joined

with them and theirs, as the Bishop of Salisbury has said, so strengthening and encouraging those taking part in the Paris talks to reach fair, accountable and firm commitments which will change the way we act as we move towards a low carbon economy.

The Business Committee moved quickly to respond to the Oxford and Birmingham Diocesan Motions passed earlier in the year integrating most of their content into debates in July and, as someone has already said, responded quickly in this Agenda to make space for a debate on the migrant crisis, and I do hope that in the next five years the Business Committee and Synod can be equally fleet of foot. Thank you.

Mr Clive Scowen (London): I rise to express some regret that the Report from the Archbishops' Task Group on Evangelism did not make it onto the Agenda for this group of sessions. It was said earlier in the year that it was not appropriate for that to be taken at the last Synod of the previous quinquennium, and there was merit in that argument; but, by the same token, it would have been compellingly appropriate to have it at the first group of sessions of this new quinquennium.

Along with many in this chamber I believe that, for the sake of our nation, evangelism must be the dominant theme of this quinquennium. Of course, discussing evangelism here does not make it happen; but what we, along with the House of Bishops, give priority to will, over time, help shape the culture of the whole Church. As Father Cantalamessa reminded us this morning, millions of our fellow country folk live as if our Lord Jesus Christ had never lived.

As we heard in our reading earlier this afternoon, people live harassed and helpless lives like sheep without a shepherd, without any inkling that they have a heavenly Father who loves them and that he invites them into a fullness of life beyond anything they can imagine. Can I urge that we give attention at every group of sessions to how the whole Church can be set free to be, as no less than Her Majesty herself this morning reminded us, ambassadors for Christ who help our families and friends, our neighbours, our work colleagues, our whole communities to be reconciled to God through faith in Christ. If we cannot give attention to that at every group of sessions, then we will become increasingly irrelevant. I hope that will not be the case but, rather, that we will be able to give real leadership to our whole Church to get on with its task to which Lord Jesus calls us.

Ms Jayne Ozanne (Oxford): Madam Chair, it is exciting to see that there has been so much change in Synod since I was last here; electronic voting to name but one, and women now sitting in all three Houses to name a landmark other. But there is one change I fear that is not such good news and one I would dearly like to ask the Business Committee to take time to reconsider. That is the high number of presentations that we appear to have in our Agenda.

I am not sure if I was the only Synod member to be deeply disappointed that tomorrow's Report on Public Perceptions of Jesus does not make room for a take note debate but, rather, is confined simply to questions. I feel that this is a missed opportunity which I believe could still be rectified and I would ask that this formal request for a take note debate be given serious consideration for three reasons.

Firstly, we have here in this chamber a wealth of experience and knowledge from which we and, indeed, the whole Church could benefit. The whole purpose of Synod

is to bring together Christians from across the dioceses of the Church of England with differing insights and stories of what God is doing within their midst. What an opportunity, therefore, to reflect on the Report together and hear how it resonates or not, as the case may be, with our own perception of our situations on the ground and what we are doing to address it.

Secondly, we are a new Synod and we need to get to know and trust each other. Many are here for the first time and will be keen to cut their teeth with maiden speeches. I cannot think of a more relevant and motivating topic than a report that looks at the state of the relationship between Christ, the Church and the nation. This is particularly true given the inspirational sermon we had this morning as well as events earlier this week regarding the controversial ban on our cinema advert.

Thirdly and finally, I must admit I am concerned about the reasons as to why this has not been considered as a take note debate. I hope that I am deeply mistaken in fearing that this might have been a move in some way to try and manage Synod. Please God, this is not the case, for if it were it would create a worrying signal for our future. We have to trust that God is working in and through us here. We are going to have, I am sure, some very difficult debates in this quinquennium and so we are going to need to learn to discuss items of difference in a way that models good disagreement. Again, this would have been a relatively easy debate to enable us to start practising this.

For all these reasons, and particularly the latter, I would urge the Business Committee to think again and allow us a take note debate which can, if needs be, be adjourned until February. Thank you.

Revd Preb Stephen Lynas (Bath & Wells): I want to refer to page 8 of the Business Committee Report and, again, to the item about the Shared Conversations which will occupy us when we are in York next July. Members will see there that it is scheduled from Sunday pm to Tuesday pm and so we are talking about a big commitment in every way.

Yesterday, I was fortunate to be able to sit in with many other returning members on the induction day for new members. I think congratulations are due to the Business Committee and the staff who organised that. It was a really good day and I am sure new members will think that too.

One of the highlights for me was the presentation by David Porter about Shared Conversations. He gave a little history of how we got to where we are. He talked about the fact that the regional groupings of Shared Conversations are two-thirds of the way through, I think. I think there are four to go. In a sense, he set the tone and the story for what is planned to happen when we meet in July. Now it seemed to me that was an immensely helpful portrait and I guess new members found it very helpful, but it would have been even more helpful if the whole Synod could have heard it because there are many people who are suspicious of this programme.

Archbishop Justin has referred to a sense of "building together" and so on. I think I want to ask the Business Committee, is it possible simply, in whatever paper or electronic forms are available, for the whole Synod to have a copy of what David Porter said to us yesterday and then we have all heard the same story, we are all on the same page, and we can go forward together to what will be an interesting and a

taxing time in July. Thank you.

Miss Prudence Dailey (Oxford): I completely agree with everything my friend, Jayne Ozanne, has just said. Anybody who knows either of us may suspect that there will be times during this quinquennium when we may not entirely agree on everything, although I hope we will still be friends.

That is really the point, members of Synod do disagree. Not being able to express that disagreement through a vote does not make it go away. This Synod is a legislative and decision-making body. I believe that, wherever possible, we should have a debate with a vote at the end of it and we should avoid replacing that by presentations, except in situations where that is necessary. I do think that four presentations in two days of Synod is really too many, and I hope that this is not going to be an increasing trend.

Like many others, I submitted my request to speak via the app and one of the fields on the app is where it asks you to specify whether you are for or against the motion. I found the dropdown was not working and so I had to say that I was for the motion. I was left wondering whether this was a bug or an undocumented system feature.

Synod, there will be times when some of us will want to be able to express opposition to something and will want to be able to do so through a vote. We can do that in love and respect, but not being able to express that disagreement does not make it go away. I hope that we will have fewer presentations and more votes, please. Thank you.

Mr John Freeman (Chester): On a point of order, can I make a motion for closure after the next speaker?

The Chair: I will accept that after the next two speakers, so after Mr Sam Margrave and Mrs Vivienne Goddard.

Mr Samuel Margrave (Coventry): Thank you, Chair. Can I begin by congratulating all those who were elected to General Synod and wish them well over the next five years? New members may not know, but, if you have an issue you care about, you can put forward a Private Member's Motion, as detailed on page 2 of the Business Committee Report. If it gets 100 supporters, it should be debated at General Synod.

In the last quinquennium, two Private Members' Motions were supported by 285 members of the last Synod, meaning that they should have been debated, but the Business Committee, in my view undemocratically, kept issues you cared about off our agenda.

In regard to the new spirit of this new Synod, can the Business Committee promise that any Private Members' Motions that are put again and receive 100 signatures will be debated? Unlike diocesan motions, Private Members' Motions are not carried over, so those members who put forward motions lost the chance to ever have them debated.

Furthermore, we saw issues in the last quinquennium, such as spending £2 million on leadership training or MBAs for priests, taken by the Archbishops' Council and not brought to this place for debate before the decision was made. I would just like to

ask that, in future, important decisions, such as that one, are brought here to Synod for all of us to speak, to decide, to debate, and to pray about those important issues.

Finally, in regard to the displays and fringe meeting policy that seemed to slip through since the last Synod, although I know it did appear in the last Business Report, I wonder what responses were made in regard to the policy. Importantly, the policy says that the Business Committee will have the final decision on whether people can have a stand or hold a fringe meeting based on their ethos and whether that ethos is relational to the Church of England.

What concerns me is, does that mean the Business Committee, for groups such as Inclusive Church, Changing Attitudes, or Christian Concern, people on the spectrum at each end of the Church who may not be the mainstream or the particular views of right now, will decide, "This doesn't sit comfortably with us", or "We don't want to hear about this", or "That's a bit controversial", so people are not able to come to this place. We need to have an opportunity to listen, to learn and to love each other. I think when we have fringe meetings, when we have displays, it is very important that they show us something we may not already know. I would ask for a commitment from the Business Committee that displays and fringe meetings will not ban particular people because people are sponsored by Synod, so Synod members invite people, and I trust Synod members. Thank you, Chair.

Mrs Vivienne Goddard (Blackburn): The two previous speakers have made my first point about presentations. I would simply like to add to that. With modern technology, surely we can have a link sent to us and we can watch the presentations before we come, thus disseminating it to a wider audience than just members of Synod.

My main point I want to draw Synod's attention to is GS Misc 1123, which came with your papers, which gives you the constitutions of the Archbishops' Council and, in particular, of Ministry Council. There are some very important matters coming from Ministry Council to this quinquennium. I have been privileged to serve on that committee for some time now.

During the last four years, Dr Judith Maltby and I, who are the only two members of Synod on that Council - not counting bishops - have become increasingly concerned about the lack of representation from this Synod on that matter. I believe the elections do not come up for another year. Through the Business Committee, I would love to ask the Archbishops' Council to look at the elections before they happen.

Just to make the point, at a recent meeting, when there had been a couple of apologies, I asked how many people in the room had the right to vote, and the answer was four bishops and me. I really do not think that is quite right. There are a lot of staff members on the Council, and they need to be there, of course, they are valued and give valuable information, but when it comes to making major decisions I really feel there ought to be more representation from this body. Thank you.

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

'That the question be now put.'

The Chair: That has my agreement. All those in favour of motion for closure on Item 3, please show? All those against?

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

The Chair: I invite Sue Booy to respond to the debate. You have up to five minutes.

Revd Canon Sue Booy (Oxford): Five minutes, Chair. Testing times for all of us, I think. I would like to begin by awarding Archdeacon Spiers a gold star in my reviewing and rating speakers in the Business Committee debate. Thank you for your suggestions, some rather more random than others. I wonder whether we should have a kind of Candy Crush Saga version of Synod. Maybe not.

Mr Cawdell, thank you very much. Because I only have five minutes, I simply want to say to you that your point about Church Representation Rules could well be referred to an Elections Review Group and I can assure you that one will be being set up by the Business Committee.

Mrs Foreman, talking about the forecast of future business and wanting us to make sure that the issue of lay leadership does not pass into the beyond, as a lay member of Business Committee, Mrs Foreman has been very much appreciated. We will not be sending her or anyone else beyond, I do hope.

Anne Martin and Stephen Lynas, both of you addressed the issue of the Shared Conversations. I am not able to tell you very much more at present about July, but the Business Committee is keeping in touch with David Porter about the design of July. As Stephen said, he gave a very informative address to members new and old yesterday. We can certainly ask if he has the text of that so that can be disseminated because I think everyone would agree that would be very helpful.

Mr Scowen, as far as I am aware, we were not asked to make space on this Agenda for the report of the Task Group on Evangelism, and if we are not asked to make space on the agenda we cannot do it. We are your servants. We order the agenda; we do not go out and look for it, as it were.

To some extent, this is also relevant to the points raised by Jayne Ozanne and Prudence Dailey. It is always really good to feel that members of your own diocese can be the people who challenge you most fiercely.

I would like to say, first of all, in response, that we were not trying to manage Synod in any way other than the way that you ask us to, to look at the business and order it in the way that we feel is best. We were asked by the Mission and Public Affairs Committee for the presentation format for this particular piece of business, and it seemed good to us at the time in terms of what we had been asked for.

I am not entirely certain that the point about getting to know one another, when we are all so new in each other's company, would have suited a debate, but that is certainly a matter of opinion. It was not, in any circumstances, on our mind. There will be an opportunity in the buildings debate, as I have said, for people to make speeches about something which many people are familiar with, so maybe you can feel we got that one right.

I do have to tell you that we cannot, at this stage, change the agenda unless the matter is urgent. If the matter is urgent, there is a way of doing that. I do not think this is an urgent matter.

Mr Margrave, the point about Private Member's Motions and 100 signatures is not that if you get 100 signatures then your Private Member's Motion will automatically be debated; the point is that 100 signatures is considered by the Business Committee as being guidance for us in respect of the deliberations that we make. The ordering of business is our affair and our responsibility.

I am not absolutely certain, Mr Margrave, that you have understood our intention in the fourth guideline on Synod displays, which says quite clearly we reserve the right to refuse space where a display is contrary to the ethos of the Church of England. I think you have heard enough from a number of people today to understand that it is not contrary to our ethos to hold together people who are in disagreement. We are not trying to ban people who are reflecting opinions held by the membership here.

Mrs Goddard, thank you. I am sure your point about Ministry Council has been heard. I would like to come back at the end to thank Catherine Grylls and others for your kindness about the way that Business Committee has done its work. We hope and pray that we will continue to be fleet of foot.

The Chair: I now put Item 3 to the vote.

The motion

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

was carried on a show of hands.

The Chair: That ends this item of business.

Introduction to Synod Worship by the Chaplain to the Synod

The Chair: We move directly on in our Agenda to Item 4, an introduction to Synod Worship by the Chaplain to the General Synod. This is a presentation under Standing Order 107 without questions. I invite Revd Michael Gisbourne to come and give us his presentation.

Revd Michael Gisbourne (Chaplain to the Synod): I begin by saying thank you to the Presidents and the Business Committee for giving me a short slot in the Synod Agenda; an opportunity to introduce myself as Chaplain. As you will see from GS Misc 1121, I am a parish priest in Blackburn diocese, with 23 years of parochial experience in the north-west. I refer you to that paper for further biographical details.

When the local Lancashire media picked up news of my appointment, a colleague asked, "Michael, are you really going to look after the worship of General Synod, with all those bishops, clergy and lay people as they debate some of the hot topics of the day?" "Yes", I replied, "and I can't wait".

Since my appointment, the Standing Orders of the General Synod have been my bedside reading. I got as far as Standing Order 1, which makes it clear that all

arrangements for the General Synod, including Divine Worship, shall be made under the direction of the Presidents. It is the Archbishops, as Presidents of the Synod, who appoint the Synod Chaplain, and it is they, with the advice and support of their chaplains, who oversee its worship.

As those of you returning to Synod will be aware, previous General Synod Chaplains were Synod members. However, due largely to the excellent work of my predecessor, the Revd Canon Gavin Kirk, the range and nature of the worshipping presence at Synod has grown considerably to include initiatives like the Continuous Praying Presence, the early morning prayer meetings, as well as more varied styles of worship. Given this workload, it was felt that it was no longer ideal for a Synod member to manage all this, in addition to carrying out their usual Synodical duties. Accordingly, they decided to appoint a Synod Chaplain, reporting to a small committee consisting of their chaplains and the Vice-Chair of the Liturgical Commission.

The Synod will be engaging with some turbulent times in the Church and the world over the course of the next five years. Worship may not constitute the main business for which Synod meets, yet it is the foundation that undergirds, inspires and sources all that we do as Christians. The Archbishops are keen to welcome a broad range of worship and musical styles to reflect the range of traditions across the Church of England. They long to see a greater integration between the work of business and the work of prayer. I plan to reflect this in our worship and ground the continuous praying presence more deeply in our work and provide it with a greater focus on the business of Synod. They have asked me to build up the pastoral presence and support available to Synod members and visitors.

It is my hope to deliver the Archbishops' vision to punctuate the business of Synod with opportunities for worship, stillness and a refocusing on the reason that we are here: to resource the mission of the church of Jesus Christ across the nation and beyond.

The Archbishops, and I, need your help with this. To use an analogy from the sporting world, you will all know that worship is not a spectator sport, that is, it is not something to be consumed because we like it or ignored because we do not. Worship is for us to join in and together give God glory. It may not always be to our particular style or tradition, but it is so much more than what we may or may not prefer.

Some years ago, I qualified as a football referee. As I prepared to take charge of my first match, which was something like the local working men's club third 11 versus the Fox and Goose - the pub – an experienced colleague said, "Just remember, Michael, whatever you do, at least 11 people will agree with you. They just might not say anything though".

Whether a particular act of worship is to your tradition or not, please be assured that I will endeavour to ensure that all our worship points us to God's glory and to have an encounter with the risen Christ, but to get there I will need your help.

At this Synod I will lead much of our worship, but it is not my intention that should be so in succeeding Synods, and so I come to a plea. If you would be willing to assist in any way, helping to shape a particular style of worship, leading part of it, guiding us

in our intercessions, overseeing the IT, designing PowerPoints, joining in musical accompaniments, is anyone able to play the guitar, the trumpet, the drums, the violin? I have even heard mention of a Synod choir and a string quartet.

When God called Moses he said - paraphrased - "I want a volunteer and you're my choice". I do not want to have to use the same tactics. If you would like to volunteer to help in worship in any way, please have a chat with me over the next couple of days - I am the one wearing the waistcoats. There are sign-up sheets for you to complete at the information desk. I will be around at the end of business today by the information desk if you would like to talk further about how you may be able to help develop Synod worship. There is also an email address in the Synod papers.

It is an honour for me to be here, and I look forward to working with you, to help the worshipping and pastoral life of Synod over the next five years. Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you, Michael. We are very glad to have you with us. That concludes this item of business.

THE CHAIR *Mr Aiden Hargreaves-Smith (London)* took the Chair at 4.11 pm

Renewal and Reform

The Chair: We come now to Item 5. For this Item, members will need GS Misc 1124 and may also find GS Misc 1125 helpful. This item consists of a series of presentations under Standing Order 107 on Renewal and Reform. The aims of this session are to set out the challenge for the new Synod on Renewal and Reform in this quinquennium, to give an opportunity for those leading the various areas of work to provide an update on progress, and to provide an opportunity for questions.

In a moment I shall invite Canon John Spence to provide an introductory overview. He will set out the vision and purpose of Renewal and Reform and report on progress on Resourcing the Future, and work flowing from the report Optimising the National Church Institutions.

After he has spoken, we shall have up to ten minutes for any immediate questions to Canon Spence on the overall vision or requests for clarification. I shall then invite each of those responsible for the different areas of work to address the Synod, and that is expected to take just under 40 minutes. We shall then have approximately 20-25 minutes for questions to the panel. Given the limited time available, may I remind members that this is not an opportunity to make points or speeches, and I very much hope that members will keep their questions as simple and concise as possible so that we may make full use of the time available. Finally, because you cannot have too much of a good thing, I shall invite Canon Spence to make some brief concluding remarks before we conclude the item, which we must do before 5.40.

I now invite Canon John Spence to introduce this item. Other than being a star of stage, screen and shepherd's pie making contests - you will have to ask any member of the Chelmsford diocesan synod for further details - Canon Spence is the Chair of the Finance Committee of the Archbishops' Council and chaired the Task Group on Resourcing the Future.

Canon John Spence (ex officio): It is a great joy to be working with Aiden Hargreaves-Smith as Chairman again. He was very embarrassed earlier that he had noticed that our pocket handkerchiefs were matching, thus implying that we might be guilty of some sort of collusion, and how nice of him to refer to the cottage pies of the Chelmsford diocese where he is particularly known for his proclivity for pork pies. He has been one step ahead of me because he has given you my first slide already so I will not take you through all that, but it is very much to invite you to be in a common piece of knowledge and shared understanding and a readiness to take forward this work.

Those of you who have heard me before have often heard me talk about restoring risen Christ to the centre of this country, its conscience and its culture. What does that mean? It does not of course mean that we only see the risen Christ in the centre of the country, we mean that we see Him in the centre of every community. We see Him in the most deprived communities of the country and in the richest, at least in financial terms. We see Him in the urban context and in the rural, but we do not just see Him geographically, we see Him in that new world which we are entering, that virtual world of social media and of digital. We see Him in every segment of the population, the young, the 16-year-olds, the 14-year-olds, those who have just left church schools, those who are at secular schools, just as we see Him in every element of the most deprived people, the oldest people, those who have emigrated into this country and those who seek to move beyond.

This will not be easy. The refusal of the cinema chains to show the advertisement you have just seen tells us it will not be easy. The demographics of the Church of England - where our population of attendance has shrunk year by year while the population of the country has grown, where our age profile is now 20 years older than the population as a whole, where you are eight times more likely to go to church as an 81-year-old than you are as an 18-year-old - tell us it will not be easy. Indeed, be under no illusions, given our inability to prevent death, the population attending the Church of England on a regular basis is certain to decrease for probably the next 20 years unless anything extraordinary happens. It will not be easy, given the growth of these multiple ways of accessing and entertaining oneself, accessing the social media piece through a whole range of pursuits, as we see increasing competition around the use of time and the extensions to Sunday trading, which suggest to us that if we measure success alone by our ability to bring people into church, then we will be doing the wrong measure. This is truly about the evangelism and discipleship that the Archbishops laid out. This is not just about how we preserve our congregations and our quiet private communities; it is our engagement in the wider parts of every part of British, English, life.

So it will not be easy, but I believe with every ounce in my body that this is our time, and you may not understand just what wonderful things have been happening and how radical they are. When the last Synod convened five years ago it would not have believed that when we went on our round of diocesan consultations early in 2014 almost every one of them said to us, "We want to grow. We want to have a strategy for growth. We would like your help in getting there". That universal recognition that you need to change, that you need to move things on, is of itself the fundamental radical change from which everything else drives. Wonderfully, there is virtual unanimity about what good growth looks like, which is not growth confined to the suburbs but a growth which is seen in the rural and the deprived communities, a growth that is not just measured by numbers but by depth, by the distinctive living

style of the Christian disciple liberated, as somebody just talked in the Business Committee debate, to go out into their communities empowered to bring the risen Christ into the homes and hearts of all whom they touch. Wonderfully, the dioceses of this country are sharing information, learning and data in ways that they never have before. Only in the last two years have we moved to a position where there is that universal sharing while the inter-diocesan learning community has been such a success that we look for ways to repeat the model.

Wonderfully, out of all this, an increasingly comprehensive response known now as "Renewal and Reform" is emerging, and because it is not a central strategy, some great central programme that has been defined in stone and approved and has to be locked into that piece, it is just that, an emerging agenda and one which can continue to emerge and grow more radical as we respond to what the parishes, the deaneries and the dioceses say. For as long as I am associated with it - and it is not my agenda, it is the agenda of the Church being co-ordinated by the Archbishops' Council - it will be that, a responsive agenda recognising that it is where the rubber hits the road, that the need is greatest and we are there, as the words of the hymn said this morning, to help sparks move to flames, to light more bonfires across this great country so that, while the overall numbers may continue to decrease inevitably, in the short and medium term, we can grow the numbers of wonderful new initiatives having success in individual communities and can indeed see that huge shift into the virtual media as new ways of engaging.

If I move now to the two work streams for which I am directly responsible.

On Resourcing the Future, and I am not going to stick to the words in front of you but you get the general shift, it is about the move from subsidy into intentional investment. It is about ensuring a mutuality of learning. Let me tell you precisely where we are. We have agreed, as an Archbishops' Council endorsed by the last Synod, that we will not have the Darlow Formula any more, which was opaque and penalised success, but we will now move to a methodology where 50% goes to communities that are deprived and can only be spent in those places - the dioceses will determine how they are spent but they can only be spent in those places - and 50% on investment and growth. That is agreed. We have to wait now for the Church Commissioners to complete their actuarial review early next year to know how much will be available in that pot but it will be spent on a 50:50 basis.

We want to maximise the impact of that as quickly as we can which is why we have shaped a proposal, again endorsed by the last Synod, to the Commissioners that they break the inter-generational equity rules in order to give us a transition fund which will enable those dioceses who most relied on those subsidies to come off them over a period of time and enable us to move to having the full funding available from 1 January 2017. I will go to the Church Commissioners Board this Thursday in order to make that case. I have already had that conversation with the Assets Committee. They will make conditions which I will take back to the Archbishops' Council on 1 December and, assuming that all parties achieve agreement on those conditions, as I confidently believe they will, we will then be issuing the guidelines to individual dioceses so that you can start thinking about where you want to spend that money.

Given that we are expecting sums granted to be somewhere between £300,000 and £1 million in each case, you will need that time in order to make your plans and

make your submissions before you can spend the money. It will be a wonderful sign of success when we move to the point that those funds are oversubscribed. I do not expect it to happen in the short term, but I want us to have that ability that can be in place, but be under no illusions. This is going to be different.

If we are going to pull this off for the benefit of the Church, there will be some very clear guidelines as to how the money can be spent, some milestones that you will have to commit yourselves to - and I say "you" as each diocese - and then they will need to be met in order for that funding to be continued. The Church Commissioners and Archbishops' Council will be unanimous on that.

It is not the fact that we will have perhaps £48 million being distributed in this new way through these two flows that is the radical change. The radical change is that we have had the learning from that which we have spent, from the research that we have undertaken, from the research that others have undertaken, and we are reaching out to them so that we can go forward with the best possible knowledge, that the dioceses have committed themselves to sharing the understanding of what works and does not, so that one can ensure the money, when spent, can have the maximum impact. It is that element of radical change that I believe over the life of this Synod will enable us to see the impact that is occurring and those bonfires being lit.

On the second work stream - I always try to get away from this term of "optimising the NCIs", so let us call it "getting the engine room right" - we again see considerable progress being made. We are working at the moment on the culture of the operations within Church House and on other parts of the centre, so that we can ensure everything is aligned to understanding our key role and thought leadership but the enabling and facilitating of parish and diocesan strategies. We need to reform the Archbishops' Council budget, which will come to General Synod in July next year, because I have only been able to put sticking plaster to it for the last two years and because of the way it has been operated it has starved us of the investment that we require and you will see a radically different proposal coming forward for that.

The enabling legislation to which the Bishop of Willesden will speak shortly and which will come before a synod in February is actually partly driven by the need to get the engine room right by relieving our staff of some of the enormous workload they have in coping with every item of legislation, some of which can be simplified in the methodology.

I am waiting now, and we will see at Archbishop's Council next week, for the first business case presented by Arun Arora and his great media and communications team about how we organise ourselves to fully exploit the digital and social media space, and there are some really very exciting proposals in that paper and elements that are already being tried to great success. The notion of chatroom virtual priests which young people access, where we can intervene in conversations where young people are saying they do not particularly believe in God and start bringing in an alternative viewpoint are devices that go to young people, and to old people indeed, who never would come to church.

In summing up this element I say to you, my dear friends in Synod, it is a great privilege to be your Finance Chairman on the Archbishops' Council and to be

entrusted with this role as your servant in taking this programme forward. A little lad who just thought he was coming on to be the Finance Chair and to look after the accounts now finds himself having the opportunity to work with you on something which I utterly believe is an opportunity for this Synod to engage in a crusade. It is nothing less than that. It is a crusade that will see the risen Christ back in that proper place in every way that we measure our communities. We will have ample time for debate and I will want you to scrutinise us and challenge us as you will do in February as we unveil the Resourcing the Future piece and we will add to the agenda, as you tell us it needs to be added to, and we will win. And why do I think wonderful things are happening? Because that advert that the cinemas refused to show was, in its first 24 hours, viewed by over half a million people.

The Chair: We have a very short period now for any immediate questions of clarification or about the big picture to Canon Spence. Would those who have a question please stand? I propose to take three questions.

Revd Dr Miranda Threlfall-Holmes (Durham): Just a brief question of clarification on the way in which funds can be applied for. Is it only dioceses that can apply for these new funds or could new power church initiatives be proposed?

The Chair: We will take all three questions and then Canon Spence can answer them together.

Jack Shelley (Exeter): I am concerned about a gap in the things we are getting offered. We have got the idea that we are going to resource ministry and then it jumps straight to resourcing lay leadership, and we have left out resourcing lay ministries for training. Within areas of Devon where I come from we find that more ministry is being done by the laity and we need to be properly training them for that role.

The Chair: We will try a third question.

Mr Martin Sewell (Rochester): I have two sons who work in digital marketing/social media and I would like to ask John if he would expand a little on how sophisticated this has become in terms of the targeting of who you get your message to and how important this is. I ask the question from a biblical standpoint because when the disciples were particularly feeling low, the fishermen went back to their trade and were then told to work on the other side of the boat. What was Jesus telling them? He was telling them to use the net more wisely.

The Chair: Thank you. Canon Spence?

Canon Dr John Spence (ex officio): Thank you very much, Chair. In terms of the first question, no, it is not restricted to dioceses. I apologise. I just used that as shorthand. We would love to see collaborations going on between maybe rural parishes across two or three dioceses who want to put something. Clearly we will always seek the diocesan view of that investment. I would remind you that, while in this building Philip James and his team will be doing some quality assurance around it, the final choices will always lie with the peer review groups that are going to be specially trained for purpose, because the last thing we want is for this place to become a sort of approving head office.

To John on the second point, it is a great piece about lay ministry versus lay leadership. I think the Bishop of Sheffield and Matthew Frost will expand, and one thing we need to do is be clear where the boundaries lie, but what I have heard is a great aspiration. And the research tells us this by the way, the research tells us that we should be looking to really expand the roles of the laity and all the things that they do, so that is why Matthew will lead a lay leadership. The lay ministry piece is thinking in that more narrow area within the ministry council.

Thirdly, Martin and the digital piece, yes, absolutely the targeting is quite extraordinary as to what is capable of being done now and, as I have said to you this morning, in the business paper that we are waiting to case we will be debating the degree to which we go outside to get expertise and the degrees to which we build the expertise in-house. This world is moving so quickly. We heard it in the Business Committee debate about apps. It is moving at such a pace that you need to ensure you create the resource, whether in-house or out-house, that can keep pace with all of that.

The Chair: So that we have plenty of time for questions later, I propose to move on now and to invite the Bishop of Sheffield to speak. The Bishop chaired the task group on resourcing ministerial education and will speak about the areas of work that have been developed since that report which focus on renewing discipleship and ministry.

The Bishop of Sheffield (Rt Revd Dr Steven Croft): Thank you, Chairman. Good afternoon, Synod. It is very good to address the subject so early in the life of the new Synod. For the life of the Synod we are called to continue the work of reimagining, renewing and reforming discipleship and ministry in the Church of England in continuity with what has been done before and I want to address each of those three areas.

First, discipleship. Reform and renewal is rooted as a whole in growing a new, deeper and richer culture of discipleship in every parish and in every diocese. According to the great document, *The Joy of the Gospel*, one of the greatest treatise on evangelism written in the last generation, the Church is a community of missionary disciples. We are called together to be with the risen Christ in the Eucharist. We are sent out to live to the glory of God in and with every part of our lives. As individuals in communities, we are called to be transformed in discipleship through the renewal of our minds. This means we need to pay very careful attention to our learning and teaching in every parish and Fresh Expressions and Cathedral and other forms of community and especially to the formation of disciples.

During the lifetime of the last Synod, the House of Bishops developed Pilgrim as a new resource for catechesis. It has been widely used alongside other excellent materials. We now want to develop a new catechism to be used with Pilgrim and with other materials, in effect the catechism that Pilgrim is already teaching.

I was inspired earlier this year to discover that in the 200 years after the Reformation, 1530 to 1740, the Church in England produced more than 1,000 catechisms. We still have all or part of about 600 of them, and they are evidence of the immense energy invested in teaching and learning the faith to children, adults and young people in the tradition in which we stand.

As a church, we have identified the need to see our whole culture change and our horizons extended in our worship and our common life so that we encourage more and more by all of us, lay and ordained, the living out of our faith in and for the whole world. As we engage with that challenge to change our culture, we need to listen to one another, to gather models of good practice, to be networked, to encourage each other as parishes and dioceses and learn the lessons of change together. As we begin that process in a fresh way today, Catherine Nancekievill, who I will ask to stand at the moment, our new Officer for Vocation and Discipleship, has developed a short questionnaire for all Synod members - there will be leaflets at the door; it is an online questionnaire - for you to tell us what helps you grow and learn in your discipleship. We need to become over this next five years a less churchy church. Digital communication with each other will be key to that change.

Lay and ordained ministers are ligaments and sinews in the body of Christ. To grow the body and size and depth and strength, we need to pay particular attention to growing lay and ordained ministers in numbers, in quality and in particular qualities. Every diocese, I hope, will give careful consideration to renewing its strategy for ministry in three particular areas. Please do find out what your diocese is doing about this, in vocations and discernment of vocation, in initial training and in the continuing development and growth of ordained and lay ministry. Imagine a six-fold grid and try and find out what is happening locally in each of those six areas. One of the ways in which strategic development funding can be used, and I hope will be used, is to support those developing strategies in all six areas of that grid.

As a national church we have identified the need to grow vocations to ordained ministry by as much as 50 per cent by 2020 and to see that growth sustained over a ten year period. This is essential if we are to replace the clergy who will retire and essential if we are to maintain a presence in every community.

The Bishop of Guildford is leading a major working party on vocations and I would encourage the whole Synod to pray and commit that to prayer and to contribute their own thinking. We need all our clergy and lay ministers to be missional, adaptable and collaborative. Dioceses have used those three words over and over again in the listening we have done. We need the clergy and lay ministers of the future to reflect the communities we serve; men and women, young and old, different ethnicities, different educational backgrounds.

Finally, funding. As good stewards we need continually to reflect on how we will support the change we want to see. We do not believe that over time we will need more stipends than we have at present. Overall, even with the increase we will pray for, there will still be slightly fewer clergy as the decade progresses. However, we will need to invest more, considerably more, in both vocations and training in the next ten years. As a foundation for that expanding of investment we have examined very carefully the way in which we currently fund initial training. In some important ways the present system is not working. It is low on accountability and transparency.

Since February, we have consulted extensively with dioceses and TEIs and we have substantially refined and renewed our proposals. Those are now for a standard block grant for initial training of ordinands to be paid through Vote 1 for each ordinand, banded according to age in three or four bands, most probably four. Dioceses will then be free to determine the best course of training for each candidate and will have increased flexibility about how the money is invested, including 'just

before' training and in IME2. The bands will be set, we believe, at the current level of the most common pathway for that age group.

We have just finished on Friday a further round of consultation with dioceses and TEIs and the final proposals will be brought back to Synod in February for your scrutiny. Ian Barnetson who is here - could you just stand, Ian - is leading on that work and, again, this is his first Synod, so please do dialogue with Ian for more detail.

The Synod debated the RME Report with its 12 recommendations in February. After that debate I went away and wrote in my journal that in that debate it felt like we had crested a mountain, only to see, as the mist cleared, four or five larger peaks appear. These are huge pieces of work we are doing. Well, we have now expeditions tracking across those four or five peaks. I think we are making really good progress. I am really hopeful about the future and I look forward to your questions and debate. Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you, Bishop. I now invite the Bishop of Truro to address us. He has been closely involved in the development of the work on Nurturing and Discerning Senior Leaders and has recently taken over from the Bishop of Ely as the lead in this area. He will provide an update on progress and plans for future developments.

The Bishop of Truro (Rt Revd Tim Thornton): Thank you. I am delighted to be telling you a little about what we have done and plan to do to discern, develop and support senior leaders, ordained and lay, in the Church for today and tomorrow.

First, if I may, a little history. There used to be a committee to oversee the continuing ministerial education of bishops. It planned a good and varied programme of events. Sadly, we, that is myself and my colleagues, did not always take full advantage of all the events. There was also a committee that had supervision of the so-called preferment list and the work with the Archbishops' Senior Appointments Adviser.

It seemed good to the House of Bishops to draw those two groups together and so the Development and Appointments' Group was born. It immediately saw an opportunity because there were some resources to be allocated from the Church Commissioners only - I repeat only - for the support of bishops and deans to put together a bid to make a step change in the way continuing ministerial development is done for bishops, to extend it to deans and to look again at the preferment list, as I think it is not a state secret to say that not everyone was content with the process that was in place to create the preferment list. So, we, the Development and Appointments' Group, put a bid together and we were successful and we have been working hard and fast to make some progress, though well aware in doing so we have made mistakes and we have not always brought everyone with us.

Our purpose is there for you on the screen and I will remind you that we are responding in our work to the goals set for us by the last General Synod. New members of Synod may be forgiven if you do not know this, but returning members I am sure will be able to repeat word for word the document GS 1815 on the quinquennium goals; three goals, the urgent need to grow the Church, how we reimagine ministry and to focus on work for the common good. Crucially, we are

concerned to equip confident leaders, leaders with confidence to face the challenges ahead. Our work has a strong outward focus, enabling our leaders to make an impact beyond the walls of the Church and in the public square; so important, as has been said so many times already today.

What have we done? Well, we have listened to many people. As a result of that, we created a programme for deans to help them in their complex work. The so-called mini-MBA was a direct response to the requests from those, just made dean, who were not experts in business and suddenly found themselves with a business to run as well as a Gospel to proclaim.

We have also started a programme for suffragan bishops and this is proving very helpful, disruptive, engaging and stretching for those on the course. It will go on being even more helpful as the learning and thoughts stirred up are spread widely in their teams and among their dioceses. We have revised the whole way we consider discerning and supporting those identified as possible future leaders of our Church. We receive from diocesan bishops, after consultation in their dioceses, names to join the learning community. It has now just under 60 people in it and we are asking right now for the second round of nominations from bishops. The learning community has been established and is proving highly effective in resourcing those who will go on to become significant and imaginative leaders in the Church. They will not all be bishops or, even, archdeacons. We hope and pray they will be parish priests, leaders of theological education institutions, run missionary bodies and do many things we have not even thought of yet. There is a robust process of discernment to become part of the learning community and we work carefully and closely with those who do not enter it to continue to consider their vocation.

For me, this leads to a crucial point I want to emphasise. DAG, the group I now chair, has a specific responsibility for working with bishops and deans which comes from its constitution and because of the source of our funding. We want to work with dioceses and others right across the Church to go on ensuring the right resources are in place to affirm, value and develop our key assets as we should. I know, for example, as a diocesan Bishop that I have learnt from the work in which I have been involved with DAG that I was not resourcing well enough my own CMD programme in Truro. We have taken steps to address that.

I hope that Synod can see that we, DAG, are doing some work but, of course, there is much more to do right across the whole Church and we want to work with partners to ensure that happens and we can learn from each other. We, DAG, are not responsible for the developing of all the clergy and leaders of the Church, and dioceses and others need also to consider how they prepare and develop leaders. We need to join up with others and we are keen to talk to all those who, like us, believe we should ensure those who lead us are well-equipped, as well as they can be, and that means that they go on learning and developing throughout their ministries.

What have we learnt? Well, we have learnt that we need to go on learning and we need to go on listening, and we need to be disrupted ourselves as some of the learning we have provided has disrupted the participants on the courses. From the programme so far, participants have really valued the quality and nature of the inputs and they have been encouraged to question and criticise all the ideas with which they have been presented and with which they came to the programmes. The aim is

to enable transformational leadership, and response so far shows that people feel much more hopeful for the future of the Church as a result of the work they have done.

I am looking forward to being part of the programme for diocesan bishops (we have 25 signed up) that starts next year. We are keen to ensure we are looking at diversity and plan to bring forward more initiatives to work with BAME clergy as a matter of priority. We have further programmes and ideas that we will develop. We will, of course, put in place ways to measure whether we are being effective or not and to go on finding resources to keep this crucial work growing and involving more people.

What we are clear about is that we now want to work with teams and ensure that in each diocese the key teams are being as effective as they can be to deliver the wonderful work God has given us to do. We want to ensure all our teams are healthy and can be sustained as they develop healthy relationships, for we know, do we not, that we are not as Christians individuals who simply respond individually to our Creator and Saviour. We are interdependent and so mutuality and vulnerability and learning together are crucial.

I am enormously grateful to Bishop Steven who has recently stepped down from the Chair and, given all the important work he has taken on in education, that is entirely understandable. His passion for our work and his leadership of DAG have been crucial. I would also like to thank all the staff who do the work so well and so diligently, especially Caroline and Lisa Adams who designed the programmes and worked with us all so closely. For me, all of this work is about responding to the call from God to be adult, mature disciples of Jesus Christ. I pray we will continue to be faithful in our response to that calling. Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you, Bishop. The Bishop of Willesden is the bishop for simplification. He chaired the Simplification Group and is now going to report on the first phase of that Group's work and on the plans that are being developed for the second phase.

The Bishop of Willesden (Rt Revd Pete Broadbent): My colleagues in the Southern Suffragans were unwise enough to vote me back in; so, yes, you have got five years of me on simplification, but I intend to make it fun. One of the things that has been going on in the Synod Twitter feed recently has been a debate about whether we are Reform and Renewal or Renewal and Reform, and I gather that this is a 'both and' rather than 'either or'; because, of course, those two things do march together. It is not a question of the Galilean People's Liberation Front or the People's Liberation Front for the Galilean Independence. It is actually about the fact that we cannot do what we are doing without structural reform and renewal through prayer towards evangelism.

Those of you who think why on earth would we spend our time talking about simplification (and I apologise to former members of Synod and members of Synod who have come back who have heard me on this before, but to new members), I am not in the game of doing this just for its own sake. This is about the evangelization of our country and making that easier.

I knew someone once who was a great doyen of mending Morris Minors and he had

a collection of Morris Minors in a garage and he tinkered with Morris Minors forever. I do not think he ever actually got one of them back on the road but he liked playing with the engines and dismantling them. Now if simplification is about that, we are not going there. This is about what goes on below the bonnet, but it is actually about making radical changes that will make a difference to how our Church works. We have already started. If I show you the timeline up there, in February 2015 the previous Synod endorsed Phase 1.

We went out to consultation with the dioceses and our first achievement was to get changes to the Terms of Service Measure to give us much more flexibility with the deployment of clergy. That took place and was enacted in July 2015 and comes into force this month. We have also got some adjustments to capability procedure which has gone through. We went out then with a *SurveyMonkey* to parishes, which took place from August to October in 2015, and we got a huge numbers of responses. Something like 2,300 people responded, which is a very good response on a *SurveyMonkey* to all the parishes.

As you will expect, some of the responses were somewhat incoherent, because if you ask parishes what hinders them in their mission they will tell you all kinds of things. We ruled out the ones that said it was the bishop, but we did talk about those things which were really important and we are analysing those responses at the moment. It is actually quite instructive to hear from the grassroots what it is that stops people in their mission, and we are going to analyse those and bring them back in due course.

In the meantime, the next stage of Phase 1 is what you will see before you on the Agenda in February 2016. There is a list there which some of you will be familiar with already, which include amendments to the Mission and Pastoral Measure to make it easier in terms of pastoral reorganisation; Bishops' Mission Orders being much simpler; streamlining some of the work on teams and groups, though probably more needs to be done; consultations on how we go forward on closing church buildings; one that will cause us some degree of controversy but which we need to look at, which is how we deal with compensation for loss of office; changes to the Endowments and Glebe Measure; and National Clergy Payroll. So plenty of stuff on the stocks which will actually free us up to do mission.

The difficulty is, of course, that one person's simplification is somebody else's threat, and we have to find ways over our time in the next few years to make sure that the simplification works. You have probably heard the story about the three logicians who walked into a bar and the barman said to the three logicians, "Are you all having beer?" The first logician said, "I don't know." The second logician said, "I don't know." The third logician said, "Yes." You will get there. The point about cold logic is that it might appear that it is perfectly possible to make changes with others having examined them very carefully on the floor of this Synod, and it is actually important that we give proper scrutiny.

This is not an exercise in pulling the wool over Synod's eyes. It is an exercise in helping us see what is possible and what is not possible. It is not a simple process. The sorts of things we will be dealing with are set out in this timeline here. Once we have had our Phase 2 analysis and we have pulled together the Simplification Group to look at these things, we will bring some more proposals to Archbishops' Council for consideration in 2016 during the first quarter. We then go out to dioceses and

parishes again and then we will come forward in 2017 with a package of proposals. We will be ruling out certain things. We are not going to fiddle around with the Faculty Jurisdiction again because a major piece of work has already been done on that, so we are not going to be picking up things about that.

Some of the parishes in the *SurveyMonkey* said to us, "Can't you deal with health and safety?" No, actually, that is not our responsibility. That is a local authority question. Some of the parishes said, "What about safeguarding?" No, there has been a major Measure on safeguarding that has gone through. We will rule out certain aspects which people do want us to play with and we will come back to telling you which those are. But we will be bringing forward amendments. They will involve work on canons, that involve work on measures, and we hope to have a coherent programme for you over the next 12 months set out for you as to what needs doing.

Alongside that, there is the new Enabling Measure and I just want to flag that briefly. You will have GS 1125 which sets out the fruits of what has gone on so far. What we have said is, it would be really helpful if we did not have the huge complex process that is currently written into our way of proceeding which enables us not to do things very quickly, and so an Enabling Measure would look at saying, 'How can we have a power to repeal or amend Church legislation by means of order making, and what are the checks and balances and safeguards you need within that?' We went out to consultation on that. Again, the timeline will show you we consulted on GS 1103 and we got 12 responses, quite substantive responses. GS 1125 sets out our response to those responses and that has come to you for you to have a look at in those moments when you have nothing else to do.

The important thing is that we will discuss that in detail in February 2016 with a paving motion. That is the point at which we can expose how this will work, what it will do, how we will safeguard Synod's role in making legislation and how we make fit for purpose our legislative processes. It will then have to go through the First Consideration and measure procedure in due course.

Lots to do. Plenty of excitement. Plenty of things that actually need changing which have been identified at grassroots and by the dioceses and by the bishops. At every level of the Church we have people saying, "We need change in order to do our job better." I hope you will journey with me on simplification. If you want to know more about any of it, there is a web page. Please access it. Please get involved. I know many of you said in your manifestos you wanted to be here to simplify. Well, let us do it together.

The Chair: Thank you, Bishop. Last, but most certainly not least, it is my pleasure to invite Mr Matthew Frost, the outgoing Chief Executive of Tearfund and a new member of the Archbishops' Council to speak for the first time in Synod. He was recently asked by the Archbishops to serve as Chair of the new working group on lay leadership and will set out the plans for the group's work.

Mr Matthew Frost (ex officio): Great, thank you. I am absolutely thrilled to be leading this piece of work. The question of lay leadership and lay involvement has been of passion of mine for years, so I am thrilled to be doing this. I am going to start just by focusing on the terms of reference first. This is a group that has been set up by the Archbishops' Council. It is going to report back in September 2016 and, as you can see, there are four broad areas that we have been asked to look at.

Firstly, reviewing and reporting on the current place and role of lay leaders. Secondly, to consider what changes in culture and practice and resource allocation are needed to facilitate it, recognising that there are hindrances and obstacles that we need to confront. Thirdly, to consider how to enhance the quality and extent of collaboration between clergy and lay leaders. We must do this work in a way that brings us together rather than disunites us. Finally, to make some specific proposals to the Archbishops' Council for how the national Church institutions should change and the service they might provide and, also, how that they can really and effectively support dioceses in their work with lay leadership.

What is the purpose of the group? We felt at this very early stage - I should explain we are in a pre-consultation phase, we will be really getting going in January - we wanted to lay out the approach we are taking to all of you because we know there is a lot of interest in this piece of work.

At this stage, we see the purpose of this working group as follows: to increase the effectiveness and confidence of lay people in leading wherever they are called to serve; in wider society, in community, but also, of course, within the church. Very importantly, this is all about strengthening and deepening discipleship and evangelism so that we can extend God's Kingdom in this country and transform society. That is the purpose that is guiding our work.

I just want to say something about scope briefly. There are three areas in terms of the scope of this work. First, that we see this as leadership in all spheres. We are not just confining this work to within church structures. As important as that bit of work is, we are looking more broadly. I have heard this from countless people. I have only been involved a few months and I have been lobbied on countless occasions to make sure the brief and scope of this work is around leadership in all spheres of society: in community, in wider society, as well as within the church.

Secondly, when we think about leadership, we are looking at a broad definition of leadership; we are not narrowing this down to just formal named leadership roles. We recognise that leadership and influence is far, far broader than simply named, for example, ministerial roles, or named CEO or leader roles. We really want to see a broad definition and understanding of leadership here.

Finally, there has been a real encouragement right from the beginning to face into the hindrances and obstacles, the root causes if you like, and really get to the heart of the matter, be they structural, behavioural or cultural. I am recognising early on that this is a complex issue and we need to get to the heart of that complexity if we are going to find resolutions that will stand the test of time.

I have had lots of advice given to me about how to approach this bit of work - very kindly offered, thank you. I am going to quickly summarise some of those things to demonstrate I have been listening to you.

First, we need to create a shared understanding. There are a lot of terms here, such as lay, leadership. What do we mean by these terms? I can imagine I could spend months working on just the question of a definition of this. Let us not do that. On the other hand, we do need to create a sense of shared understanding about these terms as a platform.

Secondly, broad engagement. Let us make sure that we really engage broadly. I am going to come back to that in a second. Particularly, as we engage, let us make sure that we work in ways that strengthen relationships between clergy and laity. It is really important that we are purposeful about that from the beginning.

Thirdly, that we really affirm good practice. I think this is going to be a fabulous opportunity to highlight what is working well, to celebrate that, to put the spotlight on it, to learn from it and figure out how we can see more of that. This is a really great opportunity to do that.

Fourthly, as I have already said, it is vital that we identify barriers, hindrances, obstacles, wherever we find them, and get to the root causes of those, whether that is a resourcing issue, whether that is about sufficient support, whether that is our models of leadership, whether that is to do with structures or whether there are cultural issues at play, let us get to the root of all of those.

Fifthly, integration with other workstreams. This has already come up a couple of times this afternoon. There are some very explicit pieces of work that are coming out of the RME work, the Lay Ministries Working Group, the Vocations Working Group, and work on developing discipleship. We have got to make sure the connection is clean and clear with each of those areas of work and we are working in a way that is complementary to what else is going on.

Sixth, we need practical solutions. This has really been hammered into me, especially by my lay colleagues. We need solutions. We need to move beyond a good analysis of the problem to actually, "What are we going to do about it", and go beyond that to get cracking with this as quickly as possible, and also focus on implementation. That is often where change programmes fall down: lack of attention on implementation, sufficient resourcing, sufficient communication, sufficient stakeholder engagement. We are going to try and put a real emphasis on each of those.

Finally, the underpinning theological foundations. We are determined to do this in a way that builds in theological foundations from the beginning; not as an add-on but really grounded from the beginning. We will be seeking a theologian to join the Working Group explicitly to help us do that. We think that is absolutely vital. One of the best bits of work that has been written on this topic in the last 30/40 years was the 1985 work on *All are called: Towards a Theology of the Laity*. It is an excellent theological foundation to this work, and I am thrilled that work was done and we will certainly be referring to that.

Finally, a couple of quick points. We have a lot of stakeholders to speak to here. We need to work within the Church; that is the left-hand column. Within church structures at a local level we need to get the wisdom and insight from church wardens and PCC chairs, all the way through to diocesan secretaries as well as those working at national institutional level. We also need to work in parachurch organisations, understand their perspective, as well as, as I have already said, to work beyond that into spheres of leadership beyond, within the church and within parachurch, whether it is politics, arts, media, business, the third sector, and so on. We are going to do our best to speak and draw insight and wisdom from all of those stakeholders, as well as engage with them as we develop solutions and implementation plans.

Finally, next steps. As I said, the pre-consultation phase is underway now. The key bit of work we need to do is identify a working group and seek approval of those from the Archbishops. The heart of the work will be that middle box, the Task Group work, which will run from about January to July. During that phase we will be engaging with you actively, both in Synod but in other ways too. We really want your wisdom, opinion and ideas as we develop proposals. We will be reporting back to the Archbishops' Council, that should read in September 2016, and implementation - I am going to listen to the comment mentioned earlier - is not 2017 onwards, it is September 2016 onwards to get cracking on implementation.

Please be in touch if you have got any ideas, any questions beyond today. Please email the Clerk to Synod either for my attention, Matthew Frost, or for the attention of Jacqui Philips. Many thanks.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr Frost. We now have roughly 20 minutes for questions. I should like to take these in four batches following the areas of work we have just heard about. May I remind members of the need for brevity in their questions and that we are looking for questions, not points or comments.

Let us start with questions on Resourcing Ministerial Education, Discipleship and Vocations. I will take up to three questions for the Bishop of Sheffield.

Ms Josile Munro (London): Chair, thank you for calling me to ask a question. I am particularly interested and welcome the work around developing vocations and senior leadership. I am particularly interested in what successful criteria we are putting in place for BAME - black and minority ethnic - vocations.

Revd Canon Jenny Tomlinson (Chelmsford): This question could be addressed to all of our speakers this afternoon because I observe that all of them are white men. I wonder if they could each assure the Synod that the working groups they chair are properly representative of the diversity of the Church of England.

Revd Angus MacLeay (Rochester): I wonder if Bishop Steven could reflect on the tension between the need for a deeper, richer teaching of the word of God, including catechesis, and at the same time some of the thoughts developed earlier about quicker processes to get folk through the vocation process, also recognising that we want our new clergy coming through especially to be equipping lay leaders. I think there is a tension here and it would be lovely to hear from him how we could do this because I think this is right at the heart of this excellent initiative.

The Bishop of Sheffield (Rt Revd Dr Steven Croft): Thank you. Josile, the success criteria for BAME candidates are that the mix of candidates in ordained ministry should reflect the mix in the population. Those are the same criteria for senior leadership, which was set by the Turning up the Volume Working Party some years ago, to which we aspire, and which we are a long way still from realising. Those are our criteria.

On the question of diversity and Working Groups, we are paying attention to that. I should say that for discipleship and the general resourcing of ministerial education, we are back with the Ministry Council in terms of diversity, so do pay attention to the comments made earlier about election and send a diverse group to represent this

Synod in those bodies. For the Vocations Working Group, we did specifically pay attention to diversity in forming Bishop Andrew's group.

Angus, the tension between informing ministers and equipping people to be teachers and quicker processes is very helpful and very important. There is no swift answer to it, but I would say that the way the proposals have developed since February is towards giving dioceses much more discretion in the way that they invest in candidates, so it will be easier than now for a diocese to determine that somebody should have, for example, three years in residential training and if they are over 30 they will not have to apply for particular permissions to do that, also to encourage investment in lifelong learning across a whole span of ministry and to see a step change there as well. We hope the tailoring and flexibility will be there.

I would say unequivocally in our present set of proposals we are not at all taking resource and finance out of initial ministerial education, we are working on the hypothesis that we will invest in a similar way for this number of candidates and we will grow the resource as the numbers of candidates increase.

The Chair: Thank you, Bishop. We move swiftly now to Discerning and Nurturing Future Leaders. I will take three questions for the Bishop of Truro.

Prof Joyce Hill (Leeds): My question is about the new wave of senior training. I refer, as the speakers have done, to the mini MBA, but that is only a "for example", I realise. My question is what measures are being put in place to give a real tough-minded evaluation of such schemes? What plans are being put in place for follow-on programmes for individuals? I ask because it is easy to think that because something is new it is therefore good. It may be, but it may not be, we need to know. It is easy for those who take part, particularly if they are taking part in a high profile and novel programme, to think that somehow they have magically done it all. Thank you.

Revd Julie Conalty (Rochester): My question, Chair, relates to a learning community and the use of the indefinite article does make it sound a little vague and perhaps hypothetical, which I know it is not. Could we be told more about the positive action that is being taken in relation to BAME and women clergy? The reason I ask is that when at Synod and we interrogated the figures from the first cohort, I thought they were rather disappointing.

Revd Mark Lucas (Peterborough): Can I thank Bishop Peter for his characteristically lively and positive presentation. I would like to say, as a result of what I have heard this afternoon, I am very concerned about the extra workload there seems potentially to be on bishops with the change in BMOs and the extra work that Peter was telling us they were going to do.

The Chair: Is your question about simplification?

Revd Mark Lucas (Peterborough): Yes.

The Chair: We have not actually got there yet.

Revd Mark Lucas (Peterborough): It was about what Bishop Peter was saying.

The Chair: I think we are on Discerning and Nurturing Future Leaders at the moment.

Revd Mark Lucas (Peterborough): I am sorry.

The Chair: I will take one more question for the Bishop of Truro.

Revd Dr Guli Francis-Dehqani (Peterborough): My question is to the Bishop of Truro. It is regarding the selection of those who are to join the learning community from which future leadership will be identified. I am just wondering whether any thought has been given to widening that selection process so that we ensure we get good breadth across gender, race, and indeed theology and church tradition. As I understand it, at the moment the process relies very heavily on the diocesan bishop and those who fall within the vision of the diocesan bishop. I understand that they are meant to consult, as it were, but I am not entirely sure what the guidelines are and how strictly they need to be adhered to.

The Chair: Thank you. The Bishop of Truro to respond.

The Bishop of Truro (Rt Revd Tim Thornton): By way of response to an earlier question, I can say with hand on my heavy heart that DAG is fully representative of the Church of England as it is at the present.

Your first question about measures is a very important question. It is not best put to the mini MBA to deans, which is quite focused on helping them think about issues to do with finance and constitutional matters and governance matters, but we are looking at measures for all the programmes we have put in place. In fact, at our last meeting, just a week or so ago, we were looking very hard at working up realistic measures, so not just a tick-box exercise but how we can put effective measures in place. We have got some ideas but we need to trial them more and work them up, and make sure they are effective measures in their own right and lead somewhere rather than just make people feel they have been asked the question.

Your important point about plans for follow-on is crucial. We are already looking at ways in which we can follow on, again not specifically from the MBA that we run for deans, which we will run again, but, as we are working on a suffragan bishops' programme, work in that contains some action, learning sets and some work that naturally follows on and takes on work into dioceses. We are looking at ways in which we can carry on that work and there will be similar work coming on from diocesan bishops.

As I trailed my coat towards the end of what I was saying, I certainly feel very strongly one of the directions of travel is about working in teams. Again, when we are doing that more and more in dioceses, it will be possible for us to find ways with outside consultants and other people to work with teams on an ongoing regular basis to see how effective they are.

The same on the question about positive action for BAME clergy in the learning community. Again, I say, with all honesty before you, we have not done well in this regard. It is very difficult to do well when the reality is that the clergy are not there in the first instance. The figures from the first year do show that it was not too bad on the gender issue, but it was not all good on BAME. We are delighted to have Bishop

James on DAG, who is chairing Turning up the Volume. He is working very hard with us to see what we can do and we are going to bring on some more plans next year to see what we can do about taking positive action forward to equip BAME clergy so that they can be considered, maybe in a parallel line to start with rather than being part of the learning community.

The final question relates to the same sorts of issues. What we are doing is asking bishops to consult, to put forward names. Again, not wanting to harp on about the past, that is a positive move forward from the way it was in the past that bishops are now being asked to consult, but we could perhaps do more. What we are doing now is bringing in some lay people to help alongside us in the discernment of those coming into the panels and thinking all the time about how we can feed back to bishops about the kinds of conversations that we are having through that discernment process, which we hope will help them think in the future about the kind of people they want to put forward. Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you, Bishop. We will move now to Simplification. I will take three questions for the Bishop of Willesden. I know there is at least one waiting. I think Mr Lucas could have a second bite of the cherry.

Revd Mark Lucas (Peterborough): As a Synod virgin, I ask the forgiveness of Synod for 'cocking up' the first time, if I can say that. I refer you to what I said a few moments ago and continue by saying I could express my question as a concern for the extra workload there seems potentially to be upon bishops, but what I am really concerned about is over-centralisation as a result. Thank you.

Mr Robin Lunn (Worcester): Many of us probably stood for election because we are very keen to make this a great success over the next five years. I just have two quick questions.

The first one is, how does the Bishop think that the deaneries can be involved in a very positive way in this whole process? They have not been mentioned today and I think it would be very useful with regard to simplification.

Secondly, what is one thing that we can utilise with deaneries to help in this particular process?

Mr Ed Shaw (Bristol): As part of the bishop's mission order, is any thought being given to these lasting longer than five years and not having to be renewed every five years?

The Bishop of Willesden (Rt Revd Pete Broadbent): On the workload, yes, it does impose a greater workload on bishops, that is why we need a senior leadership development programme. To take it seriously, we have done about 20-odd BMOs in London dioceses. They do take time. They are difficult to finesse. The church growth question is about how you multiply congregations. Church planting, missional communities, new churches in new areas, are all going to take time and effort, but is that not what we are about, growing the church? Most of the research shows that you can only grow a church by addition by relative and very small amounts and in the end you hit a ceiling. Multiplication is the way forward. Therefore, we need to use BMOs and use them creatively.

No, not about centralisation; quite the opposite. I commend to you the work of my colleague, the Bishop of Islington, who has just started his work as Bishop for church planting in the Diocese of London and across the country as well to help people. There is a wonderful picture of him on Facebook today sitting down with the clergy of a particular deanery saying, "How do we map where you want to plant? Where do you put the BMOs?" It is not centralisation; it is about saying, "Let's encourage growth from the grass roots. BMOs are a wonderful way of doing that.

Deaneries has come up quite a lot. We did have a debate in the lifetime of the last Synod about whether deaneries should be legal entities or not, and Synod decisively rejected that route. I am conscious that for many of you deaneries are being used as a major factor in planning of mission. I think there is a big question to be asked about the future in relation to the porosity of parish boundaries, how deaneries can be mission units, and what is an appropriate area to resource in terms of geography and networking for mission. Whether we can answer those questions through simplification I am not sure, but I do believe we need to try and do that.

What can we do? Deaneries which are being used by their bishops and archdeacons to plan for strategic growth and for deployment need to say back to your bishops and archdeacons what you need and want in order to do that, and we will try and make sure that we put in place the tools to be able to make that happen.

Are BMOs going to be extended beyond five years? Yes, in fact that is what is coming to Synod next February. Please vote for it.

The Chair: Thank you, Bishop. We come now to lay leadership and we have time for three questions to Mr Frost.

Mrs Sue Adeney (Worcester): I am Education Officer at Worcester Cathedral where, as in many other cathedrals in England, there are many positions held by a vast number of the laity, salaried and unsalaried, who bring professionalism and expertise. May I respectfully suggest that they might be a useful addition to the list of stakeholders and a helpful resource for this group in its work.

Mrs Debrah Mclsaac (Salisbury): I liked being 401. I could remember it because it is also the name of the motorway that joins Mississauga to Toronto where I lived around the time that the WCC reported, and the Church of England followed up with, "Call to be Disciples" and then "All Are Called". Neither of these reports had little impact. GS Misc 1124 in paragraphs 14 and 15 refers to the establishment of two working groups and the point has been made before, but I would like to make it again and ask the question as to why the membership of these groups was not referred through the Appointments Committee.

Mr Tim Hind (Bath & Wells): I am absolutely convinced that the House of Laity will want to engage with you, Matthew, on this and progress this workstream. How do you think it will be best for you to engage with the House of Laity and have you already got plans that can be shared with the Standing Committee? Are you already in dialogue with Nick Hills about the possibility of coming to talk to the Standing Committee or to the House as a whole?

The Chair: Mr Frost to respond.

Mr Matthew Frost: Just a few comments in response. Firstly on diversity, going back to the earlier question, yes, absolutely. The issue of diversity is absolutely front of my mind as we form the working group and make recommendations to the Archbishops.

On the positions held by the laity within, absolutely we want --- forgive me, that was just a chart to illustrate there are many people. It was not an exhaustive list of stakeholders at all so absolutely, yes, we will. Thank you for that suggestion.

On the appointments, I am afraid I personally do not know the answer to that. However, just to be clear - maybe I misunderstood the question - in terms of the appointment to the working group, that is something we have not done yet but that is something I will be making recommendations on to the Archbishops and they will be making decisions on that at the end of the year, end of December, beginning of January.

Regarding how to engage with the House of Laity, I am a newbie here so I am looking for all the advice I can get, but it would be great at the outset to engage with the new Chair and Deputy Chair at an earliest convenience to figure out how to do that really well.

The Chair: I am afraid we shall need to draw stumps very shortly but before we do so I would like to invite Canon Spence to make some concluding remarks.

Canon Dr John Spence (ex officio): Ladies and gentlemen, I will be very brief. Firstly, I hope you have gained some sense of the scale and pace of the work that is underway and you can see that sometimes that which is not visible to you is having great momentum.

Secondly, I have talked about a crusade. I believe it would be absolutely vital that the Synod feels that this is their agenda of renewal and reform and not that being undertaken by others. I have already had conversations with the communications team about how we improve the flow of communications to you, but I have this afternoon started talking with them with a view to us trialling a webchat or chatroom facility which we can offer on a regular basis so that you can come in and ask questions, sometimes to me or sometimes to other of the workstream leaders. It is not enough that you are kept informed of this two or three times a year, so we will trial that in the New Year.

Thirdly, I would just wish to add to the chorus of thanks to William Fittall who suddenly found this enormous new stream of work going on which we required him to organise. I would like to thank all the other staff of Church House and beyond who are helping us in this place. Could I just say, because I have the chance to do it, a word of thanks to those staff who have worked so hard in recent weeks on preparations for this Synod inauguration. I have been in Church House sometimes at a quarter to nine at night, they have had their pizza in, they have carried on work for another hour, an hour and a half, so to all of them my great thanks to you, our commitment to keep going with you.

The Chair: It remains only for me to reiterate thanks to the members of the panel for their contributions today and, more importantly of course, for all the continuing work that lies behind them. That concludes this item of business.

Questions

THE CHAIR *The Bishop of Birmingham (Rt Revd David Urquhart) took the Chair at 5.33 pm*

The Chair: Good afternoon, Synod. Item 6 on your Order Paper, Questions. As we have a lot of new members and the Business Committee have been thinking about this section of our meeting, I thought I would just explain what may be obvious to you but if you wish to see the procedure, then Standing Orders 112 to 117 are relevant and also you have already seen the Business Committee's report on page 3, which pointed out the timetable for submitting questions and the resources needed to answer them. You have also your questions which number 42 this afternoon on the Order Paper that has been circulated together with the written answers. The procedure will be that the answers that are written will not be read out and that we will move straight on to the opportunity for those who wish to do so to ask supplementaries, of which I may allow up to two per question. I will also let you know who is answering the questions. It will be a great help if those who are answering questions are ready to come up to the podium here in order - you know who you are. Also if you are intending to ask a supplementary - and particularly those who I will give priority to, who have actually submitted the question - if you could be ready to approach the podium, if called, pretty rapidly and in that case, although we are finishing at 7.00, we may get through most of the questions that we have before us.

Archbishops' Council

1. Mr Martin Sewell (Rochester) asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: The Church has recently launched new social media materials to explain to a wide audience what the Church offers in its Baptisms, Weddings and Funerals. Can the Synod be informed of:

- (i) The latest available figures for uptake in relation to each website; and
- (ii) How dioceses, deaneries, churches and individuals are being educated and encouraged to understand the missionary strategy underlying such initiatives, to enable them to reach the widest audience?

Mr Philip Fletcher (ex officio) replied on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: The latest yearly visitor figures are as follows:

Baptisms: 36,000
Weddings: 797,000
Funerals: 19,000

By the end of May 2016 nineteen dioceses will have received a full day presentation on funerals, with some also having an evening presentation for self-supporting and lay ministers. We have held a packed Funerals Conference in 2105. There will also be two further one-day national conferences in 2016.

For baptisms, 9 dioceses will have received presentations by Easter next year, along with a Praxis event a few weeks ago. There will be five one-day conferences running February- April next year. In addition for both projects, a series of shorter

presentations will be developed for diocesan use, and a DVD with core missional messages for parish use is planned.

Finally, two new baptism preparation courses have been written, the first of which, Starting Rite, is available now, and the second will be available early next year.

2. *The Ven Andrew Piggott (Bath & Wells)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: In the light of the welcome increased funding provided by the National Church to develop a Talent Pool of Senior Leaders for us and the bespoke programmes which have been running for some time to grow the gifts of our current pool of Bishops, Deans and others:

- how many similar bespoke courses and programmes were provided annually by the National Church in the life of the last Synod focussing on the formation and development of the gifts of archdeacons (as distinct from training provided to equip archdeacons with information and skills needed to deal with legislation);
- how much money was spent; and
- how has this amount changed in real terms since 2005 both in actual and per capita terms?

The Bishop of Sheffield (Rt Revd Steven Croft) replied on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: No such bespoke courses or programmes for Archdeacons were provided in the period 2010 to 2015. Therefore no money was spent on these during the life of the last Synod; nor were any such courses or programmes funded during the previous quinquennium.

Ven Andy Piggott: Thank you for your answer. Given the key role that many archdeacons play in supporting their bishops and in developing and implementing diocesan strategies for mission and growth, what plans does the Archbishops' Council have to enable current archdeacons and those yet to be appointed to receive the same support and encouragement as other senior leaders in mission?

The Bishop of Sheffield: Thank you for the supplementary. As you heard the Bishop of Truro say in the earlier session, the funding provision for senior leadership training going forward is to be systematically and carefully reviewed next year. As part of that review, there is ongoing dialogue with archdeacons and with other groups about the kind of training that is required for the future and, as you also heard Bishop Tim say, in his own mind and the minds of several others, there is a move towards locating training in teams as well as for individuals, so those two things are being borne in mind in the next round of funding of training.

Revd Canon Simon Butler (Southwark): In the context of that, Bishop Steven, will consideration be given to funding archdeacons in that role at a national rather than at the current arrangement, which is their own funding through their own diocesan support?

The Bishop of Sheffield: Yes, I think consideration will be given to that but this obviously is not a commitment that would be the solution that would emerge, but that option will be being considered as part of the review.

3. *Revd Dr Miranda Threlfall-Holmes (Durham)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: What is being done to ensure that the Reform and Renewal

programme is furnished with up to date ministry statistics, as the latest published ones are for 2012?

The Bishop of Sheffield replied on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: There are some underlying data and system issues preventing the extraction of data from 2013 onwards. Staff in a number of National Church Institution departments are working to resolve these problems and to create long term sustained ability to capture and report accurate data for a wide range of purposes including Reform and Renewal. At present it is not possible to give a projected date by which this will be resolved. In the interim the 2012 statistics provide an adequate basis for work on Reform and Renewal and the lack of data from 2013 onwards is not preventing the programme and its work going forward.

Revd Dr Miranda Threlfall-Holmes: Given the frustrating lack of ability to extract these data, I wonder whether in the interests of the increased transparency and shared learning that John Spence was talking about slightly earlier we might be able to give consideration to releasing the raw data online so that some of those in the Church with expertise will be able to extract information from it.

The Bishop of Sheffield: Thank you for that suggestion and I will take it to those who are dealing with it. I cannot answer it, Miranda, because I am not myself aware of what state the raw data is in, but thank you for the suggestion.

4. *Mr Samuel Margrave (Coventry)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: Does the Archbishops' Council hold information as to the number of persons employed not just by it but also by the other national Church institutions on annual salaries of £100,000 or more and, if it does, can it confirm how many such persons there are and what the total annual cost of their salaries is?

Canon John Spence (ex officio) replied on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: Information about staff receiving ongoing remuneration or redundancy payments in excess of £60,000 is included in the published annual reports of the Archbishops' Council, Church Commissioners and Pensions Board in accordance with Charity Commissioner policy. The 2014 reports showed that there was one Archbishops' Council member of staff receiving remuneration of more than £100,000, one by the Pensions Board, two employed by Church of England Central Services, and nine by the Church Commissioners, of whom eight were involved in asset management.

Mr Samuel Margrave: The question in regard to the cost of salaries has not actually been answered in the answer. Second of all, I just wanted to ask whether, being as all salaries over £60,000 are recorded, could it be made available in one place how many people are paid over £60,000 within the Church across all the institutions so that there is transparency and the laity can know where their parish share is going?

Canon John Spence: I am sorry about the cost piece and I will look into that for you, Sam, and see what we can do. I do think we need to be aware that the workload that has been incurred this year on things like safeguarding has significantly increased and if you need to employ expertise, you do need to pay for it. I am not sure I can commit to offering in one place every salary of over £60,000 across the entire Church. If people paying parish share want to know how their money is being spent, they look to their diocese and that is the primary point. I would be struggling

to justify the workload, I think, Sam, that would be involved in bringing all that together. We will of course see what we can do to enhance information, but I am not sure I can promise that all in one place.

5. *Mr Andrew Presland (Peterborough)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: Further to the answer given to Question 19 in February 2015, that the new themes and guidelines for the Church and Community Fund would be posted on the CCF's website in the second half of 2015, for what reasons was it announced on the CCF website on 10 November that grant-making from the Fund was being suspended with immediate effect whilst the CCF underwent a review of its operations?

Canon John Spence replied on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: The Archbishops' Council will be considering how its Church and Community Restricted Fund should be used in 2016 and beyond. A further statement will be made once a decision has been made.

House of Bishops

6. *Revd Canon David Banting (Chelmsford)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: In the light of the re-introduction of mitres as part of regular episcopal attire in the Church of England from the late 19th century, does the House offer bishops any guidance on the wearing of mitres and the reasons for doing so (whether to comply with legal requirements, meet expectations or otherwise)?

The Bishop of Willesden (Rt Revd Pete Broadbent) replied on behalf of the Chair: I am not aware of any guidance from the House on the wearing of mitres.

The Canons do not prescribe the form of vesture to be worn by bishops. There is no canonical requirement for bishops to wear mitres. It is entirely a matter of personal discretion. Each bishop will decide what is appropriate in a given context bearing in mind the nature of the service, the tradition of the parish and the cultural expectations of those attending.

Revd Canon David Banting: To help an old dog remember the anniversary year of his wedding and his ordination, it is a new number. Thank you for your answer, Bishop Pete. However, it only gave negatives and no help to those in the Church or the watching world to understand the most visible and distinctive symbol of a bishop so in the hope of reducing ignorance, misunderstanding or cheap jibes and in the spirit of simplification and making the Church more explicable and relevant - this is my supplementary - is this Synod left to understand that the House of Bishops is not able to offer anything simple or factual to explain or commend the basic use, and symbolism, of the mitre?

The Bishop of Willesden: I think the answer to that is the House of Bishops has not discussed this and does not intend to. My answer is clear. We do not offer guidance. Bishops make choices in relation to where they are and will wear the garb that is required and suitable in a particular context. If you are ministering in a place where there are lots of Africans and Asian folk, you look underdressed without a mitre. Perhaps I ought to ask David Banting whether he has ever played chess.

Revd Canon David Banting: Are you inviting a supplementary?

The Bishop of Willesden: I am not.

Revd Canon David Banting: I continue to ask my question, whether you feel that there is any need to explain the symbolism to the watching world, of whom the press gallery might be an example.

The Bishop of Willesden: I am happy to take a second supplementary if you are happy to. I do not think we need to explain that any more than we need to explain dog collars or robes, which might actually lead us into the next question.

7. *The Revd Preb Stephen Lynas (Bath & Wells)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: In July 2014 the Synod resolved ‘That this Synod call on the Business Committee to introduce draft legislation to amend the law relating to the vesture of ministers so that, without altering the principles set out in paragraphs 1 and 2 of Canon B 8, the wearing of the forms of vesture referred to in paragraphs 3, 4 and 5 of that Canon becomes optional rather than mandatory.’ What progress has been made in bringing draft legislation to the Synod as requested by that resolution?

The Bishop of Willesden replied on behalf of the Chair: The House of Bishops will be discussing the next steps at its next meeting on 14 – 15 December following a discussion at the Standing Committee of the House last week.

Revd Preb Stephen Lynas: While very grateful to the Bishop of Willesden for his reply, we saw this morning a vast array of clerical apparel, some very bright and shiny and some very grubby, but it concealed underneath it some clothes which were not necessarily suitable for everyone to see. Your answer is a bit the same, Bishop. You tell us that the House of Bishops is going to do something and you tell us the Standing Committee has done something. Could you tell us what the Standing Committee has done and what the House of Bishops might be doing in future?

The Bishop of Willesden: Yes, I am very happy to tell you the way in which we are trying to handle this. There is an outstanding commitment to look at the whole question of vesture. It was thought that it should not just be handled by a simplification process because it involves the amendment of a canon and will require special majorities if it is going to be changed at all. Therefore the Standing Committee of the House of Bishops is going to be recommending to the House a procedure for consultation on the matter in the wider church, that we get some kind of consensus about what we want to do. That will go to the House of Bishops in December and we will then try and find out ways of consulting Synod members before we get to the formalities of Article 7 business.

8. *Revd Preb Stephen Lynas (Bath & Wells)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: The promulgation of Amending Canon 35 in the dioceses has raised questions about whether those authorised to distribute the sacrament under the Administration of Holy Communion Regulations 2015 require DBS clearance. In some dioceses it is said that if they take the sacrament to someone in their house or a care home, they must have DBS clearance. In others, safeguarding advisers have said it is not necessary if taking ‘home communion’ is the only visit they make. Will clear guidance be provided on this issue to ensure a consistent approach across every diocese?

The Bishop of Durham (Rt Revd Paul Butler) replied on behalf of the Chair: In short, an individual engaged in the act of giving communion will not be eligible for a DBS check even if the administrant is privately giving communion to someone who is housebound or in a care home. That said, if, for example, the administrant is visiting the housebound or care home frequently (once a week or more) or intensively (4 times or more in any 30 day period) and whilst he/she is giving communion, he/she gives advice or guidance, he/she would be eligible for an enhanced DBS check. Alternatively if, as part of the role, the administrant helps with shopping or handling money, he/she would be in regulated activity and, therefore, eligible for an enhanced check (together with a check of the barred list).

Revd Preb Stephen Lynas: Can the Bishop give us any indication of how this answer, which is most helpful, will be promulgated around the dioceses so that individual safeguarding teams, bishops and archdeacons and people in parishes as this new regulation comes into effect know exactly what they do need to get clearance for and what they do not?

The Bishop of Durham: Yes, we are going to publish guidance on the regulations more broadly. That is in process at the moment so it will be included in that wider guidance which will also make it quite clear that safer recruitment procedures should be undertaken by the PCCs in choosing such people.

9. *Revd Dr Andrew Atherstone (Oxford)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: What representations have the Church of England made to the Government in support of proposals for the private sponsorship of refugees, recently outlined by the Home Secretary?

The Bishop of Durham replied on behalf of the Chair: We have welcomed the decision to establish a private sponsorship scheme, and are working closely with the Government as it develops a system appropriate for the UK context. There have been detailed discussions with Government, with ecumenical partners and others about a private sponsorship scheme, in which churches and other faith groups are likely to play a significant part. We regard this as supplementary to the 20,000 who are to be resettled during the current Parliament under the Vulnerable Persons Relocation scheme.

Revd Dr Andrew Atherstone: A similar supplementary. How will the House of Bishops communicate these discussions and plans with our parishes and our deaneries to encourage sponsorship of refugees in local communities?

The Bishop of Durham: At the present time there is still lots of work to be done on this whole thing, and that is with the National Refugees Welcome Board. Once there is clearer guidance on offer it will be made very widely known but it is not yet ready to do.

Mr Andrew Gray (Norwich): Just with regard to the discussions that are taking place with the Government over the private sponsorship of refugees, my question really is two-fold: one, what is the timeline for that; and the second part of my question is will the Church of England actually be setting a target, because if anyone should be leading the way on Christian charity and outreach to those who are in a dire situation, it has to be us. In the 1970s the Church of England did a fantastic job of getting Vietnamese boat refugees in against the swathe of public opinion. I believe

we should do the same again.

The Bishop of Durham: In terms of the timeline, probably post-Christmas, although it is likely that the possibility of signing up your interest on a register will happen before Christmas. Is there any intention of the Church of England setting a target? No, partly because the possibilities will include individuals signing up for private sponsorship, a church congregation signing up for sponsorship, an organisation, a diocese, so it would be very difficult to set a target anyway because of the range of possibilities.

10. *The Revd Stephen Trott (Peterborough)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: In view of the particular dangers faced by Christians and other minorities in Syria and Iraq, what assurances have been sought and received from HM Government that they will receive fair consideration within the Government's foreign aid programme in the Middle East and as part of the numbers of refugees to be invited to settle in the UK?

The Bishop of Durham replied on behalf of the Chair: In the House of Lords on 7 September the Archbishop of Canterbury raised the need for fair consideration of the needs and risks faced by Christians in the Middle East, especially as many Christians are not in the refugee camps. The matter has been raised in subsequent meetings. The Government has affirmed its determination that, in receipt of British assistance, none should be discriminated against on the basis of race, religion or ethnicity; and that it will work with UNHCR to ensure that this is the case.

Revd Stephen Trott: Could I ask whether there is any evidence that these undertakings by the Government are actually now being implemented? I see that the date was 7 September in the House of Lords that the assurances were given.

The Bishop of Durham: The selection of people from Syria to come at present, the current 1,000 who are coming, is being undertaken under the existing resettlement scheme from 2014. The new scheme for the 19,000 will take place post-Christmas. We are constantly seeking to remind the Government that there are issues around Christians not being in the camps. We do have evidence that they are listening to us. We will only find out once the UNHCR start recommending who comes whether or not they are keeping to that promise.

The Chair: Questions 11 and 12 are grouped together. The Bishop of Norwich to reply.

11. *Ms Jayne Ozanne (Oxford)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Given the statement on the Church of England's Marriage website www.YourChurchWedding.org to couples seeking a same-sex marriage that "although there are no authorized services for blessing a same-sex civil marriage, your local church can still support you with prayer", will the House consider publishing guidance to assist parishes so that all such requests will be met with a welcoming, positive response?

12. *Revd Andrew Dotchin (St Edmundsbury & Ipswich)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: In discussing 'same-sex' marriages The Weddings Project says on its website: "Church of England ministers cannot carry out or bless same-sex marriages, but your local church is still there for you. At any time you are welcome to

come and pray with us, or ask us to pray for you.” Can guidance be given as to what form of prayer should be used, and whether it may be public, private or both?

The Bishop of Norwich (Rt Revd Graham James) replied on behalf of the Chair: I shall, with permission, answer questions 11 and 12 together. Paragraphs 19-21 of the House of Bishops’ pastoral guidance of 15 February 2014 dealt with this matter. The House has no plans to issue further guidance.

Revd Andrew Dotchin: Thank you for your response, Bishop, and it is good that you quoted the document. Paragraph 19 sees that the Bishops expected faithful married same-sex couples to seek recognition in an act of worship and encouraged in paragraph 21 pastoral and sensitive support, and I applaud that, but what recourse do couples have if a welcome is not extended and such care is not offered?

The Bishop of Norwich: They could always be in touch with the bishop in relation to that and indeed that has happened. I think the majority of clergy, though, consult their bishops more frequently than perhaps people recognise in these situations and I think the vast majority of clergy do respond pastorally and sensitively with a good deal of imagination, and I am not sure that further written guidance would aid the process very greatly.

Ms Jayne Ozanne (Oxford): Given that we are committed as a church to honesty and transparency, could the House of Bishops explain why they have not been more upfront with the confused general public as to why we, the Church, do not offer all the benefits of marriage so powerfully set out in the yourchurchwedding website to committed, loving non-heterosexual couples rather than hiding behind the phrase “The law doesn’t allow us to” and to flag this exemption upfront on the home page so as to offer some reasoned principle to the LGBT community that feel deeply hurt and aggrieved by what most can only understand as prejudice. I ask this at a time when the institution of marriage itself is deeply under threat. Indeed, I have just been asked to defend marriage and why the state should even recognise it at the Oxford Union this week.

The Chair: Thank you very much for the question but no further speech. Thank you.

The Bishop of Norwich: I think the House of Bishops has produced a good deal of teaching in relation to the pastoral statements on civil partnerships and same-sex marriage. That is available on the Church of England website. It may not be there in relation to the marriage website but it can be sourced very easily. I think also what you are asking for is something of course which we are exploring in the facilitated conversations at the moment. The whole purpose of the facilitated conversations is to enable the Church as a whole to debate these issues further and of course this Synod will have the fruit of the regional conversations in its own conversations in July, so I am not sure that this will be quite the time for adding anything to the marriage website when so much else is available.

Mr Clive Scowen (London): In spite of the Bishop’s last sentence, would it not be helpful to everyone concerned if the marriage website, this website that is being discussed, actually did set out the Church’s current understanding of marriage as the lifelong union of one man with one woman?

The Bishop of Norwich: Well, I would have thought, I mean, I am not sure without

going back to look at the website that it does not actually say that. I imagine that it might. I will take that back. But the teaching of the Church that marriage is the union between one man and one woman for life is there in the canons. It is there in the teaching of the Church. I think the fact that it is not repeated on the website may be something that we can correct. But it seems to me it is demonstrated in a whole host of statements and teachings in other ways.

Revd Canon Simon Butler (Southwark): Noting that the House of Bishops has issued pastoral guidance, I wonder whether the House might make some time to receive feedback from its members about how this guidance is being received and the examples of good practice and places where that good practice has not been followed through?

The Bishop of Norwich: I think it is very likely the House of Bishops will in due course do that. The guidance in relation to same sex marriage has only been out for just under two years. There is a reference group that exists which I chair which deals with individual cases that bishops refer to it. Our experience is not that extensive yet, but our experience in relation to what you do after civil partnerships in terms of offering prayers, for example, is quite extensive, so I think we may return to it. Whether we would want, as a result, to issue more guidance or change to the law, I doubt. I think we have got enough legislation and probably enough statements.

13. *Mrs Andrea Minichiello-Williams (Chichester)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Has consideration been given to whether the current disciplinary provisions contained in the Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction Measure 1963 and the Clergy Discipline Measure 2003 are sufficient to deal with issues raised by clergy who enter into a same sex marriage?

The Bishop of Norwich replied on behalf of the Chair: The House of Bishops had the opportunity to consider the implications of these two pieces of legislation when it was considering what pastoral guidance to issue before the coming into force of the same sex marriage legislation. It has no plans to bring draft amending legislation to the Synod.

Mrs Andrea Minichiello-Williams: How is the House of Bishops intending to discipline and enforce provisions in the canons, the Clergy Discipline Measure and the Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction Measure in cases where clergy have entered into same sex marriage?

The Bishop of Norwich: Well, it is not open to the House of Bishops to have a general policy on how the law is applied and any complaints about the particular circumstances or lifestyles of a priest have to be considered case by case under the prescribed procedure.

Secretary General

14. *Mrs Anne Foreman (Exeter)* asked the Secretary General: What was the 'turnout' in the elections to the 2015 General Synod in, respectively, the House of Clergy in the Province of York; the House of Laity in the Province of York; the House of Clergy in the Province of Canterbury; and the House of Laity in the Province of Canterbury?

15. *Mrs Mary Durlacher (Chelmsford)* asked the Secretary General: Are there any figures for the average overall turnout of voting in the recent General Synod elections, and will there be any analysis of voting turnout in the different dioceses?

Mr William Fittall (Secretary General) replied: I shall with permission answer questions 14 and 15 together. The figures for 2015 were:

| | 2015 | | 2010 | |
|------------------------|-------|---------------|-------|---------------|
| Canterbury | | | | |
| Average overall | 51.88 | | 51.32 | |
| Average clergy | 56.86 | | 55.91 | |
| Average laity | 46.91 | | 46.74 | |
| Highest turnout clergy | 67.96 | (Birmingham) | 75.00 | (Ely) |
| Lowest turnout laity | 45.60 | (Hereford) | 43.20 | (Bristol) |
| Highest turnout laity | 72.10 | (Guildford) | 64.13 | (Chelmsford) |
| Lowest turnout laity | 29.82 | (Hereford) | 37.83 | (Lincoln) |
| York | | | | |
| Average overall | 48.18 | | 50.35 | |
| Average clergy | 52.49 | | 57.23 | |
| Average laity | 43.87 | | 43.48 | |
| Highest turnout clergy | 69.00 | (Sodor & Man) | 73.90 | (Sodor & Man) |
| Lowest turnout clergy | 39.86 | (Liverpool) | 46.50 | (Liverpool) |
| Highest turnout laity | 56.96 | (Chester) | 54.70 | (Sodor & Man) |
| Lowest turnout laity | 34.74 | (Liverpool) | 36.30 | (Liverpool) |

A detailed list of percentage turnout by diocese will be posted on the notice board in the Bishop Partridge Hall.

Dr Rachel Jepson (Birmingham): What consideration will be given to ensuring a level playing field for lay candidates standing in future elections who have neither the money nor time to canvass heavily are not disadvantaged, please?

Mr William Fittall: Well, it is the standard practice after every election of the kind that has just happened for the Business Committee to establish an elections review group and they can consider suggestions for improving the electoral process, whether that involves a change to the rules (and bear in mind that there is a commitment to try and introduce an electronic voting system for the next Synod general election in 2020), or can look at other guidance and help. Beyond that, I think that having complicated rules about what people can spend can be quite difficult to enforce. But that is something that, obviously, the elections review group will be able to look at, and if you have got ideas do write in to the Chair of the Business Committee about that.

Mrs Mary Durlacher: Thank you for the figures. It is quite dismaying that in Chelmsford diocese our laity results were surprisingly low in terms of turnout, 40%, whereas we came top five years ago at 64%. My question is how can we go about finding the reason for this? The Bishop of Truro talked about how instructive it is to hear from the grassroots and this thinking of *SurveyMonkey*, could we think of doing that and finding out the reason why there is not a greater turnout?

Mr William Fittall: I think it is very interesting to look at the figures. Overall, the turnout among clergy nationally was about 55% and among laity was 46%. It is quite interesting to look at the way that there has been a change among dioceses since 2010. I think there might be quite a number of different views as to why dioceses do change and, of course, participation is very important; but, equally, it is important, in fact it is even more important, that dioceses are being active in mission and ministry and it is not the only measure of the health of a diocese that it may have got scored rather low in its turnout for clergy and laity. But I think it is something for further reflection as people ponder what happened and the elections review group will have that opportunity.

16. *Ms Jayne Ozanne (Oxford)* asked the Secretary General: Can an explanation be given of the criteria used to select Christian blogs and commentators for inclusion within the Church of England Daily Media Digest?

Mr William Fittall replied: The aim is to send the Daily Media Digest out by around 8 o'clock each morning with comprehensive coverage of what has appeared in the mainstream media and necessarily selective references to what has appeared in blogs. It is not the aim of the Digest to provide a signpost to all the commentary being offered by individuals and campaigning groups on their own sites about Church of England matters. Editorial decisions are a matter for the Communications Office team and are often influenced by practical considerations such as time and space. The aim is to be balanced and the team is always open to ideas for doing better.

Ms Jayne Ozanne: Given the high readership of the Daily Media Digest and the fact that it is clear that there are not, actually, any specific criteria that are used to decide which blogs and commentators should be featured and that those contributors which are included, many of which are ardent campaigners on sensitive issues, are done so on subjective grounds, can the Secretary General please work to propose some clear guidelines and a formal monitoring group to ensure that in this highly charged time of debate we can ensure that principles of good disagreement are being adhered to?

Mr William Fittall: Well, you will not get a formal monitoring group out of me because I have only got about another day and a half to go. I would say, frankly, that with editorial matters you have to give somebody trust and confidence. I do agree, however, that on these matters there needs to be care and sensitivity and I think further dialogue on this with the Comms team would be helpful. We do not seek to provide on the daily document a comprehensive guide to everything that is going on on the blogosphere. That is not possible. This is the Church of England's national Daily Media Digest, drawing attention to the published press. I can say that the only blogs which are guaranteed insertion are those from either Archbishops and those appearing on the Communication Office's own blog, which hosts a number of authors often writing about work or issues which are being promoted by the NCIs as part of a campaign. But, yes, if there is a feeling that there is not a sufficient even-handedness, we can talk further about that. Certainly my successor can.

17. *Mr Andrew Presland (Peterborough)* asked the Secretary General: In the light of the time and effort needed by church officials to demonstrate to HMRC that individual PCCs are not 'connected charities' for the purpose of the Gift Aid Small Donations Scheme, have any conclusions been drawn on the extent to which public

servants' understanding of religious organisations needs to be increased, and the way in which the Church of England might usefully be involved in any such process?

Mr William Fittall replied: It took over two and a half years to sort out this issue given HMRC's fanciful view of the connectedness of parishes in relation to the Gift Aid Small Donations Scheme, and the Employment Allowance. The handling was made more complex by policy concerns by officials relating to the amount that might be claimed. We work hard, in partnership with the Second Estates Commissioner, to build understanding of the Church of England among ministers and officials within Whitehall and in Parliament. Many well established relationships exist and we continue to achieve many important objectives in relation to funding, legislation and policy across a range of issues. But it will require constant effort. There are no quick fixes.

National Society Council

18. *Mr Robin Lunn (Worcester)* asked the Chair of the National Society Council: Due to the straitened circumstances in which many Statutory Advisory Committees for Religious Education (SACREs) find themselves, will the Church consider investing small amounts of less than £1,000 in them, and working with our ecumenical partners to secure other funding for them?

The Bishop of Ely (Rt Revd Stephen Conway) replied as Chair: Our review, *Making a Difference?* was published in September 2014. It set out some of the challenges facing Religious Education (RE) and the opportunities to ensure greater understanding of the important role of RE within the curriculum in order to promote the place of theological enquiry and religious literacy. The National Society will seek to work with others towards a nationally agreed framework and syllabus for RE which is clear about its role and about the essential content for teaching the subject effectively. Rather than invest limited funds in the agreed syllabus work of approximately 150 individual SACREs, we think greater impact will result from engaging with the RE community and any work developed through the RE Council at a national level. We will support such work as it seeks to establish greater consistency for RE in schools across the country.

Mr Robin Lunn: Thank you for your very informative answer, Bishop. I am a member of the Worcester SACRE which is starting to struggle due to the sub-contracting commissioning out of county council services. You mentioned greater impact, what greater impact is the National Society looking for? And, secondly, at what stage if a SACRE was seen to be struggling would the National Society speak out?

The Bishop of Ely: I think that, as you say, there is a mixed picture about the influence and effectiveness of SACREs around the country and there are local considerations around funding. I think that, primarily, the National Society is, rather than have a lot of separate RE curricula operating around the country, looking to work with the RE Council to develop a national curriculum at least which will be on offer because, of course, different church schools have different rules attaching to, as you know, how the curriculum may be applied. But working with the RE Council to produce a curriculum which does the best for our children and which will have the best national stature.

Canon Peter Bruinvels (Guildford): A member of Surrey SACRE. Recognising that

finance is not necessarily going to be available to each of the SACREs, can I be reassured, or can we be reassured, that there will be proper connection and linking up? These do work very much, as the Bishop has just said, on their own. If not funding, they need more than a DDE supporting them. They need some guidance, particularly over the national curriculum and RE and, as an inspector myself, I hope that can be forthcoming.

The Bishop of Ely: Thank you very much for that, Peter. I think that the idea is that the RE Council will be setting up a commission to look into how a national curriculum might be put together. Of course, that commission will be taking soundings from around the country from the people who are engaged at the local level like you. This is not going to be something that is going to be dropping from on high, but properly consulted about and the priority is to reinforce what can be delivered locally but with a national profile.

Ministry Council

19. *Mr Adrian Greenwood (Southwark)* asked the Chair of the Ministry Council: How many stipendiary posts are there in the Church of England where the title and/or a substantial part of the role is explicitly about 'evangelism'? If possible, please sub-divide the answer between those who are ordained, Church Army officers and other lay people.

The Bishop of Sheffield (Rt Revd Steven Croft) replied: It is not possible to answer this question accurately or in full. The national record of clergy does not allow information to be extracted on the basis of such titles. Nor is there a central record kept of the role description of all clergy posts. The record of lay ministries apart from Readers is kept locally in the dioceses rather than centrally. The latest available ministry statistics indicate that there are 119 Church Army officers serving in the Church of England.

Mr Adrian Greenwood: Given the high priority of both our Archbishops to the re-evangelization of our country to those who are sheep without a shepherd, and given that the Church without mission is like fire without burning, would Bishop Steven agree that one measure of the success of Renewal and Reform is that by the end of five years there will be gifted evangelists in all communities of our country and that all Christian disciples will have confidence to share their faith with gentleness and humility?

The Bishop of Sheffield: Thank you, Adrian. I would have great pleasure agreeing with what you have said. I would also add two other things, if I may. It is arguable that the answer to your question, if you omit the phrase about the title but a substantial part of the role is explicitly about evangelism, the answer in terms of clergy is all of them, because the role is defined in the ordinal prior to particular role descriptions where evangelism is a specific part in the charges to deacons, priests and bishops. Secondly, we may not have much information about titles but we do have information through the Experiences of Ministry Survey, work done by Kings College, London, of the amount of time clergy spend in mission and evangelism. I commend that work to you and to the Synod and also to say that I would hope that over a five or ten year period we would see the proportion of time that is spent in those activities rise as well, and that is one of the most critical things.

20. *Mr Simon Baynes (St Albans)* asked the Chair of the Ministry Council: Can guidance be given on the earliest date on which a parish vacancy may be advertised when an incumbent resigns - whether (i) the date that the incumbent has written to the bishop resigning, (ii) the date of his/her last Sunday in the parish, (iii) the date he/she takes up ministry in a new parish, or (iv) some other date?

The Bishop of Sheffield replied: There is no legal requirement for advertising and other ways of making an appointment than competitive interviewing may be adopted. The earliest point at which advertising can take place is when the patron decides on the manner of selection, in the light of any views expressed by the PCC at the meeting required by s.11 of the Patronage (Benefices) Measure 1968. That meeting ought normally to take place while the outgoing incumbent is still in office.

Mr Simon Baynes: I would like to thank the Bishop of Sheffield for his answer. Given that many parishes currently face a long interregnum and given that this puts an enormous burden on retired and non-stipendiary clergy, sometimes for many months, will the Ministry Council now consider as a matter of urgency, and in the spirit of Reform and Renewal, a full review of the Patronage (Benefices) Measure 1968 so that vacancies may be reduced to no more than three months?

The Bishop of Sheffield: Thank you. I think I have to say, first and foremost, Simon, that I think such a review would be outside the purview of the Ministry Council as such and would fall within the other bodies of the Archbishops' Council; and, secondly to say, that one of the challenges of the next decade, as we have already said, will be the falling number of stipendiary clergy that we have under retirement age in relation to the number of clergy that dioceses and parishes want to deploy and can support. In its broadest sense, Reform and Renewal is looking to address that shortfall, particularly in the renewal of vocations. In my experience, dioceses are handling that shortfall in different ways. I think I hear your question as an encouragement to be strategic in that endeavour.

Mr David Lamming (St Edmundsbury & Ipswich): My supplementary question relates to the last sentence of the written answer. Is the Bishop aware that in some dioceses, despite the fact that the Patronage (Benefices) Measure requires the bishop, where he is aware that a benefice is shortly to become vacant by reason of resignation, "To give notice of that fact, as soon as he considers reasonable in all the circumstances, to the designated officer of the diocese.", that a practice has grown up of not giving such notice until the present incumbent has taken up his new post or on retirement that his period of notice has expired with a consequent delay in the holding of the s.11 and s.12 meetings and the appointment of a successor. Would the Bishop confirm that such a practice is inconsistent with the intention of the 1986 Measure which envisages that the process to find a successor will commence while the present incumbent is still in post and, accordingly, will he discourage such practice where it obtains?

The Bishop of Sheffield: Thank you. I am certainly aware, and thank you for underlining that. I hope that the answer that has been provided will clarify the position. I would draw attention to the important word "normally" there, both in the weight of what you are saying but also in the need for a pastoral discretion exercised by the bishop with archdeacons and others about circumstances in which it may be prudent to allow a longer period of reflection.

21. *Revd Charles Read (Norwich)* asked the Chair of the Ministry Council: What help is the Council and the Ministry Division able to give to Theological Education Institutions following the cancelling of the contract with University to provide a Virtual Learning Environment for Common Awards?

The Bishop of Sheffield replied: The contract with University has been extended to September 2016 to provide continuity of provision for the Virtual Learning Environment, or VLE, and in order to provide direct tailored support for individual Theological Education Institutions or TEIs. Ministry Division staff have provided additional support and facilitated sharing of skills and knowledge through the TEI network for both the current academic year and in preparation for 2016-17. Access to online journals and library resources is being reviewed in liaison with TEI staff and Durham University. Facilities for online submission of essays and the plagiarism detection system have been provided direct from Ministry Division to those TEIs which require it. Consultation with TEIs on future VLE provision has begun through a VLE Development Group in order to establish the requirements for the next stage of the VLE.

Revd Charles Read: Thank you, Bishop Steven, for this full and very supportive answer. Can I tempt you to a bit more information from the last sentence? Given that some TEIs begin their academic year in the middle of August, what is the timeline for the consultation you mention there for setting up the new VLE provision?

The Bishop of Sheffield: Thank you, Charles. I am sorry, I do not have the detail of that in my notes, but I will ask the Ministry Division to write to you with that information and place a copy on the notice board.

22. *Revd Charles Read (Norwich)* asked the Chair of the Ministry Council: How much money was invested in the contract with University and is the Council attempting to recover some or all of this?

The Bishop of Sheffield replied: The financial details of the contract with University are commercially sensitive, especially in the context of a possible tendering exercise for the next stage of the VLE. Negotiations have taken place with University and as a result the total contract payment was reviewed and reduced. No payments have been made since March 2015 and the six month extension to the contract to September 2016 was made without additional charge. I do recognise the difficulties for TEIs and their staff over the past year and am grateful for their response. We are focused on improving both value for money and quality of service for the next stage of the VLE.

Remuneration & Conditions of Service Committee

23. *Revd Stephen Trott (Peterborough)* asked the Chair of the Remuneration & Conditions of Service Committee: Since a number of clergy may be badly affected by the loss of income from tax credits in the near future, what plans are there to implement the Synod's resolution of November 2002 to increase the National Minimum Stipend to a more realistic level over time so that no clergy need to rely on social security payments to supplement their income?

The Bishop of Manchester (Rt Revd David Walker) replied: The definition of a stipend in *Generosity & Sacrifice* is payment 'for exercise of office' that 'reflects the

level of responsibility held'. The National Minimum Stipend cannot obviate the need for a spouse or a partner to work. We expect people to use welfare support where they are entitled. These changes will affect clergy differently depending on circumstances such as family size, household income and disability status. To make a compensating adjustment to the National Minimum Stipend (NMS) would directly increase the starting level of pensions by the same proportions and would be a further cost to dioceses in future pensions. Linking the NMS to a level that no clergy need draw on welfare benefits would not be directing dioceses' financial resources to those of greatest needs. Bishops and dioceses already have the opportunity to pay grants and access funds through a range of clergy charities to deal with hardship.

Mrs Caroline Herbert (Norwich): Has the Committee considered that the need or the expectation that a priest's spouse or partner will work might be a factor that discourages priests from applying for jobs in more rural areas where there is perhaps less likelihood of their spouse or partner being able to find a job than if they apply for jobs in London and the Home Counties? If so, do you have any suggestions on what can be done?

The Bishop of Manchester: In the huge issues on deployment of clergy, and I think there are going to be some further considerations around that in the near future, the difficulties for a whole variety of reasons why clergy are reluctant to move from one part of the country to another, and particularly the London and the South East area where it is most easy for a spouse to find not only the current job but have confidence of finding the next job and career progression, and so the issues that you relate to there are not just about the rural areas. I think that many of us in the North of England would say that they apply as well.

In olden times, a long time ago, the belief was that a stipend was enough to bring up a family on. That is not the case in many walks of life nowadays and I think what I was flagging up in my earlier reply was, even back when *Generosity and Sacrifice* was being discussed over a decade ago, there was a recognition that was no longer a tenable position to hold.

Revd Dr Miranda Threlfall-Holmes (Durham): Can I just point out at the bottom of the first paragraph of your answer that not all clergy with children and family responsibilities have a spouse or partner who would be able to work. I know of several who are single parents and do not have that option to increase the family income available to them.

The Bishop of Manchester: Indeed, that is a very good point, Miranda. Charitable money is not supposed to be used to defray costs on the State, so I think what all of us hope is that where there is need, first of all, any entitlement to welfare benefits, to public benefits, is addressed. Beyond that, bishops in most dioceses - all the dioceses I have ever worked in - do have access to support funds that can help clergy. There are also the clergy charities and other bodies. I know my own children received support from the clergy charities at a difficult time in our family life when my wife was not working. There are a variety of methods through which we can address those sorts of situations. I would not want to minimise the difficulty for those who are bringing up children and seeking to live on a stipend.

24. *Mr Christopher Pye (Liverpool)* asked the Chair of the Remuneration and Conditions of Service Committee: Following on from the answer given to Question

35 in the July 2015 group of sessions, what progress has been made in examining the mandatory retirement age for clergy; and, further to these considerations, has account been taken in any further consideration of the issue of the answer given to an earlier question regarding either raising the age or removing the need for Readers to apply for permission to officiate at the age of 70, to the effect that Readers and clergy will be treated the same with regard to retirement age?

The Bishop of Manchester replied: Since July RACSC has spent some time considering the mandatory retirement age for clergy, and will report on its progress soon. We have been unable to identify the previous question about Readers. There is no canonical requirement for Readers' licences to expire at 70. The Bishops' Regulations for Reader Ministry require Readers in active ministry who are under the age of 70 to hold a renewable, time-limited licence. Readers who wish to remain in active ministry after that should apply for the Bishop's written permission to officiate, which will be for a limited period, subject to renewal. There are currently no plans to change these arrangements.

Mission and Public Affairs Council

25. *Mr Paul Boyd-Lee (Salisbury)* asked the Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council: Has the Church of England consulted with other religious groups and Civil Society Organisations about the threat to freedom of speech posed by the Extremist Disruption Orders and, if so, what has been the outcome?

Mr Philip Fletcher (ex officio) replied: We maintain contact with a wide range of other groups on issues of freedom of speech and of national security, including our main ecumenical partners. We share with others the view that freedom of speech is a core British value, including the ability to make categorical statements of religious belief provided that such statements do not constitute an abuse of power over vulnerable people. We take some reassurance from the sections of the Government's recently published Counter-Extremism Strategy which assert the importance of free speech in the context of religious belief, but there are still questions about whether the word 'extremism' can be defined clearly enough in law to forestall any possibility of future misuse of legislation. Draft legislation has not yet been published, and we shall form a view when it is made public.

Mr Paul Boyd-Lee: Thank you for that encouraging reply that there has been contact with many other groups concerning this situation, which brings one to the question of outcome. Are you able to say whether there has been a consensus of opinion from these groups to simply sit back and wait for Government legislation to be published, or has there been a view of actively engaging with the Government drafters in order that legislation is produced which is both helpful to the nation at large and the church, whilst not appearing to be obstructive to freedom of speech?

Mr Philip Fletcher: All sorts of contacts occur between the servants of the Synod and the servants of Government in order to clarify the position on all sorts of subjects. The importance of freedom of speech in the context of religious belief is clearly very dear to the heart, not just of the Church of England but of very many other groups.

26. *Mr Clive Scowen (London)* asked the Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council: What representation has the Church of England made to the Government about the threat to freedom posed by the proposed Extremist Disruption Orders?

Mr Philip Fletcher (ex officio) replied: We have seen in recent days the tragic impact of terrorism and our hearts go out from London to the people of Paris. Of a previous set of measures the Bishop of Durham said in the House of Lords in January, 'As we consider the latest set of Government moves to strengthen the laws which guard our people against terrorist acts, we have to hold our nerve in our convictions about liberty, equality and fraternity, and look steadily at the changes being proposed. These matters are too serious for us to polarise or politicise issues beyond what is justified in legitimate debate.' The proposed Orders do raise questions about freedom of speech. However, we do not yet have full details except that, in its published Strategy, the Government has pledged that freedom to state religious opinions in public will be safeguarded. We wait to see exactly what is proposed.

Mr Clive Scowen: Would Mr Fletcher accept that ministerial pledges, even though given in good faith, are not necessarily reflected in what actually happens and that it is therefore critically important that the legislation put in place does not give powers which could in future be used to limit our historic freedom of speech and, in particular, our freedom to proclaim biblical truths which may be at odds with the prevailing consensus and political correctness?

Mr Philip Fletcher: My answer on the similar questions here very much takes the point that despite the reassurances, undoubtedly given in good faith, we need to see what actually is in the proposed legislation. We will indeed be looking at it, when it comes, with great care to see what perhaps inadvertent consequences it might have.

27. *Mrs Andrea Minichiello-Williams (Chichester)* asked the Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council: Has consideration been given to whether the House of Bishops' Pastoral Guidance on Same Sex Marriage (15 February 2014) leaves church members vulnerable to investigation and sanction by the State under the Government's new proposals in its newly published Counter-Terrorism Strategy to tackle "violent and non-violent extremism in all its forms"?

Mr Philip Fletcher replied: The Government's recently published counter-extremism strategy asserts the importance of free speech, and says that the measures proposed 'will be designed so that they can only be used where it is necessary to prevent the activities of groups and individuals who pose a clear threat to the safety of individuals or society more generally'. It would be utterly bizarre to suggest that the Pastoral Guidance poses any such threat. The Extremism Bill has not yet been published. When it is available, we shall give full consideration to its implications for the freedom of Christians and others to express their beliefs, and will continue to engage with the government on any points in the proposals which concern us.

Mrs Andrea Minichiello-Williams: Inadvertent consequences. Given that the Church of England has this week experienced, however bizarre it may seem, discrimination through the banning of the Lord's Prayer in cinemas, the same discrimination that many committed Christians have faced over the past ten years for expressing love for, and faith in, Jesus Christ, will the Mission and Public Affairs Council now proactively warn the Government of the potential further threat to freedom of speech and expression under the proposed extremist disruption orders, clear details of which have been published most clearly in Government strategy documents, and especially in light of the fact that action has been proposed against Christian schools in the recent Department for Education report on extremism in schools as against the

backdrop of Christian schools, such as Grindon Hall, being put into Special Measures and others, even more worryingly, having been forced to close?

Mr Philip Fletcher: I think that question covers a vast range. I bow to the judgment of the Chair on just what falls within the terms of the question, but I am not going to hide behind that. Of course, we, the Council, and the staff that support us so ably, look at what the Government say and then what is in actual proposed legislation, and the two need to tie together. It is often very difficult in legislation to avoid the laws of unintended consequences. We aim to assist the Government, when its proposed legislation is published, and we will certainly draw attention to any problems that we foresee.

Revd Canon Jonathan Alderton-Ford (St Edmundsbury & Ipswich): Would Mr Fletcher agree with me that we are not actually being persecuted while we are being discriminated against? Perhaps we need to be a little bit more careful in our language.

Mr Philip Fletcher: I agree that this is a field where language needs to be used with great care. Mrs Minichiello-Williams mentioned the issue of the Lord's Prayer, which we have all now had a chance to assess for ourselves, and where, be it whispered, the number of hits is probably rather greater than it would have been if no such proposed ban had been introduced. Yes, all of us need to take great care. I come back to a point in an earlier answer that we are very much standing at one with the people of Paris at the moment and we are conscious that there are real threats which need to be taken very seriously.

28. *Revd Canon Charles Goddard (Southwark)* asked the Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council: What support is the Church of England planning to give to the relaunch of the EcoChurch initiative in January 2015, and how will the work of the Shrinking the Footprint team engage with the new initiative?

Mr Philip Fletcher replied: The Church of England, through the Environment Working Group, has made a donation toward the launch of EcoChurch in January. We have also helped to promote the initiative in publications and included an A Rocha presentation on EcoChurch in the programme for the recent conference for Diocesan Environment Officers. We expect to continue to promote EcoChurch throughout 2016.

Revd Canon Giles Goddard: It is good to know that Shrinking the Footprint is so involved in this. I wonder if Synod is also aware how involved Shrinking the Footprint were in putting together the Pilgrimage for Paris? I wondered if you might want to pay tribute to Shrinking the Footprint for doing that, and also whether you might want to send a message to the pilgrims who I know are engaged in a very cold, wet walk through northern France.

Mr Philip Fletcher: For any member of Synod who is not already aware, you should be aware that representatives of the churches are, as we speak, progressing to Paris as a pilgrimage to make clear our concern about climate change. We wish them every good wish in completing that pilgrimage successfully and, still more, that leading on to a successful agreement between our Government, the European Union and all the other governments on real commitments to the control of climate change. Yes, I do pay tribute to that group of pilgrims.

29. *Mrs Sarah Finch (London)* asked the Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council: Does the Church of England have any connection with Operation Noah?

Mr Philip Fletcher replied: Operation Noah is one of a number of faith-based organisations with which Shrinking the Footprint and the Environment Working Group stay in touch. As far as possible, we promote their initiatives through our wider networks. Several members of the Board of Operation Noah are members of the Church of England, including The Revd Canon Giles Goddard of this Synod, who is also a member of the Environment Working Group, and The Revd Chris Halliwell who is the Diocesan Environment Officer for Blackburn. The Bishop of Kingston attended a board meeting earlier in the year, and joined Operation Noah members at the climate coalition march this summer. Operation Noah has been involved in a number of initiatives in which we are also engaged, such as the Pilgrimage to Paris.

Revd Canon Giles Goddard (Southwark): Would Mr Fletcher agree that the engagement that we have had with a number of faith-based NGOs, including Operation Noah, Christian Aid, Tearfund and CAFOD, has been very helpful to the work of the Church of England?

Mr Philip Fletcher: Yes, and I would add A Rocha from my previous answer. There are a number of groups out there who are doing great work on behalf of the Christian faith in establishing our concerns about the environment. We keep close links with them without ever getting to the point where we “take them over” or where we feel that we must march so much in lockstep that it actually inhibits freedom of approach.

Revd Canon Simon Butler (Southwark): I was fortunate enough recently to attend the PWM Conference - Partnership for World Mission Conference - as its chaplain for a few days. I wonder what learning from that conference can be brought into the ongoing work that we are doing on the whole agenda of climate change within the MPA.

Mr Philip Fletcher: I think I look forward to learning further myself about what the PWM Conference might bring, but I would want to note the importance of the Anglican Communion in all of this. The Bishop of Salisbury, for example, has attended conferences called by the Archbishop of Cape Town, and it is crucially important that we stand with our fellow Anglicans where climate change impacts are often very direct, very immediate and being felt now.

30. *Canon Jane Perrett (Ely)* asked the Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council: Noting that the Archbishops' Council wrote to the Secretary of State for Defence in March 2007, and that the UK Parliament is due to debate the Main Gate decision on Trident renewal at some point in 2016, can the attention of HMG again be drawn to the General Synod resolution of February 2007 and in particular to the amendment that was passed to ‘suggest to Her Majesty’s Government that the proposed upgrading of Trident is contrary to the spirit of the United Kingdom’s obligations in international law and to the ethical principles underpinning them’?

Mr Philip Fletcher replied: The House of Bishops' Pastoral Letter of April 2015 argued that serious questions still remain about the proposed renewal of the UK’s minimum deterrent, and that these need to be pressed in conversation with HMG. Whilst opinion within the church, and in the country, is not unanimous, the absence of informed debate about the relevance of Trident in relation to the post-Cold War

global threats to the nation's security is a serious concern. These questions will become more pressing next year when the Main Gate decision is due. The MPA Division will continue to resource and equip Lords Spiritual to contribute to parliamentary debates on Trident, ahead of any decision, and will seek to ensure that ethical considerations are not lost in the wider political and strategic debate.

The Bishop of Liverpool (Rt Revd Paul Bayes): Is it the intention of the MPA Council to commission resources from MPA to dioceses, deaneries and parishes, including the 2007 material, so that churches locally as well as the bishops in the Lords are theologically resourced to form a view on Trident renewal and to influence their Members of Parliament, other decision-makers and opinion formers?

Mr Philip Fletcher: Can I take that very interesting suggestion away? There is not a huge amount of additional funds. The papers today suggest that maybe the timetable is drifting back a little. This is a subject – the independent nuclear deterrent - which has been of concern to this Synod almost from its first meeting. I have no doubt that it will continue to be of close concern, and involves not just this Synod but all elements of the Church of England.

31. *Mr Adrian Greenwood (Southwark)* asked the Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council: Has the Mission and Public Affairs Council given any consideration to the huge expansion and transformation of Halloween in popular culture in England over the last 10-15 years (including on the BBC) and what this signifies for the Church's mission in society? If so, what was the outcome? If not, would it consider undertaking such a review and sharing its findings?

Mr Philip Fletcher (ex officio) replied: Issues concerning Halloween are part of MPA's work on 'new religious movements and alternative spiritualities'.

Dr Anne Richards logs and analyses enquiries about Halloween, which are growing in number. She offers advice to anyone expressing concerns, wondering what to say to children, or looking for alternatives to Halloween parties and so on. Basic advice is offered in a leaflet that has been tested with diocesan advisers on new religious movements, who will also have their own material for use at Halloween.

The mission theology page on the Church's website contains resources from the Mission Theology Advisory Group, including reflective prayer for All Hallows' Eve/All Saints/All Souls and resources for groups. These are intended to set this time of year in a firmly mission-orientated context and equip Christians to engage effectively with neighbours and friends.

MPA focuses on responding to concerned enquiries and resourcing local churches to approach Halloween as an opportunity for witness and mission.

Business Committee

32. *Ms Christina Baron (Bath & Wells)* asked the Chair of the Business Committee: Will the Business Committee organise consultations both within and beyond Synod about possible dates and patterns of meetings, before setting dates beyond 2018?

Revd Canon Sue Booy (Oxford) replied: Standing Orders 1 and 2 make clear that the setting of the dates, length and timings of General Synod meetings is the responsibility of the Presidents, in consultation with the Business Committee. Under S.O. 2(2) the Synod must approve a motion from the Business Committee setting out the dates of future meetings, which should be set at least 6 months in advance. In practice, dates for the General Synod are usually announced and agreed at least two years in advance. The last such motion setting dates from 2016 - 2018 was proposed by myself and passed by Synod in July 2014. The Business Committee will probably be discussing this again at its March 2016 meeting. Synod members are welcome to write to the Clerk to the Synod prior to this meeting with any views on the potential dates, length and timings of groups of sessions in 2019 and beyond.

Ms Christina Baron (Bath & Wells): Will the Business Committee, and others responsible for setting Synod dates, bear in mind the possibility of Synod sessions running into a Saturday but not including the Sunday, because weekends come in two parts and they are often referred to as if they were indivisible?

Revd Canon Sue Booy: Thank you. I indicated in my speech earlier today that we intend to try and keep to a weekday and weekend pattern. The point about Saturdays is well made and we will be looking at this question when we meet for our more general meeting next March.

Canon Robert Hammond (Chelmsford): In addition to Saturdays for Synod meetings, would the Chair of the Business Committee consult with the new Secretary General on whether boards and committees' residential meetings could, where they are not currently, be held to include a Saturday, thus reducing the need for many working laity to take two days' annual leave for each residential meeting, and hopefully encouraging more to stand for election to these really important boards, committees and councils?

Revd Canon Sue Booy (Oxford): I have no jurisdiction over those kinds of meetings as you will realise, but I am sure the point, which is well made, has been heard.

33. *Mrs Debra Mclsaac (Salisbury)* asked the Chair of the Business Committee: Will the Business Committee consider producing a report after each Group of Sessions of the Synod of 1) the number of times a member was called to speak during that Group of Sessions; and 2) a cumulative record of which members have been called by which chair since the beginning of quinquennium?

Revd Canon Sue Booy replied: The administrative staff of the General Synod retain a record for the Panel of Chairs of those who have spoken at each Group of Sessions, as well as the number of times they have spoken. If the Business Committee so decides, this list for each group of sessions can be reproduced on the website or as an Appendix to the Business Committee Report. No statistics are held for the number of times an individual Chair calls a particular speaker and there are no plans to monitor this.

Mrs Debra Mclsaac (Salisbury): Will the Business Committee considering publishing the list it keeps already?

Revd Canon Sue Booy (Oxford): We will consider at our March meeting the feasibility in terms of time, cost and the best way of communicating the information.

34. *Mrs Debra Mclsaac* asked the Chair of the Business Committee: What steps will be taken to encourage chairs of debates to call new or less prominent members of Synod to speak?

*Revd Canon Sue Booy*s replied: The choice of those who are called to speak in Synod debates is entirely a matter for the Panel of Chairs under SO 15(2) and is not a matter for the Business Committee.

35. *Mr David Lamming (St Edmundsbury & Ipswich)* asked the Chair of the Business Committee: During the debate in February 2015 on the motion to approve the seat allocations for the recent election of members to the House of Laity (as set out in GS 1975), Mr Gerald O'Brien drew attention to the injustice and unfairness of an allocation that provides four seats for the diocese of Carlisle (with 17,674 electoral roll members) but only three seats for St Edmundsbury and Ipswich (with 20,053 electoral roll members). In reply, the Chairman of the Business Committee expressed her confidence that the issue would be raised again with the Elections Review Group at the beginning of this quinquennium. Will she confirm that the Elections Review Group will indeed reconsider the allocation of seats in the House of Laity with a view to bringing forward proposals to Synod that would correct the current imbalance in favour of dioceses in the Province of York?

36. *Mr David Lamming (St Edmundsbury & Ipswich)* asked the Chair of the Business Committee: Despite the fact that electors had nearly three weeks to return their voting papers in the recent General Synod election, the turnout in most dioceses was depressingly low—under 50% for the House of Laity election in 22 of the 33 dioceses that have posted the figures on their websites, and under 40% in four dioceses (Manchester 35.39%, Oxford 38.28%, Peterborough 30.79% and Salisbury 35.44%). Will the Chair of the Business Committee confirm that the Elections Review Group will look into the reasons for the low turnout and also bring forward legislative proposals to make provision for online voting in 2020 as agreed by Synod at the November 2013 Group of Sessions?

37. *Mr Clive Scowen (London)* asked the Chair of the Business Committee: Has the Business Committee considered bringing to the new Synod early in this quinquennium options as to how the electorate for the House of Laity might be formed for future elections, in time for any change which the Synod might consider appropriate to be implemented in time for the 2020 elections, and, if not, will it now do so?

*Revd Canon Sue Booy*s replied: With permission, I will take these questions together. All these issues are important potential areas for consideration by the Elections Review Group, a sub-committee of the Business Committee, which will be established early in this new quinquennium. Synod members wishing to request further work on these and other matters should write to the Clerk to the Synod, requesting that they be tabled for consideration when the Elections Review Group is re-formed, which is likely to be early in 2016.

Mr David Lamming (St Edmundsbury & Ipswich): My supplementary really relates more to Question 36 which also links back to Question 15 to the Secretary General and arises from Mary Durlacher's supplementary. Would the Elections Review Group perhaps consider as one of the factors to look at in the context of turnout

whether there has been any correlation between turnout figures and those dioceses that conducted online hustings or even live hustings?

Revd Canon Sue Booy: I know that these are things that the Elections Review Group considered last time because I was fortunate enough to chair it and I can assure you, Mr Lamming, that the Elections Review Group will consider anything that you write to it about.

Mr Clive Scowen: Will Canon Booy undertake to ensure that establishing the Elections Review Group is one of the first things that the new Business Committee does and will she also undertake to consult Synod early to gauge opinions about how the electorate for the House of Laity should be formed before detailed proposals are formulated?

Revd Canon Sue Booy: I do not think I can make any promise, which I think Mr Scowen is trying to get, about how quickly we form the Elections Review Group. I think it is unlikely to be before our March meeting, but we have heard the request to consult Synod early. We have done that generally by using the Report of the Business Committee which often contains information that is not highlighted in the speech that I make and so I would commend you to read sometimes what are the latter points in that report for that kind of information and then ask me questions about it. Thank you.

Crown Nominations Commission

38. *Revd Canon Giles Goddard (Southwark)* asked the Chair of the Crown Nominations Commission: The recently published "Archbishops' Guidelines on the Implementation of *Choosing Bishops – the Equality Act 2010 (Revised)*" were dated March 2015. What guidelines were followed previous to that date in the appointment of Diocesan Bishops, and how were they agreed?

The Archbishop of York (Most Revd and Rt Hon Dr John Sentamu) replied: In June 2011 the Secretary General issued for Synod members GS Misc 992, to which was attached a note from the Legal Office explaining the relevance of the Equality Act to the appointment of diocesan and suffragan bishops. An updated version of the note was issued in June 2013 as GS Misc 1044. A note on implementation was issued subsequently on the authority of the Archbishops to diocesan bishops and to the Crown Nominations Commission. The note has been updated, most recently in March. A Synod member who was aware of the note asked at the Synod in July whether it could be published and it was placed on the website earlier this month.

Revd Canon Giles Goddard: Thank you for your reply. I want to connect your reply to the Reform and Renewal agenda. We have heard a lot today about the importance of developing leadership skills and also developing diversity. In terms of lesbian and gay clergy, that is not happening, so how does the Crown Nominations Commission plan to stop wasting the leadership talents of those lesbian and gay clergy in same-sex relationships and those who have supported them?

The Archbishop of York: The note and the question reply was simply setting out what the legal position is and that this publication had to do with the Archbishops actually giving permission to do it. The Crown Nominations Commission, Mr Goddard, as you know, takes an oath of confidentiality. I would be revealing more than actually

what I, having taken an oath, would be wanting to reveal. All I can say at the moment is that definitely there is not a desire to waste anybody's talent in the life of the Church and I for one am actually committed to making sure that no one, regardless of their status or sexual orientation, in the end is not seen as a member of the body of Christ. If we begin from that particular point, I think the issue is that wait to see what happens with the facilitated conversation. Of course the trouble with it is you could put too much stock in that and people think it will be the silver bullet that delivers the thing. I think for me is to leave what the House of Bishops have already said on a number of issues and then to make sure we, as a church, regardless of what the facilitated conversation will deliver in the end, are actually being very faithful disciples of Jesus and do not see anybody of talent and ability as not part of the body, because that is the issue at the end of the day.

39. *Canon Malcolm Halliday (Leeds)* asked the Chair of the Crown Nominations Commission: In relation to the Archbishops' Guidelines on the implementation of "Choosing Bishops - the Equality Act 2010 (Revised)" published on the Church of England website in November, can the Commission:

- (a) clarify the intended application of the guidelines to clergy who act in accordance with the statement in the House of Bishops' Pastoral Statement on same Sex Marriage of 15 February 2014 that "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 ..."; and
- (b) confirm that the guidelines will be applied equally to candidates who have spoken out against, as well as those who have spoken out in favour of, a change in the Church's teaching on marriage and human sexuality?

The Archbishop of York replied: The guidelines and the words quoted from paragraph 25 of the House of Bishops' pastoral guidance are entirely consistent. Indeed paragraph 18 of the recently published guidelines specifically says that 'the mere fact that a candidate had questioned the Church of England's teaching on human sexuality ... would not be sufficient to raise any issue from this point of view: that is something that clergy are free to do. An issue could only arise as a result of the way in which that disagreement had been expressed.' It would be misleading to regard those who have spoken out in favour of the Church's teaching as simply the mirror image of those who have opposed it. But bishops do need to be a focus of unity and so the manner and content of any candidate's public statements are something that those making an appointment can properly weigh.

Canon Malcolm Halliday: Thank you, your Grace, for your answer and for the guidelines that were published. I have a concern that paragraph 21 of the guidance seems to encourage campaigning organisations and other churches overseas to fuel controversy about a candidate's ability to be a focus of unity rather than merely expressing a disagreement on a particular teaching, playing the person rather than the ball. How does the CNC intend to overcome that?

The Archbishop of York: It is very difficult for any appointing body to insulate itself from voices that may be very strident. I just hope that because the CNC begins with prayer and a Eucharist on the first day and they go through and look at the numbers of people who should be put on the short list, and then it spends two days, again in an atmosphere of prayer, and I just hope that - at least my experience with it over the

last ten years is this - it is done in an atmosphere of actual attentiveness to the job in hand regardless of the noises off, because if you do not do that way, it is going to be very difficult. Of course we all come, whether we like it or not, with all our prejudices in any gathering but I just hope that we are working with the Holy Spirit in the long run regardless who is shouting loudest somewhere else.

40. *Mr Anthony Archer (St Albans)* asked the Chair of the Crown Nominations Commission: What plans currently exist for the Crown Nominations Commission to report to Synod, as envisaged by SO 136(4)?

The Archbishop of York replied: We have already committed to a report back to Synod in 2016 on the matter of interviews and we will look at the possibility of widening this report in the light of our ongoing reviews of the operation of the Commission. We will obviously need to respect the necessary confidentiality of our consideration of individuals.

Mr Anthony Archer: Chairman, I thank the Archbishop for his answer and note that the scope of the report may be widened which I would welcome. Is it not a fact that the CNC is a body accountable to this Synod and to ensure confidence in the system it needs to report on a far more regular basis than hitherto? Can the Archbishop commit that the promised report will come sooner rather than later, and that it will deal with all the current issues facing the Commission which we are well aware of and that there will be a take note debate, at all times of course ensuring confidentiality of deliberation but emphasising the transparency process?

The Archbishop of York: Mr Archer, as you know, we have given an undertaking that we shall report back to Synod in 2016. 2015 is nearly ending, so that will be in the New Year. The Standing Orders of course say the Commission must report to Synod from time to time as it deems expedient on matters of general concern within its area of responsibility. That rightly leaves the judgment to the Commission. Since our work involves dealing with confidential casework, it is only from time to time that there are matters of general concern to report, and people want to know what we are doing about interviews, what has actually happened and research is being done. Very systematically our report is going to arrive. Of course if you want to have that report debated, you and I are in the hands of this Committee.

Mrs Anne Foreman (Exeter): I am delighted to learn that the report may be widened and I wonder if your Grace could please indicate if there would be an opportunity for the experience and the views of the diocesan representatives on CNCs to be taken into account?

The Archbishop of York: If you remember my answer in July last year, I gave the same undertaking and the Archbishops' Secretary for Appointments has been given the task to go back to the time from when the question was asked of all those members of the diocesan six who participated for questions to be asked and it is going to be a big job to be done. That is why, by the way, there has been a bit of a delay, simply because we want to find out not only from central members but all of those since interviewing and other things came to being what was their experience, what are they telling us, what should be in the report, so it is going to take a bit of time, but certainly if we did not include the experience of the diocesan six for any given CNC and is just the central members, I think our report would be totally, totally inadequate.

Revd Canon Simon Butler (Southwark): Your Grace has mentioned the possibility of bringing back a wider report and I wonder if you might undertake to do that recognising the fact that there are wider concerns and that the CNC does appear to have run into more problems in recent years in making decisions. I wonder whether it might be the right time for the Commission to consider bringing back a wider report around those issues that they faced in recent times?

The Archbishop of York: I think, being faithful to the person who originally asked the question and the undertaking in relationship to that question, we must give faith. There are problems sometimes of why we do not come to a particular decision in a particular meeting. By the way this is the experience of the rest of the Church and we must not think Crown Nominations is the only one that is odd. It is not. I have been involved in interviewing for vicars' jobs three times and the appointment group has decided not to appoint and sometimes it has been wise to wait and see what happens. What we have experienced, if you are on an appointment committee, what is important is you get the candidate who you actually think is going to do the job. It does not mean the people you interviewed are no good or they are not worth it. The other thing you have got to remember about the Crown Nominations Commission: nobody applies. People are asked, people are requested, so the way you deal with them - that is why there is this confidential question - has got to be slightly different. People have got to take hold of the reality as they see it, so for me I have never seen a Crown Nominations Commission not reaching an answer that means it has failed in some way. It is that they have not actually seen the Archangel Gabriel rising and every diocesan six want an Archangel Gabriel. Thank God, thank God, occasionally even when they are being difficult, they have actually ended up with a bishop who has landed, and landed very well, in that diocese so let us continue to pray for the Holy Spirit to call up and bring up people when we are going into all these conversations as a church. In the end Christ will call people that are serving and please look to your own parishes. Where there is failure to appoint, it is not because people are just being awkward and difficult.

41. *Mr Samuel Margrave (Coventry)* asked the Church Commissioners: Are the Commissioners able to make an assessment, expressed in today's money, of how much the historic assets of the Church of England (through its various institutions) profited from its support for slavery and its ownership of slaves, and of any reparations made to the victims of slavery?

Mr Andrew Mackie (Third Church Estates Commissioner) replied: No, we have no way of making such an assessment. The Ethical Investment Advisory Group has been asked by the National Investing Bodies to develop a guidance note on Modern Day Slavery and it intends to advise them on the measures they should ask companies to follow to address the risk of slavery within their supply chains. The guidance is expected to build upon existing initiatives supporting audits of supply chains. Earlier this year the Commissioners worked with other investors to support the Transparency in Supply Chain reporting requirement. The Commissioners will continue to engage with companies on this as part of their broader engagement framework for 2016.

Mr Samuel Margrave: In regard to the answer, I do not feel that you answered the important point of the question and the question itself. You have answered a different question. The question is about reparations that have been made. This was raised with me during Black History Month, and I am aware that the last

Archbishop of Canterbury raised this issue in 2007 and said that we need to do something, and I just wondered what we had done to make things right from our past. It is not a criticism of the Church. It is just about a healing that needs to be undertaken and I just wonder what we have done. Thank you.

Mr Andrew Mackie: Thank you very much for that question. I do not want to enter into a long argument about this, but I think we did answer the question. We said no, we have no way of making such an assessment. As far as the rest of what you are saying is concerned, I think the important thing is to make clear no one is cavalier about this. It is clearly a very serious issue but I think the answer to the question really was derived from a proper recognition of the difficulty of really establishing what the level of reparations should be and whether there should be any. I think it would involve a huge piece of historical research which probably would not lead to any very firm or clear conclusion. As far as what is being done is concerned, there is clearly a need to be sensitive to this topic to speak properly of the opportunities for healing but, as far as the question to the Church Commissioners is concerned, I do not think the Church Commissioners have the power to make the sort of reparation that the question alludes to.

42. *Mr Martin Sewell (Rochester)* asked the Church Commissioners: The Church Commissioners are significant investors in retail companies whose poorer employees might have their family life adversely impacted by changes in Sunday trading laws, especially when coupled with Welfare Benefits reforms. In a reply to a question I asked in the course of the presentation on the Commissioners' Annual report at the July 2015 group of sessions, a willingness was expressed on behalf of the Commissioners to raise this concern during ongoing discussions with the companies in which they invest. Has an opportunity to raise those concerns arisen and, if so, what was the outcome?

Mr Andrew Mackie replied: Proposed changes to Sunday trading hours have not yet come before Parliament and the law continues to restrict opening hours of large stores to 6 hours on Sundays. The retail industry is divided about further deregulation and, if and when new legislation is passed, some may open and others may not. The proposal is to devolve the decision to local areas, so the likely take up of longer trading hours is even more uncertain.

Given the nature of competition in retailing, some firms will be under pressure to open even when they perceive no commercial benefit. Any conversations with companies, should the law change, would need to reflect this moral complexity. The Mission and Public Affairs Council is leading the Church's response and has said that extending Sunday trading hours would erode common leisure time essential for family life and shared social activities.

Mr Martin Sewell: Paragraph 2 of the answer tells us that companies in which we invest may choose to disrupt the family life of poor people "even when they perceive no commercial benefit", that is to say placing a burden on others without profit to themselves. My question is, are you absolutely sure that it is best described as moral complexity rather than, say, moral and commercial incoherence?

Mr Andrew Mackie: Thank you for that. I think I understand what is motivating the question but I think I probably would prefer to stick to the more measured description in the written answer to the question. This is, as I said in the summer, a really

important topic but the proposals are at a pretty nascent stage. The Mission and Public Affairs Council, as is proper, is the body that is engaging with this. Obviously, we, the Commissioners, take advice from the EIAG which is in constant dialogue with the Mission and Public Affairs Council. I think we cannot formulate a response to a policy that has yet to exist, but that does not in any way downgrade or fail to recognise the seriousness of the topic that is raised in the question. It is a really important topic.

Mr Clive Scowen (London): With respect to Mr Mackie, I do not think he has really answered the nub of the question which has nothing to do with the government's proposals or what legislation might come forward, but about using our shareholder power to influence those who are pressing for change. Government does not just do this for fun. It is usually pressed by somebody. My question is, are we going to press back by using our authority as major shareholders in some of these companies to urge them to change the view they are taking about the desirability of changing the law?

Mr Andrew Mackie: As I have said, the proper body for dealing with this at the moment is the Mission and Public Affairs Council. The final paragraph of the answer refers to what it has said in relation to this topic. We ourselves, to the extent that we are talking about our retail real estate assets, have certainly raised the point. For example, at the Metro Centre we have raised the point. Staff and retailers there have expressed concern about the negative impact of any extension to Sunday trading. We do not find the economic arguments for extending Sunday trading convincing. We think there is a possibility of confusing shoppers and that any proposals to extend Sunday trading will not necessarily lead to extra spending. I think where we have got a direct line into the relevant people, as a result of owning directly the assets, we have made our point. To the extent that what you are talking about is our holdings, our shareholdings, our interests in companies through shares, then I think at this nascent stage, the proper body is the Mission and Public Affairs Council, who will obviously talk to the EIAG and we will be advised by the EIAG.

The Chair: That concludes Item 6 on your order papers and includes answers to all the questions. Thank you to those who have asked them and who have answered them and those who answered supplementaries. Synod, you have also won yourself complete freedom and permission on the timetable for early prayers, so those of you who were going to go at 7.00 have no need to do so but you can join in being led by our Chaplain, Michael Gisbourne, who will now lead us in evening worship.

The Revd Michael Gisbourne led the Synod in an act of worship.

The Archbishop of Canterbury dismissed the Synod with the blessing at 7.05 pm.

FULL SYNOD: SECOND DAY WEDNESDAY 25 NOVEMBER 2015

THE CHAIR *Mr Aiden Hargreaves-Smith (London)* took the Chair at 9.30 am.

The Revd Michael Gisbourne led the Synod in an act of worship

Loyal Address

The Chair: Members of Synod, may I welcome you back to the Synod chamber for our work together today which starts with Item 7, Loyal Address. This is a short formal item. The text of the loyal address is on the Second Notice Paper, which members will have picked up yesterday, and I now call on the Archbishop of Canterbury to move the motion

The Archbishop of Canterbury (Most Revd & Rt Hon Justin Welby): I beg to move:

“That a Loyal Address be presented to Her Majesty The Queen.”

Her Majesty has attended every inauguration of the Synod (that is ten) and has done so on every occasion with patience and support for the Church. On each occasion we have moved a Loyal Address and, as the years have gone by, it seems more and more appropriate that we should express our thanks and gratitude to her for her commitment to the Church, for her personal Christian witness and for her fidelity to her Coronation oaths. I, therefore, with great pleasure and privilege, move that the General Synod does present a Loyal Address to Her Majesty.

The Chair: Thank you, your Grace. I see no one standing, so I put the motion to the vote.

The motion

“That a Loyal Address be presented to Her Majesty The Queen.”

was carried on a show of hands.

The Chair: Thank you. That ends this item of business.

Global Warming

THE CHAIR *Professor Michael Clarke (ex officio)* took the Chair at 9.50 am.

The Chair: We move now to Item 8 on the agenda to a short presentation by the Archbishop of York. This is designed not to provoke debate today but to inform us as we move through the life of this Synod, and an issue which will continue to dominate. I am delighted to say that the Archbishop is accompanied by his wife. Welcome, Margaret.

The Archbishop of York (Most Revd & Rt Hon Dr John Sentamu): Professor Clarke, members of Synod, in July and August of this year Margaret and I had the privilege of visiting for three weeks the diocese of Polynesia, Fiji, Tonga and Samoa at the

invitation of Archbishop Winston Halapua and his wife, the Revd Susan Halapua.

Mrs Margaret Sentamu: It was the most hectic three weeks I had experienced for a while, with a very packed programme. We met the Head of State of Samoa, the President of Fiji - that is a better image of him there - and the Deputy Prime Minister and members of the Tongan Royal Household, where we were really very warmly received. We turned the sod for a new Anglican primary school, for there are not many schools in that area which are Anglican and the Anglicans are in the minority. We blessed an international extension to the airport, an airport extension. It is amazing what you do. We demolished a church as well for rebuilding. We soon became quite adept at the different languages in the three nations.

The Archbishop of York: Bula.

Mrs Margaret Sentamu: 'Hello' in Fijian.

The Archbishop of York: Vinaka Vakalevu.

Mrs Margaret Sentamu: 'Thank you very much' in Fijian.

The Archbishop of York: Talofa.

Mrs Margaret Sentamu: A general greeting in Samoan.

The Archbishop of York: Malo e lelei

Mrs Margaret Sentamu: A general greeting in Tongan.

The Archbishop of York: In all the three countries we visited, we addressed ecumenical and interfaith leaders, members of civic society, government and diplomats from various countries in the three Pacific nations and beyond. Topics ranged from climate change, HIV/AIDS, poverty and unemployment.

Mrs Margaret Sentamu: We had the honour of visiting Poutasi village, one of the many villages in Samoa which had suffered the devastation of the Tsunami in 2009. In this village the Archbishop was bestowed with the highest chiefly title of To'osvili, meaning, 'He who steadies the boat', by the paramount chief. The paramount chief who bestowed this greatest honour, his wife had died in the Tsunami but he managed to survive because he ran much faster than his wife did.

As a new chief of Poutasi, the Archbishop got to wear a very special headdress and yet another skirt - but this time much longer than the sulu he is wearing this morning, which is a national dress for men. This was followed by the Ava ceremony and another big feast to celebrate this very historic event. I came away not only with an expanded waistline but boasting of being married to a Samoan high chief.

The Archbishop of York: The Moana/Oceanic Eucharist held on Pangaimotu Island of Tonga and broadcast live on radio and television said it all. In order to get to the island in time for the Eucharist we woke up at 4.00 am and were transported across to the island in small boats. The students of St Andrew's High School dramatised the Moana Prayer: That climate change be addressed.

To be on an island which once upon a time had everything, but is now barren, because of human activity thousands of miles away due to pollution by the developed nations, was a sobering experience.

In the midst of this devastation we celebrated the power of God's love and grace. At the end of the Eucharist, in response to the Gospel of Love, worshipers planted seedlings of mangroves as a sign of hope and new life for the future. The Deputy Prime Minister spoke of the importance of the Church and government working together in caring for the environment.

The question is, will the international pledges we have heard so far save island countries such as Fiji, Samoa and Tonga and the other 33 smaller islands in the South Pacific which are now feeling the most dire effects of climate change.

Two schoolchildren in Fiji spoke about a waterlogged cemetery. They said: "The shoreline extended more than 150 metres out towards the open sea until 1995 when the sea level started rising, covering everything in its path and causing families to move inland. A cemetery, which is now part of the ocean, is evidence of sea level rise. All the graves now lie submerged in the ocean at high tide and at low tide they are exposed, all topsy-turvy and covered in barnacles."

Members of Synod, their dead in 1995 had a second burial. The first was from dust to dust. The second was from dust to salty water.

The Pacific island, the Republic of Kiribati, off the coast of Fiji, is already planning for the relocation of its entire population as its sea levels continue to rise. That is 150,000 people.

In all my lectures and reflections on climate change and leadership, I stressed the importance of having the right leadership in place that will give voice to the challenges facing the people of the South Pacific.

The Deputy High Commissioner in Suva invited diplomats from the Pacific and beyond, together with UN representatives, leaders of religious communities, including members of the Fiji Conference of Churches, senior civic servants and academics and other community leaders to discuss the pressing issue of climate change in the Pacific region and globally.

I urged them to speak with one voice at the forthcoming UN Summit on Climate Change in Paris taking place next week. The Deputy High Commissioner offered to convene further conversations to have the diverse groups of people represented to speak with one voice on this matter.

Mrs Margaret Sentamu: Although Archbishop Halapua and his wife, Sue, said we had been a great blessing to the diocese of the South Pacific and the wider communities of Oceania, we came away feeling much more blessed for the way the people took us into their hearts and they made us feel one in Christ.

In keeping with their motto, which is, "In Christ we in our Koro [Koro meaning we in our boat, our vessel, together] move together. And we have work to do."

So let us listen to a prayer of dedication by Archbishop Winston Halapua which

probably says it much more powerfully than we can.

(Video played)

The Archbishop of York: The Head of State of Samoa, Tui Auta Tupua Tamasese Ta'isi Efi - that is a long name, is it not - who is also an academic and scholar on the subject of climate change, in his address to the University of Hawaii said these words:

"Fundamentally, the problem of climate change is a problem of arrogance and greed. If we want to address seriously the critical issues that face our world today, we have to come up with something that is bold enough to allow us to say the unsayable. In other words, what is constructive in this search for answers is also what is most hard to say. Arrogance and greed are human vices that speak to the weaker side of ourselves, to our vulnerabilities as human beings. The arrogance that pervades the modern psyche is an arrogance that compromises the soul: That of a people, person, leader, parent or child. Arrogance and greed, whilst seemingly easy to identify, is difficult to make transparent or even to avoid. Arrogance is the condition of presuming unfettered dominion over our environment and all living things. It is the ability to rationalise and believe that what is wrong is right."

Mrs Margaret Sentamu: "Greed is the unhealthy preoccupation we have with profit." That is clearly set out by Oliver James in his book *Affluenza*. It is the accumulation of pecuniary or material gain for individual benefit at the unreasonable expense of others. Modern technology, industrialisation and mercantilism have allowed us to live a life of comfort literally at our fingertips. But this has come at a cost to our natural environment and spiritual health.

The dialogue on climate change is, therefore, not easy; not just for the technicalities of understanding atmospheric changes and rising sea levels, particularly, if not more so, for the soul-searching questions it forces us to confront about ourselves and our pursuits of wealth.

The Archbishop of York: The Head of State of Samoa goes on to say that, "In the Samoan indigenous reference to the aiga, or family, in its traditional framework, sees a genealogical connection between all living things; between people and their natural environment, between people and animals, between people and the cosmos, the plants, seas and rivers, and between people and God. In other words, God, people and all living things are family. Treating the environment as family in this way can re-orient our hearts and minds to see anew."

Mrs Margaret Sentamu: This is why the ava or the kava ceremony, as it is called, is not only about welcoming and showing kindness to guests but it is about honouring the genealogical connections between people, God and all nature. So by drinking from the one cup that is what they are doing. And at this ceremony a prayer is always said before drinking, either while raising one's ava cup towards heaven where God resides or while pouring the other liquid on the ground in a gesture of connection with the earth. The prayer gives thanks to God and seeks blessings for a successful gathering or meeting.

The Archbishop of York: Therefore, concern for planet earth is not a Christian 'add-on', but intrinsic to our understanding of the Gospel today. The affirmation we

make when reciting the Creed - 'God, the Father, Almighty Creator of heaven and earth' - is foundational for the Gospel of Jesus Christ our Lord.

As the psalmist put it, 'The earth is the Lord's'; all we have - life and the means of life - comes to us as a pure gift of God's love. Care for God's creation is an essential and vitally important dimension of our Christian discipleship and mission in response to God's love in Jesus Christ.

So, as Christians, the world over, and as Anglicans in England, we ought to be leading players in debates and in taking action about climate change. Because what ultimately matters is not scientific knowledge or technology or a change to our economic system - vitally important though as these are - what matters is how we see ourselves in God's world, how we as human beings relate to the rest of God's creation, on which our life depends. Vinaka Vakalevu.

Mrs Margaret Sentamu: Thank you very much for listening to us.

The Chair: Thank you, Archbishop. Thank you, Margaret. Good to have you with us. I have no doubt all of us will carry images from those words and pictures into the wider debate as we have it over the coming years. So, again, thank you very much indeed. I am now going to adjourn Synod briefly to allow the Chair of the Business Committee to make one or two domestic announcements and, in particular, to give us some advice about the use of voting mechanics.

(Synod adjourned briefly)

THE CHAIR *Mr Geoffrey Tattersall QC (Manchester)* took the Chair at 10.15 am

The Migrant Crisis

The Chair: We move to Item 9 for which you need GS 2009 headed "Debate on the Migrant Crisis". Now we have about an hour and 15 minutes to deal with this item and you will see that there are two amendments, so we are going to have to be really quite disciplined to get through this within a reasonable time and I am going to look to someone to help me do that by moving closures at appropriate times.

I am going to call first of all the Bishop of Durham who may speak for ten minutes and then, so you get the plan, I am going to call two speakers to speak for five minutes and then we are going to go down to three-minute speech limits. After two more speakers at three minutes, I am going to move to the amendments and see if we can get through those before coming back to the main debate on the motion, either amended or unamended, so bear with me, but first of all I call upon the Bishop of Durham to move the motion at Item 9.

The Bishop of Durham (Rt Revd Paul Butler): I beg to move:

"That this Synod, recognising that almost 60 million individuals have been forcibly displaced worldwide as a result of persecution, conflict or generalised violence, a fifth of them because of the tragic conflict in Syria, and noting the compassionate response of British people to the suffering and needs of those displaced by conflict and other causes:

- (a) urge parishes and dioceses to work closely with local authorities and other community partners, to provide practical and sustainable resources and structures for the resettlement of vulnerable refugees and to pray for all those seeking to address the causes as well as the symptoms of this crisis;
- (b) welcome both the scale of the aid provided by Her Majesty's Government to those suffering as a result of the conflict in Syria and its decision to resettle vulnerable Syrian refugees, while calling on it to increase the number significantly beyond its initial target of 20,000 over five years;
- (c) call upon the Government to work with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to ensure that vulnerability to religiously motivated persecution is taken into account when determining whom to receive into Britain; and
- (d) call upon the Government to work with international partners in Europe and elsewhere to help establish safe and legal routes to places of safety, including this country, for refugees who are vulnerable and at severe risk."

There are around 60 million people forcibly displaced in the world. They become refugees through persecution, violence and war. In Burundi over 200,000 have fled the country and tens of thousands are internally displaced since the violence began in April. The story goes unreported here because they will not arrive in Europe, but eight million internally displaced in Syria and four million who have fled into Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan, then some on to Europe, that directly affects us, so, too, those fleeing Afghanistan, Iraq, Eritrea and Southern Sudan. 800,000 have arrived in Europe this year; around 3,200 have died trying to reach Europe. The numbers are approximate but God knows exactly how many there are. God knows every one of them by name. He counts every hair on the head. Each one made in God's image and someone for whom Jesus Christ died. It seems an age since the picture of the body of a three year old boy washed up on a Turkish shore marked a decisive shift in the public mood. Then the horror of 129 people killed in Paris in one night, and perhaps another shift in the public mood. We have wept and prayed over these deaths. Cruel murderous violence is terrible, whether on our doorstep or far distant, whether the ensuing death and suffering is witnessed in the streets of Paris or on the shores of Turkey, Lesbos or Lampedusa. All of this suffering is the cry of my neighbour and in so many cases our neighbours have had to flee their homes.

There is a deep need for a generous and constructive discourse which develops a new understanding of the reality of global migration. Great regional migrations have marked past centuries. Perhaps global migration is to be one of the marks of this century. Groups of Christians are meeting to work towards such a language, not least across the continent of Europe.

Our chief purpose in this debate, however, is less broad and ambitious. It is to talk about how we, as God's people, respond to the practical opportunities which God gives us. The British Government has taken an impressive lead in aid to the region, in which the vast majority of those suffering from displacement are still trying to survive. If this lead were followed by many other countries, the challenge would

become less daunting. There would be more hope of people believing they can make a life within the region. Bitter winter conditions are now beginning to descend on those without homes. It was also welcome when the Prime Minister made a commitment to receive 20,000 Syrians whose risks and needs are most acute for resettlement in the UK. Most of us have seen this number as a good start. The Archbishop of Canterbury welcomed it but as a slim response. Eighty-four bishops wrote to the Prime Minister urging that we take more.

It is hard to imagine a list of British values which did not contain the word "hospitality". It stands close to the heart of the Gospel. So many waves of people needing protection and help over centuries and in living memory: Ugandan Asians, Vietnamese, Bosnians, Kosovans. Each time what began as a costly commitment by our country has ended as a creative enrichment of it. Hospitality does not involve an idealising of the guest. Guests can be hard to understand - damaged, vulnerable, unfamiliar - but through their coming healing can enter the house. Many in the churches believe that if we put our backs into working with others to create the capacity we can make 20,000 a number that can be comfortably exceeded. After all, it is not money that will do most to enable people driven from Syria to make new lives, it is practical care from a community inviting them in, suggesting in many practical ways the possibility of hope and the promise of safety. When the College of Bishops met recently it was exciting to hear how many dioceses were already building the local partnerships which ensure that solid sustained support will be in place for those who are brought to our country without disadvantaging those many others in need, including others seeking asylum who are already being sacrificially helped.

The Government has helpfully announced a forthcoming private sponsorship scheme based on similar schemes in Canada and elsewhere. This is very promising but it must be implemented as supplementary to the 20,000-person resettlement operation which the Government has pledged to arrange and fund. The first 1,000 from Syria are arriving by Christmas. This phase is a stepping-up of the vulnerable persons relocation scheme which began early in 2014. The next phase is going to be a much bigger proposition. A government team is working hard to scale up the operation. The churches have been directly involved in this. I have taken on the role of co-chair of the National Refugee Welcome Board which brings together many branches of civil society, including all the main faiths. I am working closely with the Bishop of Croydon who is chair of the Church's refugee network. Meetings have taken place with the government ministers responsible for this area of work, another one tomorrow, and with officials who are responsible for detailed implementation. In this, we work closely with churches together in Britain and Ireland.

Under the resettlement programme, the UNHCR identifies those who are in most need of resettlement. This is what other countries are doing. It is right and fair. We need to be assured it is fair to all, including Christians. We have no wish to accelerate an exodus of Christians from any part of the Middle East. We pray for the name of Jesus Christ to be uplifted in every land, not least those where the Church has maintained its witness and developed its distinct local identity over long centuries. And yet there are Christian people who cannot be safe or flourish in any part of the Middle East which they can reach. There is a bond of mutual responsibility and love between Christian people the world over. Now we know from our Lord the way to do justice and love mercy is seeing the image of God in every person. The compassion which compels us to help the refugee will be blind to

differences of creed as to colour or any other characteristic. For all that, it is right that we uphold the right of our fellow Christians to fair treatment. Whether or not they are in refugee camps, easy or hard to find, they must suffer no discrimination as UNHCR seeks out those in greatest need of resettlement. Those whose suffering is exacerbated by religiously motivated persecution deserve to have that factor given full weight in the calculation of need.

In Durham this month we welcomed 12 Lutheran clergy from the Nordkirchen, Northern Germany. We shared Remembrance Sunday. We learned that some of those parishes are engaged in impressive work welcoming some of the refugees arriving in their areas. A million have come to Germany. The churches have little support in this and are very stretched, so some of our parishes are now praying about how they can support the work in Germany.

Our country is bound together with Europe in so many ways. We will do well to rediscover our common life with the churches of Europe. The diocese in Europe, supported by Us, have been doing terrific work with partner churches on the frontline in receiving refugees arriving in boats and by land. These refugees, whether in Calais or elsewhere in Europe, still demand our care. We shall not sleep easy if we pass by, as it were, on our side of the English Channel and regard the fate of those in Europe as separate from our own. The request for safe and legal routes to places of safety, not excluding the possibility that some of those now in Europe might come to Britain, is therefore the final element in the motion which is before Synod.

I look forward to our debate because I am sure we shall hear something of the eagerness and practical commitment with which dioceses and churches across the country are mobilising to meet these opportunities, responding to these terrible hurts and needs. I almost apologise for the length of the motion - almost but not quite - for this is no simple challenge which we face. It is a challenge full of tears and hope, in which, as my Lutheran sisters and brothers might say, we are utterly thrown upon the grace of God. I beg to move the motion standing in my name.

The Chair: This matter is now open for debate. I call first of all Caroline Spelman followed by Bishop Angaelos.

Rt Hon Caroline Spelman (ex officio): As a new Church Commissioner, I want to help the Church play its role in meeting the challenges of this wave of migration coming to Europe. The Bible teaches us to make the needy stranger welcome in our midst for one day Jesus may challenge us with the question "When I came to you as a migrant, what did you do?" This no doubt inspired the letter signed by 84 bishops to the Government asking to do more. Today I want to explore what it is that we can do together, but first some context.

Britain is a signatory of the Geneva and Hague Conventions which place an absolute moral imperative on us to help. Indeed since the outbreak of the war in Syria in 2011 we have already granted asylum, or other forms of leave to remain, to almost 5,000 Syrians, and the Prime Minister announced our intention to expand this programme by taking some of the most vulnerable displaced Syrians by working with UNHCR to identify the refugees *in situ* and as far as possible discourage the perilous journey across the Mediterranean at the mercy of the weather and the traffickers. We have the resources to do this because we are committed to spending 0.7% of our gross national income on aid, despite the pressures to save money and spend elsewhere.

This means that £1.1 billion is being spent on refugees *in situ* including 18 million food rations and giving 1.6 million people access to clean water.

The minister responsible for the Syrian refugees, Richard Harrington, has made it clear in replying to the Bishops' letter that he wants to involve the Church in the design and implementation of the resettlement plan. He is keen to hear from us what we can do. The Christian charity Home for Good has received 8,000 offers of a home for unaccompanied asylum seeking children, but many of the migrants are coming as families so a spare room will not be suitable for them. However, all of these offers will need to be registered and of course all the families will have to be vetted in the interests of safeguarding. There are already some examples of practical help.

The community church in Derby provides a welcome box for migrants and has already helped 129 Syrians settle into its city. An ecumenical group, including members from my own parish church in Knowle in the Birmingham diocese, run a drop-in centre next to the office where migrants have to sign on each week in the West Midlands. I am sure these models can be replicated as there will be much more to do as the increased numbers arrive. For example, offers of help to teach English would be very much appreciated and, as Richard Harrington said, offers from Christian landlords to provide secure tenancy.

We can also advocate for our brothers and sisters in Christ. The Archbishop of Canterbury has already raised the issue of Christians in Syria, and in a letter to me from the DFID minister, Desmond Swayne, he confirmed that, while 12% of Syria's population was Christian, no more than 2% of them have registered with UNHCR which means that Christians either have not been willing or able to do so. We should also advocate for other religious minorities as the plight of the Yazidis reminded us.

Let us address the difficult question of the response of our settled population to incomers. As a student of population geography, I acknowledge the fact that migration can cause fear and resentment. It is a fact that migrants often do outperform the indigenous population and in so doing of course make a very positive contribution to their host country. Our strength as a nation is in part due to assimilating wave after wave of migration - my own ancestors were Huguenots, just one example - but this current wave is mixed with the risk and fear of terrorism which makes it especially difficult. There is often a blurring of the distinction between economic and humanitarian migration, and of course both types are found in the camps. The Government has to be careful to identify genuine refugees. It has to make difficult policy decisions that go much deeper than public opinion. The understandable emotional reaction to the death of that poor Syrian child on a beach in Greece contrasted with the reaction against the refugees after the Paris attacks exemplifies the volatility of the public and media reaction. I have had letters from constituents saying, "No more migrants", so to each and every one of us I ask that we extend the hand of friendship, show our solidarity to those already here and those who come to seek safe haven as the Holy Spirit requires of us.

The Chair: After Bishop Angaelos, who is speaking for up to five minutes, Mr Tim Hind for three minutes and all the other speeches will be three minutes.

Bishop Angaelos (Ecumenical Representatives): The world is now becoming more

aware of something that has been unfolding for years and yet left untreated, but in that context I am thankful to this chamber, to the Church of England, to the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, to the Bishop of Durham, the Bishop of Croydon, His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, Her Majesty's Government, the Prime Minister, the newly appointed minister for vulnerable Syrian refugees and for the ministers in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Baroness Anelay and Tobias Ellwood, because much is being done.

From my own experience over the past year I have been able to visit both Erbil and the Greek-Macedonian border and see the camps there. In their own words I have seen people who have been on what they call "death boats" who, in their own words, have become used to quick deaths by bombs and bullets but are now dying slow deaths in this journey and who were carrying what is similar to a Tesco shopping bag that carried everything they possessed. So these people are vulnerable to traffickers, to smugglers and to everything that meets them. In the past months we have made submissions to a special select committee on Syrian refugees. I have met personally with Minister Harrington as well as the Foreign Office minister to make submissions and see how we can help in sponsoring or in any other way.

I am thankful to the Archbishop of Canterbury for being outspoken and we are reminded by him yesterday that loving one another and working together is by no means a choice we are free to make or not make, but in his words this is an obligation. We are also reminded by Her Majesty The Queen that we are ambassadors for Christ and entrusted with a ministry of reconciliation, spreading God's word, peace-making and conflict resolution.

We are a united body of Christ. There is no church of the east and church of the west. It is one body and it suffers equally so we, I think, need to approach this collaboratively. These are, after all, vulnerable people and they are not just statistics but we are also extending this hospitality to non-Christians because, as Christians, there is no way we can just look after our own, but this does present a wonderful opportunity because there is no greater place for light than in the most strict darkness and so we are here as that light and as that hope. As the Archbishop of York reminded us yesterday, this is a golden opportunity to demonstrate to the world that at times of crisis it is not only possible but achievable to respond in a way that shows generosity, compassion and self-sacrifice.

We are not here to worry, we are not here to fear but we are here to present what we can do together, how we can collaborate, how we can work together and in the spirit of what St Francis has told us, to work and be the living scripture that is before all. Collaboration is important and on this point I would welcome today's motion and I am very thankful for the work that has been done on it. We need to collaborate ecumenically and I want to reassure everyone here that this is not a problem that is a problem to be addressed by the Church of England but by the Church in England, and I think we all are willing and wanting to work together. Tell us what we can do as well with our networks both here in the United Kingdom and in the Middle East. Tell us how we can help and extend that word.

In an inter-religious way we met with Muslim friends here yesterday at Synod and we need to support them when they speak confidently and robustly because they themselves become a target. We need to support Christians being where they are and where they belong.

Finally I am thankful for my presence here ecumenically and I see myself as a voice in and a voice out. As a voice in, I bring you the voices of leaders of the Middle East churches both here and across the Middle East who value your support and want it; and, as a voice out, I will go back to them and present the sentiments that I have felt personally in this chamber that we, our brothers and sisters here, want to support them in every way, and in the words of Revelations 1 we do indeed share with you in Jesus the persecution and the kingdom and in your patient endurance.

Mr Tim Hind (Bath & Wells): Chair, this is a very timely debate and to help solve the current issues I think we need to look to the past and our success or otherwise in dealing with previous issues. One of the hidden jewels of our current response to isolation and lack of social cohesion in multi-faith and multi-ethnic communities is the charity Near Neighbours, and I declare an interest as the Archbishops' Council's representative trustee on that body but I speak in that personal capacity.

Over the last five years, Near Neighbours has given 1,000-plus grants in two tranches to small projects which enable multi-ethnic communities to work together. This has been done in a way which has been without intent to deal with the underlying ideological differences and is typically in response to the needs of settled communities. Some of the issues that are resolved by these projects have been caused by a lack of attention to the integration of migrants in the past. The migrant issues before us today are not entirely new and we need to learn from the mistakes that have been made before. I would hope therefore that, as Near Neighbours starts to think about its next phase, it could helpfully expand to include an opportunity for engaging in dialogue within communities to help understand the causes of isolation and lack of social cohesion. Let us face it, we have 15,000 points of contact across the land in which that dialogue can take place. However, in order to achieve it, it will require significant additional investment. So far the vast majority of the funding for Near Neighbours has come from Her Majesty's Government through DCLG. I believe that it may be necessary if we put ourselves in a position of supporting action we actually need to be prepared to put some C of E money up into the mix and maybe that will lead us to reconsider the way in which we give support to external agencies and bodies through votes three and four.

The Chair: Your Grace, we are on a three-minute limit and it would help if we could keep to that.

The Archbishop of Canterbury (Most Revd & Rt Hon Justin Welby): I will do my best. I very much welcome this motion and particularly also welcome Giles Goddard's amendments. I think we need to recognise, though, that especially paragraph (d) of the motion essentially commits us to supporting the use of armed force overseas. The reality of working in those areas to create safe ways or routes to places of safety must include some kind of forceful response. It is almost impossible to see how it can be done otherwise. We are at the point where in the Houses of Parliament we will be compelled to think quite shortly about how we respond to a government proposal, I suspect, to extend the bombing campaign across into Syria.

It seems to me that where the Church is talking about welcome we must also listen carefully to the powerful words of Bishop Angaelos and of his colleagues from that part of the world that the ideal situation is not simply, as one of them put it to me, to create a drain for the people of those countries to escape but also to create the means by which they can stay in prosperity, in flourishing and in safety. The

implications of that for the commitment of this country and the others in the coalition are absolutely enormous. What we have not seen at the moment is a sufficiently coherent response that brings together all the forms of action that are required if indeed we face what the Prime Minister has described as an existential crisis.

Therefore I support the motion but I think we need to bear in mind the implications of us taking it on board. Not only must the Church be willing to put its own money where it is putting its mouth, not only must we be deeply committed to the welcome and to the private sponsorship of people coming in, but we must also recognise that in much of the Levant in the Middle East and in many other parts of the world, including north-east Nigeria, Burundi and other places, the forces that are driving people out into being refugees may need to be confronted. In the same way as the French police on that dreadful night so recently had to go into the Bataclan Theatre and deal with those who had taken it over, the international community has to face the necessity that it may in certain parts of the world need to challenge the equivalent people who have not taken a theatre but taken a whole section of land and are using it to wreak the most terrible havoc and cruelty. Let us indeed support this motion but let us do so utterly realistically about its implications.

The Chair: I am going to move to the amendment at Item 14 and ask the Very Revd Andrew Nunn to propose the amendment standing in his name. You have up to five minutes and I want you to speak to and propose the amendment.

The Dean of Southwark (Very Revd Andrew Nunn, Southern Deans): I am glad that we are having this debate today and was very pleased to see the motion that is before us, but, to be honest, I was a little surprised to see that word “welcome” at the beginning of (b) to describe our response to what has been offered to our brothers and sisters, who are refugees, teeming across European borders, living beside the Eurostar tracks in Calais, and in the refugee camps in the Middle East. My memory might be wrong, but when the Government announced that we would be taking 20,000 refugees over the course of this Parliament, the response, and in particular the response of the Church, was not one of huge welcome. There was a huge amount of disappointment instead, a sense of frustration; for some anger, that a country which has such a good history of welcoming refugees – and, as the Bishop of Durham said, “Hospitality is part of who are we are” - was only able to make such a meagre response. Of course for those who will be brought from refugee camps to this country, it will be wonderful, and I am delighted for them, but the Government’s policy is too little and could be more generous. I did not welcome it then and I find it hard to welcome it today.

This Synod is never very popular when we are perceived as trying to tell the Government what to do. I think that there is an honourable position for the Church to speak truth to power, whenever that is needed, to hold the moral compass, to let the plumb line measure the rightness of our actions, but I take the point that if we pontificate on these matters, we should be seen to be helping to achieve what we desire. On this subject, as we have already heard, we are doing that. My own cathedral responded immediately to the developing crisis by sending money to the Anglican Church of St Paul in Athens to help that congregation respond generously in their wonderful work with refugees who have arrived in that city. We visited the Jungle camp in Calais, along with our diocesan Bishop, to hear the stories and give support and provide Bibles in people’s first languages for use in the wonderful church of St Michael that has been built in the camp. Parishes across the Diocese of

Southwark have been making their own generous responses, as have our schools. Other dioceses, and I know in particular about the great work being done in Chelmsford Diocese, have made very generous responses. We can provide blankets, Bibles and money, and we can promise accommodation, but we cannot open the borders.

I want the nation to be more generous and if, as the Archbishop has just said to us, we do become militarily involved in Syria, even more refugees will be heading our way. Much more generous our response needs to be. I acknowledge what the Government have done, but I cannot yet welcome it and I hope that Synod will similarly tone down that clause in the motion and not give a mixed message to the nation. I move the amendment in my name.

The Chair: I call on the Bishop of Durham to respond.

The Bishop of Durham (Rt Revd Paul Butler): Thank you, Chair, and thank you, Andrew for raising this proposal. However, I will resist this amendment. The clause welcomes the scale of the aid provided by Her Majesty's Government. They are to be commended for holding to 0.7% of overseas aid. They are to be commended for putting more aid than almost any other nation on earth into the situation in those camps. That cannot be just acknowledged; that must be welcomed.

Secondly, we recognise in the motion itself that we do not think the 20,000 is adequate and we call for more, but we should at least welcome the 20,000 because that is a move and originally it was zero. We welcome the fact there has been movement and we are encouraging further movement.

Finally, I simply have to say that in practice, on the ground, those of us who are now doing it, working as positively as we can, where we can, with Richard Harrington and others involved, it is making progress. We need to be as welcoming as we possibly can, and, therefore, I would urge you to resist this amendment.

The Chair: We are simply debating the amendment and I see no one standing, so I am going to put the amendment to the vote.

The amendment was lost on a show of hands.

The Chair: I am going to ask Revd Canon Giles Goddard to move his amendment at Item 15, please. He has up to five minutes and I would ask him to speak to and move his amendment.

Revd Canon Giles Goddard (Southwark): I am submitting this amendment at the request of the Bishop of Croydon, the Right Revd Jonathan Clark, who has already been mentioned. He is chair of the Churches' Refugee Network. It arises mainly out of the work that the Churches' Refugee Network and others have done with refugees in Calais. I am using the word "refugees" rather than "migrants" because I think it is a better word to use.

The situation of those in Calais has dropped from the news recently, however an article in the *Guardian* on 3 November said that there are now 6,000 people living there in terrible conditions. One of the aid workers said: "It is the largest slum in Europe, and probably the worst". An Iraqi nurse called Karzan, aged 35, is living at

the heart of it in a wooden structure, half the size of a small garden shed, with his wife Sharmin, his one and half year-old son Hemn and his brother-in-law. He said, "When I came here a month ago there were two families; now there are 40, 50 or 60. We have never lived like this before. We feel like we are dying slowly".

This amendment makes explicit what is implicit in the main motion under section (d). It makes particular reference to those with families already legally resident in the UK because, according to Citizens UK, around 10% of those in Calais would definitely qualify for the right to remain in this country on the basis of family connections, but the processing of their applications is virtually non-existent.

There are also European implications to this amendment. If the UK is seen to be fulfilling its responsibilities, it will help the discussions across Europe which have been so difficult. The Government have made a start, but we have heard today that much more is needed. It is not as if we do not have the resources or the space. We are one of the wealthiest countries in the world. I learned recently that the built environment in this country covers only 4% of the UK's land mass. That is a surprising statistic, but apparently true; and it is even less if you include urban open spaces and brownfield sites.

As we have heard already, there is no point in asking the Government to do something unless we get our own house in order, so I very much welcome the main motion. The situation of those already in Europe, especially those in Calais, is worsening by the day and as a country we have obligations to refugees and migrants which we are failing to fulfil. I therefore propose the amendment and urge Synod to support it.

The Chair: I call on the Bishop to reply.

The Bishop of Durham (Rt Revd Paul Butler): I am very grateful to the Bishop of Croydon for the work that he has done behind the scenes and then to Giles for proposing this. It makes more explicit something that is implied in clause (d) and I would accept the amendment.

The Chair imposed a speech limit of three minutes.

The Bishop of Dover (Rt Revd Trevor Willmott): I welcome Giles's amendment and hope that we will pass it. I want to speak particularly from our experience in Canterbury of engaging with the Roman Catholic Diocese of Arras, which includes of course that area of Calais which we now so wrongly call the Jungle. The *Guardian* article of 3 November is in fact incorrect. At the moment, the minimum number of people surviving in the Jungle is approaching 10,000. We discover in our engagement with those communities a total lack of infrastructure, a total lack of co-ordination and, in many ways, the Christian community runs the risk of being part of the problem and not the solution. Those communities in our country who so gladly and willingly want to do something are doing less than well by taking stuff to Calais, or by delivering stuff which nobody knows how to handle, which is causing many of those who are volunteers there to lose heart completely.

I welcome Giles' motion because I want to say from the Diocese of Canterbury and from us and from CUF that we are intending to appoint a person who will work in Calais to co-ordinate and support the volunteers. We hope that person will be in

post at the beginning of January. We as a diocese, together with the Roman Catholic Diocese and with CUF, stand ready and willing to work with the Government to ensure that that co-ordination identifies the needs of the particular refugees in Calais, particularly those who have the right of asylum in this country. I hope, Synod, we will support this motion wholeheartedly.

Mr Gavin Oldham (Oxford): I welcome this amendment because it refers to “refugees” as opposed to “migrants”. The whole debate refers to migrants. I think we should appreciate - and I just want to speak in this context really - that the situation in migration in Europe is much more complicated than purely the refugee situation, and it has been caused to be that way because of the eurozone, because the common currency - which makes Germany operate at a much lower exchange rate than it should be and the Mediterranean countries operate at a much higher exchange rate than they should - has driven migration throughout Europe. Because, generally, people do not want to move to Germany from those Mediterranean countries, they have come to the United Kingdom. That is why we have nearly half a million French people living in London, and why we have so many people from Poland, and from Italy and from Spain.

When we talk about doing things in proportion we have to look at migration as a whole. We cannot simply look at the situation for refugees. We also need to look at the overall migration situation. I just want to make that point. I will be supporting this amendment. I think it is a very good amendment because it refers to refugees, but do not think that migration is just about the refugee crisis; it is not, it is about the non-functionality of the eurozone and the way it is driving migration throughout European countries.

Mr John Freeman (Chester): 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: That is clearly carried, so we vote now on Item 15. This is the amendment at Item 15.

The amendment was carried on a show of hands.

The Chair: We move now to the debate with Item 9 having been amended by Item 15 and we are back on the debate.

The Bishop of Gibraltar in Europe (Rt Revd Dr Robert Innes): First of all, I want to thank parishes and individuals in this country for their prayers and financial gifts made to our diocese and to our churches over recent months, which are hugely appreciated. We face a problem of immense scale and seriousness. EU leaders are talking about the biggest crisis to hit Europe since World War II, and at the political level European leaders struggle to be co-ordinated and have not been able to offer solutions. The crisis requires immediate, medium-term and long-term action. There is an immediate need for humanitarian assistance, but medium term we need to establish safe routes of passage so migrants do not fall into the hands of the some

29,000 people working as traffickers in Europe. Long term, we face challenges of economic justice, peace-making and climate justice so that people can stay in their homelands.

Many churches in my diocese are already working with migrants. They are supplying them with warm clothing. Perhaps more importantly, they provide some of the social and spiritual needs: human contact, helping with language; involving asylum seekers, where appropriate, in church and family activities; building bridges that will help people feel valued and welcome. People in my churches have themselves had to struggle with living in cultures which are not their own and so they know how to help others do that.

We should warmly commend our Government's international aid programmes, where we lead in Europe, but within Europe the burden of migration is being felt very differently in different places. I understand that my home town of Woking is offering accommodation for 12 families. When I visited Leipzig I discovered they have received 5,000 families; in Milan 70,000 migrants; in Greece hundreds of thousands of migrants. The heaviest burden is being borne by the poorest EU Member States. This is a moment when Europe has to work together, and I would encourage folk in this country to work in solidarity with our European partners, to share together in facing this very serious crisis. I would also encourage the Church of England to give theological resources to understanding the deep roots of this issue, which is multi-faceted. I would love to see better co-ordination amongst Christians and some deep theological reflection on the causes and nature of migration, and how its terrible effects can be ameliorated, and to point signposts of hope and to see where God is speaking to us, and what he is saying to us, in this hour.

Canon Dr Jamie Harrison (Durham): I am grateful for this motion particularly as amended by Canon Giles Goddard. We are being explicit and of course being explicit has its risks. The words in the amendment "fair" and "proportionate" and the words in our main motion of it being "over 20,000", can start to worry people who do not share our own particular interest in the words of welcome, hospitality, equity and generosity. For to welcome is not merely to tolerate; it risks rejection. Three weeks ago, or even less, our diocesan synod in Durham passed a motion calling for the Government to establish a national welcome and resettlement board. That was 11 days ago, not 11 years, for the Diocesan Synod Motion to get here. Amazing! Here we are wanting to engage with the Government in numbers, in being explicit, in wanting to see more people coming and to be truly welcomed.

Yet to be truly welcoming, realistically, can be costly. It puts pressures on us but, more worryingly perhaps, for those around us, it puts pressure on the healthcare system. As many of you know, I visit GP practices for the Care Quality Commission. Many are under pressure. For those in education, you know the pressures you have in primary and secondary education. Those in social systems and in housing know how easy it is for people to complain when others come in late in the day, as they see it, to take what they believe is theirs.

One of our main challenges is to be able to articulate what it means to be hospitable, to welcome and to share. We have already heard something of the amount of money we have in this nation; so many resources which we can and should share.

One particular challenge, as the website Medical Justice tells us, is that between 5%

and 30% of those who come as asylum seekers have suffered torture, with its severe physical, mental, psychological and spiritual effects. We need to release resources in our NHS, in our various systems of care - social care, psychological care - to allow these people to flourish, to have language engagement, to have translation services to explain their needs and to support them. I hope we will all support very thoroughly this amended motion.

I am reminded of those two German Jewish girls who came over on the *Kindertransport* who found themselves in Coventry when the bombs were dropping. Where was the family that they had left theirs behind for at the sound of the bombs? They had gone off to the countryside in their car to escape! We must not just tolerate, or even seemingly reject; we must welcome, and do so with realism, because that is our calling as people who follow Jesus Christ.

Mr Elliot Swatridge (Church of England Youth Council): We are all immigrants. Biologists argue that all human beings alive today have an ancestry that can be traced back to Africa. We are all thus ultimately related. It might legitimately be said we are all Africans. Humankind then migrated throughout the world. The first anatomically modern humans to reach Britain arrived around 40,000 years ago. We are thus also a nation of immigrants; each and every one of us. There is simply no such thing ultimately as a native Briton. I go online and I am staggered by the extremity of people's xenophobia, prejudice and downright racism. To be frank, recent events have made me deeply ashamed to call myself British.

Let us not talk in solely abstract terms. These are real human beings. Asia Bibi from Pakistan is one of them. Though not Syrian, she, too, is a member of the 60 million displaced people which GS 2009 highlights. After a discussion in June 2009 about her faith, she was falsely accused of insulting the Islamic Prophet Muhammad. She was arrested, imprisoned and, in November 2010, was sentenced to death. She was put in windowless solitary confinement in a 2.4 x 3m room and has been physically abused by prison guards. To quote reports, she is suffering from internal bleeding and requires urgent medical treatment. She vomits blood, she suffers terrible pain and she can hardly eat. Her family have gone into hiding, having received death threats because of her case, and, if Asia is released, they will together be forced to seek asylum in Europe. I would be absolutely shocked if anyone with even an ounce of compassion would deny them. Yet if they would for her, why are some so willing to deny this to those fleeing from Syria? They may not have had their family formally arrested because of their faith yet their lives are in similar jeopardy from fierce conflict.

Lives are literally in our hands. In God's eyes, it is no good praying for our persecuted brethren if, when it comes down to it, we would withhold from them the very thing that would guarantee their safety and freedom. As a body of the people of the God who himself was a refugee to Egypt in the infant Jesus, we are called to welcome as many asylum seekers as possible, even if it involves deep self-sacrifice. In the end, the Government's 20,000 figure is only 0.03% of our population. Please pray for Asia Bibi, but also change the lives of tens of thousands of people like her, by challenging our culture's undercurrent of xenophobia and advocating for our nation to welcome far, far more than 20,000, and even more than 50,000 refugees. We are all immigrants after all; God might well be calling us to be the answer to our own prayers.

Revd Preb Stephen Lynas (Bath & Wells): I am glad to be following Elliot because he mentioned that word “xenophobia”. It does seem to me that one of the aspects of this matter which is not addressed in our motion, and perhaps cannot be, and not addressed in our conversations so far this morning, is the hostility to migrants and refugees, particularly as expressed in some sections of the press, which makes it quite difficult to talk about this issue in the way we might like.

Exactly 43 years ago, as a rather spotty young ordinand, I spent this autumn period working as a volunteer in a resettlement camp set up by Her Majesty’s Government for the Asians who had been expelled from Uganda by President Idi Amin. The resettlement centre was one of about ten set up in army bases, airforce camps and buildings of that sort. I was at RAF West Malling in Kent, which was near my home. I went there out of my Christian commitment and I went there because I needed to fill a gap year before I went into training for the ministry. In those days it was a Heath Conservative Government that organised the airlifting of thousands of Ugandan Asian refugees to this country. Civil servants were seconded, government premises were made available; the response was very different to what we are seeing and hearing about in the press at the moment. The situation is different and the nature of the crisis is different, but I learned an awful lot of lessons, and I hope they have stayed with me through my ministry. It does worry me that we do not address the hostility that is being put in all our media.

I spent my time in the refugee camp writing a newsletter to help people get in contact with one another. I spent my time operating a telex machine trying to help refugees who were in Kent be reunited with their grandparents who were at a refugee camp in Tonfanou on the western Welsh coast. It was heartbreaking at times, but I learned three things from that: I learned to enjoy Asian food, which I had never encountered before; I learned something about the courage and dignity of refugees; and I learned something about the gratitude of those refugees, and their commitment to making a good life in this country from the rescue that they had been offered. We all know now, 43 years later, of the immense contribution of Asians from Uganda to our business and community life right across the country. They were committed to make a go of it.

My plea today is that as we pass this motion we remember also that we need to alter the narrative in our parishes and our communities. It is not just about us and the Government. I hear it in my pub and I am sorry to say I hear it in churches where I go to minister: people are afraid of refugees and migrants. We need to knock that on the head in all that we say and do.

Revd Canon Debbie Flach (Europe): I want to speak a little about what is happening on the ground in my diocese. As we have heard, over 800,000 migrants have landed in my diocese by sea so far this year. That does not include the estimated 3,500 who have drowned or those who have entered undetected. Nor does it include numbers of refugees fleeing conflict within Europe, for example from the Ukraine. There is that unprecedented pressure that we have heard about on European countries and upon the churches that are seeking to serve. Many of our countries and our dioceses have of course been affected.

I am going to tell you about two places where things are happening. One of course is Lille because I am the Vicar of Lille. I would just like to mention to the Bishop of Dover that I do not think Monseigneur Jaeger’s territory includes the Archbishop of

Lille's territory.

The churches and charities work together in Lille under the beautifully titled "Conseil Oecuménique de Solidarité du Doyenné Ville de Lille". As you will notice immediately, they are not very good at snappy titles or acronyms.

We were called to an emergency meeting at the end of September and learnt that the main need of many of the charities in Lille was, "Please don't send us any more clothes. Please send us funds now and send us long-term volunteers". I think you will find that applies to Calais as well.

We were strongly encouraged not to do things on our own, but to join in on existing initiatives. In October, the *Médecins du Monde* and the *Secours Catholique*, who are the people most involved up in Calais, filed something called a *référé-liberté* at the Administrative Tribunal of Lille to force the French Government to take urgent measures about the situation of those migrants in Calais. The court ruled that the state had 48 hours to undertake an inventory of the unaccompanied minors in distress and to try and force the Pas-de-Calais *Département* to invest.

In Athens, as you have already heard, there is much going on and they are working together with the churches in Athens, which is a new move as well. Every two days they put out a media update to let everyone know what is happening. There is growing concern in Greece at the Balkan countries' actions to either close or restrict border crossings to migrants who are not from Syria, Afghanistan or Iraq. I support this motion. Thank you.

Dr Meg Warner (London): It will be obvious from just those few words that I am a fairly recent migrant. I came to this country two years ago from Australia. I was one of the lucky ones, I come from a nice colony and have a grandparent who was born here.

There are many things that I will miss about my home country, but I confess that there was one guilty sense of relief that I found about leaving, which is that I was leaving behind the political situation and response to the challenge of refugees and migrants in my home country, which I could almost describe as a system of institutionalised cruelty designed to stop the boats and to stop migrants coming to Australia. There is a sense that that policy is succeeding because the boats have stopped. That is not success, because any success in stopping boats travelling to Australia can only result in a number of boats travelling to other countries less able and less resourced to support them than that country.

While here, I have been seeking to build a ministry of travelling Bible scholarship, similar to that pioneered by Dr Paula Gooder. What do you know? My first gig, with thanks to Bishop Trevor, was in the diocese of Canterbury. I found myself at the sharp end of the issue here and found that many of the sentiments that I had experienced in Australia were those that I was beginning to hear in this country too. That opportunity gave me a chance to really think about our biblical tradition and what it is that our tradition has to say to us and speak to us about this issue.

It is not always easy to look to the Bible for guidance for ethics and for acting today. Our Bible speaks with many voices, and not one. It speaks to us from a context

which is very different from our own. That is one of the reasons why it is so remarkable that our tradition speaks so clearly in relation to the question of migrants.

Our two primary foundation stories tell us that our people began as migrants. The Exodus is an extraordinary story of delivery from oppression in slavery and leads to the reminder that we were slaves in Egypt and that we ought, therefore, to remember others. The ancestors of Genesis, Abraham was also an immigrant and he was told, as were the members of his family, to live in the land which he would be given as an alien. Leviticus tells us that the Lord tells us that, “the land is mine and that with him we are but aliens and tenants”. It is for us to live as aliens and not to alienate others. I commend this motion to the house.

The Bishop of Southwark (Rt Revd Christopher Chessun): I am glad to support the motion before us, as amended helpfully by Canon Giles Goddard. The crisis which erupted suddenly, if the media is to be believed, was in fact many years in the making and will require a response lasting years and decades. The people of Syria are still at the mercy of the regime’s barrel bombs, still forced to watch beheadings and crucifixions of family members and kinsfolk at the hands of ISIS, still forced to pay the extortionate Jizya tax as humiliated minorities, still in increasing numbers experiencing the deadening existence in refugee camps.

Bishop Angaelos has spoken very movingly to us about what we are doing and all we can do together as the Church in England. The Archbishop of Canterbury is right in reminding us that we need to help to make it possible for Christians to stay in their historic Middle East homelands.

Her Majesty’s Government, which is to be commended for its financial commitment, second only to that of the United States, is nevertheless, as the motion recognises, lagging behind many of our European partners, rather lamentably so, in opening our borders to those in very evident peril. There is, of course, the enormous diplomatic challenge to encourage other countries to meet their aid obligations. No amount of resettlement will mitigate the continued failure to address the refugee crisis at source.

The United Nations’ High Commissioner for Refugees has calculated that for what was needed in the way of humanitarian aid, the amount raised fell from 71% in 2013 to a mere 37% by October of this year. The consequences for the refugee camps in terms of food rations, education, health and other facilities, will be drastic unless this trend is reversed significantly and rapidly.

I will be visiting camps in Jordan during Epiphanytide, along with Roman Catholic bishops from the Vatican Coordination Group, and Erpil with other Anglican bishops in March.

The merit of this motion is that, first, it recognises the long-term nature of the migrant crisis, for which there are no easy fixes. Mass displacement and dispersion will present us with issues and challenges for years and decades to come. Secondly, in each of our dioceses - my own no exception - there is great eagerness to extend hospitality, as has been well attested in this debate, to provide shelter and safe lodging, to work in partnership with the Government, local authorities and leading agencies. Thirdly, and lastly, the Church has an important role in modelling a

generosity of spirit that will have a compelling and converting effect on others. Thank you.

Revd Jonathan Macneaney (Chelmsford): Thank you, Chair, for calling me. At the start of last month I had the opportunity to travel with a Hungarian charity to the Serbia-Croatia border to a town called Bapska where approximately 5,000 refugees were crossing every day with local aid brought by a local group in Epping.

My abiding memory will be of smiling children lining up waiting to get on buses to be taken to their next destination and of their very relieved, but exhausted looking, parents. It was with great sadness that a week after we returned, we understood that the razor wire had gone up, the rain had come down, and the refugees were now trudging through knee-deep mud being told 20 miles in one direction or another they might find an open border.

The organisation that arranged that trip was not a Christian one, but simply locally concerned people. They were excellently prepared, but the response was polarised. There was support, but also, as Dr Harrison has mentioned, much anger and fear. I think the Church must respond to both of these, challenging the fear and facilitating support. Challenging fear means in our pulpits, in our pubs, on social media reciting that biblical imperative “do not be afraid”. It also means continuing our work here to challenge those issues in the social and economic realms that are causing people to be fearful and to scapegoat economic migrants and refugees.

I think the Church is also uniquely placed to harness the goodwill of the nation. Where the Church was able to help in Epping was in engaging with local civic authorities, with whom we have good relationships, in being able to provide access to local media, and in having a volunteer force by way of our congregations who were willing to give time, money and were easily exercised. I believe local churches, going forward, could act as sponsorship agreement holders on behalf of their communities within the private sponsorship route.

Finally, I think that any credible, compassionate response has to acknowledge and recognise that there are costs and challenges to immigration. It is imperative upon the Church that it should be at the forefront and willingly sacrificing both in our financial and social realms and be seen to be leading in that respect. I commend the motion. Thank you.

Mr John Freeman (Chester): 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: I call on the Bishop of Durham to reply to the debate. He has up to five minutes.

The Bishop of Durham (Rt Revd Paul Butler): Thank you very much, everyone who has contributed. I will try and comment as speedily as I can.

Caroline Spelman, thank you for all that you do for us as Second Estates Commissioner. We look forward to working with you further. Thank you for all that you noted, not only about what Government is doing but also the local examples of the welcome boxes in Derby and in Knowle.

Bishop Angaelos, it is always a joy to hear you in this Synod. We are very grateful. Your point about collaboration is absolutely critical. Forgive us if we have not talked to you adequately. Thank you for your support for the motion. Your phrase about “being light in darkness” particularly struck me.

Tim Hind, thank you for the point about Near Neighbours. I am sure they may well be a key partner as well as offering learning from their experience.

Archbishop Justin, thank you very much for your support. In reference to your comment about armed conflict, I would want to note that there may well be that for establishing safe and legal routes. I think those moving this motion would say that it is only in relation to that that this motion gives support to armed conflict, but recognising that it is likely that some will be needed so to do.

Bishop of Dover, thank you very much for your support for the Goddard amendment and for all the work that you and others are doing, particularly in Calais.

Gavin Oldham, likewise, thank you for your support for that amendment. Whilst the heading is “Migrant”, the entire motion is about refugees and refugees for humanitarian reasons.

Robert Innes, Bishop of Europe, you are carrying a big load in Europe. Thank you for giving us some statistics to emphasise that and the need for Europe-wide collaboration and calling for a theology on migration.

Jamie Harrison, thank you for telling Synod about Durham’s motion, which I have to say was put down before I knew I was going to be leading this, so it arose as a deanery synod motion that moved to Durham synod.

Elliot, thank you for your comments about “all being immigrants” and referring us to the plight of Asia Bibi, highlighting the fact that it is not just Syrians who suffer religious persecution.

Stephen Lynas, thank you for your comments about xenophobia and the need to alter the narrative. Absolutely, we do need to alter the narrative of fear. In my hometown of Bishop Auckland last weekend a load of fly posters were put up, “Refugees not welcome here”. It is something we have to do. You also highlighted the point that we receive from refugees in your story about Ugandan Asians. We need to constantly remind ourselves that this is a two-way process, we will learn and discover from those who come.

Debbie Flach, thank you for further enhancing our understanding of what is going on in Europe, particularly from Lille and Athens.

Meg Warner, thank you for your reflections on Australia and your comment about the fact that the boats have not stopped travelling but are travelling elsewhere, and for

beginning to respond to the Bishop of Europe about a theology about the clear biblical material on migration, particularly from Abraham and Exodus.

Bishop Christopher from Southwark, thank you for your comments particularly emphasising the need for other countries to live up to their promises about aid into the region and the need for us to model generosity of spirit.

Jonathan from Chelmsford, thank you for your reference to your own visit to the Hungarian border and also highlighting the need to challenge fear and to facilitate support with others. Thank you too for mentioning the private sponsorship possibility, which is not actually mentioned in the motion, but is one of the practical ways that individuals, parishes and dioceses might well want to respond in due course.

With all of that, and thanks to Giles Goddard again for his amendment, I commend the motion (as amended) standing in my name.

A Speaker: Standing Order 37, we call for a division of the whole Synod.

The Chair: Given that, and exercising my discretion under Standing Order 37(2), I am going to order a counted vote of the whole Synod because it seems to be important that we should have recorded figures. I am not going to read out the words of the motion, you can see them on the screen if your eyes are good enough - Item 9 (as amended by Item 15).

The motion as amended:

“That this Synod, recognising that almost 60 million individuals have been forcibly displaced worldwide as a result of persecution, conflict or generalised violence, a fifth of them because of the tragic conflict in Syria, and noting the compassionate response of British people to the suffering and needs of those displaced by conflict and other causes:

- (a) urge parishes and dioceses to work closely with local authorities and other community partners, to provide practical and sustainable resources and structures for the resettlement of vulnerable refugees and to pray for all those seeking to address the causes as well as the symptoms of this crisis;*
- (b) welcome both the scale of the aid provided by Her Majesty’s Government to those suffering as a result of the conflict in Syria and its decision to resettle vulnerable Syrian refugees, while calling on it to increase the number significantly beyond its initial target of 20,000 over five years;*
- (c) call upon the Government to work with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to ensure that vulnerability to religiously motivated persecution is taken into account when determining whom to receive into Britain;*
- (d) call upon the Government to work with international partners in Europe and elsewhere to help establish safe and legal routes to*

places of safety, including this country, for refugees who are vulnerable and at severe risk; and

- (e) *call upon the Government to take a fair and proportionate share of refugees now within the EU, particularly those with family already legally resident in the UK.”*

was carried after a division of the whole Synod. The voting was as follows:

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|------------------|------------|
| <i>IN FAVOUR</i> | <i>333</i> |
| <i>AGAINST</i> | <i>0</i> |

3 abstentions were recorded.

Legislative Business: Ecclesiastical Judges, Legal Officers and Others (Fees) Order

THE CHAIR *Professor Michael Clarke* took the Chair at 11.33 am.

The Chair: Ladies and gentlemen, can I congratulate all of you for having the stamina not to have disappeared for a cup of coffee. Thank you very much indeed.

We come now to Item 500, for which members will need the draft Order GS 2007 and the Explanatory Memorandum GS 2007x. Can I also draw your attention to the fact that there is financial comment on the Sixth Notice Paper?

I am going to call upon Canon Elizabeth Renshaw to move Item 500 standing in her name. She may speak for up to ten minutes.

Canon Elizabeth Renshaw (Chester): Thank you, Chair. I beg to move:

“That the Ecclesiastical Judges, Legal Officers and Others (Fees) Order 2015 be approved.”

The Ecclesiastical Judges (Fees) Order is made under section 6 of the Ecclesiastical Fees Measure 1986 (as amended) and prescribes the fees payable for faculty petitions and proceedings, as well as other proceedings which involve ecclesiastical courts. In practice, the overwhelming majority of proceedings in the ecclesiastical courts are in connection with faculty petitions, which seldom give rise to hearings. Hearings in faculty cases, and appeals from chancellors’ decisions in them, are both infrequent.

The Order also includes provision for the remuneration of the provincial registrars, the vicars general, the Dean of the Arches and Auditor, and the President and Deputy President of Tribunals for the work they undertake for the Church.

Last year, the Fees Advisory Commission gave an undertaking to review the Order, both its form and its content, including the principles and the quantum of the fees specified, in consultation with diocesan registrars and chancellors during the course of 2015. That review is now complete and the result is the entirely new Order before you.

It differs from the Orders made in previous years in three main ways. The first relates to its format, since the 2015 Order has been prepared in line with modern Statutory Instrument drafting practice. Additionally, it now identifies more fully and accurately the matters in respect of which fees are prescribed. This includes descriptions of the matters themselves rather than references to the statutory provisions under which they are carried out, making the Order and the items for which fees are charged, far clearer and more intelligible to its users.

The second main change concerns the rationale for some of the fees set in the Order. At some point in the past it seems that many of the fees contained in Ecclesiastical Judges (Fees) Orders were set with reference to the fees paid to judges in secular courts for undertaking comparable functions or activities. However, that benchmarking was not maintained and over the years the fees contained in these Orders, despite being uplifted by an inflation-related formula on an annual basis, fell some considerable way behind their Ministry of Justice comparators. The new Order restores that link to secular benchmarks, where possible, in the interests of greater fairness to both the Church and to those who serve it in a judicial capacity. As was said in the debate on the Legal Officers (Annual Fees) Order 2015, “the labourer is worthy of his or her hire”.

The Commission therefore proposes that the daily sitting rate for chancellors should correspond to that of recorders in the secular courts, a sum of £629 currently. This will require an initial uplift of some 10% on the current rate, which was set at £570 in 2014. We believe this to be both just and principled. Moreover, as I have already said, as hearings are so infrequent, the financial impact of this uplift will be negligible.

There is no equivalent comparator in the secular courts for the work done by registrars as this facility is provided by the Courts Service. However, the Commission believes that the previous practice, whereby registrars were remunerated at a rate of 75% of the relevant amount for ecclesiastical judges, continues to be both fair and appropriate in relation to work undertaken in connection with appeals from decisions of the lower courts and tribunals.

In courts and tribunals of first instance, where most of a registrar’s work will take place, the Commission felt that a slightly higher rate of 80% of a chancellor’s fee was justified, acknowledging that this still produced an hourly rate which was low in comparison to commercial rates.

The third main change to the order relates to the fees payable in connection with the faculty jurisdiction process. Recent changes, notably the new Faculty Jurisdiction Rules 2015, which will come into effect from 1 January 2016, and the introduction of the online system for processing such applications, will have a considerable impact on the number of faculty petitions and the way they are handled and processed. In particular, the new Rules will enable a wide range of matters to be undertaken without a faculty and, therefore, without the payment of any fees if the works on other proposals are approved by the archdeacons.

While it will be some time before it is possible to assess the scope or significance that these various changes will have, it is certain that from 2016 the number of faculty petitions considered by chancellors will decrease. The registrar members of the Commission have estimated that the degree of the fall is likely to be between 30

and 50%. While recognising that it is not yet possible to say precisely what the effect will be, the fact that those faculty petitions, which will still be considered by chancellors, will be of a more complex and substantial character will put further pressure on registrars, who are already substantially underpaid for the faculty work they do since the costs of the time they spend on dealing with work of this kind is considerably more than they receive by way of fees.

In the Commission's view, this position, like the previous underpayment of registrars under the retainer, needs to be remedied as a matter of justice regardless of any other considerations. That itself points, in the Commission's view, to the need for an above inflation increase in fees, quite apart from any consideration of the overall volume of work. Given the uncertainties as to how the recent changes will impact on the workloads of registrars, the provision made for this year's order must inevitably have an element of provisionality about it.

To that end, we propose that the fee payable on submission of a faculty petition, the lodgement fee, should be increased. Where previously there had been two fees, one of £114 for the submission of a faculty petition and one of £49 for preparatory and ancillary work, we propose that there be one single fee of £200 to cover this work, representing an increase of 23% of the aggregate of the two previous fees.

In conclusion, Synod, I would like to commend to you the proposals that are in the papers; there being, given the uncertainties as to how the recent changes will impact on the workloads of registrars, the provision made for this year's order must inevitably have an element of provisionality about it and I would commend it to you. My apologies once again for the mix-up both in the paperwork and electronics. Thank you.

The Chair: Canon Renshaw, the heart of Synod goes out to you, I think. There are few things worse than turning over a page or pressing a button to find the text you are wanting is not there. We were with you. Item 500 is now open for debate.

Revd Paul Benfield (Blackburn): I probably ought to declare an interest. I am a barrister, although I have not practised for almost 30 years and I did not practise in ecclesiastical law. I support this motion. The labourer is, indeed, worthy of his or her hire. But I want to thank the lawyers, many of them who give a lot of time for pro bono work, work without charging. Because of my legal background, clergy quite often contact me when they are in some sort of difficulty over a disciplinary matter or other things.

Disciplinary matters are not a problem because I can refer them to an appropriate solicitor and they will be granted ecclesiastical legal aid. But more and more recently I have had clergy contacting me where they are involved in some sort of safeguarding issue or risk assessment issue for which there is not ecclesiastical legal aid. The worry and the stress that is placed on those clergy in these uncertain circumstances where the processes are not at all clear and they do not really know what they are facing are, indeed, immense.

I have been very fortunate to be able to send such people to lawyers, who are often registrars in other dioceses in London and in the north of England, where they have been given considerable help free of charge, but this cannot go on forever. I would urge that the appropriate authorities consider as a matter of urgency extending

ecclesiastical legal aid to matters concerning safeguarding and risk assessments, for if a clergyman or a clergywoman has a bad risk assessment against them it does affect their future. They cannot move. The bishop cannot give them a 'safe to receive' letter, so it is a crucial matter in their future ministry.

I would, in thanking all our legal officers and registrars around the country, thank them very much for the time they give for pro bono work but urge that ecclesiastical legal aid be extended to wider areas concerning safeguarding and risk assessments.

Mrs Julie Dziegiel (Oxford): Thank you, Chair. I am wishing to explain my support for the proposed Fees Order, both in level and in structure. We are a law-making body. This is an immense privilege and, make no mistake, it is absolutely a tool for mission.

As a parish treasurer I am rarely involved directly in faculty applications. I am more involved normally in the financial consequences of those applications, but my parish work has brought me into contact with the area of listed buildings consent. Believe me, it is a minefield. I remember being told that the only way around a listed buildings consent problem regarding a house owned by the parish would be to demolish the part that it had been altered without the correct listed buildings consent, rebuild it as it had previously been, seek consent and then rebuild the extension if and when such consent was forthcoming. We would in this process have blocked a road, but that did not seem to be terribly relevant.

Instead of listed buildings consent, we have the faculty jurisdiction, which means our buildings are under the care and control of people who love our Lord and want to use the buildings for the purposes of his Kingdom. This is a real blessing. But having these laws means that we have to have lawyers to explain them and use them. We also have to attract new lawyers to take up ecclesiastical law to replace the ones that, as we are all getting older, retire and do less professional work.

Ecclesiastical law is a bit of a specialist area. I wound up recently talking to a young lawyer on a train. I was trying to talk to her about Jesus but we wound up discussing ecclesiastical law, which she had never heard of. I only hope she had heard of Jesus.

In order to make our law an area of expertise of enough high quality people, it has to pay enough. Not top dollar. One assumes that these lawyers are not likely to hold the secular view that money is all there is to life, but it does have to be enough. My first reaction to the fee levels in this Order is they seemed rather low.

When I was a newly qualified chartered accountant half a lifetime ago (I will sadly say that 'half a lifetime' is now more than 25 years), the firm I worked for charged me out at £126 per hour. Taking account of seniority and experience or even just 25 years of inflation, the fees set out in this Order seem low indeed. But given they are fixed, when possible, to secular equivalents and, of course, always acknowledging the need to use the precious money donated by our parishioners wisely and well, I trust that they are sufficient to represent fair pay.

I also like the form of the tables which make it very clear what each fee is for. Some of the language is a little challenging and I am hoping someone might explain to me exactly what an 'interlocutory order' is, but I assume that everyone involved, if they

were doing one, would actually know what it was.

I will be supporting this Order and I hope, with the full appreciation of the privilege of our law, you will too. Thank you.

Mr Paul Boyd-Lee (Salisbury): In the main, I find this a very welcome piece of legislation because I really feel that, in years to come, it will save more business on the floor of this Synod, talking about bringing our fees into line with the secular courts and so on. It is, therefore, with some trepidation that I make a comment on one section in here and that is the part dealing with faculties and fees payable there, because I really feel that it perhaps does not sit comfortably with the rest of the business.

Having said that, the whole changes in faculty rules are a very welcome piece of business which this Synod has done and approved, and I say that on behalf of churchwardens and those who are trying to maintain our churches. But I think there is a difference here. These are all legal fees, yes, but there are different aspects. Most of them here in this piece are to do with when things go wrong, but the faculty side I would suggest is where things are going right, where we are putting things right in the churches; building them up, making our buildings safe and usable places to use and so on.

The Explanatory Memorandum says that it has been a difficult issue, this one, because it is unknown how the system will work out in the months ahead. It is very new. At first glance, if you add up the figures and look at the cost to a diocese, perhaps they do not look like too much. In my own, we have, I believe, 175 faculties per year. Multiply that up by the fee increase (not the whole fee, the increase) and you are possibly looking at a £7,000 or £8,000 year increase.

But when you come down to individual churches' level, it is not good news. No fee increase is good news. But looking at those who are particularly struggling, which are worrying whether to get work done or not, and also looking at this piece of business we are doing later today concerning church buildings, many of which maybe need work doing on them, again it is difficult. It is not good news. I think my point here is how this is perceived by the general public at a particular time when we are trying to simplify legislation on one hand and also to cut our costs back on another.

So what is to be done? Certainly, amendments were offered. May I make a point about that quickly, that the deadline for getting amendments on this has been very tight. Because we have so many new people with Synod who are trying to find their way around the building, let alone how to deal with amendments, perhaps they have not had the time which they might have needed to look into this more deeply. Anyway, the option left then with no amendments on the floor is to rule out the business altogether.

I do suggest maybe that is a way forward at the present time; not to hold up the main part of the business for long, but to give more time to look at this important part of how this will filter through concerning the faculty payments. As the Explanatory Memorandum says to us, the number of other cases is pretty small, so holding it up a little while I do not think is going to affect things greatly. But I would prefer to see it delayed slightly in order to get things right.

The Chair imposed a speech limit of three minutes

Revd Canon Joyce Jones (West Yorkshire & Dales): I am a member of the Fees Advisory Commission which produced this Order and, actually, the only parish priest who is a member of that Commission. Chair, this Order may seem rather remote and obscure to people in our parishes but, of course, the getting of this Order right is very important to us all. We need this system of ecclesiastical law which enables courts to deal with disputes which cannot be resolved in any other way. We all hope we will never have to face a court hearing. The whole idea of a consistory court fills most clergy with complete trepidation. But, if we do, we need to have judges who can deal with this effectively. It is right they should have the opportunity to be properly paid, although many choose sometimes not to take a fee if they are working full-time. The system of payment needs to be clear and transparent and I hope you have seen that the Order meets these criteria, it provides a system so that, going forward, can be clear and transparent. And the hearings are very rare, hopefully.

However, as has been mentioned by the previous speaker, the place where we all come up against ecclesiastical law is where we have to apply for faculties and the fees for dealing with these is where there is not a hearing, and it is very important to us that we have the registrars who are able to do this.

The Commission spent a considerable amount of time trying to find the best way to deal with this, to make sure that the registrars can be paid fairly and, also, that the cost is not an overburden to the parishes. If you have looked at the financial statement you will see that it is suggested there that the proposed increase in fees for registrars is likely more than off-set by the expected reduction in the number of faculty petitions which will result from the forms introduced by the Faculty Jurisdiction Rules.

This Order is only for the coming year and there will be a new order for the following year. It has already been said that it does have some element of provisionality about it, so there will be an opportunity then to look again at it when it can be seen exactly what the effect of the new position is.

I would encourage you to vote for this Order so that we can have a system in place immediately to deal with fees for the coming year, which is not very far away at all, and then, when we have some experience of exactly how it works, we will be able to review the matter. So I would encourage you to support this order.

The Chair: Phillip Fletcher, then I would be interested in a motion of closure.

Mr Phillip Fletcher (ex officio): Thank you, Chair. I have sought to speak only because my colleague, Canon John Spence, who wrote the financial comment on the Sixth Order Paper, is unfortunately unable to be here today and sends his apologies.

Having stood up though, I think we ought to take note that the people of England do have a thing about lawyers. I call in evidence the young William Shakespeare. *Henry VI Part 2*, one of his very earliest plays, is, frankly, not a barrel of fun but there is just one sure-fire joke. We will test it. Jack Cade's Revolt, Dick the Butcher says, as they have invaded London, "The first thing we do, let's kill all the lawyers."

The problem for us today is that there is never a right time to end artificial constraints on pay or prices. With the full co-operation of this Synod, the Fees Advisory Commission has actually been holding fees well below the going rate for years. After a full survey, they now come to us and propose that we bite the bullet and that we do allow increases significantly above the level of inflation. Naturally, as Paul Boyd-Lee has pointed out, we may be reluctant, but I suggest we reject on this occasion Paul's siren voice. There will never be a better time for a necessary correction. As the financial comment in the Sixth Notice Paper brings out, the simplification of the faculty system will significantly reduce the total number of faculties. The residue, almost by definition, will tend to be more complex. We cannot expect the lawyers to continue to operate below cost level. We need, in fact, the right lawyers on our side to take this forward. I urge colleagues to support the Commission's proposals in the Order before us. Thank you.

Revd Canon Simon Butler (Southwark): 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: Canon Renshaw, you have to up to five minutes.

Canon Elizabeth Renshaw (Chester): Thank you, members of Synod. Thank you, Chair. I am very grateful for all your contributions this morning. As has been emphasised earlier, we know there is still work to be done. Faculty and other court orders are the second big area that needed reform and which the Fees Advisory Group has tried to grip. The Synod has already endorsed the first and biggest of them, the registrar's annual retainer. There we had a balanced approach, increasing the retainer to a fairer level but, in return, expecting greater accountability.

The FAC is now advocating the same approach with court fees. There is a real need in that context to pay registrars more out of fairness. But the work they do also needed reappraising. That latter task has been performed in respect to faculty jurisdiction by the separate review and approval of the new Rules which will produce a much tighter and better focused system, dispensing with unnecessary legal work. So we invite Synod to agree and give registrars the increase in faculty fees that we propose.

Synod, I ask you to support as the Commission will address all of your concerns as we work through these changes. Thank you for all of your contributions. Thank you, Chair.

The Chair: Thank you, Canon Renshaw. I now put Item 500, standing in the name of Canon Elizabeth Renshaw, to the vote.

The motion

“*That the Ecclesiastical Judges, Legal Officers and Others (Fees) Order 2015 be approved.*”

was carried on a show of hands.

The Chair: That concludes that item of business, thank you very much.

THE CHAIR *The Revd Canon Dr Rosemarie Mallet* took the Chair at 12.10 pm.

Public Perceptions of Jesus

The Chair: Synod, we now move to Item 10 on the Agenda for which you will need to have sight of GS Misc 1126 and the booklet called, 'Talking Jesus'. This is a presentation under Standing Order 107 and, time permitting, the Business Committee has agreed that members may ask questions of the presenters. The Bishop of Bristol will open the presentation with a short video and then the substantive presentation will be made by Mr Gareth Russell of Barna Global, and Dr Rachel Jordan of the MPA and the Archbishops' Council. I call upon the Bishop to open the presentation.

The Bishop of Bristol (Rt Revd Mike Hill): Thank you. I welcome the opportunity, Synod, to talk to you and introduce this document that I think has been sent to all of you, called, 'Talking Jesus'. I think I need to start by saying: Do not believe everything you read in the newspapers. I think I was somewhat startled by the media coverage of it which, not exclusively, was quite negative around some of the statistical evidence that has been produced.

It seemed to me that if you are going to look at the document, what you need to do is to look at the whole of the document and not just report a part of it. Obviously, if you speak to some people, as the researchers did, who did not become Christians off the back of another Christian speaking to them, then you are not really going to get a blank cheque endorsement for Christian witness. However, as you will hear, this research, sponsored by the Church of England, the Evangelical Alliance and HOPE, I think gives much to encourage us around the whole area of Christian witness and reconnecting with our cultures.

No one here is talking about the kind of insensitive attempts to push people towards the Christian faith. I remember last summer being in Terminal 5 at Heathrow and a young gentleman in a yellow saffron robe with a hairstyle much after my own approached me and said to me did I want to know the meaning of life. I felt a bit mean in saying "probably not" to him, but it did remind me that the best kind of communication that we do person to person is with those people with whom we are in a relationship. We are not talking about insensitive approaches. We are talking about at the right time and in the right way.

It is interesting, and has been widely said for years, that most people who come to the Christian faith will cite the input, verbal or otherwise, of a Christian friend. That reminds me to say that the antidote to a poor witness is not no witness but good witnessing.

Turning to the research, you will have read from GS Misc 1126 that the picture carries with it some kind of ambivalence. There is some good news about practising Christians speaking about their faith, 66% of respondents have talked about Jesus to a non-Christian. I have to say I found that rather counterintuitive.

As you know, our normal response to data is largely to feel attracted to material which kind of affirms our world view, our intuition and, at the same time, to resist

data that we receive as counterintuitive or data that we cannot fit into our world view. If all we do is to allow data to affirm what we already believe, we will probably never start to learn any new things. Nick Taleb in his interesting little book, 'The Black Swan', makes the point that we naturally go and are drawn to the things that do affirm us, whereas, in fact, real change comes when we start to focus on what we do not know. I want to say to you (and this really is the opening message of my introduction) facts are friends, even if we do not like the facts because what we need to do, I think, is to try and define reality before we can make any impact on that reality.

If I might just very briefly tell you an issue from my own ministry some years ago. Some of you remember the parish audit where one sent out all these questionnaires to members of one's congregation and got them back, only to discover that the average age of your congregation was about 63 which, frankly, I could have told you by looking at them Sunday by Sunday. So I became very fascinated in trying to find out what the people who did not come to church thought about us and discovered that they actually loved to tell us.

We got a group of Bible students down from a Methodist College up in the North of England called Cliff College and sent them door to door with a questionnaire. This was before Alpha, before all of that Christian exploring, before how to sign up to the Christian faith in three easy lessons courses. We asked people were they regular church goers and if they said yes, we were not that interested in them, but if they said no, we asked them 20 questions, one of which was, if they were a small group of people who all knew nothing about the Christian faith but wanted to know more, would you be prepared to attend such a group? Now I would have never guessed that 53% of people who did not describe themselves as regular church goers said, yes, they would be prepared to attend such a group. I had a curate at the time who was a barrister before he was ordained and I thought he might put a good case for Christ, and the impact was startling. Facts are friends, and I quickly discovered when I was in local church ministry sitting around with my PCC that fantasising together was extremely good fun but did not really move us on very much. God has a big idea. The big idea is the Kingdom and He has got a plan, a big plan, and Acts 1 reminds us all what our part will be in that plan and that is to be His witnesses, that is not just about what we say. It is not just about lips, it is about lives. But this report, I hope you will discover through this presentation, gives us encouragement to think again about all this and not least our verbal witness.

In Chicago there is a remarkable river, imaginatively called the "Chicago River", and it is an interesting river because in 1900 the flow of the river was changed from flowing into Lake Michigan to flowing out of Lake Michigan, and we in our churches are constantly talking about how do we get people to come to us, how do we get them to come to church? I think we need to change the flow. There is evidence here that we really can go out sensitively, willingly to live and speak about our faith and who knows? If we do that, the evidence is that it might become a game changer in the lives of some of the people you confront. I look forward to hearing more on this presentation. We are now going to have a short animation and then I am going to hand over to Rachel.

(Video played)

Dr Rachel Jordan: Thank you so much for giving us this opportunity to be with you

today. It is brilliant. I am Rachel Jordan. I work in Mission and Public Affairs and I am the Church of England's Mission and Evangelism Adviser, and it is my great privilege today to introduce you to Gareth Russell, who is the UK Vice-President of Barna Global.

Mr Gareth Russell: Good afternoon, everybody.

Synod in unison: Good afternoon.

Mr Gareth Russell: Thank you for being so responsive so quickly. As Rachel said, my name is Gareth Russell. I head up the UK and European work of Barna research. I also actually lead a Vineyard Church in Milton Keynes so as well as the data I hope that I have some of the practitioner in me as well and hopefully we can share of some of that today.

We want to thank you for inviting us to present today. We know that you are having a lot of presentations but we hope this presentation is stimulating for you. What we are presenting is a research study that was commissioned by the Evangelical Alliance, by Hope and by the Church of England, and today I am delighted that Steve Clifford, Director of EA; Roy Crowne, the Director of Hope; and Yemi Adedeji from the One People Commission are here today. We have had a breadth of church engagement throughout this process and in the first phase of the research it was a great privilege for us to have the Archbishop of York with us at the presentation.

What we wanted to find out was, what do UK adults know and believe about Jesus Christ, not just Christians but what do UK adults know and believe about Jesus Christ. Then we wanted to find out what do they think of us, what do they think about His followers and how often, if ever, do Christians talk about Jesus, how often do they talk about their faith. Then we wanted to find out how do both Christians and non-Christians feel about those conversations.

For the large research project, what we have actually done is gone and got some specific Anglican data that we are going to present to you today as well, that is not in your 'Talking Jesus' flyers but we are going to present some of that today. Here is the information about how we conducted the research study. It was a survey, a representative sample of just over 3,000 UK adults - sorry about the size of the text up there - and an oversampling of just over 1,600. The national survey, the confidence level is plus or minus 1.8% at 95% confidence level, so 95% of the time we are 1.8% plus or minus and then over on the oversample it is 2.4% at the same confidence level.

This just gives you a brief overview of the age breakdown in the English audience. It is very similar to the census, so nothing surprising there, and this is basically census Christians so 57% of those who responded identify themselves as Christian.

Now we are not trying to make any theological statement with this next slide, so please do not ask any questions on that, but basically we wanted to have a research tool that categorised those who were practising or active in their faith so we asked them how often do they read the Bible, how often do they pray and how often do they attend a church service. If they attended a church service, prayed or read their Bible once a month or more, we identified them as practising Christians. Interestingly out of that 9%, 3% identified as Anglican, so that is a huge percentage.

There is no huge difference between the religious practices of Anglicans and the general Christian population. When we looked at the practising Christians and practising Anglicans, they read the Bible, participated in prayer and a religious service relatively similarly.

I am going to hand over to Rachel.

Dr Rachel Jordan: We have got two slides that, if you look in the booklet, actually seem to tell us slightly different stories about the age breakdown and the generational profile of practising Christians. The first one is because when we weighted the sample of practising Christians we went on the evidence that we already have, so we asked Bev here, the head of statistics, we asked other research bodies what do we think is the generational breakdown of practising Christians in this country. That particularly, though, up until now has been based on our attendance figures so you get a spread that is predictable like this. Interestingly enough, in our other survey which was weighted by the population's age profile and the population's spread regionally, we got a different story.

So you take the 9% of practising Christians and we broke them down in the population as to which age bracket they are in, and we discovered to our amazement that we had under the age of 34 as much percentage of practising Christians as we did over the age of 65. Dare I say that the missing generations appear to be between the ages of 35 and 64. There is something about the age group perhaps even sitting in this chamber today that says something has happened on our watch and that might be a wake-up call to us. We are hoping that we can dig a little bit deeper into this because that is a fascinating story.

What happens when we look at the audience therefore of practising Anglicans? The practising Anglican audience is the one we had on our original data, so the practising Anglican material is based on the age breakdown of the practising group and it is based on our original weighting so you get a very similar breakdown. I would show you this slide but maybe I will not - basically it is very similar.

I will tell you something else instead! What I will tell is one of the things that concerned me from our research which might come up as another slide, 81% of English practising Christians have a degree or equivalent level. Actually that is a shocker. If you think about this research where we are connected in society, if we have got a degree or equivalent level, that means we are less in contact maybe with people who have not. We are reaching more people with a degree and equivalent. That is sometimes asking a question about whether that would be very similar to what Jesus envisioned when He set up His church.

Going back to that slide, that is our breakdown of the English practising Anglican audience. The reason it looks familiar and perhaps very much in line with what would look familiar is it came from the weighted oversample on things like our attendance figures, so that make sense to you. It is not like the other story, but the other story tells us something that maybe we should dig into a little bit more.

This is a little piece that warns us that 81% of all practising Christians across all denominations, so that is not just us, are degree level or equivalent in their education. I would say that was a little flag to the church across all our denominations.

Mr Gareth Russell: Then we wanted to find out what did people believe about Jesus. In Mark 8.27 Jesus asked “Who do people say I am?” and that is what we wanted to find out here.

I do not know if you are a glass half-full person or a glass half-empty person, but if you read this slide, I would suggest a mainly negative finding that six in ten English adults believe that Jesus was a real historical person. We are not asking about the sovereignty of Jesus, we are not asking about Jesus as God, we are just asking was he a real historical person and only six in ten believe that Jesus was that. When you look at the ethnic minorities, that figure jumps, so if you look at 60% of all English adults but then the ethnic minorities, 79% of all ethnic minorities believe that Jesus was a real historical person. Approximately one in five English adults believe that Jesus was God in human form who lived among people in the first century and, as you can see in these graphs, the blue bar is the 18 to 34 year-olds and it really does drop when you look at the 18 to 34 year-old responses but, again, when you look at ethnic minorities, it increases once again. Asian English adults are more likely to say that Jesus was a spiritual leader or a prophet, and black English adults are more likely to believe in Jesus’ divinity, God in human form.

When you start any research project you come to that project with some assumptions of what might be the answers and this is the one probably that surprised us or one of the ones that surprised us the most, that 43% of all English adults believe in the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. This is not practising Christians, this is all English adults, 43%. This has pretty major implications for our teachings at Easter. I do not need to tell you that. I am not telling you how to do your job but that is the implication here. Still 57% do not believe in the resurrection so there is a job to do there, but the question here is about the significance of the resurrection for their lives. The vast majority again of black English adults believe that Jesus was a real person and that he was raised from the dead.

We then asked everyone that we surveyed to put some words against who their perception of Jesus was. All English adults responded with words that you probably would expect: spiritual, loving, peaceful, the things that probably if we had written it down beforehand, we would have expected. What is interesting is when you look at millennials, which is the 18 to 34 year-old age group, they come up with one different word. They come up with the word “leader”. Again when it comes to our interaction with millennials, when it comes to our teaching and discipling of millennials, that is an interesting factor for us to take into consideration.

Rachel is going to talk a little bit about what non-Christians think of us.

Dr Rachel Jordan: When you are trying to work out the task of evangelism, one of the key things to know is how many people know a practising Christian. Sometimes you might consider that there are three of us left in the back room, but actually it is a really important thing. It is not as if we were a company but if we were a company, we would want to know how far our reach is in the population so we asked and this is the result. 67% of the population say that they know a practising Christian and we asked them, “Do you know a practising Christian who is a follower of Jesus Christ?” What is really fascinating for this again is the breakdown of who those people are. Drop to the bottom, 1% of the population know a church leader. Now that is maybe

also because there are not so many church leaders in the population but why is this important for evangelism? The task of evangelism cannot be the task of our church leaders because they will only have the chance to reach 1% of the population. The task of evangelism has to be when we enable all the people in our churches who are in touch with 67% of the population to do the task of evangelism. It is very clear and simple, and we are mostly known as friends and family. We are really close to people so 34%, we are family members; 40% we are friends. Something else significant when you go to the under 34 year-olds, and this surprised me, I anticipated that when we asked the under 34 year-olds if they knew a practising Christian the answer would be less. The answer is more. More under 34 year-olds in this country know a practising Christian than in any other of the generations, and that is fascinating, I would say, something really interesting going on so that gives me real hope. Then somebody said - because remember we did a 1,000 study and then we got the chance to ask more detailed questions when we did this bigger study - "That's because they know granny", so we asked them what is the age of the person that you know and the majority of non-Christians under the age of 34, the practising Christian they know is peer. Now that is exciting news when it comes to this country.

So they know somebody but what do they think about that person? So we asked them. We gave them a whole pile of tick questions of all the things we could think of and this is the result. We came out overwhelmingly as friendly, caring and - I love this - good humoured. That is a great opportunity for the Church. Christians are friendly, caring and good humoured. I would say I am pretty happy with that. We are not known to be narrow-minded, hypocritical or uptight, or the rest of those things. That is a really positive result. We are known and we are liked and we know the majority of the population. The task of evangelism should not be that difficult.

Then we asked all these non-Christians, what was their experience of evangelism so, very importantly, these non-Christians who are in relationship with a Christian, have they ever had a conversation with that Christian about Jesus, so we asked them and more than half of the English non-Christians who know a Christian, that is 57%, have had a conversation with someone about Jesus. I would say that was a pretty good start and that makes 39% of all English non-Christians, so there is a challenge here. If you look at the group of non-Christians who know a Christian, who have not had a conversation with a Christian, and you add to that the group of people who do not know a Christian, that is 61% of the population we may never have spoken to. Does that make sense? There is some really good news and actually there is also a challenge for us. There is 61% of the population that we have not actually managed to have that conversation with.

Then there is something else. What happens when we have the conversation? We know it is family and friends when we have most of those conversations so most of the conversations that are taking place, the non-Christian says the person who spoke to them is family and a friend. When we have the conversation what happens? This is slightly more challenging to us. Only 16% once we had had the conversation felt sad that they did not share our faith; 42% after the conversation felt glad that they did not share our faith; and 42% just did not really know. There is something interesting going on when we have our conversations so we have dug a little deeper.

We then asked people for more responses. Let me just frame this for you for a

minute. This is, if you like, market research of a specific group of people. This is non-Christians who have had a conversation with a Christian who have chosen after that conversation to remain a non-Christian. Does that make sense? Then there is also another piece of the survey that asked non-Christians who had a conversation with a Christian who chose to follow Jesus Christ for themselves, how that went. You kind of need both parts of that story to give you the whole picture so when you do market research on the people who said no, say, to a product, you are more likely to get a negative response. But out of the people who are non-Christian who chose to remain non-Christians after the conversation, there is an openness. 19% wanted know more about Jesus and 20% wanted to have an experience or encounter with Jesus. Really interestingly, they are not all the same people. Only 60% of that group is an overlap, so it is quite a lot of people who want to know and quite a lot of people who want to encounter as well as people who want to know both, so that gives more people who are open. Do you know, they are actually waiting for us to have a conversation with them. This goes up and gets more positive news. Again, when you go to the under 34 age bracket more people want to know about Jesus in that age bracket and more people want an experience or encounter with Him. Fantastically good news.

This is the news of what happens when people talk to a Christian and they come to faith. When they talk to a Christian and come to faith of course it is very positive and they said after the conversation that they had 85% wanted to know more and 82% were open to an experience or encounter. Of course it is positive. If you like, it is the other side of the story.

Mr Gareth Russell: Finally we just wanted to talk about Christians' experience of evangelism. Here we have some of Anglican-specific data. English practising Anglicans do feel a responsibility to evangelise and believe that talking to non-Christians about Jesus is part of their responsibility. You have got 82% there who have a responsibility to talk to non-Christians about Jesus. The second pie chart, which is a lot less, is non-practising Anglican and they are nominal Anglicans basically, but practising Anglicans do feel a responsibility to evangelise. Not only that, the majority or 50% are always looking for opportunities to talk to others about Jesus.

Now we have done this presentation to various different church groups. We have done it to the Vineyard Movement, we have done it to the Baptists and we have done it to the Evangelical Alliance Council and we get the looks and the faces like you are giving me right now, the quizzical looks, the looks not quite of disdain but looks of certainly "This does not look like this in my parish" but this is what we found. Now what we have to remember here is that when people answer questions in a survey about themselves there is often a halo effect, so often people will answer the question more positively about themselves than the reality. However, this is what we found and this is what we are presenting to you and the percentages are so large that they need to be taken seriously. 75% feel comfortable talking to non-Christians about Jesus and only 24% feel unable to talk or to take those opportunities. Not many are afraid of causing offence when they talk about Jesus, not many think that others are better suited and certainly they do not feel that they do not know how to talk to non-Christians about Jesus.

This chart shows how many practising Anglicans have actually shared their faith in the past week, the past month and the fact that they do not. Incredibly there 70%

have talked about Jesus in the past month. I will leave that one with you.

This graph just shows you a comparison with practising Anglicans and non-practising Anglicans. This is pretty much what you would expect, non-practising Anglicans, the nominal Anglicans are less likely to share their faith. What is also interesting is when you compare the English Christians - this is not Anglicans, this is the general study - and English non-Christians they remembered the conversations about Jesus similarly, so they remembered if the ask was to pray for them or to pray for someone on their behalf, to come to a church event, to come to a church service. The percentages are quite similar there and it was remembered similarly.

Rachel alluded to this earlier but 18 to 34 year-olds are somewhat more active than older Christians in England when it comes to sharing their faith. Now the likelihood of this is, although we did not actually go through this in the research, that many millennials are first generation Christians, so them becoming a Christian has been their decision and if it is your decision, you are more likely to be passionate, you are more likely to be zealous and you are more likely to share.

Dr Rachel Jordan: Finally what a great opportunity; we had this poll of practising Christians. We could not miss the opportunity of asking a poll of 1,600 practising Christians how they came to faith. It is one of those crucial things if you are looking at the task of evangelism. What we discovered is that many practising Christians attribute their faith to growing up in a Christian family. That would not surprise us, I do not think, but 41% growing up in Christian family was really important in how they came to faith. Sometimes we swing with evangelism as to whether people come on a journey or whether it is one sudden moment, so we thought we would ask. We worked out that people come to faith in all of those ways so when it comes to how we practise our evangelism, we should expect some people to come on a long journey, some people to make several decisions and some people to come suddenly to faith. All of those things happen and have happened, and that is why we are here in this room.

Then we know again the key relationship of where people come to faith - this is so important and so simple - most people attribute the reason that they have followed Jesus Christ for themselves is because of a friend. It not a surprise but it is so important. The task of evangelism is more important than ever, and it is friend to friend. It is in our friendships.

Finally we asked people if they could tick more than one key influence of what helped them come to faith, and these key influences were growing up in a Christian family and then attending a normal church service. 27% of practising Christians said attending a normal church service was really influential in bringing them to faith. I just think we could ask all our congregations "What would help you bring a friend to church? What do I need to change to give you the confidence to bring your friend here into this worshiping community to experience it for themselves?" And reading the Bible for themselves. For 27% of us who are Christians reading the Bible for ourselves was one of the key influences that brought us to faith. Let us get the story of Jesus out there in language and in a way that people can read and understand for themselves. The word of God is still so powerful. And conversations with a Christian they knew well comes in at 27%; 27% of us said that was really important. If you add in, interestingly enough, conversations with a stranger that is 9%, you get a grand total of 36%, which comes in just under growing up in a Christian family

which I think is why talking about Jesus is so important.

Just to help you on some of the other data that is up here, basics courses coming in at 5%, the majority of us who are practising Christians came to faith over eleven years ago hence things like social media, the internet and even our use of basics courses and new forms of church and Fresh Expressions are not appearing heavily in this data because they just have not been running for long enough.

The final thing - even a challenge to us - is could we think of five friends we know we could pray for, with the expectation that we are going to help one of them come to faith in Jesus Christ?

The Chair: May I thank the Bishop of Bristol, Mr Russell and Dr Jordan for their presentation. There is now a short period of time for questions. May I remind Synod that this is not a time for speeches. I will take the questions in groups of three and the panel will decide the appropriate person to respond.

Revd Julie Conalty (Rochester): I find this Report really interesting. It is the second time I have seen a presentation on it. I take the point about having to look at the whole thing, but I do wonder if our confidence in evangelism is over-inflated. If I talk about my faith in Jesus to ten friends, the statistics on page 20 suggest that two of them will be open to find out more, while three will feel more negative towards Christ. I recognise that that is only one set of statistics and there is another set that needs to be looked at. What I want to know is do these odds, which are stacked against me a bit, suggest I should be talking differently, or less often, or more selectively, or not at all?

Revd Barry Hill (Leicester): Thank you Chair, Rachel, Gareth and the partners, HOPE and EA, in the balcony. The ETG seems a good model of what was preached about yesterday.

Given that the research chimes with what we see as a Ministry in Mission team as we travel around Leicestershire, that more Christians are more confident talking to more people about the difference that following Jesus makes, I wonder how we might live better in a narrative that says God is active, that more people are interested and that we have something to say; rather than we have nothing to say, no one is interested and, if God turns up, it is an occasional bonus.

Ms Carrie Myers (Southwark): My job is as a volunteer manager for a charity. I appreciate the contextualisation of some of the slides, but if I received feedback on my volunteers that a significant proportion of the conversations they were having about our charity resulted in people not wanting to know more, or indeed feeling negative towards the charity, my first recommendation would be perhaps to put in a comprehensive and urgent training programme for those volunteers, probably run by the people that are having the conversations with more positive outcomes.

My question is: how do we equip the whole people of God to have positive conversations? Did the researchers receive any qualitative information or anecdotal evidence about what differentiates the good conversations from the off-putting ones, in terms of content, in terms of context and in terms of the people to whom we were speaking? What suggestions as a Church can we offer for effective mission and evangelism which draws people in rather than pushes them away?

Dr Rachel Jordan: Two questions were quite similar there. The first is Julie's on the confidence issue and whether we should be carrying on talking if we are helping two out of ten and we have eight out of ten that we are putting off. Of course, that is one side of the story and you need the other side.

One thing I would like to put in there is I wonder what we would have got on the ratings of the Apostle Paul when he went somewhere; how many people did he actually help come to faith and how many people ended up actually killing him? There is a strange issue around that. I regret that we did not have a survey on him.

I think you are right, one thing this research does not tell us - which goes to Karen's point - is exactly what is happening in those conversations. It might be worth us doing some more research to find out at a deeper level how those conversations are happening. I would say that these people are still being rated as "friendly, caring and good humoured", so if they are doing this really badly, would they come out as friendly, caring and good humoured? That is an interesting counterbalance again. Maybe there is some more work to do.

Barry, I think we should have more confidence because God is active, and when I saw these results, even as an evangelism adviser, I felt more people are interested than I ever anticipated, so it could be a glass half full or it could be a glass half empty.

The Bishop of Liverpool (Rt Revd Paul Bayes): Can I thank Rachel Jordan and the MPA for this contribution to finding out some good and honest truth about England as it actually is. Incidentally, Synod, would you like to join me in wishing Rachel well for her forthcoming wedding in a couple of weeks' time?

That was not my question, Chair. Given that the facts are always friendly, and in the light of Bishop Mike's comments on different ways of commending faith and coming to faith - and Rachel has just mentioned this - might we know whether any follow-up research is being planned from hereon and what the presentation team thinks that follow-up research should most immediately be?

Revd Zoe Heming (Lichfield): Regarding the issue of what we would need to change in terms of how we can then invite our friends into church, I have a question I would like to ask. What is often omitted from our churches when considering the image of Jesus is that "wounded healer", or the weak Jesus. We prefer perhaps, more so in fearful times, the more muscular King, Lord, Sovereign Jesus to the weaker one.

With the role of this Synod, and indeed the whole Church, being prophetic witness to that Christ, do we risk losing our legitimate voice when it is sometimes quite difficult to distinguish between those who hold power in Government and in industry and those who hold power in churches? Far from being a shameless bid for promotion from lowly curate up the ranks, I assure you, for me, the heart of the matter seems to be about criticisms I am hearing about losing that legitimacy of voice and of clarity, where Jesus is not being communicated as that weak, wounded healer who accompanies and indeed shares His bread with those who are suffering.

The question is: how are we going to, particularly now as we begin to move forward with this research, make sure that we are taking proper account of that weak Jesus that we need to be communicating across the board in all of our response in our

churches?

Miss Jane Patterson (Sheffield): Thank you for your presentation. My question is quite simple: what do we do now? What do we do in this season? My godson Mark, who is not a practising Christian, was one of more than 20,000 students who were invited to and attended carol services organised by Christian Unions in universities across the country. How about this Christmas we all use the unmissable opportunity to seek to change our families', neighbours', colleagues' and friends' perceptions of what Christmas is and who Jesus Christ is? This is a great opportunity. Why miss out?

Dr Rachel Jordan: Paul, thank you very much for mentioning my wedding: 5 December; it is coming fast.

The first thing on research, as you are aware, this is our first go at looking at evangelism research, and we definitely need to do some more. The great thing is the Evangelism Task Group is on it. There is a specific piece of research there where we have looked into one segment. This was a big, broad brush stroke, encapsulating the whole population, but we know our population is made up of many different parts, and the task group is therefore doing a piece which will come to Synod soon, which is a dig down into one segment of that. That might show us a way that we might need to begin to segment the population to get a fuller understanding of what is going on. I think it also begs a question. We did this research because we thought probably no one was talking about their faith, in all honesty. We discovered that people are, but it is not always having the desired impact. Sometimes it is and sometimes it is not. It appears there is more research that we need to do around what is happening, which I think we have seen very clearly.

The Bishop of Bristol (Rt Revd Mike Hill): It was Zoe who asked about the wounded healer. I think that is such an important thing that you said there. Just thinking about the New Testament, one of the most powerful moments in Pauline writings is when he talks about power being "made perfect in weakness". My experience of speaking with Jesus - and I would not claim to be an expert in this - is we all need to learn about what I call "appropriate vulnerability". Many of us are frightened of being vulnerable, and I think sometimes vulnerability can be expressed in ways that are indulgent. Some of the most powerful stories are those stories of people who have lived through incredibly difficult personal or family circumstances and come through all that. Somebody once said that beautiful people do not happen by accident; they are made through life's experiences. If I might say so, I think your point is a really important one; if we talk about being confident in evangelism then I would not want that to be heard as the kind of muscular Christianity that you referred to in your question, but thank you for that.

Dr Rachel Jordan: Finally on what do we do now; a brilliant question. I love the fact that if we are really thinking about Christmas - it is one of our best opportunities - and I know a lot of us do. We do that both here and in the Church of England when we look at Christmas. Also with HOPE there is some new resource and they are doing big football stadium Christmas Carol services across the locality. Great opportunities.

Also, we should pray. I would say that is a really distinct response to this research,

that when we hear it, that we pray; that we pray with a heart for the people who do not know Jesus in this nation. I think that will change us: if we make it the number one priority in our lives, so that we are praying for the people who we know, and that we are constantly doing that. We are doing that together across all denominations on 3 January. There are plans in the Evangelism Task Group, where we are looking particularly for it to help us with a heart for prayer for the people who do not know Jesus. Again from the Evangelism Task Group we will be working on more of the ways that we can encourage each other to do the task of evangelism together.

The Chair: Synod, could I thank the team once again because that is all the time we have for questions and that concludes the item of business. The afternoon session will begin at 2.30.

THE CHAIR *The Bishop of Manchester (Rt Revd David Walker)* took the Chair at 2.30 pm.

Debate on a Report from the Church Buildings Review Group

The Chair: Good afternoon, Synod. We have now reached Item 11 on our agenda: the Church Buildings Review, for which you will need GS 2008. There is also a finance note on the Sixth Notice Paper that you may want to take a look at as well.

This is our first go at Synod on this issue. It is quite likely that after today there will be legislation of a more detailed nature at later times, so there will be lots more chances to talk about church buildings in more detail. Today we are looking at the particular Report that the Bishop of Worcester is going to introduce in a moment and to try to get a feel for that, and get a sense of what the major issues are that we want to deal with in that Report. We have had a number of amendments. You will see them down on the Order Paper at 16, 17, 18 and 19.

What I am proposing to do is after we have had about three speeches on the general motion, I am then going to ask each of those proposers of amendments to speak to but not put their amendment. When we have a sense from them of what those amendments are about, we will then move on to a stage where we are asking for them to formally move their amendments. We will debate each of the amendments, if there is debate, vote on them and then we will move back to the main debate again. We do have timed business to follow this at 4 o'clock so we have just under an hour and a half to complete this particular item of business. We have had quite a number of requests to speak already, so apologies to those who will not get called in the course of the debate this afternoon.

I call on the Bishop of Worcester to introduce the motion that stands in his name. He has up to ten minutes.

The Bishop of Worcester (Rt Revd Dr John Inge): I beg to move:

“That this Synod, acknowledging both the blessing and the burden of the Church of England’s stewardship for so many historic buildings:

- (a) welcome the report from the Church Buildings Review Group;
- (b) commend it for discussion in dioceses, deaneries and parishes; and

- (c) invite the Archbishops' Council, the Church Commissioners and the Church Buildings Council to work together on the detailed implementation of the proposals in the report so as to enable the Business Committee, in the case of those proposals which require legislation, to schedule the start of the relevant legislative process by July 2016."

John Inge, 42; which you may remember is "the meaning of life"! Chair, the first thing I want to do - as I ask Synod to welcome and commend to the wider Church this Report of the Church Buildings Review Group - is to reiterate the thanks I express in the summary of the Report to members of the review group and to the Church House staff who so ably assisted us, not least, I might say, our outgoing Secretary General. We were given six months to complete our task and sometimes I wondered whether we would make it. We had some lively discussions, with a proverbial free and frank exchange of views, but by the grace of God, and a great deal of hard work by a few, it is before you unanimously commended by members of the group.

I remind you that our terms of reference were very narrow. We were asked by the Archbishops' Council and the Church Commissioners to consider: "What functions need to be exercised nationally to advance the mission of the Church of England through its use and stewardship of church buildings, and how might they best be carried out". We have responded to that brief by proposing modest goals which we believe to be achievable and helpful. We noted in paragraph 5 that in seeking to fulfil this brief, we quickly concluded that we could only approach this question sensibly if we stepped back and surveyed the nature of the opportunities and challenges that the Church of England faces regarding its buildings at this moment in its history. The Report was commissioned, after all, as part of the Reform and Renewal process, and it is right that this first major review of church buildings for some considerable time should contribute to that process by enabling a wide and informed debate about church buildings.

I hope that this afternoon will be a very important part of that. The Report certainly generated considerable interest in the media. Unfortunately, coverage focused largely on the festival churches proposal, and completely misunderstood it - perhaps willfully in some cases - to mean that festival churches would remain closed except for Christmas, Easter and other festivals. The intention of course is exactly the reverse, that some of the legal requirements pertaining to parish churches should be removed from these particular buildings, so that they can remain open throughout the year, and used as is seen fit by the local church, without them being an intolerable burden in terms of the legislation that pertains to parish churches. On the Wildean principle that all publicity is good publicity, I welcome the above attention. I hope however that this afternoon's debate, and the consultation upon which we have embarked following the publication of the Report, will be rather better informed.

The statistics with which the Report begins - unavailable until now - should certainly enable the analysis to have a sharpness that might previously have been lacking, and I would suggest that there is much food for thought in them. The substantial theological section which follows has been praised by some, who have welcomed such theological meat in a Church Report, and criticised by others, who do not find it

to their taste, such as the priest whose letter to the *Church Times* declared: "I wish I could say that I had read the Church Buildings Report with interest, but so much of it was academic waffle that I did not." I claim responsibility for the waffle and I leave you to make your own judgment. I do hope, though, that, even if you disagree with the conclusions of that section, you will be willing to engage with it and the scriptural approach that it commends.

Emerging from the statistics, and the theology, are the six general principles which guided our thinking and are articulated at the beginning of Part 3 of the Report. These translate into some specific recommendations, and then Part 4 deals with the way in which various functions carried out at a national level might be better organised in order to provide greater focus and more strategic thinking than is possible under the present arrangements, which owe more to history than current needs. That of course is the meat of our brief.

Those who imagined fondly that the Report would produce a magic bullet to solve all the challenges facing the Church in its custody of nearly 16,000 church buildings will be disappointed. We do not think that such a bullet exists and we are cautious about proposing a one-size-fits-all approach, for reasons which we believe the statistics make clear. We do not want to underestimate the challenge our buildings pose, but neither do we want to minimise the potential for good and for the Gospel which most of them represent, some of which of course is already being realised. It is also worth noting that our church buildings are arguably in a better state as far as fabric is concerned than they have ever been. We believe that a Dr Beeching-type cuts approach would be very mistaken indeed, even if it were possible in a church where most decisions pertaining to buildings are, rightly, taken locally. The fact is that thousands of closed churches would send out a very powerful message that the Church and the Christian faith have had their day in this country. Apart from growing the Church, there is, in our view, no single solution to the challenges posed by our extensive responsibility for a very significant part of the nation's heritage.

That having been said, we are not proposing fiddling while Rome burns, or burying our heads in the sand like proverbial ostriches, hoping that the problem will go away. Rather we propose a more strategic approach to the use of church buildings nationally and in dioceses as part of mission plans, which we believe will help very considerably.

At the same time, our first principle notes that securing more assured financial support for listed cathedrals and church buildings for the long term should be a priority. Though handing historic churches over to the state, even if it were possible, would not be a happy solution, if the experience of other countries not too far away is anything to go by, it should be noted that in financial terms the Church of England is the least established church in western Europe. We welcome recent Government funding that has been received and hope that significant help will be assured in the future. These buildings are, after all, everyone's heritage, and they are the jewel in its crown, as well as being flagships for the Gospel.

This debate is an opportunity for Synod to offer initial reflections on the Report as part of the consultation process. As it does so, I ask Synod, recognising the blessing and the burden that our stewardship of so many historic building buildings represents, to welcome the Report, to commend it for wider discussion and to invite the Archbishops' Council, the Church Commissioners and the Church Buildings

Council to work together on the detailed proposals as set out in the motion. I beg to move.

Rt Hon Sir Tony Baldry (Oxford): Chair of the Church Buildings Council. I concur with everything said by Bishop John in his excellent speech, and I will thus try not to repeat any of the points that have already been made. Our purpose has to be to ensure that our church buildings are blessings and not burdens. We want all our churches to thrive, to ensure that church buildings can connect with the communities that they serve, that we can celebrate their beauty, their history, their sense of place, continuity and sense of the sacred. But the challenges of caring and maintaining some 16,000 parish churches are many. For example, a couple of weeks ago I was visiting a church on the Northamptonshire/Leicestershire border to consider the future of a church with 600 sopranos - soprano pipistrelle bats. But what made me slightly weak-kneed was not the bats but that this magnificent Grade 1 listed medieval church, with some wonderful medieval stained glass and an organ that had come from the Palace of Whitehall in the time of King Charles I, was served and supported by a community of just ten houses. As a consequence of history, not least the medieval manorial system, there are significant numbers of listed church buildings in dioceses such as Truro, Exeter, Hereford, Norwich and elsewhere with magnificent church buildings serving comparatively small communities.

The Bishop of London and I went and saw the Chancellor and requested money for church roofs. We reminded the Chancellor that he had said of a previous Government that they had “failed to repair the roof while the sun was shining”, and that we had quite a lot of roofs that needed repairing, and we hoped that the sun would shine on our request. We are extremely grateful that the Chancellor gave us £55 million for the Church Roof Fund. Can I also thank the Chancellor for announcing today in the Autumn Statement that the Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme is going to remain at £42 million and will not be altered during the lifetime of this Parliament.

The first tranche of the Church Roof Fund is helping repair and restore 372 church roofs, but I had a note from a landmark listed church in the Diocese of Lincoln saying that they had been awarded the grant, but they were not sure that they could proceed with the project because they are a community of just 70 people. That is the total number of people in the community, not the size of the congregation, and they were not confident that they could afford the annual cost of insurance.

For reasons of history, the majority of our church buildings are in rural areas serving about a fifth of England’s population, so the challenges are many, and there is no one, single solution. We need to find ways to make the maintenance of our church buildings viable, hence why we are discussing how we can widen the sharing of the burden, with more friends groups, in some cases passing on the responsibility for maintenance to trusts, or making it easier for churches to rent out or lease out part of the building they no longer require thus sharing the building, and the burden, with other community uses. Sometimes the solution may be festival churches, but can I reinforce the point made by Bishop John: the idea of festival churches is to keep churches open, and to keep churches open for now and for future generations, it is to draw together the local community a number of times a year in acts of worship to ensure such churches are there, open for worship and also, hopefully, to encourage the community to help raise the money needed for paying for the essentials such as insurance and to clear the guttering and to maintain the basic fabric of the Church.

With all our church buildings we are seeking to try to ensure that our churches are open as much as possible to serve their communities in as many ways as possible, as places of prayer, worship and contemplation, but also churches across the country every day provide a huge range of social enterprise and community services. In all of this, we have to find a sense of balance, a balance between those who understandably want every piece of heritage, every ecclesiastical artefact, every church treasure maintained to the highest possible standards, and who would canonise George Gilbert Scott, and, on the other hand, those who equally understandably, from their perspective, argue that the millions that we spend on maintaining church buildings could be better spent on the Church's wider mission and that we could equally well, like Moses, worship God in tents.

The Church Buildings Council somehow has to help square the circle so we have both the capacity to simultaneously support refugees and maintain rood screens. In policy terms, it does not make much sense having one part of the Church, i.e. the church Buildings Council, responsible for churches that are open and another part of the Church, i.e. part of the Church Commissioners, responsible for churches that are contemplating closure, closing, or have closed. It does seem sensible to have a single entity dealing with all church buildings.

I think it is important to stress that these are proposals that are all subject to consultation and everyone who is part of the Working Party very much hopes that as many people as possible will read our report and contribute to the consultation.

In conclusion, Sir John Betjeman served on the Oxford Diocesan Advisory Committee for 32 years and observed, "Our churches are our history shown in wood and glass and iron and stone", and more optimistically observed, "He ordered windows stained like red and crimson lake. Sing on with hymns uproarious ye humble and aloof, look up, and oh how glorious, he has restored the roof".

The Chair: I did not dare interrupt Betjeman at that particular moment!

Revd Simon Talbot (Ely): Chair, many thanks for this opportunity to make my maiden address to the Synod. As well as being a rural incumbent, it has been my privilege over the last six years to serve on the Church Commissioners' Church Buildings (Uses and Disposal) Committee - let the heart race!

I welcome the report GS 2008, in particular the development in the document of a theology of buildings and place, which can better inform our practical discussions and decision-making. Also, I welcome the proposals to bring together the various committees involved in church buildings. A way of streamlining our decision-making is essential, particularly in this simplification era.

However, the report does, in my view, contain some notable flaws, chief of which is the concept of the festival church. Although I am not scouting for work for our Church Buildings (Uses and Disposal) Committee, or its successor body, I fear that avoiding the hard choices that exist both for urban and, in particular, rural dioceses in facing the future use and possible disposal of church buildings is storing up problems for the future. Rather than facing these problems now, the festival church avoids making a decision. How will these buildings be cared for? More importantly, who will pick up the cost for ongoing maintenance and insurance? If the PCCs feel that they can no longer provide energy and finance, who is going to fill the gap? For

this reason, I think that suggestion in particular in the report needs more development and further thinking. I warmly commend the report in some respects, but in that area I think we need to do more work. Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you. We will take Archdeacon Jackie Searle, after which I am going to ask each of the proposers of the amendments to come and not propose their amendments, but speak to them. We will take them in the order that they are on the Order Paper: Peter Kay, Sally Gaze and Jonathan Alderton-Ford.

Ven Jackie Searle (Gloucester): I welcome this report, and may I say I thoroughly enjoyed reading the theological section and really appreciated that.

In Gloucestershire, in our diocese, we recognise both the burden and the blessing of the wonderful buildings that we have. We have a wide range of multi-parish benefices and the clergy and the church wardens do a fantastic job in maintaining those. I really want to pay tribute to them as we think about this subject.

It is also worth saying that the faculty simplification has been warmly welcomed, so much so that my colleague archdeacon and I, when we have introduced it at church wardens' workshops, have received rounds of applause. That does not happen all that often.

We recognise that in our buildings sometimes there will be a need to close. We have also recently convened a Building Review Group, and so we have some embryonic ideas from that which I would like to share that are pertinent to this paper.

First of all, we really want to have churches that are open and feel open. Open and feel open, places of prayer and encounter with God, places of hospitality, places for the community. I welcome in this report the proposal for seeking more national help and for funding for those buildings that are valued so widely across our nation.

We have also recognised in our diocese, and in every diocese, that there is in fact already a department that deals with buildings; that is our property departments. We already have a way of dealing with a number of buildings, albeit for different purposes, by which we have a small staff who manage those properties across the whole diocese, and do it well. We have begun to explore - and this is very embryonic at this stage; a model by which our churches and their communities, those that particularly would fall under the remit of this paper, perhaps 100 or so of our church buildings - whether there is something to be said for a similar kind of department within the diocese that would enable an economy of scale, so that the management and administrative burden that rests so heavily on a great number of our incumbents and churchwardens could be released. What they are asking for is that they may be released for mission and ministry and the things that they would like to be able to do.

This embryonic proposal would be that the money that is currently spent - this average amount that I think the paper puts at about £10,000 - would be put together so there could be a way of using an economy of scale that would provide things like utilities, and the administrative burden, the management of the building, would be able to operate in a way that covers all those churches that contribute to such a scheme, leaving that freedom for mission and ministry that our clergy and wardens long for. Thank you.

The Chair: I am now going to call on the Revd Peter Kay to speak to, but not move, his two amendments. It is five minutes between the two, I am afraid, not five minutes for each. After which we will hear from Sally Gaze do something similar.

Revd Peter Kay (St Albans): I am not that Peter Kay! Chair, I would like to thank the Church Buildings Review Group for their report, which I found very helpful, thought-provoking and interesting. I appreciated the thorough research and statistics, the theological reflection and many of the recommendations that have come out of it.

I welcome the reorganisation plans, in particular, to bring a fresh focus to our approach to buildings.

My amendment, which I hope Bishop John will view as a friendly one, is intended to help provide what I feel is a balanced and positive direction to that focus. My own viewpoint is as a rural incumbent in north Bedfordshire with three Grade I listed churches. However, I do not view the opportunities as being particularly those of maintenance, or indeed managed decline as, I am afraid, in my view, a lot of the focus is on.

I can certainly confirm that, yes, some rural congregations are struggling. Not just rural ones, of course. We do have to think about how viable they are. The large majority of churches are not in that position. I suggest that for many normal village churches there are enormous missional opportunities, in fact, of a type that we have not seen in generations.

To speak about the rural context, you will be aware of many of the wider social challenges, many pubs, shops, other facilities shutting. These difficulties are certainly not confined to rural communities, of course. Churches cannot simply replicate what has been lost. In places where social gathering points are being lost, it means that simple local church events, such as coffee mornings, toddler groups, concerts, and so on, can take on a new significance and weight within the life of that community and provide opportunities to connect and bring people into the life of the Church.

Here is the point. Very often, the limiting factor is not age, or numbers of people, or imagination, or willingness, it is simply that they do not have the proper facilities to put these events on. Many rural churches do not have a church hall. Village halls are not always ideal and are subject to the vagaries of booking.

To put things more positively, from a rural perspective, if a church building has got a loo, a kitchen area, decent heating, and at least some flexible space, there are all sorts of ways in which we can use our buildings to advance the Kingdom in our communities.

I speak from a rural perspective, but I do not think the amendments are purely with a rural view in mind. In fact, I believe that all of us, if we take a step back, can think how our own buildings can be improved to serve and connect better with our own particular communities. Improving facilities is not easy, it takes tenacity, vision, encouragement, patience, fundraising skills, and, of course, prayer. Therefore, alongside the recommendations that we have in the report, I would love to see our central bodies asking as a crucial question, "How can we encourage and support

dioceses and churches to invest in their facilities to better serve and connect with their communities?”

I am thinking not especially about dishing out money, but rather training, a joint strategy with dioceses, perhaps some national goals, and so on. I think it is a vital question to consider and one that the report, yes, does touch on and acknowledge, but one that I sense is in danger of being obscured among the wider reorganisation and administrative matters.

You may say that I am too young and too new to Synod for such scepticism, but what I find so exciting about the Reform and Renewal agenda is the way we are being challenged to be outward-looking in so many different facets of our church life.

That is why I am putting forward these amendments, first to acknowledge the opportunities that our buildings provide and, secondly, a distinct request to ask our central bodies, as they implement the recommendations, to consider the opportunities for mission that our church buildings provide all of us and to develop an overall strategy for investment and growth.

I hope that gives a helpful picture of my motivations.

The Chair: As indicated, the other two who have amendments standing in their name, to speak to, but not to move, their amendments.

Revd Canon Sally Gaze (Norwich): Chair, there is a story of Pooh bear seeking to ride to safety on a honey pot during a flood. If I remember rightly, the story goes that sometimes Pooh was on the honey pot and sometimes the honey pot was on Pooh. I found that quotation not in its AA Milne original, but in an Archbishop Justin sermon about church buildings. He continued an explanation: “Buildings can be like that. Sometimes they are the servants of the Church, and sometimes they are on top, her tyrant”.

I am a rural team rector with seven medieval church buildings and three ruined churches in my care. I am acutely aware that we are spending far too much time underneath our honey pots. We love our church buildings, but that strong attachment makes us reluctant to admit how close we are sometimes to drowning.

The report from the Church Buildings Review Group paints a well-researched picture of the joys and difficulties which face many church communities in the care of their buildings. It offers examples of dioceses developing ideas to help church buildings survive. Some people would say, why am I asking the Simplification Group to give further consideration to more creative ways forward and options? I am asking because Pooh bears, just like me, all over the country are tied to multiple honey pots and the report has not yet offered credible alternatives to address that issue.

It does seek to create legislation to allow PCCs to delegate management of the building to another body, but without other changes this will not make a significant difference to most multi-parish benefices. We simply need more ambitious options to be created.

The report states that there cannot be one national strategy for church buildings. I quite agree. Dioceses and parishes are different and solutions need to be found

which are right for each place. There ought not to be just one national strategy, yet I think that is what we currently have. Our one strategy is always to combine the cure of souls with the care of the parish church buildings, however many of them there may be. It is a national task to examine the theological basis and the practical outcomes of that strategy. It is one that may have worked better in the past than it does today. It is a national task to identify whether there are alternative structures which can be offered as options to dioceses and benefices.

Of course, there could be very many such options and I am just going to hint at one. There is not time in my speech, unfortunately, to go into detail, but I want to show there are possibilities that are worth time and attention. Suppose the interested parties in a multi-parish benefice could decide that, instead of having eight buildings all vested in the incumbent, it could have six churches managed in a different way and just two parish churches in the current sense of parish church. The incumbents and PCCs would still have pastoral responsibility for the whole area, but just two buildings, releasing energy for other ways of evangelism and care. They could be cared for locally with the support of the diocese, but not with the overwhelming responsibility on the incumbent for 12 or 14 buildings. They could have experts in managing historic buildings closely involved in local trusts.

I know that the last Synod was excited to hear about some wonderful creative mission and ministry in the report from the Rural Affairs Group, so now please answer the prayers of a rural priest who is passionate about the Gospel and growth. Incumbents, congregations, and even ecclesiastical buildings, need to be further released for mission. Please vote for this amendment.

The Chair: Thank you, Sally. Unlike a very famous atheist, Pooh bear was allowed to travel with his honey without the security forces extracting it from him. We are going to hear from Jonathan Alderton-Ford now, after which we will have two or three speeches on the general motion, but I will be cutting the speech limit down after Jonathan to three minutes. I am trying to get in one or two maiden speeches as well.

Revd Canon Jonathan Alderton-Ford (St Edmundsbury & Ipswich): In Suffolk, we can take a great deal of pride in the results of the Listed Places of Worship Scheme. Eighteen years ago, way back in the last millennium, our diocesan motion and the VAT campaign we ran eventually became this annual tax rebate on repairs. Since then, well over £40 million has been refunded to the Church and in some years £9 million has come in.

With our sister diocese of Norwich, we have the largest and finest collection of medieval churches anywhere in the world, so we could sit back and say, "Job well done". No, we cannot. First, experience shows there needs to be an ongoing dialogue with the Government by the Archbishops' Council not only to safeguard the scheme but to make sure the rate of return is not suddenly changed without consultation. This has happened at least twice in my time on Synod. This amendment helps to make sure that process is properly conducted and carefully monitored, as the report implies and a previous speaker has indicated.

We cannot let this go for another reason. We all know of many unlisted churches set in strategic locations over the whole of our nation who are doing vital work in their

communities, yet they receive no assistance from this scheme nor any other. Is that fair? Is that Gospel? No, it is not.

My amendment aims to end that injustice. It aims to give fresh hope and encouragement to many good churches that we all know. Stonework and lead roofs are expensive to repair - tell us about it in Suffolk - but so is 1930s brickwork and 1960s flat roofs covered in asphalt. In every diocese, even sleepy Suffolk, there are many urban and suburban churches that have small but dedicated congregations who do extraordinary things year after year, and they need our help. I calculate that the additional rebate is going to be no more than £2 million per annum as a maximum. This may seem a lot to some, but when you consider that we save the Government £3.5 billion in social welfare each year, I think they can afford it. If we present our case well they would see the clear social benefit and respond.

My second aim is to end the anomaly in the VAT law. While it is true that new buildings and some extensions can claim 100% tax rebate, it is given on the proviso that for the next ten years the new building cannot charge commercially for the use of its facilities. This clause affects both listed and unlisted churches. It prevents the generation of income and seriously curtails effective business plans. If it changed, it could help stimulate new work, new jobs and a range of commercial activities. It would stimulate the economy in poor areas and, in turn, would be beneficial to the taxman and would help the Church to grow.

I am not saying "demand", I am saying, "Please, do ask", and if the answer is "no", so be it, but, given that MPs of my acquaintance are bemused by the policy of the Church of England, which is seemingly to pour resources into churches where nobody goes because they are in the middle of fields yet neglect the ones that do wonderful work, work that often takes place in their constituencies, if we ask them I am sure we would receive wide-scale support.

I must remind you, this is a Listed Places of Worship Scheme, not a listed churches scheme. Such an action would be a positive ecumenical and multi-faith gesture into many of our divided communities. If evangelism can be described as one beggar telling another beggar where bread is, surely it is wrong for the beggar who has found the bread not to share it with his deserving brother and help him get his share. If Pooh has got a honey pot, can Piglet not have some?

If we are going to reach out to all our communities, not just some, if we are determined to make the best use of all our buildings, new and old, ugly and pretty, and if we are serious about getting the job done, then please support this amendment standing in my name. Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you, Jonathan. We now come to perhaps a couple of maiden speeches, if we may. I wonder whether we might hear from Gary Waddington and then Mr Timothy Goode.

The Chair imposed a speech limit of three minutes.

Revd Gary Waddington (Leeds): Chair, I am very grateful for being called and for the ability to make my maiden speech. Can I also add my thanks to the Bishop of Worcester and the Church Buildings Review Group for their work, particularly for the theological exploration of sacred space and holy place. As a former DAC member, it

was always entertaining when parishes could come and articulate a theological vision for what they wanted to do, and so I find that work particularly refreshing and helpful.

I want to very much support the main motion and speak to three Ts. I want to echo Peter Kay's plea for training. The report mentions, somewhere around pages 52 or 53, the need for some training in IME 4-7. Could those who work up plans for implementation strongly consider how more significant training and support can be given, whether centrally or across dioceses, both in IME and in CMD.

My own parish is currently engaged in a £2.5 million redevelopment project, and, whilst my formation has enabled me to understand something of the Gospels in Greek, a 28-page online stage 2 Heritage Lottery Fund application form, and some of the other funders one has to read, seems to be written in a language with a specialised hermeneutic not readily accessible to the uninitiated in the land of heritage outcomes-speak.

The advice of archdeacons and buildings' experts, where available, is indeed invaluable, but those on the frontline day-to-day who have to deal with design teams, architects, quantity surveyors, and the like, would be hugely helped by a depth of training. Whether we are in rural poor, urban poor, or, in my case, in somewhat suburban splendour, we have common themes to deal with, even if they require sometimes different approaches.

Technology helps us enormously, and much information is available, but a single intelligible, single point access would save huge amounts of time.

Time is indeed my last point. For many of us, to echo previous speakers, both clergy and churchwardens in the wonderful supportive work that they do, time is often a premium. Capacity to be able to understand and deal with often very complicated themes can be something that can hold parishes back from engaging themselves in their frontline missional responsibilities.

Those considerations of training, technology and time, are vital in safely delivering the heritage and mission outcomes we would all wish to see.

The Chair: Revd Timothy Goode, followed by the Dean of the Arches, after which we will be having the various amendments formally put.

Revd Tim Goode (Southwark): Chair, I support Peter Kay's amendment, number 17 on the Order Paper, and personally understand the burden and blessing of so many historic buildings that the motion before us states, being a parish priest of a Grade I listed building.

I am, though, disappointed that the report makes no mention of a desire to make our church buildings physically accessible to all as an aid to mission and to look at ways financial support can be provided, from within or outside, to parishes in this vital area. The introduction to the Common Worship Baptism states that in God "we have a new dignity and God calls us to fullness of life". All have a new dignity, all called to fullness of life, disabled and enabled.

If our church buildings are places where prayer has been valid, paragraph 90 of the report, and where we tell our story, paragraph 94, then our story is a pretty poor one when it comes to celebrating and affirming the ministry of those who have mobility issues, given that so many of our church buildings are inaccessible, especially beyond the nave and into the chancel and sanctuary. In fact, so many of our church buildings reveal a narrative that from the time that our medieval churches and cathedrals were built, right up to the recent past, on the whole the ministries of disabled people were ignored and, where this was not the case, they were more often than not passive participants.

Given that the Church now joyfully acknowledges and celebrates the extraordinary gifts of the disabled through ordination as well as many other ministries within the Church, I am concerned that the missional aspect of our church buildings as places of safety, sanctuary and inclusion are being undermined by a Church that has cut its disability budget by over half, while at the same time expecting the disabled priest to minister and lead in church buildings that themselves disable rather than enable.

Our church buildings are missional and church buildings that have successfully engaged with issues of access and inclusion are more likely to be growing vibrant communities of faith. We need to invest in the accessibility of our church buildings to better serve our communities and make our church buildings fit for mission as part of our Renewal and Reform. The invitation to invest in the accessibility of our church buildings would ensure a welcome for all those who have been disabled by our church buildings in the past and whose ministry is such a wonderful and life enhancing gift to the whole of Christ's Church.

The Chair: Thank you. The Dean of the Arches, after which I would be looking to Peter Kay to formally move his first amendment.

Mr Charles George (ex officio): Mr Chair, thank you for calling me. It has been a privilege and a pleasure to work with the Church Buildings' Council in recent years in connection with the reform and simplification of the faculty system, and I have found this latest Report extremely interesting and I commend it in most respects. I simply want to mention four matters.

First, the proposal that the Church and government representatives explore ways in which more assured financial support for listed cathedrals and church buildings be provided in the long term. It is extremely unsatisfactory that we as a Church limp by with occasional grants and with a lack of assured funding. Whilst one welcomes today's announcement we do need more, and I would hope that it will be a priority not just of the Bishop of Worcester and Sir Tony Baldry in their new roles but also the individual diocesan bishops and the Archbishops' Council to press ahead and ask for further assured funding so that there can be substantial progress made on this matter within the first two years of this quinquennium. I have in mind some form of guarantee of approximately half the funding of quinquennial reports. In that sort of way there would be a proper way in which we could proceed.

Secondly, I welcome the idea of a wider use of open church buildings. Can I merely say that there is plenty of scope at present within the legal formats which are set out in the helpful Appendix 3 to your report dealing with means to have shared uses of churches. Unfortunately, these are simply not being taken up. The law is in place. I am not aware of a single case in which proposals have been refused through the

faculty system. There simply are not enough proposals coming forward.

Thirdly, I just want to say a word of caution about the suggested amendment of the PCC Powers Measure 1956 to enable PCCs to transfer maintenance and care of church buildings to another body. It does seem to me that this will present considerable problems in terms of the faculty jurisdiction and the ecclesiastical exemption which will need to be explored, but I am more particularly concerned about the position of insolvency rules and insolvency legislation and whether people are going to be prepared to come forward in some form of structure and whether they will be able to undertake these very substantial liabilities for care and maintenance of church buildings without exposing them to personal liability.

The fourth matter I leave over, but it is simply the need for a rather more realistic approach to closures.

The Chair: Thank you very much. I am calling on Peter Kay to formally move the first of his amendments that stands at number 16 in our Order Paper.

Revd Peter Kay (St Albans): Yes, the first amendment is on your screens and I formally move that amendment.

The Chair: Thank you very much. I now call upon the Bishop of Worcester to comment on that. He has two minutes.

The Bishop of Worcester (Rt Revd Dr John Inge): I thank the proposer of the amendment for that amendment which he said he hoped I would see as a friendly amendment. Indeed, I do. The majority of the Report is relevant to all church buildings, as I hope anyone who has read it will have seen, from the simplification to the recommendation to secure widened local community involvement regardless of listing status or location. With that in mind, there was, hosted by the Ecclesiastical in St Martins in the Fields today - he was talking about all the good work that has been done - a competition looking for imaginative work being done by church buildings. There were 424 entries, all of which brought in more community use and all of which are replicable. But to get back to the amendment, I am very happy to accept it.

The Chair: Thank you very much. I see no one standing, therefore I put that amendment to the vote. You were not quick enough, Sir.

The amendment was carried on a show of hands.

The Chair: I now come back to Revd Peter Kay to formally move his second amendment.

Revd Peter Kay (St Albans): Thank you. The second amendment is on the screen also, which I formally move.

The Chair: Thank you. Once again, the Bishop of Worcester to respond, please. Two minutes.

The Bishop of Worcester (Rt Revd Dr John Inge): Paragraph 45 states that, "We believe a significant part of the answer lies in securing widening local community involvement in managing and caring for buildings." That is more fully stated in

Recommendation 3 of the Report, "Guidance on legal models relating to the use of open church buildings should be more widely disseminated in order to promote good practice in enabling such wider use."

I agree wholeheartedly with the proposer that we should be more enthusiastic in our encouragement and exhortation to parishes to improve their facilities; and, as set out in paragraph 112, to help us meet Christ's second great Commandment to love our neighbour, which, of course, is all about service to the community. Recommendation 6 encourages dioceses to be more strategic with their buildings, not least including incorporating church buildings, "into each diocese's vision and strategy, as well as forming an integral part of deanery Mission Action Planning." With all that in mind, I am very happy to accept this amendment.

The Chair. Thank you. Once again, I see no one standing; therefore, I put this amendment to the vote.

The amendment was carried on a show of hands.

The Chair. Sally Gaze.

Revd Canon Sally Gaze: Chair, I move the amendment in my name.

The Chair. Thank you. Once again, the amendment is up on the screens and I call upon the Bishop of Worcester to respond. Two minutes.

The Bishop of Worcester (Rt Revd Dr John Inge): This one is more tricky. I have every sympathy with the proposer of the amendment. Recommendation 2 absolutely concurs with the desire to find creative new ways of managing church buildings and reducing the burden on incumbents. The lawyers will be looking also at ways to loosen existing legislation to facilitate more flexible use of church buildings. The Church Buildings Review Group, however, thought long and hard about the effectiveness of changing ownership of church buildings and came to the view that ownership best rests with the PCC, whilst at the same time seeking to simplify governance and facilitate creative models of management unless the church is to be closed.

Now I think that the points that the proposer of the amendment makes need to be fed into the consultation process, of which this is a part, but I would rather not see this tied down. There is reference to the Simplification Group in Recommendation 4 and more work being done by it, but I would rather not pin things down at this stage of the consultation process in the terms that are articulated in this amendment. So I am not happy to accept this amendment.

The Chair. Thank you. So this Item is open for debate.

Revd Canon Ruth Hind (West Yorkshire & Dales): Chair, I stand to support Canon Gaze's amendment and because in GS 1127 the Rural Affairs Group of General Synod asks for the Simplification Group to provide greater clarity on the tasks and responsibilities that currently fall on the incumbent, with a view to allowing some of these to be assigned to others. At present, it is difficult for incumbents to assign the care and management of their buildings to others if they remain legally responsible for them together with the PCCs.

Canon Gaze's amendment is entirely in line with what the Rural Affairs Group have asked for. It does not tell Synod what to do. It merely asks for a creative exploration in an area where some clergy in multi-parish benefices are frustrated and where their capacity for missional engagement is being inhibited. The Reform and Renewal agenda is one of examining and streamlining our practice to make it fit for purpose. Please support this amendment to allow the Simplification Group to consider all available options for the ownership and management of church buildings. Thank you.

The Chair: Synod, we have not a lot of time to debate the particularities of the amendment, so I wonder whether anybody standing is wishing to oppose the amendment?

Ven Douglas Dettmer (Exeter): Archdeacon of Totnes but, until recently, incumbent of 11 church benefices and, therefore, the proud owner of 11 churches and churchyards; and I am sure it was a slip of the tongue by the Bishop of Worcester, the PCCs are not the owners of the churches, of course, but the incumbent is. I think my uncomfortableness about this amendment, and I am wanting to encourage us to vote against it, is precisely in the first half of the purpose stated for it, which is to relieve the burden on incumbents.

The focus here, although I recognise its mission motivation, is on incumbents as owners of buildings. As a rural multi-parish incumbent myself I am sure that I was not alone in seeing myself as involved with the whole community not just the church-going part of it, which explicitly understood and wished to further Christian mission. The best way, in my experience, of engaging with the whole community in mission is to engage with the whole community full stop. One of the golden opportunities we have to do that is through engaging with communities in supporting and maintaining our buildings.

I would want to encourage us to not load something else onto the Simplification Task Group, but to celebrate the potential we have as incumbents for working with communities in finding helpful ways forward in maintaining our church buildings for the purpose of mission.

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

“That the question be now put”

The Chair: That has my agreement, does it have the agreement of Synod?

This motion was carried on a show of hands.

The Chair: I, therefore, put Item 18 to the vote.

The amendment was lost on a show of hands.

The Chair: It brings us on Item 19 and I turn to Canon Jonathan Alderton-Ford to formally move the amendment that stands in his name.

Revd Canon Jonathan Alderton-Ford (St Edmundsbury & Ipswich): Chairman, I formally move the motion in my name.

The Chair. Thank you. Synod, you will see it is now up on the screens at Item 19. I call upon the Bishop of Worcester to see how generous he is going to be this time.

The Bishop of Worcester (Rt Revd Dr John Inge): Thank you. The first part of this amendment refers to the Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme. Sir Tony has already broken the news that, remarkably, in view of a 20 per cent cut in DCMS's overall budget, it is going to be maintained at £42 million for the lifetime of this Parliament. That is a very remarkable thing and we, I think, should express our profound gratitude to the Government and I think that this is not the time, frankly, to be passing an amendment of this sort.

Secondly, the extension of the scheme to churches which are not listed; admirable purpose from the proposer but, frankly, it is a contradiction in terms to have a Listed Places of Worship Scheme that applies to places of worship that are not listed. It is like talking about systematic theology. I do not want to go into too much detail on the second part, but the previous Government put considerable time into this without any success and, actually, it seems to us, it having been rejected, that the Government is unlikely to go into this again. But I can assure Synod that we will, as in accordance with our first recommendation, do everything we can to secure long-term support funding for these buildings which are everyone's heritage. So I am not happy to accept this amendment.

The Chair. Thank you. This amendment is now open for debate with a speech limit of two minutes, but I see nobody standing. Therefore, I put Item 19 to the vote, the amendment in the name of the Canon Jonathan Alderton-Ford.

This amendment was lost on a show of hands.

The Chair. We now move back to the substantive debate as amended by Items 16 and 17 and Mr Prolocutor.

The Chair imposed a speech limit of three minutes

Revd Preb Stephen Lynas (Bath & Wells): Thank you, Chair. Pro-Prolocutor for the record. We are just about to have some elections, so let us not go there. I am speaking from the diocese of Bath and Wells, which, if you have looked at the charts in this Report on pages 9 and 10, sits very comfortably in the middle of the green section. We are seriously rural but not so much to the extent of some who are here.

I do want to praise the Bishop of Worcester for the wonderfully eclectic collection of waffle which is to be found in the Theological Perspective part of the Report, because I found it helpful. I do not like waffle but I did find what was there helpful because it gave me a perspective on the church buildings' issue which is often lacking when you are actually discussing a hard case in a parish or in a diocese.

The waffle began with George MacLeod and his idea of 'thin places', and then it went rapidly via TS Elliot, Walter Brueggemann, Tom Torrance and William Temple, via St Augustine, and that is just the first four pages. It is like reading chapter 11 of the Epistle to the Hebrews. Time does not permit us to note Timothy Gorrige and Rowan Williams. What particularly helped me though was the reference in paragraphs 111 and 112 to our Lord's Summary of the law and his two Commandments.

The Report says, "A lack of awareness that both parts of our Lord's summary of the law have repercussions for churches, [as much as] as they do for disciples." In other words, the church building needs to express our love for God, and many of them are quite good at that, but it also needs to express our love for our neighbour and we are not always quite as good at that. We do need to not delude ourselves that everybody loves and understands the buildings, including, sadly, those who have the stewardship of them sometimes.

If I may give anonymous examples. A church in which I celebrated not too long ago, they have not got a clue what a gem they have got. They have one of those long stone ancient effigies lying on the floor. It is hidden by a rather tacky set of notice boards. They have some lovely modern banners made up by young people, which is great, but they are stuck up with a nail in the plaster without much thought to how that ought to be done. Another of our churches which had some serious damage had the opportunity then to completely refurbish the floor and all the seating but, to the intense frustration of the incumbent, the PCC and churchwardens wanted to put it back exactly as it was before.

So the impression we give when we read these reports and we talk about them is that everybody is up for sensitive opening up to community use and new ways of worship but, despite any number of loos, serveries, coffee shops and post offices, we do need to just remember that many churches are starting from a place that is much further back than that, to the intense frustration of their clergy of course. As Gary Waddington has already said, there is a lack of theological understanding of what our buildings are about sometimes. When I was a choirboy in a rural church in Kent I used to sing, "We love the place, O God, Wherein thine honour dwells; The joy of thine abode. All earthly joy excels". You will be thankful for the red light; we welcome the report but we need to think very hard about how the implementation is going to go down at parochial level. Thank you.

The Chair: I think we will take the Bishop of Gloucester for a maiden speech as bishop followed by Wendy Coombey also for a maiden speech.

The Bishop of Gloucester (Rt Revd Rachel Treweek): Like others, I want to say how much I welcome this report and am very grateful to Archdeacon Jackie for saying how in Gloucester we are already beginning to look creatively at how we manage our buildings within the wider picture of mission and ministry, but I want to briefly say something about identity.

As has been noted in the report, there is a strong interconnectedness between place and story. I particularly love the quote at paragraph 96 from Douglas Davis who recognises that when the dimension of history becomes added to personal identity and individual experience, it gives a place a particular cultural significance and makes it very sacred.

As so often with people's lives, when something connected with the past is radically changed in the present, it can often imply that what existed in the past is now being devalued or diminished. Identity is threatened. I became even more aware of these emotional and psychological aspects in relation to church buildings when I served for a while on the Church Commissioners' Pastoral Committee. Objectors to changes to buildings or objectors to closure often experience something which is not dissimilar to bereavement, and yet so often I think we fail to recognise that and therefore fail to

work with it in an emotionally intelligent way.

I would very much like us within this report to promote ways of enabling communities and worshipping congregations to tell their past stories, to create timelines together, celebrate all that has been good and life-giving in the past and provide opportunities to honour the past and seek ways to mark all of that liturgically. We need to be able to proclaim that letting go of the past is not devaluing it. It would be good to gather together examples that we have where people have worked with churches and the wider community to engage in such projects which are about saying that the past is not being diminished by change in the present. Theologically, it enables us to speak of our God whose love and faithfulness is unchanging and yet was in the business of change and making all things new. It is certainly something I want us to explore in Gloucester and I hope that these sorts of processes could be commended as the proposals in this report are progressed.

Mrs Wendy Coombey (Hereford): Firstly I also welcome the work of the Review Group and I particularly welcome Peter Kay's amendment which focuses on the community use of church buildings. That is what I have spent doing in our dioceses in the last 14 years, encouraging that work, and I have to say that church buildings are part of the fabric of rural life, and I am talking from a rural perspective so forgive me if you live in an urban area. I am prepared to share my bread and my honey, but this is about rural areas. Our church buildings are symbols of faith. There are there and they are woven, and I think we must never under-estimate, as we previously heard, the sense of failure that some communities feel when they are the person after 800 years who walks away from a church building and I do not think we can under-estimate that, so we have spent a considerable amount of time in Hereford diocese putting in place the resources and the skills to try and stop that happening. I think church buildings are one of the markers of sustainable rural communities and we should not lose sight of that.

However, despite the fact that the Dean of the Arches has mentioned that the pastoral measure, the amendment that allows use of buildings, has not necessarily been taken up, what it did do was inspire church communities to look at how they can use their buildings. We have had a lot of that in our area and where it has happened combined with a really solid mapping exercise, particularly more so in later years, it has led to much stronger finances, much larger collective community responsibility for the building so that is very important but there is an issue that I do have to raise, and that is finding funding to support development of church buildings. Much of our funding is focused on repairs and heritage development, and sometimes the projects are not about that. They are simply about putting those facilities in. When we hear the big lottery - whether or not you agree with lottery funding - saying to our rural communities, "You are not large enough for us to invest in", we have a real problem. That is not their role. We buy lottery tickets in rural areas. Why are we not able to benefit from that funding?

I really would appreciate as part of the review and looking at the whole issue of funding if we can put pressure through government departments and through our relationship with DCMS to actually try and turn that around.

Finally there is one other fantastic resource we need to maintain and that is English Heritage's support workers, the grants at places of worship which support the workers across the country. We do not want to lose that resource either.

Revd Andrew Yates (Truro): Thank you for this opportunity to give a maiden speech today. I would like to take you to Penzance, to the parish that contains the most deprived part of Cornwall, St John's. There is a large Victorian building. Up until two months ago it was open for just two hours a week for mainly 30 elderly worshippers. Now it is open 30 hours a week and you will hear the sound of 20 children shrieking with laughter and their parents chatting over coffee. The difference has been the installation of a play zone: £30,000 worth of nets, slides and baubles. I would like to take this opportunity to thank you to the Church Community Fund for funding half of that project. It has even been blessed by the Bishop of Truro and there is photographic evidence on Facebook "Soft play at Penzance with Bishop Tim on the yellow slide".

This was a church facing closure. It has been given a lifeline now financially through this play zone. Its worship area has been retained, totally unchanged. But, most importantly, we are now offering those families from the deprived parts of our town a soft play area, somewhere that is safe for their children to play. Already there have been enquiries about baptisms and weddings, a slow stream of people walking into the chancel area to light candles in prayer. On Saturday afternoon I watched a mum talking to her two children about the stained glass window there in the church. But, most importantly, this play zone is bringing in people that other organisations would define as hard to reach. As a result, we are having all sorts of really important conversations, conversations with people from that local community we would not have if it was not for the play zone. We are hearing first-hand about those in bed and breakfast accommodation that have to leave that house at 9.00 in the morning and wander the rest of the day. We are hearing about people facing benefit cuts. We are being informed that the further attempts to serve that community are taken up by these conversations, but I think this informed listening is also helping us to get ready for the talking of Jesus that we were hearing much about before lunch today. All these things have only happened because of that play zone.

I would ask us if we could be more upbeat about the many excellent examples of churches having additional use. Paragraph 122 lists some of them, not play zones so perhaps that could be added next time it is printed. There are wonderful stories of people exercising mission. Could we have some details and could we examine those? Paragraph 124 talks about sharing this information. Could we look into a web-based resource where these stories could be placed so others could be inspired to follow and also we can prevent ourselves reinventing the wheel by hearing these stories and learning from them?

Canon Phillip Blinkhorn (Manchester): I want to welcome the report and really look at it from the point of view of an urban diocese and particularly about church closures. You will see that Manchester got a couple of honourable mentions in the report and this was, I have to say, quite a surprise. I was really impressed by the terms of reference of our task group that were quoted. Although as a member of the steering group that set them and the building task group involved, perhaps it says more about my attention to detail and the fact everybody needs to go back and look at terms of reference occasionally. I also reflected with our diocesan secretary that if we were held out for managing closed churches well, both of us hate to think what is happening elsewhere because we think we have got a problem.

We have got a large number of churches built, and I almost say thrown up, after 1850. Most have no listing and an awful lot of them are either beyond or towards the

end of their useful lives. They are not in the right place. One of our churches in Mosside has five other church buildings within a mile - that is a mile as the asthmatic crow flies - and in that distance there are two parks, an industrial estate and a new office development. We know we need over the next 15 or so years to actually close a lot of the buildings. Our group is trying to put the discussion in a process that also looks at congregation size and financial strength. When we started our review we asked some of the dioceses about their strategy and I am afraid the answer was usually, "Good luck. Let us know how you get on".

What we need, we think, from the centre is a process that demonstrably and quickly supports diocesan decisions - it is not always obvious at the moment - and that helps with disposal. The report seems to think it is easy to find alternative uses in urban areas rather than rural dioceses. It is not true. So we need the Church Commissioners to relax some of the conditions and covenants they impose on sales. We need more professional help from central resources on what might be done, not only finding our own developers. We need more co-ordinated reviews and a sharing of good practice and ideas. Thanks for the report. We want to treat it as a start but more creative thinking, please.

Revd Tiffer Robinson (St Edmundsbury & Ipswich): I welcome this motion. I welcome this report and I would like to speak about the overall tone of the debate in which it is in so it is not misinterpreted. I am a rural parson from Suffolk with four country parishes. We have about 2,000 people living in those parishes and on a Sunday we have between 80 and 100 except for benefice services where most people have a lie in. Sometimes I am one of them. I am not trying to blow my own trumpet. These were good examples of fairly healthy rural churches before I arrived. They pay a full share and they struggle along. We are seeing some people coming to faith and I think the work we are doing is valuable. We are not considering any of the things in the report like festival churches or uniting our parishes, and I am trying to resist the need to say "yet" because so much of the dialogue and discourse around rural ministry is about expecting that one day we will decline and our hope should be that we do have to. That is what I really want to say today. Rural churches can and do grow and, although it is clear in this report these options are not intended for every small rural church, there are many who would quite happily mothball most of our rural medieval buildings tomorrow. The report inspired vast swathes of clergy and laity to conclude, having read the first page of the report only, that the solution to the rural problem is to stop resourcing small churches and find other people to look after the buildings so the Church can focus all its energy on urban centres. That is not the fault of the report of course, but it is something we need to be aware of.

As I have said before, these are not really solutions to a rural problem. They are creative ideas to allow more flexibility. It is the job of those of us involved in rural ministry to convince the rest of the Church and indeed the country that rural churches are not a problem, they are a mission opportunity that we need to be resourcing and they are crucial for the wider church.

So I support this measure because there are churches that will find the proposals very helpful in what they are trying to do, but it is not a solution to the so-called problem of rural ministry. Indeed the solution is not to see it as a problem at all but a mission field to which Jesus Christ has called us.

The Chair. I see no one standing. Therefore I call upon the Bishop of Worcester to respond to the debate.

The Bishop of Worcester (Rt Revd Dr John Inge): Thank you very much indeed, Chairman, and I would like to say a very big thank you to all members of Synod who have contributed to this debate which from my perspective has been very heartening.

I will make short reference to those who have spoken. Can I first of all pay tribute to the work of Sir Tony Baldry, who is a member of the Group and is doing an extraordinarily good job as the Chair of the Church Buildings Council as indeed did he as Second Estates Commissioner. We all owe him a great debt of gratitude and I was grateful for what he said this afternoon.

Simon Talbott welcomed the report but had questions about festival churches. Let it be absolutely clear that this category of festival churches is not the magic bullet and, as I said at the beginning, we do not think there is such a thing as a magic bullet. The festival churches proposal will be helpful for a number of churches in order to reduce some of the legislation pertaining to parish churches but there of course will need to be closures. We have said that we recognise that there will be need to be closures but that the mood music should be one which recognises the potential of our church buildings.

Jackie Searle paid tribute to the faculty simplification measure and I, in turn, would like to pay tribute here to the stalwart work that Anne Sloman has done in enabling that measure and indeed to the Dean of the Arches. We owe them a great debt of gratitude for this having been possible, so thank you.

Jackie Searle also made reference to the possibility of having something akin to a property department, of doing things on a larger scale, and that is something we would applaud. It is something that has been done nationally with procurement and it is something we would want to encourage with church buildings within dioceses but we do not want to be prescriptive about it. There must be a very clear principle of subsidiarity. Gary Waddington paid tribute to the report but mentioned the need for training, technology in order to release time, and the Church Buildings Division is committed to providing as much of that training and appropriate technology that is possible within the constraints of budget and human resources in order to release time.

Timothy Goode made an impassioned plea for physical accessibility with which I heartily concur. We are all aware that a great deal of progress has been made as far as accessibility is concerned, but there is a great deal still to do. I would simply say that it was not within our remit to look at this particular question, but I am sure that members of Synod will have taken note of his remarks and would want to applaud the sentiments behind them.

The Dean of the Arches made reference to more assured financial support, and today's announcement is a very good step in that direction. I have to say in the present climate that is remarkable. The Church has never received direct funding from the Government in the way that it has since the implementation of these schemes, and that it should have been maintained in the way that it has, and indeed for us to have secured the roofs funding and the First World War funding is very

remarkable, and we need to pay tribute to that, and of course we will want to be working for assured financial support in the future, as is said in the Report.

The Dean of the Arches made reference to the wider use of church buildings, with which of course we would wholeheartedly concur, and he also raised a very important point about looking carefully at the implications of the transfer of maintenance and care in terms of faculty and insolvency rules, and that will clearly need to be looked at very carefully.

I am extraordinarily grateful to the Pro-Prolocutor of the Synod. I had not expected to be compared to the author of the Letters to the Hebrews, but I am extremely grateful to him for his kind remarks. He reminded us that we need to think very carefully about the implementation of this Report, as indeed we do.

The Bishop of Gloucester made reference to identity and the way in which there is an interconnectedness between place and story, and our church buildings should illustrate both the Christian story in which we are caught up and relate to people's experience. She spoke of the invitation to people to tell stories. There is a good opportunity to do that in something which is being encouraged by the church buildings division, an idea pioneered by Sir Tony Baldry; that each church in the land should have some sort of festival to mark the 90th birthday of Her Majesty The Queen next year. We hope that festival will involve the telling of the story of that church, that community; the telling of the story of the Christian faith to which Her Majesty The Queen is so wonderfully committed.

She also made reference to the fact that churches should be living buildings. Indeed they should, and of course there is a problem sometimes about people wanting our churches to be preserved in aspic. I was accosted by somebody at a church I was visiting to do a service the other day in Worcester, who was bemoaning the proposal to remove church pews. She said her grandfather had been responsible for the installation of those pews 100 years ago and he had imagined that it would be for all time. Well, I hope it will not be!

Wendy Coombey made reference to community use and to the fact that these buildings, though we might wish that there were more people worshipping in rural communities, are very important symbols within the communities in which we stand, and we need to take cognisance of that fact. There is in fact some interesting research that has been done comparing dioceses where there have been more closures with those where there have not, and I have to tell you that the closure of churches, according to that research, has not led to an increase in the number of people attending churches.

That is my time. Is that seven minutes? Who would have believed it! I apologise to those to whose speeches I have not made reference, but thank you for them. I beg to move.

The Chair: A reminder, Synod, that we are now voting on Item 11 as amended by 16 and 17. Point of order.

Mr John Wilson (Lichfield): Chair, given the interest beyond this place, in our dioceses and parishes, and particularly the media, it would be good to have an accurate record of the vote. I wonder if you would consider a count of the whole

Synod?

The Chair: I had thought about that and was not desperately minded, but of course if 25 of you wish to stand and require that, then please do so. I do not see 25 standing, so this will be a show of hands.

The motion as amended:

“That this Synod, acknowledging both the blessing and the burden of the Church of England’s stewardship for so many historic buildings and the missional opportunities provided by our buildings, whatever their age:

- (a) welcome the report from the Church Buildings Review Group;*
- (b) commend it for discussion in dioceses, deaneries and parishes;*
- (c) invite the Archbishops’ Council, the Church Commissioners and the Church Buildings Council to work together on the detailed implementation of the proposals in the report so as to enable the Business Committee, in the case of those proposals which require legislation, to schedule the start of the relevant legislative process by July 2016; and*
- (d) invite the Archbishops’ Council, the Church Commissioners and the Church Buildings Council to develop a strategy to inspire, encourage and support churches and their dioceses to invest in their facilities to serve their communities and provide opportunities for mission.”*

was carried.

The Chair: Synod, that is very clearly carried. Thank you for your attention during this debate. For the avoidance of any further Twitter storm can I explain the device on my cardigan is not an early Christmas pudding; it is a cupcake in honour of the centenary of the Women’s Institute; a very important body.

THE CHAIR *Mr Geoffrey Tattersall QC (Manchester)* took the Chair at 4.02 pm.

Farewell

The Chair: We move to Item 12 on the agenda. I call upon the Archbishop of Canterbury to give a farewell to Sir William Fittall, the Secretary General. It is Item 12.

The Archbishop of Canterbury (Most Revd and Rt Hon Justin Welby): I take your word for it.

The Chair: The Chair is always right!

The Archbishop of Canterbury (Most Revd and Rt Hon Justin Welby): Yes, but all Archbishops are infallible! Is that right? I may be getting above my pay grade there.

We come now to a farewell that will have an unusual element in that the person

being farewelled has a right of reply; so I may be a little more careful than usual. However, as it is William Fittall, I can of course rely on scrupulous impartiality and deferring to the minister; so I can continue to say what I like!

William has been Secretary General for 13 years. To be Secretary General can never be a task free of crises, but in those 13 years he has had more than his fair share: constitutional changes such as the change to the Marriage Measure, and even a review of the Act of Settlement, the future of the Lords Spiritual, and then small matters such as the finances of the 2008 Lambeth Conference and the regular round of coping with the various pension challenges. One person has remarked that, "There is no problem is so vile or knotty that it does not seem easier to tackle after a chat with William". I had to laugh too; it a bit double-edged, is it not? It is funny how it sounds different when you read it out! And it goes on: "a man of solutions".

In fact, William is one of those rare people or places that has given rise to a word that the Archbishop of York reminded me about on Monday evening. "To Coventrate" something, since 1940, has been to "obliterate it completely" in German; "to Fittallise" something has come into the language as meaning "to sort something out and render it exquisitely clear". William has spent 13 years Fittallising the Church of England through some of its more complex and difficult issues, and invariably finding his way through to a sensible solution. I will come back to that in a little bit.

He came to the post after a remarkably distinguished, and if I may say so, personally extraordinarily courageous, career in the Civil Service, notably in the Northern Ireland office, in which he served during some of the toughest times, and most notably during the peace process.

I myself first met him before that, when he and Barbara turned up at our home group at St Michael's parish in our flat in Paris in 1980. It is fascinating having William Fittall in a Bible-study group. He is very learned. It is the 12-page memos that come before each meeting of the Bible study, setting out 11 different ways of interpreting the passage, that of course took a little more getting used to; but it was very advantageous.

For some the words "Civil Service" produce a negative reaction. If you are such a person, you might be glad to know that at interview he was asked by one interviewer, "If appointed I hope you won't bring the bad habits of Whitehall to the Church?" No doubt taking a long time making decisions, being deeply embedded in bureaucracy and the process of decision-making, being held back by deliberative assemblies: things like that that we really do not want to get into! The questioner forgets the response but says now that, as far as he is concerned, William has brought the very best of Whitehall to the Church of England.

The bad habits were illustrated by those of us - which looking around is most of us - who are old enough to remember *Yes Minister*. I remember it very well. Of course in our brand new Synod we may well have members who have never seen an episode of the programme, not least the one touching on the appointment of a Bishop. There seemed to be very few problems with it, as far as I can remember. But the main aim was the careful manipulation of Ministers to make sure everything is safe and does not rock the boat. It is summed up by a comment I heard from the

Permanent Secretary to the Treasury, when someone remarked to him that one of his Ministers who was responsible for taxation had been a tax specialist before he was a Minister, and the Permanent Secretary said, "Oh yes, we always find it a bit of a disadvantage when they know their subject; it does make them rattle the cage so".

William has never been like that, because he has brought the best, and the best is about clear information, intelligently presented, with the possible courses of action and their consequences properly evaluated and set out in a way that you cannot avoid them. It is not about hiding opinion or blocking action, but ensuring consequences are understood and, once a decision is made, doing everything to ensure that it is implemented.

William is careful about expressing his opinions; careful that is, not that he does not express them. The staff at Church House always knew that if some council, committee, or even the House of Bishops, had made a surprising decision, when William came in, he would declare to all, "Roll up the maps". For those of you who do not know the allusion, after the Battle of Austerlitz, William Pitt the Younger is meant to have remarked to his colleagues, "Roll up that map of Europe; we shall not be needing it these ten years". In other words, he would have come to the conclusion that we had reached a decision that would change life as we knew it.

At the same time, his ability to adapt and then to work fast and accurately is legendary. More than one working group would reach the end of a long day and know that the next day they would have to look at the working document afresh, and would assume that it was so late that they would have to work from their heavily amended papers. The next day they would find fresh documents with tracked changes clearly showing, so that decisions made the day before could be reviewed - and, where appropriate, reversed. That was not in my script. Everyone would assume that William had been up all night. The truth is he is so quick that he was probably not up that late, or he would have been late but not exceptionally so, and the speed and accuracy with which he worked allowed him to appear as fresh and as ready to grapple with detail once again. He would expect the same of others, but would take time to explain how he wanted papers to appear, even if he rewrote some of them himself. Looking over at his colleagues - yes, one or two nods. One member of staff thought they probably ought to be flattered when William declared that one paper was so well done he thought he had done it himself. I am really not looking forward to the eight minutes after this!

Synod ought to know that, apart from his hard work, his colleagues are grateful for someone who looked out for them and who was frequently kind and thoughtful. If he did not automatically use the usual, "How are you?" that people use so easily, it was because, when he did ask, he really did want to know. There would be many of us, particularly on the Bench of Bishops, who have had to take on particular responsibilities who will appreciate the careful briefing, instruction and help that we have received on arriving.

Colleagues also talk of someone who was no pushover in argument but who would listen and would be persuaded by a good case. If William was convinced, then you knew your work and thinking was robust. Indeed, one former colleague reckoned that one of the best accolades he had was when William had opposed him for a long time over an issue, was eventually persuaded, and cheerfully used all the arguments that he had been resisting to champion that particular cause.

His energy belongs to someone much younger than himself. Perhaps the secret of this was revealed when one of his colleagues was waiting for a lift on the third floor of Church House at going-home time. This was one of the moments where William did actually want to know how someone was and in response to the question, the person replied: "I'm feeling very old; I have just discovered your new PA was at university with my daughter", to which William replied, "Oh, I never feel old; I was born middle aged".

Of course one of the other things that those who have worked with him closely have come to know is that William is extraordinarily good company. You are never in doubt if William has found something funny as his laugh has an extraordinarily eruptive, wheezing quality - and I ought to know - quite often caused by reading that most establishment of organs *Private Eye*, which he then quotes to one to show the bit that has amused him. There is also something of the thespian hidden below the surface which occasionally at the end of Synod quinquennial reviews he has revealed, or at Church House pantomimes. Performances have included mad waiters, Chinese potentates and a clueless intern.

He cannot touch something without doing it well. He has on many occasions been the person who has enhanced our worship at Bishops' meetings and other councils and committees by playing the organ. It was quite clear that even at short notice William's capacity was considerable.

But of one thing there is no doubt, and that has made so much difference over these 13 years: that underpinning all that William does is his Christian faith. He is a Reader who preaches regularly, but also grasps very quickly the issues at stake when it comes to matters of faith and order and discussion, and it becomes abundantly clear that amidst hugely difficult decisions that have to be made, it is an attention to prayer and to the tenets of Christianity that lead William to do the best he can for liberating the whole organisation to be truly the Church of Jesus Christ. His offering of the gift of superb, of gold plated, of brilliant administration has been a truly Christian vocation. During a recent hoo-hah with the previous Government, before the last election, he went into Whitehall on one occasion, and I happened to speak to the colleague he was with after the meeting. They said two quite senior civil servants from the particular department they were seeing came in, obviously assuming they were meeting some kind of Church House something-or-other, who would clearly know nothing about the real world, and he said you could have sold tickets to watch William dancing rings around them, achieving everything he wanted and leaving them baffled, confused and still quite content: an entirely unfamiliar feeling for the House of Bishops.

William, for all your dedication, all your extraordinary ability, for your faith, your care and friendship, the Synod, Church House, and indeed the whole Church, are deeply, deeply grateful.

I am not even going to begin to wish you a peaceful retirement, as I know it will not be long before you are putting your energies into something else, whatever that is. Whoever you lend those energies too, they are deeply fortunate. I do hope that Barbara now sees more of you, and we wish you every enjoyment in a richly deserved retirement from your duties as Secretary General.

The Chair: Mr Fittall now has the opportunity to respond.

Mr William Fittall (Secretary General): What is a secretary general? If that seems a strange starting place for a farewell address, I can only plead that it is less puzzling than the beginning of Rowan Williams' first Presidential Address to us in July 2003. The new Primate of All England set out his stall with the memorable opening words, "Does the Church of England exist?"

Well, secretaries general are not allowed to have existential angst. We are practical people of affairs, there to support the archbishops and the three national bodies over which they preside - the Synod, the House of Bishops and the Archbishops' Council - in delivering the national work of the Church of England.

Working for Rowan Williams and David Hope, and now for John Sentamu and Justin Welby, has been a unique and undeserved privilege. So has serving members of the Synod, the House of Bishops and the Archbishops' Council. These have been 13 very special years, for which I give profound thanks to Almighty God.

Not that they have not been without their challenges. Executive power in the Church is widely dispersed, and rightly so. Just occasionally, all archbishops attempted to sympathise with Archbishop Davidson, who remarked plaintively just after he had navigated the Enabling Bill through the House of Lords in 1919, "If people would only let me do things my own way, the Church of England would get on all right".

Back to my opening question. The dictionary of that great 18th century Anglican, Dr Johnson, is of some help. Under his nine uses of the word "general", as an adjective, he notes that it is, "appended to several offices, as attorney general, solicitor general, vicar general", and he defines "secretary" as "One entrusted with the management of business. One who writes for another". What he could have added is one of the descriptions he used for his own occupation of lexicographer, "a harmless drudge". Certainly all administrative roles involve some drudgery, which is why I treasure George Herbert's words about sweeping a room as for God's laws.

But is a secretary general harmless? From a distance he may seem like the fictitious Humphrey Appleby, or the far from fictitious Peter Mandelson, for whom I once worked in the Northern Ireland office. They were viewed as occult figures, operating in the shadows and provoking the fingering of garlic by those not quite sure what they did but certain that it was suspicious and needed treating with the utmost wariness.

I hope those of you who have worked with secretaries general at close quarters would acknowledge that deep down we are friendly and well-disposed creatures, wholly committed to the welfare of the Church we love and serve. What is beyond doubt, however, is that secretaries general are rare beasts. In the 67 years since 1948, the Church of England has had just four: John Guillum Scott, who served for 24 years; Derek Pattinson, who did 18; Philip Mawer, who did 12; and now me since 2002.

True, this does not quite compare with organists of the Temple Church in London, of which there were just three in the 139 years between 1843 and 1982, but Edward Hopkins, Henry Walford Davies, and George Thalben-Ball all had the good fortune to be appointed in their twenties. Aspiring secretaries general are expected to have proved themselves first in a range of other executive roles.

What then do we do? When I informed the Archbishops and John Spence privately, a year ago, of my intention to retire this month, I invited them to reflect on whether a secretary general was still needed and, if so, whether the role needed to be modified. I started by reminding them of Margaret Thatcher's tribute to the value of Lord Whitelaw in which, without quite weighing her words, she had indeed observed that, "every Prime Minister needs a Willie". The question, I suggested, was whether every archbishop needed a William or Wilhelmina. My hope was that they would answer "yes", though I had not quite expected them to take me so literally. I am delighted that William Nye is succeeding me and wish him a long and fruitful term of office.

The three core elements of the role - this is just an extension of the induction day for some of you - have been as advisor and business manager, as team leader and programme deliverer, and as representative and negotiator on behalf of the Church of England, particularly in Whitehall and Westminster. In my time, the balance has shifted from week to week, but they have all mattered and have been retained in my successor's mandate.

How then shall I look back on my time here? With thankfulness, as I have already said. I have been blessed with superb colleagues, lay and clerical, who have been stimulating, committed, interesting and high achieving. For some, such as the present Bishops of Lincoln, Liverpool, Bradford, Penrith and Woolwich, and the Dean of Westminster, serving at Church House has helped prepare them for wider responsibilities. For others, including our outstanding legal team, this is where they can best serve the Church.

I shall also look back with satisfaction that we have got all of the legislation passed by Synod over the past 13 years through the Ecclesiastical Committee and Parliament. That was not the case in the 1980s and 1990s. The speed with which we got the women bishop's legislation from final approval in July 2014 to parliamentary approval and royal assent that October, and then got the Government to take the legislation that we had prepared to accelerate the arrival of women bishops in the House of Lords, exceeded all reasonable expectations.

It has been good to have improved the quality of our relationship with colleagues working in dioceses and to have made progress in 'Working as one Body' across the National Church Institutions. I am pleased that we have more women and minority ethnic colleagues in senior roles now at Church House than when I arrived, though there is still much progress to be made.

As my time at Church House draws to its close, and as I look forward to spending more time with Barbara in Saltwood parish in the Canterbury diocese, there remains one stubborn regret. It is that we, and other Christian traditions in this land, have yet to recapture the imagination of those who, in a society awash with more information than ever, remain desperately hungry for meaning. As a servant of Jesus Christ, I continue to believe that true meaning can only be found in Him, who for all time is the way, the truth and the life.

In my interview for this job in June 2002, I said this: "I believe that the central challenge facing the next Secretary General is to help the Church of England move on from that sense which our country had 30 years ago of being locked into inexorable decline. That requires us to believe that there is nothing inevitable or

irreversible about the ‘melancholy, long withdrawing roar’ of retreat. It may take time, but the growth which the Christian Church is experiencing elsewhere in the world can occur again in the Church of England too.”

That remains my conviction. In places that growth is now occurring. But it remains patchy and the big numbers and the spirit of the age are still against us. We need to be reformed and renewed, both spiritually and institutionally, for the task ahead.

We need, too, to resist allowing sincere internal differences over social and ethical issues from absorbing disproportionate time and energy and diverting us from the commission of being ambassadors for Jesus Christ to a needy world.

A few months ago, I came across a paragraph in a collection of essays by John Habgood. The words have stayed with me as I have tried to make sense not only of my time as secretary general, which is now ending, but of the Christian path we shall each continue to walk until our dying day as we follow in the steps of our crucified and risen Saviour. It is a quotation of words of the American theologian Reinhold Niebuhr, and with them I conclude:

“Nothing worth doing is completed in our lifetime; therefore we must be saved by hope. Nothing true or beautiful or good makes complete sense in any immediate context of history; therefore we must be saved by faith. Nothing we do, however virtuous, can be accomplished alone; therefore we are saved by love. No virtuous act is quite as virtuous from the standpoint of our friend or foe as from our own standpoint. Therefore we must be saved by the final form of love, which is forgiveness”.

Thank you.

The Chair: That completes the business for this group of sessions and I therefore call upon the Archbishop of Canterbury to prorogue us.

Prorogation

The Archbishop of Canterbury prorogued the Synod.

INDEX

- A Rocha 61, 62
Administration of Holy Communion
Regulations 2015 47–8
All are Called: Towards a Theology of the Laity 36
Amending Canon 35 47
Anglican Communion, and climate change 62
Anglican–Methodist Covenant 3
archbishops, appointment 2–3
Archbishops’ Council:
budget 26
and church buildings review 114, 115–116, 121, 124, 135
questions to 43–6
staff salaries 45
Archbishops’ Secretary for Appointments 67
Archbishops’ Task Group on Evangelism 16, 20, 110, 112–113
archdeacons, continuing ministerial education 44
Assets Committee 25
- baptism preparation courses 44
Barna Global research 104
benefices, multi-parish 118, 120–1, 127
bishops:
appointment 2–3, 66–7
continuing ministerial education 30
wearing of mitres 46–7
women as 3, 5
Bishops’ Mission Orders 33, 38, 40–1
Bishops’ Regulations for Reader Ministry 59
Business Committee:
questions to 63–6
Report on the Agenda 11–21, 66
- Calais, refugee camp 79, 83, 84–6, 90, 93
canon law, Canon B 8 47
catechism, new 38
chancellors, fees 96, 98
children, unaccompanied refugees 80, 90
Choosing Bishops - the Equality Act 2010 (Revised) 66–7
Christians in Middle East 49, 78–9, 80
Church Army, and evangelism 55–6
women 38
Clergy Discipline Measure 2003 51
- Church Assembly 3
church attendance 24, 104–5
Church Buildings Council 114, 115–117, 124, 133, 135
Church Buildings Division 133, 134
Church Buildings Review 12, 20, 113–35
Church Commissioners:
actuarial review 25
and church buildings 114, 115–117, 132, 135
Church Buildings (Uses and Disposal) Committee 117
Pastoral Committee 129–30
questions to 69–71
Church Community Fund 46, 131
Church of England Central Services 45
Church House 26
staff 42, 114, 137
church planting 40–1
Church Representation Rules 14–15, 20
Church Roof Fund 116, 133
church schools, and religious education 54–5
Church and State relations 1–2
churches:
accessibility 123–4, 133
closures 131–2, 133, 134
community use 116–20, 122, 124–6, 127, 129–31, 134, 135
festival 114, 116, 117–118, 132, 133
maintenance 125, 134
ownership of buildings 126–7
rural 116, 119, 120–1, 128, 130, 132, 134
urban 131–2
Churches’ Refugee Network 84
cinemas, ban on Lord’s Prayer advert 14, 17, 24, 27, 60
Citizens UK 85
clergy:
black and minority ethnic 32, 37, 38, 39–40
and evangelism 55–6
lesbian and gay 66–7
retirement age 59
in same-sex marriage 51, 67
stipends 57–8
vesture 47
climate change 16, 61, 62, 72–6
Communications Office 53

Community of St Anselm 3, 9
 Continuous Praying Presence 22
 counter-terrorism strategy 59–60
 Crown Nominations Commission,
 questions to 66–9
 CUF (Church Urban Fund) 85–6

Daily Media Digest 53
 Darlow Formula 25
 DBS clearance, and home communions
 47–8
 deaneries, role 40–1
 deans, continuing ministerial education
 30–1, 39
 Development and Appointments Group
 30–2, 39–40
 Diocesan Stipends Funds (Amendment)
 Measure 6
 Diocese in Europe, and migrant crisis 79,
 86–7, 89–90, 93
 disability, and accessibility 123–4, 133
 discipleship, renewal 28–9, 36, 37–8
 discrimination against Syrian Christians
 78–9
 displays 19, 21
 diversity:
 and appointment of bishops 66–7
 and working groups 37–8, 42

Ecclesiastical Committee of Parliament 6,
 7, 140
 Ecclesiastical Fees Measure 1986 95
 Ecclesiastical Judges (Fees) Orders 96
 Ecclesiastical Judges, Legal Officers and
 Others (Fees) Order 95–101
 Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction Measure 1963
 51
 Ecclesiastical Offices (Terms of Service)
 Measure 33
 EcoChurch initiative 61
 ecumenism 3, 9–10
 and migrant crisis 80, 81–2, 89–90
 and public affairs 59
 elections to General Synod:
 allocation of seats 65
 turnout 51–3, 65–6
 Elections Review Group 20, 52–3, 65–6
 Enabling Measure 34
 Endowments and Glebe Measure 1976 33
 English Heritage 130–1
 enquirers' courses 103, 110
 Environment Working Group 61, 62

Equality Act 2010 66–7
 Ethical Investment Advisory Group 69, 71
 eurozone, effect on migrant crisis 86
 evangelism:
 Archbishops' Task Group 16, 20, 110,
 112–113
 and friendship 102, 107, 109, 110
 and public perceptions of Jesus 107–9
 Experiences of Ministry Survey 55
 extremism, religious 10
 Extremist Disruption Orders 59–61

Faculty Jurisdiction Rules 2015 96, 100,
 101
 faculty petitions:
 fees 95, 96–7, 98, 99–101
 simplification 118, 133
 Farewell 135–41
 Fees Advisory Commission 95, 100–1
 festival churches 114, 116, 117–118, 132,
 133
 Five Principles 9
 freedom of speech 59–60
 friendship, and evangelism 102, 107, 109,
 110
 fringe meetings 19
 fundamentalism, religious 10

General Synod:
 Agenda 11–21
 Chaplain 12, 21–3
 dates of meetings 63–4
 ecumenical representatives 5
 elections 51–3, 65–6
 new members 6, 17, 18
 observers 3
 opening ceremony 1–3
 Queen's Speech 3–5
 staff 12–13
 worship 21–3
Generosity and Sacrifice 57–8
 Gift Aid Small Donations Scheme 53–4
 global warming 72–6
 government:
 and resettlement of refugees 77–8, 79–
 81, 83–5, 87, 89, 91, 93, 94–5
 and support for listed church buildings
 115, 116, 121, 124, 128, 133–4
 group work 15

Halloween 63
 Heritage Lottery Fund 123, 130

HM Queen:
 Loyal Address to 72
 opening speech to Synod 3–5
 Holy Communion, administration 47–8
 Home for Good 80
 House of Bishops:
 Development and Appointments Group 30–2, 39–40
 questions to 46–51
 and same-sex marriage 60, 67
 Standing Committee 47
 and Trident weapons system 62–3
 House of Laity, allocation of seats 65–6
 House of Lords, bishops in 60, 63, 140
 human sexuality, structured conversations 10, 50, 67

 Iraq, Christians in 49
 ISIS, in Syria 91

 Jesus, public perceptions 16–17, 102–13

 laity:
 and evangelism 55–6
 lay leadership task group 15, 20, 27, 28, 34–7, 41–2
 Lay Ministries Working Group 36
 leadership:
 lay 15, 20, 27, 28, 34–7, 41–2
 senior 30–2, 37, 38–9, 40, 44
 learning communities 25, 31, 38–40
 legal aid, ecclesiastical 97–8
 listed buildings consent 98
 Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme 116, 121–2, 128
 Lord's Prayer, banned in cinemas 14, 17, 24, 27, 60, 61
 Loyal Address 72

Making a Difference? 54
 marriage, same-sex 49–51, 60, 67
 media:
 and Church Buildings Review 114, 134
 and migrant crisis 89, 92
 and public perceptions of Jesus 102
 see also social media
 Medical Justice 87–8
 migrant crisis 14, 16, 76–95
 ministry:
 resourcing 28–9, 37–8
 training for 29–30, 37–8
 Ministry Council 19, 21, 37–8
 questions to 55–7
 minorities, religious 80, 91
 mission:
 and church buildings 114–115, 117, 119–121, 122–4, 132, 135
 role of archdeacons 44
 role of deaneries 40–1
 Mission and Pastoral Measure 2011 33
 Mission and Public Affairs Council:
 questions to 59–63
 and Sunday trading 70–1
 Mission Theology Advisory Group 63
 mitres, episcopal 46–7

 National Church Institutions, and salary levels 45
 National Clergy Payroll 33
 National Investing Bodies 69
 National Refugee Welcome Board 48, 78
 National Society Council, question to 54–5
 Near Neighbours 82, 93
 Nurturing and Discerning Senior Leaders 30–2, 37, 38–9, 40, 44

 Operation Noah 62
 Optimising the National Church Institutions 23, 26
 ordination training 29–30, 37–8, 122
 and Common Awards 57

 Panel of Chairs 64–5
 Paris:
 climate talks 15–16, 61, 62, 74
 terrorist attack 10, 11, 12, 60–1, 77, 80, 83
 Parliament, Ecclesiastical Committee 6, 7, 140
 parochial church councils:
 and advertising during vacancy 56
 and maintenance of church buildings 125, 126–7
 Partnership for World Mission 62
 patronage, and advertising during vacancy 56
 Patronage (Benefices) Measure 1968 56
 PCC Powers Measure 1956 125
 Pensions Board 45
 persecution, religious 77–9, 88, 93, 94
 Pilgrim course 28
 preferment list 30
 presentations 16–17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 23, 72–6, 102–13

Presidential Address 6–11
 Primates' meeting 3
 Private Members' Motions 18, 21

 quinquennial reports 124

 Readers, retirement age 59
 refugees:
 private sponsorship 48–9, 78, 83, 92, 94
 Ugandan Asian 89, 93
 see also migrant crisis
 registrars, diocesan, fees 95, 96, 97, 100, 101
 religious education 54–5
 Remuneration and Conditions of Service Committee, questions to 57–9
 Renewal and Reform 12, 23–42, 44–5, 55, 56, 66, 114, 120, 127
 Resourcing the Future 23, 25–42
 Resourcing Ministerial Education 28–30, 37–8
 risk assessments, and ecclesiastical legal aid 97–8
 Rural Affairs Group 125–6

 SACREs (Statutory Advisory Committees for Religious Education) 54–5
 safeguarding:
 and administration of Holy Communion 47–8
 and ecclesiastical legal aid 97–8
 Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 6
 St Anselm Community 3, 9
 sea levels, rising 74
 Secretary General, questions to 51–4
 sexuality, structured conversations 10, 50, 67
 Shared Conversations 17, 20
 Shrinking the Footprint 61, 62
 Simplification Group 32–4, 40–1, 120, 126–7
 slavery:
 modern day 69
 reparations for 69–70
 social media 24–5, 26, 27–8, 43, 92
 South Pacific, and climate change 72–6
 Standing Orders:
 SO 1 21–2, 64
 SO 2 64
 SO 15 65
 SO 37 94
 SO 107 21, 23, 102
 SO 136 68
 SOs 112–117 43
 Starting Rite 44
 stipends, National Minimum Stipend 57–8
 suffragan bishops, continuing ministerial education 31, 39
 Sunday trading 70
 Synodical Government Measure 1969 3
 Syria:
 Christians in 49, 78–9, 80
 and migrant crisis 76–91
 use of armed forces in 82–4, 93

 Terms of Service Measure 33
 Theological Education Institutions (TEIs) 57
 theology:
 and church buildings 114–115, 117–119, 122–3, 128
 of migration 90–1, 94
 training, and church buildings 122, 133
 Transparency in Supply Chain 69
 Trident weapons system, Main Gate decision 62–3
 Turning Up the Volume Working Party 37, 40

 UNHCR, and Syrian crisis 78, 79, 80, 91, 94
 Us. (United Society) 79

 vacancy in benefice, and advertising 56
 Virtual Learning Environment 57
 vocations:
 black and minority ethnic 32, 37
 growth 29
 Vocations Working Group 36, 37–8
 Vote 1 29
 voting:
 electronic 14, 16, 52
 by whole Synod 94, 134–5
 Vulnerable Persons Relocation scheme 48

 Weddings Project 49–50
 witness, verbal 102–3
 women bishops 3, 5
 Worship and Doctrine Measure 1974 4

 xenophobia 88–9, 93

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