

GENERAL SYNOD

National Support for Local Churches

Introductory Paper

“Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful. And pray for us too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains. Pray that I may proclaim it clearly as I should. Be wise in the way you act towards outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.” Colossians 4: 2 -6

Summary

1. The intention of this session of Synod is to inform Synod members about some of the different work streams through which the National Church Institutions seek to support the local Church and parishes for evangelism, outreach and mission. The opening presentation will introduce the work and share our common vision.
2. The workshops in the afternoon will give Synod members the opportunity to hear about some current work streams and feed ideas into future projects. The work streams we will cover in detail are;
 - a) Thy Kingdom Come
 - b) Life Events
 - c) Digital Evangelism
 - d) National events as opportunities for community witness
 - e) Inclusion and Outreach to the marginalised
 - f) Crossing the Generations.
3. The final debate will draw the strands together, providing an opportunity for Synod to comment on the work begin undertaken, and to express views on how the national Church can best provide on-going support for local churches in evangelism, outreach and mission.

Detailed Overview

4. The National Church Institutions work to resource and support the work of dioceses, deaneries, parishes, local churches and Christians in their witness and service, in the networks, neighbourhoods and communities in which they are called. This General Synod session is designed to inform Synod members of some of the current work in this area and to invite Synod members to help shape future work.
5. The vision is of confident Christians, well connected to those around them, courageously sharing their faith in words and actions with distinctive local churches embedded in their local communities serving others and witnessing to Jesus Christ.

6. Many parish churches are doing a great job connecting to their communities, witnessing and serving. The resources that the national church provides are there to enhance and add value to this on-going work. Some churches might be in contexts where mission is harder, and where it is more of a struggle to grow in witness and service; for these churches the national Church seeks to provide resources to empower them and enable them to strengthen their work.
7. The afternoon will comprise six workshops focussing on six different aspects of local ministry, and how they can be supported. Necessarily, we have had to select only some of the forms of ministry which the NCIs seek to support. There are many other important areas which we have not had scope to cover in this set of workshops. The inclusion of these particular six should not be taken as to mean that each of them is more important than other areas of ministry. However, we recognise that there may be areas of ministry which are not so well supported by the national Church, or on which more could be done – subject to prioritising and available resources. The debate later in the afternoon will be an opportunity for Synod members to raise such issues, as well as commenting on their experience of the workshops.

Thy Kingdom Come

8. 'Thy Kingdom Come' (TKC) is a focused ten days of prayer between Ascension and Pentecost for the empowering of the Holy Spirit to enable our evangelism and witness, initiated by the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Evangelism Task Group. Churches from every diocese were involved, 36 of the cathedrals ran beacon events, millions watched the TKC films on social media, and this year TKC went global with 85 countries joining in.
9. TKC has brought us back to the essential starting place of reliance on God for evangelism and church growth. It has helped put prayer at the heart of all we do. Praying for the Kingdom of God to come – for light in darkness, hope in fear, peace in strife and the light of the gospel to reach all. It has been extraordinary to see the reach of this prayer movement across the Church of England, rippling out to other denominations and now engaging globally, uniting Christians in prayer and commissioning us everywhere to be bringers of the Kingdom and bearers of good news. Together we have prayed that "God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ."

Life Events

10. Weddings, funerals and the baptism of children have been at the heart of parish ministry for generations. In 2015 the Church of England conducted 148,250 funerals, 109,000 baptisms of children and 44,670 weddings, a valued ministry amongst our wider community. This ministry offers the local church a significant opportunity for mission and evangelism. The Life Events work began with the weddings project in 2008 followed by projects on the baptism of children and funerals. The projects have all started with nationally commissioned and funded research which has led to the creation of bespoke resources to support local church ministry.
11. The resources enrich our local churches' offer to those who come to us for weddings, baptisms and funerals. They help local churches connect confidently and build stronger links with those who come to us for life events. Enabling the church to offer a

distinctively Christian experience, clearly signpost faith in Jesus Christ and invite all those involved to return and journey with us towards deeper faith.

Digital Evangelism

12. The digital world has created a new opportunity for the Church to embrace a platform for building connections and sharing our faith in a new way. The NCIs' newly strengthened digital team are here to help us inhabit this space in a distinctively Christian way witnessing to Jesus Christ. An opportunity to signpost people to Christian community and to invite others to join in a conversation and go deeper in faith.
13. They are doing this through the following projects. A new Church of England website will be launched this year, including "A Church Near You" and a video-led introduction to the Christian faith for non-Christians. Research is underway for the on-line discipleship portal approved by Synod as part of "Setting God's People Free". The team will work on raising the profile of the work of the Church of England with short films featuring great stories from our work in local communities and Church of England schools across the country.

National Events

14. National events offer us another set of opportunities to engage with our communities, as we did for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee. Nationally, we have provided simple resources that help directly at a local level, from street party packs, to service outlines for remembrance when we marked the centenary of the start of World War One. Much of this work has been done in partnership with other agencies and denominations, enabling both national and local ecumenical working and greatly extending our reach. Nationally we are continuing with this work to look at the commemoration of the end of WW1 in 2018 and to create more resources to enable churches at the key seasonal calendar moments each year.

Inclusion and outreach to marginalised communities

15. There are many areas where historically the Church has struggled to engage people and communities. Nationally we want to learn how local church communities make the most of the differing opportunities these areas afford and work more closely to offer substantial assistance, for example working amongst marginalised people, especially on outer estates.
16. The Archbishops' Council has recently agreed, in formulating new objectives for 2017 to 2020, on the importance of seeking to be a Church that welcomes all people, and of aiming to do more to reach out to BAME people, and people from lower socioeconomic groups.
17. The work to reach more of those within our BAME communities and to encourage and support cultural diversity with the Church of England is led on by The Committee for Minority and Ethnic Anglican Concerns (CMEAC). It is also a priority of the Evangelism Task Group. Together they work to keep this important issue at the forefront of the Church of England's agenda.

Crossing the Generations

18. Finally the last stream in this afternoon's synod workshops focusses on the opportunities we have as a Church to impact younger generations and in particular to make the most of the opportunities across generations. We are looking at opportunities for older and younger generations to work together to offer distinctive witness to Jesus Christ from one generation to another and encourage all age growth in discipleship together.

Overview Table

	THEME	BRIEF SUMMARY
1.	Thy Kingdom Come	Launched by the Archbishops in 2016, this is a global prayer movement which is about empowering Christians to see themselves as evangelists and witnesses. There has been a recent national prayer initiative, and the session at Synod will coincide with the launch of further materials endorsed by the Archbishops.
2.	Life Events	The national Church's work on Life Events (weddings, funerals etc.) originated with a motion from Synod in 2012. The aim is to report back to Synod on what the Church's investment in this initiative has produced since 2012 and seek their engagement for the next stage.
3.	Digital Evangelism	The Church has only recently established this initiative and has put an initial £2m into setting it up. This is about reaching out to younger generations through digital means and helping reach more people through web-based and other evangelistic initiatives
4.	National Events as opportunities for Witness	Resourcing local churches to make the most of national events, for example, the Queen's diamond Jubilee, has taught us that there is local appetite for national resources that enhance our witness at these times. This workshop will look forward to the commemoration of the end of WW1 in 2018 and future resourcing.
5.	Inclusion and Outreach	How does the Church look, sound and act more inclusive? How do we reach out to the more disadvantaged parts of our society? How do we adopt a more Christ-like openness and willingness to change and adapt?

	THEME	BRIEF SUMMARY
6.	Crossing the Generations	“Rooted in the Church” discovered, that where key relationships across the generations flourish in church life, a healthier future can be predicted for the young as they grow up. Come and investigate new research into this important area.

Conclusion

19. As we work together as the whole Church of England, national, diocesan and local, we can grow as confident disciples of Jesus Christ, praying for God’s Kingdom to come, being willing to turn our prayers into action, connecting with those around us, offering a distinctively Christian contribution to the communities in which we are placed, witnessing in both words and actions to Jesus Christ. Thy Kingdom Come has shown us how we can be united, across various traditions and expressions of our faith, as we pray Thy Kingdom Come and witness to Jesus Christ together. The national Church is here to resource this activity as we work together to serve a diverse nation. We are all needed so that we make the most of all the opportunities that are given to us to make Jesus known to all.

Dr Rachel Jordan-Wolf
National Mission and Evangelism Adviser
Archbishops’ Council

June 2017

National Support for the Local Churches:

Workshops

Thy Kingdom Come

1. 'Thy Kingdom Come' is a focused ten days of prayer between Ascension and Pentecost for the empowering of the Holy Spirit to enable our evangelism and witness. The Archbishops' Evangelism Task Group was established following the debate in November 2013 on "The Pearl of Great Price". The Synod tasked this group to have at its heart the primacy of prayer, in particular to call the nation to pray for evangelisation. 'Thy Kingdom Come' is the implementation of this charge as the Archbishops of Canterbury and York invited the Church of England to seek a fresh touch of the Spirit to empower our witness. The invitation grew wings which took it beyond the Church of England and it has grown exponentially into an international and ecumenical call to prayer.
2. In the United Kingdom Anglicans, churches represented in Churches Together in England and Wales, Orthodox and many others gave the ten days between Ascension Day and Pentecost to pray in a concentrated way for our effective witness. Around the world a myriad of churches from 85 countries joined this great movement of prayer. In the UK Christians from every diocese took part as did 36 Cathedrals.
3. There were specific constituencies we sought to encourage and resource; individuals, families and churches and cathedrals. The resources that we produced sought to serve a variety of traditions and styles, ages and outlooks. All resources were translated into 6 languages and available for free on the website, they included the 'Kingdom kit' for children to engage with over half term, a Novena, prayer diaries, service plans, prayer stations, bookmarks and Bible studies. The drive was to engage as many as possible in ways authentic to each, but inviting all into a more profound and committed pattern of prayer for the ten days.
4. The website sought to engage people with a sense of the breadth of prayer, with all being encouraged to #pledgetoprayer. Those who signed up received a daily video for each of the ten days straight to their inbox. Contributors included:
The Most Rev. Michael Curry, Presiding Bishop and Primate, the Episcopal Church;
His Eminence Christoph Cardinal Schonborn, Archbishop of Vienna;
The Most Rev Paul Kwong, Archbishop of Hong Kong;
The Venerable Liz Adekunle, Archdeacon of Hackney; and,
His Grace Bishop Angaelos, General Bishop, the Coptic Orthodox Church in the UK.
There were also videos for young people each day. The quality of these engaged many.
5. In many diocese the 10 days of prayer culminated in a central 'Beacon' events often at the cathedral. These ranged from a live BBC1 broadcast on Pentecost Sunday morning with Archbishop Justin, Matt Redman and Tim Hughes to the Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham National Pilgrimage with Father Cantalamessa (including a 40-hour watch of prayer before the Blessed Sacrament). Internationally the Province of South East Asia led by Archbishop Moon Hing saw tens of thousands joining in prayer through the 10 days.
6. The BBC 1 live service was broadcast within hours of the terrorist attack the night before at London Bridge. It enabled Archbishop Justin to speak and pray directly to the

nation about the love of Christ and the hope this brings to all. The testimony of the BBC is that they have had double the number of viewers expected for such a program.

7. One viewer said: ***“The message was of hope, love, peace and joy in God, which is what we all need at this time. The service brought the light of God's Spirit to us in these dark days.”***

Another wrote: ***“I have watched the Pentecost Service with the Archbishop of Canterbury twice! On a difficult day for the UK and with an election in the week ahead it has brought me such hope. It communicates a sense of life in a new dimension that somehow over-rides the daily news of pain and suffering. Thank you so much for this broadcast. Thank you to its production team, participants and all behind it.”***

8. Building on the last two years we look to next year and beyond, and consider how praying, ‘Come Holy Spirit’ is the most revolutionary of prayers, as it is to involve ourselves in God's work of extending the bounds of the Kingdom. This prayer is all-involving for us particularly in the way that Paul sets out his prayer for the Philippian Christians:

Continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, ¹³ for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfil his good purpose
Phil 2:13

9. As we have prayed for God to give us increased confidence, faith and expectation that He will use us as His witnesses, so priorities focus on we now need to walk in that faith and allow God to turn our prayers into action.
10. We are excited to see in 2018 how this great wave of prayer continues to embed in the life of the church. However the focus now is to encourage each of us as individuals and the churches we are part of to consider how God will use us to be part of the answer to the prayers we have prayed.
11. Currently, we have produced the following resources which will be promoted and given away over the coming year and we will share these with you in the workshop:

12. ‘Evangelism for the local church’

We have produced an accessible, clear and practical guide to help churches know where to begin in planning an evangelistic event. It is a special edition of a short booklet by +Stephen Cottrell, the Bishop of Chelmsford, and engages churches and PCC's with enthusiasm and help in working out what each of us might do. It is set in the context of understanding how people grow and develop in faith, and of how we become a missionary church, renewing our faith as we share it with others. We hope to send a copy to every ordained minister and PCC in the coming months.

13. Video training session- Growing in confidence as witnesses

This is a one-off training session designed to be run in local churches and small groups. Archbishop Justin alongside three enthusiasts candidly share their successes (as well as failures!) in advancing God's work and reflect on how to take the next steps. The whole session is designed to last 90 minutes, of which half is a series of the recorded five short conversations and half local discussion on the questions raised. It can be downloaded for free-www.thykingdomcome.global/faith

14. Thy Kingdom Come 'Luke's Gospel'

For many who know little about Jesus we wanted to put a gospel into their hands so they can read and encounter Jesus firsthand themselves. We published a special 'Thy Kingdom Come' edition of Luke's Gospel, designed for those for whom we have been praying during Thy Kingdom Come. As well as the words of the Gospel, there are also explanatory reflections, an introduction to prayer and the opportunity to make a commitment at the end.

15. Bishops on Mission

In the Northern Province Bishops have gathered with the Archbishop of York for a series of short missions with ordinands, visiting different dioceses in turn. Inspired by this in the Southern Province a significant number of Bishops have committed to piloting at least six days of intentional evangelism in each pilot Diocese. This journey alongside the ordinands and deacons from their own Dioceses will take place over eighteen months – and we will gather up the learning as we travel.

What are the aims of this workshop?

16. We will:

- Reflect on the experiences and fruit of TKC 2017
- Share hopes and expectations for TKC 2018
- Discuss and learn how we might enable every parish church in the activity of evangelism
- Discuss how we encourage each Christian to understand themselves joyfully to be a witness to Jesus Christ.

17. The session will be interactive and we look forward to hearing your views and experiences as we long to see many more come to know the love of Jesus Christ.

**Emma Buchan
Project Leader
Evangelism Task Group**

Life Events

1. Weddings, funerals and the baptism of children have been at the heart of parish ministry for generations and continue to be a significant opportunity for mission and evangelism. From the inception of the Weddings Project in 2008, the underlying aim of all this work has been to explore opportunities for church growth, expressed in three core purposes:
 - a) to attract more people to choose the Church of England at key moments on life's journey;
 - b) to build understanding amongst the public as to what the Church of England offers and the meaning behind that offer; and,
 - c) to care so much when people do come that they want to come back.
2. In 2015 the Church of England conducted:
 - 109,000 baptisms of children under 12
 - 44,670 weddings
 - 148,250 funerals

Life Events are a major opportunity for one-to-one contact and relationship building with the people we meet, who will often be on the fringes of our church communities, or not connected with church at all.

3. Congregations at these events are growing and although these numbers are not included in the statistics for mission, it is estimated that **around 500,000 people each week**^{*1} will have contact through attending a Church of England led service to mark a significant life event.

Research

4. From 2007 – 2012 there was major investment in the **Weddings Project**, with wide-ranging research leading to the development of new resources and sharing of key messages with dioceses.
5. In 2012 General Synod approved the decision to build on the impact that the Weddings Project had made on dioceses and clergy by exploring the opportunities for mission and ministry around birth and death. This developed into work around the baptism of children under 12 and funerals. Legacy funding of £500k was allocated to this work.
6. During 2013 **Phase One** of the work around baptisms and funerals involved rigorous research with the public, as well as with clergy and readers and other interested parties [funeral directors]. From July 2014, **Phase Two** involved piloting a range of on-line and print resources in 300 benefices, and in September 2015 **Phase Three** began, involving sharing key findings throughout the Church of England.

¹ Calculated by taking an average congregation of around 85 across all services multiplied by weekly number of occasional offices.

7. The research findings have been used to develop a range of resources, both in print and on-line, which communicate with the public.
8. The core purposes are worked out in a local parish context, supported by high quality national materials. The websites and print resources always point towards the local church, where the warmth and welcome of the vicar and the local congregation remain at the heart of effective ministry around the occasional offices.
9. Resources have also been developed to **support parishes** in the ministry which emerges through the occasional offices;
 - www.churchsupporthub.org : a website tailored to church needs where research, reports and interactive sharing of ideas across all occasional offices can be found.
 - www.churchprinthub.org: an on-line print shop where all the resources can be purchased and customized with local parish details.
 - In addition, www.pastoralservicesdiary.org is a **free on-line administration** and diary management tool that enables churches to manage all their occasional offices on line and to engage with effective communication and follow up with all those involved.
10. Since September 2015 there have been a series of one-day presentations in partnership with Dioceses across the country to present the research messages and introduce the resources to parishes. By the end of June 2017 29 dioceses will have held initial funeral presentations and 31 will have had baptism day events, alongside national and regional conference plus number of other special presentations to Diocesan Synods, Praxis and others.
11. As the key messages and resources are disseminated more widely, stories are emerging of how this is making a real difference to parishes, and impacting both growth and community presence:

“People do actually want what we’re offering, they do want the Good News, but we’ve been hiding our light under a bushel for too long. Keeping in touch need not be complicated or time consuming, so I decided to share some really simple, low cost things we’d done to keep in touch with families in our parish.” Delegate, baptism presentation

The next challenge

12. In May 2016 Archbishops’ Council decided to continue investment in the work around Life Events to ensure that insights gained and resources developed are sustained for long-term impact, and that good practice becomes embedded at parish level. The Life Events team are now working in depth with four dioceses to research and resource long term development and change.
13. The workshop at General Synod 2017 will give synod members an opportunity to:
 - a) Hear the key insights that have emerged across all the research with the public around Life Events;

- b) Have an overview of the resources that have been developed nationally to help support parishes in their ministry around Life Events;
- c) See new tools which will enable discussion and action at diocesan, deanery and parish level, with input in shaping these tools so that they meet real needs; and,
- d) Discuss core questions around the missional and community impact of engaging with Life Events.

**Revd Canon Dr Sandra Millar
Head of Life Events
Archbishops' Council**

Digital Evangelism

1. Digital and social media present unique opportunities for the Church to engage with and encourage regular churchgoers and to enable more people to hear the Christian message as they go about their daily lives.
2. A new digital communications team was established in October 2016 with three years of funding from the Church Commissioners to build confidence and connection in local church communities.
3. Findings from our first two national social media campaigns highlight a strong desire to engage in our content when targeted in a focused way. We reached 1.5 million people with our Christmas #JoyToTheWorld campaign and more than 2.5 million across our #LiveLent and Easter 2017 discipleship project. Much of this national work was used locally and there is an opportunity to increase this in the months and years ahead.
4. The year's priorities focus on being courageous for the Gospel and helping churches in four key areas:

New websites

5. Launch new Church of England and Archbishops' websites in late 2017. These sit at the heart of our strategy to engage both Christians and non-Christians.
6. [A Church Near You](#) which lists church services and contact details will be transformed, with new functionality added. In a typical year the site receives more than 12 million page views from four million sessions, with 66% of people visiting for the first time.

Discipleship

7. Partner with Durham University to research the new digital discipleship portal approved by Synod in February 2017 as part of the *Setting God's People Free* paper.
8. Develop a new Introduction to Christianity section within the new Church of England website to explain better the foundations of the faith in a way that is engaging and video-led.

Evangelism

9. Amplify and share the *Thy Kingdom Come* campaign, which is now complete.
10. Deliver a strong Christmas campaign, building on the work of 2016, to engage people across the country.

Campaigning

11. Complete the filming and production of 30 films that explain and explore our missional work in communities.

12. Prepare and develop the strategy to better explain the work of Church of England schools and our role in education one million children every day.

What are the aims of this workshop?

13. We will:

- Explain the evangelism, discipleship, campaigning, and website streams of the strategy in more detail;
- Share the research conducted in early 2017 that underpins the transformation of the Church of England and Archbishops' websites and how this will help locally ;
- Gather your thoughts on what support we can give to churches across the country. The relaunched *A Church Near You* features as a key resource within this; and,
- Hear from you on any thoughts to enhance thinking around our Christmas 2017 campaign.

14. The session will be interactive, with the opportunity for questions at the end of each stage of the above.

15. I look forward to hearing your views and experiences as we shape the digital strategy for the Church of England together.

Adrian Harris
Head of Digital Communications
Archbishops' Council

National Events as Opportunities for Community Witness

1. Key national events offer us a unique opportunity to engage with communities and be appropriately distinctive about our faith. For example, the Church was at the heart of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee celebrations in towns, villages and cities. Here at the NCIs, in partnership with other organisations, we aimed to inform churches in time for them to get involved in celebrations and created resources to help. The final resource was the Diamond Jubilee New Testament, produced in partnership with HOPE and Biblica. It enabled local churches to offer a distinctively Christian witness at all the various events. In total 750,000 copies were given across the country.
2. The demand for a nationally created resource, delivered locally, showed us how the NCIs could serve local churches in community outreach. From this beginning a number of resources have been created in partnership with HOPE. As we approach another national event, the commemoration of the end of World War 1 in 2018, we would like to hear from Synod members about how best to resource local churches to engage with this.
3. Nationally we also work to support the key moments in the Christian calendar that are some of our greatest opportunities for witness and engagement, such as Christmas and Easter. We will showcase some new resources but once again look to Synod members to bring fresh ideas as to what would enhance the churches witness during these periods.
4. Please bring any other fresh ideas and examples of projects that have worked well in your context, so that we can learn from local practice and help the church to develop effective community outreach, evangelism and witness.

Dr Rachel Jordan
National Mission and Evangelism Adviser
Archbishops' Council

Inclusion and Outreach to Marginalised Groups

1. More than 30 years ago, the Church of England was in the vanguard of concern for the least well-off and most marginalised communities in the nation when we published the report, *Faith in the City*. This led to a tremendous upsurge in Christian social action which continues in old and new forms to this day (think foodbanks...).
2. But in the intervening years, some of the Church's focus has shifted. Conscious of declining congregations, some in the Church have perhaps put less emphasis on seeking the common good in society, and rather more emphasis to building up the Church itself. For a while, it looked as if these two aspects of Christian discipleship – serving the poor and proclaiming the word – were locked in a zero-sum game.
3. But we are entering a period in the Church's life where different vocations are understood to require one another. In some of the toughest parishes of the country, clergy and laity are discovering that the good news of Jesus Christ remains unheard if the Church is not seen to be taking the stresses and struggles of the community seriously. And Christian social activists are finding that, without a viable cohort of faithful people in the area, the Church's capacity to respond to social need is utterly inadequate. Some areas of belief may still divide Anglicans – but in the most hard-pressed communities of the nation, the way discipleship is practiced is rarely one of them.
4. In this workshop, we will look at how the National Church Institutions are developing responses to the Archbishops' Council's new "Objective 9": to be a Church that can provide a home for all people in England. In its aims for the current quinquennium, "... the Council is committed to developing a strategy for evangelism and discipleship for those less well served by reasons of race or class - including a stocktake of the impact of Renewal and Reform on BAME communities and developing the work of evangelism on outer estates.
5. This workshop will focus specifically on new initiatives in working class and similar communities. It is important that the Archbishops' Council's aims are understood to reflect the fact that all the named constituencies have been neglected or failed by the Church of England in the past and into the present. The forms that neglect and failure have taken are varied – bringing the groups together under a single aim does not imply that they are all alike or that similar strategies can overcome past failures.
6. Among the initiatives which will be introduced in the workshop will be the strand within the Renewal and Reform programme on evangelism and ministry on estates. This work, which was inaugurated in February 2016 at a conference at Bishopthorpe, is a kind of laboratory for examining what it would take to be truly a church for and of the people on the outer (usually ex-council) estates. The work to date touches on funding policy, ministry policy and the importance of learning from each other – all explored through a clear sense of understanding and working with the culture of the place. Already, the sense of possibility among practitioners is tangible – but how is enthusiasm to be captured in the service of real growth and change?
7. In another NCI venture, begun just a few weeks before Synod meets, representatives of some of the neglected coastal towns of England are coming together to explore their own context and to explore what resources can be developed through closer networking and through shifts in central perceptions and policies.

8. But the workshop will not all be about central policies. The real work of evangelism is always face-to-face and local. We will spend time hearing from participants about their own experiences and insights, and what they – you, the Synod members – would make the priorities in enabling us to be a Church that is truly a Christian presence in every community.

Revd Canon Dr Malcolm Brown
Director, Mission and Public Affairs
Archbishops' Council

Crossing Generations

1. *There has to be some way of getting young people and us to be a whole family where everybody always has a place within it, and sees a role and value.*

Parent, Yorkshire

Too often, young people don't feel part of the common thread of a congregation.

Young adult, Kent

The church in England is really missing those in their 20s and 30s and Toddler Groups are one of the best ways to reach them.

Curate, Leeds Diocese

2. Last year, the Education Office commissioned two research projects. The first explored the relationship between the Church of England and young people in order to better understand what helps young people stay rooted in their faith and church lives. When this research, "Rooted in the Church", was published, it highlighted the importance for young people of being part of the wider church community, not just the youth group.
3. The second, the Toddler Project, took an in-depth look at church-based toddler groups in five Dioceses to explore the missional opportunities they offer and identify practices which help them be confident in their church roots.
4. How do the National Church Institutions support Dioceses and parishes as they build bridges between the generations in worship, life and service, from youngest to oldest? This workshop will:
 - a) Explore both research projects in more depth, their implications for parish life, and the links with the Christening Project and the Young People Talking Jesus research;
 - b) Introduce the web-based resources Going for Growth, Learn to Listen and Worship Workshop;
 - c) Hear about the work of the Church of England Youth Council from some of its members;
 - d) Highlight the opportunities to cross generations in education contexts and the support offered by the Education Office and the Foundation for Educational Leadership; and,
 - e) Consider how Crossing Generations goes beyond simply all-age worship towards an intergenerational church.
5. A mixture of presentations and discussion will allow Synod Members to learn more and contribute towards shaping future areas of work and research.

**Revd Mary Hawes
National Children and Youth Adviser
Archbishops' Council**