

## **Summary of General Synod, July 2010**

*1,465 words*

Key debates on women bishops' legislation and the authorization of new liturgical provisions were joined by discussions on other subjects include clergy pensions, clergy terms of service, the status of deanery synods and resources for Fresh Expressions during the meeting of the General Synod, held in York from July 9th to 13th.

### **Women Bishops**

In February 2009, Synod agreed that draft legislation to allow women to be consecrated as bishops should be referred for revision in committee. The Revision Committee completed its work in April 2010. At this latest group of sessions, the Synod voted to 'take note' of its report, before moving on to the Revision Stage which involved clause-by-clause debate of the draft legislation. This gave Synod its last chance to amend the substance of the legislation before its formal referral to dioceses, which will commence this autumn.

The Synod left the draft legislation largely unamended, reflecting its desire to continue to make provision for those who in conscience cannot receive the ministry of women as bishops, by providing for certain functions to be undertaken by a male bishop under a diocesan scheme made in accordance with a national code of practice.

If a majority of Diocesan Synods approve the draft legislation, it will return to the General Synod (probably in February 2012) for Final Drafting and consideration in accordance with Article 7 of the Constitution. The Final Approval stage, at which two-thirds majorities are required in each House, could be reached in July 2012. If approved the legislation would then go to Parliament for consideration by the Ecclesiastical Committee and each House.

The legislation requires the drawing up of a code of practice. The approval of a code by the Synod can only occur after the legislation has secured Royal Assent. But the

House of Bishops has agreed that further work on a draft code should proceed now, while the draft legislation is with the dioceses and the expectation is that the House and the Synod will have an opportunity to consider further the shape of a draft code before the legislation comes to final approval.

Read the report by the Revision Committee:

<http://www.cofe.anglican.org/about/gensynod/agendas/july2010/gspapers/gs1708-09y.pdf>

Listen to the 'take note' debate on the report:

<http://audio.cofemedia.org.uk/synod/july2010/Jul1005.mp3>

Read the proposed amendments to the draft legislation:

<http://www.cofe.anglican.org/about/gensynod/agendas/july2010/noticpapers/np5.pdf>

Listen to the debates on various amendments via the summary pages:

<http://www.cofe.anglican.org/news/gsjul100710am.html>

<http://www.cofe.anglican.org/news/gsjul100710pm.html>

<http://www.cofe.anglican.org/news/gsjul120710am.html>

<http://www.cofe.anglican.org/news/gsjul120710pm.html>

Other legislative business included two pieces of legislation forming part of the preparations for the introduction of 'common tenure' for clergy in 2011, including provision for maternity, paternity, parental and adoption leave and time off work to care for dependents for those holding office under the common tenure arrangements.

Listen to the debates: <http://audio.cofemedia.org.uk/synod/july2010/Jul1011.mp3>

### **Liturgical business**

The Synod gave Final Approval to the Additional Weekday Lectionary and Amendments to the Calendar, Lectionary and Collects, authorizing them for use in the Church of England. The Amendments add five new Commemorations to the Common Worship Calendar and provide for two other anti-slavery campaigners, Olaudah Equiano and Thomas Clarkson, to be celebrated with William Wilberforce on 30 July. The Lectionary provides Bible readings that are especially suitable in length and content for services at which occasional worshippers are present – for example, choral evensong in cathedrals. Read the liturgical material:

<http://www.cofe.anglican.org/about/gensynod/agendas/feb2010/gspapers/gs1724a.pdf>

Read the further report of the Revision Committee:

<http://www.cofe.anglican.org/about/gensynod/agendas/july2010/gspapers/gs1724z.pdf>

Listen to the debate on the Further Revision Stage:

<http://audio.cofemedia.org.uk/synod/july2010/Jul1002.mp3>

Listen to the debate on Final Approval:

<http://audio.cofemedia.org.uk/synod/july2010/Jul1021.mp3>

### **Clergy Pensions**

Synod agreed in February 2010 to make certain changes to the clergy pensions scheme, including increasing the pension age for future service and increasing the accrual period for future service. This was subject to statutory consultation with scheme members, which has now been completed. The Archbishops' Council reported back on the consultation exercise and made recommendations about changes to the clergy pensions scheme, incorporating one alteration from the package approved in principle in February (that the period necessary for a full pension should be 41.5 years for future service). Synod formally approved the resulting amendments to the scheme rules, as well as making certain other changes (including amendments to both the funded scheme and the pre-1988 scheme in connection with pensions for surviving civil partners).

Read the report summarising the changes:

<http://www.cofe.anglican.org/about/gensynod/agendas/july2010/gspapers/gs1780.pdf>

Listen to the debates: <http://audio.cofemedia.org.uk/synod/july2010/Jul1002.mp3>

### **Diocesan Synod Motion – Job Sharing in Ordained Parochial Ministry**

Following debate on the motion moved by Mr Tim Hind on behalf of the Bath and Wells Diocesan Synod, General Synod carried a motion requesting the Archbishops' Council to bring forward legislative proposals for enabling job sharing arrangements in the ordained parochial ministry, especially by married couples.

Listen to the debate: <http://audio.cofemedia.org.uk/synod/july2010/Jul1020.mp3>

### **Diocesan Synod Motion – Marriage Measure 2008: Qualifying Connection**

Following debate on a motion moved by the Bishop of Ripon and Leeds (the Rt Revd John Packer) on behalf of the Ripon and Leeds Diocesan Synod, General Synod carried a motion requesting the Archbishops' Council to introduce legislation which

would enable a Bishop to give directions allowing those who have a "qualifying connection" with a particular parish (under the Church of England Marriage Measure 2008) to marry in any church within the benefice of which that parish forms a part.

Listen to the debate: <http://audio.cofemedia.org.uk/synod/july2010/Jul1023.mp3>

### **Diocesan Synod Motion – Deaneries**

A motion from the Coventry Diocesan Synod moved by the Revd Mark Beach sought to promote legislation conferring incorporated status on deanery synods and enabling them to take a more 'executive' role in supporting the Church's mission. Following debate and amendment by the General Synod, a motion was carried welcoming the discretion that each diocese has to determine the extent of any delegation of functions to deaneries and the existence of a number of legal vehicles for assisting such delegation; and requesting the Archbishops' Council, in consultation with the House of Bishops, to produce updated guidance on the available options and examples of good practice.

Listen to the debate: <http://audio.cofemedia.org.uk/synod/july2010/Jul1014.mp3>

### **Private Member's Motion - Fresh Expressions**

A Private Member's Motion from the Revd Richard Moy on the need for an online library of visual and video resources for worship was debated and amended, with the Synod carrying a motion requesting the Archbishops' Council to identify sources of funding for the production of such a resource library.

Listen to the debate: <http://audio.cofemedia.org.uk/synod/july2010/Jul1022.mp3>

### **Relations with the Church of Scotland**

The report *Our Fellowship in the Gospel* set out ways in which the Church of England and the (Presbyterian) Church of Scotland can consult and co-operate as two national or established Churches. The Church of Scotland welcomed the report and its recommendations at its recent General Assembly, and following debate, the General Synod similarly endorsed its contents.

Read the report:

<http://www.cofe.anglican.org/about/gensynod/agendas/july2010/gspapers/g1792.pdf>

Listen to the debate: <http://audio.cofemedia.org.uk/synod/july2010/Jul1012.mp3>

## **Faith and Order Commission**

Synod agreed to the formation of a new Faith and Order Commission, in succession to three bodies: the Doctrine Commission, the Faith and Order Advisory Group and the House of Bishops' Theological Group. This represents a streamlining and concentration of the Church of England's theological resources at national level.

Read the report proposing the new Commission:

<http://www.cofe.anglican.org/about/gensynod/agendas/july2010/gspapers/gs1782.pdf>

Listen to the first part of the debate:

<http://audio.cofedia.org.uk/synod/july2010/Jul1010.mp3> [fast forward to mid-way through file]

Listen to the second part of the debate:

<http://www.cofe.anglican.org/about/gensynod/agendas/july2010/gspapers/gs1782.pdf>

## **Review of Constitutions of Boards and Councils reporting to the Synod**

Following the Synod's rejection in July 2009 of the Archbishops' Council's proposals for overhauling its committee structure, Synod debated and approved the Council's revised proposals, produced after consultation with the bodies concerned, which essentially entail a reduction in the size of the bodies.

Read the report:

<http://www.cofe.anglican.org/about/gensynod/agendas/july2010/gspapers/gs1793.pdf>

Listen to the debate: <http://audio.cofedia.org.uk/synod/july2010/Jul1013.mp3>

## **Other business**

The Archbishop of York, Dr John Sentamu, gave a Presidential Address on the theme: 'The way to come closer to God is be generous and honest towards everyone'.

Read the address: <http://www.archbishopofyork.net/2932>

Listen to the address: <http://audio.cofedia.org.uk/synod/july2010/Jul1004.mp3>

Synod also received a special address from one of the ecumenical guests – the Lutheran Archbishop of Estonia, The Most Rev Andres Pöder.

Listen to the address at the beginning of this file:

<http://audio.cofedia.org.uk/synod/july2010/Jul1001.mp3>

Synod received presentations of the Annual Reports of the Archbishops' Council and the Church Commissioners; and approved the Archbishops' Council's budget for 2011.

Read the Council's report:

<http://www.cofe.anglican.org/about/gensynod/agendas/july2010/gspapers/gs1794.pdf>

Listen to the Council's presentation:

<http://audio.cofedia.org.uk/synod/july2010/Jul1015.mp3>

Read the Commissioners' report:

<http://www.cofe.anglican.org/about/churchcommissioners/annualreport/2009report.pdf>

Listen to the Commissioners' presentation:

<http://audio.cofedia.org.uk/synod/july2010/Jul1016.mp3>

Read the Council's budget and proposals for apportionment:

<http://www.cofe.anglican.org/about/gensynod/agendas/july2010/gspapers/gs1781.pdf>

Listen to the debate: <http://audio.cofedia.org.uk/synod/july2010/Jul1010.mp3>

At the end of what is the last group of sessions of the quinquennium, the Archbishop of York reported the dissolution of the Synod on 14<sup>th</sup> July in accordance with writs issued by HM The Queen. Nominations for elections for the next General Synod, organised by each diocese, are now open and close in early September.

Background papers for each debate, alongside links to an audio archive of each session, are available at:

<http://www.cofe.anglican.org/about/gensynod/agendas/july2010/>

**ends**