

NEWS from the Church of England

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For immediate release

Women in the Episcopate: Statement from the Archbishops

The Archbishops of Canterbury and York have welcomed the progress made by the Steering Committee charged with the preparation of draft legislation to enable women to become bishops.

The Committee has met several times during September and October to prepare proposals for consideration at the November meeting of the General Synod.

The proposals of the committee are published today. In response the Archbishop of Canterbury and York have today issued a joint statement:

“It is significant that the 15 members of the Steering Committee chaired by Bishop James Langstaff of Rochester, who represent the widest possible range of opinion on the matter, have been able to reach substantial agreement on a package of proposals to put to General Synod in November. For this we thank God, and we pray in hope that this will help General Synod debate and decide on the necessary next steps to enable women to become bishops.

“We are also profoundly grateful to all the members of the Committee who have engaged with each other and with their shared task in such depth and with such care and prayer throughout the intense deliberations of the past few weeks. Our particular thanks also go to David Porter, Sandra Cobbin and Bill Marsh for their work in facilitating these meetings. We are also grateful for the help and support offered to the Committee by William Fittall, The Secretary General, Stephen Slack, Chief Legal Adviser, Alexander McGregor, Deputy Legal Adviser and Sir Anthony Hammond, Standing Counsel.

“In the light of this we warmly commend the proposals of the Steering Committee to members of General Synod and to all members of the Church of England for prayer, study and reflection.

“May we be guided by God, and ‘make every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.’ (Ephesians 4.3)”

+Justin Cantuar

+Sentamu Eboracensis

Ends

Notes to Editors:

The proposals of the steering committee can be found here: <http://churchofengland.org/about-us/structure/general-synod/agendas-and-papers/november-2013-group-of-sessions.aspx>

The Steering Committee was established by the General Synod in July 2013 following its debate on recommendations from the House of Bishops. See here for further information

<http://churchofengland.org/media-centre/news/2013/07/general-synod-votes-to-restart-the-legislative-process-to-allow-women-to-become-bishops.aspx>

The Report from the House of Bishops "Women In the Episcopate - New Legislative Proposals" (GS1886) can be found here: <http://www.churchofengland.org/media/1771468/gs%201886%20-%20women%20in%20the%20episcopate%20-%20new%20legislative%20proposals.pdf>