

# **GENERAL SYNOD**

## **NOVEMBER 2005 GROUP OF SESSIONS**

### **REPORT BY THE BUSINESS COMMITTEE**

1. The Business Committee welcomes Synod members, new and old, to the first Group of Sessions of the eighth General Synod, to be inaugurated by Her Majesty The Queen on Tuesday 15 November. The new quinquennium brings fresh challenges and opportunities, and the Business Committee hopes that the General Synod will be able to reflect on a range of issues concerning the mission, ministry and financing of the Church, and the Church's engagement with society.
2. The purpose of this report is to give background information about the subjects which feature on the Agenda for the November Group of Sessions, together with information about the Synod's procedures generally, in order to help members make the most effective use of their time at Synod. The Business Committee, and its staff, are here to

assist members and to be of service to them. We are always ready to consider comments from members about the business content of recent Groups of Sessions, or about the Synod's procedures.

3. Responsibilities of the Business Committee include the management of the business of the Synod and of its meetings, and are set out fully in Standing Order (SO)115. The Committee has sought in the last quinquennium to identify ways in which the business of the Synod can be handled more effectively, and proposes to continue to do so in the new quinquennium.
4. The Committee customarily considers and reports on correspondence received following the previous Group of Sessions. Comments received following the July Synod touched on the arrangements for the study groups and the need to set aside sufficient time for these, the need for clarity as to when ecumenical representatives were speaking from the perspective of their Churches and when they were expressing personal views, the efficiency and viability of a five-day Group of Sessions, with long sitting hours (particularly at York), and the raising of points of order by Synod members. Correspondence also focused on particular aspects of the chairing of debates, and in particular on the need to call speakers who wished to make a maiden speech.

### *Venue and timing of the November Synod*

5. On the morning and afternoon of Monday 14 November, prior to the Inauguration of the Synod on the following day, there will be an induction seminar which is intended particularly for new members, but which members who have been re-elected are also welcome to attend.
6. On Tuesday 15 November, there will be a service of Holy Communion in Westminster Abbey at 10.30 am, at which Her Majesty The Queen and His Royal Highness The Duke of Edinburgh will be present. Detailed arrangements for this will be given in a separate notice.
7. Following the service, at about 12.15 pm, Her Majesty will address the Synod at a brief ceremony in the Assembly Hall of Church House, Westminster. After the Inauguration ceremony, the Synod will adjourn for lunch. The Synod will re-assemble at 2.30 pm and will then sit until 7 pm. On Wednesday 16 November, the Synod will sit from 9.15 am to 1 pm and from 2 pm until 6 pm. **A meeting of the House of Laity will take place in the Assembly Hall at 6.15 pm, as required by the Standing Orders of the House.**

### *Overview of the Agenda*

8. Over the past two quinquennia, 1995-2000 and 2000-2005, the General Synod had to consider a

significant amount of liturgical business relating to Common Worship and most recently the new Ordination Services. At present no Liturgical Business is planned for the quinquennium 2005-2010.

9. However, there is likely to be a greater volume of important Legislative Business, particularly in relation to taking forward the recommendations of the Toyne Review of the Dioceses and Pastoral Measures, the McClean Review of Clergy Terms of Service, and the legislative process for enabling women to be consecrated to the episcopate. There will also be plenty of space for the Synod to debate a wide range of subjects in its deliberative capacity, including Diocesan Synod Motions and Private Members' Motions.
10. The Agenda for the November 2005 Group of Sessions is necessarily constrained by the Synod sitting for only two days. However, the Agenda presents the new Synod with a good range of different types of business, including a morning of legislative business, a matter arising from the report of the McClean Review on Clergy Terms of Service, a seminar on the Episcopate (in preparation for the debate scheduled for February 2006 on Women in the Episcopate), and a substantial outward looking debate, on Facing the Challenge of Terrorism. Time does not allow for more than a representative selection of different types of business, but there will be more

opportunity for deliberative debate at the February Group of Sessions in 2006. This Group of Sessions will also include a Presidential Address by the Archbishop of Canterbury, in which he will share something of his vision for the future with the Synod.

#### *Security*

- 11. Members are asked to wear their Church House passes at all times and to study the security notice which will be circulated in a notice paper.**

#### *Worship*

12. A time of prayer and worship customarily takes place at the commencement of each morning sitting, including the Wednesday morning. Outline information about services in the Church House Chapel is given on the inside front cover of the Agenda.

#### *Order of Business*

13. The business each day will follow the order set out in the daily list given in the Agenda, except where it is necessary to modify this. Every effort will be made to give the Synod the longest possible notice of any variations which it is proposed to make in the timetable and to keep such changes to a minimum. Members are, however, reminded that if at any time within the Group of Sessions an

unexpected gap opens in the Synod's Agenda, business earlier in the Agenda which has not been reached or completed within the period allotted, can be called by the Chairman, unless other provision has already been made for it.

14. If there is no such outstanding business and an unexpected gap opens in the Synod's Agenda, then unless the adjournment is carried, the Business Committee has decided that the next item to be taken, as **contingency business**, will be the Southwark Diocesan Synod Motion on the Bicentenary of the Act for the Abolition of the Slave Trade. Members are reminded that the rubric 'not later than' in the Agenda does not prevent an item coming on significantly earlier than the time stated, depending on the progress of the preceding business.

#### *Private Members' Motions*

15. Private Members' Motions are normally contained in **Special Agenda III**, but as Private Members' Motions cannot be carried over from one Synodical quinquennium to another, there are no Private Members' Motions for consideration at the November Group of Sessions. Notices of any new Private Members' Motions will be published in a notice paper, and they will be available at the November Group of Sessions for signature by members (to indicate their support for them) but

only if they are received no later than 5.30 pm on Tuesday 15 November.

## *Content of Business*

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### **Introductions (Tuesday 15 November)**

16. A particular welcome will be given to the three newly elected (non-voting) **representatives of Deaf Anglicans Together** (formerly the National Deaf Church Conference): the Revd Vera Hunt, Mrs Hilary Sage and Sister Susan Bloomfield.

### **Report by the Business Committee**

17. This will provide the customary opportunity for members to raise points about content and shape of the Agenda for this Group of Sessions, or about the Synod's business generally.

### **Facing the Challenge of Terrorism**

18. The July Group of Sessions of the General Synod took place just after the terrorist atrocities in London on July 7. The debate on Facing the Challenge of Terrorism, now brought by the Mission and Public Affairs Council, gives the Synod opportunity to reflect on those events and the Government's response to them.

19. The motion concentrates on the situation in this country. It condemns the bombings, expresses

sympathy for the victims and their families, and appreciation for the work of the emergency services. It acknowledges the daunting responsibilities carried by the police and the security services. It recognizes that an effective counter-terrorism strategy will require an understanding and an addressing of the underlying causes of terrorism without excusing violence. In considering legislation it urges political parties to heed the warnings from history over the progressive erosion of fundamental rights. It concludes with a call to members of the Church of England to promote greater understanding, reconciliation and respect within their local communities, especially where there are significant numbers from other faith traditions.

20. With the Government's Terrorism Bill likely to be making its way through Parliament in October and November, the Mission and Public Affairs Council will circulate as up-to-date as possible a briefing paper on the situation in this country in the second mailing (GS 1595). The report *Countering Terrorism: Power, Violence and Democracy Post 9/11*, from a working group of the House of Bishops (released in mid-September), which looks at issues of international order, the situation in the Middle East and the role of the United States, is circulated as GS Misc 805 to provide a wider backdrop. However, this debate is specifically about terrorism in the United Kingdom.



## **Seminar on the Episcopate**

21. In his contribution to the July Synod debate on women in the episcopate, the Archbishop of Canterbury suggested that the General Synod agenda might include a theological seminar on the episcopate. This would enable Synod members to reflect further on some of the wider theological issues in preparation for later debates on the specific question of women bishops. The Archbishop's remarks were made in the light of earlier exchanges at the July Synod, during debates on the Ordinal, on the meaning of episcopacy in the Church.
  
22. The Business Committee has agreed (in the light of discussion at the House of Bishops) that there will accordingly be a seminar at this Group of Sessions, in the form of a presentation, under Standing Order 97. The Bishop of Rochester will open the seminar; his contribution will focus on theological issues concerning the episcopate and will be based on Chapter 2 of the Rochester Report, which will accordingly be circulated to Synod members to help resource the session (GS 1568). The Bishop's contribution will be followed by other theological contributions. This first phase (lasting no more than 45 minutes) will then be followed by an hour for questions and comments, with a panel consisting of the initial contributors responding at intervals, prior to some closing comments from each of the initial

speakers. There will be neither a debate nor any vote at the end of the session.

### **Presidential Address (Wednesday 16 November)**

23. The Archbishop of Canterbury will address the Synod and give his vision for the next quinquennium.

### **Legislative Business**

24. Full details of the legislative business for this Group of Sessions can be found in **Special Agenda I**.

25. The major items of business are the draft Dioceses, Pastoral and Mission Measure, Amending Canon No 27 and the Vacancy in See Committees (Amendment) Regulation. These items, which come before the Synod for First Consideration, give effect to the recommendations of the Toyne Review of the Pastoral and Dioceses Measures, which were approved by the Synod in February 2004.

26. The general aim of the draft legislation is to improve the Church's structures and processes in a way that will enable it to further its mission, in the broadest sense. In particular, it develops the process for diocesan reorganisation, at present to be found in the Dioceses Measure 1978, so that the Dioceses Commission can take a more proactive

role and improve the prospects of bringing projects which are in the Church's interest to a successful conclusion; it helps to simplify, devolve and make more flexible the procedures for pastoral reorganisation and closure of churches for regular public worship in the Pastoral Measure 1983; and it provides a new legal framework for 'mission initiatives'.

27. The Admission of Baptised Children to Holy Communion Regulations also come before the Synod for First Consideration. The Regulations will replace the existing Guidelines on this subject produced by the House of Bishops in 1997.
28. With a view to the Clergy Discipline Measure 2003 being brought fully into force at the end of the year, the Synod will be invited to approve the promulgating of Amending Canon No 24 and the Clergy Discipline Appeal Rules. The first of these items (which received Final Approval in 2000) makes a number of changes to the Canons related to the new processes under the 2003 Measure, and the second prescribes detailed procedural rules for appeals under it. The Appeal Rules will be taken under the 'deemed procedure' - that is, they will not be debated unless one or more members request that they should be.
29. Finally, the Synod will be asked to approve the Payments to the Churches Conservation Trust

Order, which will specify the Church's share of the Trust's funding for the years 2006-9.

### **Review of Clergy Terms of Service: Property Issues and Progress Report**

30. The Archbishops' Council set up a group, chaired by Professor David McClean, in 2002 to review the terms under which the clergy hold office, following the Council's response to the DTI's discussion document *Employment Status in relation to Statutory Employment Rights*. The Group's report on the first phase of its work (GS 1527) was debated by the General Synod in February 2004, when its recommendations were welcomed.
31. The Group's second report (GS 1564, copies available on request) was debated in February 2005. After resolving to take note of the report, the Synod passed the following resolution (after a successful amendment by the Archdeacon of Berkshire shown in italics):-

That this Synod:

- (a) Welcome *in general terms* the recommendations summarised on pages 1 to 7 of the (main) Report, *but with grave reservations about recommendations v, ix, xxxiiif and xxxiiig*;

- (b) commend the report to the dioceses and the wider Church and ask dioceses and other interested parties to submit comments by the end of July 2005 to the implementation group referred to in (c) below;
- (c) request the Archbishops' Council to appoint an implementation group to follow up the recommendations in the report (taking account of the responses from dioceses and other interested parties both to this report and to the earlier report (GS1527) on the first phase of the work) and to bring forward legislation based on those recommendations as early as possible in the next quinquennium.

32. The areas where the Synod expressed reservations were to do with the proposal to transfer ownership of the clergy house, the church and churchyard from the incumbent to the Diocesan Board of Finance. The Group set up by the Archbishops' Council to implement the Review Group's recommendations has been rethinking these proposals in the light of the reservations expressed by the Synod, and the comments submitted to it. It has produced a report with revised recommendations on the property issues (GS 1593), in order to test the mind of the Synod before embarking on the legislative work in this area.

## Questions

33. Under SO 105, members may address Questions to the Secretary General, the Clerk to the Synod, the Chairman of the Archbishops' Council, the Chairman of any body answerable to the Synod through the Archbishops' Council (including Boards and Councils), the Chairman of any Church of England body on which the Synod is represented, the Chairman of each of the three Houses of Synod, and the Church Estates Commissioners. Anyone wishing to ask a question must give notice of it to reach the Clerk to the Synod by **5.30 pm on Thursday, 3 November 2005**. The Questions notice paper will be distributed at the beginning of the Group of Sessions.
34. Members are entitled to ask up to two questions. 'Omnibus' questions are not in order. If a member wishes to query several points, each should be the subject of a separate question. Detailed information, tables of figures, etc, are better dealt with in a written answer, and members are urged to be selective in matters which they raise orally at Question Time, including any supplementaries which must be framed as a question and should be kept brief. Members should indicate clearly when submitting a question whether it is for oral or written answer.

*Farewells and prorogation*

35. The Synod will be prorogued no later than 6 pm and the closing ceremonies will be conducted by the Archbishop of Canterbury.

On behalf of the Business Committee

Richard Turnbull

September 2005

**Members of the Business Committee (as at 30 September 2005)**

The Revd Dr Richard Turnbull (Winchester) - Chairman

*Elected by the House of Bishops*

The Rt Revd George Cassidy, Bishop of Southwell

*Elected by the House of Clergy*

The Ven Alan Hawker, Archdeacon of Malmesbury

The Revd Prebendary Sam Philpott (Exeter)

The Revd Simon Pothan (London)

*Elected by the House of Laity*

Mrs Sue Johns (Norwich)

Mr Frank Knaggs (Newcastle)

Mrs Maryon Jägers (Europe)

*Two members of the Archbishops' Council*

Mr Brian McHenry (Southwark)

Professor Peter Toyne (Appointed)

The Secretary to the Committee is David Williams  
and the Assistant Secretary is Malcolm Taylor



## GENERAL SYNOD

### Forecast of future General Synod business : 2005 – 2006

There will be one or more Private Members' Motions in each Group of Sessions

#### February 2006

- Legislation*      Admission of Baptised Children to Holy Communion Regulations:  
Final Approval [Article 7 business]  
Clergy Discipline (Channel Islands (Guernsey)) Order  
Care of Cathedrals Rules [deemed?]  
?Parsonages Measure (Amendment) Rules [deemed?]  
?Legal Aid (Amendment) Rules
- Reports*            Rural Affairs and the Church of England  
Into the New Quinquennium  
Women in the Episcopate : Report from Bishop of Guildford's Group  
Hospital Chaplaincy  
Church Colleges/Universities and the Church of England:  
Mutual Expectations  
Anglican/Baptist Conversations  
Ethical Investment
- DSMs*              Bicenentary of the Act for the Abolition of the Slave Trade (Southwark) – if not taken in November 2005  
The Human Genome (Guildford)
- July 2006  
Presidential Address  
Budget  
Archbishops' Council Annual Report
- Legislation*      Draft Pastoral and Dioceses Measure, Amending Canon No 27 and  
Vacancy in See Committees (Amendment) Regulation:  
Revision Stage  
Clergy Terms of Service legislation: First Consideration

?Women bishops legislation  
? Marriage legislation: First Consideration  
? Care of Cathedrals (Consolidation) Measure: First  
Consideration  
?National Institutions of the Church of England (Transfer  
of Functions Order [re CBF's functions]  
?Church Accounting (Amendment) Regulations [re PCC  
accounting]

*Reports*

Commission on Urban Life and Faith report  
Further Education issues  
The Dearing Report: five years on  
Follow-up to Finance Reviews  
?Called to Act Justly: Follow-up report  
?Report from Church of England delegation to the WCC  
Assembly (Brazil, February 2006) (or GS Misc  
report)  
?Church Music Report

*DSM*

Carbon Dioxide Emissions (Southwark)

October 2005