

Practical Guide to the Meeting of Synod Members, February 2021

19 February 2021

Contents

Section A: Contact List	2
Section B: How this Synod meeting will proceed	3
1. Introduction	3
2. What are the 'ground rules' for this remote Synod meeting?.....	3
3. Order of the programme	4
4. Participation	4
5. Points of Order	5
6. Delays and technology failure	5
Section C: Test voting.....	5
1. Remote test voting via an online platform	5
2. Instructions for test voting.....	5
Section D: Technical advice	6
1. Technical preparations	6
2. Joining the meeting	6
3. During the meeting	6
4. Accessibility	6
Section E: Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)	7

Section A: Contact List

Zoom support and technical advice	synod@churchofengland.org please do not send messages to staff members via the Zoom chat function.
Technical issues with the remote voting website	votesupport@engaged.events
Clerk to the Synod <i>for issues directed to the Clerk to the Synod</i>	clerk@churchofengland.org

Section B: How this Synod meeting will proceed

1. Introduction

This Guide helps Synod members navigate their way through the February informal meeting on the Zoom platform. The February Group of Sessions was due to be run from Church House in the same way as November: that is, a small number of staff would be physically present together with the Chairs to deliver the meeting. Unfortunately, the national lockdown has made this arrangement unfeasible.

As it is important for the Church to be able to engage with key issues at this crucial time, the Officers of Synod agreed to hold this informal meeting. As an informal meeting, it will not be subject to the Standing Orders; however, this meeting will still provide a platform for Synod members to engage with and hear about key issues at this time such as the COVID-19 pandemic, safeguarding, vision and strategy, and the Archbishops' Housing Task Force.

In addition, a test vote will take place using our external provider to enable Synod members, staff and the voting software provider to test the process in advance of the April group of sessions.

Unlike previous Synod meetings on Zoom, this meeting will be conducted using the Webinar platform so on screen members will only see those directly involved with an item and not other Synod members. However, there also be a virtual "lunch room" available to Synod members during the lunch hour which will be run in a meeting format. This guide will provide more information on these arrangements.

The Zoom login details of this meeting of Synod members will be sent to members on the day before the meeting.

Please read this document carefully and email Synod Support (synod@churchofengland.org) if you have any questions or suggestions.

2. What are the 'ground rules' for this remote Synod meeting?

Synod members are asked to bear the following in mind:

- a. As with physical Synod meetings, this remote meeting will be a public meeting and members of the press and public will be able to observe the meeting via the livestream on the Church of England website and the Church's YouTube channel.
- b. Synod members participating in remote meetings are asked to observe the usual Synod policies, including the Code of Conduct.
- c. Members are encouraged to report back on proceedings to their Diocesan Synods and other diocesan meetings in the usual way.
- d. The 'chat' function between members will be disabled during the Zoom webinar, but the General Synod Twitter feed will continue as usual.
- e. During the lunch break, a "lunch room" will be open for Synod members to communicate with one another directly. The 'chat' function between members will be enabled in that room, but there will not be staff support.
- f. Screen breaks have been arranged to prevent members from becoming overtired with excessive screen time. The timings of the items have also been extended to take the remote environment into account.

3. Order of the programme

The programme has been drafted with consultation with the Officers of Synod, Chair of the Business Committee, the Secretary General, the Clerk to the Synod, and Synod staff.

4. Participation

Canon Margaret Swinson and the Revd Canon Kate Wharton have kindly agreed to be the compères of the February meeting.

Members are invited to be attendees of the meeting. On the screen, they will be able to see the panellists, which include the compère, the BSL interpreter, individuals presenting the corresponding item, and where appropriate, the presentations.

Presenters of some items have the option to invite questions and comments from Synod members. Any questions or comments should be entered in the “chat” box and directed to “all panellists”. While the panellists may not be able to address each contribution separately, they will note all of them, summarise and respond to the key issues.

Members are asked to rename themselves as they join the meeting with the following protocol, so that panellists can acknowledge the contributors and gain a basic sense of the contexts of the contributions:

3 digit Synod number (including any leading ‘0’s)
Space
B, C or L (to indicate House of Bishops, Clergy or Laity)
Space
Name

For example: 044 B Tim Thornton or 188 C Dylan Redding or 328 L Fiona Bacon

You can rename yourself by clicking the participants tab, hover over your own name, click ‘more’ and then click ‘rename’.



For this meeting the request to speak process, as used in formal groups of sessions, will not be in use.

5. Points of Order

As it is an informal meeting, there will be no provision for points of order.

6. Delays and technology failure

During the meeting, it may be necessary for the compère to call for a short pause, for example if a panellist experiences a technology failure or if staff members need to rectify a technical fault. Please bear with us if this should happen.

If the entire meeting is suddenly terminated for everyone (due to a technical issue), then members are advised to monitor their emails as we will send out a replacement Zoom invitation as quickly as possible. Please note you will have to use the new Zoom invitation as the original one will have become invalid.

Section C: Test voting

1. Remote test voting via an online platform

The remote voting facility will be provided by Crystal Interactive, the company that has provided the hand-held voting devices for Synod in the current quinquennium. You will receive an email from votesupport@engaged.events during the week commencing Monday 22 February with your personal voting details. Please contact Synod Support (synod@churchofengland.org) if you do not receive the email.

The email you receive will contain a link to the voting site, your username (which will be your email address) and a unique 6-digit voting code. These details must be kept private and not divulged to any other person.

There will be no testing of the 'simple vote' via Zoom poll.

Synod Members are responsible for providing their own devices for accessing the voting site and for ensuring they have an adequate broadband connection.

2. Instructions for test voting

Following the November 2020 Group of Sessions, Crystal Interactive have re-developed their voting site to provide a solution to the issues encountered. Ahead of the April Group of Sessions, the Synod Office, along with Crystal Interactive, have decided to run a test vote with all Synod members to trial the new system. Please refer to the "Members' Guide to Voting, February 2021" for a step-by-step guide.

Members will receive an email from Crystal Interactive during the week commencing Monday, 22 February. Please look out for the email and log into the voting site as instructed.

The test of the voting system will take place at around 1pm, right before the lunch break. Synod members are strongly encouraged to participate in this test.

Section D: Technical advice (please also read the FAQs which are at the end of this document).

1. Technical preparations

Virtual participation will take place over an online meeting system called Zoom. Zoom can be accessed via your internet browser, the computer app or mobile app. You should ideally use a laptop or desktop computer to help ensure better sound and video quality. Please ensure that you have downloaded the most updated version of Zoom.

As you cannot be seen in the webinar format, there is no need to have your video on.

2. Joining the meeting

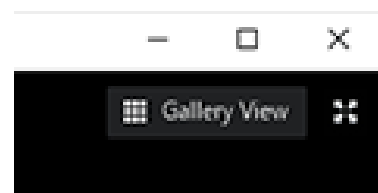
The Zoom login details to the Synod webinar and the “lunch room” will be sent to members the day before the meeting, i.e. no later than the afternoon of 26 February. Members will need to leave the webinar to join the lunch room, and then leave the lunch room to join the webinar.

Members **should not share the Zoom links** to avoid anyone unexpectedly joining and disrupting the meeting. The public will be able to watch the meeting via the livestream.

If you have any technical issues before or during the meeting, please do not use the Zoom chat function to message the panellists. Instead, email Synod Support at synod@churchofengland.org.

3. During the meeting

We recommend that you watch in ‘gallery view’ rather than ‘speaker view’ as you will see the interactions between the panellists. To switch between the views, press the button which is usually found in the top right hand corner of your screen (see below) bearing in mind that once you have selected a view, the button will then change to offer you the other option.



4. Accessibility

British Sign Language interpreters will be available throughout the sessions. You will be able to see the interpreter as one of the panellists.

Individuals with any special needs are encouraged to contact us in advance via email on synod@churchofengland.org so that we can do our best to accommodate your needs.

Section E: Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

If I accidentally leave the meeting can I re-join?

Yes, you should be able to re-join by clicking on the link again. If not, go to Zoom.us, click on join a meeting and enter the webinar ID and password (which you can find in the emailed invitation).

Do I have to have my video turned on?

No. As this meeting will be conducted on the webinar platform, you cannot be seen by the public or the panellists. If you choose to join the “lunch room”, you can choose to turn your video on or off.

Why can't I see everyone in the meeting?

This meeting is conducted on the webinar platform; therefore, you will only see the compère and the individuals presenting the item. If you wish to see other Synod members, please join the “lunch room” during the lunch break, which is set up as a Zoom meeting so that members can “see” each other.

If I need help to access the meeting what do I do?

If you email synod@churchofengland.org we will do our best to respond as quickly as we can.

Can I put my ‘hand up’ to request to speak, or submit a Request to Speak form?

No. The “hand up” function will not be active during the February meeting, and as it is an informal meeting we are not using Requests to Speak. Instead, presenters of some items may invite comments or questions at certain points of their item, and such contributions should be send using the “chat” function on Zoom and directed to “all panellists”.

Can I use my iPad or other tablet device to access the meeting?

Yes, though the display will look different from that on a laptop or desktop computer.

Can I use my mobile phone to access the meeting?

Yes, but you will get a much-reduced display. We recommend that you don't use a smart phone unless you have no other option. We do recommend that you use your smartphone for the voting app; you can have the Zoom meeting and voting open in separate tabs on a larger device, but having them on separate devices is likely to be easier to use.

My internet has failed, can I dial in and listen on a phone?

Yes, you can dial in by landline or mobile phone (the phone numbers will be on the email invitation) however due the length of the session you may incur considerable costs so please check with your phone provider before making such a call.

What is the difference between ‘speaker view’ and ‘gallery view’?

In speaker view, you see one large picture of whoever is speaking on your screen, whereas in gallery view you can see more (much smaller) pictures and it may not be obvious who is speaking.

If I have a technical problem with Zoom during the meeting who can I contact?

Please email synod@churchofengland.org. Please bear in mind, however, that at certain times of a day, we may be dealing with a large volume of emails, so an immediate response may not be possible.